

N027

1969/2



OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 1969/2

First a welcome to the following new members:-

- G. Davies, Penlan, Llangeitho, Tregaron, Cardiganshire, Wales
Mersey
- Mons. Grandin, 5, Route de Dinard, Dinan, 22, France
Bellatrix
- P. Houdre, Ker Avedo le Pone, Parame, St. Malo, 35, France
Santez Anna
- J. Lemee, Medecin, Plancoet, 22, France
Je crois en dieu
- I. Logan, 10, Cottessmore Gardens, Leigh on Sea, Essex
Red red rose
- M. Roullois, 4, Rue de la cite, St. Servan, 35, St. Malo,
France
Toxon
- Mons. Touanen, 13, Rue de Kergaison, Quimper, 29, France
Aigue Marine
- J.L.Butera, 33, West Cedar St., Boston, Mass. 02114. U.S.A.

Yes, this IS the English edition of our Newsletter ! For the first time in our history we have more members from overseas than from England. The Association now has three fully active area groups, the original Solent and East Coast Areas being joined by the Cote d'Emeraud Area, nicely organised with area Secretary (Monsieur Roullois), Treasurer (Monsieur Renault) and a Committee of Messrs. Richard and Jardin. Their Area Race (the winner of which will be their Commodore) is the JOSE BALADRE CUP RACE, which forms part of the Regatta week organised by the Societe Nautique de la Baie de Saint Malo. The race is held on Saturday and Sunday, July 25th and 26th. This clashes with the East Coast Race, but in view of the distances involved is not likely to cause any conflicts in the minds of would-be entrants. The French section will be delighted to see any South Coast based boats who can get over for their race, and of course, any boats cruising in the area.

Another Old Gaffers Race is that organised by the Medway regatta Committee, which will be on Saturday, July 19th. They will be pleased to see any boats who are in the area for our race on the 26th. There should be quite a convoy sailing round from the Medway to the Blackwater - why not try and join them ?

It is with very great regret that we have to announce the death of two members:- Mr. C.H.Paxton of Chichester, who was our second oldest member and was one of the entrants in the original Old Gaffers Races in the Solent before the Association was formed. Members will doubtless remember some of Mr. Paxton's contributions to our Newsletters. His memory is being preserved for us as a donation which his son sent is being used to provide a C.H.Paxton Memorial Trophy for the Solent Race.

Second was a newer member, Mr. F.W.Mason of Ongar, who died suddenly. His boat, Madeleine, was all fitted out for the season, and is now on the market (if not already sold). If you know of anyone wanting a cruising boat, please try and help to sell Madeleine, as we all know what happens to a boat which is neglected for any length of time. (See Adverts.)

Apologies from the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for the lateness of this issue. Business and family ties have caught us both. The order of this issue will be a trifle odd, as we are keeping the race details on separate sheets for sending to new members. Please check on ALL details for the races - we do have to change things from year to year !

RACES Please, please, read ALL the details in this Newsletter, and send in your entries AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. As our races get bigger and more interesting for all concerned, so the work of organising them grows, and much as we would like to carry on in our old free and easy ways, in fairness to all entrants, we MUST tighten up here and there on organisation. We shall all be extremely sorry if we have to refuse an entry, or have to disqualify a boat for non compliance with our rules, but if we do, it will be the fault of the owner concerned. PLEASE do not put us in the position of having to refuse YOUR entry.

RACE ORGANISATION Last year showed a distinct improvement in the number of helpers available on Race Days. From what I could gather, it seemed all concerned enjoyed themselves thoroughly. BUT WE STILL NEED MORE HELPERS. The results of our races are not worked out by magic, and I can't persuade my boss that it would be fine publicity if he let us have a computer and a couple of programmers for our Races, so some eighty multiplication sums have to be worked out and checked. There is nothing really difficult in this, but it does take time. If we have more helpers, those who are doing these sums can spend more time watching the finish of the race. The East Coast Race is almost certain to run over into the supper time, so we shall need a full relief team to take over whilst the first set of workers have their supper. This year both the East Coast and Solent Races are 'shore based' so helpers can come along by road. Quite a number of our members from both areas live in the London area. All concerned would be delighted to see some Solent based owners helping with the East Coast Race, and some East Coast based owners helping with the Solent Race. How about it, those of you who live in the middle? Of course, if you CAN get your boat round, we'd far rather see you sailing in the race!

SUPPER ORGANISATION In the past our suppers have tended to be rather free and easy affairs. Last year, the East Coast ran on later than had been expected, and the supper arrangements broke down badly. I heard several complaints, most of which appear to have been due to our allowing people to occupy tables before the caterer had had a chance to replenish the salad dishes etc. In an effort to prevent this happening again, we are having three set sittings. PLEASE help by choosing the sitting which you feel you can be reasonably certain to be able to get to. Also, please note that this year we have a choice of menu. If you can't make up your mind which menu you prefer when you order the tickets, don't be annoyed if the caterer or our supper organiser chooses the wrong one for you! We hope to have a certain amount of flexibility in the sittings, so if you have booked for a second sitting, but are there in time for a first sitting, please ask whether you can join the earlier sitting. Please note that at both races, SUPPERS WILL BE PROVIDED ONLY ON PRODUCTION OF A TICKET. Excuses about having left them aboard, or lost them overboard WILL NOT WORK.

PROVISIONAL ENTRIES AND SUPPER BOOKINGS. As we appreciate that some of you have jobs which make the ability to enter and start in a race uncertain, we are prepared to accept a provisional entry for the East Coast Race, provided it is in EARLY, and details of the reason for the uncertainty are given. The entry fee must be sent with such a provisional entry, but if the entry has to be cancelled FOR REASONS BEYOND THE OWNERS CONTROL a refund will be made. NOTE this is not intended to cover those who have to make long passages to get to the race etc., but only those whose employment or special domestic circumstances cause real uncertainty.

We can not make a similar offer on supper tickets, but if you are not certain of the number you will need, and order the maximum, we will endeavour to re-sell any surplus for you on the day if you have advised us in advance that this might be necessary. NOTE that we can NOT guarantee any re-sale or refund.

CHEQUES - Please make these payable to the Association, NOT to individuals.

1969 EAST COAST RACE

This will be on Saturday, July 26th, starting at 1130 at Stone Sailing Club Line, River Blackwater.

The race is open to all traditionally gaff rigged boats and will be divided into three classes; Class 1 for boats 28ft. L.W.L. and over; Class 2 for boats under 28ft. L.W.L.; and Class 3 for open and small boats considered by the Committee to be unsuitable for a sea passage in arduous conditions. (As a rough guide, under 20 ft. L.O.A.)

All classes will start together. Class 3 may sail a shorter course and will not be eligible for the Tom Bolton Cup or the East Coast Old Gaffers Trophy.

Class 3 owners should report to the bridge at Stone S.C. at 1045 on the day of the race to receive course instructions.

The race will be sailed under I.T.R.U. and R.Y.A. Rules, and handicapping will be 'time on time' using the R.Y.A. T(H)CF.

Course - Stone S.C. - Wallet Spitway (P) - Priory Spit (P) - Knoll (S) - Stone S.C.

Entries, on the attached form and accompanied by the appropriate fee, to be sent to

Mr. J.A.Scarlett, Lawley, 70b, Fambridge Rd., Maldon, Essex

Entries to be in by July 18th.

Entry Fee £1 for members of the Old Gaffers Association
30/- for non members.

Late entries will be accepted up to one hour before the start at an extra fee of 10/-. Entries may be sent to the above address up to Friday 25th July.

Boats whose name is not clearly displayed will be disqualified. (Registered fishing numbers can be displayed instead of a name)

PRIZES The East Coast Old Gaffers Trophy for the first boat over fifty years old on corrected time. (Present holder Fanny of Cowes)

The Tom Bolton Memorial Cup for the first fishing or ex fishing boat over the finishing line (Present holder Stormy Petrel)

The Zetland Trophy for the first Class 3 boat on corrected time (Present holder Annie Laurie)

The Sheave Trophy for the first Class 1 boat across the finishing line not winning any of the above trophies. (Present holder Duet)

The Dulcibella Trophy for the first converted ship's lifeboat to finish

Engraved pewter tankards or sweet trays for the first three boats in Classes 1 and 2 not winning one of the above prizes.

The Liferaft Hire Company Ltd. Silver Cup for Seamanship awarded to the crew considered by the committee to have shown the best seamanship

The Cup for Trying awarded on aggregate performance over a number of years to a boat which has not won any of the above prizes (Present holder Star)

The first East Coast Area member of the Old Gaffers Association in Class 1 or Class 2 will be Commodore of the East Coast Area until the 1970 Race (Holder D.T.Cook)

In the event of a tie for a prize on corrected time, the prize will go to the first boat over the line. For a prize on finishing order, the prize will go to the boat with the lower T(H)CF.

Entrants considered by the Committee to have sailed an outstanding race, but without winning any prize, will be given a free entry for the 1970 East Coast Race.

Sailing Instructions will be posted to all entrants on the Monday before the race. Owners proposing to cruise during the week before the race should notify the Secretary when sending

in their entry. They can either collect the sailing instructions from 70b, Farnbridge Rd during the week, or at Stone at 1030 on the day of the race.

The racing rules require us to put in the sailing instructions the names, sail numbers and letters and ratings of the yachts entered. This can be done only if we get the entries in time. Also, please help us to make a success of our souvenir booklet (free to entrants - extra copies 3/- each) by putting the known history of your boat on the back of the entry form.

The pleasure launch Viking Saga will be following the race again this year. Embark at Stone from 1030. Cost £1 for adults and 10/- for children. Licensed bar aboard, but meals can NOT be provided

There will be the usual supper and prizegiving at Stone Sailing Club in the evening after the race. Please note the following supper details carefully, and fill in the entry form correctly. Note that the last date for ordering suppers is earlier than the closing date for race entries.

SUPPERS at 15/- each.

Sittings - sit down between

First - 6.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Second - 8.00 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.

Third - 10.00 p.m. -

The Prizegiving will be at 9 30 p.m.

Menus

-A-

-B-

Iced fruit juice or
Minestrone soup

Iced fruit juice or
Minestrone soup

Cold Roast Beef Salad
Boiled potatoes

Steak, Kidney and Mushroom Pie
Boiled potatoes, garden peas
and baby carrots

Baked Apricot Sponge
with custard or
Ice Cream
Cheese and Coffee

Baked Apricot Sponge
with custard or
Ice Cream
Cheese and Coffee.

You MUST indicate the menu required and the sitting preferred when you complete the race entry form.

You MUST apply for suppers at least TEN DAYS before the race.

Please note that suppers are limited to 160 and if you do not indicate menu and/or sitting preferred - or if when you apply the sitting is fully booked - these will be allocated according to availability. There can be no last minute extra suppers, so be sure and order enough.

RACING FLAG Please make sure your boat is provided with a SQUARE racing flag, and that the design of the flag is described on the entry form.

IDENTIFICATION Following the resolution passed at our Annual General Meeting, the Race Committee no longer have discretionary powers not to time in any boat they can not identify. THE NAME OF THE BOAT (or a registered fishing number) MUST BE CLEARLY DISPLAYED. The sailing Committee are now obliged to disqualify any boat they can not identify. Please help to make the work of the spotters as easy as possible by listing hull and sail colours (main first, then working headsails) on your entry form and when you receive the sailing instructions make sure your boat is CORRECTLY described. Notify the Bridge Team at Stone of any errors (Lengths are listed only to the nearest foot)

PLEASE enter as early as you can. A provisional entry, to be confirmed later, will be accepted at the normal rate, even if confirmation is made on the day of the race PROVIDED there is a good reason. Fees should be sent with any provisional entry, and will be refunded if the entry can not be confirmed. Please make cheques etc. payable to the Old Gaffers Association.

1969 SOLENT RACE

The Solent Race will be sailed on Saturday, 6th September, starting at 1100. a.m. from the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club line at Cowes.

The Race is open to all traditionally gaff rigged boats and will be divided into two Classes; Class 1 for boats 28ft. L.W.L. and over; Class 2 for boats under 28ft. L.W.L. Both classes will start together and sail the same course, which will be 'around the buoys' in the Solent.

The race will be sailed under I.Y.R.U. and R.Y.A. Rules. Handicapping will be by the R.Y.A. T(H)CF.

The Race Committee will operate from the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club House, which is immediately adjacent to the Royal Yacht Squadron.

Entries, on one of the forms with this Newsletter, please, and accompanied by the appropriate remittance, to be sent to M.D.Millar, 107, Baker Street, London, W1M.1FE, by 20th August. Entry Fee £1 for members of the Old Gaffers Association. A surcharge of 10/- is added for non members..

Late entries will be accepted at a surcharge of 15/- IF RECEIVED by Mr. Millar by first post on Thursday 4th September. AFTER THAT HE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE TO RECEIVE THEM.

Line entries will be accepted on the day of the Race, up to the ten minute gun, by the Race Officer in person ONLY, and in his absolute discretion. Such entries will qualify for prizes only if a completed entry form, £2 fee (plus surcharge for non members if applicable) and Declaration form are received by the Committee not later than 1900 Hrs. (Forms and Race instructions will be available at the R.C.Y.C. from 0900 Hrs.)

Race instructions will be posted to entrants by first class mail not later than the last day of August, together with any supper tickets ordered. No other acknowledgement or receipt will be sent.

PRIZES THE DEAD-EYE TROPHY for the first boat to complete the course, irrespective of age, Class, or handicap. (A new trophy presented by Mr. M.R.Richardson).

THE CHANNEL CUP for the first boat on corrected time, being fifty years old or over, irrespective of Class.

THE LE HAVRE PLATE for the first Class 1 boat on corrected time, not being the winner of the Channel Cup.

THE EMSWORTH CLEAT for the first Class 2 boat on corrected time, being fifty years old or over and not being the winner of the Channel Cup.

THE CHANNEL PLATE for the first Class 2 boat on corrected time being under fifty years old.

THE C.H.PAXTON MEMORIAL TROPHY for the boat which, not having been eligible for a trophy or other prize in this or the two preceding annual Races, has in the opinion of the Committee put up the best non-winning performance in these three consecutive races.

THE LAGGARDS LADLE for the last boat, irrespective of Class, age or handicap, to complete the course within the prescribed time limit.

Second, third and fourth prizes will be awarded in each Class in which there are sufficient starters to justify their award. Momentos to all boats completing the course.

All trophies and prizes awarded subject to Declarations being completed

The Solent Area member sailing the first boat on corrected time fifty years old or over will be Area Commodore until the next Solent Area Race.

The Old Gaffers Supper after the Race will be held in the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. Supper will be served to TICKET

HOLDERS ONLY from 1930 Hrs. Tickets at £1 each to be ordered on the Race entry form.

PRIZE GIVING after the Supper at approximately 2130 Hrs.

PLEASE BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL when filling in your entry form. Last year, at least half the entries had to be referred back to owners for clarification of handicap detail.

IF YOU ENTERED LAST YEAR AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE TO YOUR BOAT WHATSOEVER, say so, and omit the detail, OTHERWISE WE MUST HAVE IT ALL

REMEMBER that boats which do not fly a SQUARE RACING FLAG or do not have their NAME DISPLAYED so that it is legible to the Race Committee WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE -

MADELEINE 7 Ton counter stern gaff cutter; 30 x 8'6 x 3'6 ; four berths; pitch pine on oak. 1968 Stuart Turner 10 H.P. engine, with alternator and stern gear - 1,650 r.p.m. Electric starter. S/L marine toilet; new Taylor paraffin cooker, gimbelled, on formica stand. New Dunlopillo bunk mattresses, blue with white piping; polythene sink. New pony winch, anchor chain, and two anchors. Whale gusher pump. Compass, echo sounder, log, full suit of sails - roller reefing mainsail and jib. New sheets, halyards, cam cleats etc. Snub winch for mainsheet. New fibreglass dinghy and outboard motor.

This is an extremely attractive boat, and is in the soundest, most seaworthy condition, having had a £1,000 refit in 1968 (excluding the new engine). She is perfectly ballasted, sails well, and takes any weather and sea in her stride.

There are many items included in the sale, and a full inventory is available on request.

Lying Burnham on Crouch, where moorings have been booked for the coming season. £2,300 o.n.o.
Telephone 01 529 7165 after 7 p.m.

KERNYAS 2½ ton Blackwater Sloop. Built 1965. Registered. Tan Terylene sails; mast in tabernacle, single handed lowering gear. Seagull 100+ long shaft with long range tank and clutch. Fulllength and full width cabin top giving exceptional accommodation. 2 Berths, gimbelled primus, separate toilet; cockpit tent cover. Danforth and fisherman anchors, 20 Fthm chain; nylon kedge warp. Numerous extras - mattresses, cabin and navigation lamps etc. Mooring available at Hamble if required. £900 o.n.o. J. Yeatman, Inshore, Hamble River Boatyard, Lower Swanwick, Hants.

GIPSY 28'6 x 8'9 x 5'9 Pitch pine on oak, built by Burt of Falmouth in the late 1920s. Sail area 522 sq ft. 12 H.P. Solo marine engine, petrol/T.V.O. 3 Berths, fresh water tanks, galley with calor stove and lighting Avon Redstart dinghy. £850 Dr. H. Gordon Helm, Pounsley Combe, Spriddlestone, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon.

SEACROFT Gaff cutter built in Porthleven as a fishing boat about 1930 and converted for present owner's father by a local shipwright 47 years ago. A sound comfortable cruising boat easily handled and sails well. Fully powered by 10 H.P. Morris Vedette engine 5 years old. 26 x 8'6 x 4' 2 Settee berths in saloon. Calor gas stove with oven, sink, and good lockers. Pipe cot, W.C. and ample sail stowage in foc'sle. Canvas mainsail, terylene staysail and jib. Storm jib, spare main & staysail. Surveyed January 1969 and since overhauled and refitted by qualified shipwright. In Commission. Lyinh Helford River £1,000 T. Rendle, Upalong, Porth Navas, Falmouth, Cornwall.

NAMING OF BOATS Since the decision at the A.G.M. I have had some queries as to just what we regard as clear identification of a boat, and where the name should be. Possibly the best place for those who cruise is on a canvas storm dodger. Boats on which dodgers would be out of place can paint the name on the side of the cabin or doghouse, or on the topsides. No sizes can be quoted. Obviously what is suitable on a boat like Pembeth (excellently neamed in very large letters on the doghouse) is completely impossible on a little winkle brig. Points to watch are that the name should be in a clearly contrasting colour - gold letters on varnish are almost completely impossible to read, and the letters should be bold, clear, and well spaced. Neat small letters are easier to read than larger, closely spaced letters with ornamental scrolls. **A NAME ON A BOAT'S TRANSOM IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.** If you own a small boat, and are worried because you can not paint the name in as large letters as you would like, then take jolly good care to finish the race as near to the Committee end of the line as possible. You all know the areas in which we sail. If we can't read the name of your boat using 7-50 binoculars, then you will be disqualified.

WHITSUN RALLY AT LE HAVRE

eleven Old Gaffers (and three Bermudian camp followers) had notified their intention of attending the Rally at Le Havre, carrying a total of some sixty souls. Of these, eight owners had taken advantage of M. Claude Tissier's very kind offer to place a bulk order on their behalf for bonded stores from J. Ryst et Cie.

In the event, only four Old Gaffers and one fellow-traveller arrived; these were Gaivotta, Sea Wigeon, Quiver, and Tango, the latter accompanied by non member Hefod (a vessel having a queer mainsail with a pointed top). We have not yet discovered what happened to all the rest, except that Amelia Jane was assumed to have touched France somewhere as the waterguard had cleared her in on her return; Allan Grimble has since revealed that she fetched up at Cherbourg, rather than fight the weather into Le Havre.

Probably the weather forecast rather than the weather itself put some people off, as when Quiver left Chichester Harbour shortly after 1800 on Friday evening, the Met boys were still offering 6 to 7 S.E., and S.E. was the way we wanted to go. However, we poked the bowsprit out over the bar and it didn't even get wet, so we pressed on, soon shaking out the reefs tucked in in anticipation of a dusting, with a light easterly breeze and little sea. Twice during the night the breeze died altogether, and we started the engine to keep the log line from anchoring us by the stern; but with a defective exhaust system (which we knew all about before we started), we couldn't motor too long at a time without setting the ship on fire; so we had to be content with a slow and somewhat tedious passage in poor visibility - it wasn't actually fog, but you couldn't see anything.

By mid day Saturday, the breeze had backed round to North and first the topsail, then the spinnaker were set to try and put up the average a bit. By 1530 the continuing backing necessitated a gybe, and it freshened sufficiently to give us four hours at over $4\frac{1}{2}$ knots, two of them logging just over 5; it held thus until after dark, when the wind went with the daylight, but so did the murk, and the sky cleared with the visibility. We had made landfall with Cap d'Antifer on the port bow at dusk, but it was a slow passage from there to Cap de la Heve; however, one did not mind quite so much as it was by then such a beautiful night. But by 0200 it became apparent that, having missed the tide, we were not progressing at all, so we had to risk the fire and motor in for the last two hours, entering Le Havre at 0400.

Later in the morning, J. Ryst's lorry (and a Douannier) duly appeared with the bonded stores, to everyone's apparent satisfaction, especially some members of the J.O.G. who were able to take over the orders of those Old Gaffers who had not turned up! We are indeed indebted to Claude Tissier for all the trouble he took in arranging for this loot.

As so few Old Gaffers had assembled, their owners agreed that it was hardly worth holding a formal party; Gaivotta's crew wished to look at another bit of France before returning home, and she departed during Sunday afternoon; she was soon followed by Sea Wigeon, whose crew had to get back to work on Tuesday morning. Tango and her friends took advantage of Claude Tissier's hospitality at the Societe des Regates and dined there on Sunday evening, while Quiver's crew elected to seek out (and find) a truly 'French' restaurant in the back streets of the town.

Quiver's return passage on Monday was appreciably more expeditious than the outward one had been, taking two thirds of the time. The wind varied from S.E. to S, mostly Force 2 to 3, and with (for a change) unlimited visibility. The latter enabled us to see small thunderstorms coming up over the horizon, and in two cases, completely to dodge them by judicious alteration of course in good time. However, one pair of storms linked by a bridge of cloud were too broad to dodge, but by keeping under the 'bridge' we were able to minimise their effect. A brisk spinnaker run in torrential rain for half an hour or so in this squall put us neatly back on our rhumb line from which we had earlier deviated.

Thereafter, an uneventful night brought us into Chichester Harbour in comfortable time to carry the morning tide up to Birdham, where we locked in some 24 hours after leaving Le Havre.

On further thoughts, there were two events during the night which might be of general interest.

Quiver's navigation lights are fitted with twin filament (car tail light) bulbs, so that the batteries can be conserved on 3 Watt consumption for routine running, harbour use and so on, but switched up to 21 Watts in thick weather or if anything gets indecently close. During the night passage, a steamer was observed coming up on our port side over the horizon, on definite collision course; when she was about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off, and as a preliminary to our altering course on the assumption that the steamer couldn't or wouldn't, our lights were switched up to bright; within seconds the steamer made a positive alteration to pass under our stern, and there is no doubt that it was the brighter lights which enabled him to spot us in time.

The second incident occurred after dawn. Steve was on watch alone, sailing along goose-winged at 3-4 knots. He had crossed the course of a small German timber ship well ahead of her, and concentrating on steering his own course had almost forgotten about the German. However, he glanced over his shoulder to find that she had altered course considerably and was bearing right down on him. He called the skipper urgently, who emerged somewhat bleary-eyed to find the ship almost in the cockpit with him, but, sigh of relief, just swinging back to her proper course. It was then that we noticed her master standing on the wing of his bridge, examining us through binoculars - he had just come over to admire an Old Gaffer at close quarters, but he does not know to this day how nearly he got his beard singed with a Very flare.

M.D.M.

FOR SALE PATSY-LYNN. Falmouth Quay Punt, 26' x 8' x 4'6. Pitch pine on oak. Electric start 8H.P. Stuart. Electric lights. All new Terylene rigging and new standing rigging. Countess gas cooker, sink & drainer. 2/4 berths. Ready for use. £800 L.H.Landricombe, 136, Shaldon Crescent, Woodlands, West Park, Plymouth, Devon.

BRISTOL CHANNEL PILOT CUTTERS

The Pilot Cutters of the Bristol Channel were some of the most seaworthy small craft of the age of sail. However, steam cutters were introduced in the Welsh ports before the First World War, and at Bristol in 1922 so that it is now over forty years since any were commercially used. The exact number of surviving pilot cutters is not known, but there are 18 still registered and probably more as house boats. These cutters, which were known as skiffs by the men who sailed in them were handled by two men, and since they were up to 56ft. in length overall would not be regarded as small boats today. They were designed to survive at sea rather than for speed.

When the pilot cutters were sold off, most of them became yachts, equally important they had considerable influence on small yacht designs in the twenties and thirties. As far as sea keeping qualities were concerned they were the elite of the work boats, a sort of King Kong of the whole gaff tribe. Because of their ability to make long ocean voyages the remaining cutters are scattered all over the world, and perhaps the Old Gaffers Association could be a way of joining owners together so that information of mutual interest could be exchanged. The marine artist Mr. Peter Stuckey, of 8, Tweeny Lane, North Common, Warmley, Bristol, is interested in starting such a section. He has over the years got together a great deal of information on these craft, which eventually will appear as a book.

There are only two pilot cutters yachts based in the Bristol Channel now. The Breeze at Barry, and the Peggy (ex Wave) at Penarth. Three years ago there was an attempt to preserve a cutter at Bristol. The craft involved was the Margeurite-T which was built for the Cardiff pilot Frank Trott in 1893. Unfortunately, not enough money was found to buy the cutter and instead a model was made from photographs taken of the craft while lying at Salcombe. Actually this model cost more to have made than the original cutter did to build, and is now on show at the Bristol City Museum. Although this model is a particularly fine one it does not represent a true working version. It is hoped that this will be rectified. It was not for instance normal practice for pilot cutters to have ratlines, although nearly all the surviving yacht versions do now. The work boat's crew went aloft either on the mast hoops or in port in a bosun's chair. Nor would the working cutters have carried navigation lights; they were supposed to by law, but a local tradition said that a single white light aloft was enough, and that is all they had. Several cutters were run down by steamers at night, but it made no difference.

A short while ago I saw the Margeurite at Poole (the 'T' seems to have been dropped from her name) and she is remarkable in that she has been altered very little, remembering that she was sold for a yacht in 1913. To a large extent she is still a Victorian work boat, both in rig and below decks. Long may she stay that way; so many of the working craft suffer the fate of 'modernisation'. In a small way, accommodation can be improved, but when people start building miniature green houses on the decks the whole appeal of this type of craft has gone. Of course, a large number of yachtsmen only buy Old Gaffers because they are cheaper to purchase, and then try knocking them into the shape of their dream ship. There is a Colchester oyster smack which every summer sails the East Coast with a bermudian mainsail! It is the sort of sight to make strong men weep. In this strange get up she actually appears to sail rather worse than she would with gaff rig.

The Old Gaffers Association has accomplished a lot, but surely one of the best achievements is to make owners proud of the gaff rig and make a determined effort to maintain and sail their yachts to their best ability. The topsail was a rare sight ten years ago on the East Coast; now (due to the races?) they have become quite a common addition to many sail

lockers. Owners no longer mumble some excuse when questioned about their yachts; they say "gaff, of course" in loud voices with a strong hint of pride. Actually, being a supporter of the gaff rig should not draw you into an argument these days because the experts are all arguing mono-hull against multi-hull and with a little bit of luck that will keep them busy for several years to come.

R.N.Simper.

WANTED Kelvin 30 H.P. petrol/paraffin, poppet valve or sleeve valves, or J2 diesel. Must be complete, and in good running condition; fair price.

Also oddments, blocks, sails etc. for 50ft pilot cutter.

Magazine write-ups, books, papers, what have you.

John Crabb, 329, High Street, Herston, Swanage, Dorset.

Also wanted - contributions for the Newsletter. Accounts of cruises, descriptions of boats, especially of unusual types; descriptions of conversions, major overhauls, repairs etc.

Hints on rigging, painting, materials for caulking, stopping and generally maintaining old boats always welcomed.

For about the first time in the history of the Association, I have been able to hold one article over for the next issue (Sorry, Len, it just wouldn't go in this one !) If I had more articles, compiling each Newsletter would be much easier.

Apologies for the terrible typing in this issue - it is being produced at panic speed so you can get the entry forms in time for the East Coast Race.

BEFORE FILLING IN THE RACE ENTRY FORM OPPOSITE
PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE READ ALL THE NOTES
ON THE RACES.

Let us have a record entry for both races. All concerned in the organisation of the races hope that all entrants will enjoy their finest ever day's sport.

This newsletter has been sent only to people we regard or are prepared to regard as members of the Old Gaffers Association. If your name is not included in the list of members it is because either you have not completed a membership form or paid a subscription. Several members have not sent bankers orders - will they please note that 1965 subscriptions are due on January 1st. Prompt payment will enable us to plan our year's expenditure. Below is a copy of the membership form and bankers order. If you have not yet filled in either or both, they will be ticked in red - if they are so ticked, PLEASE complete them and return to me. If neither is ticked, please pass the form on to a friend.

J.A.Scarlett, Lawley, 70b, Pambridge Road, Maldon, Essex

I wish to be a member of the Old Gaffers Association, and agree to abide by the rules of the Association.

(Block capitals Please)

Signed

Name

Phone No. Office

Address

Home

Name of Boat

Sail No.

Rig

Type or Class

Size

(Tons)

Year Built

Builder

Designer

(if known)
Where built

I am a member of the following Yacht Clubs;-

I normally sail in the area.

Would you be willing to help organise races in your area ?
YES NO

STANDING ORDER

To

(Bankers)

Address

On receipt of this order, and thereafter on the first day of January each year, until cancelled by me in writing, please pay the sum of ten shillings to the Co-operative Wholesale Society Limited, Bankers, Chelmsford Branch, 50, New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, for the account of the Old Gaffers Association, Account No. MO22, and debit my account accordingly.

Signed

..... 2d

Date

..... Stamp

8. Wood End,
Heat Bank,
63, St. John's Road,
Hedge End,
Southampton.

