

The Silhouette Owner

The Journal of the Silhouette Owners' Association

Number 23

October 1962

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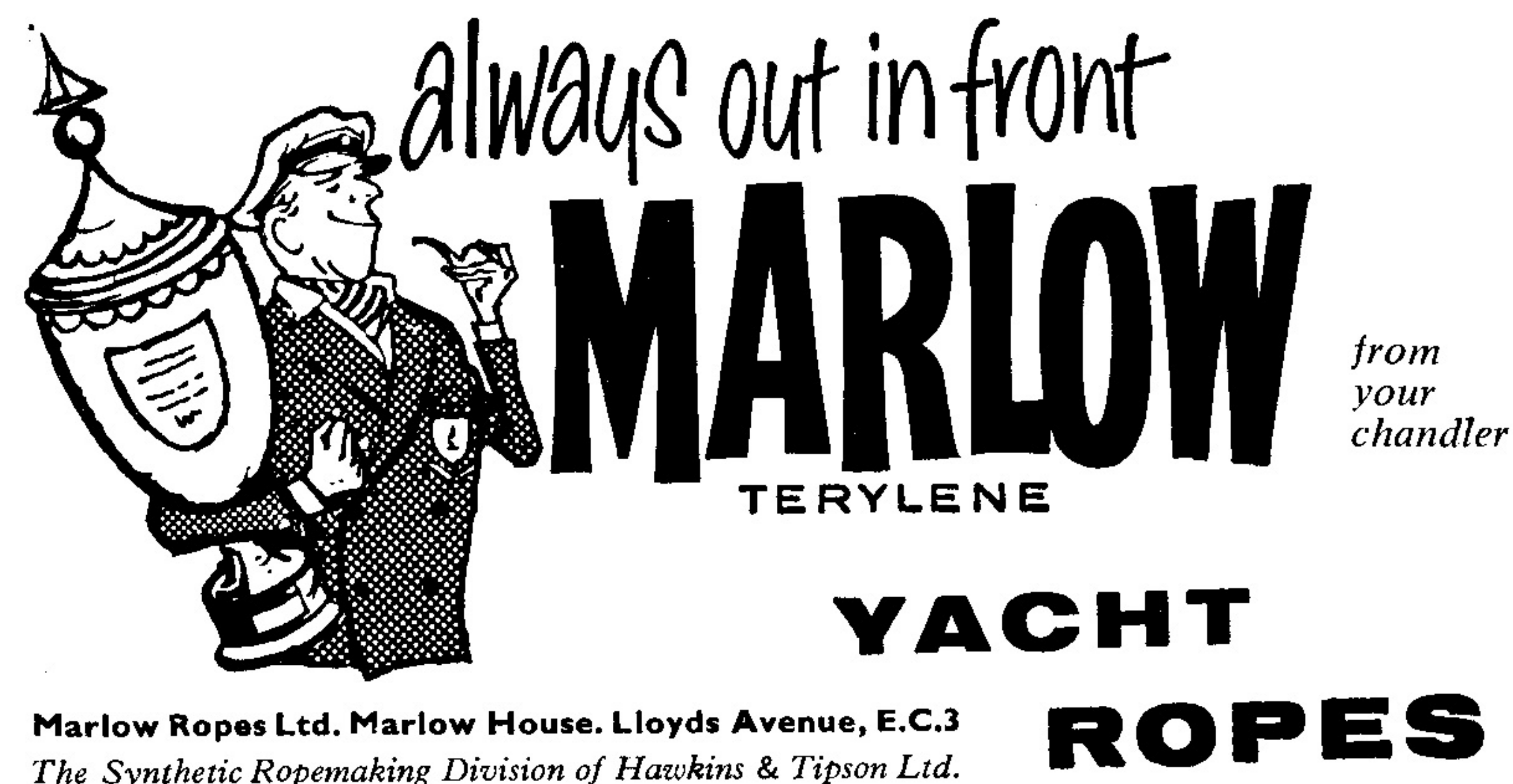
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Laying up

THIS is the time of year when yachting thoughts are dominated by the problems of laying up. If you can find cover for your boat, so much the better, but Silhouettes can live quite happily out of doors, provided that sensible precautions are taken to prevent rainwater, or condensation water, from accumulating and *standing* anywhere, and that paint and varnish are protected against frost. A canvas cover of some sort is desirable, but it need not be very expensive—secondhand tarpaulins can be had from about £5 up. It is best to make a tent rather than to wrap up the boat. A pole through the tabernacle, secured to the samson post forward and resting in a crutch aft makes a good ridge for a cover, and if it comes down well over the sides it will provide good protection.

Leave the tent open fore and aft for a clear current of air to go through, but try to place the boat so that the ends get whatever shelter possible from prevailing winds and driving rain. Take up all floorboards, and take off locker covers—let air get everywhere it can.

Laying up time is the proper time to think about next year—it is also comforting to do this, because it takes one's mind off the generally rather depressing scene of saltings or yard in autumn. It's a good time to buy new fittings, and it's easier to find the money for them bit by bit during the autumn and winter, than to try to buy everything at once in the Spring. And think about insurance, which is among the most important of all marine "fittings". Lots of people—possibly most people—are under-insured. A boat is quite a valuable piece of property, but it doesn't remain static; one is adding to it all the time. It's a useful exercise to take a piece of paper and to jot down all the things one has added to a boat since it came from the builders; and to add up the cost. Then have a look at the insurance policy, and see if it comes anywhere near covering the real value of the boat and all its bits and pieces. If it doesn't, *do* something about it: write to the insurers, and say that you want to add this and that to the policy for next year. If you are going to do anything about insurance, *do it now*.



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Secretary's Notes

TRY to contact any business man, between the hours of ten and eleven; his secretary will tell you that he is at coffee; anytime after that, to about 3 p.m., he is at lunch; afternoon tea extends to 4.30; after that he has left the office. Of course if the attempt is made during the months from May to September, more likely than not you will be told that your desired acquaintance is on holiday until some future date; in fact life seems to be one long holiday for the other fellow. I expect that is the feeling some folks felt during September, when any letters or phone calls went unanswered for a week or two, but while apologising for any inconvenience caused, please let me add that I was not on holiday, but trying to wrest a little more bread and butter from a job of work in the Middle East. (Which is also the reason why I am not very sympathetic to moans about the lack of sunshine in this country; sometimes the sun does get you down).

* * * *

After finally getting delivery of our long-awaited ties, and I hope by now having many satisfied members proudly displaying their colours, we seem to be in a spot of bother over burgees. Our stout-hearted treasurer virtually bullied the makers into producing the last batch, but was told firmly that the next delivery would take at least three months. Such is the position of supplies nowadays. It seems that we have no alternative but to await the convenience of the makers, and console ourselves with the thought that at least they will be in time for the 1963 season.

* * * *

We had an interesting chat with an insurance assessor recently, who told us that the number of claims for Silhouettes was quite high

in relation to the number afloat, but hastened to add that well over ninety per cent of the claims arise from insecure moorings. After having this information I did inspect some of the mooring methods used by other folk on the Crouch. Many were suspect, so may I here suggest that a few extra shillings spent on adequate mooring chain and tackle is money well spent? An occasional inspection may also prevent a lot of inconvenience and damage.

* * * *

My biggest ambition for next season is to make sure that the List of Members is up-to-date, and without a single mistake or incorrect classification. So please, if you have not already dropped that post card to point out any error in the last list, don't delay; do it today.

* * * *

We are always pleased to see a new group being formed, and especially happy to see the newly-constituted Plymouth group. The Silhouette and Plymouth are synonymous, so congratulations to Mr Nichols for all the hard work he has put in to bring this group into being, and best of luck to our Plymouth friends.

A well-known boat agency has offered to give the association a trophy for any form of competition among Silhouettes that can be run on a country-wide basis. Ideas or suggestions will be welcomed.

PS. Please don't forget that post card if you were wrongly classified!

REG GARROD.

The Pegg Cup

THE Pegg Cup, presented by R. N. Pegg, Commodore of the N W Group, is for a handicap race to mark the close of the racing season in the Menai Starits. It is open to all members and associates of the N W Group.

The race was sailed at 11.00 hrs on Sunday, September 16, over a triangular course in excellent conditions. Ron Bradford in *Buttercup II*, crewed by Geoff. Walton, was a very popular winner, closely followed by Don McKnight in *Sampan*, second, and John Pegg in *Gazelle*, third. After crossing the finishing line Don McKnight had the bad luck to strike an underwater obstruction and badly holed *Sampan*.

Reg and Nancy Pegg acted as starters, and the finishing order was: 1, *Buttercup II* (Silhouette, Ron Bradbury); 2, *Sampan* (Caprice, D. McKnight); 3, *Gazelle* (Silhouette, John Pegg); 4, *Sian* (Silhouette, Derek Williams); 5, *Dolphin* (Silhouette, H. Firth); 6, (retired) *Coral Reef II* (Silhouette, Roy Beaumont).

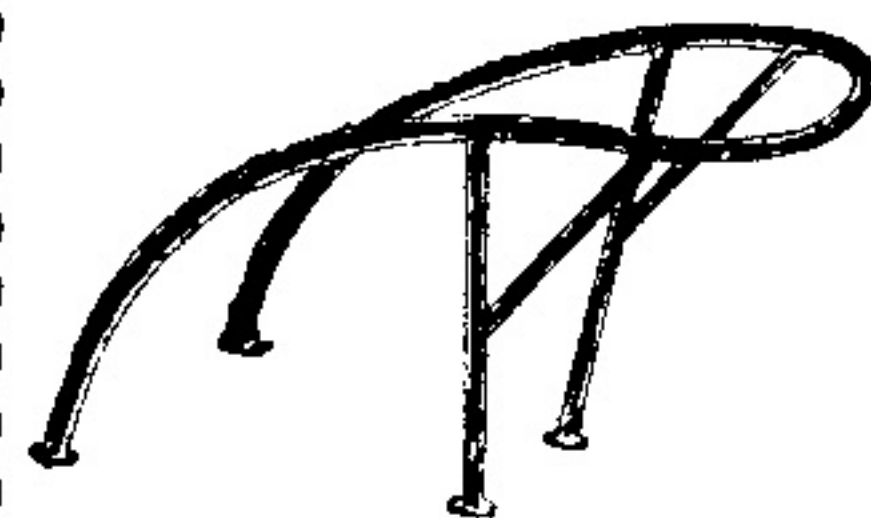
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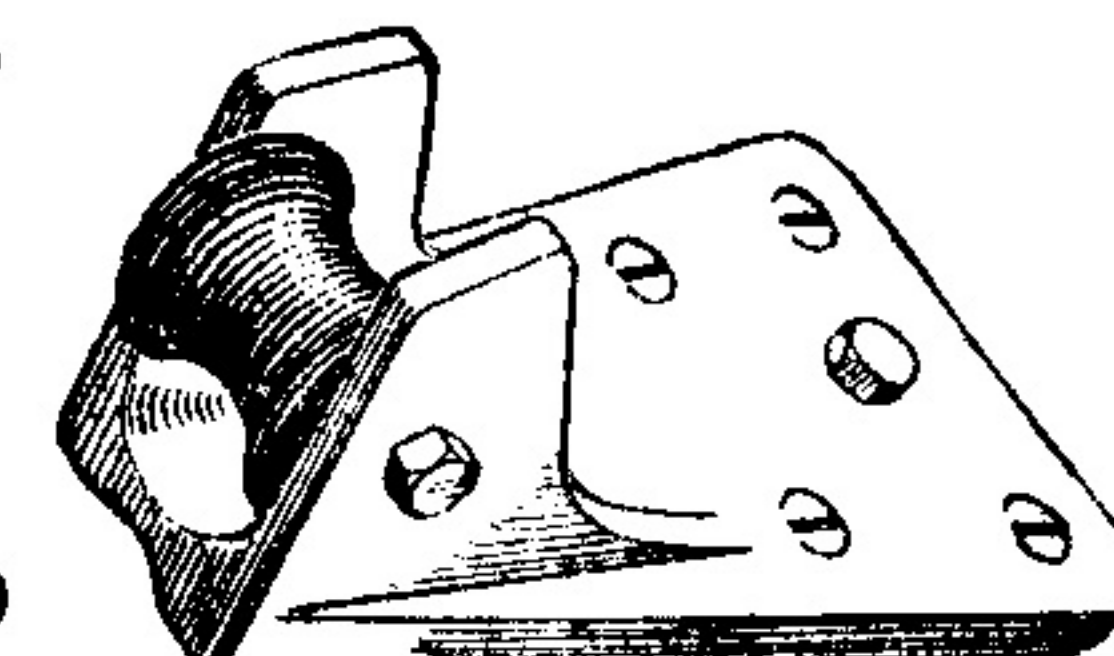
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Setting out to sea By Martin Ware

THIS has been my first season cruising. Before this I had dinghy-raced summer and winter for nearly ten years, on a large lake in the South of England, with just an occasional visit to the sea for an Open Meeting, or while on holiday. I knew, therefore, quite a bit about the mechanics of sailing a boat, but next to nothing about seamanship. Add to that, that I planned for part of the season to be crewed by two of my children (aged 14 and 10), that an exacting chair-borne job put time at a premium and also gave little opportunity for keeping really fit, and that I am by nature cautious, and there were what I thought compelling reasons for putting in some serious homework before actually venturing on the sea. Perhaps this account of my preparations, some of the mistakes I made, and what unforeseen hazards I encountered may help—and even encourage—other newcomers to cruising.

My boat is the standard three-berth, masthead rig, Mark II Silhouette. As I wanted to cruise, and not race, I got heavy ground tackle; a 15lb. C Q R with 20 fathoms of chain, and an 18lb. Fisherman, with a short length of chain and 24 fathoms of warp for kedging, or use in weed. Stowed well forward, their weight nicely preserves the fore-and-aft trim which the presence aft of the outboard (a Seagull 100) and crew otherwise would upset. Indeed, I believe that the considerable weight of the anchors and chain is more than compensated for by the good waterline it ensures. I have a storm jib and a genoa, as well as a working jib, and each at times has fully earned its keep. There is roller-reefing (pawl and ratchet, so as not to lose the handle) for the mainsail. The tender is an Avon Redstart which, though costly, has the two great merits of providing buoyancy for an emergency, and of being easily towable (an exhaust valve on the bellows allows practically all

the air to be removed, and the tender then folds away into a very small space). My other safety gear, besides charts and tide tables, local "pilots", wireless, compasses, and lead, includes lifejackets and life-lines for every member of the crew, a lifebuoy and line, a foghorn, and, of course, red flares. Half way through the season I was given a barometer for my birthday, and that is a help too. All this may seem a great deal of equipment for cruising in the sheltered waters of the Solent, but every item except the lifebuoy, the flares, and (thank goodness) the foghorn, has been in regular use. Furthermore, growing familiarity with the gear breeds a sober confidence for longer voyages in the future, and anyway it's fun to use.

I launched my boat at the end of March, but for six months before this she had been sitting in an old barn at home. This six months was a boon as before *Mermaid* ever touched water, I knew every cranny of her. I had ample time to inspect and cogitate over every piece of gear, to effect a few minor improvements, such as the fitting of a topping lift, and a stemhead roller, and to consider what I could comfortably stow inside her. "Barn sailing" had other advantages too; it spurred me on to prepare thoroughly for the real thing.

This I did in four ways. First, I read about cruising as much as I could, in *The Silhouette Owner*, and *Yachting Monthly* and in books. Of the books, I liked specially Peter Heaton's *Sailing and Cruising*, M. J. Rantzen's *Little Ship Navigation, Coastal*, D. A. Rayner's *Safety in Small Craft*, and Eric Hiscock's *Cruising Under Sail*. Secondly, I attended the excellent series of evening lectures on coastal navigation run by the Little Ship Club in London. Thirdly, I went for a week's instructional cruise with Coastal Courses Ltd. Here I was able to perform, under expert supervision, some of the things I had been reading and learning about, and this week was of great value in building up my confidence. Finally, I applied to the S O A Crewing Register for a crew who had some previous experience of cruising, a step I strongly recommend for the novice skipper. I was most fortunate in my crew, John Pickup. Only then did I consider myself ready to go to sea on my own account.

Since her launching *Mermaid* has logged 18 short passages (longest 15 miles) between her home port of Gosport and other harbours in the Solent and Chichester Harbour. Reefed down to the first batten, and with the storm jib set, she had handled so well in a Force 6-7 wind—the strongest yet encountered—that a nine-year-old boy (Bryan Pickup) was easily able to manage the helm. She rode the waves splendidly. On the one occasion when reefing was too long delayed, however, the heavy weather-helm in the gusts made steering quite difficult. The moral: reef early: is obvious.

There have been a few bad moments. The worst was when in trying to shift under power from a temporary anchorage too near a busy

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fairway, the anchor-buoy rope tangled with the propeller. The motor stopped repeatedly before the cause was located, and *Mermaid* was blown dangerously near some rocks until my younger son Robert retrieved the situation by dropping the anchor again (at this point I was upside down over the stern trying to disentangle the propeller). Apart from its immediate lessons, this incident poses a more general question: as motors sometimes fail (in my experience other causes have been seaweed in the propeller, an empty tank, and dirt in the fuel system), is it not sound practice when motoring in confined waters to have one's sails set? Yet this is seldom done. What are the pros and cons?

Other bad moments have been due to the leeward spreader jumping off the rod on the mast. The first time this happened was because I had let the shrouds get too loose; I had forgotten that new shrouds stretch. This mishap prevented us from changing tack, and eventually we had to take down all sail, motor into harbour, and there lower the mast in order to replace the spreader. On the second occasion the shrouds were reasonably tight, so the spreaders have now been fixed permanently to their rod by split pins. (I gather Mr. Hurley has overcome this defect by fitting a longer rod through the mast). On another occasion the Seagull's vibration shook the fuel tank loose, but this tendency has been cured by special lock-nuts provided by the makers. And once, disastrously, we forgot to filter the fuel; in the end the carburettor got choked, and we had to strip it down and clean the whole fuel system.

Finally, an unsolved problem. How does one stop condensation in a sleeping bag in the quarter berth? Bags elsewhere in the cabin remain dry, and there is plenty of through ventilation. As it is the skipper's berth, I should particularly like to know.



Cruise to Caernarvon By Herbert Firth

AT 16.00 hrs on Saturday, September 8, a notable little fleet left Glyn Garth to sail to Caernarvon for the week-end. There were four Silhouettes, *Sian* (Derek Williams), *Restless* (Roy and Elizabeth Francis), *Coral Reef II* (Roy and Philip Beaumont) and *Dolphin* (Herbert Firth and Bill Evers-Swindell), Patrick Barry came in his Debutante *Looby Loo*, and A. Goodwin in his 5-tonner *Lady Irene*. All except *Lady Irene*, which went into Caernarvon Harbour, entered the river and made fast alongside the Castle Wall Quay. The Committee of the Caernarvon Sailing Club kindly placed the club premises at our disposal, and thoughtfully made arrangements for toilet facilities and hot water the next morning. An excellent party was held at the club, and we were very pleased that our Vice-Commodore, Ron Bradbury, was able to get to Caernarvon by road to join us.

Lady Irene left Caernarvon at 07.00 hrs to return through the Swellies at low water slack, but the rest of us planned to go back on Sunday afternoon. However, there was an adverse weather forecast (very), so the return voyage was postponed to the following Saturday, and the boats were left in the River Afon.

The return trip was planned to leave Caernarvon at 09.00 hrs, but only *Restless*, *Looby Loo* and *Dolphin* got away on time and through the Swellies safely. *Sian* and *Coral Reef II* didn't leave until 10.00, and couldn't make it. They had to wait by H M S *Indefatigable* for low water slack.

A film show and party was held at the Gazelle Hotel, Glyn Garth, that Saturday night, and we were all sorry that John (in bed with flu) and Helen Anderson were unable to be present. We were very pleased to see our Commodore, Reg Pegg, with his wife and children, Mary and John, and also Hugh and Alice Jones from Holyhead and Reg and Mrs Martin from Port Dinorwic.

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On the Wyre

SILHOUETTE owners on the Wyre at Wardleys, near Blackpool, have got together and decided to form a Wyre Group of the S O A. Mr R. O. Brewer, of 157, Lawsons Road, Thornton, Blackpool, has been elected Group Commodore, and Mr T. H. Swarbrick, Wardleys Cottages, Hambleton, near Blackpool, Hon. Secretary. Miss J. Wright has been elected Hon. Treasurer.

The group held its first race on September 2 over a four-mile course. Result: 1, *Y Not* (T. H. Swarbrick); 2, *Little Bear* (F. Gregory); 3, *Sulyda* (B. Woods).

A further meeting to discuss a programme for next season, group subscription, etc., is to be held later.

Dates for Diaries

Saturday, November 17. Second annual dinner and dance of the N W Group, at the Manor Hey Hotel, Urmston, Manchester. Tickets 30s each, from H. Firth, Hon. Secretary N W Group, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Please apply in good time, because it is a vast help to the organisers to have a clear idea of numbers.

* * * *

Saturday, January 5, 1963. A G M of the Silhouette Owners' Association, and annual London party. Please make a note of this now, because we hope to make our next party better than ever. This time it will be in Central London, so that it will be easier for people to get to. Details later.

THE SILHOUETTE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee—1962

Commodore : J. R. L. Anderson, The Old Hall, Marple, Cheshire. Marple 1458.

Vice-Commodore : Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.

Rear-Commodore : Bernard Collins, Hilltop, Lincoln Road, Rochford, Essex. Southend 544876.

Acting Hon. Secretary : R. A. Garrod, 4 Crawley Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield.

Hon. Treasurer : J. D. O'Brien, 12, Malpas Drive, Pinner, Middlesex.

Sail Number Registrar : W. H. Chambers, 79a, Adelaide Grove, London, W.12. Shepherds Bush 3856.

National Member : Herbert Firth, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Altrincham 0765.

The Commodores and Secretaries of all recognised Regional Groups of the SOA are ex-officio members of the National Committee.

Hon. Technical Adviser : Robert Tucker, 58, Southbury Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

THE SILHOUETTE OWNER. The *Journal* of the SOA is published monthly, and is sent to all members by post.

Hon. Editor : J. R. L. Anderson, The Old Hall, Marple, Cheshire.

The Silhouette Owners' Association exists to promote the interests of Silhouette Owners throughout the world. The annual subscription is 15s (USA \$5). Burgees can be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer.

Incidents in a sailing life

WITHOUT going too deeply into such things as getting knocked on the head with a swinging boom and involuntary swims, one does experience some quite amusing incidents which emanate from the desire to sail a small boat. An example of this could be illustrated by our shopping expedition to buy sleeping bags. Here I must digress for a moment, and explain that from a tender age I have always suffered from what is now considered almost the social crime of being larger than most—call it overweight, stout, fat, obese what you will, (and throughout the years I have heard them all). The fact remains I am definately "O.S.". Therefore, when the other half of the crew returned from the local camping and sports outfitters with two tailor made, Terylene, feather-down filled sleeping bags, I viewed the cut away tapering shapes with grave suspicion. Nevertheless, I stowed them on board, ready for the next weekend that we should sleep afloat.

This turned out to be a night when we were anchored off Foulness Island, when the wind whistled up to half a gale and the temperature, was, as described by the broadcasting news reader, "below seasonal

SOA REGIONAL GROUPS

Regional groups of the Silhouette Owners' Association have been established in the following areas:

South-East. *Hon. Sec. Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.*

North-West. *Hon. Sec. Herbert Firth, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Tel. Altrincham 0765.*

Solent. *Hon. Sec. J. R. Caulder, Sellafeld, Orchard Lane, Hermitage, Emsworth.*

Bristol Channel. *Hon. Sec. Cyril Watts, 5, Vassall Road, Fishponds, Bristol.*

Avon. *Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206, Hagley Road, Edgebaston, Birmingham.*

Scarborough. *Hon. Sec. B. M. Beeden, Elm Tree Cottage, Doncaster Road, Thrybergh, near Rotherham.*

Blackwater. *Hon. Sec. P. F. Croft, 48, Annalee Road, South Ockendon, Romford.*

Scotland. *Hon. Sec. J. B. Jackson, 81, Baillie Drive, Calderwood, East Kilbride. Tel. East Kilbride 21194.*

average". Clad in pyjamas, I unzipped the opening in the side of the padded envelope, and proceeded to wriggle in feet first, to make myself comfortable for the night. It was then that I realised that my first suspicions were well founded, for although my feet were jammed hard against the bottom seam, the uppermost part only just reached that part of the anatomy from where the figures of young ladies' vital statistics are taken. A pair of shoulders and two arms remained completely exposed, like the ice cream of a well filled cornet. After performing contortions with my wrist muscles, the zip was pulled up so that the whole contraption fitted skin-tight at the top, tapering gently to the feet, which by now had had to assume the shape of a pigeon toed Egyptian as depicted on the many friezes in the British Museum.

Not having spent a very comfortable night, it was decided to buy a slightly larger model for the next time, but this is where the snags arose. Mr. "Local Camping and Sports' Outfitter", assured us from the bottom of his heart that all sleeping bags were of similar dimensions, and the only alternative would be a made-to-measure order which, with luck, would be delivered before Christmas, but certainly not in time to use during the "Summer" months. So off we went to the heart of the metropolis to seek out shops with greater selections. Many models were viewed and rejected, some offended my wife's colour sense, some were not good enough in quality, some had the wrong filling; being ignorant of all these technicalities, I left this side of the deciding to my wife, while I busied myself with a six foot tape to check up the length and breadth. At last the right colour, quality and filling combination was found, and I had satisfied myself that the dimensions were ample; but it was then that my wife decided to enter my field, and to concern herself with the size problem. In vain did I assure her that the rule could not be wrong, and that the thing would

envelope my ample proportions; neither this nor holding up the material and stretching it round my waist would convince her. We finished making the purchase after I had slipped off my shoes, lain full length on the floor, and allowed the shop assistant to fit the thing around me.

* * * *

I always try to keep my passport up to date, for several reasons, not the least being the likelihood of a trip across the Dover straits. So, on finding that it was ten years old this year, I applied for its renewal. But this is not possible after ten years, and a completely new document is necessary, which calls for new photographs. Instead of paying a visit to the local photographer to procure these prints, I hit upon a plan to save time and trouble by using one of those automatic machines that take three poses for two shillings in the slot. Remembering that I had seen such a machine in the entrance of a nearby railway station, I called there at the first opportunity. Needless to add, the machine was being used by a pair of giggling teenage girls. After discreetly walking past, and waiting a suitable time until they had vacated the cabinet, I slipped inside and drew the curtain almost furtively, ashamed lest any passers by might think that I was vain enough to want a record of my image. Inside the small cabinet is an adjustable seat to allow the head and shoulders to be lined up with the taking aperture. After twirling this to the correct height, I then read the instructions, which allow one to choose between a dark or light background by pulling a drape across the rear panel. Having arranged for the light background, I then read that the two shilling piece should be placed in the slot, and one should assume the expression that one wants to portray, and hold it when the green light turned to red. After arranging the now thinning locks, and trying various facial distortions to find the least hideous, the two bob bit was slipped into the slot. The whole machine started to buzz with the promise of hidden power, the green light blazed directly into my eyes, and I waited for something to happen. I waited and I waited, until the dawn of realisation that nothing was going to happen. Peering through the green dazzle I saw a large button, obviously waiting to be pressed, so I pressed it. The green light shut off, the noise stopped, and my coin rolled down a return chute. So the whole process was started from the beginning again. Carefully I read all the printed instructions even to the makers label, again I adjusted the seat, the back cloth, the crowning glory, and slipped another coin in the same slot. Again the green light, again the whirring sound, and again the long wait without results. The was bordering on the ridiculous, so retrieving my 2s from the return slot, and totally disregarding any onlookers, I emerged from the enclosure, and read all the instructions that were printed on the outside. These consisted of arrows to point where the finished photographs could be collected and sundry advertisements, but added nothing to indicate how to set the thing to work. Without bothering to adjust the seat, or the curtain, or the hair, I slumped inside, and popped in yet another coin to see if

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the machine would react. More buzzing and more green lights. But still no picture. I gave up, and while pausing to light a pipe two urchins put their two shillings in the slot and walked past me carefully studying a still damp photograph.—R. G.

Rough Weekend

“WHEN you can’t think of anything else to do,” said Ian, “drop the anchor.” We couldn’t, and we did. The chain ran out with a comfortably solid sound, the faithful C Q R bit and held at once, and we swung securely in relatively calm water. We made a cup of coffee, and considered things. It had been an eventful day.

We left home on the Derbyshire edge of Cheshire at 05.30 and made Glyn Garth, having stopped for breakfast on the way, around 10.45. It was the day of the Beaumaris Town Regatta, and we were entered for the Silhouette race. Our start was 12.15 from Beaumaris. We hadn’t all that much time, so we hurriedly carried down the dinghy and rowed out to *Mary Lane*. *Dolphin* (Herbert Firth) and *Buttercup II* (Ron Bradbury) were also making ready. It was a pretty filthy morning—scudding rain clouds, and a good bit of wind, the upper reaches of Force 4 at least. At least we wouldn’t be becalmed. *Dolphin* and *Buttercup II* got away first, but we followed soon afterwards, to make the start-line at Beaumaris. We were under all plain sail, full main and mastshead jib. I think we might have done well to reef, but we were going to race, and she seemed to carry the canvas well enough. Away from the moorings, out in the Straits, it was blowing a bit harder, but we wanted to make the start in good time, and carried on. Just as we got there, we found *Dolphin* turning back—“Whole regatta cancelled. Forecast Force 6 or more.” We decided to sail around for a bit, and make the Gazelle for lunch. *Mary Lane* revelled in the wind—now a good Force 5—and so, for a bit, did we. Then the port spreader came adrift from the mast: probably my fault, shroud too slack (though I profoundly distrust those alleged locking nuts on the rigging screws).

In that wind there was nothing for it but to take sail off her and ship the Seagull. This we did, and motored back to the Gazelle jetty to get the mast down and restore the spreader.

We tied up at the jetty and went for a drink. When we got back the weather was worse, blowing a good Force 6, with a vicious short steep sea. Arthur Goodwin had heroically brought his big Colin Mudie sloop alongside to put some pigs of ballast in her. Ron Bradbury was helping him. We got down *Mary Lane's* mast and restored the spreader—a beastly job in a Force 6 wind, but there were good friends at hand to help. Then Goody wanted to take his boat back to her mooring: but how was he to get ashore? The howling wind from the SW had blown up to Force 7—measured on the ventimeter—and the sea wasn't fit for a dinghy. Ron offered to go with Goody—would we go alongside in *Mary Lane* and bring them back?

We said we'd have a go, and they went off to their mooring. We considered things. To get to them, we had to meet the full sweep of the Force 7 wind, and a sluicing tide. We decided to have a go with the Seagull, but to have the jib in readiness to hoist at once in case we had to run for it. We cast off, and the wind hurled us away from the jetty.

The gallant Seagull thudded away, but we couldn't bring her round directly into the wind. So we made out into the middle of the Straits, and gradually wore her round. The short steep seas stabbed at us, and we had to make across them, but *Mary Lane* held her own gamely, and steadily made ground. We were still towing the dinghy, which was a stupid thing to do, but I'd forgotten about it. The dinghy didn't help.

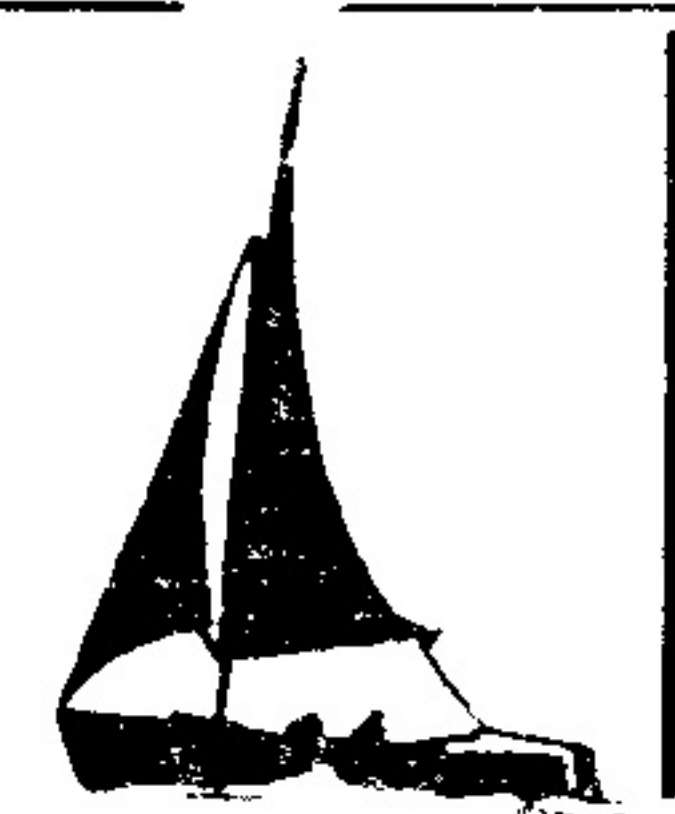
After what seemed ages, but really wasn't very long, we made Goody's boat. Going alongside was a tricky business, but we made it, and Ian grabbed hold of her pulpit, holding the boats apart by sheer strength. Ron and Goody came on board, and back we went to the jetty. We put them ashore, and then considered our own position. We were sleeping on board, but conditions off the Gazelle didn't seem to offer much chance of a quiet night: also, we would be marooned, for it would have been foolhardy to try to get ashore in a dinghy in that wind and sea. We decided to run down to Gallows Point, enter the anchorage there, and get some shelter. Again the wind hurled us from the jetty. This time it was with us, and we all-but-planed under jib alone. Ron had said that we could use his mooring off Gallows Point, and once round the Point we made for it. To fetch it, however, we had to beat back a little, and she wouldn't beat under jib alone in all that wind. We went out again to get a rag of mainsail on her—and found the wretched spreader adrift again. Well, there was always Seagull: but this time there wasn't—at some stage a surge of the dinghy must have struck it, for the air-intake part of the carburettor had been broken off. We went in again under the jib and dropped the hook.

Apart from the carburettor, Seagull seemed in good shape. Now *Mary Lane* always inherits old hot water bottles from the house—as soon as they begin to leak, they come to her. The uses for a bit of strip rubber from an old hot water bottle are endless, and a bit came in handy now. With marvellous ingenuity, Ian made a cowl for the air

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intake out of a bit of rubber, and Seagull started. What is more, she kept going to bring us to our mooring. We tied up and relaxed.

Helen and the children had motored round to Gallows Point to meet us, and were there on the beach. They were supposed to be sleeping in a tent, and Ian volunteered to go ashore and help them find a place to pitch it. So they went off, and I set about tidying up the boat. When Ian came back, having pitched the tent in a kindly farmer's field a couple of miles away, there was no water, and we were sitting on the mud. Fortunately he had rubber boots, and fortunately I had had the sense to fill a bucket with sea water before the sea went away. So the worst of the mud stayed outboard. We had supper and turned in.

It was a wild night, but I slept through it. Ian woke during the night and said that a cascade of rain added itself to the gale, but the cabin stayed bone dry. After breakfast in the morning we got down the mast again and fixed the spreader again. The tide had come back and gone again during the night, and there would not be water till around 11.00. I borrowed Ian's boots and waded ashore to rejoin my family, and Ian settled down on board with a book. I found Helen and the children in good shape—the tent had stood up to the gale, and the children were having the time of their lives. We struck camp, and went back to the boat. There was still plenty of wind, but the vice had gone out of it, and there was even a little fitful sunshine. I volunteered to look after the children, while Helen crewed for Ian, to take *Mary Lane* back to her mooring off the Gazelle. We stood on the beach and watched them go out, with three rolls in the main and a small jib. *Mary Lane* disappeared round the Point, and a friendly man with a big motor cruiser invited the children to come on board. They had an enchanted time with the Baby Blake—a refinement that *Mary Lane* does not possess. When we got to the Gazelle for lunch, I was relieved to see *Mary Lane* riding happily at her own mooring, with Ian and Helen sitting in the cockpit, eating their own lunch on board.

—and Sequel

IT was wholly in keeping with this untoward season that when the Beaumaris Town Regatta was re-sailed on September 1, the start had to be postponed for lack of wind. Thinking that the start was at noon, *Dolphin* (Herbert Firth) and *Mary Lane* set off from the Gazelle in the morning, and ghosted along to Beaumaris, to learn that the start

had become 15.00. It wasn't a bad day, so we tied up to a big yacht's bouy off Beaumaris (the owner fortunately absent) and had a leisurely lunch. *Sian* (J. D. Williams) came and joined us. Around 14.15 we cast off, but there wasn't a breath of wind, so we motored towards the start and drifted around, waiting. Here we were joined by *Fenton* (Vivian Bellis) and *Gemini* (Jack Taylor). There was no problem about the start, because the tide carried us over the line, but there was a considerable problem about rounding the first mark in what had become a sluicing tide. *Fenton*, *Sian* and *Dolphin* rounded it splendidly, but *Gemini* and *Mary Lane* got stuck. *Gemini* bravely kedged to wait hopefully for wind, but *Mary Lane* tried to beat back, and with every tack got carried farther away towards the Irish Sea. *Sian*, *Fenton* and *Dolphin* were also beating back, but more happily, because they had rounded the mark. *Sian* and *Fenton* managed to find an inshore patch where they could make a little progress, but *Dolphin* was fiercely held by the tide. Soon afterwards both she and *Mary Lane* retired, and set their Seagull topsails for home. Some wind did come, and *Sian* and *Fenton* made a fine race of it at the end, pretty well neck and neck, with *Sian* just getting in ahead. *Gemini* deserves an honourable mention for sticking at it.—J R L A.

Notes on Pilotage; the Dee estuary

By Joan Abrams

Mrs Abrams is Editor of the Bulletin of the Dinghy Cruising Association, and these notes are reprinted with her kind permission. They were originally written with dinghies in mind, but all the channels are deep enough for any boat drawing not more than two feet. Care should be taken to sound constantly in exploring the estuary—on neap tides it is sometimes not possible to sail across the banks; while on high spring tides even the narrow gutters of Burton Marshes become navigable.

THE Dee Estuary, between the North Welsh coast and the Wirral, is a place of constantly changing sands. The marshes which fill its head are growing, so that the sailing area is becoming smaller. The sands which block the lower estuary, and which extend off its mouth, are growing rapidly also, and the shallow channels are becoming navigable only by very small boats.

The current Admiralty chart gives a completely misleading picture, and should be used only for the entrance channels, where there is still a certain amount of shipping. There are two main entrance channels, Hilbre Swash and the Welsh Channel. The Swash is the way from the north. It is well buoyed as far as Hilbre Island, a prominent landmark with its tall beacon, where it joins Welshman's Gut, leading

across the mouth of the estuary to the Welsh Channel. There is a way through to the Rock Channel, leading to the Mersey, from the pair of buoys two miles north of Hilbre Island. A dinghy can cut the corner at this point, at about two hours of flood, and sound a way across the tail of East Hoyle Bank on a course for the buoys at the entrance to Rock Channel.

Hilbre Island is a bird sanctuary, so that one has to have permission to go above the high water line. This leaves a large area for landing at most states of the tide, but there are no stores to be had—only a keeper lives there. There is a very pleasant anchorage just east of the island in a sandy gutter where a boat lies aground for eight hours out of every twelve. This is a beautiful spot to spend a tide; one can scramble over the rocks of the island to see a magnificent view of the Welsh hills and Anglesey, in clear weather. The banks here are of firm sand, and the walk to West Kirby at low tide is an easy one. It is only possible to sail between the West Kirby shore and the three Hilbre islets at the top of the highest tides.

The other way into the Dee is from the Welsh Channel, also well buoyed and with deep water for dinghy purposes at all states of the tide. It enters the Dee round the Point of Ayr, a headland of sand dunes with a disused lighthouse. The shallowest point of the entrance channels is in Welshman's Gut, where the two channels are connected. There is always water for a dinghy, however, though the channel is rather narrow between the West Hoyle and Salsbury Middle banks.

Grey seals are usually to be seen in this part of the Estuary. At low tide they lie on the south-east corner of West Hoyle Bank.

There are two main channels up the Estuary, one navigable, for part of the way at least, by vessels of some size, the other for yachtsmen and small fishing boats only. The main channel is buoyed, and begins along the Welsh side of the Estuary. The Dee Buoy is at its entrance. It is separated from the Point of Air coast by mud banks and marshes. This stretch is known as Wild Road, and cargo boats waiting for water often anchor here. They are usually bound for Mostyn Ironworks, or for the Point of Air Colliery, or sometimes for Connah's Quay on spring tides. It is possible for a dinghy to anchor on the shoreward side of this channel, and the Point of Air provides shelter from the prevailing westerly winds, but there is no way of getting ashore. The channel runs from Salsbury Swashway buoy to the end of the protecting wall running out along the entrance channel to Mostyn Harbour. There are constantly changing banks to be navigated through if one wishes to reach Mostyn at low tide. The harbour belongs to the ironworks, and is for commercial traffic only. Its entrance wall protects a sheltered bay to the south-east of it, where there is quite a good anchorage. Care should be taken to avoid the bad holding ground close to the end of the harbour wall. The shore at Mostyn is one of horrible mud, landing is only possible at high tide, and there are no recognised landing places, as ironworks and railway separate the shore from the road.

(To be concluded.)

FOR WOMEN

Learning To Sail

By Anne Fowler

"YOU must at least have some vague idea how to handle her," insisted the Skipper reasonably. "Suppose I were swept overboard. What would you do?"

This was a situation which I had carefully avoided studying. I had taken the tiller when coming up to moorings, or when the Skipper wanted to light a pipe. I had never felt the slightest desire to venture further. I had read several bewildering books, but Peter Heaton's "parallelogram of forces" had curbed any ambitions I might have had. The whole question sounded too like a geometrical theorem, and geometry had not been one of my best subjects at school.

"How are we ever to go on longer journeys if you will never take the tiller?" urged the Skipper.

This was a telling point. I agreed to learn, although unfortunately I could remember the Skipper's previous lessons on how to drive a car. "I am not losing my temper," he would roar and we would return home in a strained silence.

"I am slow at picking anything up," I pointed out, "and I have never yet noticed from which point of the compass the wind is coming. But I suppose I could watch the burgee."

My enthusiasm rose. One should always be prepared to learn anything. The Skipper agreed to suppress any outward show of emotion when I failed to follow his guidance. We were older now and surely we had reached a stage when we could be sure of each other's powers of restraint. The Skipper exerted every effort, praised me unduly when I merely obeyed his instructions, and we sailed almost peacefully along. But my attention, unfortunately, so often strayed. I have always liked looking at a person when I am talking. We gybed in a frightening manner.

"I must know how to do it properly," I said before the Skipper could explode. "Peter Heaton says that you must always gybe before picking anyone out of the sea."

"Later," said the Skipper firmly. "You must first learn how to tack."

He talked about angles of 45 degrees; showed me where I should be pointing. It all sounded clear and concise. So long as the shore offered a reasonable object for me to aim at, I could follow his instructions. But when I had only the open sea and wide horizon I could find no convenient right angle.

"But you must be able to *feel* that it's right. Watch your mainsail," urged the Skipper.

"It's exactly like a badly signposted roundabout," I complained. "You can't possibly tell which is the opposite road."

I thought of Clementina Gordon and Felicity Redmond-Lyon.

Sailing was a sport that women could obviously follow, but I was beginning to realise that one must have some natural ability. Powers of endurance were no substitute for a little intuitive skill.

"It's something that can be learned," said the Skipper emphatically. "You only have to memorise a few simple rules. I don't think you are really trying."

I began to understand that he would never have that faith in me which it was so essential that a helmsman should inspire. I could not visualise him sleeping quietly below while I sailed *Sou* through the night. We all have our limitations, I told myself. We sailed on moodily in a following wind. There was a sudden gust and I gybed badly. The boom struck the backstay with a heartshaking reverberation.

"We'll just have to hope," I said sadly, "that it will be I who am swept overboard."

From New Zealand

I AM still engaged in building my boat and hope to have it in the water this summer. It is, I believe, the only Silhouette in N.Z. A friend of mine, whom I taught to sail a year or two back, built a Caprice last year, and there is a Midshipman at Lyttleton, and another building at Wellington. But with the increasing shortage of deep-water moorings at Lyttleton, the main port for the Christchurch area, I am sure that bilge-keelers will become popular soon.

I am joining the Banks Peninsula Cruising Club and hope to take part in some of their harbour races at Lyttleton, 15 miles from here, and also in some of their passage races which are fairly short events, apart from the annual Boxing Day race to Akaroa, which goes round the outside of the Peninsula. As the Peninsula sticks out like a thumb into the Pacific on the east coast of South Island there is nothing between it and the South Pole, and a southerly blow kicks up some really nasty seas on the south side of the Peninsula. For this reason not many yachts here do much off-shore stuff, as it is a wicked coast with no shelter between here and Wellington. With my trailer, however, I hope to spend my holidays exploring the beautiful Marlborough Sounds, a labyrinth of narrow fiords in the North of the South Island leading off Cook Strait which separates the two islands. The only snag about the Sounds for sailing, is that, like some of the narrow and deep Scottish sea-lochs in which I have cruised, there is either no wind, or else one is apt to get vertical knock-down blows off the hills.

I shall write and let you know in due course how my boat copes with local conditions. I am using the American sail-plan which Bob Tucker kindly sent on to me and have increased the ballast weight by 90 lbs.

I notice from your magazine that a Scottish Branch has been established in Glasgow, with Mr. W. G. Lang, whom I have met. Which seems to prove that Silhouettes are becoming popular even in deep-water areas like the Clyde!—*B. Murray, Pigeon Bay, Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, New Zealand.*

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