

THE HARRISON BUTLER ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER No: 61

Summer 2005

www.HarrisonButlerAssociation.org

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February 2004 to February 2005

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CONTENTS

	Page
The President's Letter	Mrs O. Joan Jardine-Brown 4
Editorial	Bill Edwards 6
Correspondence	8
<i>Keepsake</i> in the Baltic	Lesley Walker 9
Book Reviews	Mark Miller 15
An Ex-Editor Cogitates	Mark Miller 16
Loose Ends	19

COVER PHOTOGRAPH



Destina entering the River Hamble



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

Theale
July 2005

Dear Members

I've just re-read my last letter to avoid the old age risk of repetition: I couldn't remember what I had written.

I returned home from hospital on February 17th and time has worked in my favour though too slowly for my liking. Four weeks later I was pronounced clear of MRSA which was a relief. I am now walking stickless in the house, a far cry from the AGM when I sat on a chair with legs raised on a stool and everything revolved around me.

Judy Giles provided us with an excellent buffet lunch and members enjoyed the ambience of lunch in the flat, bringing back memories of our pre 1999 meetings.

Judy, as you know is Minutes & Meetings Secretary referring to Extraordinary General Meetings. This AGM was to an extent extraordinary and Judy filled her function with a considerable degree of aplomb which was appreciated by all members and not least by me. Thank you, Judy for your very successful rescue operation.

We decided later, at the meeting that our next AGM (on February 25th 2006, please note) would be preceded by a Bring & Share Lunch which have proved very successful at the Crag but since then my son Colin and I have sampled a lunch at the Lamb Hotel, the most westerly pub on the opposite side of the road in Theale, walkable but a bit further than the Red Lion. We decided that it would be worth a final try for us next year. Sharon No. 1 (there are three Sharons) was very friendly and cooperative and willing to do what we want although she was unsure of cost she said she thought she might be able to do us a lunch for less than £10. I have discussed the plan with John Elphinstone and he agrees that we should try it. If it's no good we can revert to a B & S lunch in future but it's worth trying.

John, you will remember is our new chairman and at present Loudon Greenlees is acting Hon. Treasurer. Loudon, Peter Crook and Bill Edwards are going into consultation in order to sort out and rationalize the membership, there is a list of new members accompanying this letter together with amendments to the current Year Book.

Bill and I have decided to overhaul the Year Book and send it out with the Winter Newsletter in future and the Supplement with the Summer issue. Please check that your entry is correct in the current list and tell Bill if there are mistakes so that the 2006 issue may be as accurate as possible.

We welcome our new members and hope that they will join us at our functions and that they will enjoy being part of the HBA family.

As always, Bill welcomes items for the newsletters whether long or short. We strive to make them interesting but it is up to you to do your share. I'm sure you all do interesting things: share them with us. We can only print what we have and sometimes we have to scrape the barrel to fill papers.

This time we have an interesting letter from John-Henry & Marilyn Bowden from Venice where J-H has been appointed to a three year chaplaincy. I have had a postcard of the Fastnet Lighthouse from Jan & David in *Dindy*. Last year it was of Ardnamurchan but this year they are gracing S & W Ireland with their presence. They rang to say they have so far encountered no HB boats.

There is also the account of Part 1 of *Keepsake's* Baltic Cruise after much prodding and a promise made at the AGM – too many witnesses to avoid putting pen to paper!

Faithful Mark Miller has also sent a contribution.

Peter Ward has just spent a weekend here because he was again on the Classic Boat Stand with some of his models at the Thames Traditional Boat Rally at Henley which is a function I have

attended for several years with Paul Cowman who also was there on both days. Colin and Lucie Henwood (Henwood & Dean) also had a stand with some very shiny launches and skiffs and a 1924 Austin with a canoe stern, also looking wonderful. They had a small refrigerator in their tent and dispensed very cold water to drink which was most welcome in the very hot weather. The Dunkirk Little Ships are always moored alongside the bank and do a parade along the river. It is a mostly motor-boat affair but there was an excellent Burgoyne designed boat sailing in the river with a very modern high aspect ratio rig. I went with Paul and Sarah on a river trip aboard the *Windsor Belle* and had to be given an upward shove to get me on board the rather high step from the jetty to boat. It is a delightful stretch of the Thames and I saw a part of it I didn't know. Henley of course the home-base of Stuart Turner engines which you swear either by or at.

Our grapevine (Adrie Burnett this time) tells me that *Galatea* is for sale in Canada. She was built to the Fastnet design, one of THB's larger designs. Sadly, we haven't heard from Steve Philips for some years now.

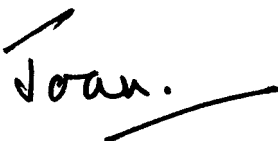
Another of the larger HB boats *Mat Ali* (Khamseen design), is also for sale as are other boats listed at the end of the newsletter.

Our next meeting will be at the R. Southampton Y.C. at Gills Farm on the Beaulieu River, the Laying-up Supper on October 8th. Please do come: also a good opportunity for new and old (established) members to meet and is always an enjoyable occasion. Come by boat if you can – we have several Solent based boats which we don't see as often as we should like. On the last Beaulieu River occasion Clive Lester and I spent hours on the telephone trying to gather enough people but the notice was late in going out. Please respond quickly this year. I very much look forward to seeing you.

I think that completes my letter and there's no time for late additions so what I have forgotten will have to wait.

Greetings and blessings to you all,

from

Handwritten signature of Joan, written in black ink with a flourish underneath.

P.S. (I couldn't not have a PS!) I quite forgot to remind you to pay your £10 subscription if you haven't already done so.



Editorial

I am very pleased (and envious!) to include Lesley Walker's first edition of *Keepsake's* Baltic Cruise in 2004. Included are some lovely photographs, albeit downgraded to black and white to fit our newsletter budget; but they really do set the scene for an epic journey.

It reminds me of our preparations to prepare *Caracole* for extended cruising when we retire in 2008. It is an expensive business and spreading the cost and work has enabled us to continue enjoying using the boat at the same time. Of course we now enjoy the relative calm and beautiful scenery of the Devon and Cornwall borders along the River Tamar and the occasional stiff sail around Plymouth Sound and finally a peaceful anchorage in the Lynher River. What a difference from the Bristol Channel which may well have its attraction for some but we are more than happy with the two hour drive to Devon. I often see an all male crew or lone man sailing and I wonder how many have frightened their wives or partners at some point who thereafter vowed never to go sailing again? It certainly brings back memories of near misses due to my poor seamanship, boat handling and more seriously, the sudden switch to rough conditions, so characteristic of the Bristol Channel as the tide turns and suddenly there is a strong wind over tide.

Joan has given a good plug for contributions to the newsletter but could I just add again that photographs with a brief caption can be just as interesting and so easy. You can either email the jpeg files or post the original for me to copy and return to you. Anyway, why don't I start:

Bill Edwards

July 2005



"Yes Trisha, keep this heading, harden up the mainsail a touch, oh, and keep an eye on that huge Warship bearing down on us, watch the motor boaters and now take a nice photo of me!"

As you can see she managed it and we are still living and sailing together!



Caracole off Watchett on a good day in the Bristol Channel

Finally, if anyone can tell me (or better still write an article on) how to calculate the correct size of standing rigging I would personally be very grateful as this is the next crucial stage in preparing *Caracole* for her travels.



Correspondence

Dear Joan

Happy Easter Everyone!

This year, as a one off, we are sending Easter Greetings instead of Christmas Greetings. We hope that the various frantic activities and teething difficulties we experienced are over and we and this brand-new computer are settled in. So in the hope that not all of you have given us up as a lost cause this is how it happens that we are here.

How we come to be here

In March last year while I was away J-H back home looked as if he really was going to get his redundancy package. At that time an ad. in the Church Times caught his eye - a vacancy in the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe for a chaplain in Venice, which reminded him of happy times spent there as guests of Tim and Lizzy-Boo Llewellyn. A few emails flipped between us. And so it was, that before he actually finished working for RM we found ourselves making a quick trip to Venice on the instructions of the bishop, to see if we really might bear living in this tiddly house in Venice for three years.

We thought we might.

How soon could we start?

Oh, goodness! What about all our well-laid plans of a long, leisurely holiday, sorting out our house, pottering about the garden, lengthy cruise in Cobber, Christmas in the snowy northern forests, the Royal Mail ship to St. Helena (the only way to visit Petrina's home and parents) and a trip to Australia and NZ - scuppered. (In the end we did make it to AUS and NZ.)

After frantic packing-up we had far too much luggage for a plane, so took the train. It was

late at Venezia S.Lucia station but we were met by the inperturbable Lady Frances Clarke who with her perfect command of the Italian language and her position of great respect in Venice escorted and even transported some of our extraordinarily heavy and awkward luggage onto the vaporetto. I'm sure so much luggage is not normally allowed on vaporetti. At the end of the Grand Canal in front of the magnificent domed rooves of the church of Santa Maria della Salute we stepped off into a film set. 17th century Venice was before us with people wearing period costume, buying and selling from large round baskets and barrels and kegs. Sheep and pigs wandered about and large old sailing ships were docked at the quay, canvas sails limp in the still, autumn air. We were told this was to be a film about Casanova.

J-H's institution was a grand service with Bishop David Hamid presiding, and a number of local clergy dignitaries and representatives of the Diocese from Rome, Padova and Milan as well as everybody to do with St. George's in Venice. John-Henry's brother Richard also came out for the service. Our tiny house was so packed that he stayed in the comfy accommodation provided by the nearby nuns who run a B&B to boost their flagging income. After the service there was a highly superior bun-fight for all those likely to form the congregation and after that a grand dinner with the churchwardens and church council and officials. As we left the church for the parties, fireworks leapt into the air silhouetting the Salute Church beyond our diminutive St. George's. The fireworks weren't really for us, the Arsenale was also celebrating several hundred years of service, but it added to the glamour.

Acqua Alto

That night the wind blew and the rain came down in torrents, not that it was cold, on the contrary it was sticky and hot. At dawn the acqua alta siren wailed its mournful cry up and down several times over the city warning the inhabitants of an extra high tide that is likely to flood the fondamenta which edge the canals and cover many of the lower lying calles, spilling into shops and houses. There was a total of 12 in the congregation that morning including Tim and Lizzy-Boo, Howard and Christabel, (J-H's great supporting friends since university) who had waded across from the Giudecca that morning. Water swirled round the church steps up to the second of three. It lapped at us during the sermon and wet people appeared in church with bare feet and sodden clothing. After the service we were stranded for a couple of hours with wine and peanuts and plenty of good humoured chat until the water receded with the tide.

And so we began our life in Venice.

Impressions of Venice life

As we anticipated, our lives have changed radically in the last 12 months. We have moved from country to city life, an ancient medieval one indeed - no cars, no supermarket (worthy of the reputation), and at first, no radio, TV or computer. We do now have a radio and TV - useful when we know more Italian. This computer, newly bought for the chaplain just before Christmas after much investigation and estimates, shut down in the

new year and has just been returned to us a couple of weeks ago. Everything is available here at a price but it all takes time and seemingly endless investigation and negotiation - and, at the critical point, in Italian. We do, however, have a neat, cosy little romantically called a gondolier's cottage. It is a traditional type Venetian house, like a flat on its side, three rooms on three floors wedged between a slightly bigger one with a plaque indicating Ezra Pound lived there, and a much bigger, posher one that is always empty and is said to belong to the Campari family. Ours is covered in sunny yellow plastering which is not crumbly and looks very smart. Never mind the scaffolding on the house opposite which means we cannot use our washing line from the bathroom window that looks out into the Calle. It's a fine little house. Next door's is dusky pink.

A number of our friends have come or booked to visit us. We like visitors and you are most welcome. I'm sorry this letter has been so long coming and that we misprinted our telephone number in our original change of address notice. The address and telephone number heading this letter are correct.

John-Henry & Marilyn Bowden

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KEEPSAKE IN THE BALTIC 2004

By Lesley Walker

Part 1 - Aarhus, Denmark to Aland, Finland

On 28 May 2004 *Keepsake* sailed out of Ega Marina in Aarhus, Denmark where she had wintered for the past two years. Our ultimate destination was St Petersburg, via Denmark, Sweden, Aland and Finland with the Baltic States on the way back. That was the plan! It was also my first sail on *Keepsake* and the longest journey she had undertaken in the thirty years Mac has owned her. We were well-prepared for the Baltic – I had read *To the Baltic with Bob* and was determined to enjoy the experience more than Griff Rhys Jones seemed to have done!



Keepsake in Ega Marina, Aarhus, Denmark

28 May - 5 June Denmark to Sweden Ebeltoft, Hundested, Ven, Copenhagen, Falsterbo and Sandhammaren

Keepsake had already spent some time cruising in Danish waters in 2002 and 2003 so we didn't linger but headed for Copenhagen. After anchoring the first night near Ebeltoft, the following morning we visited the pretty but very tourist-oriented town and explored the frigate *Jylland*, the world's longest wooden ship built in 1860. This was the first of many fascinating preserved museum ships we visited in the Baltic. After buying delicious salmon and smoked mackerel from the packed and popular Ebeltoft Fisk & Rogeri, a quayside shop full of fishy delicacies, we sailed SE towards Gilleljie 5-6

knots in a good westerly wind with the sun shining and the sea sparkling. But as so often happened on this voyage, after several hours the winds dropped completely and we were forced to motor into Hundestedhavn to lay up for the night. Because it was late and a Bank Holiday weekend, the small harbour was full except for one berth alongside the stone inner harbour wall between two fishing boats. In the next few minutes we had a powerful lesson in the need to LOOK UP. A small crane was jutting out over the quay wall and as we prepared to go alongside, suddenly our spreader and rigging caught fast. Time stood still as we tried to untangle her from the crane jib before the spreader snapped. Too high for the boathook, Mac managed to free her with the spinnaker pole and we got clear. An inspection the next morning reassured us that she was undamaged but we were both aware of how close we had come to disaster. For the rest of the voyage, 'look up' was a constant refrain!

After a day of motoring in almost no wind we turned more to SE as we reached Oresund and once more could go under sail. After sailing between Danish Helsingor and Swedish Helsingborg, we anchored for the night on the north side of Ven, a small green pastoral island in the middle of Oresund. Very early the next morning we motored into Copenhagen – copper and gold turrets, domes, spires, towers – and tied up in Nyhavn for an ice cream! Later we moved alongside the quay in Christianshavn Kanal where we spent 2 nights right in the heart of Copenhagen. A highlight of our visit was catching the train to Roskilde to visit the extraordinary Viking Ship museum where we watched the 30 metre long replica longboat *Skuldev II* being built. The original longboat which had been discovered in the sea at Roskilde, had been built in Dublin and the replica, launched in September 2004, is to be sailed to Dublin in 2007.



Keepsake in Nyhavn, Copenhagen

We spent the next 3 days trying to sail and mostly motoring with headwinds from Copenhagen into the Baltic Sea via the Falsterbo Canal and along Skane, the southern coast of Sweden. If we had known how often we were going to be forced to motor over the next 3 months we might well have turned back there and then! To make matters worse we discovered that the rubber ball in the Baby Blake had perished – so we couldn't pump out the heads! We seemed to be the only yacht heading east in the Baltic, our only company the occasional tanker or car ferry. We anchored in crystal clear water off the point at Sandhammaren, the lighthouse flashing comfortingly in the gathering dusk, long empty white beaches and dunes covered in sea grass backed by the green of birches and pines.

The next day the weather had changed again. We headed NE then E then SE as the winds changed over the day in both direction and intensity. It was slow sailing for most of the day but then our luck changed and we had a fantastic sail at 5 knots to the small harbour of Allinge on Bornholm, a Danish island off the coast of Sweden.

5 to 9 June Bornholm and Christiansø, Denmark

Allinge's harbour reminded us of Cornwall – small, inner and outer stone walls with shops and houses clustered around. Polish, German, Swedish, Danish and British yachts were all lying alongside. We walked two miles

through wildflower-filled meadows to the impressive ruined castle of Hammerhus, built between 1743 and 1822. Early on 7 June we set sail for Christiansø, another smaller Danish island which had been used as a fortress against the possibility of a Swedish attack – in fact the only people who had ever shelled Christiansø were the British! This is a magic island, or rather two islands. An iron footbridge built in 1912 connects the smaller Fredericksø to Christiansø. The only shop, a post office and a kiosk are all run according to the rhythm of the tourist day visitors in the summer with one guesthouse, bar and restaurant for the evening. The *MS Chimera* is one of the ferries which brings day trippers in from Bornholm – she was built in Scotland in the 1920s and was a Cardiff cutter in the Bristol Channel. *Keepsake* attracted lots of attention, as she continued to do throughout the trip, and we met many locals and other travellers when they rowed or walked up to admire her and ask lots of questions! At Christiansø we also had our first experience of having to pick up a stern buoy to moor and by the end of the trip we had become experts! The nearby island of Graesholmen is a bird sanctuary and we loved watching the many eider ducks and ducklings and thousands of other water birds. We visited the museums, including the former prison in which 19th century Danish political dissidents were imprisoned (now accommodation for visiting artists and writers) and walked right around the edge of the fortified island and along the cobbled street between the former barracks buildings which are now home to the 100 inhabitants who chose to stay after it ceased to be a military base. The small stone cottages surrounded by well-tended gardens and drystone walls, the gravel footpaths, no cars, dogs or cats and the amazing granite fortifications and cannons all conjured up a feeling of having been caught in another century. We watched the fishing boats come in with a good catch and dined in the hotel with two Danes who were photographing and writing a book on the island. This is one of the world's special places.



Keepsake at Christiansø

9 – 18 June Sweden including Gotland Uttklippan, Kristianopel, Kalmar, Byxelkrok, Visby and Lickersham

After two nights with the seas abating somewhat we reluctantly left Christiansø and sailed NW for the Swedish mainland. Despite the earlier unsettled weather, the winds slackened off. We were leisurely following a Swedish tall ship, watching crew high up on the yards unfurling the topsails, when all of a sudden the wind changed and increased to Force 6. *Keepsake* heeled over from upright and put her toe rail under as we struggled to reef the mainsail. We sailed through the night, starting the engine about 2.30am to motorsail as the winds slackened again. The moon was still up but light was already showing in the east as I took my turn on watch and we headed towards the lighthouse on Uttklippan. It was my first overnight sail: strange to sit watching the lighthouse flashing every 15 seconds in the distance, Mac asleep below, *Keepsake* ploughing on through the dark seas, all alone, the orange glow in the east slowly enlarging, the sounds of the waves and the bow through the water. There was little wind and frustratingly we gave up sailing for the rest of the day as we entered Kalmarsund, anchoring in calm seas off the little town of Kristianopel that night. We were woken at 3am by sudden movement and the sound of the anchor chain snatching – the wind had freshened and changed direction yet again. After several hours at anchor in rough and uncomfortable conditions, we sailed off up the sound to Kalmar. At least we were sailing again! Kalmar Slott (castle) rose up impressively on the left as we entered the harbour.

Kalmar Gästhamn, newly refurbished and welcoming, is close to the supermarket and town and full of visiting yachts from all over Scandinavia and Northern Europe including several British boats. Over the next three days we drank grappa and discussed Swedish possible routes into Stockholm with a young German crew who were returning south and had coffee with a couple from the Isle of Man.

We spent the first afternoon enthralled in Kalmar Slott, an extraordinary building with the sea on three sides, moat, drawbridge, passageways, cannon-lined battlements, earthworks, towers and turrets giving way to inner cobbled courtyards, fabulously decorated walls, massive gates and impressive doorways. Part of the castle had been a female prison c1600-1800s and there was a haunting exhibition consisting of large black and white photographs of women undergoing traditional punishment such as being buried alive, wearing a scold's bridle, carrying very heavy stones suspended around the neck, undergoing the water test for witchcraft, etc. The inclusion of archival records of the trials of women sentenced to such punishments made the exhibition very powerful and moving. The history and use of other rooms in the castle were interpreted through modern art installations that captured an essence, a sound, a colour, an image, a moment in the life of the inhabitants at some period: a child singing, a tiny velvet jacket and lined-up lead soldiers in the nursery; scaffolding, paintbrushes, colours and the trestles of the decorators in a drawing room. Our archaeologist guide showed us the water closet of one of Sweden's kings, Eric, who had lived in the castle. We were especially pleased as this room is usually off limits to visitors because of vandalism. Eric, who lived in fear that he would be murdered by his brother, had a secret escape route in the ceiling as well as complicated locks on all his doors. As he was murdered by his brother, his fears were with some justification! The second day, after the chandlery for Camping Gaz and a BBQ as a back-up for cooking (it is almost impossible to get Calor Gas cylinders recharged in the Baltic) we visited the Läns

Museum to see the exhibition of the archaeological excavation of the *Kronan*, a royal battleship which heeled over and exploded off the SE coast of Öland in 1676 with the loss of 800 men. Located in the 1980s in 26 metres of water, 80% of the wreck site has been excavated. Finds such as her magnificent cannons, clothing, coins, personal items, furniture, navigation instruments, medicines, food and skeletal remains gave a fascinating window into life at sea in the 17th century. One of the strengths of the museums in Sweden (and there are many strengths!) is that so much of the interpretation is in English.

We sailed out of Kalmar harbour early the morning of 13 June and after a few hours of good sailing northwards, the wind dropped and veered so we were forced to tack up the sound. We had decided to anchor off the island of Blau Jungfrau for the night but when we reached the island at dusk, we changed our plans. A nature reserve, it was a huge red and grey granite rock rising steeply out of the sea. Its smooth rounded granite shoreline was starkly impressive, even menacing and definitely not welcoming. We sailed on eastwards and anchored off Byxelkrok for the night, sheltered from the SE wind. But again not for long. In the early hours the wind again veered and increased in strength and we were soon tossing about uncomfortably so we rose and sailed off with the mainsail reefed towards our next destination, the island of Gotland, at 4am. After a rough crossing, we sailed into Visby harbour at 1730. Visby, a medieval Hanseatic walled town and a world heritage site, had enthralled Griff Rhys Jones and we were keen to see what he was so enthusiastic about. Visby has 12 ruined churches or abbeys, massive intact walls and gatehouses, tiny cobbled streets and lanes, wonderful tall merchants' houses and tiny wooden cottages and there were flowers everywhere. With *Keepsake* safely in the guest harbour, we found the excellent library with free internet, UK newspapers and great café (like Swedish museums, Swedish libraries are well-run, open late and welcoming to all) and the local museum and botanic garden. Viking picture stones and

early burials were highlights in the museum. One of the marvellous aspects of our travels was meeting interesting people with stories to tell and beautiful boats to talk about: a young Finnish team heading for Lake Geneva to race their 8 metre 1926 racing yacht, a converted and very luxurious pre-war Norwegian fishing trawler owned by a Dane and his Finnish wife, Sven a retired Norwegian double agent, during he Cold War and Canadians on their yacht tucking into smoked salmon ... After three sunsets over the Baltic, it was time to move on. When we left Visby at 0600 on 17 June we intended to head for the Swedish mainland but as usual the winds were not favourable and instead we had set a course northwards along Gotland's west coast, in a rough and rolling sea. We put into Lickersham, a small picturesque fishing harbour surrounded by nature reserve and spent a pleasant day varnishing, reading, exploring the cliffs and dining on fresh salmon bought in the harbour.

18 June – 3 July Sweden and the Archipelago Bjorko, Stockholm, Vaxholm, Lidon, Arholma, Bjorko

After a quiet, peaceful night we started on the 24 hour crossing to the Swedish mainland, guided through the night by the Landsort lighthouse 1+4 (60 secs). It was almost midsummer and although the sun set at 21.50 the glow never left the sky all night. Sunrise was at 0400 as *Keepsake* ploughed slowly through the water with only a headsail, only one other yacht passing in the distance on my watch. After a salutary lesson on why you need up to date and detailed charts to negotiate between the many islands of the Swedish archipelago (it is frightening how easy it is when you are tired to misinterpret the charts as the thousands of islands and passages look the same), we anchored in Fifang, an exquisite bay surrounded by birch and pine trees and lichen and moss-covered grey boulders, on the southern approaches to Lake Malaren.



At anchor in Fifang, Sweden

Despite the fact that it is almost midsummer we are still in fleeces and Aran jumpers. It was here that we encountered our first of many Scandinavian yachts moored right up to rocks, an unusual sight for us! The crew simply stepped off onto land. After two peaceful days at anchor on 22 June we reluctantly sailed out of the bay with only the genoa and headed north up the narrow Himmerfjärden with a good southerly behind us. We had to navigate from buoy to buoy, the course often changing dramatically between the buoys to avoid rocks. It was quite a lot of fun picking up the next heading each time. As we got closer to our next stop, Södertälje, an industrial city close to Stockholm, the waterside houses with their little jetties, boathouses, timber buildings, verandahs and summer furniture reminded me very much of the bays of Sydney! Still running under only the genoa at 5-6 knots, *Keepsake* negotiated the narrow passages and sharp turn to starboard at Brandalsund, avoiding large freighters and car ferries, all without engine right up until the entrance to Södra Kanalen.

The Södertälje Gästhamn is well run by Anki Johansson, a female harbour master. We were made to feel very welcome as we caught up with laundry, enjoyed the sunny outdoor café, caught up with email and Mac caught up with UK news in the well-stocked town library, spending a happy few hours surrounded by 6 weeks worth of the *Daily Telegraph*. We left to pass through the lock and then sailed out into Lake Mälaren, intending to enter Stockholm from the west via the 'back door'.



Going through the lock at Södertälje, Sweden



A perfect anchorage in Lake Mälaren, Sweden

We spent two days exploring the lake to the west – Mariefred with its castle and churches was rather touristy for our taste and we sailed with only the staysail and a SE wind to the world heritage island of Björkö or Birka, founded in the 8th century as the Viking capital of Sweden, where we spent a cool and rainy midsummer eve. Unfortunately there were no public midsummer celebrations there so we had to content ourselves with decorating *Keepsake* with local wildflowers and eating traditional Swedish food. On 26th June, after exploring the island with its wonderful modern museum, thousands of burial mounds and flower meadows, we set sail for Stockholm. We sailed close hauled, tacking all the way along the island of Ekero, After a night at anchor in the outskirts of the city, we sailed into Stockholm itself early in the morning of 27th June, under bridges, through several locks and into the marina next to the Vasa museum. The marina was crowded and we only stayed long enough to

restock, even finding a filled calor gas cylinder and visiting the *Vasa* which took our breath away. I had seen what was left of the *Mary Rose* but the *Vasa* is truly marvellous – like a ghost ship from the past. We were awed by her size and her survival. There was something magic in the idea that people of the 21st century were looking on a ship they were never meant to see! We also wandered about the Gamla Stan, the old city with its narrow cobbled streets and tall merchants' houses and took the opportunity to buy yet more charts, this time for the Swedish Archipelago and Aland.

28 June – 3 July Sweden and the Archipelago Stockholm, Vaxholm, Lidon, Arholma, Bjorko

One of the wonderful aspects of the trip for me has been sailing into cities such as Copenhagen and Stockholm for the first time – arriving by water, being part of the bustle of a busy port, giving such a different view than all the more usual ways of arriving. Mac is a master at finding the perfect anchorage even within the city environs. The journey from Stockholm out through the archipelago gave us the opportunity to anchor in some beautiful bays, often the only yacht among wooden summer cottages and pine forests with the smell of woodsmoke as saunas and stoves were lit in the evenings.



Watching the depth near Stockholm, Sweden



Sunset over the stern, Swedish Archipelago

We followed the main shipping route through the archipelago, with huge cruise ships and freighters suddenly appearing from behind tiny islands as if out of nowhere and threatening to run us down. At the edge of the islands we again met contrary winds and cold weather. After anchoring for a night at Arholma, we set off the next morning for Mariehamn the main town of Aland but were forced to turn back by bad weather. Wet, cold and dispirited, we anchored in a deserted bay on the island of Bjorko. Two young children appeared when the day brightened to swim off a large rock and their laughter and fun lifted our spirits. Despite the cold, we too decided to take our first swim in the Baltic – and it was cold! Invigorated and cheered by our swim, we woke early the next morning to the right winds and we set sail across the Sea of Aland for Mariehamn and Finland.



Mac and Keepsake at anchor Arholma, Sweden

Next issue: Finland and St Petersburg

BOOK REVIEWS

By Mark Miller

TRANSATLANTIC AT LAST by Helen Tew. ISBN 0 9542750 1 Published in 2004 by Seafarer Books, Woodbridge, Suffolk. IP12 2TE

In about 1930 a young girl, Helen Graham, wrote a book entitled 'The Adventure of the Faeroe Islands'. A slim volume of only 38 pages. The price, 2/- Net, is stamped on the cover.

It recounts a voyage made in 1929 to the Faeroe Islands by the author, still in her teens, and her father, in the engine-less gaff cutter 'Emanuel', 30 ft. overall.

The passages made on the voyage were impressive, for instance Fishguard to Donaghadee in one hop, and show that the crew and the boat were a good team.

In 1934 Helen's father, Commander H.D. Graham, crossed the Atlantic alone in 'Emanuel' returning via Bermuda. His book 'Rough Passage' is one of the classics of ocean voyaging in small yachts.

Helen had always wanted to sail the Atlantic and was very upset when her father decided to sail alone.

She married John Tew in 1936, he was working for Laurent Giles and later managed the Berthon Boatyard in Lymington. John designed the 26ft. gaff cutter 'Mary Helen' and had her built by Percy Mitchell in Mevagissey. They made many fine cruises together until John Tew died in 1975.

Helen Tew still wanted to cross the Atlantic under sail and finally after bringing up five sons and struggling to keep 'Mary Helen' in reasonable repair she made the voyage in her eighty-ninth year.

TRANSATLANTIC AT LAST not only tells

this story but includes details of many other passages made by this remarkable lady.

THROUGH THE LAND OF FIRE by Ben Pester ISBN 0 95427 505 5. Published in 2004 by Seafarer Books, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2TE.

Many modern books describing long distance voyages are boring. They contain little information about what life is really like on a small yacht on an ocean passage and, even worse, never provide details of the boat itself. This book is an exception.

In his preface Ben Pester writes "The spirit of the cruise was Corinthian in the way sailing was practiced earlier by truly amateur yachtsmen. We had no sponsors and were mercifully free of the all-powerful commercialism which controls modern sailing and the lives of those engaged in it, all pursuing fame and fortune."

The content is an honest account of a voyage to Cape Horn, a cruise through the waterways of Tierra del Fuego and the passage back to Falmouth. In addition to incidents of day to day life onboard there is much interesting historical information about the area visited.

Jeremy Burnett, one of our members, crewed for the whole voyage and has contributed two appendices, 'Birds and other wildlife' and 'Bread on board'. His wife, Adrie, helped organise the stores and has detailed the problems in another appendix.

While not written as an instructional manual anyone contemplating an ocean passage would learn much of value from this book. For those of us content to cruise in local waters it is an enthralling read.

An Ex-Editor Cogitates

By Mark Miller

'Z' 4-TONNERS These were all built about 1938-1940 by Lockharts of Brentwood, Middlesex, marketed by O.M.Watts, the yacht chandlers of Albemarle Street, London, to the Zyclon design by T.H.B.

Unfortunately O.M.Watts sales records were lost. [*sent to a Beaulieu Boat Jumble! O.J.J.B.*] Lockharts did not, as far as we know, build any further boats after WWII ended. It is thought that around fifty Z 4-Tonnners were built.

Recently I was reading a profile* of O.M.Watts and noted the following: He was involved before the war in marketing and generally assisting the builders with the Z 4-Tonnners, which are thought to be the first production line yachts built in this country FIFTY-THREE of them were sold in the first 18 months and he described them thus: 'Lovely tough little ships - they had tremendous strength'.

The advertisement below appeared in Yachting World July 1945. I have found no evidence that Burne's ever actually built any "Z" ' and would be interested to learn if the promised catalogue was ever available. [*Burnes did not build Zyklons and as far as I know there was no catalogue. O.J.J.B.*]



Captain Watts (he had served at sea and gained a Master's Certificate) ran a fascinating shop in the centre of London. Many years ago we were beating into Falmouth Harbour, well reefed, when the swivel fitting connecting the mainsheet to the end of the boom carried away. It was a Thursday afternoon and a new crew were due on Saturday to sail round to Milford Haven. I rang O.M.Watts, spoke to the man himself, who understood the problem and he promised to put a new fitting in the post to me, c/o The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club. When I asked about payment he said " Oh I'll enclose an invoice - send me a cheque when you have a moment." I rowed ashore next morning and there was the fitting. Who would provide such service today?

* Yachts & Yachting - March 7th 1975.

BABY BLAKES. When we bought *Cinnamon Lady* it was agreed that she would be handed over with everything in working order. She was lying in Shotley Marina, on the River Orwell. We sailed round there from Falmouth in our previous boat . This seemed an easier procedure than attempting the journey by train laden down with sleeping bags, tools, charts and a two-burner primus stove.

We moored the two boats alongside and transferred our gear. The engine started first time, the echo sounder showed the depth, the Lavac forad seemed to function but an engineer was still working on the SL 400 toilet in the aft cabin. (The young daughter of a friend described our new acquisition as a 'two potty boat'.)

Despite faxes to Simpson-Lawrence and suggestions from the yard foreman the SL 400 would neither pump nor flush. So rather than endure any further delay we sailed with

only one 'potty' working. The passage back was very quiet. There was hardly any wind. We spent nights at anchor in Pyefleet Creek, the Downs off Deal Pier and then Osborne Bay. From the Solent we motored through the night, with the mainsail set to steady her, and arrived off Falmouth next morning. We decided to get the mainsail down before motoring up to our mooring at Mylor. It jammed half-way down.

Now Priscilla is much lighter than me. I can hoist her aloft but she needs help to get me to the top of the mast. There was no bosuns chair aboard so we had to make do with a fender. She sorted out the problem aloft, nipped below, then returned with the news that the Lavac had stopped working.

So there we were with a fine boat but no working loo. After due consideration I decided to purchase and fit two new Baby Blakes. I'd had them on previous boats and knew how they worked.

After some years the forward one needed an overhaul so I took it out of the boat and stripped it down at home. I rang Blakes for some spares and was put through to an employee who knew the product, took my credit card number and the correct parts arrived next day. Very efficient.

A year later it was the turn of the one in the aft cabin. Took it out, got it home, decided what was needed and rang Blakes. They no longer supplied spares direct 'having rationalised their operation'. Spares were now handled by selected chandlers. The nearest was in Plymouth. When I contacted them all they could offer was a complete kit suitable for someone starting an ocean passage at about £100. They seemed unaware that they had been selected as spares stockists.

Time was passing so I again contacted Blakes. No - they would not supply direct - I had to deal with their agents. Eventually I obtained the few items I required when the Plymouth chandler received his supply. What a performance!

Manufacturers selling a mechanical device with parts that will eventually need replacing, in my opinion, a duty to purchasers to supply such spares direct and with a minimum of fuss.

On further enquiry I was told that Blakes original spares storeman, who had been with them for many years, had finally retired. Apparently a successor had not been trained to take over so the spares operation was farmed out to various stockists. So instead of being able to talk to a knowledgeable expert now all you can do is hope that whoever takes your order in the stockists is accurate and that the items required arrive within a reasonable time.

Both toilets are now functioning correctly. But if I ever have to replace one or fit one to another boat I will try the much cheaper plastic models.

FIFTY YEARS AGO I owned *Ranzo*. She was a 1-Rater designed by Mylne and built by Anderson of Millom, Cumberland, in 1912. A long narrow boat with little freeboard. She had been built as a $\frac{3}{4}$ decked racing boat and, like many others, was eventually converted for cruising.

Although I could tell of many adventures, such as being swept down in windless conditions on to a rock in Bardsey Sound and fending off with the sculling oar, which then broke, my purpose is to comment on some of the changes in yacht gear over the past fifty years.

Sails then were cotton and readily affected by mildew. If it rained on Sunday then Monday evening you would be onboard airing sails to dry before daring to fit the sail cover.

Fresh water was carried in glass carboys, which broke, or metal cans which rusted or caused confusion as both paraffin and petrol were in similar cans!

Rope was sisal, hemp or manilla depending on the depth of your pocket.

Dinghies were solid. This was a problem for the small cruising yacht. It slowed you down if you towed it and was in the way if you could find space on deck. The problem was alleviated somewhat when Prouts introduced their canvas & plywood folding dinghies.

Engines, if you had one, were Stuart-Turners running on a petrol/oil mixture or a converted car engine. The electrics were the weak point. If they were damp there was no spark . No spark meant no engine.

Now we have terylene sails and ropes, plastic containers for all purposes, inflatable dinghies and the diesel engine. This does not need a spark just air, clean fuel and good compression.

Probably the development of the reliable marine diesel engine is the factor which has had the greatest effect.

WORDS OF WISDOM. I was sitting in the office of the Managing Director of what is probably the largest yacht yard in the South West. He was on the phone to a client who was contemplating buying a wooden boat. His advice was “Always remember that a wooden boat is a commitment”.

A PROBLEM SOLVED. We are fitting a new engine. Sounds easy - lift one out and

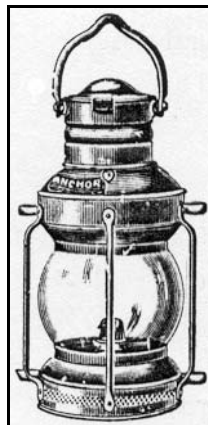
drop the other in its place. In practice there are problems. The exhaust should be 2“ and not the present 3“. The new engine is shorter hence the propeller shaft must be longer. The controls are on the starboard side of the gearbox but the present morse control is on the opposite side. The new prop is right handed but the old was left. And so on etc, etc.

The cooling water intake was 3/4” diameter but this had to be increased to 1”. We removed the existing fitting, located in the bottom of a locker, to find a hole. approximately 3/4” diameter through the bottom planking, which is 1.1/8” thick backed with a pad the same thickness. So a 3/4” hole through 2 1/4” thickness to be increased to 1” diameter, working in the base of an awkward locker.

The existing hole could be enlarged with a rasp but this is a crude tool. I shaped up a plug, 3/4” x 2 1/4”, started holes in the centre, top and bottom, to locate the drill of a 1” hole-saw, and glued the plug in the hole.

Next day I centred the hole-saw in the drilled hole inboard and drilled down about half way. Then drilled up from outside, (the boat is ashore!) Result a smooth hole through the planking and pad which accepted the new skin fitting exactly.

It is so nice when ideas work so well.



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CALENDAR EVENTS

8 October 2005 Laying-up Supper & Beaulieu Rally R. Southampton Y. C.
25 February 2006 Annual General Meeting at Theale

WINTER ISSUE: No. 62

Copy date for the next issue: 1 December 2005

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