



THE HARRISON BUTLER ASSOCIATION



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SUMMER 2004

www.HarrisonButlerAssociation.org

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February 2004 to February 2005

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Argo

THE HARRISON BUTLER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

No. 59

Summer

2004

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Memory

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.

President's Letter

The Crag
June 2004

Dear Members

This is probably letter No. 57 and I realise that my missives have become rather stereotypical with accounts of AGMs and April B&S Lunches or Laying up Suppers and October B&S Lunches so I wonder if they have become a bit boring. I hope not as they do need to be read because they contain information as well.

Starting with the AGM, we acknowledged the valuable contribution which Paul Cowman had made as Editor and welcomed Bill Edwards as his successor. Bill is also O.C. Website, the title of which is: www.HarrisonButlerAssociation.org. It has already generated some interesting correspondence including a letter from the present owners of *Fiddlers Green* in Canada after many years in limbo. I had been slightly suspicious since hearing that she was a gaff-rigged Englyn and even more so when I learned that she had been built in the fifties as I had not supplied the design. Photographs came and I had to write one of the letters I hate saying that she was "derived from" and not authentic. Another went to someone in New Zealand.

You have all (I hope) had copies of Minutes which I hope you will read. They are they much more accurate than my memory. Janet Band was not at the meeting so we did not have the codicil about Senior Associate Members but I prevailed upon her to compose one after the April B&S lunch. This will have to be agreed upon at the AGM and we shall publish it in the next newsletter.

We are now looking for a new Chairman to take over from Keith who will have sat, I hope comfortably, in the Chair for, I think, six years. We generally have a change after such a period though some occupants have decided on shorter terms of office. Proposals to me please, male or female. Whoever is elected should be prepared to attend at least three consecutive AGMs and if possible to attend some of our other functions. It is not a very onerous post but you can put into it as much as you like. Most of the day to day running is concerned either with financial, editorial or membership matters and they are dealt with accordingly.

Several HB boat are now on the market: *Ardglass* (Cyclone II); *Argo*; *Mayfly* (Pepin); *Omega of Broom* (Omega); *Peradventurer* (Englyn); *Watermaiden* (Rose of Arden); *Zest* (Zyclon Z4), *Selamat* (Dream of Arden with raised topsides) and *Mischief III* (Yonne). I don't remember when so many of the larger boats were for sale at the same time. *Watermaiden* is back from Spain and I think lies off Mashfords at Cremyll. I had a long telephone conversation with Geoff Taylor very recently.

A Russian training-ship came into Falmouth last week, departed, and returned the same day and then left again. The *Meer* and a floating crane for use in the lifting of a French trawler off Lizard is alongside one of the docksides and there has been a lot of marine activity while I have been here. Sadly when the training ship left, only her fore-and-aft sails were set, nine of them. She went out of sight before the square sails were set. With a SW wind that was not surprising. We had a terrific gale here on June 23rd, the wind getting to force 11, 41 knots. I took great care not to be blown over! For a change it was a daylight gale and I was able to appreciate the visual aspects without being affected by it: Carrick Roads teeming with white horses though from our high-up viewpoint one can't appreciate the height of the waves.

I think the April B&S Lunch was the best we have had due in large measure to the superb weather which followed a wonderful sunset the previous evening. We have a 180° skyscape here so see the

weather in all its moods. We were able to sit on the terrace and bake in the sun or enjoy the shade within.

Keith and Janet stayed here for the weekend: Janet had rushed back from abroad on Friday evening and arrived on Saturday. We went to St Just church on the Sunday and then across the Fal in the King Harry Ferry for lunch at Trellisick, our local N.T. property. After lunch we walked around the garden and among the hundred or so other visitors I managed to pick on a couple of complete strangers of which the wife turned out to be ex-wife of one of our members! My life is peppered with coincidences (known as me riding on my broomstick).

Prima made her début at the Beale Park Boat Show in mid-June and received compliments and admiring glances. One man made many visits and if he can make suitable mooring arrangements in Scotland is likely to buy her. "Period pieces" have their attractions. (see May 2004 Classic Boat)

It says much for Mike's and Kailas's building prowess that they were invited to become Associate Members of the Wooden Boat Builders Trade's Association. This is a signal honour; never before has it been offered to ex-students more or less straight from college and usually people apply for membership, so it's congratulations to Kaila and Mike.

I received recently a letter from Dick Wynne, Honorary Secretary of the Albert Strange Association (ASA), saying that with my permission he would like to register the HBA as honorary members of the ASA. I spoke to Keith about this and we agreed that it was a good suggestion and that we should reciprocate with honorary membership of the HBA for the ASA. This will not of course afford voting rights nor other constitutional benefits but is a general friendly arrangement and they will become welcome at our functions and we shall reciprocate with exchange of newsletters. I have already received a copy of 'Jib & Mizzen' and I was able to thank Dick in person in the ASA tent at the Show along with Jamie Clay. Dick's letter is reproduced. Our interests run along parallel lines as did those of my father and A.S. who used to visit THB from time to time to have his eyes examined. We have members in both camps and I also was a ASA member in its very early days.

It wouldn't be me if I didn't mention subscriptions. I wouldn't have to if you all paid up as you should! If you haven't, please do so, £10 plus arrears to Peter Crook who has all the electronic devices to make it easier for those who are not square, or as I am, cuboid. As an alternative, Standing Orders simplify Peter's job and save all the remembering and reminders and (eventually) crossing off of bilge-rats from our membership.

This letter is shorter than usual, I think, (sighs of relief all round) but the Rouen Cruise item is rather long. In another version there is a lovely non sequitur: '*We cleaned the plugs for the umpteenth time and discovered that Joan had chickenpox*'. A unique form of divination or diagnosis?

Please remember that my forgetory is improving daily so, remind me if I should be sending you anything or if I haven't answered your letter(s). And please accept my apologies.

Peter Mather's telephone number has changed to 01353 669510. He is on the verge of moving to Amble, Northumberland and we hope to have his new information in time for the Year Book.

Please note these dates:

Laying-up Supper at Woodbridge. September 18th. Attendance forms should accompany this newsletter.

AGM. February 26th 2005. Notice will go with the next newsletter. No excuses for ‘previous engagements, they will be subsequent!

I hope to see lots of members at each event.

With my best wishes for happy sailing, or laying-up, according to your hemisphere.

as ever

Joan.

P.S. I have recently seen two copies of sale particulars of HB boats in which the lines are reproduced. This is factually in breach of copyright. I do not wish for my father’s designs to be made public without permission.

P.P.S. Great news! *Memory* has surfaced i.e., her whereabouts have been made known to us by Shane Creedon, son of her owner, also know as Shane Creedon who lives in the Dublin area. *Memory* is a very special boat being the first of my father’s designs to have been built in the UK in 1912. She is in need of TLC which is not surprising when you remember that she is five years older than I am and a little restoration wouldn’t come amiss with me. Philip Byrne, her previous owner has also been in touch and has her welfare at heart. We shall pursue the matter and hope to have more to report in the next letter.



‘Tramontana’ (left foreground) Racing at Penarth Regatta 1959(see Correspondence)

Taken from an original photograph belonging to Peter Ward
A Cayua Design – the largest HB design?

Editorial

I always find it fascinating how our lives these days are constantly flipping from the old to new technology. Sitting here typing up THB's log of the *Vindilis* 1938 Cruise to Rouen (Page 14) is a good example. I say 'typing up' but what I really should be saying now is "speaking up" because I am using 'Speech Recognition' to copy Joan's handwritten translation straight from *Vindilis*' log book – possibly almost as much a challenge as the cruise itself must have been!

Thank you for those of you who have sent your comments and experiences for the Newsletter – Your Newsletter. My attempt to make the 'Editing' easier by using 'voice recognition' came up with some amusing translations: The weather forecast in Geoff Taylor's account of returning to England from Spain in *Watermaiden* ended up as "*No girls were forecast during the whole 28 days!*" Perhaps nearer to the mark the word 'Surveyor' in Mark's article appeared as '*Subversive*'. Incidentally, I did like Geoff Taylor's advice in his cruise home log of: "*saving the adrenalin for more worthy occasions*", how true.

Our Website continues to help with communication. For example, an email out of the blue from Shane Creedon, helped confirm the whereabouts of *Memory*. There have been other contacts which are referred to in the Newsletter. Again the mix of old and new technology is evident and it is very satisfying to watch this part of the Association develop.

On a personal note, my attempts to discover more about the history of my own yacht – *Caracole* – and in particular, its rescue from Turkey have drawn a blank. The man who actually recovered her was a John Jackson of Mylor. I spent a morning telephoning round Boatyards and Marinas in the Falmouth area to try and track him down but to no avail. One or two remembered the name but that was it. Obviously, I would be very grateful for any new leads. Peter Ward very kindly wrote to me with his memories of Charles Rayner to whom I referred in the last Newsletter. Again, under the heading of writing about the people who own and sail HB yachts, this is well worth a read.

It was also very interesting to read Dick Wynne's letter from the Albert Strange Association to Joan and the very thoughtful invitation to make our Association an honorary member. It reminded me of membership I had of another Association which I have just left. I got so fed up with hearing from some Members about how important the numbers of sides (4) the mainsail should have that my sense of humour finally failed. I suppose by their very nature Associations such as ours are exclusive but we all form part of an important sailing heritage in this country and it is good to see similar Associations communicating with one another. Enough politics!

I hope you enjoy this latest communication and for those of you who are out sailing your HB yachts please do let me have your pictures and extracts from logs. For a relatively small group members are making some epic voyages in HB yachts. At the AGM I heard about Richard Hunn's round Britain trip last summer in *Zephon*. I guess I am not the only one of us who dreams of doing such a thing so perhaps Richard will encourage us by telling us his story (please)?



July 2004



Correspondence

(email) Dear Bill,

Memory

I have found your website by accident and pure coincidence. My father happens to be the owner of an original *Memory* design. The boat was built in 1912 and he has full history and design information regarding it. He bought the boat around 1977 to 78 and spent a considerable length of time restoring it back to its former glory. We both sailed her around Dublin Bay for many years.

I have progressed to more modern craft and currently sail a Gibsea 33 (please don't immediately delete as I know there is no comparison) however, to make matters worse poor *Memory* is now sitting in my father's garden looking rather sad. He has suffered ill-health over the last several years and whilst he had always spent more time maintaining the boat rather than sailing her he has been unable to keep up the work.

I live in Kent and both my parents (now in their very older years) live in Dublin, I would be very happy to obtain more information for your website if you're interested. Also I am sure that my father would be more than happy to discuss the sale of the yacht to an enthusiastic HB follower if one was interested, she is however in a bit of a state.

Yours truly

Shane Creedon



Dear Paul

Ard Chuan

Enclosed is a print of *Ard Chuan* speaking to a French naval vessel in mid-Atlantic some years ago I believe *Ard Chuan* is a large 'Cyclone' - could be wrong. Who owns/did own/first owner I do not know. I found a print among my souvenirs and the letter accompanying it must be somewhere in the files I passed on to Joan years ago when she heroically took on the position of Secretary. Perhaps I should have sent this print direct to her, but I thought it might be of interest in the Newsletter.



Where *Ard Chuan* is now I have no idea. She was in the West Indies an age ago.

Regards

Ron Goodhand



Dear Bill,

Guardrails, Safety & Self-Steering Vanes

There seems to be some debate about guardrails, safety and self-steering vanes. We won't be seeing Mark Miller at Joan's HB meeting at the Crag on May 24th, to continue the discussion, so I felt I must write with some of our experiences. We have sailed *Dindy*, a Cyclone II, for several years with no guardrails or means of steering other than a hand on tiller. This has included two, three month cruises to Ireland and one to Scotland starting and finishing from Mylor, our homeport. Crew is two people plus cat.

At odd times over 30 years of sailing, I have sailed offshore without guardrails, but I must say I feel safer with them. I know all about not relying on them and how they can be a problem getting someone back on board from the water. After much debate about spoiling her pretty lines and being tripped up by the rails we have installed guardrails on *Dindy*, at the proper height and bolted through the deck. They have not spoilt her lines and I feel so much happier moving around the deck. If they are securely installed they can stop you going overboard, plus, we now have something to tie the fors'ls, to get them off the deck.

Regarding vane steering. However much I enjoy helming, hand steering a boat on long passages, with a crew of two, can be a chore. Unfortunately the cat adds nothing to the crewing of the boat other than being able to smell land as we get close to it! This year, for a cruise to the Outer Hebrides we have installed a third man – 'Norm' in the guise of the wind vane made locally at Indian Queens. If all works as it should I am positive it will make life a lot easier - I will be able to make that vital cup of tea at 02:00 hrs when we are sailing on a beautiful reach of all is at peace with the world.

In passing we have also finally discarded the Taylor's paraffin cooker (50 years old), and installed an 'Origo' alcohol stove. Hopefully we can now forget the art of pumping,

cleaning blackened overheads and saucepans, flare-ups and being accused of "not having the burners hot enough".

I will keep you informed regarding the vane steering and new cooker. We hope to explore the Outer Hebrides (again) and possibly go out to St Kilda, very much depending on the weather, so let's hope it's a good summer for everyone.

Jan Robson



Dear Joan

Albert Strange Association

Having not long ago become Secretary of this Association, I thought I would drop you a line enclosing, with our compliments, the first issue of our new magazine. With your permission I will register your Association as an honorary member of our own, if it is not already, and send future issues with the frequency stated on the cover. I have yet to fully plumb the depths of our correspondence archive, and it may be that contact between us has been established in the past. Since Albert Strange and your father were well acquainted it may be a good idea to maintain a regular communication, with the prospect that further light may be shed on the work of either designer as a result, and I hope you agree.

Incidentally I have a keen interest myself (not, so far, exercised) in traditional methods of yacht design, and of course have the HB book on the subject.

Yours sincerely

Dick Wynne

Honorary Secretary
Albert Strange Association



Dear Bill

Charles Rayner

The article written by Charles Rayner in the last newsletter was a wonderful reminder to me of the many happy hours I spent in the late Fifties early Sixties sailing in the Bristol Channel in *Eider Duck* - the boat then owned by the Rayners. She was a 9 ton gaff cutter built by Howard of Maldon in 1900.

Charles was a great friend and a wonderful character. He was much older than me and when we first met about 1956 or so, I was then an apprentice with the Bristol Aerospace Company. A fellow apprentice and I acquired the hull of a hard chine 16 footer which was the first effort of an amateur builder, which he decided he could improve on, so he sold us the bare hull keeping all the rest of the gear for the Mark II. As apprentices we had very little cash, but managed to beg and steal enough junk to get the boat sailing. The maiden voyage - a very foolhardy voyage - was from Weston-super-Mare to Ilfracombe. This was quite a voyage for such a small boat, with the minimum of gear and of course, no engine. Even the ex-lifeboat heavy ash oars were acquired in a very dubious fashion from Charlie Mills shipyard.

On arrival at Ilfracombe we entered the inner harbour which was the favourite place for the very few cruising yachts to visit in those days. This was because you could dry the boat out on the relatively hard sandy bottom, ideal for any work or antifouling to be done in pleasant surroundings. We moored in the close vicinity to a large and interesting looking cruising yacht - *Eider Duck*. Charles was attending to some maintenance or other and we got talking. He was amazed at our voyage and he admired our enterprise. We instantly made friends with the family and we were asked over for some lovely meals and pleasant yarn swapping. At 19 years old I was already a veteran sailor having sailed on Lake Windermere and Torbay since I was 12, besides there was the lovely daughter, Ann, who kept very aloof from us disreputable and ill kempt voyagers.

Charles and I kept in touch because it appeared that although there was considerable age difference we had a great deal in common. He was a brilliant photographer and was often published in the yachting press. Even then I always carried a camera. Charles used a huge press camera and he taught me a great deal. I was never a good photographer but it gave me great pleasure. Charles was also a great car enthusiast, and so was I. His principle was to buy an old but high quality car, run it until it broke, and then buy another. Of course in those days you could buy large cars for very little.

After the death of his dear wife he bought a little cottage in Pill on the mouth of the Avon. This muddy little creek had also once been the home of the Bristol Pilots and many Cutters were built there. This was Charles' home port and Tide Cottage was a stone's throw from the Creek.

I visited the cottage a few times. Charles was also a great music lover and introduced me to the wonderful Mozart clarinet concerto played on his homemade hi-fi equipment. There was very little he could not make, mend or improve. On one visit he showed me a series of articles he had written for 'Motorsport' magazine. One was entitled "Running a Grand Prix Bugatti on the Road". He had owned several Bugattis before the war.

Charles, ever the connoisseur, of course, introduced me to the Harrison Butler designed yacht and it was his ambition to own one. One dark summer night we were moored in Barry, probably sitting in the cockpit yarning about boats when a yacht was seen in the harbour entrance. We leapt up to assist the crew to come alongside. They were cold and wet as it was always wet in the Bristol Channel. We were invited aboard for a drink, a bunk cushion was lifted to reveal a dozen or so bottles of whisky and around the cabin table one of these was consumed. I don't think Charles made much of a contribution, as I don't ever remember him drinking alcoholic drinks. It was a pleasant time in interesting company and the yacht was the *Judy Ann*

which in those days we all thought was a Harrison Butler design. Since then disproved by Joan, but she was certainly an HB inspired boat and very lovely to. Since then we discussed HB boats for many hours. We sailed in the company of the great *Tramontana*, a Cayuca Design, kept by Norman Alexander in Barry and we had raced in the Penarth Regatta against another HB Yacht but I can't remember her name. It could have been *Salute* but I haven't seen the name in any of the HB lists.

When in the late Sixties I moved to Poole I kept sporadic correspondence with Charles and learned that he had bought *Caracole*. He had of course tried to sell dear old *Eider Duck* and he wrote to offer her to me for ridiculously low figure. I had to turn it down because I could not afford it having just bought a plywood 23 footer and I felt that the maintenance of an old 9 tonner was to be too much for me. Charles said he was desperate to get away and I could have her anyway and pay him in instalments. I regret I still turned the offer down and I don't know what happened to her. The next time I saw Charles was at the London Boat Show in the early Seventies. We talked for a while and he told me that *Caracole* was in Spezia and I was welcome to come out there for a holiday. I never did as I got a job with the Decca Survey Company and went to Nigeria and the Middle East and lost touch. Then I read in Yachting Monthly the terrible news of his death.

Much later, when in Cowes with *Peradventure*, I came across *Caracole* again. Ron Matthews had bought her from Charles' daughter, Ann. He had then done a lot of very fine work on her. He had altered the cabin top to be very similar to that of *Peradventure*, that is to say extended forward of the mast to make the fo'csal more habitable. This had been done to *Peradventure* by the builders Anderson, Rigden & Perkins much against THB's advice to the owner. We sailed in company to Poole but *Caracole* left us standing and arrived in Poole well ahead of us mainly due to a magnificent masthead Genoa that Ron had made for *Caracole*. That was my last encounter with her, about 1981 I think.

Charles was a good friend and a great influence on me. I can see him now, as always wearing a navy blue beret, at the helm of *Eider Duck* and I am most grateful to have known him.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Ward



(email) Dear Bill

Kelana

We were previous owners of an HB Z4 "Kelana", which after several years of good sailing and refit work we sold her to her new owner last year. We did much interesting and gratifying work on her to bring her into the condition that she was sold in, and many photos together with a brief story of that activity are available, but again Mark the new owner would have to be consulted and agree to same etc.



As for websites, I am a great fan of these, and if used correctly can be very informative and helpful.

Terrance Wilson



Watermaiden

A Cruise Home - June 2004

By Geoff Taylor

I arrive back on 12 June to find England basking in glorious sunshine under blue skies. The final run in from the Lizard to Plymouth Sound was one of the best sails I have enjoyed for a long time, with a quartering NW wind of about Force 4 and not much sea running. This section of the trip was in the daylight hours so was doubly pleasurable.

I anchored in Cawsand Bay at the entrance to the Sound and, perfectly protected, I passed a restful night. I motored round into the Tamar and picked up the mooring which a friend and I share. This was a lassoing job as a pickup buoy and mooring strop had not yet been fitted after servicing. I was glad that I had not pushed on to the mooring the night before as the task would have been decidedly more difficult in the dark. While being accused, perhaps only in my own mind, of being rather cautious I do find that this approach does lead to a rather less traumatic lifestyle, with a consequent saving of adrenaline for more worthy occasions. I was glad to have taken the snug anchorage easy option the night before.

The trip from Ayamonte, a Spanish town 2 miles inland on the River Guardiana, which forms the border between the eastern Algarve of Portugal and Spain, had taken 28 days, and was particularly tedious due to light winds, head winds (also light) and calms. No gales were forecast during the whole 28 days for sea areas well out into the Atlantic and south to the Canaries. The dominant weather feature initially was a thundery depression stationary on the Portuguese Atlantic coast. This produced light winds, and calms which, together with long rolling seas coming in from the West made it a rather tedious business working my way NNW from C.St Vincent. The trip along the Algarve coast had been swift and enjoyable with a brisk easterly which had, however, eased right off as we rounded the Cape.

During these calms I saw for the first time small crabs, a couple of inches across, swimming near the surface. On another occasion and on several subsequent days there were literally thousands of small Portuguese man o' war jellyfish. It was as though they had all hatched (or whatever the appropriate process is) simultaneously. I have, in the past, often seen the full sized specimens which are a regular feature particularly in summer out near the Azores, but the tiny, young specimens I had never seen.

Also during the slow progress north I had a large whale alongside but after once surfacing he submerged and did not return. That is three times now that I have seen a whale on this coast. It could well be the sole inhabitant of the area, who checks floating objects in case they may be family members or friends.

By the time I got to the latitude of Lisbon the wind had gone ahead and I was forced offshore until I was about 100 or so miles west of the coast. This is no disadvantage as it keeps clear of shipping and shore effects in the weather pattern.

A favourable change in the wind enabled me to head to north for about five days which brought me about 60 miles north of the north coast of Spain. About 450 miles in a direct line from Plymouth. At this point in the NE winds came along, and thoughts of a quick run home evaporated. However they were not strong so I took the starboard tack to make northing and as the wind slowly veered over the next few days my NW course gradually swung round to NNE until, when I crossed into sea area Sole I was at about $13\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W longitude. After a couple of days of variable winds a Westerly settled in and progress was due east all the way home except for northerly deviation towards the

Lizard, as they were forecasting a veer to the NW and I did not want to be caught too far south of the coast in the event of the veer continuing into the north. Also seas closer to the shore would be calmer. This was in fact the case and the last day's run was sailing at its best.

I shall keep *Watermaiden* on the mooring to the summer and if she should not sell I have the offer of undercover storage which would enable me to carry out some maintenance although as usual she performed faultlessly. The only minor event on this trip was a stainless extension wire to the running backstay, itself galvanised, which began to strand. I have never liked stainless because of its habit of suddenly failing. This time a lot of the strands broke but the wire did not part. However, on the NIC' 35 that I used to sail, I had three failures of rigging where the 1x19 wire snapped completely. Each time right at that the swage. Twice, fortunately, at deck level but once aloft. In the present instance I had a short strop (jib tack) that I was able to insert while putting in a solid eye with bulldog clips further along the original stainless wire beyond the stranded section. While doing this repair and in order to keep sailing I interchanged port and starboard sections. The repair took about an hour and I later switched them back. I have never had any kind of failure at sea with galvanised rigging and even the flexi main halyard is the one which was installed when I bought *Watermaiden* 27 years ago, as is at least 50% of the other standing rigging.



Vindilis, June Cruise 1938

This is a combination of extracts from Vindilis' Log Book and Joan's recollections 'of a very enjoyable cruise'. The ship's complement comprised THB, her mother Nellie, her cousin Norman Lainé (who often sailed with them) and Joan.

- June 17th
Saturday 'We left Hampton-in-Arden at 3.45 pm reaching Swanwick Shore at about 7.45, delayed by having to have the brakes let down as they were hot [does that ever happened nowadays?]. Norman was waiting for us in Moody's yard. We got aboard in two dinghy trips, supped, and turned in at midnight.
- June 18th We slipped our mooring at 7 am and went down the Hamble under power and alternated between sail and power down the Solent as the wind kept disappearing. We reached Yarmouth Isle of Wight at about 4.30 pm and tied up alongside Kezia for the night. My mother, Norman and I went ashore for petrol. We saw the Empress of Britain; a Union Castle vessel [I can't read THB's writing for her name], and the Isle of Sark plying their way up the Solent to Southampton. These were regular commuters, except the Empress, before W.W. II.
- June 19th Another 7.0 am start and the log entry says 'Sky overcast and grey, not looking to cheerful for sea passage, but glass rock steady and 9 pm forecast good.
'Needles abeam 8 am, fine, force 4 wind WSW which hardly varied in strength or direction for the whole passage. Furled mizzen and set balloon staysail which we carried until 9.30 pm when we put up the sidelights. We streamed the log at 9.0 am.'
At about noon THB got seasick and retired to his bunk emerging as necessary. This was not an unusual occurrence when he came straight to the boat from work and set off almost immediately on a passage. I myself felt a little, not sick, but "unusual" on the Channel crossing and indeed for a few days afterwards. 'We continued without incident and by 5 pm had done 40 miles, an average of 4.5 knots. By then the wind was aft of the beam with at times quite considerable beam seas. Only twice did we get a spray over the quarter.'
- June 20th At about 10 pm THB had recovered and took the helm and at around midnight began to get occasional glimpses of Antifer and at 12.30 we got a bearing which put us 16 miles from Le Havre Lightship, a position agreeing exactly with the Walker log reading. At about 2.30 am we went about, five miles WNW of Le Havre lightship we hove-to under mainsail alone to wait for daybreak when we had a long push against a foul tide. Log reading at Lightship 77 miles. We got in a muddle with the buoys because the colour of the whistle-buoy differed from that shewn on the chart [RCC, I regret to say but no doubt corrected by now. Maybe the buoys had changed too]. 'From this we went too far south and entered Havre via Le Grand Placard. Passed into the Avant Port at 8.05 am and anchored E of the S Mole. Hoisted the "Q" but no one took the slightest notice!'
THB then slept and at 3.00 pm we got the anchor and motored into the Arrière Port and picked up a fishing boat mooring. When we tried to start the engine to enter Havre it utterly failed so we sailed in. When we had moored a longshore man came off and offered to pilot us through the docks. He took us [THB and Norman] to the customs, P.O. etc. His Normandy French was very difficult to follow'. Business with the customs took a long

time but eventually we got our passports and paid 4 francs.

'We then went to a shop and bought an absolutely indispensable Ladder chart of the Seine, "Carte de Paris à La mer par Canal de Tancarville. Paris. Société d'éditions géographiques maritimes et coloniales" 17 Rue Jacob (V/C) 50 francs". Then I discovered that I had left my papers at the Customs and returned to the Custom House to be told that they have been sent on to the yacht.' They returned to Vindilis in the nick of time for us get to through the docks. Our roundabout route took us via the Bassin de LEure and Garage. We made fast to a "péniche" and our pilot left with 45 francs. The log reports 'A gloomy place. A lot of girls were screaming, with joy or, sadness when we went to sleep.

June 21st

'Got underway at 6.0 am and gave the prescribed three toots on the foghorn and entered the Lock. We have to negotiate three locks entering the Sas (Lock chamber) and Flurial before entering the Canal. Our passage was slow as the engine would only run at half throttle.

'Arrived at Tancarville Lock at 10 am and tied up alongside the péniche "Gelinotte". The lock opened at 1 pm, roughly 3 hours before HW Havre. Then a Mr Brunell, the son of the French instructor on the Britannia came to us and advised us to shift as often barges would want our place. We moved to a corner just outside the Lock. He gave us another valuable book, "Annuaire des Marées pour Le Havre" giving H & LW and, information about the signals flown on the N. jetty etc. He also got us lettuces and petrol.

When the Lock opened the Captain of the Lock told us to stand by and, after a few barges had entered we followed and were put in the left-hand corner, as far out of the way as possible. Warps passed up to bollards, and fenders put out on both sides. We then had to visit the Customs and then the Capitaine d'Éclus, who spoke English. This took a long time and about 25 vessels had been accommodated. Then the river Lock gates opened and a grand scramble took place. The péniche near us gave us a fair squeeze but with fenders on both sides no damage was done. The dinghy astern got an end to end squash but survived!' [I remember terrific turbulence from all of the propellers and ominous creaks.] 'All the trouble was due to the fact that at the moment when we should have moved out the engine failed to start. Joan had to tow with the dinghy but fortunately it burst into life.' [Fortunate indeed for the flood tide sweeping past the exit was so strong that I probably should have not been able to prevent Vindilis from being swept on to the Lock gate. The flood tide comes in like filling a bath whereas the ebb is comparatively gentle.] 'Going out we kept well to starboard to allow for the "flot" outside.

'Once in the Seine all was plain sailing. We set sail to a favourable wind and with the engine going half speed and a favourable wind we covered the ground rapidly. We had entered Tancarville Lock at 1 pm and left at 2.30. At 10.30 we anchored, just before we got to Yville-sur-Seine. We had tried two other places but in each case the anchor just jumped along the bottom, and the lead bounced, and on one occasion brought up fragments of hard chalk. The question of anchorage in the Seine is a serious problem. We eventually stood gently in and got 2 fathoms then 4 when we anchored at 10 pm, giving her 25 fathoms to make sure. Nothing happened during the night low-water.

June 22nd

'Had a good go at the engine and found a large black flake in the passage connecting the float-chamber with the carburetor. We were thinking of

getting underway to get all the flood when Vindilis grounded. Sounding in the dinghy shewed that she had swung onto a ridge and had plenty of water under her forefoot. She lay over for a short time but soon as the flood made, 15 minutes saw her free. At low-water there were some rocks ahead which we might have found very nasty had we grounded near them. If we had gone on a few more miles to Duclair we could have got a proper anchorage. There is a yacht club there with a clubhouse and some yachts at anchor. Those on the left bank were protected by a lighted buoy at each end: only hurricane lamps. The delay at Yville and the fact that we sailed a lot without the engine prevented us getting to Rouen so, at 8 pm we moored with CQR and kedge in 4 fathoms near La Ronce. The kedge seemed to get a bite much sooner than the CQR which seems to be ineffective in any bad holding ground.' [certainly on chalk].

June 23rd 'Flood began at 6 am. Got off at 5.40. Engine now going well. Passed under Transporter Bridge and tied up to Quay wall in Rouen at 11 am. There are no ladders or rings. One has to trust a spectator to make fast to the bollards. Norman leapt from the light board to the quay. With warps fore and aft and the usual springs we lay quite happily and did not bother about the warps. At night high tide she lay off with loose warps. The adjustment of the springs is the most important. Nellie and Norman went ashore first and later on Norman looked after the ship and the rest of us went ashore. The "spire flamme" of the cathedral is made of iron and very beautiful. There are two other large and beautiful churches. All the inhabitants were intensely dowdy and untidy. The women all seemed to be in mourning. There is no suggestion of joie-de-vivre. The men on the bridges give the idea of being morose and some of the workmen give a clenched fist salute? [I explained that if you happen to be a communist this is a friendly greeting!] 'The women in the shops seemed friendly and very helpful. One of the drawbacks is that there is a good deal of Normandy French, difficult to understand' [It is Normandy so what should one expect?] 'We got two numbers of the "Journal" – full of murders, crimes passionelles and suicides. A very hot day and very pleasant.

June 24th 'H.W. Rouen 12 noon. A very hot day. Went ashore with Nellie and bought yards of bread, and fruit and vegetables etc., Norman got water from a faucet on the quay. We had a look over our neighbour the Newfoundland fisherman "Santa Maria" of the Paimpol: very roughly built, untidy and dirty but trim spars.

Let go at 12.30 pm. The engine soon conked so we ran into the dock passage leading to the Bassin de St. Jerome and tied up to a buoy. Got all the jets cleaned and the plugs attended to and after this the engine ran well. Left at 1.40. Joan developing chicken-pox!!' [This was the cause of my feeling "unusual"]. 'Anchored off Le Landin for [more!] engine adjustments. We emptied the tank into a bucket and strained it back through a silk handkerchief. Moored at 7.30 pm where the engine stopped and absolutely refused to start again. All attempts ended in failure so we turned in wondering how we were to get home.

June 25th 'Cleaned the jets. Found fluff in the pilot jet. After this the engine boosted off and ran full bore and gave us no further trouble [Yet!]. 'A fine day as usual but not so hot as at Rouen. Got off at 6.0 am and for most of the journey pushed over a foul tide and a head wind. Anchored off the dolphins outside Tancarville dock at 2.30 pm. Ebb tide for last hour or so. At 6.15 the green flag was hoisted on the Lock and barges left. We got the anchor

and with engine all out and going well only just made it over the flood. Had the engine even faltered we could not have got in. Entered at 6.40 and were first out. Tied up in old place next to a battered barge under the disused factory “Produits de Silico – Calcium”.

June 26th The kedge was so deeply embedded that only by use of the engine could we break it out. A bad smell all the way down the Canal from the petrol refinery. The water near the outflow smells of sulphuretted hydrogen. A lovely day but strong NNW and NW wind. Lots of holidaymakers fishing along the banks and some out in boats. Anchored off Honfleur and Nellie and Norman walked nearly a mile and returned with three tins of petrol as we had a very low tank. All the bridges opened like magic at the “trois coups de siflet”. We did not know how we ought to go so we just carried on, locks and bridges opening till eventually we emerged into the Arrière Port and anchored at 6.48 pm. At 8.0 the Blue Peter was hoisted on the “sas digue” (sas = Lock Chambers) and we shifted our berth to a place alongside the quay in the Bassin de la Barre.

June 27th ‘Got up and 8.0, blowing freshly’, force 5 or so from SW. Warm sunshine. Norman and Nellie went ashore and returned laden with food. Joan is much better. [I had spent a lot of time lying low with a temperature and emerging when I needed to be useful so I missed some things which the others saw and took no part in the shore trips]. ‘Listened in to Test Match. A Portuguese Merchant officer interested in yachting came on board and stayed quite a long time.

June 28th ‘No improvement in weather but a bright sunny day. Joan much better, practically well again. The 10.30 am weather forecast was “gale warnings on all coasts” and in the evening, “full gale from the West”. Nellie and I went ashore for food. Havre is a fine town. The P.O. is scruffy and most inefficient.
‘In the evening the gale burst upon us and we put out our hefty warps. There is a mound of sand on the quay and we got covered with it. Went on board the Normania and they told us they had had a smooth passage until they got to the French side when it was choppy.

June 29th ‘Better forecast: moderate to fresh WNW wind. Bright sunshine and wind going down. Joan fit again! Norman and THB went ashore to call on a French ophthalmologist friend and found him well. He managed to come aboard in the evening but didn't locate us until 9.30 when he thought we'd be in our bunks so didn't hail us. When next he called we had already left, somewhat to his surprise in view of the weather.

June 30th ‘Forecast. Wind SW fresh, visibility good. Further outlook similar. SW was a fair wind and so a little freshness did not matter. Cast off our warps at 8.45 am. We found it impossible to get an official forecast at Havre. As a result of not receiving a message from the harbour master to hurry up we just missed the opening of the Sas and had a long wait for the next opening. Eventually we got through and passed out of the Avant Port at 10.45 am. The “Defense de sortir du port” was flying from the Digue Nord but other vessels, tugs, etc., were going out so we carried on. We motored out to the last buoy and passed a big swirl. On one occasion Vindilis put her arch board right under. She had nearly done so on the Needles Bar on the outward trip. Some pitching! Perhaps it was because we were pushing her along fast. At 11.45 we rounded the buoy and set sail. Wind WSW f.3 At 12.0, streamed the log. We took our departure Cap La Heve beaming East. Set course for a point midway between St Catherine and Bembridge Pt.,

NNW. 1.0 pm wind failing, log reading 1 mile. Spoil Barges abeam, slight rain. 3.45 pm set balloon foresail and sun came out. Log at 4.0 pm 14 miles and at 8.0 pm 26 1/2, slow progress. Sky became very threatening with rain all round but not with us. Wind came out N.W. Took off ballooners. Nothing came of it all and the wind petered out for good. 9.0 pm calm, log 27. 9.30 Hot soup. Put up side lights, 9.35 turned on engine. 2.0 am steamer seen astern engine conked, cleaned jets and got going. Shewed a spotlight to steamer. At 2.30 she passed us to port and then steered across our bow to her course which was somewhat to the E of ours as it should be. She was of course the Normania. 3.0 am Log 40 1/2 miles.

July 1st

‘5.0 am cleaned jets. 8.0 am Isle of Wight sighted, St Catherine’s fine on port bow. Norman took down the whole pipeline and from two old filters from the old carburetor cut circles of gauze which he inserted at junction with the carburetors and at double core junction. This leaked but we cured it with a washer made from a rubber bathing cap. 9.0 am engine started and no more trouble!! (Had we realized, one of the copper gauze filters should have been in the carburetor – who had removed it? Most of our engine troubles would have been avoided had it been in place.)

‘11.0 am A cross bearing of St Catherine’s, the Needles and what we took to be Culver Cliffs put us 17 miles from St Catherine’s which bore N40W. This spot was on our rhumb line and is probably correct. Looking back we must have been 25 miles off when we sighted land. Visibility was magnificent and the cloud effect the most wonderful that I have ever seen. The engine was now running properly and we steered for Culver Cliff. The tide had taken us considerably more to the E than one would have thought but they are now springs. Nab Tower abeam at 3.0 pm, took in the Log registering 73 miles. The Nab Tower was blowing its foghorn: is it automatic? we wondered if we were running into danger. After the first 25 miles we had little wind and most of passage had been done under engine. We now steered with the Warner lightship on the port bow to avoid “the perils of the deep.” Off Bembridge we passed the Warner on our starboard side. Going up Spithead we were for a time close-hauled on the port tack. We had off the Nab Tower had distant views of the Sussex Downs but had not seen the Ower lightship which was at one time not very far away. Earlier, we had seen HMS Southampton. When we got into Southampton Water we hoisted “Q” and cruised up as far as Netley without seeing the Customs Launch so we sailed back to the Hamble River and picked up our mooring.

‘Norman, who is a solicitor for the Inland Revenue went ashore and rang the Waterguard and got permission for us to leave the ship provided someone was left on board (with the “contraband”) to receive their representative.’ They came the following day [Saturday] and I [Joan] did the honours. Meanwhile my parents and Norman had all departed earlier. My husband, Robert had returned from abroad and had arrived to see how I was. 9 am July 3rd we went home to London. The Log continues, ‘July 2nd Nellie and I got off at 6.0 am and got to Hampton-in-Arden at about 9.30. I had some breakfast and got to Birmingham at 10.30, only half in an hour and late for my first patient. [on a Saturday!] Of the drive to Hampton-in-Arden THB says, ‘We had to step on the gas and once I looked down and noticed that the speedometer needle was “trembling at 70”. I had not noticed that we were going so fast. And so ended my best cruise ever’. [I once to reached 74 mph in that car.]

Reading this account you might wonder why it was so enjoyable. Nothing said about the beauty of the Seine with the banks varying from high wooded chalk hills to bank side belts of Lombardy poplars on flat land. The “native settlements” looked attractive but there was no time to go ashore and explore. Features which I remember particularly were an impressive power-station, “Le Chateau á neufs fenêtres” and a large bas-relief memorial to two British airmen and their sea-plane. I wonder if these survived W.W. II and subsequent years.

All the THB logs have a slightly ‘period’ flavour now and his turns of phrase are very typical of the father I knew and bring back memories. A cruise up the Seine would probably still be a worthwhile trip. I was in Rouen a few years ago, on a gardening trip, and noticed that the Transporter Bridge had gone.

Finally, I do not recommend adult chickenpox on board a small boat in very hot weather!



Vindilis



Thoughts of an Ex-Editor

By Mark Miller

Dixon Kemp

In the first paragraph of his book '*Cruising Yachts Design and Performance*' Harrison Butler states "All that I know about the subject I have learned from books and by careful study of actual yachting models. I began at Oxford by going to the Radcliffe Camera and studying Dixon Kemp's well-known work on yacht architecture".

It is also known that Albert Strange found inspiration from one of his earliest designs in the writings of Dixon Kemp.

Dixon Kemp was born in the Isle of Wight in 1839. As a boy he was keen on sailing and in his early twenties became Solent area reporter for The Field Magazine and soon afterwards their Yachting Editor.

Largely self taught he studied yacht design and construction and had a deep interest in Rating Rules. He recorded the lines of many craft, large and small, both yachts and working craft. His first design, for an 18 ft sailing boat, was drawn about 1870 and in 1876 his first book was published.

This was entitled "*Yacht Designing: A Treatise on the Practical Application of the Scientific Principles upon which is based the Art of Designing Yachts*". It is a folio sized volume with many folding plans. Ten years ago one of the specialist dealers offered a copy of this rare book at £275 and no doubt today the price would be higher. Two further revised edition's volume followed in 1885 and 1891.

Dixon Kemp's next book: "*A Manual of Yacht and Boat Sailing*" appeared in 1878. The early chapters covered basic design construction and these were followed by details and drawings of specific types of sailing craft around the coast. The management of larger yachts was covered in later chapters and make entertaining reading now that only the very wealthy can afford a crew.

"Often 1s.(one shilling - old money) is kept back from the seaman's wages as conduct money, and if either commits an offence during the week of the 1s. is stopped; the fine however is seldom inflicted, as few masters have the courage to enforce it."

Apart from the obviously dated portions of book contains much practical information of interest to those with a leaning towards tradition.

The book ran into nine editions, each revised and enlarged, until Dixon Kemp died in 1899. A tenth addition, edited by Brook Heckstall Smith was published in 1904 and an eleventh by Linton Hope and Heckstall Smith in 1913. This was in two volumes, one text, one drawings. The price was £1.10s. post free in the United Kingdom!

The Eighth Edition was re-published in 1988, completely revised on John Leather. Although expensive, £48, it is a beautifully produced book with clearer printing and drawings than the originals.

The search for *Memory*

It is believed that the first boats built to an HB design were the four built in Hong Kong in 1910.

Hence the title of 'Hong Kong design'. It is most unlikely that any of these had survived. When I was researching the designs of Albert Strange I had correspondence with the secretary of the Royal H. K. Yacht Club. He told me that during the Japanese occupation in WWII there was a shortage of firewood and many boats were burnt for fuel. Some survived by being deliberately sunk and then raised when the war ended. The club records were all destroyed except the bar chits of the period just prior to the occupation!

So it is most likely that *Memory*, designed in 1911, is the oldest HB boat. But where is she? Joan says that *Memory* was sold and taken to Ireland. She had since enquired at various clubs in Dun Laoghaire without success.

Last October I sent an enquiry to 'Afloat', the Irish Sailing Monthly. Early in December I heard from Dublin from a Mr Philip Byrne who had seen my letter. He had, some months previously, made a similar query but received no replies.

He had purchased *Memory* in 1975 in Hartlepool and had her transported to Pwllheli in Wales. From there he had sailed her to Dublin. A credible passage for such a small boat.

Due to ill health he sold her a couple of years later and lost all contact. Fortunately his health recovered and he has since owned and cruised a Westerly GK24. Having sold this last year he would now like to find *Memory* and restore her if necessary.

So that was the situation at Christmas time. We knew when the boat had gone to Ireland and who had owned her until 1977.

Earlier this year I was prevailed upon to go out to a launch party with Priscilla. I normally avoid such occasions as I find that although the food is usually good the conversation is of little interest. But being the start of a new year and having made resolutions to try and be somewhat more sociable when in the company of those who washed their cars on Sunday morning and follow the activities and Posh and Becks I weakened and agreed to be ready to go out by mid-day.

I spent the morning in my workshop, otherwise known as the garage, fitting new washers to the galley pump. The plan was a quick shower, a change of clothes and off. In the shower I had just reached the second verse of 'Danny Boy' when Priscilla bashed on the door and said there was a phone call for me from someone in Ireland.

So there I was with a towel worn as a toga, dripping water, trying to follow what a quiet spoken Irishman with a strong Dublin accent was trying to tell me on a poor telephone connection about the boat named *Memory* which he owned and about which I had written to 'Afloat'.

It seemed that he had bought *Memory* from Philip Byrne in 1977, still owned her, but due to poor health had not had her afloat for some years. I thanked him for his call and carefully noted his phone number with the intention of putting him in touch with a potential purchaser.

We were late for lunch but one of the other guests was Nick Franklin the inventor of the Aries Self Steering Gear so the conversation was far from boring.

So all that remained was to put Philip Byrne, in Dublin, in touch with the present owner also in Dublin. No problem, as they say, except that I had written down an incorrect phone number!

Fortunately all is not lost because the son of the owner had contacted Joan [*via the Website*] to tell her that his father had decided to sell *Memory*. I wrote to introduce buyer to seller only to discover

that there was a postal strike in Dublin and that my information had never arrived!

By the time this newsletter is published we may have reached a happy ending.



Is he correct?

With a number of variables entering into balance of helm it is too much to ask that any yacht should be “perfectly balanced in all conditions”. It is just not possible.

John S. Letcher. *Self Steering for Sailing Craft*. Published 1974.

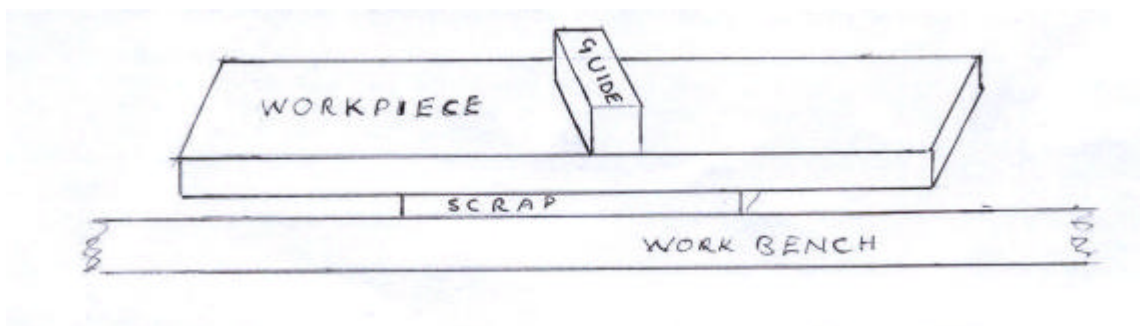


Sawing angles accurately

In a professional boat yard there is usually a mitre saw, or even better a mitre trimmer, carefully guarded from marauding yacht owners wanting to make a frame for a mirror to hang in the heads.

It is possible to cut an angle without either of these expensive tools.

Mark the angle across the workpiece with an adjustable bevel or two bits of hacksaw blade with a rivet through the holes if poor or working in a confined space. Place on the bench with a piece of scrap beneath. On top position a short length of straight hardwood exactly on the line to guide the saw. Clamp all up together and cut with a sharp backsaw. Spot on every time!



Varnish Substitutes

Cinnamon Lady has varnished topsides, all 40 foot of them. In addition there are the cabin sides, inside and out, the cockpit seats and coamings, the hatches, grabrails, margin boards, covering boards and so it goes on. The most awkward part is inside the bulwarks.

The previous owner had given up and slapped some patent brown sludge over the flaking varnish in this area. We have stripped down to the bare wood and I am wondering about using one of these modern finishes which are alleged to allow the wood to breathe. We have had good reports of “Cetol” made by the Dutch firm Sikkens. Have any members had experience with this?



Surveyors and Wooden Boats

Our insurance company require a full out of the water survey and evaluation before they will be renew our cover for 2005. I contacted a local surveyor and was surprised at his age. Not that he was old but that he was young. In the past many surveyors had worked in yards which built and repaired wooden yachts and so amassed a store of knowledge and knew what problems to expect.

Boats built of wood must now make up only a very small proportion of the total yacht population. I believe that the Boat Show of 1965 was the occasion when the number of GRP craft on show overtook the number built of wood. That was almost 40 years ago. So it is likely that many of the younger surveyors today have little experience of wooden construction but will have to rely on what they may have been taught at college or learnt from reading.

I await my surveyors report with interest.



Comfort Ratio

There are various ratios used in yacht design - aspect ratio of Bermudian mainsails - Sail Area / Displacement ratio and so on. How about a 'Comfort ratio'?

Although present day advertisements boast 'sleeps eight' this only really means that the boat will accommodate eight horizontal bodies of whom half need to be married couples or similar. What about stowage for their gear? Are the hanging lockers of sufficient capacity? Can all the crew get dressed at the same time?

The answer to all these queries is that the number of berths gives little indication of how many crew can live on boarding comfort rather than merely exist.

I suggest that the advertised number of berths divided by two gives some indication of how many can cruise on boarding comfort.



LOOSE ENDS



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More details and photographs are available at: www.TheHarrisonButlerAssociation.org

Sellers, if you send me details of your yacht including photographs I will endeavour to update the website within a day or two.



Plus:

PRIMA

Apply: Kaila Simmons / Mike Broome. Tel 01297 445545 or info@simmonsandbroome.com

SELAMAT

Apply to agent in Italy: Enrico Zaccagni at www.zacboats.it or email: info@zacboats.it



CALENDAR EVENTS

18th September 2004 Laying-up Supper at Woodbridge
26th February 2005 The Harrison Butler Association AGM



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