

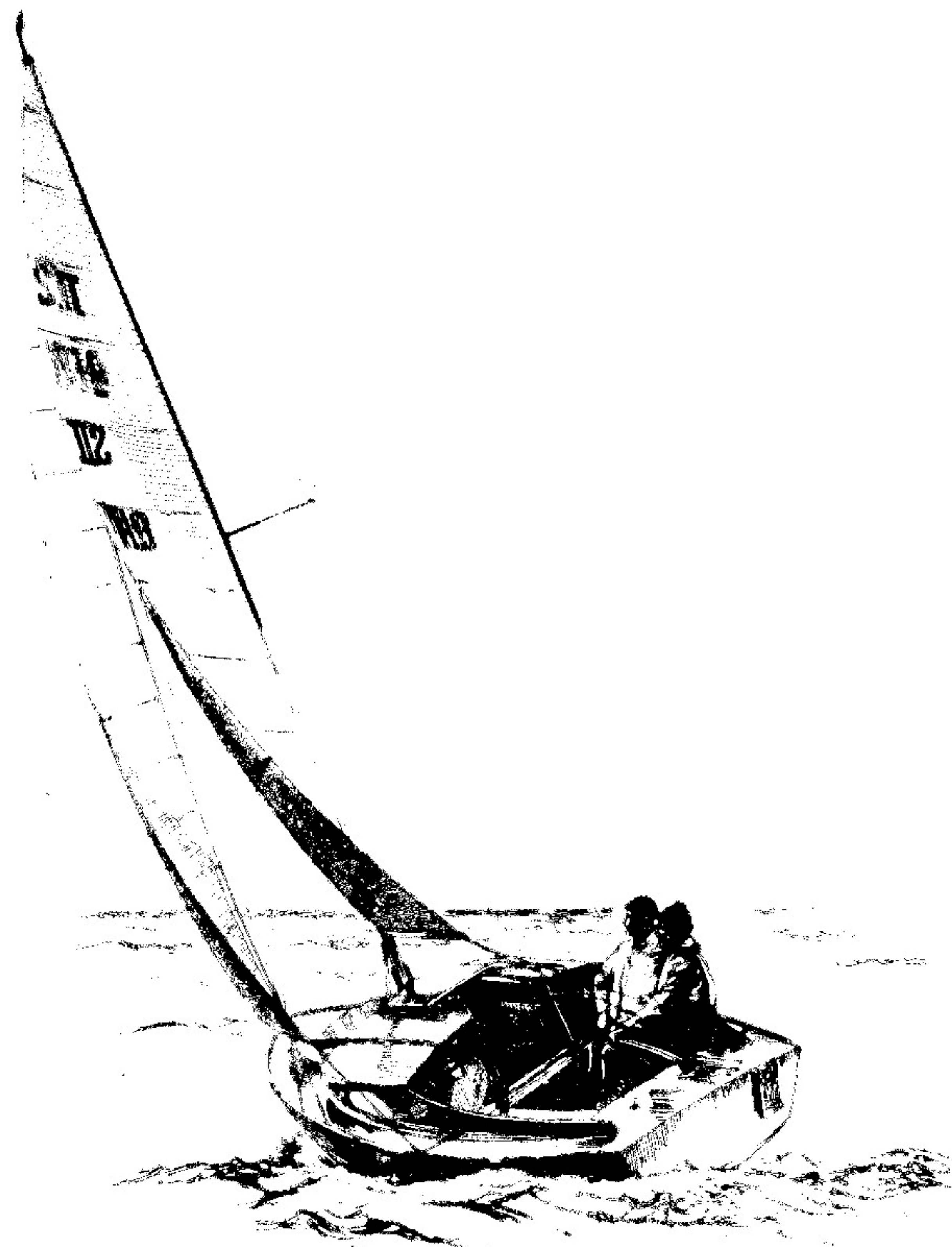
The Silhouette Owner

*The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association*

NUMBER 38

JANUARY, 1964

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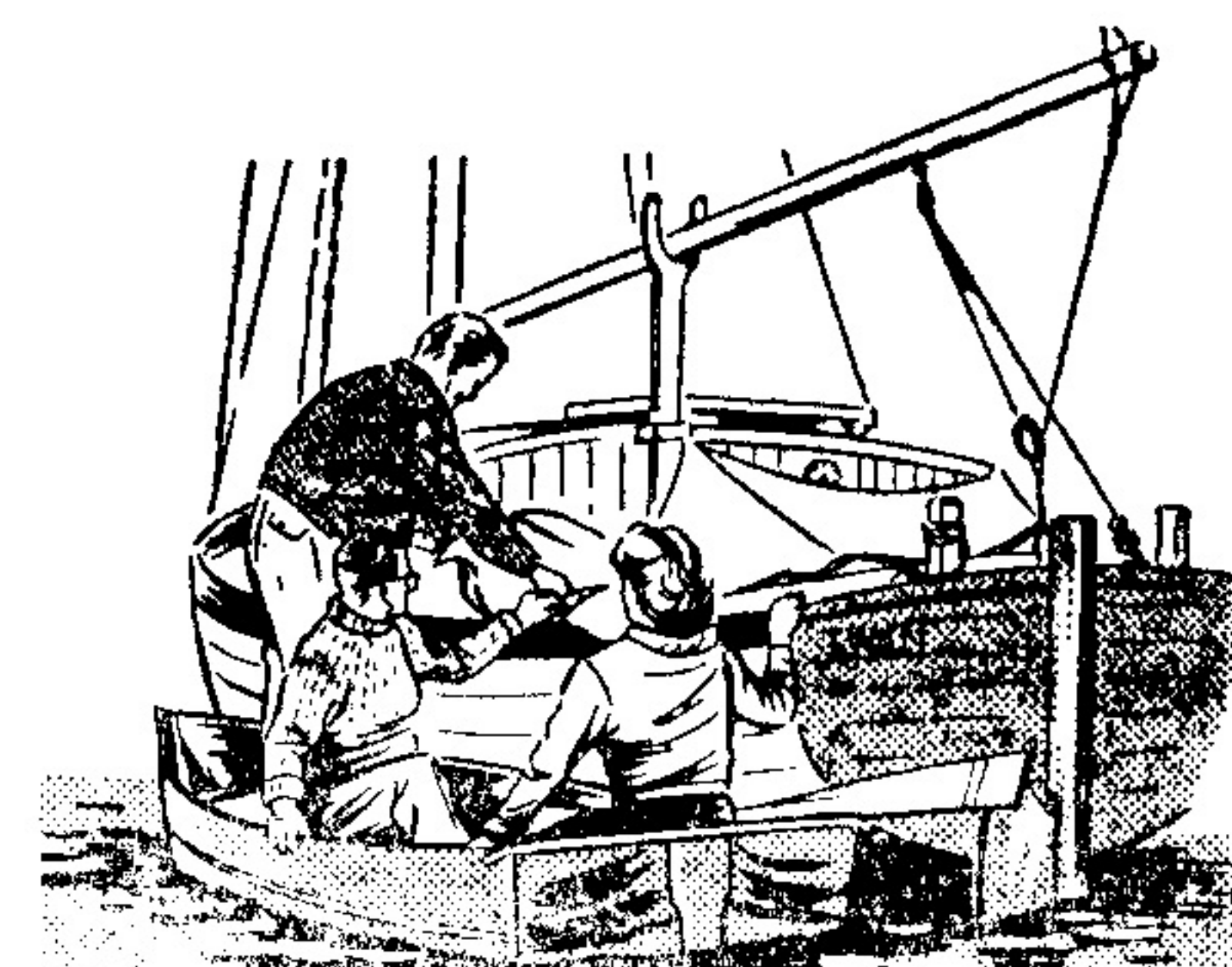
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Cruising

OFFSHORE cruising is where the Silhouette comes into her own. When her sturdiness and sea-kindly qualities are apparent. But going to sea safely in small boats demands certain qualities in skipper and crew as well as qualities in their vessel. Through the years, the Silhouette Owners' International Association has worked to encourage common sense about going to sea, patience, attention to navigational details, careful study of wind and weather, and of meteorological forecasts — all those qualities which, together, can be summed up as good seamanship. Our Log Competitions were introduced to help this purpose. Year by year, the logs of Silhouette cruises are submitted to an independent judge of wide experience in ships and sea, and from the comments and criticisms of our distinguished judges we have all learned much. We are most grateful to Harry King-Spark for undertaking this year's judging. Few yachtsmen have a wider range of experience. Harry King-Spark navigated the American yacht *En Rapport* in this year's Transatlantic Race, and went on to navigate another American yacht in the Fastnet—a great compliment by American owners to a British yachtsman. This was King-Spark's fourth Fastnet Race. In 1952, King-Spark was selected with his Six Metre for the Gold Cup series of races, and in the same year he was sailing in the Olympic Trials. He has also won much distinction in racing his Dragon. The comments in his summing-up, therefore, are based on long experience of sailing at firsthand, and reflect the wisdom as well as the kindness of the experienced skipper and navigator. We offer our sincere congratulations to the winners

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COMING EVENTS



A.G.M. and PARTY. These will follow each other on Saturday, January 4, 1964 at the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London SW 1. Time, 6 p.m. This is the first week of the Boat Show, so combine a visit to the Show with our party. And please bring friends from your local sailing club.



PLYMOUTH WEEK, 1964. Week beginning August 16. Make a date now, and fix next year's holidays so that you can come to Plymouth.

— Ian Hyde-Smith for his notable singlehanded cruise to Ireland and back, D. C. W. Sutherland for a splendid cruise round the Isle of Man, and Don McKnight for winning the *Open Cruising Trophy* — our "Associate Members' Cup" — for his voyage to Ireland in his Debutante. We are particularly proud that owners of boats other than our own Silhouettes should join in our Association as they do, and are delighted to see the logs of their voyages in our competitions. Arthur Goodwin, who won the *Open Cruising Trophy* last year with a fine voyage from the Isle of Wight to Anglesey, had bad luck this year in running into some really nasty weather in the Irish Sea. In all contests, not everyone can win trophies, but we congratulate all who have entered the Log Competitions on their enterprise, and on their readiness to submit their logs to scrutiny and criticism. It is in this way that the cause of seamanship is served.

INSURANCE. Edward Lumley (Yacht Insurance) Limited, Lumley House, 43/51, St. Mary Axe, London, EC 3, offer special facilities to members of the SOIA for all forms of marine insurance. Details from Hon. Treasurer.

Learning to Sail

WE have been most heartened by the response of members to the proposal that we should try to organise elementary instruction in sailing on a co-operative basis through our Association and this Journal. We thank all those who have written to offer help, and we hope that we shall be able to make a start with our training scheme in the Spring. There are many details still to be sorted out, but the response of Silhouette sailors is already more than sufficient to show that a workable scheme can be organised.

Log Competitions - The Judge's Report

By H. King-Spark

FROM the various logs submitted for the *Suzanne Trophy*, *The Silhouette Owner Trophy* and *The Open Cruising Trophy*, I give below my findings. I would, however, state that it is not always easy to judge a log in all its aspects when one reads it ashore, and is not faced with all the problems of the sailor when he is on his own, perhaps wet and tired, which may well influence him in making decisions which in different circumstances he would not do. But I have kept this in mind when making my judgments which I trust have been fair. And may I say how much I have enjoyed reading the various logs?

The log of Slipper : Ian Hyde-Smith. Single-handed.

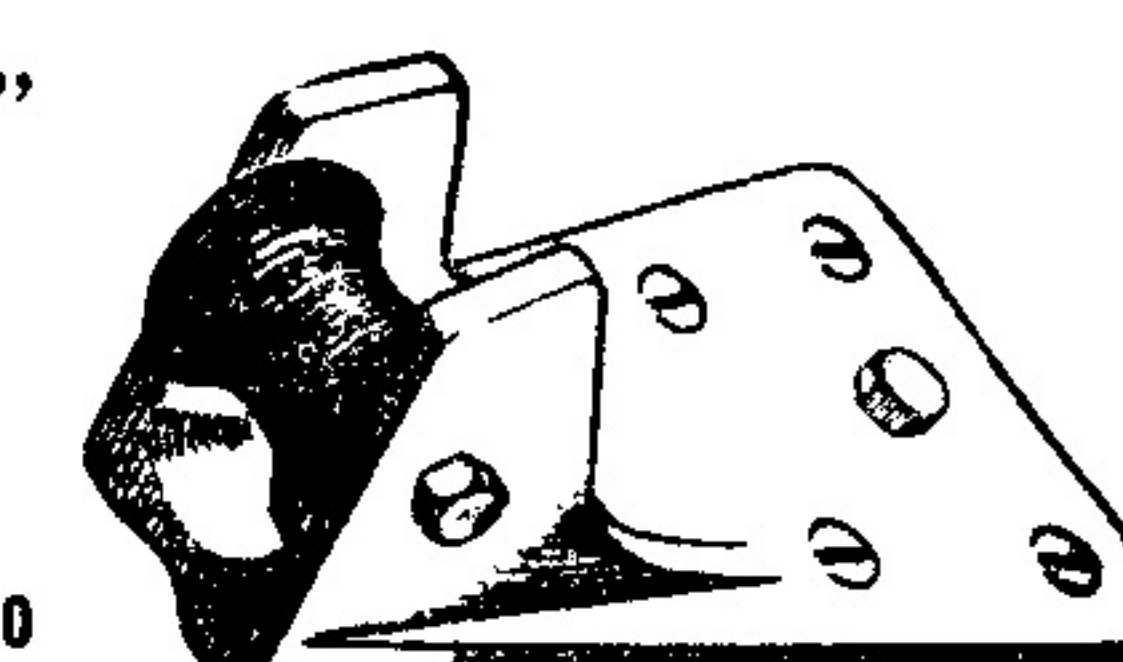
The owner took a lot of trouble and quite rightly, both with regard to navigational details and the provisioning of the ship for a single-handed passage to Dun Laoghaire. I feel that in a small yacht such as a Silhouette, and with a weather forecast of up to Force 7, it may have been a little bit foolhardy to venture forth. I also consider that all yachts, whatever their size, should carry navigation lights which can be switched on when shipping is approaching; flashing a torch on to a sail is most confusing, as it gives no indication of course or direction, and in fact, is frowned upon by the Royal Ocean Racing Club for this reason. I know it is easy to say what one should do or not do when reading a log in the comfort of one's home, but I do feel that it was unwise to have sailed over the Burford Bank in the conditions then prevailing especially when single-handed. The wisest course would have been to sail round the banks.

The decision not to return single-handed in the prevailing conditions was most sensible. I am, therefore, rather surprised that when the skipper did return to make the trip back he left having had only an hour's sleep. I compliment him on taking sights — always a good thing to do, even if not essential, as the more practice with these the better. Apart from the foregoing criticisms this skipper's seamanship, navigation and courage were all first class and I am sure he has learnt a lot from this experience, and I award him *The Suzanne Trophy*.

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*North around the Isle of Man : D. C. W. Sutherland
Skipper, and crew (one woman).*

Sutherland and his crew left Lytham on July 1 making Ramsey in 13 hours, 45 minutes, a distance of 67 miles. They left Ramsey on July 3 arriving at Peel the same day, a distance of 26 miles taking 5 hours 15 minutes. Leaving Peel on July 4, they sailed the 34 miles to Port St. Mary in 5 hours 20 minutes, leaving here on July 6 bound for Lytham, the 65 miles taking them 15 hours 55 minutes. The skipper does not state whether he carried a radar reflector on board, but if not I would certainly advise the purchase of one. An excellent and well planned cruise, blessed by good weather. The skipper sensibly made full use of the tides which gave *Sid* the excellent average speed while under way for the whole trip of just over 4.7 knots. The engine was used only when absolutely necessary, the right way when one is cruising for pleasure, and I award him *The Silhouette Owner Trophy*.

The Cruise of Platypus : J. Fitzgerald Cook and one crew (wife).

J. Fitzgerald Cook and his wife had a most pleasant cruise in their Silhouette *Platypus*, leaving Dover on July 29, arriving Calais the same day, thence on to Dunkerque and from there to Nieuport. They then entered the Belgium Inland Waterways, calling at Slijpe, Bruges, Veurne, Bourbourg and then back to Calais, returning to Dover on August 5. A most pleasant cruise, but I feel that the details given are insufficient to enable one to form a fair opinion of the trip, although everything would appear to have been carried out most efficiently. With more detail, this might have well merited an award.

L'Hirondelle's Irish Cruise : D. H. McKnight.

Don McKnight and his crew, Storm Bate and Jim Berry, in a Debutante made a cruise of approximately 260 miles in 14 days from Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire (where Jim Berry left) thence to Arklow

via Wicklow, then returning to Dun Laoghaire, and back to Menai Straits via Holyhead. This seems to me to have been a very well planned cruise and I commend the skipper's most sensible arrangements in carrying hot flasks of soup, tea and coffee, and also prepared sandwiches, biscuits, etc., which I consider in a small yacht essential. He does not give very much in the way of navigation details, but from all appearances these duties appear to have been carried out efficiently. No troubles seem to have been experienced, and I would say that this was a well planned cruise, and well executed. I therefore award McKnight the *Open Cruising Trophy*.

* * * *

"All's well that ends well" : Arthur Goodwin.

Arthur Goodwin in his yacht *Lady of Irene of Menai* with a crew of two, Ian Holyman and Don Marsh, sailed from Glyn Garth in the Menai Straits to Holyhead, together with two friends who left on their arrival at the latter port. From here they sailed to Howth, thence to Dun Laoghaire and were joined here by John Osola and Geoff Walton. At 00.50 hours on July 14 they cast off, bound for Glyn Garth and everything up to 05.00 hours seems to have gone smoothly. But I am surprised that with a wind of Force 3 increasing to Force 5 on the beam, the skipper continued to use the engine, and only dispensed with it when, in his own words, "it conked out, and as there was plenty of wind did not bother to restart." At 06.00 hours he states that it was blowing a howling gale, and they decided to lower the main, and shortly after this they changed the jib for the storm jib. I can't quite understand how the helmsman was able to keep her head to wind for a whole hour while headsails were being changed in a full gale. I should have thought the wisest course would have been to stream warps and run down wind, thus cutting down the apparent wind speed — a much safer and dryer operation for all concerned.

The log states that at 07.00 hours they decided to alter course for Holyhead, as it was now blowing Force 9 and the boat going like a bomb. I certainly agree that it must have been, but surely by this time and in the conditions then prevailing, the prudent and seamanlike thing to do would have been to lie to a sea anchor rather than close a lee shore (i.e., course 470° mag., wind S.W.).

I know that it is extremely difficult to make the right decisions when conditions such as these are met, when everyone is tired and wet, but provided that the ship is in no danger (and I repeat danger) and they could have ridden to a sea anchor, although extremely uncomfortable this would have been the sensible thing to have done. But, as stated, this decision should have been taken earlier, and thus avoided being in such a position that it was considered necessary to call for assistance. I fully appreciate, though, that all on board had a really tough experience, when it is not always easy to make the correct decisions, and I compliment all for their gallant efforts in the most trying conditions.

The log of Don McKnight's Cruise will be published next month.



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The Solent

GEORGE OLIVER has extracted the following information from members of the Solent Group who replied to a questionnaire he sent out earlier this year.

Six members have sold their Silhouettes and bought other boats, most of them bigger. More members (23) sail from Chichester than anywhere else. Poole has six, Christchurch six, Keyhaven five, and twenty other boats are scattered in other places. The average owner has cruised 25 miles but seven have done around 100 miles. The majority sail at weekends, and some part of their holidays. Thirty are interested in racing, but find wives and children inhibiting. Only ten have raced at all.

Most members would enjoy cruising in company, but eleven consider themselves "unsociable."

Cruise to the Ecrehos

By N. C. Blomfield

YACHTSMEN in Jersey have enjoyed no better weather during the season than our counterparts on the mainland, in spite of the legend that we are supposed to get more than our fair share of sunshine. So there has been the usual amount of grumbling and frustration, although we have all made the best of a bad job, and have seized every moment when it has not been pouring with rain or blowing half a gale.

On August 31, the portents appeared to be favourable, and I agreed to pilot a friend with a *Caprice* to the islands called the Ecrehos some eight miles distant from Gorey, the home port of *Leprechaun*, my Mk. II Silhouette. The owner of the *Caprice* is quite an experienced sailing man, but is one of those strange fellows who devote all their time to racing, and gets little time for cruising. In any case, the pilotage around these islands is so complex and dangerous that one tends to know one's own particular side of the island and its individual intricacies.

The islands, generally in sight from Gorey, were hidden in haze as we left Gorey at 14.30 on August 31, so we set a course of 75° mag., which would make due allowance for the fierce-flowing tide which was

sweeping us North at 4 to 5 knots. With a pleasant wind from the S.W., somewhere between Force 3 to 4, and with mainsails and genoa set, the two boats bowled along through the rather disturbed sea that we often get in these waters, for no apparent reason. After an hour's invigorating sail, the haze lifted and we sighted the Maitre Ile, and from then on, we were able to put the compass away.

The Ecrehos are two very small but enchanting islands, lying in an enormous field of reefs, halfway between Jersey and the French coast. They have been the subject of wrangling between Britain and France for hundreds of years and figure more than once in the works of Victor Hugo. During the wars with Napoleon, many dark and strange deeds took place here, and it is said that many Jersey fishermen made fortunes by selling bales of Bradford cloth to the French, who collected them from these islands. The cloth, it is said, went to make uniforms for the French army!

By 16.30 hours we were in position to make our first approach, with three large rocks, Bigorne, Sablonière and the Grand Galère in their proper places, but we had to wait for *Ptolemy*, the Caprice, which had lagged about a mile behind. (I always thought that Caprices were supposed to be faster than Silhouettes?) As the tide was sweeping us away from our correct line of approach, we started the Stuart, and adjusted the throttle against the tide, so that we were literally hove-to under power. When *Ptolemy* arrived, we got into position with Bigorne in the middle of Sablonière and Grand Galère, and after handing our genoas, we motored up on the first leg of our marks. When the flag-staff on Marmotière came in line with a black chimney on one of the houses, we turned abruptly to port on the second line of approach. This took us right up to the two islets, which are separated only by a narrow gully of water and a broader pool, which dries out on a spring tide. Here we picked up some moorings belonging to local fishermen, and lay peacefully side by side in water that was so clear that one could see the sandy, shell-strewn bottom in twenty feet.

Christopher Denis, my invaluable crew and right-hand man, knew what was wanted without being told, and the kettle was soon on. We all relaxed in the sun and admired the enchanting surroundings. A few words from my inadequate pen could never begin to do justice to this wonderful spot. Only one of the islands is available to the public, as the Maitre Ile is on lease to the Trent family. Marmotière, however, is a pure joy, and although neither of the isles is longer than three hundred yards, it is soaked in history and tradition. A number of little houses or huts, have survived from the days when fishermen used it as a base for months at a time, in the days when fish were still in these waters. Many of the huts have been rebuilt and painted in bright colours, and although few of them have more than two rooms, they provide a wonderful opportunity for their owners to escape from the crowds of holiday makers in Jersey during the visitor season.

We obtained permission to use the Custom House, a relic of the past, and we all joined forces for a large meal in the old two-roomed building. After this *Ptolemy's* crew, who were making their first trip



to the islands, were bullied into observing the traditional "initiation" ceremony. This concerns rocking the famous "Rocking Stone," an enormous boulder weighing, I believe over a hundred tons, but so finely balanced that it can be rocked backwards and forwards by a small child. While doing this, newcomers are required to sing the the National Anthem. This little ceremony completed, not without some misgivings by my friends that their legs were being pulled, we returned to our respective craft to get ready for the night.

After a wonderfully peaceful night and a brilliant dawn, we re-joined our friends at the Custom House and breakfasted on an ample helping of bacon and eggs. My friends were all for pushing on for France, now having tasted the delights of cruising, and realising how they had wasted the summer racing, but I pointed out that although France was only eight miles away as the crow flies, we would have to leave the islands the same way that we came in, and proceed a long way to the South before we could head up to Carteret, a little French fishing port which we were thinking of visiting. A glance at the chart not only convinced them I was right: it nearly made them give up yachting for good! It is much better not to look at these terrifying things if you know the local marks. I am sure it is why so few yachtsmen visit the Channel Islands.

After a certain amount of learned consultation and poring over tide tables, it was decided that we should leave in the afternoon, two hours after low water so that we should get the benefit of the tide to clear the normal approaches.

Accordingly, after a pleasant morning which we spent in exploring and low water fishing, we set off at 15.50 with a mild SW breeze and a flat sea. Circumnavigating the Ecrehos is a long business, even when the tide is in your favour and it was not until nearly 17.30 that we were able to turn with safety to the eastward, and make for Carteret. The tide was now making fast, and there was a strong set to the North, but we could see the Lighthouse at Carteret quite clearly, and were able to steer visually. I had done it many times before, and

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knew the drill. By steering on the red roof of a disused Casino well to the South of Carteret, one arrives off the harbour on an average spring tide. In any case, one always allows a bit to spare, for the tide fairly whistles up to the North, and if one gets on the wrong side of the long wall that projects from the port, one would never get back until the tide had turned again. However, all went well, and we motored into the tiny port at 19.00 hours, after an easy sail, but once again we had to wait while the Caprice caught up.

Clearing the Customs is a comic business at Carteret. Although there is generally a Gendarme leaning against the wall, the inevitable Gauloise drooping from his mouth, no advice is offered, and the yellow bunting flying from our crosstrees might have been a sign of small-pox on board, for all the good it did. The Customs House is some-way off, so armed with all the passports, I made my way there, to find the custodian of the Douane enjoying a bottle of wine, and not the least interested in the documents I presented. I might have had a dozen atom spies on board, but all he seemed to worry about was "*Les papiers de bateaux.*" He spoke no English, and my fluent French seemed to convey nothing to him at all. In vain did I suggest that a boat as small as a Silhouette required no papers, so having been up against this one on previous visits to this backwater of the Normandy

REGIONAL GROUPS

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

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Yorkshire (Humber to Tees).	<i>Hon. Sec. Brian M. Beeden, Toll Bar House, Firsby Lane, Conisborough, near Doncaster.</i>
Scotland.	<i>Hon. Sec. J. B. Jackson, 81 Baillie Drive, Calderwood, East Kilbride, Tel. East Kilbride 21194.</i>

coast, I solemnly proffered a bill from my garage, which he accepted and stamped with equal solemnity. Honour and officialdom being thus satisfied, we were now free to enjoy the smells and amenities of the port.

Because of a glorious golden beach just to the North of the port, Carteret has become a pleasure spot in the summer months, and several hotels have sprung up nearby. Choosing one of these, we enjoyed an excellent meal in true French style, and returned on board well content with the day. By the time I had adjusted the light and had found my place in my book, Christopher's snores were resounding round the harbour, and there was not a sound from *Ptolemy*, tied up astern of *Leprechaun*.

The next day it poured with rain, but we bravely donned our oilskins and visited the shops. Inevitably, of course, we all bought a large variety of completely useless things, and Christopher found reason for sending off a number of postcards to his family in Jersey. (They arrived in Jersey five days after we returned). As the rain continued unceasingly, we considered going to the local tin-roofed cinema, where there was a special post-release of an epic entitled "*Les Anges d'Enfer,*" but the smell of garlic and the noise made by the French teddy-boys inside, convinced us it was not a good idea. In any case, the rain eased off and we enjoyed a superb walk along the cliffs instead.

The forecast for the next day was not entirely promising, suggesting that we might expect NE winds increasing to strong-to-gale force in gusts, but my friends in the *Caprice* seemed undaunted, so we agreed to make a start at 16.00 hours the following afternoon, if things did not look too bad. More French food and several bottles of wine helped to dispel any illusions of fear, and we went to bed not in the least alarmed at the gloomy met. men and their forbodings.

The next day turned out less unfavourable than expected at first, and after a number of last-minute purchases, all of them (except the wine) equally useless, we motored out of the harbour at 16.05 hours and set a course for Gorey. Steering 240° mag. which would allow for the strong north-going tide, we bowled along under the full mainsail and small jib, but the NE wind freshened before long, and we were forced to give the mainsail a couple of rolls. The seas were increasing rapidly and the motion was violent over some of the shoals which are numerous between Franch and Jersey. At this point, we were leading our friends by about three cables, but we lost them entirely when a huge rainstorm burst down, blotting out everything about us. We hove-to for ten minutes, while we waited for our companions, and Christopher baled out the dinghy, which we were towing.

We had hardly got the dinghy dry when the skies miraculously cleared, and the *Caprice* came up astern. The wind, however, continued strong, and we pressed on for Gorey Castle, which we could now see in the distance.

We were about half way over and were being thrown about by the turbulent seas that are usually found over the Ecrevière Bank, the wind suddenly dropped, and Christopher started the *Stuart*. We might have known better, for after we had wallowed along for five minutes or so, the wind came back suddenly with a vengeance but from the SW. Even with four rolls and the storm jib, we could not hold anything approaching our course, so Christopher handed the jib and I kept the motor going hard. With the boom hauled in almost amidships, she was fairly comfortable, and we managed to hold the end of St. Catherine's Breakwater, but I was far from happy, for I knew that the tide would sweep us well to the North of the Island.

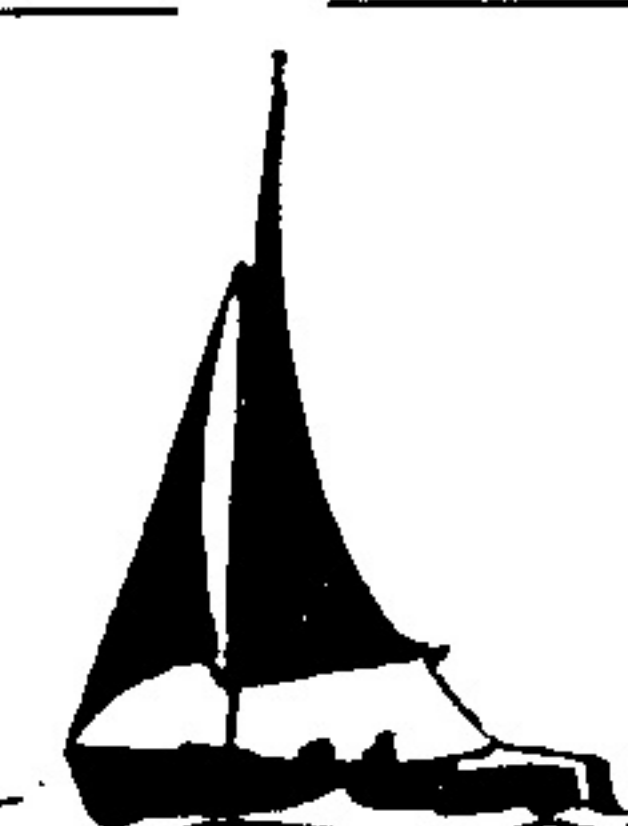
It was now about half-tide and the Ecrehos lay on our starboard beam, so I made a quick decision, and altered course for them, hoping that the poor visibility would not blot out our marks. We now had a fair wind, and the storm jib was set. In due course, I was able to see Bigorne, fine on the starboard bow, and we raced up to our marks in a terrifying manner, but the worst was still to come. As we rounded off, our second set of marks, we caught the full force of the tide set, and went towards Marmotière at about eight to ten knots over the ground. In a flurry of foam, we rounded the corner into the pool, and for one horrible moment, I thought we should run ashore, so great was our speed, but Christopher had the CQR overboard in a trice, and we fetched up with relief, just in time to see the *Caprice* careering at us at what appeared an impossible speed. While Christopher got

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out all the fenders, and I offered up a hasty prayer to St. Jude, the Patron Saint of lost causes, *Ptolemy* also fetched up with a jerk.

That night, the wind howled through our rigging but we were snug in a nest of reefs, held by a mooring and two anchors, so we slept the sleep of the just. The following morning, the weather was perfect, and in spite of our tranquil sail back to Jersey, my friends decided that they had enjoyed the cruise but they still preferred racing!

Secretary's Notes

GREETINGS to all in this the first edition of the *Journal* for 1964; but what of the past year? As regards to the Association, surely a very memorable one, with the most successful A.G.M. and Party, held at the National Liberal Club for the first time, and the Plymouth Rally or Regatta, proving to be the largest assembly of one-class small cruisers ever to get together, and without doubt the happiest gathering organised so far. We can all thank our Commodore, for a wonderful year.

* * * *

We are not going to settle into a smug little rut. Last year was a vintage year, this year—who knows? But all is set for another A.G.M. and Party at the same venue, and with luck, we won't have to contend with icy roads and freezing snow drifts to fight our way there. And it could be better than before; why not trot along and see? You know the time, the place, and the day. I promise you won't regret it.

* * * *

While it is much too early really to comment yet, I feel that the scheme announced in last month's *Journal*, to offer sailing instruction to newcomers, could prove to be, not only something that should have been started before, but a big step forward to help all amateur sailors in general. I well remember, in the dim and distant past, when I had saved enough money to afford a holiday on the Broads (£4 it cost for the whole week), we spent the whole week being stuck on one mud bank after the other. And although we all enjoyed it immensely, for some kind soul to have given even the rudiments of instruction would have been a boon and a blessing.

If you were one of those people to whom I had to write to say that we were sold out of Christmas Cards, I hope you were not too disappointed. After writing to the printers, we managed to get one thousand five hundred in all, which proved to be inadequate for the demand. So that all I could think of to do was to file every application for cards in strict date order, and to serve them out as far as they would go, without favouritism; so much so that, to my knowledge, only one member of the Committee was in the early birds' file, and was lucky enough to get any at all. Whoever has the job of ordering next (sorry, *this year's*) will have a much better guide to the numbers required.

* * * *

The official film of Plymouth Week, 1963, which is to have its première at the party, will be available, on loan, anytime after that date, to organised groups. But please let me know what date you would like to borrow it, as again we must work on the first-come-first-served principle, and we don't want to let anyone down. This film, which everyone who has seen it is more than pleased with, was made for the association by Mr. Ken Denton, a member of the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club, and he has very kindly offered to bring all his equipment up from the West Country to give the first official showing. Many thanks Ken; it is another factor which makes us even more indebted to the R.P.C.Y.C.

* * * *

Our membership grows weekly, but as must be expected, we do have folks who for reasons of their own want to drop out of the ranks. Sometimes they write to say, "It is with regret, etc, etc., but I am buying another type of boat." Now no one wants to influence a person against his or her own judgment, but it should be well known, that we as an Association DO NOT make the owning of a Silhouette a condition of membership. We welcome all comers, and few things make me happier than to see our burgee flying from the crosstrees of another type of craft. Our only stipulation is that only Silhouette owners vote on Association policy matters (which is only reasonable). In all other ways everyone is equal.

* * * *

Whoever first suggested that every organisation should appoint a Treasurer, did all Secretaries the best turn ever. I can sit down happily and type away, without a care in the world, happy in the thought that all the financial worries are borne on the very capable shoulders of Jack O'Brien, our Treasurer. But he has this time asked for a little assistance, by requesting that I write in these columns that subscriptions for 1964 are due on January 1.

As a receipt for these, a membership card will be sent. Therefore it is as simple as that; if you haven't a membership card for this year, Jack will be happy to fulfil that want in return for your cheque, P.O. or (better still) banker's order (they are printed, should you want one).

At this time of the year, one is inundated with all the usual bills that are popped through the letter box daily. I notice that we also have several brochures from holiday organisers, imploring us to book up to go here, there and everywhere, to find sun, snow, fun, food, rest, adventure, and anything else they can think of to inveigle us into signing on the dotted line. You won't be bothered with a coloured illustration of bathing belles on the beach at Plymouth, but if you *do* want the *best* holiday you have ever had in your life, then book the date, for August 16.

* * * *

Messrs. G. Hurley, have kindly consented to let us have a small stand at the Boat Show, and this will be manned each evening, and all day Saturdays, by a rota of volunteers. Don't forget to look them up when you are there.

Please bring along any and every photograph you may have to the National Liberal Club on January 4 we are looking forward to seeing them. Applications for membership to the *Secretary* please! — R.A.G.

Lesson One

by T. J. Bickford

IT is with great respect that I read of the exploits of fellow SOIA members and their adventures into the realms of bearings, tide charts, landfalls, echo sounds and other navigation aids. To me, the Silhouette has appealed as a day boat, and the seemingly hazardous world of lengthy voyages remains (as yet) other people's reports in *SOIA Journal*. As a result of the appeal by Reg for spice to add to our monthly grog, I looked back into Volume I of my log book, to extract a suitable portion of misadventure.

Observation

When signing on a crew member ensure they have a sense of humour, at first trip push them off the quay side, this may prove two things:

(a) *they can swim.*

(b) *you had better find another crew.*

Log Book Entry No. 1.

Saturday, May 13, 1961. 14.00 hours, high tide, light breeze, blue sky.

George's Yard at Richmond Walk.

Fred was last seen rubbing his hands and putting the cheque into his back pocket, so my crew, John and Pat, negotiated the steel ladder

on to the half-submerged pontoon, and boarded the well-used floating miniature paddle pool to reach our proud possession. Having found where everything lived we sat and read the booklet tied to the Seagull. Not having been aboard a Silhouette, or operated an outboard before, we sat in the sun and read the excellent little book about the Century. It says, *Read carefully*," so we noted:

Two classes of outboard owner; those with, and those without, trouble. (Which are we?) The outboard is like a human. (Male or female?).

Don't do your first trip in a hurry; so we sat back and read.

You need the correct fuel — good idea, sent crew to get some.

Must practice, and get your eye in; will require some time to understand its new master; work together for 24 hours to get down to business. (Are we setting out for cricket, getting married, or starting work with a new boss?).

Crew returned with fuel, and rearing to go, but I'm most insistent in that the books say, "You must check that there is oil in the gear-box." But this motor doesn't seem to have 1st, 2nd or top gears, so why have a gear box? Friend quietly points out reduction gearing, which requires a penny to open. Just bought boat, so had to borrow penny from young lady. (Marvellous creatures, always prepared!). Penny also useful for petrol cap. All set, glub, glub, second pull, and away she roars down Stonehouse Creek to the Tamar. All is not so well with the crew, shouts that we are losing fuel rapidly, and draws my attention to the busy buzzing motor. I rapidly draw the same conclusions, and switch the thing off to find that the leak stops. Inspection — no conclusions, restart. There it is again! So this time we throttle right back, and note that the leak follows suit. But it doesn't smell like petrol, and in fact it tastes like saltwater, and so by the process of discovery we are able to announce that the Seagull Century is a water-cooled outboard.

The simple rig and gentle breeze soon permitted us to switch off and to glide gently across Plymouth Sound.

Ships must have a name, so the nameplate (or disc to be precise) had been painted up, and was duly christened by pouring a bottle of home brewed *Cornish* cider over the plate. We drank only a short toast as the cider was a little too strong for us to stomach. (Comment, "If we drink that stuff, we will only christen the boat later with it, plus our lunch, so let's tip the whole damn bottle over it, and be careful of the paintwork").

Trying to beat against the tide up the Hamoaze in a light breeze, we made progress backwards, so reluctantly started motor with only a quick reference to the book on this occasion. Carrying out the instructions in that excellent publication *Operating Instructions for Models 40 and 100*, it started first go.

On returning to the boatyard, we were put out when we discovered that the Silhouette is not equipped with hydraulic brakes. The crew lying full length on their tummies caught the upturned paint tin first time, but nearly went over with the slippery rope, for we did a few

circles around the creek as we lost momentum. The bottom boards were fine as paddles to get us near enough to the pontoon to jump. When I landed, I thought of Newton and his apple, while discovering what has been a hard core for many to digest. Third law, my effort in jumping from the boat to pontoon had sent her speeding back across the creek, as the only rope at hand was the tail end of someone else's line, I had to wait while crew paddled back. (Comment, "I note Captain was first off the ship").

After climbing the wall we also had to climb the gates to get out of the yard.

Learnt a few lessons on the first trip. Will relate other lessons in chronological order as I turn the pages of *Moonraker's* log.

One fine Sunday

by R. J. Bennett

PICKED up Brian at 0.700 hours and six miles to Langstone harbour. *Cigale* lying gently at anchor on an ebbing tide in Eastney Lake, a slight fresh wind from the East, clear sky, and morning sunshine, with a nip in the lovely air. High tide (neap tides apogee) was at 05.01, and as we climbed aboard it was all too obvious that we had miscalculated the depth of water, and the wind direction was holding us over the mud. No time to bend on sails if we were to get away that day, so hastily clamping down the Seagull — she started second pull — we headed into stream down through the clustered craft past Ferry Point and into Langstone Channel, straight for the Fairway Bouy about a mile off shore. During this time sails were hoist and set, and with a following wind, and fair one knot tide, we soon slid South of the Horse Sand Fort. Leaving No Man's Land Fort on our port bow hand and having noted the N/S transit line between the Portsmouth Power Station chimneys and the Fort, Brian decided to sunbathe. Was it really warm enough?

Our course was approximately 280°, and we must keep off Ryde Sand watching the buoys. Clear of the sand, we drew near Ryde Pier, and got a friendly hand wave from holidaymakers on the Portsmouth Ferry Steamer. We nearly gybed from gaping and lack of concentration on the sailing job in hand.

The wind was now Force 3, and soon we were by Mother Bank, with the car ferry crossing our bows, and heading into Fishbourne. Should we sail into Wooton Creek! No, conditions were too favourable, and the bay was so pleasant, so we would push on West. I also was sunbathing by now — but we would keep well off shore, as there are rocks to be avoided. Soon there were glimpses through the tree clusters of Osborne House, and then Norris Castle, clean-cut and fairy-like with its conspicuous turret amid velvet lawns. And so to Old Castle Point, with fishing boats anchored over the shoal, and the tide now setting against us. Should we go into Cowes? It was nearly

eleven; no, the water was sheltered near the pier, so in the lee we dropper anchor, downed sails and pulled out our bottles of beer, pies and sandwiches, and incidentally put the fishing line overboard. We relaxed.

A Flying Fifteen shot out from behind the pier and heeled off into the Roads. She was followed by one darting Dragon after another. We were obviously in a good spot, as these fellows setting their sails almost brushed *Cigale* and shot out into the chop. Soon it was a hissing stream of racing craft heading into the *Solent*, where now a freshening breeze was blowing about Force 5 against the tide. At 12.30 we thought it was time to move, but decided to don oilies first. Our working sails clattered and chattered into position as we overode and hauled in the CQR. Then, on a starboard tack, we pulled into the chop, and were soon on our way to the Ryde West Middle Buoy, *Cigale* climbing and sliding in longish rollers. The first port tack was a good long one, well into the bay, but we cut it short to take advantage of the current, and went about for Ryde Middle. The Dragons and Flying Fifteens with spinnakers set were now heading West back to Cowes, and we checked to let them stream through, taking short tacks until we could lay a brief course on Quarr Abbey without getting too far South into the lee of Ryde pier. Out and back into the Solent, with fishing boats bobbing about on the shoals, then a line on the pier, and out again, but not too far North, as we had no wish to be helped by the tidal set into Portsmouth. More fishing going on over the Sturbridge Shoal — and people in the distance walking over the sea? From our level, it was disconcerting, but soon explained: they were holiday makers paddling out over the extremities of Ryde Sand at low water.

Should we go through the Forts, or steer over the submerged barrier farther North by the Dolphin? We decided on the former course, probably wrongly. It seemed ages watching the Power Station chimneys again converge and open up as we drew between the Forts. The jib was flapping now, having pulled a couple of hooks. On the plunging bows (no pulpit) it was quite tricky re-setting the sail, but there were no large steamers about in the shipping lane, and eventually we crawled round the seemingly towering wall of Horse Sand Fort (too close, perhaps) and headed for Langstone Fairway, almost on a broad reach.

Then up the Channel, with the wind abeam, amid dinghies and speedboats, to swing past the Hayling Ferry and pick up that bobbing mooring buoy on the first run into wind at the last moment. Down sails and gear stowed, boom crutch fixed and pull ashore. Why does the beach seem so stiff and straight, so *rigid*!

A nostalgic last look at *Cigale* riding contentedly 120 yards off shore, and then a smooth run home on wheels to end a very, very satisfactory day.

WANTED Secondhand Silhouette II. Noel Simmons, 27 Montrose Avenue, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex.

At Moorings by Dorothy Ison

THE cockpit of a Silhouette could not be more perfect for dreaming. The seats exactly fit, from my bottom to idle feet. *Manyana* and I are wating on the mud; I for a heavily-laden Skipper (he can take his time) and *Manny* for the tide. Her splayed feet are already wet.

A little crab scurries up the dinghy's grooves, pops into a black Wellington-hole, and digs himself out of sight. My drowsy eyes follow the carving and the boot-squelches, the swerve to avoid the smelly sucking place where I floundered that Whit-Monday and Skipper couldn't help me for laughing. (Nearly lost my boot, and certainly lost my allure).

Skipper has tied the blue dinghy to the slipway, just where the Yacht Clubbers will be wanting to launch. Swearing in store for him; still plenty of time

The flood creeps up, relentlessly counter-attacking the foraging curlews. A numerous family of baby Shelduck pursue their mother in single file, like a running string of beads. Moored dinghies rock, float, swing. A breeze ripples the water, flips the tied mainsail; the clew scrapes the foredeck sluggishly, heaves itself over, and flogs again. Little waves pat *Manny's* bottom, slap, slop, slop. One keel lifts, bumps, lifts again. She grinds the shingle, and shudders. Is she afloat yet? I bounce. She jars, now she's off the mud and swings me to a new view. Seaweed flows by idly, and a youngster's woolly hat. Hope he wasn't in it when it went overboard. A swan glides, his flaming beak begging. I have no bread for you today; well yes, there is some in the cabin, but I'm too lazy. The swan threatens me with his black eye, pretends to jab my arm. When you come back, then; I promise. With a glistening tail-shake he goes to join his unlimited relations, all in a huddle at the top of the harbour, feeding silently as if at a white funeral, waiting until the tide recedes and escalates them back to the harbour-mouth.

Commotion from a large dog in a small dinghy at the landing-stage. The two girls are trying to persuade him to jump out on to the ramp, but he sits tight. The sisters are killing themselves as they haul the great struggling lump ashore.

Rocking, swinging, bobbing gently. The sun is warm on my eyelids . . . CRASH! WAKE UP THERE! TAKE THE PAINTER. UP WITH THE JIB. GET *MOVING*! Wind's right. Tide's right. OUT OF MY WAY!

Skipper has arrived.

CHARTER 1964 3-berth Silhouette II available at Villefranche (Nice — 3 miles) April to October, from £10 per week. Roger Hancock, Woodcote, Colgate, Horsham, Sussex.

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