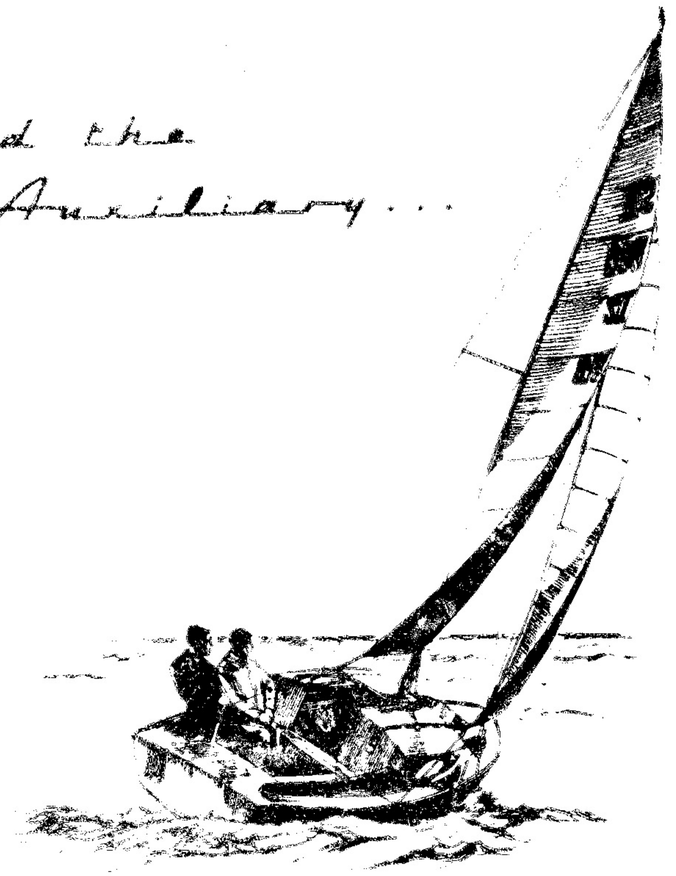
The Silhouette Owner

The journal of the Silhouette Owners' Association

Number 26. January 1963. Price 6d.





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The log competitions

MR. Maurice Griffiths, Editor of *Yachting Monthly,* and one of Britain's most distinguished yachtsmen, who generously undertook to judge this year's Log Competitions for us, has made the following awards :

The Suzanne Trophy (*presented by Robert Tucker*): Mr. D. C. W. Sutherland, for his good seamanship in the Fleetwood - Isle of Man race in his Silhouette *Sid.* (Log published in the August *Journal.*)

The Silhouette Owner Trophy: Dr. and Mrs. Douglas Wilkie, for their cruise to France and back to the Thames in *Draco.* (Published in this issue.)

Mr. Griffiths's report is on another page. On behalf of the SOA we thank him very much indeed for giving up his time to assess and analyse Silhouette logs: we hope to see Mr Griffiths at our London party on January 5, when members will have an opportunity of thanking him personally. We congratulate the winners on their well-merited awards, and we thank all those who sent logs to the *Journal*: in the nature of things not everyone can win a prize, but the standard of entries in a poor sailing season was remarkably high. A number of visitors to the Boat Show this month may contemplate becoming Silhouette owners: they will, we hope, be encouraged by the notable passages made by Silhouettes, which are the best evidence of the Silhouette's sturdiness and sea-kindly qualities. But it is not enough to have a good boat: a good boat will always try to help her crew, but sane and sensible seamanship is all-important. A successful cruise demands detailed planning, careful concern for gear and equipment at all times, and a constant eye on the weather. Sometimes one is caught out by a sudden gale (as Mr. Sutherland was): then other qualities of seamanship come into play. But the first quality of seamanship is respect for the sea, and a high sense of responsibility for crew and vessel. Practical seamanship can come only with experience, but a wise approach to the sea is the most important ingredient in it. Our boats have a fine record, but it is up to us to maintain it.


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The judges summing up

SUMMING up his comments on the Silhouette cruises in this year's Log Competitions, Mr Maurice Griffiths writes :

Fleetwood - Ramsey Race. D. C. W. Sutherland. Crew: Two men

To enter a Silhouette in this race needs courage. With a freshening head wind and progress almost nil, the skipper made a seamanlike decision to give up and run before it, reducing to running ahull (under mast only) in good time. Closing Walney Island at 0630, conditions compared with the weather forecast—wind moderating to Force 5—another seamanlike decision was made to get sail on her now, and stand on for their home port, Lytham, reached in due time. Experiences of the rest of the boats in the race fleet confirmed the sharp blow and hard conditions, and Sutherland and his mate are to be commended for meeting these conditions as they did.

The Log is well-written with clarity and economy of words; it is evident that the skipper made sensible decisions throughout. It would have been helpful for the reader if he had said who the "we" were (crew of one or two?) and given some distances. For this venture, and the seamanship displayed, I am pleased to award the *Suzanne Trophy.*

Draco's Summer Cruise. Douglas and June Wilkie. Crew: Man/wife

In 18 days Dr. and Mrs Wilkie covered 278½ miles from Heybridge to Brightlingsea - Ramsgate - Calais - Etaples - Boulogne - Ramsgate - Harty Ferry - London. Seamanship and navigation appears to have been properly carried out, and the inboard engine (which worked well) was used only strategically, as necessary to carry out the programme. The log, with track chart and tabular records of average speeds, apart from the narrative, is a model of a competition log. The cruise had evidently been planned in detail in advance, and the absence of crises

and of trouble with engine or gear reflects credit on the owners in the way they set about this cruise.

Two later trips of 20 days in all, not entered for this competition, took *Draco* by way of the Grand Union Canal up to Napton Junction, Oxford Canal and down Thames again and back to the Blackwater and the Heybridge moorings, a further 316 miles. For the Channel cruise I award Dr. and Mrs. Wilkie the *Silhouette Owner Trophy*.

The log of Perelandra. W. S. Farnell. Crew: Two men
In five days 125 miles of sailing, drifting, motoring from Ramsgate to Calais - Boulogne - Le Touquet - Boulogne - Ramsgate. A successful cross-Channel cruise, with seamanship and handling of the boat up to standard; but the navigator slipped up in allowing the boat to drift 5 miles down tide of Calais. The run back down to the Downs with the hull and mast vibrating at maximum speed was undoubtedly, as the skipper described it, "smashing sailing". A good and well conducted cruise for a Silhouette, a near miss for a prize.

Charter Cruise. John Pickup. Crew: Two men
Seven days in the Falmouth river - Truro - Fowey - Helford River area. A pleasant little cruise, with no untoward incident, but not a prize winner.

First Voyage. W. R. Grey. Crew: Singlehanded.
Taking over a new boat in Poole Harbour, trial sail out into the Channel "armed with a chart, a compass and a lot of hope" owner carried away by enthusiasm. Has to spend night at sea off St. Albans Head, with no navigation lights, no light for compass other than pocket torch, no prepared food. Large ship narrowly avoided in the dark; owner unable to leave the helm. Unnecessary risks taken during this foolhardy 24 hour venture, about which I think the less said the better, except to warn other enthusiasts not to do this kind of thing.

Secretary's Notes

WELCOME to the new year! With all sincerity, I wish it to be a happy and prosperous one for all, and especially for our members. By now, you should be well under way with the painting and varnishing, and all plans and prepartions made for the additions, alterations, and adjustments that we need to make this a better season than last, and whether you race or cruise it is always satisfying to have a well turned out craft. I think it is quite noticeable that while one may see all kinds of wrecks and ill-maintained boats in any mooring area, the little Silhouette is usually in very good trim and a constant pride to the owner.

Do we make resolutions? Perhaps. There are many, besides the old hardy annuals of abstinence from beer and tobacco, but one

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should be high on the list: if you do not already insure through the association, do so this year. This is not because I have any financial interest in insurance of any kind but for three very good reasons—one, you won't get better rates anywhere—two, the larger number of policies issued the less likelihood of increased premiums—three, any disputes are more easily settled by a body rather that a single individual. Perhaps I should mention the fourth—association funds do benefit from a little commission.

* * *

Only a few days left before the AGM and party. Make an effort put on your best bib and tucker, and turn up, you *must* enjoy it.

This is the time of year when boating activities are at their lowest ebb; not so with the association committee members. The Journal still has to be published, the balance sheet to be made up, and the latest list of members prepared for printing, besides lots and lots of letters from past, present and future members seeking every kind of information, so it is important that you cast your vote at the AGM for the best man for the job—at the election of officers.

We were all delighted to see the little paragraphs in the various yachting publications of SOA activities. Our press secretary, Harry Maloney, is doing yeoman service, so keep him supplied with information please, Mr. Group Secretary.

Treat yourself or friend to a "West Country Calendar" for 1963 published by the Western Morning News. Among the several colourful and beautiful photographs reproduced, is one of Plymouth Sound with a fine study of a Silhouette under sail, as well as a couple at moorings in other harbours.

Don't forget to keep your holidays open for Plymouth Week 1963.

R. A. G.

Draco's Summer Cruise

by June and Douglas Wilkie

OUR summer cruise was due to start at high water, about lunch time on Saturday, June 30—the culmination of several weeks of frenzied planning and poring over charts. Leaving Highgate at 0700 there was just time to collect our enlarged tent from the sailmaker (and also an unplanned demand from a passing policeman for a seven year test certificate on our car); to load in an amazing quantity of stores; and to mend a window broken the previous week by the bumpkin of a neighbouring boat. Surprisingly, everything seemed to be going according to plan, even the weather forecast (an anticyclone off the West, giving NW winds), so at 1230 we dropped the buoy at the Blackwater Sailing Club to motor to the jetty and leave the dinghy. The new engine, a Watermota Sea Urchin, started first pull, but we hardly seemed to move, and with sinking spirits struggled back to the mooring, to find that the propeller shaft coupling had cracked.

Our destination was France, and a difficult estuary at that, so we decided sadly that it would be foolish to set sail with an engine that was unserviceable. There was nothing for it but to wait for the spare part, and think bitter thoughts as we watched the good weather pass. Last year, hoping to make the same journey, we had been stuck for nearly a week in Ramsgate harbour as gales roared up the Channel, leaving us time only to turn round and go home.

Tuesday, July 3. At lunchtime we were finally off, a cold and blustery day. With the wind in the N we made good time under main and genoa down to Brightlingsea, and anchored for the night in Pyefleet channel. A deep depression had now developed over Denmark, and gales were forecast from Viking to Thames—not a day for crossing the shoals of the Thames Estuary even though the wind was in the right direction.

Wednesday, July 4. By the evening there were signs that the weather was moderating, and we resolved to set out early the next morning.

Thursday, July 5. We had a rough night after the wind piped up against the flood, and morale was low when the alarm went at 0330. With first light—though grey and greasy—and tea, things felt better; we raised anchor, and set off under jib and main at 0420, about an hour after high water, aiming to reach Ramsgate that evening. By 0615 we were crossing the Swin Spitway with nine feet of water—enough to spare for the NW wind, Force 4-5. It rained on and off but we were helped by the spring ebb to make good time, so things did not seem too bad. At 0730 we were past the Heapsand turning into the Barrow Deep by No 3 buoy, being resigned to the fact that we should then have to stem a foul tide. I was sailing because on long journeys like this we

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work two-hour shifts whenever possible and Douglas was blissfully asleep in the cabin, waking only briefly to put three rolls in the main after the wind had increased to a good Force 5. We pushed nicely over the tide and by 0835 were abreast of No 10 Barrow and preparing to turn southwards across the Barrow Deep, dodging the never-ending stream of ships.

The next part of the journey is the trickiest from all points of view, especially towards low water. You have to leave the marked channel to cross Knock John Sand (where we confirmed that there are two fathoms at LWOS) and enter the no-mans-land of the Black Deep, an erie place, marked only by unhelpful spoil ground buoys. The boat was charging along before the wind, and fearing to be blown on to the drying Shingles ahead, we had to take frequent fixes of our position by back bearings on Knock John Tower and the Mid-Barrow light vessel before it was possible to sort out the confusing pattern of buoys at the entrance to the narrow S. Edinburgh Channel. The following waves steepened up ominously as we approached the entrance, where a bell-buoy tolls gloomily. We felt very alone.

All this kept both of us so busy that the next entry in the log is not until 1000 "abreast of S. Edinburgh No 5 buoy." The tension over, we reviewed the tidal situation. For the next three hours the tide would be across our track, but once we got round the North Foreland it would be dead foul, and strengthening; we reckoned that it would be a struggle to reach Ramsgate to await the favourable tide. (If we really hurried we might even reach *The Tartar Frigate* before closing time.) Thereupon we shook out our reefs, and pressed on with all speed. By 1215

we were 3.7 miles off N. Foreland light (by sextant) and the waves—we remembered the same thing happening here last year—were becoming surprisingly steep. Thinking that the headland would give some protection from the NW wind, we closed with the land. The waves turned out to be refracted round the headland with undiminished vigour, and as they came into shallower water they got even steeper, and developed ugly foaming crests. However the boat rode the waves beautifully, and we had an exhilorating switchback ride running gull-winged. Approaching Broadstairs we could see only a line of breaking waves ahead, but we had been there last year, and remembered a harbour mole that we could shelter behind. Best of all, we arrived before 1430—in time for our much-hoped-for draught Guinness, followed by fish and chips. Lovely, lovely Broadstairs! Off again at 1715 under main and genoa for a perfect sail to Ramsgate, where we fetched up in the outer harbour.

Friday, July 6. Next morning we set off at 0715 with the South-going tide. The plan was to go inshore of the Goodwins, then head for Cap Gris Nez, and to decide later whether to make for Boulogne or Calais. At first the wind was N WForce 3 and under main and genoa we made a good 4 1/2 knots down to the Ramsgate channel. We saw the upperworks of a ship, and realised with a jolt that it was not over the horizan, but under the water, wrecked on the Goodwins. Then came a fine sight—the Walmer lifeboat apparently making straight for the Goodwins,presumably going out through Kellet Gut. There was a slight haze, so Doug assembled the home-made radar reflector and made sure that he could identify the local group of D.F. stations on 310.3 kc/s "just in case".

By 1000 we had passed the S. Goodwin Light Vessel, but the wind had fallen very light, and the haze had increased. We steered due S., with the tide carrying us somewhat Westwards. Progress was slow, so we put out spinners, and soon had the excitement of catching a large mackerel. Almost at the same moment we spied an uncharted buoy—the Varne should have been four miles away. The boat scarcely had steerage way, and the tide bore her relentlessly towards what clearly was a wreck buoy. Whatever we did to get away, the buoy seemed to exert a magnetic attraction, so we started the engine and made a circuit downtide of it, through a sickening patch where oil was still bubbling to the surface. We inquired about it afterwards at Lloyds. Given the latitude and longitude, they produced all the details with impressive speed and efficiency. The wreck was the *Kirsten Skou*, a Danish ship that sank on March 29th, 1962 after colliding with the *Karpfänger*, a German ship, in fog. Fortunately the crew of 34 were all rescued by the Dover lifeboat.

We continued to motor because there was no wind, and by 1155 were halfway between the NE Varne and the N Ridge buoys, and about 2 miles E of a line between them. Overfalls were shown on the chart, and there were indeed vigorous swirlings in the otherwise calm water. At 1225 a radio bearing on Cap Griz Nez (which we could not

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see), crossed with the Ridge buoy, put us 8 miles off the Cap. We decided to turn and make for Calais, as by then there was only one hour more of S going tide. A tiny puff of wind returned. There was no hurry now, so we thankfully switched off the engine, and returned to the peace of gently sailing, and the excitement of catching mackerel. We came in with the land just E of the black and white buoy off Cap Blanc Nez. Meanwhile, mackerel had been biting fast and furiously—we caught 14 altogether. The wind had freshened and backed to W Force 4, so we changed from genoa to working jib, just before reaching the entrance to Calais harbour. We were not at all sure whether the tide would sweep in, round or through the opening piers. As it turned out, the tide was hardly noticeable when we entered at 1700: the only drama provided by a dredger, whose cacophony would have done well as background music for Dante's "Inferno". We anchored in the avant port and ran up our Q flag and tricolour, then set about celebrating our arrival with a feast of mackerel and white wine.

Saturday, July 7. A day in Calais, sunning ourselves in the Red-start (very comfortable this) with a glass of beer to hand. With much hooting and animation a large French destroyer was shoehorned into the Bassin de l'Ouest.

Sunday, July 8. The last leg of our journey to Etaples : light SE winds were predicted, which suited us well enough, as the one thing we did not fancy was a Westerly blow for our first investigation of the Canche estuary. In fact there was no wind at all when we set out at 0825, and we had to motor most of the way. It was a beautiful day, sunny and hot, with a slight haze which soon thickened and forced us to steer compass courses from one buoy to the next, past Boulogne and the sandhills beyond. By 1355 we were South of Hardelot Plage and nearing the mouth of the estuary, when a slight breeze came up from due astern, and promptly we raised the genoa. Seeing the little waves steepen we realised that we were nearing the sandy spit off the Pointe de Lornel, so we sounded our way round the edge, keeping in two fathoms. By now the stream along the coast had turned and was

setting Northwards, but in the estuary the steam sets up river until HW, which this afternoon was at 1600. What little information the *Channel Pilot* does give about this estuary is vaguely disquieting, (for example, "the channel of approach dries 16 feet") and also somewhat misleading, ("the most favourable time to enter this channel is one hour before high water".) This is certainly too late for a small boat bound for Etaples, since the ebb starts to run with great speed promptly at HW, so it is vital to reach the town before this. At neaps the flood stream does not even reach as far up as the town.

The breeze freshened, and at 1435 we were able to dowse the engine. We followed the buoys and beacons past Le Touquet sailing club. Flying our Red Ensign we were cheerfully hailed from several of the small boats sailing around. We reached Etaples in good time, and after searching around for a mooring place finally tied up at 1600 outside several other boats at the quay. It was here that we discovered how very effective springs are when lying alongside in a strong stream. Etaples is a charming place, although few English people seem to go there, and it has the added attraction of a really excellent restaurant the Normandie (one star, one spoon-and-fork in the Michelin).

Monday, July 9. This day was spent sorting ourselves out and feasting.

Tuesday, July 10. Starting at 0730, two hours after HW, we followed the local fishermen down the rapidly drying sandy estuary. The beacons give only a hint of the true whereabouts of the channel, which zig-zags in and out of them, so we made a rough chart for ourselves. Once or twice we went aground, but managed to push off again, and arrived at last off the sailing club. We learnt from one of the fishermen that the water would not return until about 1500, and set off on foot for Le Touquet.

In the estuary the water ebbs for roughly nine hours, and floods for only three; in fact for most of the time it is just a river. At Etaples, our head-quarters, fresh river water flowed past the whole time, a great convenience, because apart from being nicer to wash in than salt water, it upsets the barnacles. Even now, at the end of the season, the bottom of the boat is still clean.

While waiting for the water to come up we dropped into the sailing club, Le Cercle Nautique, and found it a friendly place in which to sip a pastis and to practise our French. All the boats there have to take the ground, and though a twin bilge-keel boat like ours seem ideal for that locality, we saw only one, a Diable. People there seem to sail only for a short while around HW; we were surprised that in the whole of our stay we did not meet any other cruising boats holidaying in this delightful estuary, or venturing out to sea. Nevertheless sailing is booming there, and they hope soon to build a dock so as to be able to accomodate deep-keel boats; they are already well-equipped—the clubhouse was luxurious by English standards—and the only dis-

advantage is that the moorings are sited in rather horrible mud, whereas the rest of the estuary is composed of beautiful clean sand.

The next few days were spent pottering about in the estuary, improving our sketch-plan of the channel, and exploring. We found that the enlarged tent on 4 ft 8 ins crutches was an absolute boon, and went far to avoid that crumpled feeling that comes from living for any length of time in such a small boat.

Wednesday, July 11. A wonderful drying day, so we put ourselves aground in the lower reaches for a washing day.

Friday, July 13. Down the estuary again, we anchored near the mouth off the NE shore; on this side sand dunes stretch almost completely deserted for miles. Out of the wind, we lazed in the sun, and cooked sausages over a driftwood fire: they tasted so much better than the English variety—or was it only sun and the taste of driftwood smoke?

Saturday, June 14. The days had passed only too quickly, and now it was Bastille Day. We had to stay for that, to see the parade of the fire brigade, the decorated floats and the feux d'artifice in the evening.

Sunday, July 15. Now we had to be off, back to Boulogne. Local HW 1030 (the same as HW Dover). It had been raining hard since 0530, so we donned oilies, and made ready, saying goodbye to our friends, and set off at 1000. With no wind we motored down the Canche, still in pouring rain. The 0645 weather forecast had predicted winds SW Force 3 becoming NW and sure enough before we had gone very far a light NW breeze came, so up main and genoa, and off engine at 1115. Crossing the bar the waves steepened, and again we were glad not to have a strong W wind. Once we had turned Northwards up the coast we had to tack, making only about two knots through the water, but helped by the fair tide; however this was due to turn against us at 1430. Still tacking in continous rain, we were abreast of Hardelot Plage by 1230. Then at 1436 we were 1.1 miles off Cap d'Alprech (by sextant), with still 3.6 miles to Boulogne. An hour later we were not yet past Cap d'Alprech and the tide was gathering strength against us. Clearly we could only get into Boulogne before nightfall by starting the engine. Even so, it was very slow going round the Digue Carnot, which seemed to stretch for endless miles. Finally we arrived in the Port de Maree at 1735, and tied up alongside a Dutch yawl. The port was so completely full of French fishing boats that you could have walked across the harbour; no doubt they had all put in for the holiday. Incidentally, we found the traffic signals at the entrance to the inner harbour very puzzling. The signal displayed was "two cones, points together, above a ball, all disposed vertically" which signifies "entrance and departure prohibited". We jilled about in the outer harbour waiting for a large deep-sea trawler that entered some time after us to pass, and then followed her as she swept in, signal or no signal. What is one supposed to make of it all?

Monday, July 16. We stayed a day to visit Boulogne. The old part, perched high on a hill, is full of charm, and retains the character of an

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ancient walled town; steep narrow streets packed with a jumble of houses, some with fine courtyards. The harbour itself is quite unspeakable at low water—the two stars given it in the Michelin are certainly not for the view from the bottom of one of the ladders! Getting ashore at LWS is very unpleasant. We braved it out once, but it was a horrible climb, 40 ft. sheer, up greasy rungs that we hated to touch.

Tuesday, July 17. According to the Boulogne shipping forecast, the ridge of high pressure over Britain and Northern France was expected to move East, and we wondered whether to wait a day to give the wind, which was light Northerly, time to go round to the South. However, the depression that was coming up seemed to be vigorous, and time was getting short, so we thought it more prudent to be off. HW Dover 1155; N going stream starting about 1030 off Boulogne, S going stream 1625 off Ramsgate. We wanted to reach Ramsgate that day, and set of at 0900 with some foul tide still to run, so as to be able to use the whole of the fair one. The wind was very light. Even in the outer harbour it was not possible to tell where it was comng from, so we motored out. Outside, we found the wind dead in our teeth, and kept going under engine for the rest of the foul tide. At1025 we

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switched off, and set main and genoa. With the wind NNE to NE Force 2 we could only point 320-340°, whereas the course was due North. However, we decided that the Easterly set of the stream should be enough to carry us clear of the Ridge and the Varne, and so it turned out. In fact, we were able to sail close-hauled on the starboard tack for the next twenty-five miles, the most exciting point of sailing, and lee-bowing the tide into the bargain. Sheer joy.

At 1130 a satisfactory fix (negligible cocked-hat) on Boulogne Cathedral and Caps Blanc and Gris Nez put us 1.8 miles off Gris Nez and due East of it, so we were making good progress. A meridian sight at 1300 gave a latitude of exactly 51°N. This was combined with a back bearing on Gris Nez to show a position 5 miles east of the Northern end of the Varne. So we had been doing an average of 5.3 knots over the ground in the right direction for the previous hour and a half. However, the breeze fell lighter still, and we could not keep up that speed. By 1430 we were 5.6 miles off the S. Foreland light, and some 3.5 miles S of the S Goodwin Light Vessel. We knew that the tide was about to turn, but through being delayed at the start of our holiday we were short of time for getting home, so wanted to make

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Romsgate that day rather than go into Dover with the tide. We soldiered on for a bit, but with so light a wind we were obviously going to lose the battle with the tide unless we started the engine as well; this we did at 1500. Though haze had been forecast, it turned out to be a quite remarkably clear day. Even from the Downs we could still see the coast of France gleaming on the horizon. By 1645 we were off Deal, and in luck, because at least the wind had gone round to the SE as expected, and also perked up a little—off engine. Under sail alone the speedometer showed two knots, hardly enough for the tide that we had to buck. But we enjoyed the rest from the engine, dropped our lines, and by-and-by hooked two mackerel for our breakfast. Progress was slow, and at 1900, as we passed close to No 2 Ramsgate channel buoy, we could see how very strongly the tide was now setting against us. It took us another hour, even with help from the engine, to reach the outer harbour. We were directed to tie up to another boat lying against the wall, and ran up our Q flag to a heart-warming chorus of oohs and aahs from the harbour wall. This time the Customs officer appeared immediately; he was most polite and did not seem a bit put out at having to squeeze himself into the small and now higgledy-piggledy cabin.

The boat we lay alongside was the *Juleen,* a converted lifeboat, whose enterprising owners had brought her by sea and land all the way from Malta. They had done the conversion themselves, and it all looked most workmanlike. When they steamed into Dover they were given the VIP treatment by a posse of TV men, and by an astonishing coincidence we happened to see the very programme in a Herne Bay cafe the next day.

Wednesday, July 18. We could not linger. HW Dover 1235, N going tide beginning 1105 off Ramsgate. We were off at 1040, again under full main and good friend jenny; a fine day, forecast—wind SE Force 2 becoming SSE Force 3-4. Going out through the Old Cudd channel, a Boulogne fishing boat passed rather too close to us: perhaps it raised hopes of some custom in the yellow helicopter buzzing overhead. Soon we were abreast of Broadstairs, our old favourite, but we could not afford to stop, and by 1135 the N Foreland lighthouse was on the port beam.

Our plan was to anchor that night at Harty Ferry, because we were not bound straight back to our mooring on the Blackwater, but up the London River. When starting Northwards from Ramsgate to skirt the N Kent shore, the tides are always awkward, because the ebb tide in the Thames Estuary starts only 1½ hours after HW Dover, so you are bound to meet it soon after you have turned the N Foreland corner. However, going gull-winged before the SE Force 3 wind, we made good headway, and by 1400, when the tide turned, Reculvers Towers were abeam. From then on it was against us and the wind, as the steepening waves showed. An hour and a half later we anchored just W of Herne Bay pier, to sit out the worst of the stream. Having blown up the Redstart we rode out to the pierhead to go ashore, but

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found it inhospitable, covered with spiky barnacles that do not suit a Redstart. However, we discovered some stairs, and went off to eat a welcome steak ashore When we returned—horrors—the tide had fallen, and the stairs stopped short of the water, so we could not get back into the dinghy. A long rope was provided by some fishermen (actually they were dying to see us off because they thought our dinghy disturbed their fish), and with its help we managed to get the Redstart round to a ladder and board it.

By 1930 the anchor was up, and we were on our way again. The following wind had freshened to upper Force 4, and we had a boisterous and exhilerating run to the E Swale. We passed the Pollard Spit buoy at 2053, but as the light faded, so did the wind, and we had to feel our way up towards Harty in the dark. At last, in complete darkness, we anchored off Faversham Creek at around 2230. We resolved to visit the Swale again soon. It seemed such a marvellous haven, quiet and peaceful, with the lights of the inn twinkling on the shore.

Thursday, July 19. The alarm went off at 0500, for we had to take the ebb out into the Thames Estuary (HW Sheerness, 0242; next HW Gravesend 1515; flood stream in Thames Estuary starting about 0850). It took us some time to come alive, nursing ourselves along with huge draughts of strong tea. It had been raining hard all night, and the day, when it came, looked most discouraging—a murky, drizzly, horrible morning. It was 0635 when we set off under main and working jib. The depression that we had been keeping an eye on was really making itself felt. The forecast gave winds SW Force 4-5, and rain. Nevertheless, the wind was light enough, after we had really sniffed the air, for us to set the genoa at 0705. We had a gentle broad reach with a light S wind

out to the Columbine, while we did the washing-up and cleaned two fish caught off the N Foreland. Then across the Kentish Flats to the E Middle buoy, where we turned westwards to follow the other Middles across the Cant. At about 0800, the wind, after veering to the SW, suddenly freshened to Force 5. We took in the dinghy and the genoa, set the working jib and put two rolls in the main. We were just (and only just) able to point our course along the Middles, and at 0855 were past the W Middle. After the W Spile we made up to the No 2 Medway red buoy; then worked our way across the shipping lane, taking two extra rolls in the main as conditions became more boisterous. The E Nore Sand buoy was on the port beam at 1040.

The wind had veered even further to the West by then, so that we could not make the channel, and had to tack. With the wind blowing directly against the spring tide straight down the 11 miles of Sea Reach the seas had become very short and nasty, but we continued to make headway, and there were plenty of diversions. Two spick and span frigates passed us going up: then—we could hardly believe our eyes—the magnificent spectacle of a fully rigged ship coming down river with all sails set. She was the *Danmark*, a Danish naval training ship, going beautifully with the following wind strong enough to get the best out of her. At 1200 the *Royal Sovereign* filled with Chelsea pensioners came down, forcing us over to the North bank into rather nasty overfalls near the Chapman Sand buoy. We had some unpleasant moments while we wallowed in the confusion of wash and overfalls. A few minutes later I let out an agonised yell of *"Hat overboard"* as a strong gust swept off my irreplaceable tarpaulin hat. Doug rocketed from the cabin, we gybed around, and managed to retrieve it just before it sank.

The narrow upper part of Sea Reach was murder for us; the wind against tide over an irregular bottom kicked up very short steep waves, just our wavelength that incessantly knocked us to a standstill. Tossing like a cork ourselves, we were irked to see how longer ships were not at all affected. Neither shore gave us any shelter as we struggled on. The fact that the waves so often took all the way off the boat meant that we made no progress from our tacks. By 1415 we were only abreast of the W Blyth buoy; in the last 2 1/4 hours we had been doing only 2.1 knots over the ground—the tide alone must have carried us that fast. At this rate we were obviously not going to reach Gravesend, some six miles on, by HW; and up river this was the nearest anchorage. We could either run back to Holehaven, or try to punch through to Gravesend with the engine. We had installed a 3 HP inboard at the beginning of this season with this kind of situation in mind: in these circumstances an outboard just will not do. We were pleased to find that though the boat was pitching mightily, the engine did not race, and we made reasonable (though wet) progress on three-quarter throttle. Finally, we anchored at Gravesend, off the yacht club E of the pier, just before HW at 1515.

A wonderful place: that evening we had a grandstand view of the

sunset and the traffic on the river. No wonder Gravesend has always been such an important place, for it is clearly the first natural anchorage Now all seemed calm and peaceful—it was difficult to imagine that the wind was still blowing hard down Sea Reach. We went to sleep happily that night to the hooting of boats on the river.

Friday, July 20. Bright and sunny, with only a few fleecy cumulus clouds chasing each other across the sky before the Westerly wind. It is not feasible to tack above Gravesend, so we set off under engine at 1015—just about slack water. HW London Bridge 1700. The journey up river was packed with interest, and we were kept busy spotting the flags of foreign boats, interpreting the sound signals, and trying to keep out of everybody's way.

We tied up at *The Prospect of Whitby*, Wapping Old Stairs (fulfilling an old ambition of ours) but it had just closed. So on to St. Katherine's Dock, where we had planned to leave the boat. It turned out, when we arrived at 1500, that you have to get permission to enter beforehand. This took an hour, and numerous telephone calls, to arrange; but they finally let us in.

Now we were almost home we felt reluctant to leave boat and river, and descend into the Tube. After all, we had been baulked of our beer at the *Prospect*, so we thought it only right to have one last taste of freedom at the ancient *Tiger* on Tower Hill. There, to our surprise and joy, we were greeted like long-lost friends by a miscellaneous group of River Police, wine importers and Customs men who had watched us come up the river earlier in the day—a fitting end to a delightful cruise.

AVERAGE SPEEDS

		Distance N. miles	Time (Hrs.)	Av. Spd. (knots)	Agg. Dist. (miles)
July	3—Maldon - Brightlingsea	17			17
,,	4—At Brightlingsea	4			21
,,	5—Brightlingsea - Broadstairs	44	9.8	4.08	61
	- Ramsgate	3¼			64¼
,,	6—Ramsgate - Calais	39¼	9.75	4.07	104
,,	7—In Calais	0			
,,	8—Calais - Etaples	37	8.6	4.3	141
,,	9—In Etaples	0			
,,	10—Etaples - Le Touquet and ret.	5			146
,,	11—Etaples - down estuary & ret.	5			151
,,	12—In Etaples	0			
,,	13—Etaples - dunes & ret.	6			157
,,	14—Bastille Day in Etaples	0			
,,	15—Etaples - Boulogne	17¾	7.6	2.34	174¾
,,	16—In Boulogne	0			
,,	17—Boulogne - Ramsgate	39¼	11.0	3.57	214
,,	18—Ramsgate - Herne Bay				
	- Harty Ferry	28½	7.8	3.65	222½
,,	19—Harty Ferry - Gravesend	33½	8.6	3.90	256
,,	20—Gravesend - St. Katherine's				
	Dock	22½	4.7	4.80	278½

TIMES AND DISTANCES RUN
(Times are given in hours and decimal fractions of an hour)

	Sails Alone	Sails and Engine	Engine Alone
Blackwater SC to Brightlingsea	4.3	0	0
Brightlingsea to Ramsgate	10.9	0	0.1
Ramsgate to Calais	8.6	0	1.2
Calais to Etaples	1.4	0.7	5.5
Etaples to Boulogne	4.4	0	3.2
Boulogne to Ramsgate	6.8	2.75	1.4
Ramsgate to Harty	7.8	0	0.1
Harty to Gravesend	7.7	0	0.9
Gravesend to St. Katherine's Dock	0	0	4.75
TOTALS	51.9	3.45	17.15

Total petrol used 4.5 gallons.

Reflections on the Season
by Stan Morgan

I feel completely out of step writing this, but I have got to say it—*"What a wonderful season it has been"* Yes, and I mean it.

In the South East I am sure most of the skippers and their mates who have sailed with us, feel that we have never had such a good sailing season since we have had our Silhouettes. Hardly a week-end missed without a good sail, either a good race, or a race and a cruise thrown in. Sure, there has been bad weather, but usually we have just got in in time.

There have been many highlights, and what makes them doubly enjoyable is that most of them were enjoyed in company with our clubmates. If we have been at a bit of a loose end as to where to go, it was usually decided to sail to the river Roach, spend the evening on Foulness Island, and get away back to Hullbridge next morning. On one of these occasions we found, owing to the wind, that our normal anchorage off the Island might become untenable during the night, so we decided to lay up somewhere else, although this meant a long pull on to the Island in the dinghies. However, Helpful Urrey (Harry Malone) thought it would be a good idea to ship his motor and pick up everybody, and ferry them to the Island. This was an excellent idea, but as there was 14 of us and two dogs we didn't expect him to do it all in one go. He did, and the spectacle was quite interesting. I imagine that the people who would be most interested in the photographs of this feat would be Bob Tucker, George Hurley, British Seagull—and (for obvious reasons) the underwriters.

* * *

Then there was our week's stay at Whitstable in June. It was the

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intention for a few of us to cruise the Kent Coast together after the Southend Week, but for various reasons all but I and Paul Smedley were unable to set off. When Paul suggested that we went back to Whitstable with him I jumped at the oportunity to sail in company for the remaining week of my holiday. We started from Southend on the Monday, with the intention of staying at Whitstable for one night, and pushing on to Ramsgate later. This was not to be, as the weather gradually deteriorated, and on the Tuesday we had to watch our boats at high tide riding out a nasty onshore gale in Seasalter Bay. Wednesday we spent repairing the damage, and getting ready for the trip back to the Crouch, which we expected to do on Thursday. We set off, but the seas were a little too much for family sailing, so back we went again. As the time was getting short we decided to try to catch a steamer from Herne Bay, but as these were all chartered that day for the Medway Barge Race it meant another day at Whitstable. Not that I couldn't have stayed there a month, it was such a delightful place; or was it "Wiggy's" and Gladys's hospitality that made us so reluctant to leave? "Wigg" and Gladys are Paul's mother and Aunt and quite without warning to them Paul got us ensconced at their delightful bungalow. They have our undying thanks for letting Jackie stay in the house with them at night during our weatherbound stay. They even insisted that we had most of our meals with them at "The Haven". Haven indeed!

* * *

Having made all the arrangements to leave the boat at Whitstable and get back to Southend by steamer, the weather quietened down, and we were able to sail across the estuary on the Friday. While it was a bit of a tumble across the estuary, the afternoon we spent on the Maplin Sands, waiting to get into the Havengore, was delightful. It is a great shame that this part of the coast is virtually a prohibited area,I'm sure is is the best beach around there.

* * *

The bridgekeeper came out to tell us that he couldn't raise the bridge for us that night, so as we had seven hours to wait, we took the

the bridge. It all seems so easy with a Silhouette. Once through the bridge, we carried on motoring until it was dark, and until we thought we had lost ourselves; but what a delightful place to get lost in! No wonder Maurice Griffiths couldn't stop writing about it. The rest of the journey home was just a quiet motor up the Roach and Crouch, passing a friendly word here and there with some of our other club boats, who had just come back from their cruises. That's the way to end a holiday, happy, but feeling that you could carry on for another week or two.

* * *

Excitement we have had too. I like to recall the day during Southend Week when I was forced, after a rash promise at the Silhouette Owners' Cocktail party, to take our French friends for a sail before their return home. I certainly did not want to take the boat off the mooring, in view of the blow we were having that day, on which all racing was cancelled. However, they insisted brandishing their ventimeters, which I couldn't read as they were in the metric system.

We walked out to the boat, and while waiting for the tide to pick us off I went to great lengths to explain to the crew of three that I wanted three rolls in the main, and under no circumstances would I agree to using the genoa. While I couldn't join in the general conversation, I picked up a little here and there, and it was quite clear that they had no intention of letting me skipper the boat; so I just let them get on with it.

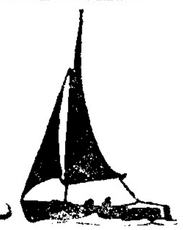
The trip was quite interesting, made more so by the half bottles of whisky which kept appearing. I joined them in a good swig just as we got under way, which gave me a bit of "dutch" to tell one of the crew in no uncertain terms that I did not fancy his "leaning it out" holding on to my weather shrouds. After a couple more rounds I thought it wasn't a bad idea, anyway and joined him on the weather gun'l. By this time a Debutante was under way making for the Medway, and when I pointed out to the "Skipper" he and the crew went into consultation and decided (after a toast to all Debutantes) that it would be an afternoon well spent to chase her.

* * *

That's how it went for the three hours or so we were out. Everytime I mentioned something or someone they recognised, the bottle went round, and we had a very ceremonial toast—John Anderson, Bernard Collins, Shearwater Cats and Canvey Island, the lot. We spent half an hour in a rather too crowded anchorage looking for my buoy, and when we did manage to get moored up and unbent the sails, I went up to examine the mooring hitch, and in the process somehow managed to unmoor ourselves. So there we were ,completely helpless. The outcome of this was that the Commodore of the Thames Estuary Yacht Club rather unceremoniously towed us on to the mooring—sternfirst and in complete disgrace. Quite good humouredly, he did mention to me that he thought the "cordiale" was a little strong.

(To be Concluded)

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A mooring at Lymington

MY Silhouette *Aleya* is normally moored in Lymington River during the season, but next year it will not be. Having had my time very badly taken up in directions other than sailing, I have only managed to fit in a comparatively small number of hours sailing. Perhaps worse still, during the off season I have not been able to spend time on the yacht and it now shows sad signs of neglect.

Knowing that during the coming year my time is again going to be very limited, I have made a sad decision not to launch *Aleya* at all during 1963, but what time I have available will be devoted to stripping off all the paint and varnish and endeavouring to get all looking cared for again. To make my decision irrevocable, lest I be tempted to launch before making a really thorough job of renovation, I am offering the use of my mooring to any Silhouette owner who would like it for the 1963 season. I shall be back on it, of course, in 1964. My home address is 21 Riggindale Road, London, S.W.16., Phone Streatham 3478; Office Phone Park 9945; Weekends—Lymington 3934.—*William E. Southwell.*

AGM & Party

THE Annual General Meeting of the Silhouette Owners Association will be held at the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London S.W.1. on January 5. 1963 at 6.30 p.m. This will be followed by the Association's annual party at 7.30, when the trophies won during the year will be presented. Please be prompt, so that we can get through the AGM in good time for the party.

FOR WOMEN

Dogwatch

By Anne Fowler

PETER was a mongrel wirehaired terrier. We had to have him put to sleep last year when he developed heart disease, but he lived for fourteen very happy years. Such was his knowledge that we had to spell any of his special words if we did not want him to understand. He was willing to fit in companionably with all our pursuits, but considered that a few rights of his own should be fairly considered. A teasing disarrangement of his bed aroused all his indignation; and the back seat of the car he considered his own, so that everyone was made

conscious of the gross liberty that was taken when another shared it with him. But he was prepared to be tolerant of other habits.

We were lucky in being able to break him into sailing in an easy way. We spent a week at Bosham the year we bought *Sou,* while the Skipper received some excellent instruction at the Bosham Sea School. Peter was filled with dismay the first time he was lifted in to the rubber dinghy, and had to be gently soothed until put on board *Sou.* His eyes were dark with panic during the first uneventful passage. We slept on board, and he quickly appreciated the small red mattress which Mr. Hurley had kindly given to him. After three day's wandering on shore, while the Skipper acquired confidence and knowledge in *Sou,* Peter and I were allowed to stay on board for the remainder of the week. Peter was thrust down into the cabin, where he crouched, a little bewildered, on the sole as we tacked back and forth. Luckily we had superb weather, and light winds, so the gentle heeling was not too frightening. He gradually accepted the boat as his home, and by the end of the week would leap about nonchalantly into the rubber dinghy for his morning and evening walk.

Bosham might have been especially created for dogs. An attractive village green, complete with appropriate posts and grass overlooking the quay, was a perfect place for short visits. For longer walks, an unspoilt path encircles the estuary, so that a dog can be well exercised. (Bosham, by the way, is an excellent headquarters as we found the following year, when we spent a happy two months there, and in the Solent. There is superb sailing, a free car park, launching facilities, water taps on the quay, and the excellent shops are only a minute's walk away; and there is a convenient launderette at Chichester. The Grange Guesthouse, where the headquarters of the Bosham Sea School is, and which is excellently run, allowed us to lunch and bathe there whenever we wanted to.)

Peter was a dog with magnificent control, and his two daily visits on shore were sufficient to keep him happy. By the end of the week he had decided that the mattressed bunks were more comfortable than the hard sole, and he soon learned to jump to the lee berth whenever we tacked. Later we found that immediately he heard the Skipper say "Lee-oh" he braced himself for his leap.

After a memorable week we trailed *Sou* up to the Thames, where we moored at Sunbury so that we could see our son and daughter-in-law who then lived at Richmond. It was tantalising to discover that the tree lined banks made sailing difficult for two such new sailors, so we motored the whole time we were there, after a friend had almost stove in *Sou's* bows on a stone wall. It was excellent training for Peter, however. He overcame any small fears he had, and braced himself on the bulkhead while we cruised along. When the cockpit was filled with visitors he preferred to bask on the cabin roof, and so acquired an absolute faith in *Sou's* trustworthiness.

When we journeyed on to spend a month on the *Broads* we thought we had better keep him down in the cabin while we were sailing. But

he was outraged and flounced in his fury, so we allowed him to come into the cockpit, where he quickly sought his favoured bulkhead. He braced himself as we tacked with an extraordinary human expression on his face, as though he were saying "Why you thought I couldn't do this I simply can't imagine." He accepted sailing philosophically, and while we put him below on rough days when we returned to the Isle of Man, he liked to bask on the bulkhead in a Force 3-4 wind. He complicated life for us a little at Bosham as we were moored about a mile from the quay, and so it meant a long row twice a day for the Skipper, but he fitted well into a regular routine. As a puppy Peter had been trained to perform on newspaper, but for longer cruises one would have to train one's dog to use a sandtray, and it would be interesting to know if anyone has acheived this. Luckily we never had to experiment ourselves.

Cats must be easily manageable on board, and the Smeatons took their cat round the world with them. There is only one word of warning. Make sure your pet is a good sailor before you take him far afield.

New Year Meditations
by Margaret Croft

NOW that the winter is with us, we have time to sit and think about next season. More time is spent reading and having read "Two-and-a-half Ton Dream," "Yachtsman's Gale" and the many exciting accounts in "Roving Commissions", it gives one the urge to do greater things with the little boat next year. In particular, I would love to sail from Harwich to Ostend or Flushing, but the thought of having a child of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years on board really frightens me; and I feel that I should be content to sail up and down the river for another season.

Sometimes I feel (and I'm sure that other sailing wives feel too) that the money which is spent on our husband's hobby could be put to so many other uses in the home, or for the education of our children. But these thoughts must be dismissed as quickly as they come, for how lost our partners would be without an interest outside the office (mine has owned some sort of boat since he was eleven years old); or we ourselves without an interest outside the home! We would become very stale indeed; and with the Silhouette would go the best of our SOA activities, and local yacht club activities, too.

I have come to the conclusion that we are a much happier family (if a lot poorer) when we are all sailing together, and therefore a plan for the future must be made. We must be content to make small trips, while waiting for Georgina to grow up, for we should never enjoy going anywhere without her and her bright little personality (though I sometimes say worse things about her). In the meantime, our plan must include getting together a complete set of sails, radio, and all the necessary equipment for a sea crossing. I am sure that it will be all the more enjoyable, and obviously more safe, for having waited.

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