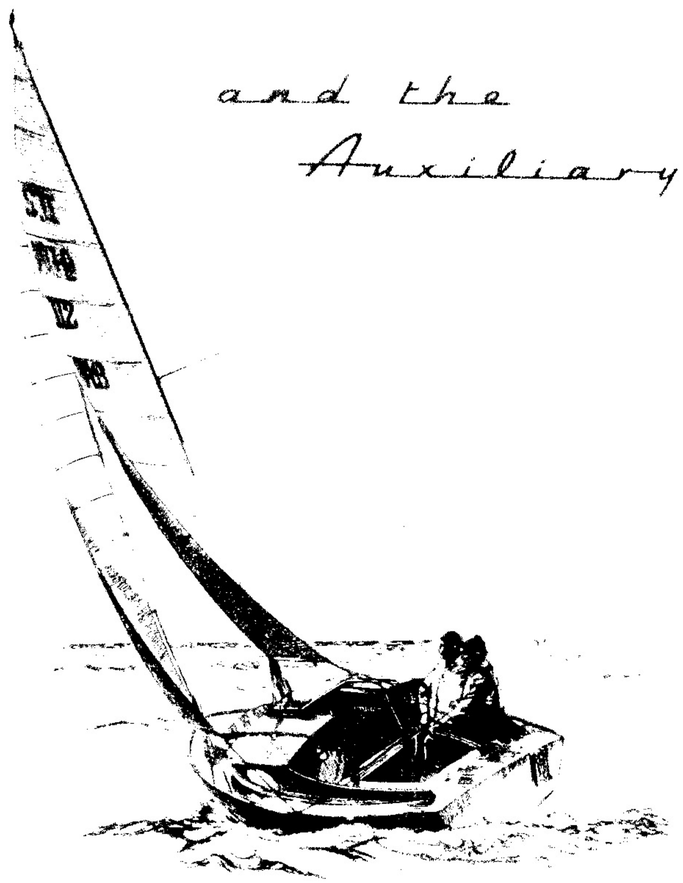
# The Silhouette Owner

*The journal of the Silhouette Owners' International Association*

NUMBER 48 DECEMBER, 1964 PRICE 6d



and the Auxiliary...



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# *Five years*

WITH this issue, *The Silhouette Owner* enters its fifth year of existence. Much water, as Rober Tucker once observed, has flowed under many bilge keels since we started as a little 4-page leaflet; although we have had our share of headwinds in the manifold hazards of life, we have kept going, and (we hope) contributed a little towards spreading enjoyment and understanding of the finest sport in the world —and towards making the bset small cruiser in the world better known. With one exception, when the postal dispute forced us to combine the August and September *Journals* of this year into one issue, we have never missed a month of publication. In these days when the attitude of "What do I get out of it?" is all too common, it is perhaps worth stressing that the whole production of our *Journal* is a voluntary effort. It could not exist without devoted work by a wonderful band of helpers — the Fowlers, who, for two years, addressed envelopes from their home in the Isle of Man; Harry Maloney, who now looks after circulation from London; Jack O'Brien, who looks after the accounts; Reg Garrod, who writes innumerable letters and looks after all sorts of things, all our volunteer writers, and other friends too numerous alas, to mention individually. Then there are the advertisers who have had faith in supporting us, and our printers, The Trajan Press, who have been a tower of strength all through. May we take this opportunity of saying "Thank You" to everybody? Five years is quite a long time in the history of an organisation such as ours. What





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the future holds, we cannot know. Navigation itself is a kind of act of faith, that if you trust your compass, somewhere over the horizon is the landfall for which your course is laid. We have navigated as well as we can, and if sometimes we have not allowed as well as we should for tides and ocean currents, we ask the indulgence of our readers.

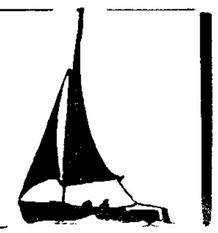
# *Films please*

THE sub-committee organising the SOIA's London party is anxious to include a really good show of Silhouette films. If you have a film of Silhouette activities, particularly of activities during Plymouth Week or at Cawsand, please lend it for showing at the party. It will of course, be returned to you. Please send films as soon as possible to the Hon. Secretary, R. A. Garrod, 4, Crawley Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield Middlesex.

# *S. W. Group*

AT the A.G.M. of the South West Group at Plymouth in November, W. Spurrell was re-elected Group Commodore, and Cyril Guscott, of Exeter, was elected chairman. Tony Gulliford has retired as secretary, and the Group presented him with an electric (battery-driven for use at sea) razor on his retirement. The Group's new Hon. Secretary is V. P. England, 8 Belle Vue Rise, Hove Hill, Plymstock, Devon, and the Hon. Treasurer is J. B. Harrison, 16 Springfield Avenue, Elburton, Plymouth.

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# *Secretary's Notes*

ALTHOUGH few of us can sail this time of the year, November has been a very busy month for the Association in general. Our Solent Group held a very enjoyable get-together at Alton, when the Plymouth film was shown, and a good time was had by all present. The Wyre and Morecambe Bay Group held a most successful end-of-season party, when all the trophies were presented for the events that had been run during a full programme. The South East Group held an at-home when the highlight of the evening was a guessing competition to identify such things as the owners of the knobbliest knees, which were silhouetted on a darkened screen.

* * *

Two serious suggestions made by members, which are well worth considering. The first is that the 1965 List of Members should include telephone numbers of members, and perhaps an asterisk if the member concerned is prepared to offer cruising members a bath, a beer, a meal, or a bed. A series of asterisks (like the A.A. book) might indicate the number of facilities a member is prepared to offer, with a column in the list reserved to indicate the distance in miles from a mooring to the home address. The writer goes on to add that he would be quite willing to be listed as a four star member, but points out that a one star menber would include a friend in a strange port when everything is damp and dreary.

* * *

Number two, that the Association should appoint an officer of "The Slop Chest." The member making this suggestion goes on to say, "Everyone has something stowed away that he has no use for, but someone else might be looking for that very thing; introduce the two together, and they could strike a deal, either swop or cash. Any item could be listed, big, small, dear or cheap; someone may want it; and it would keep people in touch." Comments on these two ideas would be appreciated.

* * *

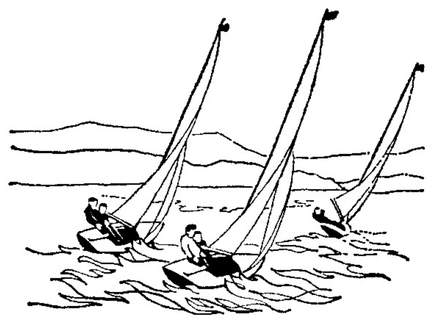
Experience wanted. A member who has to combat 4-5 knot tides finds his 1½ h.p. Seagull underpowered. Is it better to replace this with a four h.p. model or carry the faithful Seagull as an auxiliary? Mr. Williams, of 123, St. Georges Road, Wallasey, Cheshire, would like to hear from anyone who has sailed or owned a Vivacity.

* * *

The Association Christmas Cards are going well. If you do intend to order some of these, Mrs. Morgan would like to know quickly as stocks are strictly limited.

The Editor has delayed publication of this *Journal* for two days in






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*Secretary's Notes (continued)*

order to include the agenda for the AGM that was discussed by the National Committee at a meeting at the very end of November. We hope that as many members as possible will come to The National Liberal Club, on Saturday, January 9 at 5-30 p.m. A separate room, with tea available, will be open for members' friends and relations who are not interested in the formal proceedings, and the Cocktail Party, with free buffet to follow, will be a very gay affair, as is usual when Silhouette owners get together. The committee has one or two new new ideas of entertainment, which should appeal to everyone. So book this date; whatever functions, you may attend during the festive season, this is a *must*!

* * *

Our appeal for comments on past and future Plymouth Rallies, has met with quite good response, and the organisers of the 1965 event will have plenty to think about. Opinions seem fairly equally divided for plenty of racing and little cruising, and plenty of cruising and little racing! Let's hope that a programme can be arranged to suit everyone! Already we are trying to arrange for more room for moorings; many letters have said that this year was a bit cramped. This, however, was acentuated by that unfortunate gale on the first Monday.

* * *

The Plymouth Branch of the Sail Training Association, has organised a competition to raise funds for this very worthy cause. There is a fully equipped glass fibre Silhouette as the first prize; all one has to do is to guess the weight of this craft, complete and ready to sail, and it is yours for a shilling entry fee. Books of tickets (twelve in a book) are available to anyone interested.

Comments in last month's *Journal*, about the Association's insurance scheme, are well worth re-reading. If you do not already take advantage of this offer, think about it, and compare figures. You can save yourself quite a few pounds.

* * *

Do you run a business? The Association would welcome an order for a monthly advertisement; rates are reasonable, and the *Journal* is sent out to nearly a thousand members now, as well as to a number of clubs. Yacht owners do buy other things besides boats.

* * *

I must take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very merry Christmas, a Happy, Prosperous, and a Jolly Good Sailing New Year. Looking forward to our meeting at the A.G.M. and Party.—*R.A.G.*



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# *AGM*

THE Annual General Meeting of the SOIA will be held at the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London SW1 at 5-30 p.m. on the evening of Saturday, January 9 next. The National Committee of the Association met in London on November 28 and agreed on the following agenda for the AGM :

1. Minutes of the 1964 AGM.
2. Matters arising.
3. Financial report.
4. Hon. Secretary's report.
5. Hon. Editor's report.
6. To consider the annual subscription to the Association.
7. Election of officers.
8. Any other business.

As will be seen, this agenda has been broadly drawn, to allow wide-ranging discussion of the Association's affairs. If any member wishes to raise any matter not covered by one or other heading in the above agenda, please give notice of it in writing to the Hon. Secretary, R. A. Garrod, 4, Crawley Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex, to reach him by December 18 next.

The committee is rather proud of the fact that the annual subscription to the Association has remained unchanged at 15s. since the Association was founded in 1957, although costs have rocketed. There is no doubt, however, but that we shall have to face

further heavy increases in costs in 1965. One increase in postal charges for the *Journal* has already been absorbed but it seems probable that postage will go up from the present 2½d. to 3d. or 4d. early in the New Year. With increasing membership, the cost of functions has inevitably gone up— and we must expect increases over and above the statistical average as the cost of living rises generally. Nobody wants to raise the subscription to the SOIA, but the Association cannot contract out of the national economic situation. The committee has, therefore, decided to invite members' views on the question of subscription under the appropriate heading in the agenda.

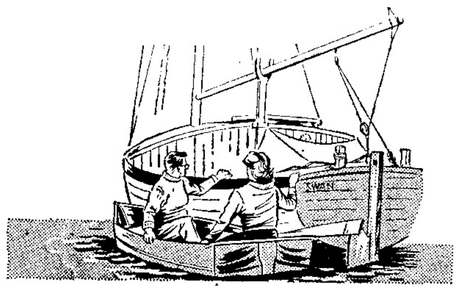
As in past years, the AGM will be followed (at 7-30) by the annual Silhouette Reception and Party. This time, the AGM and Party will be held in separate rooms, which, we think, will be a much better arrangement. But please be punctual for the AGM. We want to begin promptly at 5-30, so that we can get through business without rushing things in time for the party.

## *Foresail area*

AFTER a long discussion at its November meeting, the National Committee has decided to accept jibs with an area not exceeding 56 sq. ft. as " working rig " for races sailed under " working rig ." This should end an unhappy little controversy that arose with the extension of the " standard " jib from 52 sq. ft to 56 sq. ft. after the decision to permit the forestay to be carried forward to the nose of the boat. People who bought standard Silhouettes las year received this slightly larger jib with their standard suit of sails. The idea of any system of handicapping within a Class is repugnant, and to disqualify people who bought later boats in good faith is also repugnant. The Committee's decision is, of course, permissive: nobody is compelled to buy a larger jib, but those who have—or wish to have— the 56 sq. ft. jib may now use it without penalty. At the same time, the Committee has decided firmly that it will not accept any further enlargement of working sails, and it has given notice to this effect. In all Classes the problem of maintaining a proper balance between healthy development and irritating modifications is bound to be a difficult one. Since 1957 the Silhouette has gone through the change from the original rig to masthead rig, and from the inboard fitting of the forestay to the permitted nose fitting. Some people feel that the stemhead or nose fitting makes for a better balanced rig, and that the slightly larger jib is an improvement to prevent back-winding of the mainsail. These are matters of opinion. The Committee has no wish to be either reactionary and stick-in-the-mud, or lax in permitting modifications that may be unfair to those who see no real benefit in them. The decision about foresail area is, in all the circumstances, reasonable. We hope that it will be accepted in the spirit in which it was made, and that efforts at rule-cheating which have bedevilled some other branches of yachting will never appear among Silhouette sailors.



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## *Venturers' dinner*

A VERY pleasant evening was spent at the Manor Hey Hotel, Urmston, on November 7, when the North West Venturers Yacht Club celebrated its annual dinner. The occasion was well supported by many Silhouette owners, and members of the Venturers' fleet.

Dress was the order of the day, and if greetings were at first somewhat restrained, it was hardly surprising; take away, three jerseys, one pair of sea stiffened trousers, the inevitable woollen cap, which evidently has a lot to do with the sailing of any boat; add one dress suit, and the result is a different being. This alone, in my opinion, more than justifies an annual dinner.

The meal and service were excellent, also the speeches, especially that of Christopher Hines, whose light hearted delivery, along with his amusing treatment of his colleagues, was the perfect spirit to encourage in the club. Dancing got off to a good start, and congratulations must go to Dickie Roper who proved to be a first class M.C.; he worked hard all night and managed to keep the dance floor far more crowded than the bar. No mean feat!

I am sure that everybody appreciated the work and time spent

on organising such an affair, and to all those responsible, we say a very sincere "Thank-you." And on behalf of the ladies, I must thank Goody not only for his gift, but for his thought behind it.

For all the 2 a.m. extension, the night passed much too quickly, but it was closed superbly by the Welsh Section of the Sailing Club, led by Judge M. Evans singing with great fervour the Welsh National Anthem. What better way to acknowledge the land that welcomes us every week-end and makes our sailing possible? Well done Venturers! —" Martini."

# *Letters to the Editor*

*NAURU.*—In the September-October issue, in the article by Iris Fairman, the name of my boat was spelt wrongly, *NAURA*. This is rather a good way of spelling Nora (I never thought of that) but not to worry. As Iris and her spouse Ron sailed in her, I hope she blushes deep crimson, not to think what Ron will say to her after he's through paying for my booze for the evening when next time I see him! Anyway, the name of the boat is *NAURU* pronounced "*NAU*," as in nautical, "*RU*" as in rueful, and to satisfy the Editor's curiosity as to what is behind a boat's name: Nauru is an island in the Pacific in Lat. 0 deg. 32 S Long 166 deg. 55 E, of an area of approximately 12 square miles. When we visited it to replenish the fuel oil supplies, we had a memorable time. The Gilbert and Ellice Islanders, who not so long ago were deadly enemies, lived aboard during our stay to tend the moorings and entertained us with their guitars and mandolins and the wonderful rhythmic Polynesian songs. Though we couldn't understand the lyrics, we could, and did enjoy the harmony of their voices and music. They all sat in a circle around a huge dixie can filled with water and sugar, which they swilled like a lot of Silhouette owners in the club bar, only this lot were out on deck. It really was perfect, cool evening breeze, iced beer and the genuine twangy guitars of the Pacific, even the sound of surf on the coral reef 60 feet away. So I named my *Nauru* after the island where I sampled the South Pacific—David Barnes, M.V. *British Fulmar*, c/o B.P. Tanker Co., Britannia House, Finsbury Circus, London E.C.2.

*NEWS FROM AMERICA.*—Reg and Nancy Pegg write: "We landed in New York at the end of July, and after doing the Fair came to Richmond, Va, the home of our eldest daughter. From there we went into Canada at Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Kamloops, Vancouver, Victoria, down to San Francisco, across to Chicago and so back to Richmond. We saw a Silhouette on the lake at Toronto, and at Eureka I spoke to the owner of sail number 248 a Mr. Pearson (not the original owner) who invited me to go for a sail with him. Unfortunately I had been ill, and this was my first time out, so I had to turn down what will perhaps be my only chance to sail in the Pacific. Later we saw another one on the lake at Chicago. We have also seen some wonderful sailing waters, which seem to have a preponderance of motor boats: although Detroit did give honourable mention to the growth of "blow boats" in their waters!" Good wishes to all our friends, and particularly to members in the North West.

*CHAIN.*—I was most interested to read the article "Chain Locker," and would like to add that with regard to balance, when one has an outboard fitted, it is hightly favourable to have 15 fathoms of chain forward in order to restore the trim of the craft; further, I have fitted my fresh water tank up forward as well.

With regard to Stan Morgan's comment on the vexed question of rules



for racing, I should like to say that with inter-Silhouette races the present rules are absolutely first class. However, when it comes to racing against other craft in handicap racing, when the Silhouette has to battle against TC(H)Fs, and the rules which lead to the working out of a Silhouette TC (H)F, the Silhouette under the class rules is hopelessly outclassed. The main disadvantage is sail area, and here I have corrected the Silhouette's disadvantage by having foresails designed by a friend who is one of England's foremost designers. I would explain that after a great deal of consultation we decided that in order to match keel boats on the wind, the Silhouette must be speeded up before the wind. In order to do this we have designed a spinnaker strictly to the absolute maximum measurements allowed by RORC rules, and it may interest members to know that the sailmakers have made a marvellous job, and incorporated 350 sq. ft. of lightweight Terylene into the sail. This sail is not for use by novices, or by a skilled captain with a novice crew. I have used this sail in a Force 4, and believe me, the look of the faces of dinghy helmsmen as I have gone storming past them is really something to behold! Should anyone be interested in obtaining such a sail I shall be delighted to put them in touch with the designer. (A word of warning—price!).

Lastly, by constant attention to tuning, I have now obtained a performance of 43 degs. off the wind when going to windward. I should be interested to hear if anyone has improved upon this performance.

In conclusion I would like to apologise to all my Silhouette friends for my non-appearances this year, but unfortunately I have been laid up and in hospital for considerable periods following an internal injury suffered in a road accident.—Peter Croft, Charmaine, 22 Plume Avenue, Maldon, Essex.

*PLYMOUTH WEEK.*—I attended the Rally at Plymouth for the first time. It proved very enjoyable, and I endorse all that has been said and written about the friendly and efficient organisation. While in Plymouth I heard very little concerning the introduction of the larger jib, which now seems to be promoting a certain degree of controversy. I am not at all surprised to find that the more recently built boats have a slightly larger foresail; it has always seemed to me a logical and desirable improvement. I feel that it would be a retrograde step not to encourage it, or any other improvement. It surely is not "pandering to the millionaire class" to permit the use of the best possible sails; after all, the cost of a replacement jib is small compared with the overall cost of the boat. I believe that racing during Plymouth Week would be improved and it would certainly be more interesting for crews and spectators, if genoas and spinnakers were also encouraged.

The suggestion of a Passage Race is a grand idea, ideal for an essentially cruising boat. It would probably be necessary to sleep on board one night, with a return race next day, or could be combined with the normal scheduled cruises as arranged at the last two Rallies. I would welcome the introduction of a single-handed race — in fact anything that encourages the improvement and performance of our modest little craft.

I was also interested in a recent letter about moorings in Sutton Harbour. Certainly next year we must again emphasise the need for efficient deep fenders. I found it also helped if, in addition to bow and stern warps, breast ropes, and fore and aft back springs were used. I was somewhat surprised to find that we were asked to berth stern on to the quay. I believe that bow on would be better. One would then motor or sail up to the berth, drop the anchor over the stern and check the boat into position by paying out the anchor warp. It is much easier to give a kick ahead, than to have to manoeuvre astern. It would also give more privacy to those living on board, if the cabin faced to seaward.—W. H. Kett, Bushwood, 109 Fronks Road, Dovercourt, Essex.

## The Silhouette Owners' International Association

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*All recognised groups appoint an ex-officio representative to the Committee.*

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# *First time across*

## *by Anne Fowler*

*(Continued)*

WE remained in Calais for the five days after May 11, drying out and enjoying the food and wine.

15 *May*. We moved out of the Bassin de l'Ouest into the Bassin Carnot, where one locks into the St. Omer canal, at 14.10 hours. It was a hot sunny day, and we enjoyed our leisurely progress, although the countryside was flat and uninteresting. When we stopped for tea, we found it difficult to moor, as, although the banks appeared built up and made for craft to moor alongside, we usually found rocks and stakes just under the water, which made tying up impossible, particularly with the wash of passing barges. Shortly after we set forth again, the Skipper topped up the engine, and, in doing so, overfilled it, causing some petrol to overflow down the sides. When he pulled the starting handle, the whole engine seemed to burst into flames — a terrifying moment. However, one of our two fire extinguishers



## Regional Groups

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

| | |
|---|---|
| **South-East.** | *Hon. Sec. Stan Morgan, 19, Philbrick Crescent East, Rayleigh, Essex.* |
| **Blackwater.** | *Hon. Sec. R. W. Sharples, Dalegarth, Watchhouse Road, Salleywood, Chelmsford.* |
| **Solent.** | *Hon. Sec. J. R. Caulder, Sellafield, Orchard Lane, Hermitage, Emsworth.* |
| **South-West.** | *Hon. Sec. V. P. England, 8, Belle Vue Rise, Hore Hill, Plymstock.* |
| **Bristol Channel.** | *Hon. Sec. Cyril Watts, 5 Vassall Road, Fishponds, Bristol.* |
| **Midlands.** | *Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206 Hagley Road, Edgebaston, Birmingham.* |
| **North-West.** | *Hon. Sec. George Smith, Woodcroft, Park Road, Hale, Cheshire.* |
| **Wyre and Morecambe Bay.** | *Hon. Sec. Bertram Lloyd, The Tythe, Glebe Lane, Dowbridge, Kirkham, Lancs.* |
| **Lake District** | *Hon. Sec. T. K. Jones, Foxton House, Lowther Street, Penrith.* |
| **Yorkshire (Humber to Tees).** | *Hon. Sec. Brian M. Beeden, Toll Bar House, Firsby Lane, Conisborough, near Doncaster.* |

put the flames out in a matter of seconds. Its effectiveness staggered both of us. It is a "Firemaster," and uses a powder of sorts, which leaves a white powder everywhere but does not stain. Incidentally, our "Firemasters" are five years old, a matter on which we have, on many occasions, had guilty feelings. Apart from this episode, our 3 h.p. Johnson has never given us any trouble whatsoever.

About 19.00 hours we tied up by a small village, 15 km. only from Calais. Tired, hot and powder covered, all I wanted was for someone to place a meal before me, and so we went hopefully to a small café, only to be told that, not only did they not serve any meals, but that there was no café in the village which could do so. However, we had some very welcome drinks, and enjoyed the owner's amazement that such a very small boat had come so far. "*Mais c'est très formidable*!"

16 *May*. Left at 09.30 hours and arrived at Watten at 14.20. We did some shopping, replenished our petrol and decided to spend the night here, as there seemed too many barges waiting to pass through the lock for us get through before it closed for the night. Wondering where we could moor for the night, the lock keeper came along and showed us the best place for a small boat, close to the bridge, an ideal mooring. We wandered ashore and had a pleasant evening in a nearby *estaminet* with a crowd of bargees, all very friendly and interested in *Sou*.

17 *May*. I shall state firmly now, and then try to ignore the matter, that I am frightened in locks. Continental locks are made for,

large circular lock. No feeling of being crowded here, I thought. It turned out otherwise. We were crushed into the lock behind four enormous barges. I hung on to the stern of one while the Skipper grasped the lock gate calling "*Lentement, monsieur, s'il vous plait.*" The neighbouring bargee roared his engine furiously so that the propeller swirled the water dangerously, and we swung round. Our vociferous Belgian whom we were towing kept on insisting, however, that we should go out before the barges. At last, ignoring my pathetic pleas (as I felt the only safe place was to be well behind any barge) the Skipper agreed to do whatever the lock keeper said. The Belgian bounded away and consulted him. "We are to let the first four laden barges through, and go before the empty ones" he announced. Taking no notice of my wails, the Skipper eased gently towards the middle. The remaining bargees, however, considered they had prior rights, and a free for all ensued. They bore down on us and the leading barge crashed into the boathook I was holding out ineffectively and, but for the invaluable pulpit, which had already saved me many times in locks, I should have gone overboard. The Skipper roared and just managed to swing us clear before we reached the narrow lock gates. Humbly, we waited until all the barges had gone through, and then made our way to the attractive yacht haven. Here Harry Zandburg, the genial English-speaking harbourmaster greeted us, and guided us to our mooring alongside the pontoon. The yacht harbour was crowded with enormous yachts. Innumerable friendly Belgians admired *Sou* and commented on her size. "*But so small*!" Although Terneusen is in Holland most of the yachts were Belgian-owned, and they fêted us with friendly generosity.

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and cater essentially for, barges.

We left Watten 09.45 hours, reached Bergues at 17.15 and found the lock closed, so spent the night there. We went ashore to what looked a rather more prosperous and sophisticated café than ones we had so far patronised in the canals, but found we preferred those frequented by the bargees, and so found a small one close by with its friendly company.

*May* 18. I wandered into Bergues in the morning to shop (the Skipper pretending he had various chores to attend to on board). It was a grey stone town with good shops and a busy market, so we did not leave until 11.30 and reached Dunkirk at 14.30, having stopped on the way for lunch. We were appalled by the filth in the canal while passing through Dunkirk, so we hurried on to the French frontier at Ghyvelde, which we reached at 16.14. Here we found the ideal mooring alongside a landing stage just below the Customs, with a pleasant outlook beyond the canal and steps up to the road. I'd got a little tired of scrambling up steep nettlecovered banks, and the Skipper more tired of hauling me up! On going ashore, the Customs could not have been less interested, though long lines of waiting cars coming from Belgium were all subjected to a careful scrutiny, including having their bonnets raised.

*May* 19. We left Ghyvelde at 10.50. For 5 kms. there was a No Man's Land until we reached the Belgian frontier. After a brief visit to the Customs, we continued our journey to Veurne (or Furnes). We spent that afternoon and the next day exploring Veurne. A row of shops opens unexpectedly into the impressive Grande Place, where the Spanish Renaissance town hall dominates the square. There one can see many other gracious buildings, with houses step-gabled in the true Flemish style, and one felt one was stepping back in time to the years of the Spanish domination. We lingered, explored and admired. The side roads were attractive too, the houses mostly step-gabled, and each one different from its neighbour. Some roofs reared up, others crouched beside them with none of the monotony of British terranced houses.

*May* 21. Leaving Veurne at 14.45 we arrived at Nieuport at 16.00. It was here that the Belgians under their King Albert made their last stand in 1914-18, and an imposing memorial to the King, close to where we tied up, commemorates the occasion. Close by was a café run by an English speaking woman, and it was here that the lock-keeper lived, who, on his own initiative, opened the sluice gates and so held up the Germans.

*May* 22. It only rained for four days during our seven weeks of perfect weather on the Continent and this was one of them, so we stayed put.

*May* 23. We entered the circular lock at Nieuport at 09.15 and reached Plassendael lock, the entrance to the Ostend-Bruges Canal, at 14.00. Here the red traffic light was against us and we had to wait until 15.15 before we were allowed to enter the Ostend Canal. The



water was black with oil, and the stench at Plassendael from the canal of what smelt like decaying flesh was overpowering. This continued for most of the way to Bruges, though the Ostend-Bruges Canal was far and away the most attractive bit we had so far passed along. Unfortunately, for most of the time elsewhere high banks prevented us from seeing the countryside. On passing one railway and three road bridges on the outskirts of Bruges, we were held up for the night at Cross Gate bridge, near the windmill, which we reached at 19.00. Here we tied up by the side of the main road. An enthusiastic Belgian came aboard and spent an hour or so imbibing all he could about the Silhouette (not to mention our whisky and coffee). Next morning the bridge was opened, and we went through and turned right at the first small canal skirting the Predikheren rei. About 100 yards up this canal there is an old lock which now appears to be closed except for any special occasion, and here we tied up, almost in the middle of Bruges. A pleasant way of seeing Bruges is to go by motorboat along the encircling narrow canals under the mediaeval bridges — too low even for a Silhouette. We were too early in the season, but later the ancient buildings are softly illuminated at night; and at any time the grace and beauty of these step-gabled houses, palaces and churches remain an unforgettable memory. I spent five days exploring and sightseeing and found that even then I had not seen everything in this Venice of the North. When the Zwin silted up in the 15th century Bruges lost its importance as a seaport, and seems to have been petrified in a Sleeping Beauty somnolence. There was so much to admire, but two things stand out in my memory — Michelangelo's superb stature of the Virgin Mary and Child in the Church of Our Lady, in white marble that seems almost alive, and the brilliant brightness of the Gobelin Tapestries in St. Saviour's Cathedral. A friendly English-speaking Belgian journalist, M. Vrielynck and his family, took us for various drives round the countryside. We were constantly amazed at the kindness and friendliness of the Belgians.

29 *May*. We left Bruges at 09.15 arriving at Ghent at 16.00. The Skipper was by now anxious to get to the Scheldt and away from the smells and dirt of the canals, so we decided not to linger there but push on to Terneusen.

30 *May*. We left Ghent at 09.30 and arrived at Terneusen at 17.50. That stark statement reveals nothing of the unnerving journey. It is a busy thoroughfare barges from all over Europe, and ocean shipping travel along it. To see their huge hulks looming up silently behind one is terrifying. On the outskirts of Terneusen we saw a motor-less 9-ton Belgian yacht being warped with dfficulty past the many moored craft, so we took her in tow. One should fork right at the junction; we did not, and in consequence, waited an hour at the main lock, only to be told at the end that we should have gone along the right fork, and, with the yacht in tow, had to retrace our journey for about 200 yards. There were eight enormous barges in the pleasant

large circular lock. No feeling of being crowded here, I thought. It turned out otherwise. We were crushed into the lock behind four enormous barges. I hung on to the stern of one while the Skipper grasped the lock gate calling "*Lentement, monsieur, s'il vous plait.*" The neighbouring bargee roared his engine furiously so that the propeller swirled the water dangerously, and we swung round. Our vociferous Belgian whom we were towing kept on insisting, however, that we should go out before the barges. At last, ignoring my pathetic pleas (as I felt the only safe place was to be well behind any barge) the Skipper agreed to do whatever the lock keeper said. The Belgian bounded away and consulted him. "We are to let the first four laden barges through, and go before the empty ones" he announced. Taking no notice of my wails, the Skipper eased gently towards the middle. The remaining bargees, however, considered they had prior rights, and a free for all ensued. They bore down on us and the leading barge crashed into the boathook I was holding out ineffectively and, but for the invaluable pulpit, which had already saved me many times in locks, I should have gone overboard. The Skipper roared and just managed to swing us clear before we reached the narrow lock gates. Humbly, we waited until all the barges had gone through, and then made our way to the attractive yacht haven. Here Harry Zandburg, the genial English-speaking harbourmaster greeted us, and guided us to our mooring alongside the pontoon. The yacht harbour was crowded with enormous yachts. Innumerable friendly Belgians admired *Sou* and commented on her size. "*But so small!*" Although Terneusen is in Holland most of the yachts were Belgian-owned, and they fêted us with friendly generosity.

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barges. A very kind Dutchman on a large harbour launch took my line. The Skipper tried vainly to attract the attention of the Customs official, as we wanted to get our papers stamped as we had planned to go straight on to Zeebrugge. The lock gates opened however; the Skipper let go of the lock gate, and we swung out into the backwash of the neighbouring barge. My kind Dutchman hung on to our pulpit, and pulled us clear, and the Skipper started the engine. The motor launch started to move ahead and we followed, the Dutchman giving me a friendly wave. The next moment there was a sickening crunch. as the launch was jerked to a standstill, for the Dutchman in his care for us, had forgotten to release his stern mooring line. We ran straight into her and poor *Sou* squeaked with anguish with part of her rubbing strake stove in. We milled around looking for somewhere to tie up so that the Skipper could get ashore and see the Customs official, but my nerve had gone, and protesting vehemently that I would not be perfectly all right hanging on to a slimy pierhead, far too near to the exit of the lock for my peace of mind, I was glad when the Skipper at last agreed to sail across to Breskens and get our papers cleared there. The predicted 4/5 wind did not materialise and we took 1½ hours to get across, motoring for the last 15 minutes against the tide.

*June* 17. We left Breskens at 09.30. There was a predicted wind Force of 3/5, but it was only 1—2 rising later to 3. We had to motor at first as it was a Westerly breeze dead on our noses. Later, the wind tossed up short steep waves, the sort *Sou* dislikes. It was exhilarating being at sea again. We arrived at the Zeebrugge Mole at 12.55, and were glad it was calm. We were grateful that we had been driven to Zeebrugge by the Vrielilncks while we were in Bruges, as we now knew our way to the yacht harbour, which is completely hidden when entering Zeebrugge. We were met by Theo, the very charming English-speaking harbourmaster. The Vrielyncks drove over that evening and took us for another drive.

*June* 18. Wind SW, Force 4—5 but it poured all day.

*June* 19. Wind NW, Force 6.

*June* 20/22. Predicted wind Force 4—5, but the club windmeter showed 5—6. It is possible to buy duty free bottles of whisky at the Zeebrugge Club. There is an excellent yacht club where one can get showers and meals, but shops are about one mile away. The harbour is attractive, as there are many gaily painted fishing boats and dozens of huge yachts. Again everyone was very friendly. There was one other Silhouette in the harbour, belonging to a Belgian.

*June* 23. NW wind light and variable. We left Zeebrugge at 14.45 and had to use the engine for the first 1¼ hours against the tide. We were unpleasantly surprised to find what a very strong current there was between the two pierheads getting into Ostend. We only just managed to make headway with our engine running flat out. We tied up at 18.15 hours.

*(To be concluded).*



# *Solo across the Atlantic*
## *by Anne Fowler*

JOHN ANDERSON's *The Greatest Race in the World* (Hodder and Stoughton 3s. 6d.) is a book to read and keep. It will interest not only hardened experts in sailing, but anyone who delights in an epic tale of courage.

The idea of sailing solo across the Atlantic from East to West — "uphill" as this is the way against the prevailing winds and currents and so a greater test of man's powers of endurance — originated with Colonel H. G. Hasler in 1956. Francis Chichester heard of the scheme through a note by Hasler about the race on the notice-board of the Royal Ocean Racing Club. There were many difficulties to be overcome, but the Hasler-Chichester partnership was undefeatable, and they had decided to race alone for half a crown if no one else would compete! But then the Royal Western Yacht Club at Plymouth agreed to accept responsibility for the race, and the *Observer* promised to give a trophy to the winner. It was planned to hold the first race in June 1960. There were five competitors, and the race was won by Francis Chichester in 40 days; Hesler was second arriving in 48 days and Dr. Lewis third in 54 days. But Francis Chichester was convinced that he could better his time, and so it was that he sailed alone in 1962 in 33 days.

John Anderson gives a fascinating account of the introduction of radiotelephone, hitherto reserved for liners, and thus the *Guardian*, aided by the Post Office, its Marine Wireless Terminal and Marconi Marine, was able to publish daily bulletins in 1962, giving Francis Chichesters's own account of his voyage. It was this that added so much interest to the 1964 attempt, when there were fifteen competitors and world wide publicity was given to the daily accounts in the *Guardian* by Francis Chichester and David Lewis and in the *Daily Mail, Daily Express* and *Western Mail*, Cardiff, by Ellison and Val Howells. The world was made aware of the difficulties and the courage shown in such an undertaking.

John Anderson has gathered all the collected material together, and so we are able to visualise the hazards and misfortunes which befell the competitors. One is appalled by all that they had to endure. Eric Tabarly's self-steering gear broke on the eighth day, and for the rest of his voyage, which took 27 days, he was unable to get more than an hour and a half's sleep at any time. Francis Chichester's boat sprang a leak early in the race, and for the rest of the 29 days he had the back-breaking hardship of continual pumping. All suffered damage in the stormy weather conditions.

John Anderson sketches the characters of all the competitors in so vivid a manner that we struggle with them, feeling that we know them all. Francis Chichester and David Lewis, because of their kindliness to Silhouette owners, hold a special place in one's interest, and

Robert Bunker, as a former owner of a Silhouette, and member of the SOIA is an inspiring example.

And why did they do it? As John Anderson says:

> " It would be easy to say that the driving force in all of them is love of the sea, but it would not be true. Love of the sea is a queer thing, much compounded with fear and often hate. The sea is neutral in human affairs; it can be benign, it can be savage, but it is ridiculous to imagine that the sea cares one way or the other what happens to those who sail upon it. You can't ' love ' the sea as you can love a person — or a boat. But for all its neutral, uncaring relationship with man, the sea gives things that nothing else does. In a way, its very neutrality is part of its chief gift; it is not on your side, or against you, but if you will accept it as it is, it will leave you to get on with things, to be yourself, to profit from your skill or to suffer from your mistakes in a direct fashion that is to be met nowhere else in the world, save, perhaps, in the loneliness of high mountains. Joseph Conrad says somewhere, ' The peace of God begins a thousand miles offshore.' He is right."
>
> " The main stimulus (John adds) is somthing in a man himself, which makes him determine to try himself, to look into himself, perhaps to get to know himself, in the utterly exceptional circumstances of a singlehanded ocean race."

John Anderson's stimulating style captiviates the imagination, and his appreciation of all the competitors indeed reveals that " this is a race above all in which the game is worth more than the prize, in which the real honour is simply to take part."

# *Twickenham to Zierikzee*

## *By Peter Comber*

*(Mr. Comber is an Associate Member of the SOIA)*

*Ripple* is a standard 16ft. x 6ft. Y.M. Senior, gunter-rigged centre-plate sloop. She is fully equipped for coastal cruising. Mainsail 80sq. ft., No. 1 jib 46sq. ft., No. 2 35sq. ft., No. 3 25 sq.ft. Trysail 50sq. ft. with deep reef. *Ripple* has cruised extensively on the South and East coasts, and this summer it was decided to take her abroad. Holland seemed to be a good choice, as the waters are ideal for a small, shoal-draught cruiser and the facilities excellent. The passage along the coast to Holland is not a difficult one for a pocket cruiser. Good ports are spaced at convenient intervals along the French and Belgian coast. Most of these ports give access to the Continental canal system, so that if foul weather had persisted (which did not happen in the event) it would have been possible to proceed with quite an interesting holiday cruise by going inland. The passage across the Channel presents no particular difficulties if the tides are worked and reasonable weather chosen.

*DAY 1.* We joined *Ripple* at Twickenham, and as we had already wasted two hours of favourable tide we were soon under way, with lowered mast and the faithful Seagull pushing us through London. It was a hot, windless day, so that we continued all the way to Erith on the engine, the last few miles against the first of the flood being slow work, but pleasant enough on a fine summer's evening. At 7.30 p.m. we picked up one of the usual vacant moorings at Erith in nice time for supper, a beer and a smoke in the cockpit before turning in. Erith is a good spot to make for enroute down Thames,



as the moorings are relatively sheltered from the wash of passing traffic by the lines of large lighters.

Day's run: 30 miles—11-30 a.m. to 7-30 p.m.

*DAY 2.* Next day I got the mast up and the boat ready to sail while Peter went ashore to fill up with water and shop. We were off at 10.30 with a light and fitful, but following, wind which made for slow progress. In Sea Reach we put on the engine, in a flat calm, hoping to save our tide to Sheerness. But it was not be. The tide turned, and quite a fresh Easterly headed us. We made such slow progress that we turned into London Stone (Yantlet Creek). This little creek is well worth knowing for a shoal draft boat. It is a mere nick in the coast, but provides a very sung anchorage for the night if you are prepared to dry out at about half ebb. You should go about a quarter of a mile past the entrance to anchor, as here the bottom is clean, soft mud.

*DAY 3.* I am ashamed to say that we motored the eight miles against wind and foul tide to Queenborough, where we sat in the cockpit basking in the sun and eating peaches and drinking in turn, beer, tea, coffee and more beer. Queenborough is no beauty spot, and not improved by the pungent smell of fish glue, but it is a good sheltered mooring, and the shops have all you want.

*DAY 4.* Peter left me at ten; Mike joined me at twelve and at about one we were off, shortly after high water, with a nice crisp breeze on the quarter, later requiring one reef down, which we shook out in the evening. Timed it just right for the tides down to Margate and the Channel tide to help us beat to Ramsgate. We had no large scale chart of Ramsgate harbour, and didn't know it, but ran in with a flourish at 10 p.m. and locked into the inner basin shortly after.

*DAY 5.* This was a day of frustration. The gates did not open as early as we had expected, so that we missed our tide and did no good at all trying to beat against it. So as not to lose more ground, we anchored off the beach and rolled our guts out, ignominously scurrying back to a vacant mooring in the outer harbour, hoping very much the wind would moderate a little for the morrow.

*DAY 6.* Got away at 7-50 a.m., a fresh breeze giving us a smart beat to the South Goodwin L.V. during which we reefed down and changed to a smaller jib. After we bore away at the light vessel, the wind was blowing Force 6, with some sharper gusts; there was quite a bit of sea, which we reckoned would go down when the tide turned. We were under control and spanking along with the wind on the quarter, and the dinghy behaving remarkably well (it is on a dead run that it goes mad). Picked up the Dyck L.V. as expected and tore along inshore to Gravelines, which we reached at 4 p.m. 8¼ hours from Ramsgate. Red Ensign and Q flag duly hoisted. After a brew of tea and a leisurely wash in the sun, we went ashore up the muddiest stone steps I have yet encountered, sent postcards to wives (as promised) to say that we were safely across, did a little shopping and had the best meal of the whole trip at the Café du Vingtième

## PLYMOUTH WEEK 1965

Dates : **AUGUST 16 — 21, 1965**
Hosts : **ROYAL PLYMOUTH CORINTHIAN YC**

**For the best holiday in the best company. Please let Reg Garrod know as soon as you can if you hope to get to Plymouth next year.**

Siècle, which was much better than it looked. With a bottle of wine and a cognac under our belts we braved those steps again. Gravelines is unspoilt by visitors, and the town genuine and pleasant. It is also pleasant lying at anchor, as we did, next to the fishing boats at Port Philippe. Day's run: 42 miles—8¼ hours.

*DAY 7.* A bright Sunday morning, with church bells ringing and good folk going to Mass, as I should have been. A leisurely start, and some difficulty getting out of the harbour against the strong stream. Squared away to a pleasant Westerly, which wafted us gently along to Nieuport, which we entered at about half-past five with a whole lot of boats returning from a glorious day's or week-end's sailing. Tied up alongside a half-decker near the yacht club, where we had a wash before going to Nieuport Bains for a beer and an excellent underdone steak—a very jolly evening. Day's run: 28 miles.

*DAY 8.* Another day of gentle Westerlies, which took us sweetly along. As we sailed into what we reckoned were Dutch territorial waters we celebrated with a brew of tea and the usual biscuits, cake and chocolate. The sail into the West Scheldt was a delight, with the evening sun shining on the shore of Walcheren. However, the tide was turning against us, but the wind freshened sufficiently for us to broad reach close inshore, and creep along the edge to Breskens. We had no large scale chart of this, which looked like one hole. We thought we were being very clever when at 10 p.m. we followed the car ferry in, only to find that this harbour was for ferries only! So we had to about turn and feel our way along into the yacht harbour, where we tied up at about eleven, alongside an English yacht. Day's run: 44 miles—11½ hours.

*DAY 9.* Ashore until three o'clock, shopping, etc. The local beer is certainly much stronger than ours, and two glasses of it and a hefty meal made us both very dozy and contented. I bought two nice bits of wood and made a new boom crutch to replace the ones we had lost at Nieuport, rather pleased to find some use for the tools I have always lugged round on the boat. In the afternoon, sailed across to Flushing (Vlisingen), and had our first taste of Dutch locks and tied up for the night in the yacht harbour. Here, as almost everywhere in Holland it seems are excellent facilities ashore, and the harbour master and Customs very courteous.

*(To be concluded).*



# SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

RATES: SOIA members announcements, 3d. a word (minimum 2s. 6d.) Trade notices 1s. a word (minimum 10s.). Please send payment with advertisement.

**WANTED.** Prout 6ft. folding dinghy in good condition.—10 Cedar Avenue, South Ruislip, Middlesex.

**FOR SALE.** Silhouette II 1435, built 1963, 3 berth 4ins. cushions, Terylenes, storm jib, anchor, chain, compass, new inflatable dinghy, fluorescent lighting. Complete, ready to sail. £345 o.n.o. Penton, 243 Hammond-street Road, Cheshunt, Herts.

**WANTED.** 3 berth glassfibre Silhouette in irreproachable condition. Fair price offered for nearly new boat. Southern or South Eastern England preferred. Please state full details of equipment and layout. Comber, Combermere, Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berks.

**FOR SALE.** Silhouette II, 1437, 3 berth, 3 sails, pulpit, 2½ h.p. inboard, 2 anchors, 15 fathoms chain, cockpit cover, cockpit tent, cooker, trailer fitted brakes. Many more extras. £385. Full details on request. Sumpter, Lawnside, Willoughy Lane, Tottenham, London N.17. EDM 2727, Ex 5.

**FOR SALE.** 1963 Johnson 5½ h.p. outboard, only a few hours running and as new, long shaft, remote controls for Silhouette. £80. P. Blinko, The Den, Dawlish Warren, Devon. Phone: Dawlish 2328.

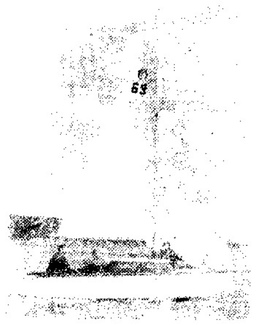
**FOR SALE.** Silhouette II 1964, marine ply, little used. Stuart Turner inboard. £450 o.n.o. Smith, Snapdown, Chittlehamholt, Umberleigh, N. Devon.

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**RIVER YAR BOATYARD** will store, repair or maintain your Silhouette, or welcome you to "do it yourself," at Yarmouth, I.O.W. Tel: Yarmouth 520.

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



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