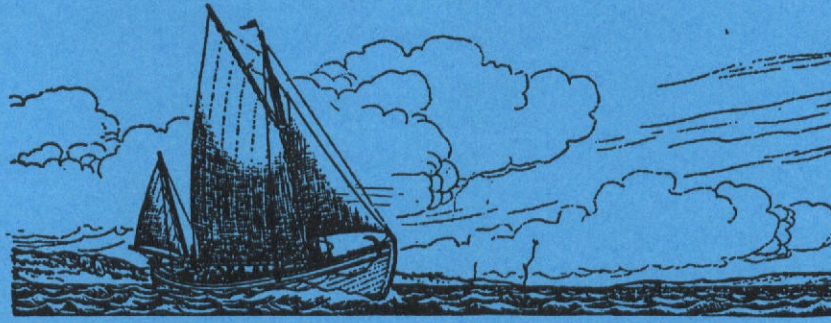


THE HARRISON BUTLER ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER No: 49

SUMMER 1999



THE HARRISON BUTLER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

No. 49

JULY

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH - 'ARGO' (6 Ton Gaff Cutter)
 Built by Burt & Son of Falmouth in 1914.
 Taken during the 1930's in Carrick Roads, Falmouth, Cornwall

Disclaimer: The opinions and views expressed in articles and correspondence in this newsletter and in other association literature are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the association or its officers. No responsibility can be accepted for the accuracy of the advice, opinions, recommendations or information given. Dates of events should be confirmed before setting out. Modifications, alterations or additions to boats featured in any articles or correspondence should be checked with the appropriate manufacturers or professionals.

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

June 1999

The Crag
St. Mawes

Dear Members

Again, the blank sheet of paper needing to be transformed into a letter and here, at The Crag, there are endless distractions which are conducive to not writing. Boats pass by below and one of them might be an HB of which there are several in the neighbourhood. The garden keeps saying, 'Help help, your attention is required urgently.' And other things and people.

I think we can chalk up a successful year if the number of new members is anything to go by. You will see their names in the new List of Members. It's good to infuse new blood into the system and we continue to attract across the age span. Our oldest members are octogenarians and our youngest, Paul Wiggins, is seventeen. He is a student at the Falmouth Marine School and is using 'Omega' as his course project.

The AGM was the customary friendly gathering with most of the regulars attending and a good number of new members also - and some non-members, friends and family. There were, I think, 34 of us. It says much for the popularity of the event that many members travel far to come to it. Several have said that it is the most enjoyable AGM they attend - perhaps because of its informality and domestic setting but mostly, I suspect, because of the members themselves.

We said good-bye to Patrick Gibson as Chairman after I think five years during which he and Lesley spent a great deal of time on our behalf, and I have particular cause to be grateful to them for many instances of thoughtfulness and kindness. Patrick took a great interest in and involved himself in all aspects of our life.

We always manage to fill our gaps and we welcome Keith Band as our new Chairman. I hope you will find it a rewarding occupation, Keith. Keith and Janet have been members for a very long time and they held the fort in the editorial chair (it must have been an editorial sofa) between Mark Miller and Paul Cowman. Janet was Treasurer from 1982 for many years. They own 'The Lady Mary of Woodbridge', an Edith Rose.

Simon Wagner was not there to hear all the complimentary things which were said about him on his retirement from his 5-year stint as Treasurer during which he managed to achieve a sound financial state of affairs to hand over to his successor, Peter Crook. As our numbers increase it is comforting to have a professional C.A. at the financial helm. Peter went through the accounts with me last month and supplied me with very impressive computerised lists. The sad thing is that we are still owed in the region of £1,000 through unpaid subscriptions. Often it is mere forgetfulness but I get a bit fed up with having to remind people - often the same ones, year after year - that they are in default. Paul has achieved a high standard with our newsletters but this cannot be maintained without adequate funds. The newsletters are a very important feature of the Association, being the twice-yearly link with all our members (except those who forget to notify a change of address and their newsletters come bouncing back onto my doormat). If you find a reminder in with your newsletter, please respond quickly or you will find that the next year has come around and you will owe £20 rather than £10. Why not make it easy for yourself (and Peter) by filling in the standing order form and sending it to your bank.

Our financial exercise took place on the day that Peter and Elspeth Macfarlane came to lunch and while Peter and I deliberated over the accounts Elspeth was despatched to the kitchen to compose a salad and a fruit salad for lunch for which Paul Cowman joined us. Then Peter drove us all to "Boats '99" and we spent hours going round the stands and meeting old and new friends and seeing almost all there was to see - which was a lot - and enjoying the delightful scenery of the Beale Park site. All the stand-holders seemed pleased with the change of venue from Greenwich to Pangbourne. It is easy of access with good parking-space and plenty of exhibition space and a large lake for the use of boats and, the Thames. It is no longer exclusively a Wooden Boat Show but there were wooden boats aplenty as well as the "other" sorts.

One of the exhibits which charmed me particularly was the Dutch exhibit. I had never thought of such things as little Dutch day-boats (Friesyachts) but there they were sailing on the lake along with the smallest schooner I have ever seen and many others. There is also a charm about steam-launches with their stately, almost silent progress.

But of course what delighted me particularly was to come upon the Ullapool Boatbuilders stand. I had noted what was obviously a Scottish boat out on the grass - a Shetland skiff, I was told - and there was our member, Nat Wilson, with his two partners. Nat was able to shew me photographs of his progress to date with his Khamseen A, an oak log for the keel and some keel-bolts! A long way to go but a good start. Nat and I had hitherto met only on the telephone, and this was true also of Derek Heelas and Andrew Cocker.

Derek's co-member is Dick Phillips, senior instructor at the Lyme Regis International School of Boatbuilding, with whom I had a long conversation.

I also met Dave Martin of the Falmouth Marine School who is Paul Wiggins' tutor. He is thinking of using Omega throughout the school but I want him to consider other designs as well before making a decision. It would be good to have an HB design as a standard study-design, to instil the right ideas into the minds of the young.

The Classic Boat team was there in force with our two members, Nic Compton and Adrian Morgan, and I gathered in a new Associate, Jenny Bennett, the Editor of the recently produced magazine, 'Maritime Life and Traditions', which is linked with Wooden Boat and Chasse Marée.

I had interesting conversations with many of the exhibitors including Alan Staley and Robert Gray. Alan is going to deal with some of the rigging on 'Yonne' after she is re-launched and the mast stepped after a seven-year stint ashore for a major re-fit. That should take place this afternoon (June 4th) if all the relevant people turn up. What if they don't??? 'Yonne' has probably got the seven-year itch to be in her native element again.

I also met Jamie Clay whom I hadn't seen since the early days of the Albert Strange Association when I was a member. Incidentally, he and Mark Miller have collaborated in compiling a second book about Albert Strange whom you will remember was an artist by profession and an amateur designer; a friend of and, to some extent an inspiration to my father.

I cannot list all the people I spoke to on the three days I was there. Keith Band took me on the Saturday and son Timothy on Sunday. He, when browsing among nautical bric-a-brac found, to his surprise in such surroundings, an item to add to his collection of medical ephemera.

Last, but by no means least, was Peter Ward, exhibiting his half-models. He stayed with me for the duration of the Show which added to my pleasure.

That, I think, completes the Show which I recommend to you if, as sounded likely, it is held there next year.

In two day's time I am having an HBA gathering of most of our local members here for tea. There will be more than a dozen of us (not all members) so I must leave enough time after my letter to do some cooking - yes, a fruit-cake anyway.

I've had letters from Australia, the U.S., Spain, New Zealand and Italy and, of course, from Geoff Taylor, but Canada is definitely quiet. Dan Roten ('Romadi') has been out of touch for a long time. Has anyone seen anything of him? We have no address for him at present, nor for John Sandlin. Things sent to their Box No.'s have come home to roost which leaves me unable to make contact.

I'm sorry that I am permanently in arrears where letters are concerned and I do apologize. My memory is not wholly reliable and I may not have sent information or designs to people as promised. Please do ring or write to remind me. I wish I could meet all our members - even in this country.

Geoff Taylor set off late in the Autumn so decided to overwinter in Vilamoura where, after many previous visits, he has friends. He returned to 'Watermaiden' one day to find a note from Nic Compton who had noticed her when visiting the marina and on a subsequent visit they met and Nic took a photograph of her sailing so there may be something about her in C.B. anon.

I am still dependent on other people to drive me here and back home again and in the interval I am marooned but for the kindness of friends in the neighbourhood. In the Spring, Paul Cowman came to drive me home and spent a few days here when we divided our time between boats and gardens. We met John Fallows and 'Mwyfanwy' in Gweek and Mark and Priscilla and John Lesh in a boatshed in Flushing, beavering away on their boats. We also called on Jeremy Burnett in his workshop where he was putting "finishing" touches on the Ian Oughtred skiff he has built - beautifully.

On this very short visit I've so far seen only Adrie Burnett and Priscilla Miller but Sunday will improve matters.

Later in Theale:

It did. There were 14 of us. Mark and Priscilla, Ian Lamond, Jan Robson and David Roberts, Anne and John Lesh, Jochen and Anja Schreiber, Keith and Pam Gray, Paul Wiggins, Dave Martin and me. Dave wasn't an HBA member when he arrived but he was before he left! He and I discussed which design should be used for teaching purposes (while other kind souls were washing-up). We decided on Zyklon, partly because it had been based on the Falmouth Quay Punt.

Jochen and Anja spent the weekend with me and I saw them again on my way home. David Burnett drove me both ways and we made a détour to Salcombe on the return trip and had lunch aboard 'Jolanda'. Neither of us had seen her since her launch in Germany in 1996 so it was good to see her again, in commission this time and looking beautiful. Jochen and Anja were looking very happy on board. I have now heard, from Adrie, that she has reached Falmouth on her voyage to ?Spain. Spies everywhere! I wonder where this will catch up with them, eventually?

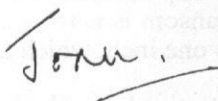
Local West Country members (and other available ones) please note: I have tentative plans for another HBA gathering in October. It will have to be lunch because of ferry times, and may take the form of 'Bring your own picnic' - reinforced at this end. We shall see.

'Yonne' was safely deposited in Rye Harbour on the appointed day - not without some fraught moments on account of a late arrival of lorry. She is floating on her marks and looking very beautiful, I am told.

I was concerned for the safety of Gary Francis because of the recent tornado in Missouri so I rang and found that it had been about 100 miles from Kansas City and anyway, he was up in Maine where 'Tradewind' is safely tucked up being repaired.

I'd better stop. I've probably forgotten all sorts of things I meant to say, such as: don't forget that the next issue is No. 50 and it will be largely up to you to make it a bulging success. We want histories/anecdotes of your boats. I may be able to fill in some of the early histories which possibly are unknown to you. If you have made interesting voyages; have useful information about anchorages; have had escapes from awkward predicaments, in fact anything which will make for good reading, tell Paul - and don't wait until the last moment (as I tend to do) but do it now, and no later than October. And, come to the Laying-up Supper on 2nd October. With your boat! Don't forget to keep a copy of what you have ordered for supper.

Meanwhile, much can and may happen and I send you all my greetings and good wishes and I shall see some of you on 2nd October.



Joan

P.S. This is a rather disjointed letter because it has had bits added and subtracted over a period of time.

P.P.S. July 8th - Last gasp message, which has to be dictated: no time to write or send photographs or look up details.

Today I spoke with Iona Macneill, widow of Hector who died last July. She told me that their daughter, Fiona, had hoped to be able to keep 'Faileag' in the family but she has neither the funds nor the time to care for her adequately and so a new owner needs to be found.

Iona is less concerned about the price than that 'Faileag' should find someone who would love and cherish her. She has had plenty of TLC and when I saw her in 1992, which was I think her 70th birthday year, she was looking splendid. She is 2 1/2 tons, our smallest boat and was built to the Bon Marché design. 'Paidá', featured in 'Cruising Yacht: Design & Performance' is the metacentric version. She was built in Oban and has cruised the West Coast of Scotland for most if not all of her life. Some work will almost certainly be necessary. She was due to have keel bolts inspected and Iona is going to check whether this has been done.

Get in touch with her if you are interested. You could have a good little boat, without breaking the bank, and the sooner she is in commission again the better. Iona and Fiona would prefer to part with her than that she should deteriorate. Would that others be so conscientious, vide 'Chloë'.

Mrs Iona Macneill, Davaar House, Campbeltown, Argyll, PA28 6RE Tel: 01586 552349.

EDITORIAL

Happy indeed are those who are able to design as well as to sail their own boats, particularly when the boats are much admired and such able cruising yachts.

A study of pre-war professional and amateur designers reveals individuals such as Dr Harrison Butler, an ophthalmic surgeon of considerable reputation and renowned amateur yacht designer.

THB, as he is affectionately known, was constantly striving to find perfect hull balance and the subsequent designs of 'Yonne' and then 'Englyn' were improvements upon 'Cyclone II'. 'Omega' completed this sequence of designs and was the only one to have been drawn to conform to Admiral Turner's metacentric shelf theory. Latterly he made use of the system as a guide to producing well-balanced boats though he recognised that it is a system of analysis and not a system of design. A yacht with a perfect shelf might be a poor vessel for other reasons. THB's designs were always carefully and accurately drawn with a distinctive and recognisable style and his boats were always capable, good-looking cruising yachts. With many THB designs from which to choose, selecting a favourite is particularly difficult, however the 'Englyn' design (there are no Harrison Butler classes, only designs) stands out as a typically fine example of his work.

In 1928 THB prepared a design named 'Cyclone II' specifically for inclusion in Francis B Cooke's forthcoming new book 'Cruising Hints'. The design, a handy 6 1/2 tonner for coastwise cruising, produced a good deal of interest. Following this success Francis B Cooke, whilst preparing his next book 'Weekend Yachting' in 1933, approached THB again requesting him to produce a new design specifically for publication within the book. The design was to be named 'Englyn' and, although similar, it was to be an improvement on 'Yonne' which itself had been an improvement on 'Cyclone II'. He never felt that his designs were not capable of improvement. She is a 7 ton Bermudian rigged cutter of 26ft 1in length overall. Nine examples are known to have been built in the UK and other countries and although their analysis is not perfect they are in fact well balanced and can be made to sail to windward unattended, a principle feature of many THB designed yachts. In THB's words -

"The design is a result of evolution. The enlarged 'Cyclone' design has proved to be satisfactory. Of the yachts presently built I have had the opportunity of sailing in two of them. They are handy and seaworthy and will heave-to under head-sails alone and in smooth water will turn to windward with this combination of sails. But both had a tendency to pull hard with a strong wind on the quarter. As an improvement I designed 'Yonne'. With full headsail and trysail she tended to carry slight lee helm, so we conclude that the hard-headedness has disappeared.

'Englyn' is a development of 'Yonne'. On the same dimensions and displacement the stern has been fined down to give a better balance between the fore and aft bodies. The transom is narrow and the quarters finer. When heeled to 20 degrees the centre of buoyancy moves forward only one inch, which is negligible."

The standard design layout, starting from the stern, includes a moderate sized after locker for sails and warps and two port side locker seats including bo'sun's stores. In the cabin is a large hanging locker, a folding chart box and table, port and starboard side settee berths, folding pipe cot and ample lockers. Forward is a heating stove, a pantry and food locker which also open into the foc's'le as well. In the foc's'le is a swinging double primus galley with stowage shelf space, a folding pipecot and simple bucket toilet. A 6H.P. Watermota or Stuart Turner auxiliary was recommended but there is ample room for a larger model. Several of the 'Englyn' designs have various modifications to the design layout, principally an aft galley and a Baby Blake and two pipe cots in the foc's'le.

Dimensions

Thames Measurement	7 tons
Length overall	26ft 1in
Load water line	22ft 6ins
Beam	8ft 6ins
Draught	4ft 6ins
Displacement	5.5 tons
Iron keel	1.5 tons
Lead keel	2.36 tons
Area lateral plane	83 sq ft
Area mainsail	255 sq ft
Area staysail	88 sq ft
Area jib	50 sq ft
Total sail area	393 sq ft
Extra sails - trysail, 2nd jib, storm staysail, balloon foresail and spinnaker.	

Following publication of the book the first 'Englyn' built, by Anderson, Rigden and Perkins of Whitstable, as also were 'Peradventure' and 'Cora A', was 'Faraway' in 1933 for Douglas H Johnson. Sadly she was lost some years ago in the Bay of Biscay, quite possibly run down by tunny fishermen and not overcome by the elements. The following year 'Englyn' (now 'Englyn I') was built for Mr Cosby Smallpeice, followed in 1936 by 'Naiad' and then 'Peradventure', the latter possibly the most famous of the 'Englyn' designs. She was built for the Hon E S Montagu KC. Being a tall man, he had 'Peradventure's' coachroof extended forward of the mast to give additional headroom in the foc's'le. This was repeated in 'Cora A' but THB was not responsible for the design of this extension. Ewan Montagu, who was recorder for Middlesex, achieved additional fame during the War as the author of a plan to deceive the Germans about our invasion intentions. Ultimately this was made into a book and then a film called The Man Who Never Was. Charles W R Winter writes extensively of his many cruises in 'Peradventure' in his book 'Run of the Tide'. 'Peradventure's' present owners, Peter and Margaret Hemingway, continue to cruise extensively from their home port of Grimsby.

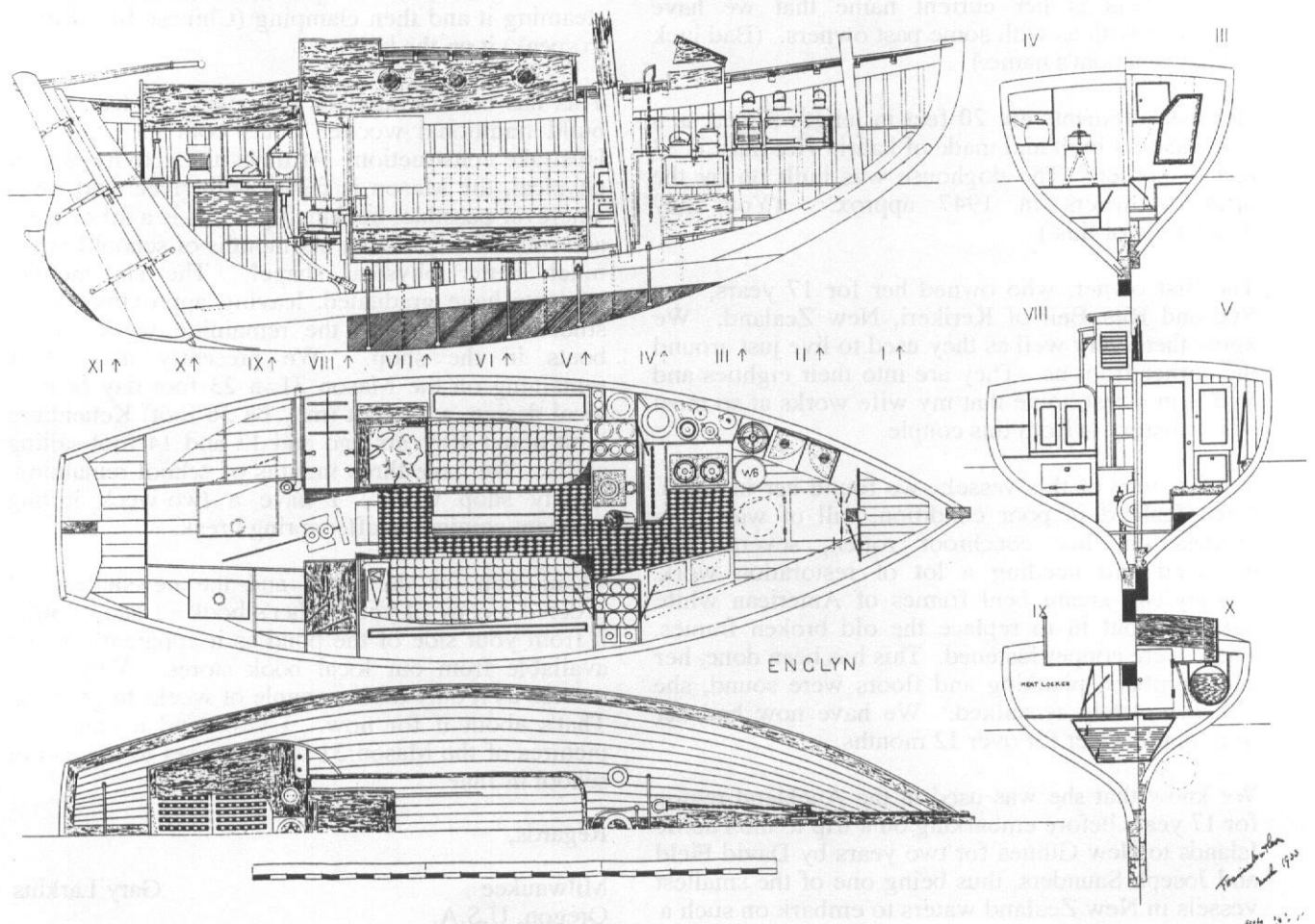
'Cora A' was built in 1937 for Gerald Uloth. She has crossed the Atlantic and now lies in English Harbour, Antigua, owned by Jane Coombs and much photographed. There soon followed several more 'Englyns' - namely 'Othona', 'Merope' (now Dorado of Keyhaven) presently being restored in Hereford, 'Almonde', built in Holland and Gaff rig cutter 'Fiddlers Green' built in Canada in 1959.

'Englyn I' is ashore near Dublin airport, Ireland awaiting a new owner. Laid up nearly 15 years ago (uncovered) in a field she has now become a total restoration project. Offers are invited. All enquiries in writing to the owner:

Patrick Cashin, 42 Malahide Road, Dublin 5, Eire.

Courtesy of Classic Boat Magazine

Paul Cowman
Worcester. June 1999.



Members' Letters



'Omicron'

We are writing as owners of a T. Harrison Butler boat (we think it is) and would like to pass on to you and your Association the pleasure and honour we have with your lovely yacht. It is very much admired by all when we are sailing and is soon the talking point of the bay when we are at anchor.

I will endeavour to give you as much history about the boat as we can and would appreciate any further assistance if any more is available.

We have a certificate of British Registry with the following information:

Official Number 315711, dated 11 February 1974.

Built in Auckland 1945

P. Voss Ltd, Hamer Street, Auckland.

Name on the certificate: '*Hippopotamus*'.

She was registered by Richard Duprat Toswill, 68 St. Mary's Road, Ponsonby, Auckland, NZ.

This information may not be of use as I understand the register does not now exist.

The bronze plate that is mounted on the front hatch calls her '*Omicron*' built by P. Voss Ltd, Auckland 1945. This is her current name that we have continued with as with some past owners. (Bad luck to change a boat's name.)

Her measurements are 20 feet in length rigged as a sloop, carvel built and made of kauri. Her mast is 33 feet of spruce. The doghouse was built on by the original owners in 1947 approx. (You may disapprove of this.)

The first owner, who owned her for 17 years, was Syd and Rita Bell of Kerikeri, New Zealand. We know them very well as they used to live just around the corner from us. They are into their eighties and Syd is in a rest home that my wife works at so most of her history is from this couple.

Brief history of this vessel: we found her in Opuia, New Zealand in poor condition, full of water, no hatches on, her coachroof rotten, several ribs damaged and needing a lot of restoration work. Twenty-two steam bent frames of American white oak were put in to replace the old broken frames. These were copper fastened. This has been done, her kauri timbers, planking and floors were sound, she was completely recaulked. We have now had her back in the water for over 12 months.

We know that she was used in the Auckland region for 17 years before embarking on a trip to the Pacific Islands to New Guinea for two years by David Field and Joseph Saunders, thus being one of the smallest vessels in New Zealand waters to embark on such a

journey. The date for this trip would have been around 1952. We have paper clippings and photos of their trip.

Kerikeri
Bay of Islands
New Zealand

Lex and Margaret Billington

* * * * *

Mason 31

A belated happy 80th birthday to you (Joan)! I have been working on a Mason 31, designed in 1953 by Al Mason, at the wooden boat school since the start of January this year. She is planked with Honduras mahogany over live oak frames, with a stem and keel assembly of purple heart; dead wood is Honduran mahogany. The ballast keel is approximately four thousand pounds of lead. I have been planking up from the garboard and as of last week the bottom planking has been completed on both the port and starboard sides. Getting out of the garboard (approximately 14 feet long and 12 inches wide at the stern) was quite an experience, so was steaming it and then clamping (Chinese fire drill so to speak) it on the boat.

This has been a fabulous experience of learning to build traditional wooden boats both in carvel and lapstrake construction. At times the activity is very physical, the Mason is fasten with rivets and roves wherever possible, bucking up rivets is a lot of work and rather noisy. After six months of school I am in much better physical shape! The six months' students have graduated, leaving approximately 30 students to complete the remaining work on the boats in the shop. We presently have work remaining on the Mason 31, a 23 foot day boat of local design, a 34 foot (may be 36 foot) Kettenburg built about 40 years ago and 13 and 14 foot sailing skiffs. We have three months of school remaining, mostly shop work. I have a two-week lofting segment coming up after spring break.

Thank you for the plans and the newsletters. I ordered a copy of your father's book - I had to order it from your side of the pond as it apparently is not available from our local book stores. Very good service as it only took a couple of weeks to get here. That's about it for now. I will send a couple of pictures of the Mason 31 when we get to the end of school in June.

Regards,

Milwaukee
Oregon, U.S.A.

Gary Larkins

Plymouth Classics

The Plymouth Classic Boat Rally 1999 will again be based at Plymouth Yacht Haven, on the new site on Mount Batten peninsula. As the work on this new site nears completion, it is clear that the facilities on offer to the Rally will be the best ever. The development of the peninsula itself by Plymouth City Council will also greatly enhance the event. Yachts will again be berthed alongside for all to see - the participant and spectator alike. The enormous ex-RAF flying boat hangar will be transformed into the venue for evening entertainment.

There will be three days of afloat activities. Saturday 31 July is a quiet day for the yacht owner, but there will be two Classic Dinghy Races in the Cattewater. The spectacular Parade of Sail and Classic Race in Plymouth Sound takes place on Sunday 1 August. The Rally continues on Monday when a cruise in company across and out of Plymouth Sound is followed by anchoring off the Cornish fishing village of Cawsand for lunch. This is followed by an afternoon cruise, in company, with the tide, up the River Tamar for an evening barbecue hosted by Weir Quay Sailing Club. Overnight moorings are available. For those sailing on to Fowey Classics, a feeder race begins in the Sound on Tuesday.

Plymouth Classic Boat Rally will happily play host to a Class Association whether they be berthing requirements or a Class Association Race/Event within the Rally.

Yelverton
Devon

Nigel Baxter

* * * * *

'Watermaiden'

I hope you (Joan) are keeping well and are enjoying the unseasonable spell of good weather. I am writing this on board at Mashford's. I arrived Sunday morning from Vilamoura. The conditions on the last four days were perfect with light N or NNW winds and flat seas with lots of sunshine. High pressure was established to the west of the channel and remained stationary.

I was ready for these conditions as the earlier part of the trip had brought two miserable depressions even though we were down at the latitude of Lisbon. Gale force winds had me running off under bare poles on two occasions and I always marvel at how comfortable and safe 'Watermaiden' feels under such conditions.

It is interesting to note that for the whole trip, twenty four and a half days, the wind never went south of west, nor south of north east, which meant that it was

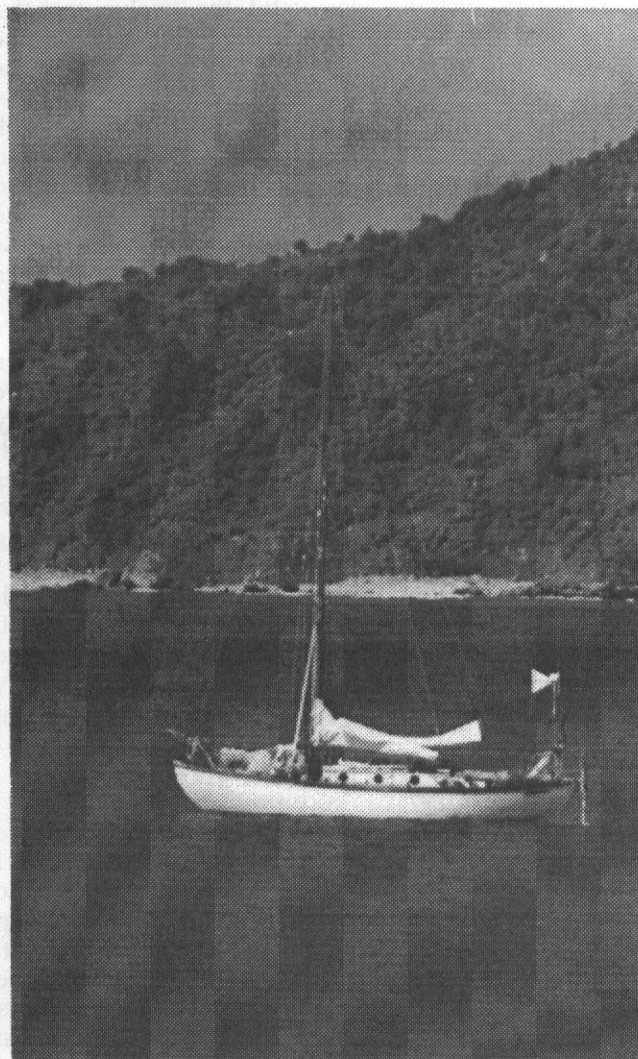
almost never abaft the beam and often well forward. I think this inability of going out on deck without oilskins and boots takes a lot of the joys out of the sailing. Also the northerly component of the wind meant that temperatures were lower than I would have expected, or wanted.

It also shows how difficult it is to generalise on the weather as the last time I did this trip, also at the same time of the year, I had light winds 2-4, mostly favourable for about three quarters of the way.

I have been offered a friend's mooring here next to the yard, so shall be leaving 'Watermaiden' there for the Summer.

Watermaiden
Corbridge on Tyne
Northumberland

Geoff Taylor



'Watermaiden'
Rose of Arden design
Anchored in English Harbour, Antigua

PART II - THE HOMEWARD VOYAGE FROM THE CHRONICLE OF THE YACHT 'ISABELLA'

From Opuia in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand
to Victoria, Australia

*A ship, an isle, a sickle moon -
With few but how splendid stars
The mirrors of the sea are strewn
Between their silver bars.*

J. E. Flecker

'Isabella' is the 8th boat to clear through the customs and immigration this day. All remaining fresh produce and tinned meat are confiscated. Once the usual formalities are completed we are given a temporary visitor's visa valid for twelve months. The port officials depart to attend another yacht and we are left to motor off to a mooring close to the Opuia wharf. Opuia is the most northerly port in New Zealand having the status of a Port of Entry with resident Customs, Health and Quarantine and Immigration officials. The customs expect up to 400 foreign boats coming south to escape the cyclone season in the South Pacific to enter New Zealand through the Port of Opuia in the two months prior to Christmas.

We row ashore after lunch and phone home, then into the showers of the Opuia Cruising Club. We are unsteady on our feet for awhile but soon normality returns. The proprietor of the local store answers all our questions as to where to find the many facilities that we need. Bill's wife is flying from Hobart to Auckland tomorrow and his daughter is arriving soon after. They plan to tour the country so our first question is to find out transport availability for Bill to travel south to Auckland. By mid-afternoon all immediate tasks are completed. Time to find a cold beer and a tender steak. It is early to bed and early to rise as the bus to Auckland leaves Opuia at 0800hr on Saturday.

Saturday 22/11/97

Once Bill and his gear leave 'Isabella' I am amazed at the amount of space there is on board and I luxuriate in the extra room. The first priority is to clean the boat and take all the bedding and damp and dirty clothes ashore to wash at the laundrymat. Whilst at sea we had compiled a list of maintenance work to do after we made port. Most of the work is simple and can be handled with the resources on board. The two jobs that require shore technicians and facilities are to service the HF radio and have the windvane part welded. A valve for the cooking stove has to be procured and the bolts that secure the bobstay fitting caulked.

The fault in the radio continued to baffle several technicians before the radio was eventually despatched to the manufacturer's agent in Wellington where repairs were successfully carried out.

Situated at the head of the Bay of Islands, Opuia, once a busy port with a large abattoir and visited by ships to load refrigerated meat, tallow, hides and timber, no longer received freighters. The town now caters for pleasure boats, ferries, fishing vessels, aquaculture and tourists. A vehicular ferry operates every 20 minutes for cars and transports between the towns of Opuia and Russel. Opuia is a small town with a general store, post office, restaurant, customs office, commercial slipways and boat building and repair facilities clustered around the town wharf. Holiday and retirement homes are built around the harbour and visiting yacht's people are welcomed and treated with kindness and courtesy. Many overseas yachts make Opuia their base whilst visiting New Zealand. The Opuia Cruising Club offers hospitality to visiting yachts.

My daily routine for the following three weeks became more and more relaxed as the time passed. Cleaning up and minor maintenance jobs were soon completed. I started to enjoy the friendship and camaraderie that existed between the crews of the cruising yachts in port. Opuia Cruising Club was the common meeting ground. Facilities at the club included showers, laundrette and a restaurant and bar. Conversation is centred mainly around yachts, routes, weather and ports. More esoteric subjects might be discussed over a drink later on but there was sufficient common interest in the former subjects to while away many an interesting hour with people of all nationalities and backgrounds. The language most frequently heard was English with an American accent. The stars and stripes were very evident amongst the cruising boats from overseas. Whenever I was asked which boat I was from and I indicated 'Isabella', the reply in an American accent was invariably, "Oh! you're the guy from that tee-eeny boat!" The yachts were from all nations and all languages were heard in the post

office where people congregated to pick up mail and to receive or send letters, postcards and facsimiles.

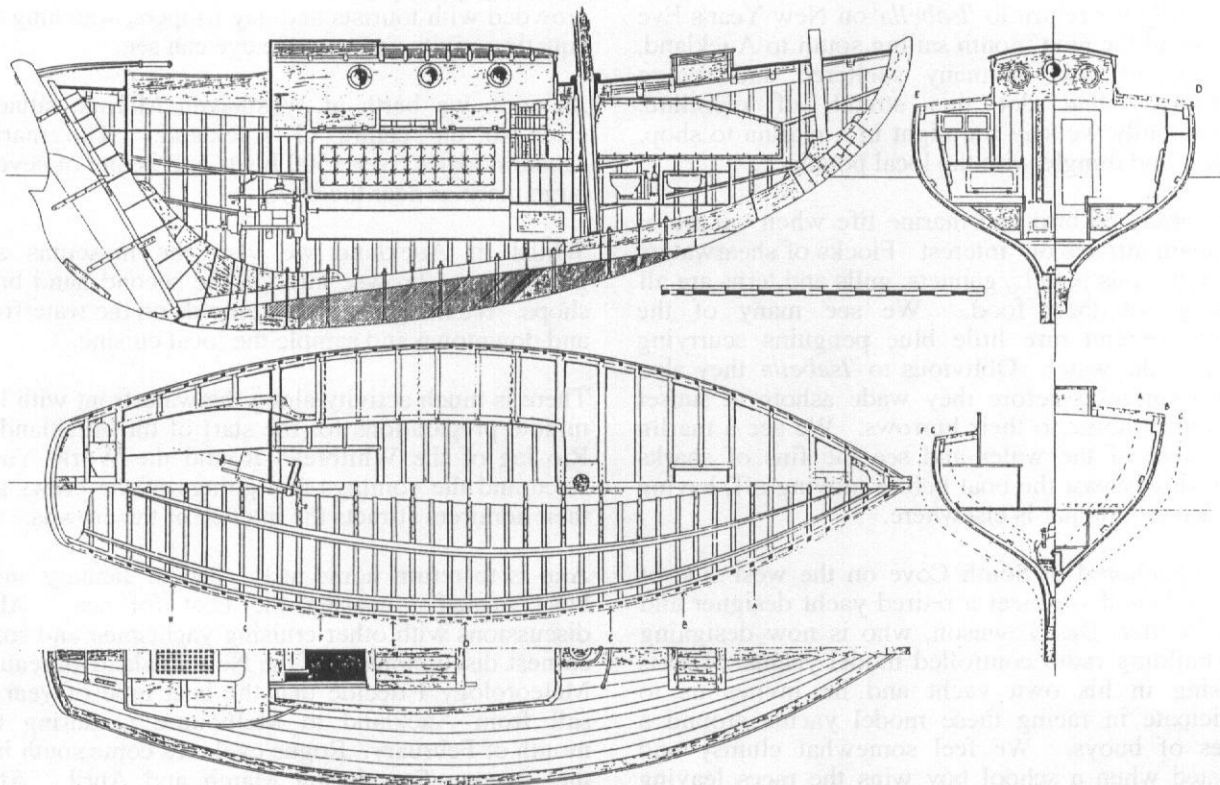
The crews from the American yachts were celebrating Thanksgiving Day on Thursday 27 November at the Cruising Club and I was invited to attend. Regrettably due to an unfortunate dental problem I was forced to decline the invitation at the last moment. I was looking forward to joining and witnessing the Yanks celebrate one of their more important national holidays.

A number of my sailing friends had made their home in the Bay of Islands several years before and had purchased prime waterfront land when land was relatively cheap. I took the opportunity to catch up with them. Usually I sailed 'Isabella' to an anchorage near to their home and would row the dinghy ashore, pull the dinghy up the beach and return on board before dark. I was never completely happy leaving 'Isabella' unattended on an anchor overnight and preferred to row to and from the shore during daylight hours.

'Isabella', having been designed in 1935 and built of timber, attracted considerable interest from lovers of classic boats and seldom would a day pass without someone engaging in conversation wanting to know the history of the boat and information about the designer.

The weather was warm and humid. Heavy rain would fall every few days which cleared the humidity of the air and then the cycle was repeated. On one occasion, being unaware of the presence of sand flies, I became the victim of a concerted attack as I cleaned the waterline of 'Isabella'. Wearing only a pair of shorts and working from the dinghy I was unaware of the bites until they erupted that night and the irritation lasted several days. Needless to say great care was taken to ensure that the same mistake was not repeated and long trousers were the rig of the day from then on.

Ann flew from Melbourne to Auckland when the school at which she taught commenced the summer holiday break on 13/12/97. I travelled to Auckland to meet her and we then returned to 'Isabella' at anchor in Opua. The bus journey lasts four hours. The bus travels through lush farmland and the road meanders along the coast around and over the volcanic hills. The countryside is verdant green with splashes everywhere of the bright red flowers of the Pohutakawa trees in full bloom. Masses of blazing Bougainvillea mingled with colourful lilies and Pohutakawa decorate the suburban gardens. We pass through small towns, across rivers and through dairy and orchard country. The shiny coats of horses and cattle knee deep in long grass glisten in the sunlight. The bus stops at a wayside restaurant, run by Dutch immigrants, for the passengers to stretch



OMEGA: Construction plan

their legs and take refreshment. No such amenities are on the bus. The driver provides a commentary on the history of the countryside and the local Maori tribes that were indigenous to the area. We look in vain for the big Kauri trees that were once prolific in the region but nearly all were logged long ago and only isolated small specimens survive.

The sea to the east sparkles in the morning sun and an endless stream of yachts can be seen making their way up and down the coast exploring the many islands that are clearly visible from the bus. In a country having such a small population, boating activity plays a major part in the daily lives of the people. Both in primary and secondary schools "water activities" is a one year compulsory subject in the students' curriculum.

Over the Christmas period we visit relatives in the South Island and travel by more conventional and less strenuous means of transport.

'Isabella' is left in the care of a slipway operator on the Opuia waterfront. He is an American guy who sailed from the west coast of the States and like New Zealand so well that he decided to stay.

We travel by bus, train, ferry and plane. Through the volcanic countryside, across rivers and steep gorges, through mountain ranges and across arid plains. We are fascinated by the great variety of scenery. The New Zealand people are friendly and hospitable, however, being the tourist season, we meet as many overseas tourists as we meet Kiwis.

Cheerfully we return to *'Isabella'* on New Year's Eve and spend the next month sailing south to Auckland, stopping at will in many sheltered and secure anchorages that dot this stretch of coastline. Occasionally we stay the night in a marina to shop, shower and mingle with the local populace.

The variety of bird and marine life when we are at sea again attracts our interest. Flocks of shearwaters and numerous petrels, gannets, gulls and terns are all hunting for their food. We see many of the distinctive and rare little blue penguins scurrying along in the water. Oblivious to *'Isabella'* they also search for food before they wade ashore at sunset and return home to their burrows. We see a marlin leap clear of the water and see the fins of sharks glide slowly past the boat before moving off, having decided that dinner is elsewhere.

When anchored in South Cove on the west side of Kawau Island we meet a retired yacht designer and boat builder, Des Townson, who is now designing and building radio controlled model yachts. Des is cruising in his own yacht and he invites us to participate in racing these model yachts around a series of buoys. We feel somewhat clumsy and deflated when a school boy wins the races leaving the seasoned sailors well behind.

As dusk approaches, whilst standing on the jetty, we catch sight of the native bird, the Weka, hopping in and out of the nearby scrub. The Weka is a flightless bird, similar in size and shape to the Kiwi. It has recently been introduced to Kawau Island to provide the bird with protection from predators, as it is becoming an endangered species on the mainland. Between two and three hundred people live on Kawau Island. No roads have been built on the island and all communication to and from the mainland is by waterborne ferry. Most houses are built around the waterfront and each has its own landing stage. Provisions and mail is delivered daily by ferry boat.

Our visit to the Hauraki Gulf and the waters further north is all too short but the brief time we have here makes us envious of these wonderful cruising grounds teeming with fish, birds and mammals. Fortunately the people who live and recreate in and around these waters realise the treasure they occupy and are taking measures to see that the waters remain unspoiled for future generations.

We arrive in Auckland harbour on Sunday 25/1/98. Sailing up the river in the late morning we pass the New Zealand and Italian Americas Cup racing yachts and the Whitbread racing yachts practising on the harbour waters. These huge yachts make a wonderful sight as they move so swiftly and effortlessly in the light airs. The harbour is teeming with craft and the water is chopped up with the wake of power boats, ferries, yachts and tugs. Vessels of all shapes and sizes criss cross about us. We are rudely rolled around in the wash of a harbour ferry steaming quickly past on our port side. The ferry is crowded with tourists and day trippers, watching the aquatic activity as far as the eye can see.

At noon we berth at Westhaven Marina, situated close to the centre of Auckland. The marina accommodates over 1500 boats and is one of several large marinas near the city.

Whilst in Auckland we visit the museums and galleries and browse through the second hand book shops. We mingle with the crowds on the waterfront and downtown and sample the local cuisine.

There is much activity along the waterfront with last minute preparations for the start of the Auckland to Rio leg of the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race and the comings and goings of the crews and their admirers attracts the interest of the crowds.

Ann is to return home at the end of January and I busy myself preparing the boat for sea. After discussions with other cruising yachtsmen and some earnest discussions with the New Zealand Bureau of Meteorology I decide that the best time of year to sail from Auckland to Melbourne is during the month of February. Rogue cyclones come south into the Tasman Sea during March and April. After April the favourable east winds together with the

westerlies move north so that a yacht sailing from New Zealand to Australia in the winter months is likely to make a landfall in north Queensland or even in the Solomon Islands. Rather than extend my time away from home I decide to leave for Western Port as soon as a suitable crew can be found.

Again I have difficulty finding a person who has the experience, free time and inclination to sail across the Tasman. If I am unable to find a suitable person I will consider sailing back single handed. Happily a friend, Rob Stott from Hastings who is waiting to have a new house built, agrees to come. He has the necessary experience in small boat sailing, has worked as a professional fisherman, is 15 years younger than me and enjoys sail changing and trimming and deck work. This will leave the navigation and cooking to me, with both of us sharing the watches and assisting each other on deck as required. A phone call finds Rob is able to leave immediately and arrangements are soon put in place.

Rob arrives in Auckland on 2/2/98 and 'Isabella' is ready to sail. We plan to sail north to the Bay of Islands, replenish fuel and stores and clear customs out of Opuia. Rob is keen to see the maritime museum and waterfront before we sail so we spend a day sightseeing at the museum and wharves looking at a great range of historic craft. Downtown Auckland is on the Waitemate river. The Auckland City Council and other authorities are undertaking major development work on the waterfront to provide additional facilities for the yachts, crews, support teams and spectators that are expected in the city for the Americas Cup races in the year 2000.

The Homeward Voyage

*But the standing toast that pleased the most
Was- The wind that blows, the ship that goes,
And the lass that loves a sailor!*

C. Dibden

Wednesday 4/2/98

The start of the voyage home to Western Port. Crew Frank Hart from Mornington and Robert Stott from Hastings.

1500hr. Depart Westhaven Marina. 'Isabella' is not fully laden as final provisions will be purchased further north. With a light SE wind and ebb tide we sail out of the marina and anchor in the Waitemate river off Devonport to tidy up 'Isabella' and settle down prior to leaving harbour early the following morning. The Wednesday evening yacht race is taking place as we prepare dinner and 50 to 60 yachts head downstream in a fresh breeze passing close by. An hour or so later the yachts are returning home with their brightly coloured spinnakers set in an easing wind. The race develops into a drifter and some of the tail enders retire from the race and start their engines to reach home before dark.

Thursday 5/2/98

0600hr. The breeze is blowing off the land, there are few clouds, a slight mist and all the signs of another warm summer's day to follow. The anchor is raised and we are under way before breakfast. The full main and genoa are set as we round North Head and sail up the west side of Rangitoto Island. Sighted to the north through the early morning mist are three large passenger liners apparently waiting for their pilots to take them to the town wharves where their passengers will view the Waitangi Day celebrations which are due to take place the following day. The pilot launch hurries past enveloped in its own spray and throwing up a plume of water behind.

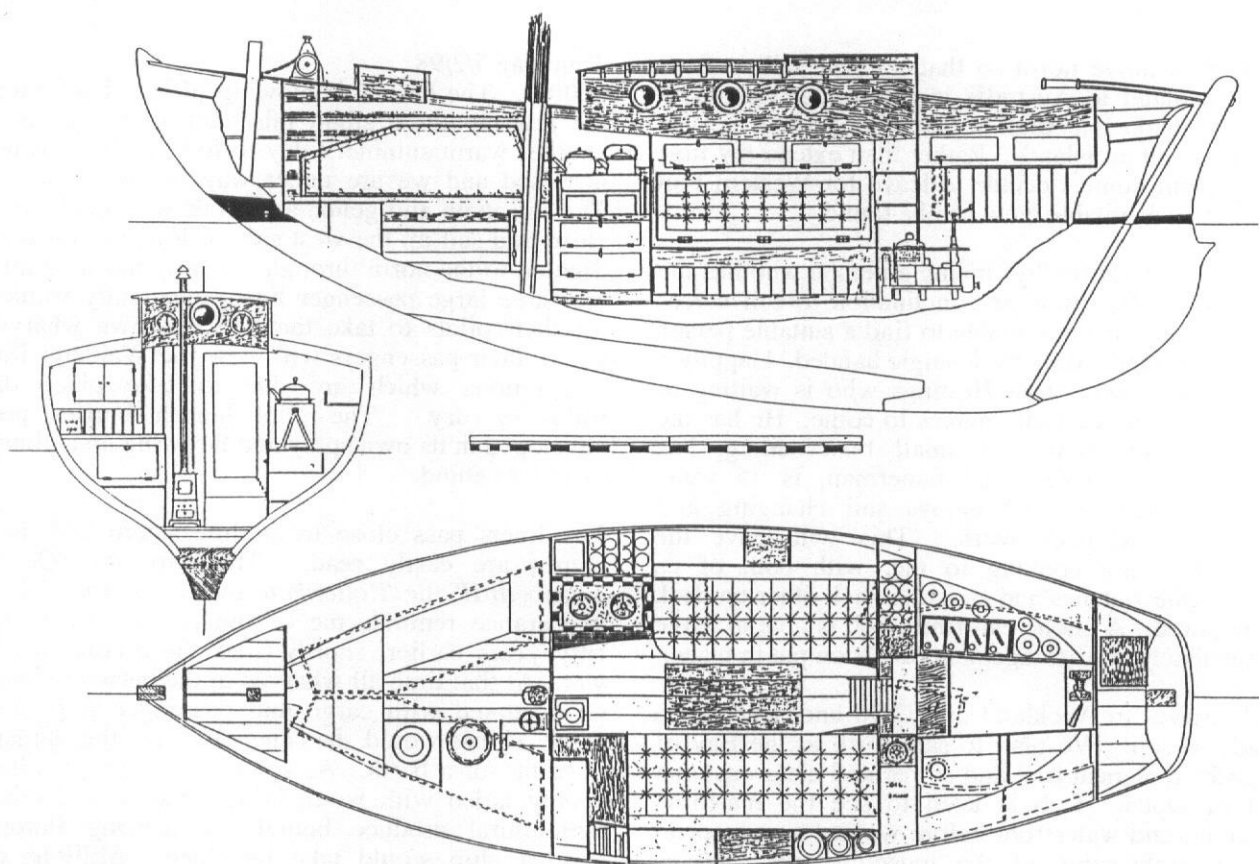
The liners pass close by in line astern and their names are easily read. They are the 'Queen Elizabeth II', the 'Rotterdam' and the 'Astor'. Their appearance reminds me of the port of Auckland fifty years earlier, shortly after the second world war. At that time all wharves in the harbour would be occupied with cargo and passenger ships and more ships would be anchored in the stream queuing for a berth. As soon as one vessel sailed deeply laden with wool, butter, cheese and other agricultural produce bound for starving Europe another ship would take its place. Millions of people were fed and clothed with exports from Australia and New Zealand. The magnificent passenger liners of the day such as the 'Corinthic', the 'Dominion Monarch', the 'Rangitoto' and many more took pride of place in the port, disorganising their human cargoes who had left war-torn Europe behind to settle and look for fame and fortune in their new land.

These days fewer ships spend shorter times in port. Their cargoes now are packed in containers and the passengers travel by air.

0800hr. Wind W 12kt. Steering north we have a beam wind and are making almost 5kt. By keeping close to the shore we carry a favourable current and enjoy the scenery. The weather is fine and warm, great conditions for Robert to become acclimatised and familiar with the boat. We motor sail most of the time and use the electric steering. With the offshore breeze the seas are smooth providing wonderful sailing. Many yachts with youngsters on board are observed returning south to Auckland at the end of the school holidays.

Friday 6/2/98

0600hr. The day is bright and the SW wind prevails as we approach Cape Brett, the southern headland marking the entrance to the Bay of Islands. We have a good run into Opuia with the flood tide helping us along. Here we plan to do our final provisioning, go through the departure safety check with the NZ Maritime Authority and clear outwards through the customs. At noon we pick up the same mooring that we vacated when we left Opuia for Auckland weeks



OMEGA: Accommodation

before. We row ashore and make arrangements to be cleared outwards on Sunday morning at 1000hr. Just two days to make our final preparations. Our main shopping needs are fresh bread, vegetables and water. The radio and windvane have both been repaired and are working well. The weather forecast is for light variable winds with a high pressure system moving across the North Island. We are anxious to get away.

Saturday 7/2/98

1000hr. We motor across to the fuel jetty and fill our small tank. Relying on sails and using the engine only as an auxiliary we carry only 40 litres of diesel fuel in the main tank plus a spare tank which holds 20 litres. The fuel consumption of the engine is approximately 1 litre per hour. By using the engine in light winds in conjunction with the sails the course can be set higher and the boat sails more efficiently.

Whilst at the jetty the Inspector boards *'Isabella'* to carry out the safety check and for the princely sum of \$80.00 gives us the necessary certificate which we are required to hand to the customs before they will issue our official clearance. Without a clearance we are not permitted to sail overseas or enter an overseas port. The inspection is superficial. We answer a long list of questions and pay the money.

Friday and Saturday night we enjoy the excellent meal that is available for a very modest sum at the Opuia Cruising Club.

Sunday 8/2/98

0700hr. Time to row ashore, have our last shower at the Opuia Cruising Club and after breakfast move *'Isabella'* onto the small customs jetty to wait for their arrival. The customs arrive at mid-day, take our safety certificate and hand us our clearance and bid us safe voyage. As they step ashore we let go the mooring lines and head off downstream with an ebb tide to push us along.

1335hr. Homeward Bound! The winds are light as we head out of the Bay of Islands. Two miles from Opuia, amongst the many boats on the water, Robert recognizes another larger Harrison Butler designed yacht. We alter course to communicate with the crew. The yacht is *'Seasalter'*, built in Adelaide in 1946 and now owned and sailed by Gordon Elcock from Nelson in the South Island. We exchange names and addresses and continue on our way. The wind remains light and we again use the motor as we sail through the night. The weather remains warm and watch keeping through the night is pleasant and interesting as the coastline slips by on our port side. Dolphins appear from time to time and the following morning many small flying fish are discovered on deck.

Monday 9/2/98

0800hr. The good progress over night has been at the expense of almost half the fuel on board. We decide to divert into the port on Manganui to refuel and supplement our fresh provisions. Manganui is a

busy fishing and holiday town situated at the head of a small inlet. The fuel berth is at the fishermen's pier.

We soon complete our fuelling and shopping and head back to sea knowing that this really will be our final port of departure. It is our intention to head north to round North Cape and then sail as far as practicable in a westerly direction until we are close to the Australian coast before turning south towards Bass Strait and home to Western Port. Taking a more northerly route we hope to be more certain of the easterly winds and miss the main westerly winds which are further south. Once close to the Australian coast the south going east Australian current will also benefit us.

Tuesday 10/2/98

0750hr. The HF radio is working well and we have no difficulty communicating with Russel Radio in the Bay of Islands and Penta Comstad in Australia. There are many small jelly fish in the water and a large number of dolphins are playing and cavorting around the yacht. One of the smaller dolphins repeatedly leaps clear of the water, loses momentum and flops back. We wonder at this strange behaviour. The dolphins make a grand sight and provide us with as much pleasure as they seem to enjoy from the presence of *'Isabella'*.

North Cape is abeam to port some three miles off. During the afternoon four large game fishing boats pass by heading towards the Three Kings Islands. The wind is in the NE and the wind strength fluctuates between 5 and 20kt.

A favourable NE wind blows steadily for six days and the sails are continuously trimmed to gain every possible advantage. When the wind lightens off the multipurpose spinnaker is set and at other times we pole out the genoa. The miles are eaten up and the positions marked on the chart steadily move westward across the Tasman Sea. The days remain warm and sunny. The weather forecasts for several days have been for a westerly wind change, however each frontal change slips by south of our latitude.

Saturday 14/2/98

1400hr. The German container ship *'Nelson Bay'* passes close by. We communicate on the VHF radio, exchange greetings, discuss the weather and wish each other a safe voyage. They are bound for Auckland from Sydney and are soon out of sight.

Sunday 15/2/98

1200hr. Another ship is sighted approaching from astern. It is the *'Tauranga'* bound for Sydney from Auckland. We are keeping to the north and following the trace that we have planned.

Monday 16/2/98

2000hr. The wind backs to the NW and starts to freshen, the barograph is falling. The wind has

increased to 35kt and we have reduced sail to three reefs in the main and the staysail. The eight days of favourable weather that we have enjoyed since leaving Opua may be about to end.

Tuesday 17/2/98

0830hr. Torrential rain for 30 minutes then the wind shifts to SSW 40kt. We heave to, half an hour later we take off all sail, lash the tiller to starboard and lay ahull under bare poles. The sea is rough and the swell heavy from the SW. This procedure is now routine on *'Isabella'* and Robert expresses some surprise as to how well the boat sits under bare poles in such conditions.

1800hr. The wind eases to 25kt and we get under way with triple reefed main and staysail.

Wednesday 18/2/98

0900hr. The wind continues to ease and is now blowing from the S at 18kt. The GPS navigator indicates that there are strong currents in our area contrary to those marked on the charts. The currents come down the coast in a series of eddies and we assume we are under their influence.

Thursday 19/2/98

0400hr. No wind. The engine is started to keep us moving. We are glad that we diverted to Manganui to take on board the extra fuel. We motor sail for most of the day as the wind starts to fill in from the NW. We are now steering SW and are glad that we sailed a more northerly course after leaving New Zealand.

Friday 20/2/98

0800hr. The wind is increasing in strength and has backed from the NW to the SW. It is now blowing at 30kt and we are again under a triple reefed main and staysail. Under this rig the boat is sailing easily although not pointing in the right direction. At present we are heading north of Sydney. The GPS indicates significant currents are pushing us further to the north which is contrary to the direction of the current charts. We must be on the eastern side of the eddy of the south going East Coast current. To be within 200nm of the coast and to encounter adverse winds and a contrary current is very frustrating. We hope we can make Eden before running into more bad weather.

Saturday 21/2/98

1100hr. The wind backs through S to the SE and is blowing between 10 and 15kt. We now have the full main and genoa set. We communicate with the Australian Customs by Radphone and advise that our ETA Eden is 1200hr on Monday 23 February.

Sunday 22/2/98

0200hr. Wind SE 12kt.
0600hr. Wind SE 18kt.

1430hr. Wind ESE 24kt. Since this morning the weather forecast received from Eden Coastal Patrol

is for a SW'ly wind change with wind strength of 30 to 40kt gusting to 50kt. Contact is made through Sydney radio with the customs and I advise that in view of the weather forecast we may seek refuge in Bermagui harbour, rather than continue to Eden.

1630hr. Wind SE 30kt. Eden Coastal Patrol advise that the 40kt SW wind change has reached Eden, it will arrive here at any time and we reduce sail to three reefs in the main and the staysail. The change will put the wind right ahead. So near yet so far!

1745hr. Only 30 miles NE of Eden. Almost there! The wind shifts to the SW at 40kt and is gusting to 50kt. The noise of the gale is increasing. We are in the midst of the south going East Coast current. The seas are building up and starting to break. The contrary wind pushes the sea and swell up against the current causing the seas between successive crests to shorten and steepen and the crests curl over in a rush of white water. We alter course towards Bermagui and the vessel is pushed over on to her starboard side by the force of the wind and the beam sea. We struggle against the wind to take down all sail and try to lay ahull but the boat is again swept on to its side and risks being rolled right over. We hang on as the boat slowly rights itself. I realise that the only safe thing to do is to run before the gale, steering the boat under bare poles. The seas are breaking over the stern and filling the cockpit. We are knee deep in water with the gratings floating around. We steer hour and hour about. The storm boards are shipped in the hatch and the bridge deck prevents too much water getting below. One sea sweeps aboard and pushes the sliding hatch open and most of the water flops below, wetting the port bunk, blankets and everything else within sight of the hatch. We pump the bilges every hour, before going on deck, not knowing from where the water is entering the boat. The ventilators are the most likely source.

The moon rises about 0100hr and provides enough light to make steering more certain. We both wear safety harnesses and clip on before climbing out of the cabin and into the cockpit. I ask Robert if he thinks we can keep going during the night and he assures me that he feels OK. Few words are spoken as we change watch each hour.

We slam the hatch closed after the other goes below and are quickly left to ourselves to hang on grimly and steer the boat as best we can. Total concentration is needed to keep the boat stern to the waves as the boat gathers momentum and slides down the face of the sea. As each wave catches the stern and tries to hurl it sideways we fight with the tiller to keep the boat on course. It is difficult to avoid being thrown across the cockpit as we grab for something to hold. Any failure to keep the boat stern to the seas would result in the boat being rolled sideways. The night passes slowly and confidence starts to return as daylight approaches.

Monday 23/2/98

0600hr. Daylight brings with it an awesome sight, white water is everywhere with the seas curling over and the tops breaking, however the wind is rapidly easing and the gale is abating. Steering is now a lot easier and our tiredness starts to wane.

0800hr. We set the triple reefed main and the staysail and alter course towards the land to get out of the south going current and to reach smoother water. We advise Eden Coastal Patrol on the VHF radio of our position and give them an amended ETA. The weather continues to improve and by 1000hr the sun is shining and the gale has gone. After a late breakfast it is time to clean up below and bring the wet bedding onto the deck to dry out. The boat looks like a Chinese laundry. The cabin top, rails and rigging are hidden beneath a mass of blankets, mats and clothes. The sun shines out of a clear sky as we tack to the south, close to the land and in relatively smooth water.

Tuesday 24/2/98

The weather stays fine and last minute preparations are made for arrival in port. We continue to clean up the boat and ourselves. An improvised shower works wonders. There is plenty of fresh water remaining and we are full of cheer. The coast slips by and at 1300hr we enter Twofold Bay, passing the pilot station and the oil wharf, and are directed to our berth.

A motley group of locals fishing from the wharf look down at *Isabella* as we tie up alongside another boat, oblivious to our recent ordeal. Once made fast the customs officer steps on board and the necessary formalities are soon attended to. All remaining fresh produce and the tinned meat that was purchased in New Zealand is confiscated. We pay the \$110 immigration fees and are then legally allowed back into Australia.

One of the volunteers from the Eden Coastal Patrol takes us by car to their station where we thank them gratefully for their help with the weather forecasts and gladly accept the use of their showers. Then to the pub for our evening meal and back to *Isabella* and off to bed.

Wednesday 25/2/98

0700hr. During the night a 50ft yacht berths near by. Speaking with the crew we find they had been caught at sea in the same gale, en route from Sydney to Eden and they had also turned round and run north under bare poles, after having suffered a torn mainsail. At least *Isabella* weathered the gale without suffering gear damage!

1000hr. A quick visit to the shops and laundrymat to replenish items of fresh food and to wash clothes. After filling our fuel tanks we depart Eden bound for Hastings, our home port. The boat is clean, tidy and shipshape. All the bedding is dry and our

clothes washed. Little remains to remind us of the gale we experienced 48 hours earlier. The fishermen in Eden say that it has been the worst gale for over three months. During the day, in light Nly winds and with all sails set, we slowly make our way south along the New South Wales coast.

1800hr. Rounded Gabo Island and set a SWly course towards Wilsons Promontory, the point of departure where we bid farewell to Australia almost four months earlier. The distance to the Promontory is 200nm.

Thursday 26/2/98

2100hr. We are sailing through the oil rigs. The barometer is dropping and the wind backs to the north and freshens to 20kt. The weather forecast is for a 35kt SWly wind change which arrives just before midnight. Still 100nm to go to SE Point. By now bad weather no longer alarms us, knowing that if sail is reduced and the boat put on a safe course the gale will work its way past. Robert, who by this time is anxious to return home and become involved in the building of his new house, is showing greater impatience than myself. He soon realises that we are not able to make headway into the teeth of a SWly gale and for 36 hours under a triple reefed main and staysail we tack back and forth, close to the Victorian coastline where the seas are considerably lighter than further offshore.

Friday 27/2/98

All day we remain hove-to waiting for the gale to abate. The land is low lying and the coast is hidden in a haze much of the time, however the GPS provides us with an accurate position that is plotted on the chart every two hours.

Saturday 28/2/98

0530hr. The wind is moderating. It continues to blow from the SW but we are able to increase sail and resume the passage towards Wilsons Promontory. We tack every three or four hours covering twice the distance that we actually make good in the direction we have to go. If only the wind would shift one way or the other rather than continue to blow from right ahead we could make better progress.

Sunday 1/3/98

0600hr. The motor is started to help us point closer to the wind which is slowly backing to the S at about 10kt. The Promontory is in sight all day and becomes more distinct as we edge closer. The seas have flattened right off.

2100hr. The wind is freshening and has shifted to the SE and the flood tide is running with us. The seas are building as we close South East Point on the southern extremity of the Promontory. The light on the point is flashing its regular 4 flashes every 15 seconds. The night is dark and the moon has not yet risen. The Islands off the Promontory can just be distinguished. As we pass close to the Point the light on Citadel Island comes into view, 2 flashes every 10 seconds.

At midnight, when we are abeam of Citadel Island, Robert comes on deck for his watch and we alter course for Cape Liptrap. By now we are in familiar waters but our attention cannot wander from watching the compass, steering the course and tending the sails. The boat has the bit in its teeth and is anxious like ourselves to make a fast passage towards the eastern entrance to Western Port and catch the last of the flood tide. The strong SE wind and tide carry us along at 6kt. There is no need for the engine.

Monday 2/3/98

1200hr. Approaching the eastern entrance to Western Port Bay the transit beacons marking the line of the channel are difficult to see. We are almost into the narrow channel before the beacons become visible. The passage from Wilsons Promontory has been fast and two hours of flood tide remain as we sail along the channel and shoot out under San Remo bridge. The flood tide in the narrows reaches a speed of 6kt. We are meticulous in keeping 'Isabella' on course, in the middle of the channel, any lapse in concentration could result in our being swept off course and on to the nearby rocks. After each alteration of course we pick out a transit to steer for, as the tide swirls around and tries to push us first one way and then the other. San Remo is passed to starboard and Newhaven to port and the fishermen on the jetty watch to see how well we control the boat. We reach the northern-most beacon and enter the wider expanse of the Bay where the tide slows to two knots. It is time to relax and square up the boat as we make our way towards the Hastings Marina. Word of our arrival seems to have been spread around as a small welcome home party is standing on the jetty to take our lines and help tie up. There are big smiles and hugs and great joy at our safe return.

*Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave
and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander
more.*

Alfred Tennyson

Voyage Statistics

Distances travelled and times taken:

Western Port to Opua	1500nm	18d 17hr
Opua to Auckland	125nm	
Auckland to Opua	125nm	
Opua to Manganui	60nm	
Manganui to Eden	1325nm	15d 00hr
Eden to Western Port	325nm	5d 07hr
Total Voyage Distance:	3510nm.	

SYLPH OF ARDEN

9-TONS AUXILIARY CRUISER

By T. HARRISON BUTLER, A.I.N.A.

Editor's Comment

SHORTLY before his death, Mr. Harrison Butler sent us the lines and accommodation plans of Sylph of Arden, with a promise that the sail plan would follow. This is the last design to come from the board of that popular and talented amateur designer, and is, therefore, of exceptional interest. Unfortunately he made no comment on the design, so we fear we have had to omit the "Designer's Remarks." He was always ready to discuss his yachts, and it is with the greatest regret that the realisation is borne upon us that we shall never again read one of his chats on design such as that which accompanied the plans of Queen of Arden, published in our January number.

In the course of his career, Harrison Butler achieved a notable sense of proportion, and his boats came to have an individuality which marked them out from the rest of the fleet. His early successes nearly all had transom sterns. He was never quite happy drawing a counter, and in the end seemed to like the canoe stern best. It is invidious to say which was the handsomest of his boats, because beauty lies in the eye of the owner, but Sylph of Arden certainly qualifies for consideration for a high place.

She is something of a departure from some of her immediate predecessors, for the designer has adopted a l.w.l. with its greatest breadth further aft of amidships than usual and with more fulness in the quarters, so producing a better run aft in the buttocks. The form of the midship section is excellent for the size and type of vessel, for it promises adequate stability and good accommodation without excessive displacement. There is a considerable length of straight keel and the ballast is kept well down, though it might have been preferable to have concentrated the weight nearer the centre of gravity by widening the lead keel.

The accommodation is worked out with great care, the only missing feature being a chain locker, which could easily be placed just forward of the stove. There is nearly six feet of headroom between the beams of the coachroof. The galley, oilskin locker and chart table are all of generous size and well placed. A coal stove makes it possible to go sailing all the year round in comfort, and is good value for its

weight even in summer. The navigation and riding lights are stowed in an accessible place instead of being hidden away in the forepeak.

An 8 h.p. Stuart Turner auxiliary engine is placed partly under the cockpit and partly in the companion by the galley. This is not an ideal position from the point of view of getting at the engine, but is the best that can be done in a vessel of this size. The propeller, which should be of the folding or feathering type, is offset to starboard.

Large enough for four people, the cockpit is deep enough also to give protection from the weather. Some owners might prefer it to be about six inches higher so that it could be self-draining, and this would allow a little more space for the motor.

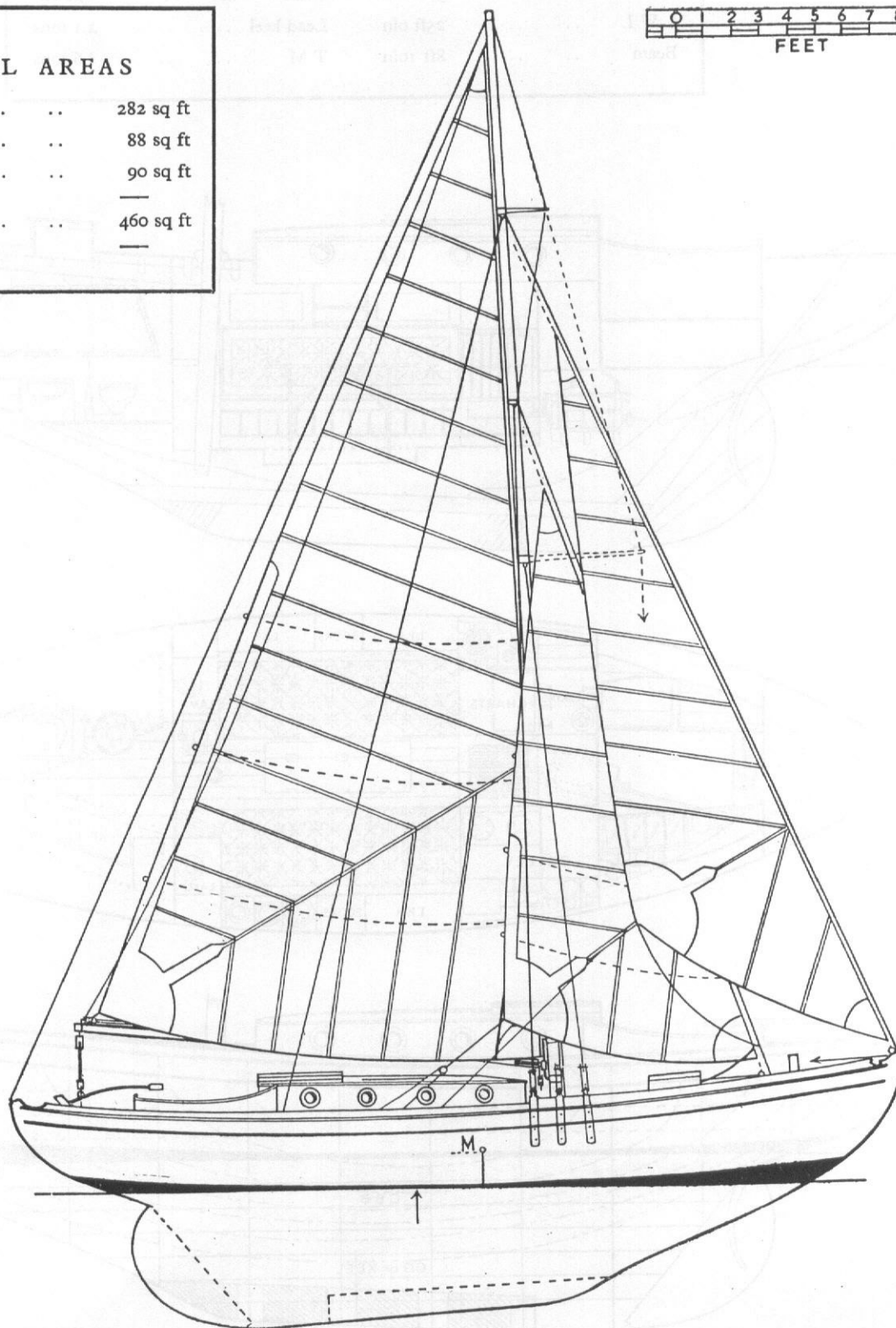
The coachroof ends abaft the mast, for the designer considered that to extend it forward entailed loss of strength. To obtain adequate strength with the mast through the cabin top, rather more elaborate construction is necessary, and this costs a little more, so that it really boils down to a question of whether one can afford to pay for the advantage of increased headroom forward.

Careful thought has been given to staying the mast, which has been placed well into the ship. The mast should, however, be a little longer so that the boom can be high enough to clear a dinghy stowed on the coachroof. The sail area is rather small, but should be easily handled and sufficient for most conditions of ordinary cruising. Harrison Butler had a preference for a loose-foot mainsail, and it will be noted that he has shown in the drawing the correct method of cutting this sail, which has the advantage of being more easy to reef although less efficient on the wind than a sail laced to the boom.

Sylph of Arden should be comparatively inexpensive to build and although not outstandingly fast, she should be a good seaboat and a comfortable cruiser; a worthy end to a long line of designs of little ships which have been built not only in this country but all over the world.

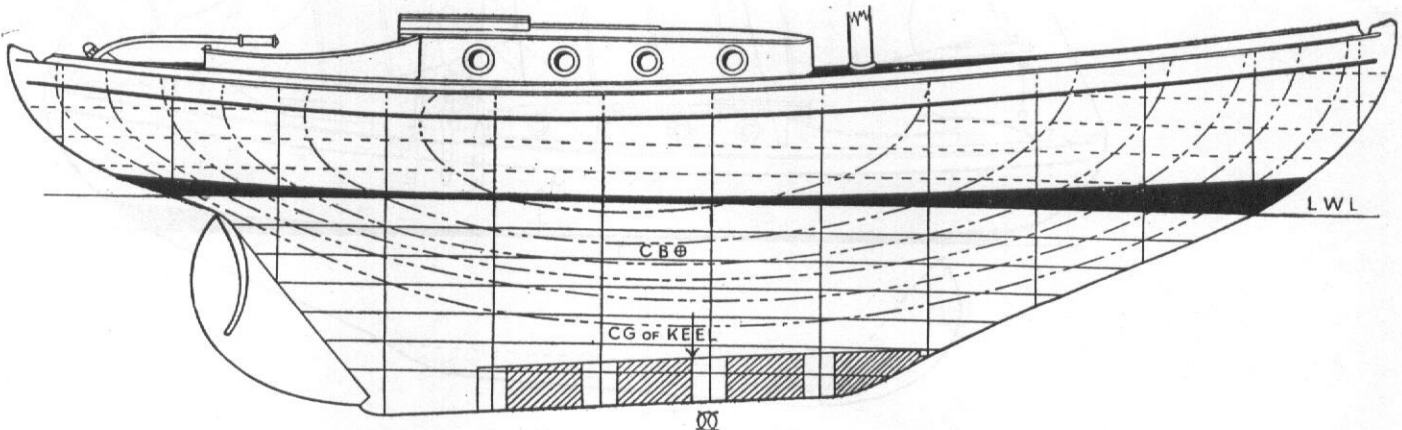
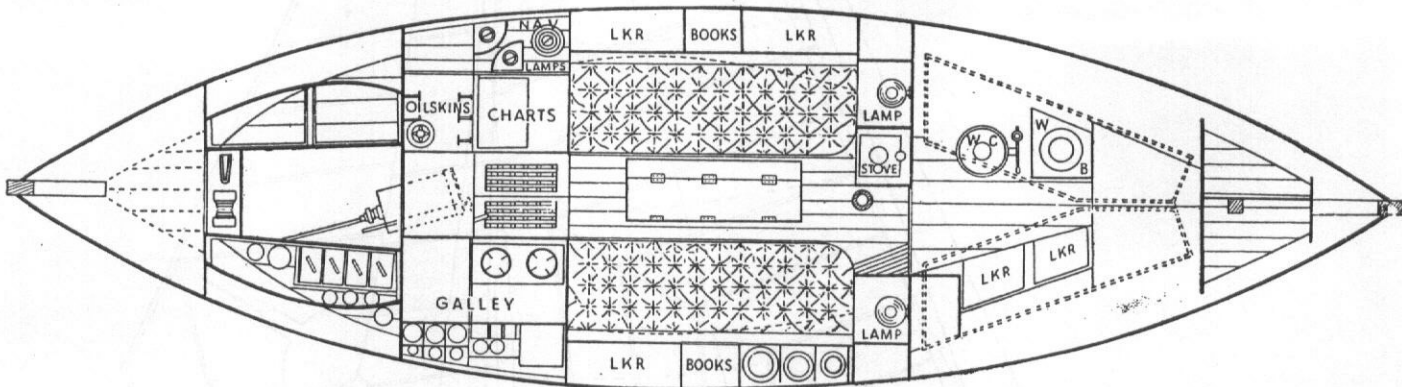
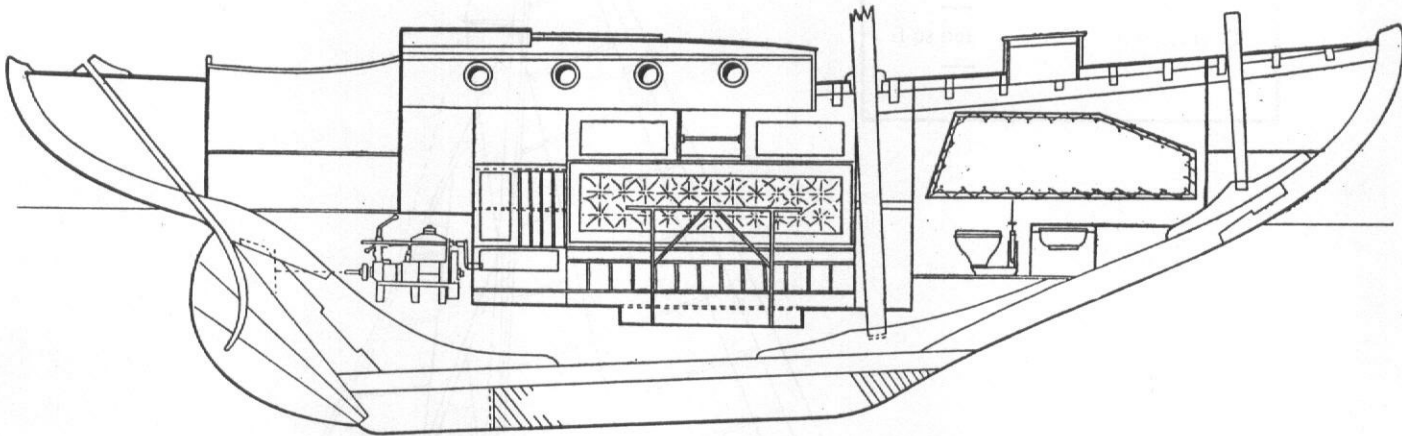
SYLPH OF ARDEN—9-tons Auxiliary Cruiser

SAIL AREAS			
Mainsail	..	..	282 sq ft
Foresail	..	..	88 sq ft
Jib	..	..	90 sq ft
Total	..	..	460 sq ft



SYLPH OF ARDEN-9-

DIMENSIONS					
LOA	.. ..	32ft 2in	Draft	.. ..	5ft 0in
LWL	.. ..	25ft 0in	Lead keel	.. ..	2.1 tons
Beam	.. ..	8ft 10in	T M	.. ..	8.6 tons

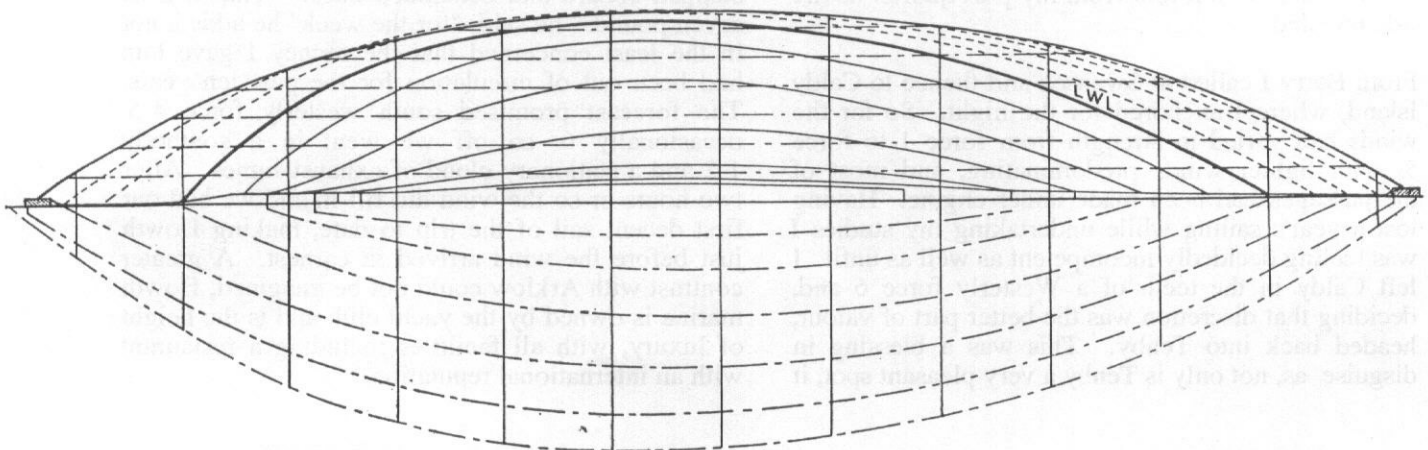
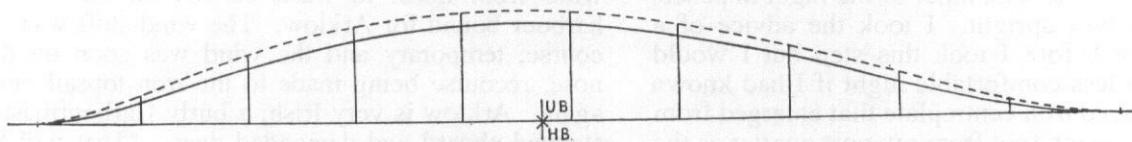
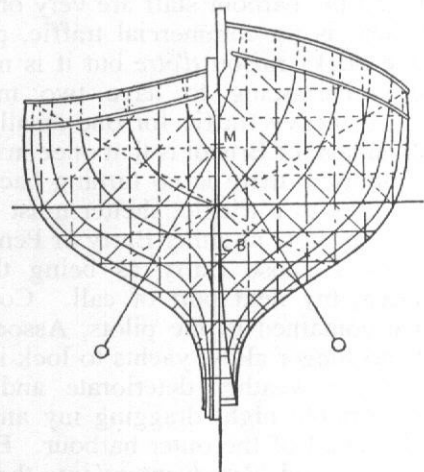
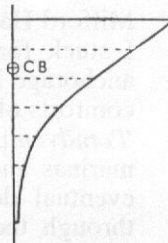
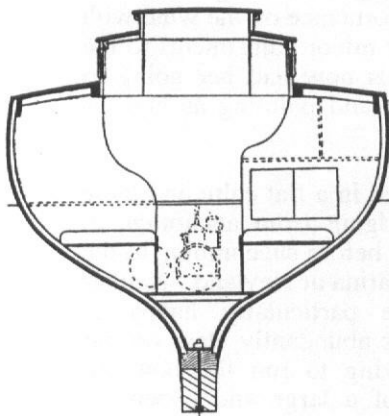


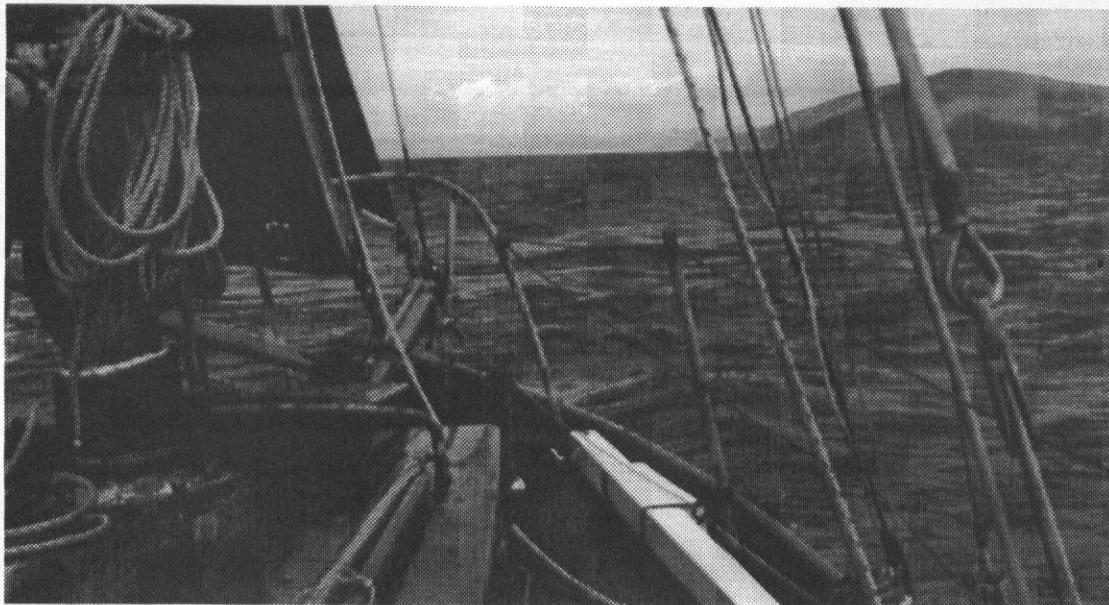
tons Auxiliary Cruiser

BRIEF SPECIFICATION

KEEL: Oak or English elm, sided 4½ in.
STEM: Oak, sided 7½ in.
HORN TIMBER: Oak, sided 5½ in.
STERN POST: Oak, sided 7 in. to 9½ in.
PLANKING: Mahogany or pitch pine or larch, 1 in. thick.
BENT FRAMES: Canadian rock elm, 1½ in. × 1½ in. spaced 7 in.
GROWN FRAMES: Alternatively grown frames may be used as follows: Oak, 2 in. × 2½ in., spaced 12 in. centres.
GROWN AND BENT FRAMES: A combination of grown and bent frames may be employed, grown 2 in. × 2½ in. oak, spaced 2 ft. centres with bent frames, 1 in. × 1½ in. spaced between at 6 in. centres.
BEAM SHELF: Pitch pine, 5½ in. × 1½ in.
STRONG BEAMS: Oak, 2½ in. × 2½ in.
DECK BEAMS: Oak or pitch pine, 2 in. × 2½ in., laminated pre-formed beams may also be used, these can be slightly smaller in section according to the timber employed.

DECK HALF BEAMS: Oak or pitch pine, 2 in. × 1½ in., laminated beams may also be used.
CARLINS: Pitch pine, 3 in. × 2½ in.
COAMINGS AND SIDES OF CABIN TRUNK: Teak or mahogany, 1 in. thick.
FLOORS: For use with bent timbers; steel galvanised arms, 18 in. long, thickness ¾ in., tapering to ½ in., width 1½ in. If grown timbers are used, dimensions of the floors to be altered to suit.
MAST AND SPARS: Hollow spruce or hollow Columbian pine. Solid spars may be used.
LEAD KEEL: 2.1 tons approximately; would vary slightly according to the type of construction employed.
KEEL BOLTS: Brass or bronze 1 in. diameter.
ENGINE: 8 h.p. Stuart Turner with 2-bladed propeller.
EQUIPMENT: Anchor 42 lbs. Fisherman, or 24 lbs. C.Q.R. Chain best short link ¾ in., 30 fathoms. 2 warps. Navigation and riding lights. Boathook. Fenders.





Peradventure Goes North

By PETER HEMINGWAY

My previous article described *Peradventure's* voyage to Bristol from Grimsby by way of the English Channel. This one describes her return home by way of the Caledonian Canal to complete her circuit of mainland Britain.

Bristol is a very relaxed city, proud of its maritime past, and the harbour staff are very obliging. Now that there is no commercial traffic, pleasure craft are the docks *raison d'être* but it is nevertheless a little embarrassing to have two major bridges closed to heavy traffic for one small yacht. One disadvantage of Bristol is that once in the river, one is committed; there is no turning back, and as the Avon dries to a trickle, shelter must be sought on the Welsh shore at either Barry or Penarth. On this occasion I chose Barry as being the nearer to Swansea, my next port of call. Contrary to the advice contained in the pilots, Associated British Ports no longer allow yachts to lock into the basin should the weather deteriorate and I spent an uncomfortable night dragging my anchor through the thin mud of the outer harbour. Exasperated, I finally rammed *Peradventure* into the mud at high speed and spent the remainder of the night in peace, aground but bolt upright. I took the advice of a local ex-pilot before I took this step but I would have spent a less comfortable night if I had known about the jagged iron centreplate that emerged from the mud a mere ten foot from my port quarter as the tide receded.

From Barry I called at Swansea and thence to Caldy Island, where I anchored for the night. So far the winds had varied in strength from force 1 to force 5, with lighter winds predominating, and most of the passages had been made under engine. Having lost a year's sailing while undertaking my studies I was feeling decidedly incompetent as well as unfit. I left Caldy in the teeth of a Westerly force 6 and, deciding that discretion was the better part of valour, headed back into Tenby. This was a blessing in disguise as, not only is Tenby a very pleasant spot, it

allowed me to attend to *Peradventure's* bottom and to carry out minor adjustments to her rig. I have in the past compared her performance on the wind with that of a square-rigger, but minor adjustments to the jib and staysail sheet leads now had her going to windward like a Christian and pointing as high as many a modern boat.

Milford Haven was reached in a flat calm and there I stuck for ten days, dodging from anchorage to anchorage in strong winds before succumbing to the comforts offered by the marina at Neyland. Neither *Peradventure* nor I are particularly happy in marinas and we made this abundantly clear on our eventual departure by trying to run the bowsprit through the windscreen of a large and expensive motor cruiser. Chastened, we fled for the isolation of the Dale anchorage but, imagining a shift in the wind from north to west, carried on out of the harbour bound for Arklow. The wind-shift was, of course, temporary and the wind was soon on the nose, recourse being made to the iron topsail once again. Arklow is very Irish; a burly Harbourmaster stepped aboard and demanded dues. "That will be seven pounds" he said, "for the week" he added, not in the least concerned that the money I gave him had been out of circulation for the past ten years. The forecast promised south westerly force 4-5, occasionally 6, so off we went in a southerly 1-2 and a stationary cloud of exhaust fumes. After two hours or so the wind did fill in and we had our first decent sail of the trip to date, making Howth just before the wind arrived in earnest. A greater contrast with Arklow could not be imagined; Howth marina is owned by the yacht club and is the height of luxury, with all facilities including a restaurant with an international reputation.

My next port of call was Ardglass, with a tidal stop-over at Port Oriel. Winds were fresh but favourable with the reaching breezes that 'Peradventure' loves. Anchor and sails were dropped in the small harbour but the habit of soft living lured me into the small marina. An enthusiastic crowd of right-minded sailors who insisted that I join in their "classic boat" festival greeted me and I was duly signed in and given my free pack of "goodies" only to find out that the only event remaining was the prize giving. However, we did win the prize for the boat that had travelled the furthest. The winds remained westerly for the passage to Belfast lough and conveniently moderated for that to Red Bay in the north of Antrim. From Red Bay I sailed to Gigha, Crinan, Dunstaffnage and Rhuba Dearg before entering the Caledonian Canal. I must say that I found the Inner Isles something of a disappointment. Perhaps the fact that it rained every day had something to do with it, but I also found them crowded and with every decent anchorage occupied by moorings. I am told things get better west of Tobermoray and members' views on this would be welcome for future reference.

The Caledonian Canal was a brief but welcome respite from the "hell out there" but it could have been otherwise had four gentlemen from Shetland not befriended us and given me much needed assistance in the up locks. Neither was I the only one needing help for ahead of me in the "Jacob's ladder" was "Mr. Caribbean". Don Street was being given a tow by an obliging Belgian couple with a boat about a quarter of the displacement of the engine-less *Tolaire*. 'Peradventure' and I were charmed by the courtesy of Mr. Street's distinguished looking New England crew who lent over *Tolaire's* stern and asked "tell me *sir*, where did you find such a beautiful boat?" I met the Belgian couple later in Lossiemouth recovering from their encounter but no doubt richer for the experience. "An interesting man your Mr. Street" they said, "but *dangerous*". Dangerous perhaps, but I recall my last meeting with Don Street in Schull some fifteen years ago when he was sailing his anchor out in a force seven wind and a crowded anchorage with just himself and seven year old son as crew. I took a particular interest in the proceedings because I was the next boat to leeward, but needless to say the operation was carried out faultlessly.

Lossiemouth is a hazardous place if the wind is anywhere onshore and I approached the harbour in a moderate north westerly breeze with a slight swell from the north. As I got nearer to the harbour the swell increased to about two metres and I began to get concerned about the depth of water in the entrance. The seas were breaking onto the rocks that lay some fifty metres south of the entrance and in the final approach the echo sounder was giving readings of between one and three metres. Since the transducer is mounted three feet above the bottom of the keel this was cutting it very fine indeed. It was a stupid lapse of judgement; I should have hove-to and waited for more water but the lure of a harbour led to

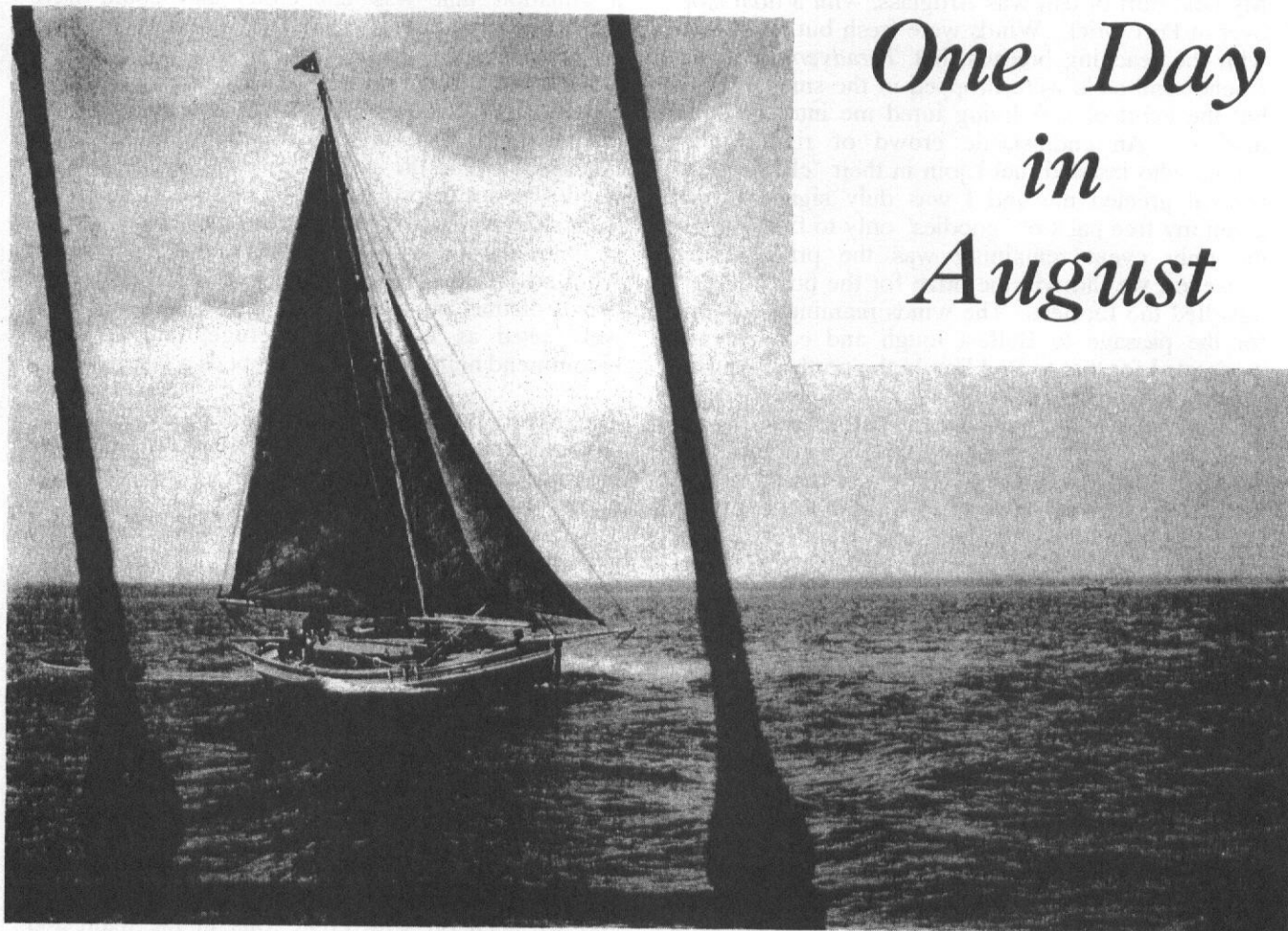
a situation that was dangerous and could have proved disastrous.

Once again I found myself weather-bound, this time for five days, but eventually a brief weather window opened and I left at just after midnight for Peterhead. For the next couple of weeks lack of wind was not to prove a problem and my usual rig was similar to that shown on the cover of the summer newsletter. I also found myself hard on the wind so that my newly found windward efficiency was a distinct advantage. Aberdeen and Montrose were used as harbours of refuge, and I would recommend neither of them except as a last resort.

The River Tay was also used as a refuge against strengthening head winds and this was a much more pleasant place and one to which I have promised myself to return for a longer stay. The natives of Tayport didn't stand and gawk at our arrival; they expertly caught and secured my mooring lines, offered local advice and shortly melted away. The following day was windless but we drifted the ten miles to the bar buoy with a strong ebb in about two hours and in complete silence, surrounded by scores of inquisitive seals. We slipped into the "hole in the wall" at Dunbar and were glad to get out of it in one piece despite lowering skies and a lumpy sea. The inshore forecast was for westerly force 3-4 but by Berwick it was blowing 5-6 and much too early in the tide to enter the Tweed. Off Holy Island the wind went south westerly and really started to blow. With it went any idea of using the anchorage there and we sped on with eight rolls in the main and working staysail and I would have reefed that had I dared. I estimated the wind at around forty knots as the lee rail was constantly buried despite being on a reach under very reduced canvas. The good thing about it was that I was on a weather shore and torrential rain was keeping the sea reasonably flat. The bad thing was that by now I had the Farne Isles under my lee and I was praying that nothing would carry me away. Clear of the Farnes the wind eased somewhat and Amble was made without difficulty after some eleven hours at the helm.

The wind swung into the south and it was to be a week before I could continue towards the Humber. The abysmal summer continued to get worse and both Blythe and Hartlepool were entered in rather more wind than one would like. The passage to the latter was made with a splitting headache due to the convivial attention of Peter Mather's friend Gordon from the Royal Northumberland Yacht Club. Runswick Bay was used in preference to Whitby, and Bridlington was my final port of call before reaching my home berth in number 2 fish-dock, Grimsby. The trip had taken just over eight weeks for just over a thousand miles, which was hardly rapid progress, and few of those miles could be described as pleasant. For the future, 'Peradventure' deserves (and needs) a decent refit, and I shall be looking for a crew for my future cruises.

One Day in August



PLEASURE CANNOT *be* MEASURED *in* MILES

by JEAN KIMBER

THE morning sun, having climbed above the oak woods, seemed to pause to look down upon the winding river and the yachts swinging at their moorings.

Most of the fleet had their riding lights in their forestays, proclaiming to an awakening world that their crews were still below, but on a neat little 6-ton cutter, painted apple green, the day had begun in earnest. The Mate was swilling the breakfast plates over the side, and she was wondering what she would have said had she caught her maid washing up in a like manner. A very feminine Cabin Boy was forrard, squatting over the hatch hauling up a tangled bundle of tanned sails and cordage in preparation for their hoisting. From the cockpit came the sound of the Skipper's voice addressing a refractory engine which, after a severe fit of coughing, was settling down to a steady thrumming.

Satisfied that this state of affairs would continue, he called the Mate to the tiller and hurried forrard to cast off. By this time the Cabin Boy had rescued a bucket which had been hanging from the stern of the dinghy where it had been doing the duty of

keeping the boat from bumping against her parent ship.

The rattle of the chain running over the bows scared the gulls, which had been perched in rows on their posts at the edge of the mud, into a raucous chorus. The Cabin Boy kicked over the clutch lever in the cockpit, and Fairwind, gathering way, swung round in a circle and headed for the sea.

Handing over the tiller to the Cabin Boy, the Mate retired below to tidy up and stow things away. The Captain came aft, sat down on the cabin top and lighted his pipe.

All Shipshape Below

When all was shipshape below, the Mate returned to the cockpit and took over the tiller, while the Captain and the Cabin Boy clambered forrard to cast off the mainsail ties, lash the jib and foresail on to their respective halliards, and thread their sheets through the leads to their cleats aft.

They hoisted both and sheeted them flat, and then, hauling together, sent

the peak of the mainsail on its journey up the mast, the hooks clicking in their track at every heave. A light breeze from the west was already flapping the Little Ship Club burgee at the masthead, and as the yacht left the shelter of the oak woods and turned into the Solent it strengthened, furrowing the surface of the water into millions of little creases. As Fairwind reached across to the Isle of Wight, the Captain produced a marline spike and settled down to splice some ties for the awning, and the Cabin Boy, getting out a fishing line and baiting it with an ingenious spinner, dropped it over the stern and payed it out.

"I haven't a hope of catching anything," she explained to the Captain, "but it's something to do, and it looks fearfully professional."

The weather was at its best, the water a brilliant blue, furrowed by slow swells rolling in from the Channel and chopped into a jabble of ripples by the breeze, which was just enough to drive Fairwind forward.

Presently the Cabin Boy wandered on to the foredeck and clambered astride the bowsprit, bracing her feet against the bobstay. This was her

favourite position, and, as she felt the surge and lift of the yacht under her, a weird song came floating back to the cockpit, slightly off-key, but, nevertheless, joyful. The Cabin Boy was happy!

In a series of long, leisurely tacks, Fairwind finally came abreast of Hurst Castle, and began to feel the force of the tide past the Needles. The Captain now took the tiller and, finding the wind slightly south of west, was able to fetch the North Channel on the port tack in one board.

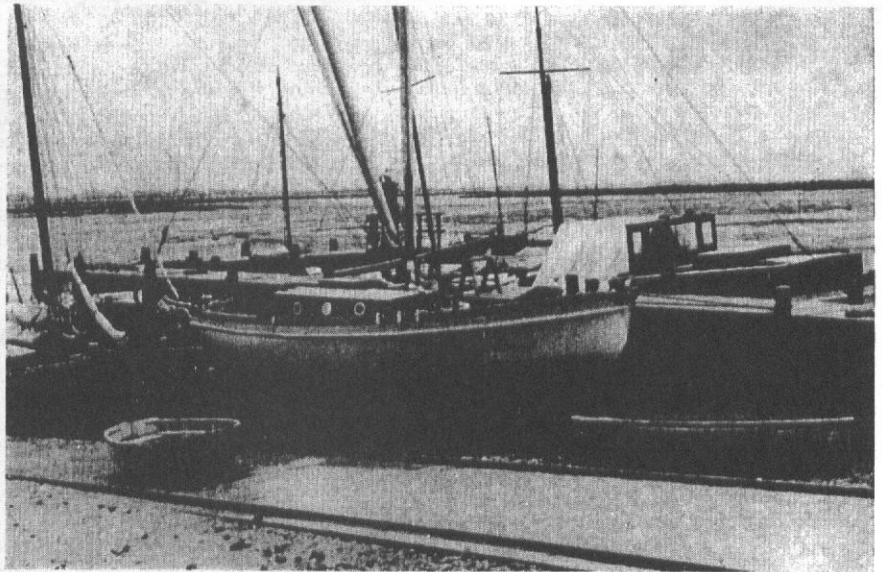
The Needles slid astern, and Fairwind sailed out into the wide, blue expanse of Bournemouth Bay. To starboard the low line of the sandstone cliffs showed hazily, and the sun picked out the gleaming white of an hotel or a block of flats, transforming the rather ugly seaside town to a fairy city; to port the sea stretched out to the horizon, while billowing masses of white clouds sailed slowly along, drifting away to the east.

Early Lunch

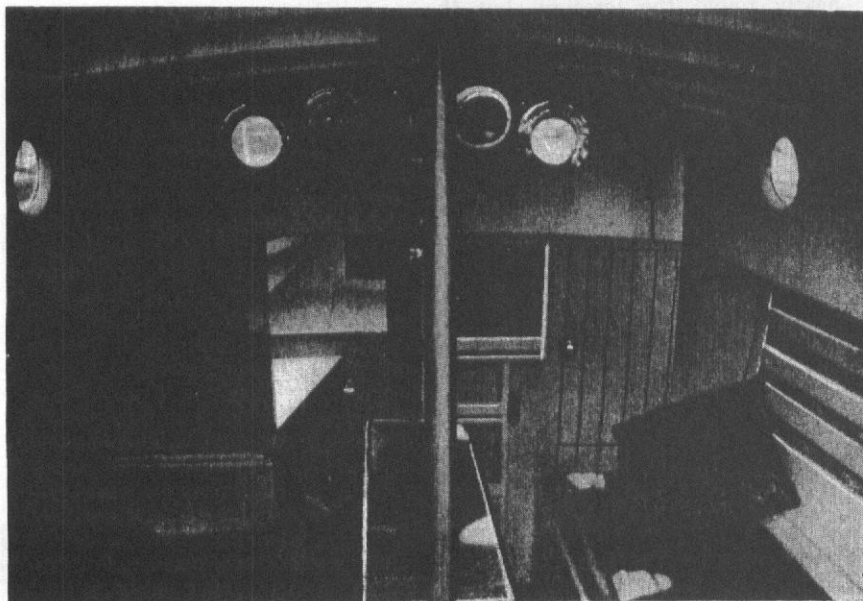
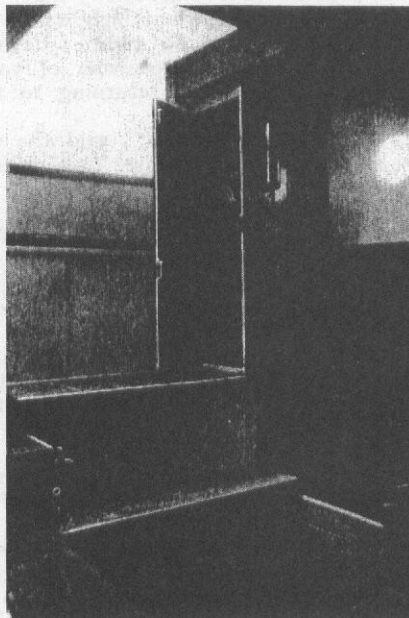
The wind gradually shifted round to the south and freshened, but that was not the reason for the Mate's disappearance below, for presently she returned with sliced ham and lettuce and a bottle of lime juice with which to wash it down. Simple food, but tasting wonderful eaten on a yacht at sea, with the sun blazing down and the wind filling the sails.

After lunch the Cabin Boy remained at the helm, being given a course W. by S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. to steer that would clear the Christchurch ledge buoy. The skipper settled down in the shelter of the hatch to enjoy another pipe, glancing anon at the compass to see how much off the course the Cabin Boy was steering.

With the aid of a couple of cushions, the Mate went to sleep on the cabin top. An after-lunch drowsiness descended on the crew, the Captain was dozing, and the Boy found



A sweet little ship is this Harrison-Butler-designed Fairwind



it difficult to concentrate on keeping the course.

Suddenly the quiet was broken by a shrill shriek.

"Daddy," yelled the Cabin Boy, forgetting to be a Cabin Boy, "I think I've caught something. I had the line in my hand and it's jerking like anything now. Shall I haul it in?"

"What's the matter?" said the Mate, sitting up amongst the cushions. "I was just dropping off."

The Captain roused himself, and prepared to receive the monster over the side. "Go on, haul it in," he ordered, "I'll steer for a while."

Supper in Sight

In silence the Cabin Boy hauled in the line. Yard after yard of gleaming brown coils curled down on to the deck, and at last the first weight appeared. But lower, still in the shadow of the water, a silver shape was weaving and darting and being drawn up gradually to the surface.

"It's a mackerel," shouted the Cabin Boy. "I've caught a mackerel."

"Be careful," said the Captain, "don't lose him now. Draw him up gently."

With infinite caution the writhing fish was dragged up and swung into the cockpit, where it jumped and flapped like a mad thing.

"We'll have it for supper," said the Mate, after the fish had been despatched, and reached for a plate on which to stow it. "It must be about three pounds. Something to put in the ship's log."

The Cabin Boy wound up her line in a glow of pride.

"Gosh," she said, "fancy catching something at last. It makes up for that one that fell off the hook at Falmouth."

Fairwind's saloon, looking forward

One Day in August

"Don't remind me of it," said the Captain with feeling; the memory of it still rankled in his soul. It was back in the days of the F.L.B., the old scaled-down pilot cutter he had once had. During a holiday at Falmouth, he had sailed out one afternoon with a cargo of enthusiastic friends and fishing lines with the intention of catching the mackerel as a paying proposition. All afternoon he had sailed up and down off St. Anthony's with lines out, and the net result was precisely three fish! The Cabin Boy had caught one but, much to her indignation, had dropped it back before it was safely landed.

"I could do with a mug of tea," said the Mate sleepily, "but I couldn't possibly get it."

The Cabin Boy took the hint and dropped into the cabin to fill the kettle.

Tea for Three

The stove consented to light quite docilely, and the cake tin proved to be the first she laid hands on. Ten minutes later she clambered back to the cockpit with three mugs of tea and some hunks of squashy wet fruit cake—the Captain's favourite.

Grasping a chunk of cake in one hand and a scalding mug of tea in the other, the Cabin Boy, squatting on the cockpit coaming, gazed at the misty horizon.

"I've always wanted to sail out there," she said, waving the cake in the air. "Could we do it one day, Daddy? Just go off and not have to come trailing home in the evening like a toy boat. Let's sail round the island sometime. I should love to see what's on the other side."

"We will one day," said her father, levelling a pair of field-glasses on a distant trail of smoke. "When you're a bit older and if there isn't a war. Hello, there's a liner coming in. Don't the gulls look beautiful, wheeling round her?"

"Um. Is that the pilot boat coming out to meet her?"

The stately white liner, her bow pushing the waves into long furrows, approached The Needles and took on a pilot. The sun, low in the west, lit up her white paint and glittered on her long rows of portholes. The gulls, circling and banking above her superstructure, dived down to grab the bread thrown to them by the passengers at the rails.

Steamers Are Not Ugly

"She is lovely," said the Mate. "I'll never say steamers are ugly after this."

The crew watched until the liner disappeared behind Hurst Castle, and then transferred their attention to their own destination.

Ahead lay the Isle of Purbeck and the cliffs of Dorset, and where the coast bent inland they could see the opening into Poole Harbour. The Captain had calculated that they would arrive just at high water, and he proved to be right. Fairwind joined a small procession of yachts and motor boats returning to their moorings.

"The question is," said the Captain, who was steering, "where do we moor?"

"Let's ask somebody," said the Mate. "What about those people in that white yawl over there?"

The crew of the yawl were very obliging. They knew of a mooring quite close to their own which was free, the owners having gone cruising to the Scilly Isles. It was just off the main fairway and not too far from Poole quay.

"See you there," shouted the captain of the yawl, and clugged away, following the string of small craft all heading for the harbour.

Fairwind's engine was now running, and the Cabin Boy went forward to lower the foresails. The jib worked on a swivel and merely wrapped itself neatly round the forestay, but the foresail had to be stowed in the locker

in the fo'c'sle. Finally there was the mainsail to be lowered and secured roughly with ties, for it would not be worth lacing on the canvas sail cover for only one night.

By the time all this was done they were chugging up the Channel past Brownsea Island. Men were out fishing on the flood in boats with ragged sails, and a fleet of dinghies were skimming back to the Parkstone Yacht Club after a race.

The mooring was just at the edge of the fairway and about a cable's length astern of the white yawl. The Cabin Boy picked it up, without dropping either the boathook or the buoy, and the Captain, after switching off the engine, hurried forward to help haul the heavy chain aboard. In a few minutes Fairwind was riding peacefully in her new berth, her bow pointing to the sea and the incoming tide swishing softly past. Some day—when peace reigns once more—there must be such another moment.

Eventide

From the cabin came the pleasant odour of frying mackerel—the Mate was busy getting supper. The sun was sinking slowly behind the hills, gilding a shimmering pathway across the harbour. The blue sky faded to pale green and long, purple-clad islets floated serenely, with here and there a shy star peeping between them. A chain of lights began to creep along the edge of the quay, reflecting a string of gleaming pearls in the shivering water.

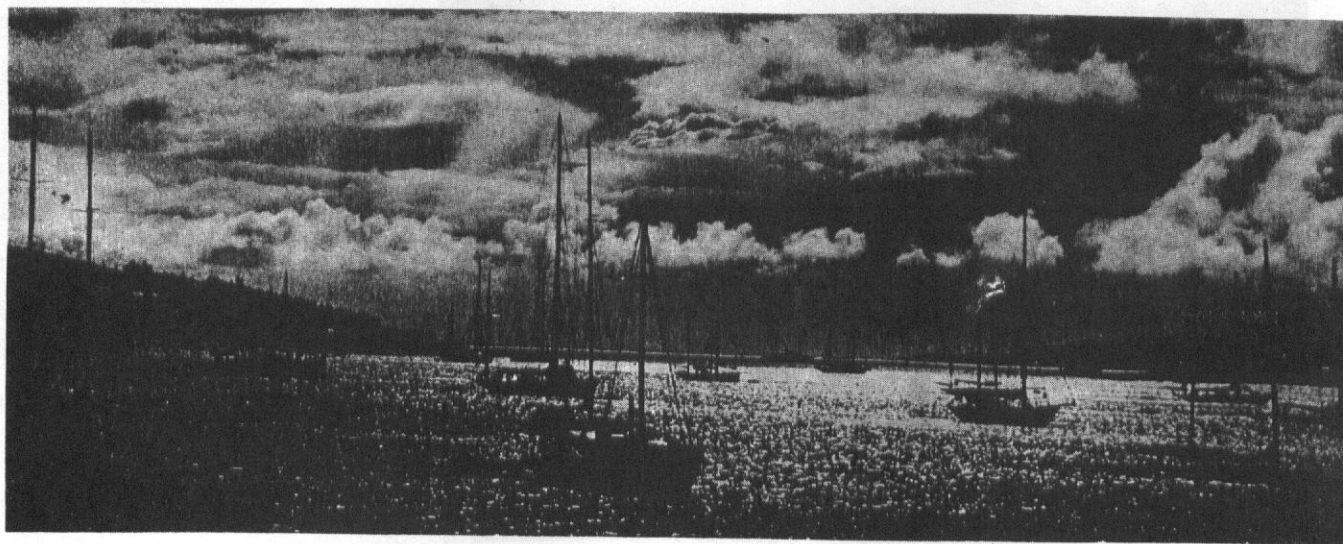
Later the Captain and the Cabin Boy sat side by side on the cabin top, feeling extraordinarily peaceful.

"Isn't it all heavenly?" said the Cabin Boy, dreamily. "I should like to write a poem about it."

"Do you know what I should like?" said the Captain.

"What?" said the Cabin Boy, breathlessly.

"A large mug of beer!" replied the Captain, with a sigh.



Tassie For Tigers

By CLARRIE AND RICHARD RULE

Sailing around Tasmania for fun is not for everybody. Yet the Rule twins aren't everybody - they are riggers for adventure. Two years ago they did Tassie east about; this year they did it west about and lived to tell this incredible tale of challenge and victory in the Roaring Forties.

"This trip is bound to be unpleasant at times - and a grind," Richard said, "so let's get the west coast over with first."

Both of us were poring over the AUS 422 chart, working out a plan of attack for a sail down and around Tasmania, Pilots, dividers, charts and tide-tables at our elbows. We were at the large chart table in the main cabin, that is, on the lounge room floor at home.

I readily agreed. Tasmania's west coast has a reputation for sudden gales and big seas, and to face it as a last leg of the sail definitely would be bad for the moral fibre.

"This means we'd knock over that horrible bit down at the bottom as well," I added, "not forgetting we'll only be two up on this cruise."

"Three, if you count the new Aries wind vane," Richard replied.

Two years before we had taken our 12-metre sloop 'Seasalter' clockwise around Tasmania (HBA Newsletter No. 48) and, after enduring a nor'easterly gale on the west coast, we were not anxious to repeat the experience, although it's always on the cards. However, we still think this coast is the fastest way home to Port Phillip Bay from the south of Tasmania, rather than the east coast.

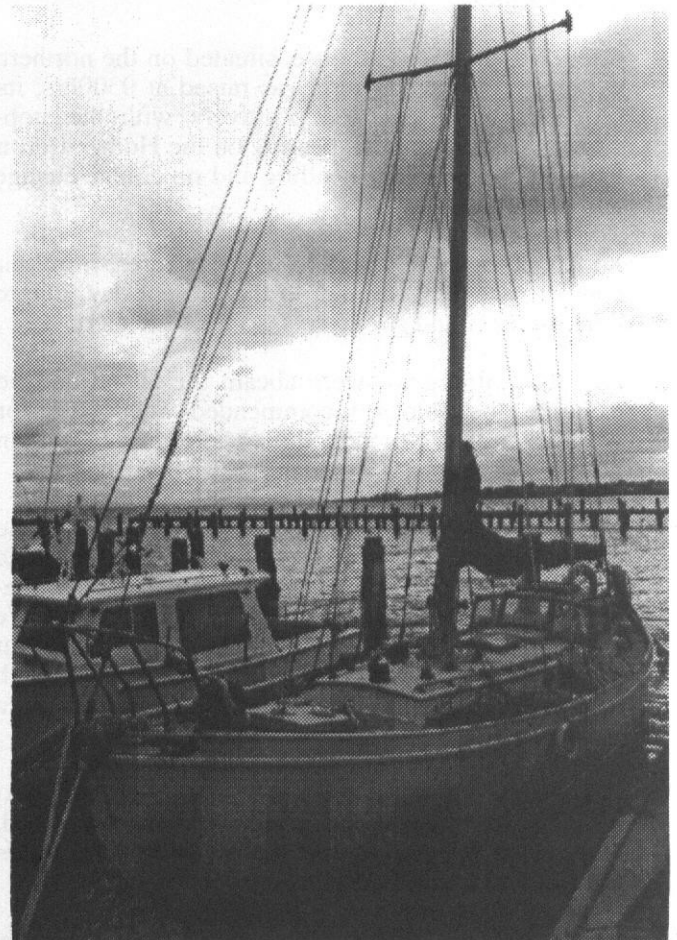
Christmas planning was in progress and after an unsuccessful attempt the previous year, due to lack of time, we were determined to see Hobart, and in particular the D'Entrecasteaux Channel with its 35 miles (all distances are in sea miles) of sheltered waterways, anchorages and colonial history. Tourist Bureau brochures covered a nearby chair.

After much delving and digging into the Australia Pilot Vol. II forebodings, we completed our cruise plan: Port Phillip Heads to the South Passage between King Island and the north-west coast of Tasmania; down the west coast, keeping well offshore as a safety margin; around the bottom; into the D'Entrecasteaux; Hobart; visit various places nearby; northward along the east coast; through Banks Strait; seek anchorages over near Flinder's Island; Deal Island (Kent Group); Wilson's Promontory and back home to Sandringham - all this, we hoped, "without breaking anything."

But there was one more thing: a fair wind at the start was vital if we were to make the South Passage without fuss; anything would do but southerlies. We didn't fancy beating anywhere.

In the following weeks final preparations were made; food lists completed; sail locker reduced to strong weather sails; additional heavy anchors taken aboard and the RFD liferaft lashed onto the cabin top.

'Seasalter' was ready and we were on our way.



'Seasalter' (30' LWL)

Aristene design

Built in Australia in 1937 for Rev. Guy Pentreath

This time we decided to use morning sickness tablets for the first few days to overcome nausea and we were pleasantly surprised with the effective results (this little experience has also widened our conversation with women ...) We gained our sea legs for the entire voyage; it certainly made a difference.

Using the ebb-tide we motorsailed early in the morning from Sandringham YC on Wednesday 26 December 1979 direct to the Port Phillip Heads via the West Channel. We reached the Lonsdale lighthouse, which guards this notorious rip entrance, in the early afternoon during the safe slackwater ebb period.

We used the Great Ship leads and set a SSW course towards King Island's east coast, 80 nautical miles south, and handed the steering over to the Aries, a sturdy, well-made piece of equipment ideal for Bass Strait sailing.

The weather was settled, baro steady, a favourable ESE wind and our departure time gave promise of a morning arrival at the South Passage, the best time to pass through and sight the tide rips, reefs and land features.

Cape Wickham's lighthouse, situated on the northern extremity of King Island, was raised at 0300hrs, its sequence being checked positively with the stop-watch. An earlier RDF bearing on the Homer-Heron had helped verify our heading and no course change had been necessary.

KI has 60 or more wrecks along its shores, from our convict past right through to the present day, due to thick weather and strong sets, so we were alert.

By late morning we were abeam the island and, to examine the Pilot's recommended anchorage for westerly gales, we took the opportunity to sail in behind Sea Elephant Rock on our way down south.

We were carefully plotting our course through the South Passage to avoid Bell Reef, Black Pyramid and the like, when the leaders of the Melbourne-Hobart racing fleet came up on us from astern. We were logging eight knots under a reefed main, but Jimmy Blacksmith and the others knifed past us with everything up, well-heeled to leeward and looking a magnificent sight in the fresh conditions.

Off Sandy Cape in the early hours of the next morning the wind dropped and we were becalmed, along with several of the fleet. Mast-head lights twinkled all around us.

This condition lasted three days, with a steady barometer of 1011mb. Our log, entered every two hours, reads: "light breezes," "no wind," "over the side with the horses," "this sunbaking is hell" - and much more but censorship is still with us. Seven of the fleet retired - no wind.

"It's a rotten coast to be on; no one wants gales, but then again a burst of wind would be nice," Richard muttered, looking over his shoulder apprehensively in case God Big Puff heard.

Even though we moaned a-plenty, no one was allowed to whistle, not even the kettle.

Previously it had been decided not to shave until we reached our first stop, Dover, a crayfish port in the D'Entrecasteaux - "only a couple of days away" - but now we resembled a pair of Ben Gunns out of Treasure Island. Still, our friends can be proud of us; we managed to stay the razor's edge and cultivate monkey-bum beards. Being identical twins, the effect was interesting on the Hobart shop-girls.

At this stage our navigation depended mainly on celestial sights as the coast was vague from 30 miles out. The aero beacon at Strahan was of limited help.

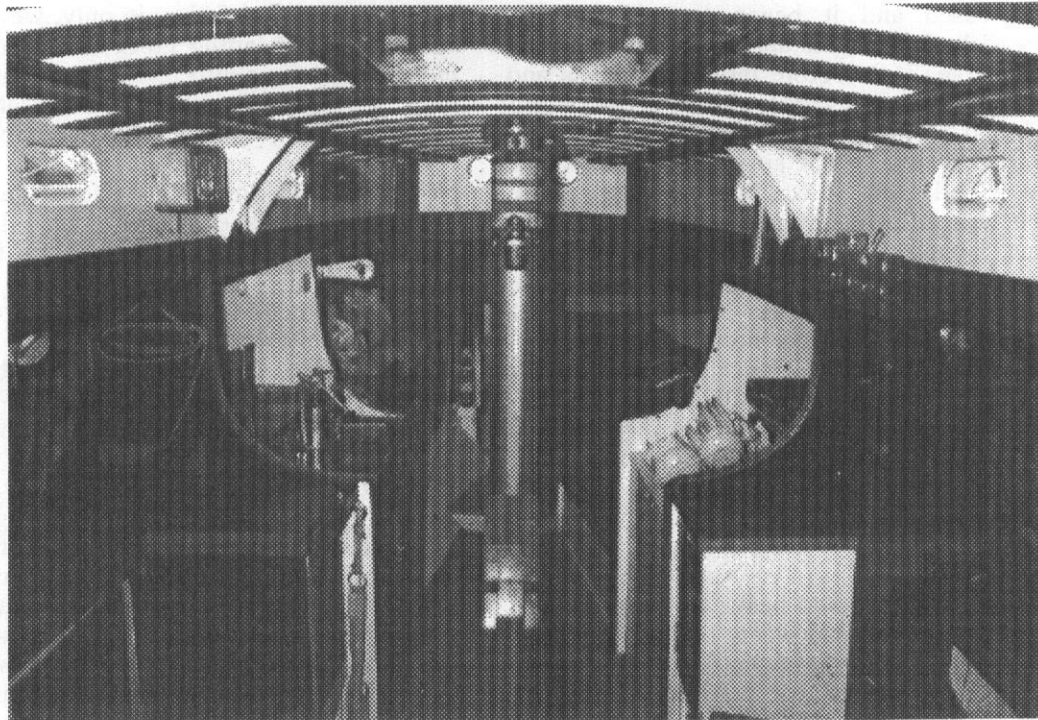
For those interested we used the 229 Sight Reduction Tables (or NP401{3}) Nautical Almanac and a Rigel quartz crystal chronometer. A Saura Keiki sextant did the doing. Often used was a cheap wrist watch with an adjustable sweep hand, which was accurate for about three hours. Time checks were made against VNG (Lyndhurst) on our tuneable AM Marine radio, or with Hobart time-pips on commercial radio. Sandringham YC's winter celestial course gave us the knowledge and confidence.

Noon sights were useful, as the position lines cut the coast, showing clearly our snail-like progress.

After short periods of sailing, drifting, sun-sights, dozing and night watches we eventually arrived 20 miles due west of South West Cape, at the southern end of Tasmania. This was no place to be. After we studied the impressive westerly swells and eyed the slowly falling barometer, now 1007mb, the Hobart evening forecast confirmed our observations with a sou'-westerly Force 5 on its way. "And the rest," we thought.

Having a healthy respect for this region near latitude 44° south and its sudden gales, we booted the engine into life and 'Seasalter' headed towards the Maatsuyker Island lighthouse in an attempt to clear it before nightfall. This island is situated about seven miles south of the mainland, is 300 metres high, and the AUS 354 chart shows depths ranging from 17 to 77 fathoms in the vicinity. Wonder, monstrous seas sweep through the area.

As the miles slowly passed and the coast became clearer we could just see Maatsuyker. 'Seasalter' slipped into her night sailing routine: everything checked (locker doors, fiddles etc); lamp lit in the saloon; lashings where needed; storm-boards and strong-backs fitted; a coffee thermos was filled and placed with two large aluminium army cups in the quarter-berth near the companionway.



'Seasalter' down below, looking forward

We had Bonox and sandwiches; each had a brief nap. It obviously was going to be a long night and both of us would be needed on deck. We had hoped, all along, to avoid a 35-mile night crossing of the south coast, but here we were. The crayboats can have it.

Sitting in the self-draining cockpit, under the doghouse, Richard and I considered our course of action. The area north of Maatsuyker was to be avoided after dark; unlit islands, reefs, rocks, sets and sheer cliffs were stuffed into the black backdrop of the southern shores. We did not have radar or the local knowledge necessary to negotiate the shorter passage even on a fine moonlight night, let alone this night. It all posed unnecessary risks. Sea room was the thing.

The southern route would be longer but safer, as the Pilot warns: "The prevailing winds are from the westward and the long swell which rolls in with great force, in conjunction with the current, which generally sets eastward and towards the Cape, throws a vessel very fast to leeward."

The reference is for South West Cape, but we also applied it to the southern coastline and South East Cape, which would be on our bow in the hours to come. To starboard and ahead was the Mewstone, a 134-metre rock, and the possibility of stronger weather, always assuming the worst in these waters.

The good news was that the fresh weather would be favourable to us and, providing we could keep the Maatsuyker light visible and over our stern, we could then check for course and northerly drift - a strong possibility with the forecast sou'-westerly. The depth-sounder, effective to 160 fathoms, was useful but by the chart the cliffs soared from the depths, so it had limitations.

When abeam of South West Cape at 2100hrs an off-shore nor'-westerly came in at 10 knots, which was helpful, and we took the opportunity to put three reefs in the main, but hung onto the 450 (No. 2) genoa. We kept the engine on to maintain a quick southeasterly course to clear the island and the Needles, a clutch of pinnacled rocks skulking at its southern tip.

Came midnight and we were passing the huge sable mass of Maatsuyker with its welcome lighthouse. Soon after, in the gloom and big swells, we briefly glimpsed the inky blackness of the Mewstone and wondered how many ships in the early days, their attention on Maatsuyker, had hit this Frankenstein's monster in heavy weather.

The next light was on Bruny Island and, although having a 22-mile range, it would not be visible until we were clear of South East Cape, so there was no help from that direction just yet. How many

vessels, without radar, cursed the lack of a light on this Cape?

The wind eased and it began to rain heavily, accompanied by low clouds and lessening visibility. Using the adage "Rain before the wind, sheets and halyards mind," we changed down to our 140 storm jib, which had been hanked on earlier and lashed to the bulwark keel-bar. The spreader lights showed just what a bad night it was and we were again thankful it was following weather. The sou'wester, as forecast, swooped in soon after and it felt more than Force 5.

Constantly Richard wedged himself in the low doghouse and took bearings over the stern on the flashes of light whilst I carefully tended to our heading and struggled to help the Aries keep the boat from yawing too much in the following seas. Our attention was riveted upon the compass, gleaming redly in the dark; due east, and let's hope we swung her right!

It was decided at 0230hrs to heave-to, under backed headsail, whilst we still had plenty of sea-room, then sail on at 0530hrs, as daylight should be with us and we'd be more certain of our position. Also this would be a safeguard against running too far east - we had no idea of the strength of the set under our keel. Caution comes easy at the thought of a filthy big cliff waiting up ahead.

We folded the Aries steering oar (partially ineffective in the troughs) to prevent damage when stopped. A bit of a verbal scuffle took place and I found myself feeling very much the sacrificial lamb - grimly riding the yacht *aft* of the Aries with one yellow sea boot in the water, trying to ram the top of the pendulum oar down far enough to free the folding knuckle, which had frozen slightly with salt action (cured later; we greased the parts). Rich pointed out that the back half of the yacht was mine, anyway, as he clipped my safety harness line onto a strongpoint.

As the night dragged on both of us, in turn, dozed on the saloon sole in full (and wet) gear with empty seabags for pillow and blanket, under the warm glow of our beloved oil lantern. Below it was very quiet and the motion was easy. 'Seasalter's three-centimetre Huon Pine hull is wonderful soundproofing against hearing the hobgoblins outside.

An hour before dawn Maatsuyker light, with its 22-mile arc, became lost to view, blanketed by the murky cloud base, oppressive rain and hissing seas with deep troughs.

"That's the end of that lot," Richard said, as he stowed the handbearing compass, his yellow oilskins and safety harness streaming with water. "We're on our own properly this time. I'll log the details and get some coffee on the way."

We were in a windy, wet black cave, barely able to see further than the mast.

At dawn, under reefed main only, we started sailing again, slowly heading north-east. To our concern there was no visibility. We were enshrouded in a thick sea fog, even though the weather was now Force 6 and still raining. What a combination!

Now it depended on our log for distance run. The estimated mileage came up, logged from Maatsuyker, and Richard poked his head over the stormboards (he maintained he had to stay below to keep dry (something about working over the chart.

"We should be clear of the cape; let's hoist the head-sail and make speed to the north-east," he said. "The D'Entrecasteaux should be in front of us."

With the added sail we went away on a reach doing eight knots, but after an hour heading into a white nothingness we decided to be prudent and heave-to on the off-shore tack and wait until we could fix our position. It was still early and the weather might lift. If anything the seas were rougher. Besides, Actaeon Island and its shoals were inshore somewhere (if we had cleared the cape) and it had a ghastly history of shipwrecks in this weather, from convict ships to yachts. Matter-of-fact, it seemed to us there were disasters all around the place.

Somehow I was landed with the first watch and, in a brief lifting of the fog, I sighted two rocks out to seaward on the bow. They were quickly identified as Pedra Branca - 51 metres, and Eddystone - 33 metres, a nice little mess waiting to run into someone.

Another slight clearing, to shorewards this time, and a headland briefly appeared on the starboard quarter before being swallowed in the murkiness. A flash of memory, and we thumbed through to the views in the Pilot. Whale Head was identified. Looked like a whale, too.

Bearings on both objects previously had been taken and these were applied to AUS 354. We now had a positive fix and could steer a reasonably safe course northwards through the soup into the D'Entrecasteaux Channel entrance. It was a great relief to know our whereabouts and we felt a surge of freshness.

The weather continued to clear and we soon had the peril of Actaeon Island abeam, port side, and Cape Bruny with its elusive damn light on the starboard bow. With elephantine trumpet calls, Rich brought out the AUS 173 chart of the D'Entrecasteaux. We were there at last.

On our way into the channel we saw a whale leap almost upright out of the water about 200 metres ahead. Falling, it smashed the oncoming waves into a mountain of spray and disappeared, coming our

way and on the bow. Thank the Lord it was daylight. 'Seasalter' did a smart turn to port with goggle-eyes hanging out over the stern. The whale re-appeared well clear, on its way seaward, blowing as it went. We reckoned it to be about 13 metres, give a ton or two.

"I hope his radar is working," Rich said, quietly.

Shortly after we sailed into Esperance Bay and Dover. Leaving Hope Island to starboard, 'Seasalter' anchored close by Rabbit Island at 1345hrs on December 31 - New Year's Eve and six days out from Port Phillip.

A small meal was followed by a bucket bath; foul-weather gear hung over the boom, drying and airing in the hot sun; dinghies sailed the width of the bay in calm conditions. The clouds raced by overhead. The west and south coasts were behind us. Momentarily we allowed ourselves to feel the strain of the past few days and then it just disappeared.

Later Richard drew my attention to 'Seasalter's' axiom on the bookcase fiddle: "It won't be easy," he said, "For all the rosy words said about sailing, it gets back to this, doesn't it?"

Over the next four days we poked all through the D'Entrecasteaux, using our tourist brochures, and anchored in numerous inlets and coves, our depth-sounder working constantly. What an exciting selection of names to whet the cruising appetite: Surveyor's Bay, Sand-rock Bay, Egg and Bacon Bay, Missionary Bay, Desolation Bay, Shelter Cove, Oyster Cove, Snug, Tinderbox Bay and dozens more. Most are small, picturesque, safe with a mud bottom and usually uninhabited.

All Port Phillip yachtsmen suffer a drought in halfway decent anchorages and soon learn to "hang in there with tooth and nail," so this cruising ground offers a paradise to the skipper who is willing to lose some tail-feathers getting there.

A dinghy is essential for exploration and the accidental grounding, thus requiring kedging operations. One night we ran aground on mud during a falling tide. Two hours later we were afloat, no harm done, thanks to the dinghy. Good fun though - so was the rum 'n' coke afterwards.

Ice and provisions can be obtained at Port Huon. Fresh water is beside the toilet block on the main wharf. A friendly Taswegian took us shopping in her car, as the store was a good walk from the yacht. It is good insurance to leave someone aboard as the large wharf tyres can cause damage, depending on wind and tide state.

We still had places to see, so reluctantly 'Seasalter' left this beautiful wonderland and headed north along the channel, investigating all the way. We

finally anchored at the Duck Hole in the southern arm of Simmond's Bay. There sou'-westerly squalls with thunder, rain and hail had not the slightest effect on the dozen or so yachts swinging to anchor in the quiet waters. We spent a pleasant evening with the friendly crew of the Sydney-Hobart racer 'Home Brew' and its four litre jug of cherry brandy.

Every Tasmanian yacht has a wheelhouse, doghouse or substantial spray hood, and any cruising yachtsman without one is crazy. A windvane or auto pilot is another item to consider.

The following day, after a steady reach up the Derwent where we observed several championship yacht races being conducted as part of the lively Fiesta celebrations, 'Seasalter' tied up to famous Constitution Dock, in company with several other yachts. We had a Tassie Tourist Bureau Newsletter which listed all the Fiesta dates and activities, and many were still current, so off we went.

Unfortunately the Sydney-Hobart and Melbourne-Hobart yachts had long gone and we missed the chance to see those exciting racing machines.

Constitution Dock is virtually in the heart of the Hobart shopping centre and it is a unique experience to sit on one's yacht watching the traffic passing only yards away, or get your hair parted by the Fiesta rock band out on the dock. Nearby was an ex-whale chaser being chipped of rust, and in a very sad state of neglect. She was headed for a maritime museum, we heard. Over on another wharf were hordes of Japanese squid ships, low in the water and festooned with lights.

A few days later, with the sights of Hobart fresh in our minds, we made passage to Storm Bay, hoping it wouldn't. From there to an overnight stop at Nubeena, a snug all-weather anchorage on the west coast of the Tasman Peninsula. Partly the stop was to break the trip and partly to add to our anchorage sketch book.

We reached the Port Arthur colonial convict settlement the next afternoon after a wave bashing session around Cape Raoul.

The entrance to port Arthur may be beautiful, but it must have seemed the end of the world to convicts. Sheer cliffs, unending forests, mountains, mists, the lack of habitation, not forgetting most of the poor wretches were city dwellers. What a shock it must have been after a hardship voyage in irons out from Mother England.

The strong gusts off the hills just inside the entrance flattened 'Seasalter' a few times, but we soon passed Dead Island with its 1700 horizontal occupants tidily arranged in their religious groups, with the exception of the mass graves of the convicts, and anchored in Stewart's Bay, a pleasant, quiet spot.

Early the next morning we motored around to Mason Cove, opposite the penal settlement, and anchored well clear of the busy ferry, whereupon we rowed ashore. We scrambled all over the well-signposted ruins, including a visit to an outstanding display of relics at the Asylum.

Victuals can be obtained from the local shops on the waterfront and fuel from the garage close by on the hill.

We left Port Arthur the following morning in fog and drizzling rain and met a heavy head sea at the entrance. Fortunately an ESE breeze came up and we were able to make a mile eating seven knots north along the coast. In a few hours we were behind Maria Island and safely anchored in the calms of beautiful Oyster Bay where we met several yachts waiting to go down through "The Narrows" (and it is) at the southern end of Marion Bay.

Thick kelp torn from the bottom by strong northerly winds had made the tricky entrance impassable from both directions. The ocean racer '*Big Schott*' came to grief here in the kelp beds and heavy onshore seas, subsequently going ashore. She was towed off later and returned to Hobart for inspection.

Our baro indicated 999mb and a strong wind warning was issued by Hobart radio. Still, after an overnight stay we had a short exhilarating sail in sheltered waters to Shelly Beach, close by to Orford. There we refuelled and left the next morning, early as usual, for an anchorage in the Schouten Passage, which divides Schouten Island and the Freycinet Peninsula.

While anchored in a cove on the north side of the island a NE wind picked up, finally backing NW at 0100hrs, causing yachts and crayboats to pitch heavily and roll. We bent on our patent snubber, a Devil's Claw, and went onto anchor watch, our usual "one hour on" until dawn, then motored north across the passage to the protection of Bryan's Corner on the mainland, where it was calm.

However we played the wrong card; the wind happily backed further to the sou'-west and blew 25-30 knots, leaving us open, so we returned under headsail, making seven knots - a walk before breakfast, so to speak. Thinking of our anchorage sketch book, we selected a spot further along the shore, known as "Under the House," and remained there with the wind gusting to 40 knots-plus on our Ventimeter. Again anchor watch was kept and it paid off. A nearby crayboat dragged in the early hours and quickly disappeared into the darkness. Blasts from our reed foghorn and spotlight flashes onto the wheelhouse alerted the skipper and he soon chugged back into the fold, giving us a wave.

The Great Circle Yacht Race entrants thrashed by during this night, heading south to Maatsuyker and all the goodies down there awaiting the customers, with Siska and Challenge leading the fleet. We

certainly did not envy their windward ordeal into those howling conditions, and we gave them the best as Iron Men. *Rimfire's* windspeed indicator burnt out at 60 knots. Several yachts retired to nearby Bicheno as a result of damage to hulls and rigging. Later we heard the fleet had a terrible windward slog around the south coast and more of the same, in immense seas, up the west coast, on the passage to the finish at Flinders.

Detecting an improvement in the weather, '*Seasalter*' left in the morning for a try up the east coast, keeping a few miles offshore, and heading for Goose Island, 130 miles distant. The wind, seeing a cruising yacht out and about, throttled back and obliged us with a light SE breeze, so we made it to Banks Strait on one tack, arriving at midnight in calm seas and feeling very much the favourite sons.

Salamander Rock, lurking seven nautical miles offshore and covered with three metres of water, was in the vicinity so we carefully cross-checked our bearings from the lighthouses to ensure a three-mile distance.

The tides run strongly through the Strait, often attaining six knots and causing dangerous overfalls when opposed to the wind. So rightly or wrongly we used Preservation Island tide times against Devonport, from which our calculations showed we were early. We decided to heave-to until 0400hrs and then pass through at low water, using the west-going flood stream up to Goose Island. This was a chance to get our heads down for a while, sharing watches and checking the bearings for drift. Except for two lighthouses and a pair of brilliantly-lit Japanese squid boats working near by, all was darkness.

Later we checked our tide times and made position so that the Swan Island light and Eddystone light bearings indicated we were clear of hazards. We then made our run NW through the eight-mile opening just as dawn broke and, after a few miles, came onto a northerly course towards Goose, 30 miles away.

Then the wind gods decided enough was enough; they had a reputation to maintain, and a fresh NW swung into action but it was too late, we were almost in the barn. After a few tacks we went in under the south side of low-lying Badger Island, dropping anchor in three fathoms at 1400hrs.

We were just about whopped. A quick brunch for all hands, the alarm set for 1700hrs and we slept, '*Seasalter*' peacefully swinging at anchor while the wind whistled overhead.

Because the weather changes so quickly in these waters we prepared our escape route, based on the possibility of a strong sou'-westerly. The spotlight was placed handy in the doghouse and we studied the chart details carefully in the event of a night move. Bearings were drawn.

At last light we went into the familiar one hour on routine, donning foul weather gear (balaclava, heavy motor-bike gloves) and sitting under the doghouse in a genoa sail-bag. Sailing is fun, they say.

Just before dawn the wind backed westerly but we hung on until first light and quickly motor-sailed out of the cove under a storm-jib with everything battened down, just as a sou'-westerly came blasting in.

It took three and a half hours to fight our way to Goose Island, two miles away, rolling heavily and taking solid sheets of water over our trawler-like bow. We couldn't make a direct course but had to tack and tack all the way.

Standing in close to the island, after a painful crawl dead into wind, we attempted three times to anchor with our faithful Danforth but kept dragging. Finally we got smart and shackled on our 20kg Fisherman, carefully wiring the shackle pin, and jilled around until a sandy patch glimmered through the wind-swept water. Here we let go and laid 36 metres of chain in three fathoms, allowing for a three-metre tide. We studied the water marks on the nearby boulders, noting it was high tide.

There isn't much to Goose. It stands 16 metres and has a lighthouse at its southern end, but Rich and I like its isolation and the handiness of the lighthouse. During the daylight hours we kept a close watch on our anchor bearings until satisfied everything was settled. The freezing wind blew at gale force with periods of rain and low squall clouds for two days without respite, howling over the very low saddle ahead and violently shaking our mast and rigging.

At night anchor watch was the standing order, our eyes constantly watching the various chosen compass bearings in conjunction with the lighthouse. We needed no inducement to stay awake: Badger Island, close under our lee, was festooned high along its boulder-lined shores with timber, debris and pallets - evidence of the violent weather in these parts.

Eventually we let out 18 metres more of chain, as the windforce increased even further, with more frequent heavy squalls, particularly at night. Even the seagulls were sheltering behind the stunted vegetation - except for two greedy stalwarts hove-to close under our canoe stern. There they sat, for two days, heads down, paddling furiously on the spot, waiting for a hand-out. They were included in our anchor watch, with a biscuit at change of shift. On reflection I don't think we did them any favours. Fortunately we only had to maintain watches; at least we weren't out there sailing in it.

We occupied ourselves in various ways; Rich gave the sextant a good wash and also practised celestial sunsights and I, as chef, consulted my Galley Cookbook and came up with several exquisite culinary creations - and gut-busters.

There was one in particular, an obscene great corned beef hash which somehow had solidified; it squatted in the frying pan and refused to budge. I had just about reserved it for use as ballast, but then decided to go ahead and feed it to Rich, who had demonstrated repeatedly his ability to wolf down anything and everything placed in front of him without a flicker of pain, grunt of appreciation or murmur of thanks (much less a burp). It went down with obvious difficulty, but it went down.

By God, he has my unswerving admiration for raw courage!

During the wash-up I had to use forcibly a paint-scraper, both feet and a screwdriver to clean out the utensils.

Eventually the weather broke a little; the shrill whistling in the rigging lessened and the sun returned. Possibly it would be a short-lived spell, but we shot out of there in minutes and headed north for Deal Island, 55 miles away and half-way to Wilson's Promontory.

It was clear that this January weather was going to remain lousy throughout, so long hauls were to be avoided. This is our usual technique in Bass Strait anyway: short, sharp dashes to anchorages with an alternative refuge close by in the event of a wind change; that and to be prepared mentally to move at night.

The waters en route are rock-strewn, some barely covered, so daylight sailing is safer. At 1900hrs 'Seasalter' entered the Murray Pass which divides the island group, after making nine knots all the way, sometimes on the wind. But nothing stops her 14 tonnes; she just keeps on going.

We anchored in the lee of Erith island near the wreck of the Fairmile cruiser, in company with eight fishing boats also sheltering from the unsettled weather.

Night anchor watches continued over the following two days as the bad weather persisted, this time from the nor'-west. At the first opportunity, after being beaten back at one attempt, we scuttled 55 miles further north to Refuge Cove, the safest anchorage on the east coast of Wilson's Promontory. But make no mistake, even in this haven a skipper needs big anchors and lots of chain to withstand the frequent violent squalls that roar down from the mountain-sides. It makes for an interesting holiday and good talk at the bar.

It's worth noting that we motored the last 20 miles in a calm - with a NW gale imminent!

The blow came in, all right - Force 8. So we seized the opportunity and a favourable north-going ebb-tide to leave early in the morning and race 12 miles along the coast, using the strong off-shore wind to

follow the first of the flood the additional 12 miles up the channel to Port Welshpool for fuel and supplies.

Then harnessing the ebb, at least to the leads at Corner Inlet, we retraced our steps to Refuge, arriving at 2300hrs, carefully probing the last few miles along the dark, rocky shoreline with the log, depth sounder and spotlight. An aspect sketch, done when leaving earlier, was a valuable aid as we were able to match it to the dim skyline. There is a light on the southern entrance point of Refuge, but it is advised as unreliable.

The inshore passage to Welshpool is deep in close and cuts hours off the journey, instead of going off-shore to use the leads. But a depth sounder is needed, especially for yachts, and caution should be exercised near the Mt. Singapore-Entrance Point section where sandbars abound. AUS801 is essential to avoid premature grey hairs.

When the anchor hit bottom so did we, with the alarm set for 0300hrs to check position.

Regretfully we had to ignore the beauty of Refuge Cove with its clean sandy beach, and at 0600hrs we pressed on for the Glennies, 35km away around the bottom of the Promontory. The weather had caused too many delays, as usual.

Our intention to stay overnight was scuppered later in the day when Westernport Safety Council Marine Radio advised of unfavourable northerlies on the morrow. The radio operator there is a gem and had kept our families in touch with us throughout the voyage. Mersey Radio has another terrific operator, his cheerful voice passing on information and snippets of news. Everyone we met praised his work and concern.

Using what was left of a light westerly the old girl, with a tired-out crew, struck off into the sunset, heading NW for a 144km night sail to Flinders or Woolamai - 88km along the track, depending on where the stamina foundered. The tide of course was foul.

It was then that Sod's Law leaped out of the bilges and dropped everything - the wind, low clouds, rain and poor visibility, but handed out one sop, calm

seas. We could have detoured to nearby Waratah Bay but past experience had taught us that it's a trap with many disadvantages (we avoid it like the plague), so we finally plodded the full distance to Flinders under motor and main, tottering in at 1000hrs.

Not a night to be forgotten, either. The Woolamai light and the coast had been completely obscured by thick cloud, hazarding our DR. The RDF, fortunately, picked up the Wonthaggi aero beacon and we used this rough bearing with our compass and depth sounder to guard our distance-off. We were able to pick a safe passage along the coast until a shabby first light struggled through the rotten conditions.

Rest? Not on your life. We hitch-hiked to nearby Flinders township for fuel, and later shaved off our Alley-Oop beards - we feared for our lives at home.

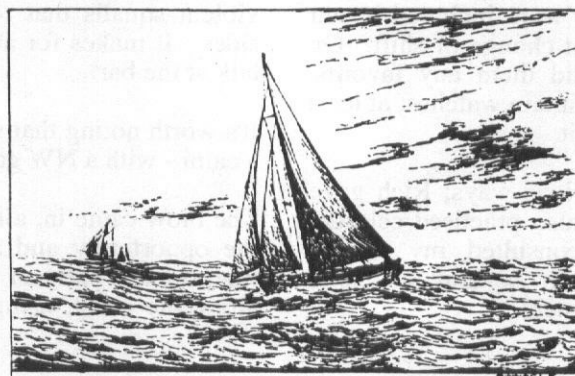
Stormy northerlies kept us weather-bound for the customary two days. Finally, on a routine anchor check in the early hours, Richard noticed calm, clear conditions, although the immediate forecast was "vigorous lows ... 20-30 knots ... gusting to 40 knots ... Strong Wind Warning for Port Phillip Bay ... Gale Warning for Bass Strait ..." At the least, another day's delay.

We went. Our tide times had already been carefully pre-calculated for Flinders and the Heads, so by 0500hrs we were hugging the coast all the way to the Port Phillip entrance. We skirted the base of Cape Schanck in a strong attempt to use what was left of the flood to carry us up to the Lonsdale lighthouse where we were successful in entering on the last of the slackwater flood, using the Eastern Leads.

We were in - the dangerous ebb could now do what it liked.

Sod smirked at everybody and sat back. The Rip was as calm as a mill-pond, with scuba divers poking around in the entrance. It became a beautiful, mild, sunny day with yachts and launches everywhere. Can you beat it? We had a quiet sail up the West Channel to the Sandringham YC, arriving bright eyed and bushy-tailed at 1800hrs, logging 1370 sea miles in 33 days and, looking back on it, hard miles all the way.

We knew it wouldn't be easy, but what a challenge!



Roaring Forties Venture

CLARRIE AND RICHARD RULE

To: The President
Cruising Association of Victoria

This is to inform you, the Office Bearers, and the Club, that Richard and I will be departing Sandringham Yacht Club in either mid-October or early November 1980 in an attempt to sail non-stop around the world by way of the Southern Ocean in our yacht 'Seasalter'.

We were unable to make our intentions known any earlier as we had several things to finalize, but currently the way is clear and the 'get ready' list has been whittled down to a meagre 2000 memos.

All the same, we are well into our preparations and should have the boat slipped at SYC by the time this Newsletter comes out.

The voyage: SYC start line - shape a course to pass south of New Zealand's Stewart Island (below the South Island) - Cape Horn - east of the Falklands - northwards to approximately 43 south latitude - pass well south of The Cape of Good Hope to miss some of the sea effects there - possibly northwards to 39 or 40 south and on to Australia's Cape Leeuwin - Cape Otway - the Heads - and SYC's finish line (presuming all goes well with the aforesaid...)

Sponsorship: We are financing the venture ourselves, but are being sponsored for five storm sails by Neil Pryde Sailmakers, Hong Kong (agent here: Bob Keeley Sails), and these 12oz sails will be a welcome addition to our heavy-weather sail locker. Anchor Marine are also helping the venture, for which we are most grateful.

The boat: 'Seasalter'. 12 metre cutter, 15 tons, Huon Pine hull, canoe stern, straight keel, ex-cruiser racer and proven sea-boat. Built 1935 at Birkenhead, Adelaide. Harrison Butler design 'Aristene' (Ketch). We are owners 12A. 'Seasalter' served as a Patrol Yacht, armed with hand-grenades, during WWII, for Port of Adelaide Defence after the Japanese submarine attack on Sydney Harbour, 1942. She is registered as a British Ship. The original owner resides in England.

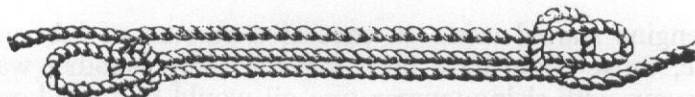
With El Presedente's permission, may we cordially invite Cruising Association Victoria members along on the day to see us off?

Yours in sailing

Clarrie and Richard Rule.

The Rule brothers did in fact depart for their round the world voyage in 1980. Regrettably, due to leaking garboards, they were forced to turn back after only covering a short distance. Several years later a second attempt was undertaken, but the will and inclination had gone. They soon turned back and subsequently decided to sell 'Seasalter'.

P.C.



An Ex-Editor Thinks



A well thumbed copy of Erskine Childers only novel 'The Riddle of the Sands' lives on our saloon bookshelf. It is sandwiched between two other classics of small boat sailing - Slocum's 'Sailing Alone Around the World' and Maurice Griffiths 'Magic of the Swatchways'.

Who was Erskine Childers? Educated at Haileybury and then with a First in Law from Trinity College, Cambridge he was appointed a Clerk in the House of Commons in 1893. He served as a trooper in the Boer War, ran a cargo of rifles into Howth Harbour in 1914 in his yacht 'Asgard' to aid the struggle for Irish self-rule yet served as a Lieutenant-Commander in the RNVR during the First War. He opposed the compromise Irish Free State set up under Lloyd George's Government in 1921 and fought on the side of the anti-Treaty forces in the civil war which followed. He was captured by Free State soldiers and executed by firing squad on 24 November 1922.

Childers owned a number of cruising boats and wrote articles on his cruises in the journals of the Royal Cruising Club. His best known boat was the 'Asgard', one of the few yachts designed by Colin Archer. She is still in existence - but only just. After a period under private ownership in the Falmouth area she returned to Ireland and represented that country as a sail training vessel, taking part in various Tall Ship Races. She was not ideal for this and after a larger vessel had been purpose-built 'Asgard' was retired and put on show in Kilmainham gaol, in Dublin.

She is still deteriorating there today but there seems a good chance that funds may be made available for a complete restoration to enable her to sail again.

What started me off mentioning 'The Riddle of the Sands' is that a sequel has just been published. 'The Shadow in the Sands' by Sam Llewellyn (ISBN 0 7472 2191 X). Does it come off? You'll have to borrow a copy from your local library!

* * * * *

There are advantages to being married to a mathematician. A recent article in Classic Boat quoted the formula for Thames Tonnage as $(L - B) \times B^2$ all divided by 188. This looked wrong. Everyone knows the formula is $(L - B) \times B \times 1/2B$ all divided by 94.

I was just going to write and point out the error to the magazine but fortunately asked Priscilla to have a look at the two formula. She pointed out that $94 \times 2 = 188$ and that $B \times 1/2B$ can be written $B^2/2$. $L - B$ is common to both and hence the two are identical.

However, the magazine did not mention that the L in the formula should be the Length Between Perpendiculars (LBP) - that is from the forad edge of the stem to the after side of the sternpost. This is the same as LOA for a vessel with a transom but a shorter measurement if she has a counter or canoe stern.

It will be noted that the formula does not include draught or depth of hull. Hence a plumb stemmed, transom sterned, clog drawing over 6ft could be the same Thames tonnage as a long-ended, shallow draught centre-board skimming dish. Despite this apparent anomaly it was common practice among yachtsmen, before the glass fibre revolution, to describe their boats in terms of Thames tonnage.

* * * * *

Last season our diesel engine started using an excessive amount of lubricating oil. A possible, though somewhat remote, cause could have been that the sump breather was blocked. Hence as pressure built up in the sump with rising temperature oil would be forced up into the cylinders. I could not find a breather, not could the yard engineer. We telexed the main agent who indicated we should look in the rocker-boxes. All was then revealed.

A narrow tube protruded a couple of inches above each cylinder head. This tube connected with the air port in the head and so any excess air forced into the rocker-box from the crankcase was drawn into the cylinder. This was an interesting discovery but we have still to solve the problem of our excess oil consumption.

Wood screws are made in a variety of lengths and sizes. As far as length is concerned the increments are:

- up to 1" long - every 1/8"
- 1" to 3" long - every 1/4"
- 3" to 5" long - every 1/2"

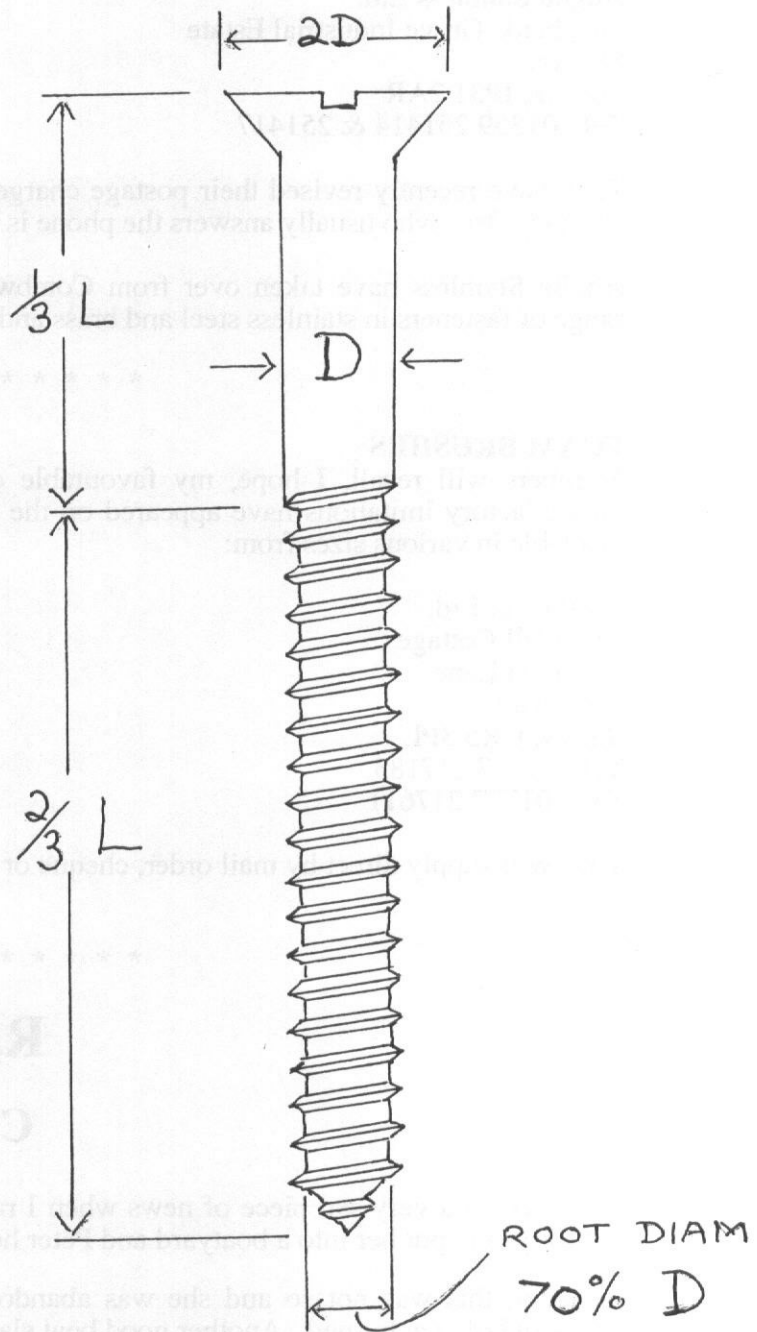
Sizes are numbered 1 to 24 depending on the diameter of the shank - D in my sketch. It is quite unusual to find any odd numbered sizes in stock at a local hardware shop or yacht chandlery. Common sizes range from 3/4" No. 4's to 3" No. 14's.

Although the boatbuilding text books condemn the use of brass screws, and I heartily agree, it is not unusual to see them being used even in yards that in the past have had a good reputation. Silicon bronze, though more expensive, is a far superior material. (See page 36 for details of a reliable supplier.)

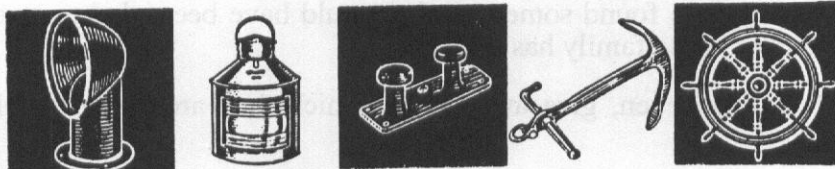
All screws are threaded for 2/3 of their overall length. The head diameter is almost exactly twice the shank diameter and the diameter of the root of the threads is approximately 70% of the diameter of the shank. See sketch.

It is a common misconception that wood screws are tapered. Wood screws are not tapered. The diameter of the shank and the diameter of the outer edge of the threads are the same until a couple of threads above the bottom.

When using a screw it is necessary to pre-drill two holes. One the same diameter and length as the shank and the other (the pilot hole) to accommodate all the thread except for the very end where it comes to a point. The general rule for the diameter of the pilot hole is 90% of the root diameter in hardwood and 70% in softwood.



Mark Miller



Useful & Reliable Suppliers

SILICON BRONZE SCREWS, BOLTS, WASHERS & NUTS

These are available in a wide range of Imperial sizes from:

Anglia Stainless Ltd.
Shepherds Grove Industrial Estate
Stanton
Suffolk, IP31 2AR
Tel: 01359 251414 & 251417

They have recently revised their postage charges, downwards, and now accept payment by plastic. The lady, Iris, who usually answers the phone is very helpful and knows the business.

Anglia Stainless have taken over from Combwich Marine Enterprises. They also supply a wide range of fasteners in stainless steel and brass and also copper boat nails.

* * * * *

FOAM BRUSHES

Members will recall, I hope, my favourable comments on these in Newsletter No. 42. Some unsatisfactory imitations have appeared on the market. However the real thing, a Jenny Brush, is available in various sizes from:

Westwater Ltd.
The Well Cottage
Doghurst Lane
Chipstead
Surrey, CR5 3PL
Tel: 01737 217183
Fax: 01737 217611

They will supply direct by mail order, cheque or card.

M.M.

* * * * *

R.I.P.

Chloë

I received a very sad piece of news when I rang Peter Moseley. 'Chloë's owner, after neglecting her for years, put her into a boatyard and Peter hoped she was there to be brought into good repair.

Sadly, this was not so and she was abandoned until she outstayed her welcome and she was "disposed of" i.e. burned. Another good boat slaughtered.

Peter said he wrote to someone. He said, the secretary (male), but couldn't remember the name. Maybe it was a member whose address had changed for he had no reply. What a pity he didn't tell me. We could probably have found someone who would have been glad to rescue her. It almost feels as though a member of the family has died.

Why don't people sell or, even, give away boats which they are either unable or unwilling to maintain?

O.J.J.B.

LOOSE ENDS



ASSOCIATION BURGEEES
HOUSE FLAGS £8.00
ASSOCIATION TIES £6.00
Available from the Hon. Treasurer

* * * * *

BOATS FOR SALE

'OMEGA OF BROOM'

26' 10" x 22' 6" W.L. x 8' 9" x 4' 9" 7.5 T.M.
Southampton Launch & Boat Co. 1939
Pitch-pine on oak, mahogany and teak brightwork, three/four berths
1994 18 h.p. Yanmar auxiliary. Bermudian Sloop rig
Completely restored as featured Boatman Magazine September 1995
Lying: Cornwall
Apply owner 01579 350137 or agent 01905 356482

'COBBER' Z4 Tonner

21' 9" x 19' W.L. x 7' 2" x 4' 4" 4 T.M.
Alfred Lockhart Ltd. 1939
Pitch-pine on oak, teak sheerplanks and brightwork, two berths and two pipecotts
Bermudian Sloop rig. Reconditioned 8 h.p. Stuart-Turner auxiliary
Lying: Hampshire
Apply owner 01273 401076 or agent 01905 356482

'CHIQUITA' Z4 Tonner No. 22

21' x 19' W.L. x 7' 1" x 4' 4" 4 T.M.
Alfred Lockhart (Marine) Ltd. 1939
Pitch-pine on oak, teak brightwork, four berths, Blake heads, galley
1996 9 h.p. Yanmar auxiliary. Bermudian Sloop rig. Planned Spring 1999 refit
Lying: East Coast
Apply owner 01379 566241 or agent 01905 356482

'IBIS' Cyclone

21' 4" x 19' W.L. x 7' 2" x 3' 10" 3.6 T.M.
Feltham of Portsmouth 1935
Pitch-pine on oak, mahogany brightwork, two berths and pipecot, Taylors stove
Gaff Cutter rig. Major 1992/93 refit
Lying: N. France
Apply agents 01548 531217

CALENDAR EVENTS

3 - 11 July	HAMBLE WEEK (Royal Southern Yacht Club)
17 - 18 July	THAMES TRADITIONAL BOAT RALLY (Henley on Thames)
31 July - 2 August	PLYMOUTH CLASSICS (See letters page)
31 July - 7 August	COWES WEEK
4 - 6 August	FOWEY CLASSICS
6 August	FASTNET RACE
6 - 7 August	FALMOUTH CLASSICS
10 - 19 September	SOUTHAMPTON BOAT SHOW
2 October	HBA LAYING-UP SUPPER (Royal Southampton Yacht Club) (See separate notice)

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