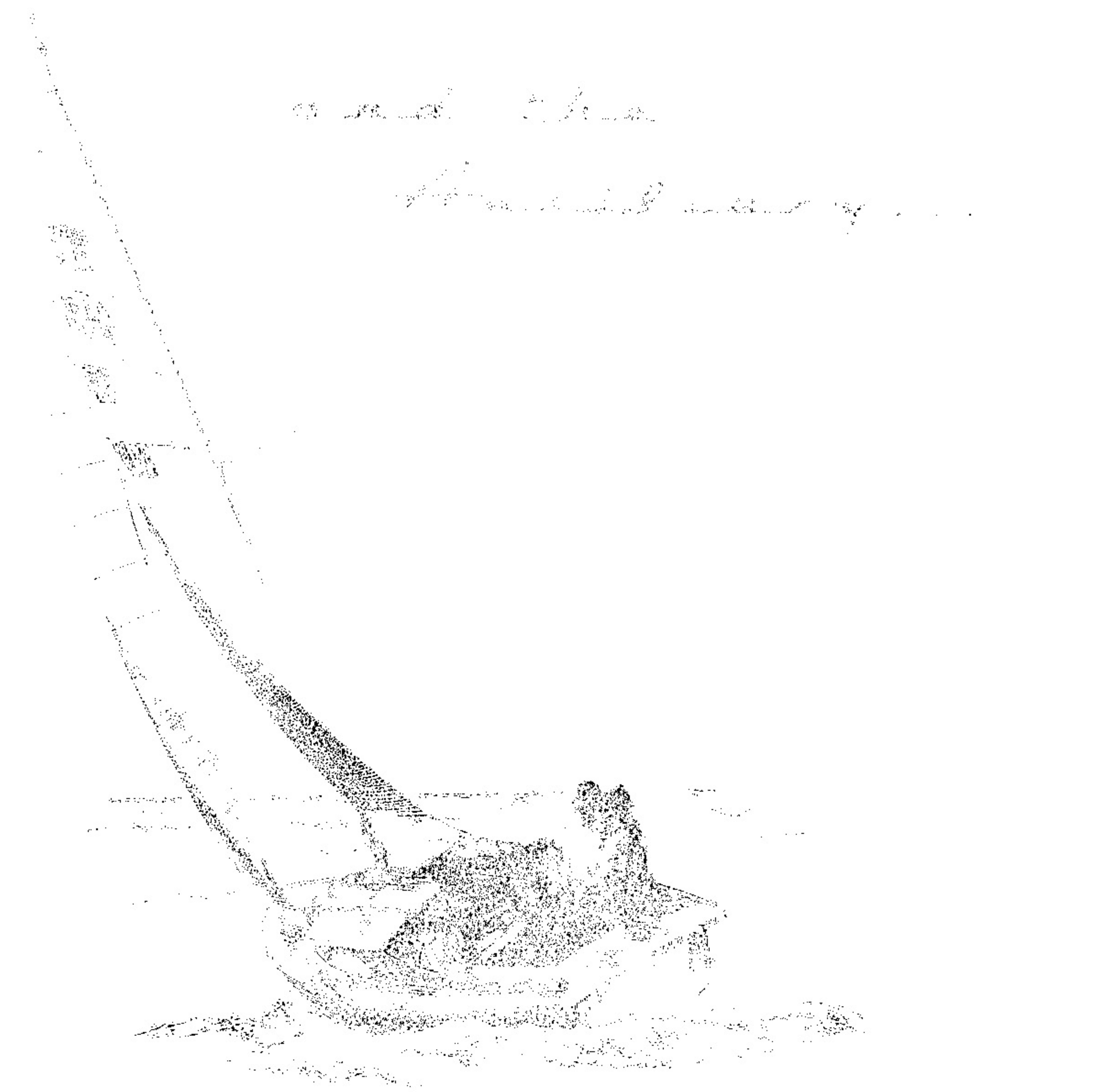


The Silhouette Owner

The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association
NUMBER 10 NEW HAVEN 1911



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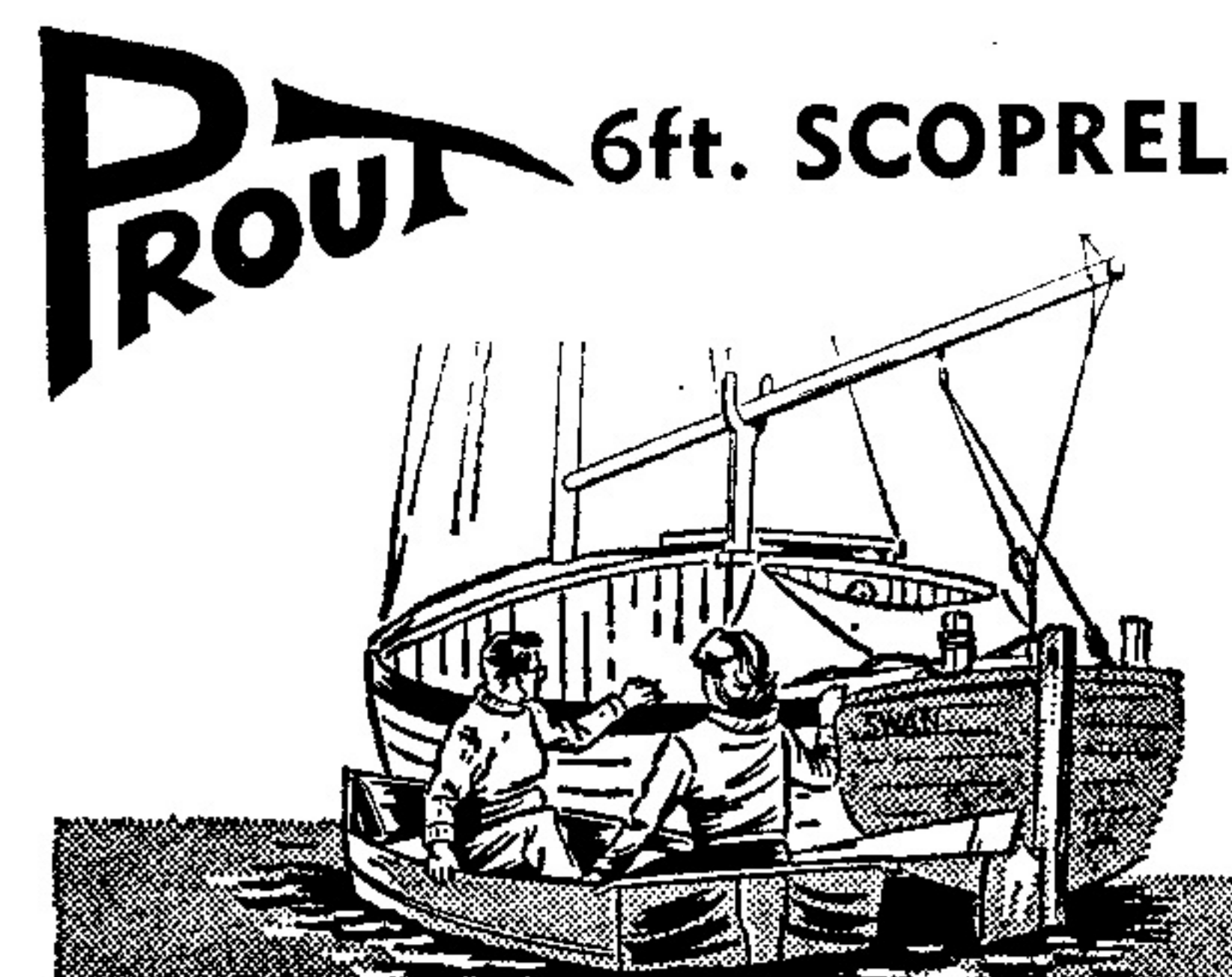
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Weatherwise

AFTER a lot of protests, the BBC has at last given way and promised to replace the midnight weather forecast that it has dropped from the Light Programme by a new "forecast for coastal waters" at the end of the Home Service each night (approximately 11-45 p.m.). This new service is to be introduced in March, so we don't know yet what it will cover; but the BBC's promise is certainly a lot better than its previous insistence that whatever light entertainment it plans for midnight in the Light Programme is more important than the broadcasting of met. information vital to the safety of shipping. Sailing people should watch what happens closely, and be ready to write to MPs, the BBC, and everyone else one can think of, to insist that shipping is properly served in this very important matter of broadcasting weather information. Sailing (and cruising in small powered boats) has grown so much over the past few years that the authorities haven't yet woken up to the fact of how many people are concerned nowadays with the weather at sea. Regular met. forecasts are among the most valuable aids to safety that modern science has brought to seafarers, and the BBC has a plain duty to ensure that their help is made regularly and widely available. It is really rather hard to see why a few minutes at a regular time, and a regular frequency, should not be set aside every three hours through the twenty-four for broadcasting met. forecast to seamen. Fog warning, for instance, would be of the greatest value to coastal shipping, and three-hour forecasts should enable fog warn-

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ings to be included for any area liable to be seriously affected. If it is considered right for time to be given up to advertising in commercial television services, why cannot regular time for information that can save lives be found in non-commercial sound broadcasting? Sailing opinion can make itself felt here, and do an internationally useful job in pressing the BBC to give more time to met. forecasts.

Secretary's Notes

AT the Committee meeting held in London on Saturday, February 6, the first item on the agenda was to vote in the Commodore for the year 1965, and I am delighted to be able to report that by a unanimous decision Herbert Firth was asked to carry on with the good work for a further twelve months. Herbert agreed, and this is particularly good news. Major Firth, to give him his proper title (which he seldom uses) is one of those rare people, who can be the very acme of dignity and decorum, when the occasion warrants, but is "One of the boys" when there is any light-hearted fun to be had. The Association is fortunate in having such a person as Commodore.

All in all, it was agreed that the A.G.M. and Party was a success,

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and it was agreed to hold the same event at the same venue, on the first Saturday of the Boat Show next year. It is hoped that lessons were learned from past mistakes which we hope to put right at the next party.

* * *

Mr. Caulder, the Secretary of the Solent Group, put forward a suggestion for a scheme of simple sound signals for Silhouettes cruising in company, but as I have no doubt he will be writing about this in full in this Journal I will confine my remarks to giving the whole idea every encouragement.

* * *

The sub-committee dealing with the Association's scheme to teach the rudiments of boat owning to new-comers, reported that although the scheme had had some success in 1964, it could be extended considerably this year, if various Groups could arrange specified days during the season, when basic instruction could be given at certain places to pupils who had made arrangements to come. Representatives of the N.W., the S.E., the Exe and the Solent Groups, present at the meeting agreed to collaborate, and it is hoped that others will follow suit, and join in this really needed and satisfying service.

* * *

The forthcoming Plymouth Week was well discussed, and a basic programme was worked out, this to consist of four races, two to be round the buoys, and two outside the Sound, weather permitting, of course. This will leave three full days for cruising, with an informal cruise on the first Sunday of the week, and finishing with the ever popular (especially to the winners) Coates Plymouth Gin Race, as a grand finale on Saturday morning. Lots of letters have been received asking for a passage race, round the Eddystone Lighthouse. Most of the committee are in favour of this event, but it is felt that with such a large fleet, and possibly adverse weather, maybe with fog, such a race might run into difficulties. So it has been decided, reluctantly, to cancel the Eddystone suggestion, in favour of a race outside the breakwater, and to decide the actual course when an accurate weather forecast is to hand.

* * *

Steps have been taken to ensure that an official film of this year's rally is taken, and I hope that it proves as popular as the 1963 edition. Moorings have been taken into account, many of last year's entrants have written on this subject, and it is hoped that the recommendations made by the committee to the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club will prove much more satisfactory this year.

* * *

A welcome was extended to the newly formed Poole Group, and Mr. E. R. W. May of 2 The Circle, Moordown, Bournemouth, was congratulated on being elected the secretary for this body. A very

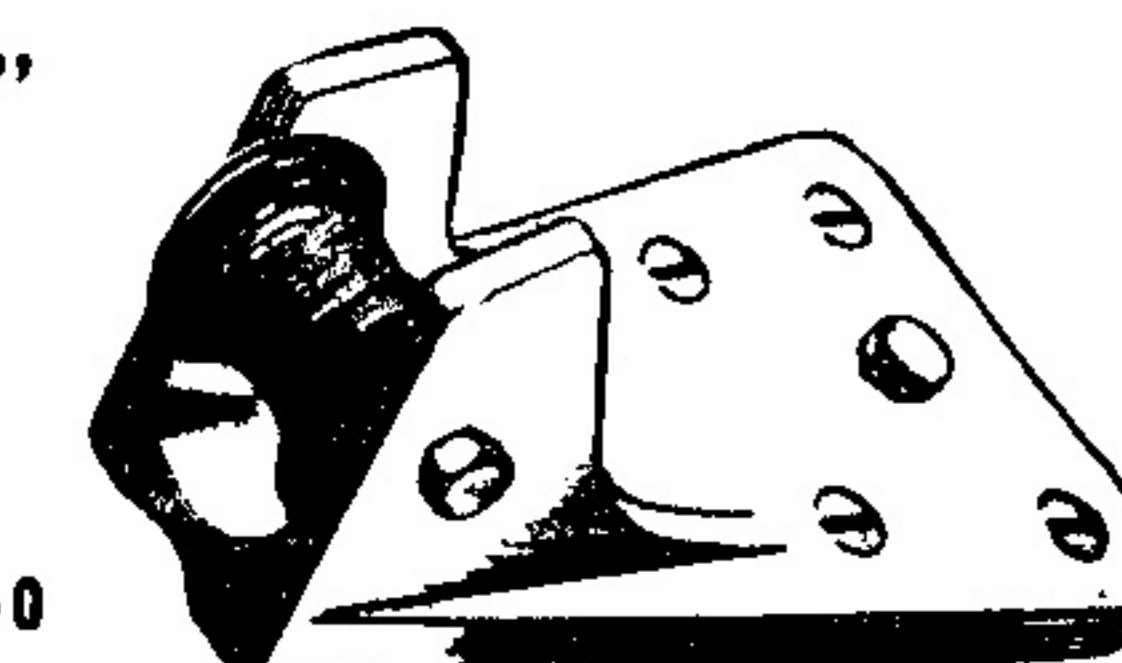
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busy and satisfactory meeting attended by, for the first time, a representative of Associate members, who is very busy at the moment answering queries about the necessary papers for boats visiting foreign ports.

* * *

A member of the Association has had to sell his boat for personal reasons, but would like to have a chance of crewing with anyone needing crew, or advice, in the Crouch area. Anyone interested, please drop me a line.

* * *

Probably the most obvious fault with a Silhouette is excess weather helm. I get many letters asking how to eliminate this, and I suppose most of us have taken steps to give a better balance. Have you any ideas on the subject? I am sure our Editor would be only too pleased to publish any letters on the subject, and it would help others with their experiments.

* * *

We have a young member, a keen, and able crew, who is available and willing to offer his service on board any entrant for this year's Fastnet, so if you do know of anyone fitting out for this event, I can give you the address of this young man, who is fully equipped with personal transport and sailing necessities.

* * *

Our new treasurer reports that subscriptions are rolling in, new members are joining weekly. Sad to say they are still *a few* who have still to pay for 1965; are you one of them? You might look into this if you don't want to miss the April Journal.

* * *

Spring is just around the corner, soon we will be sailing again. Happy Days.—R.A.G.

Guide to the Blackwater

by R. W. Sharples

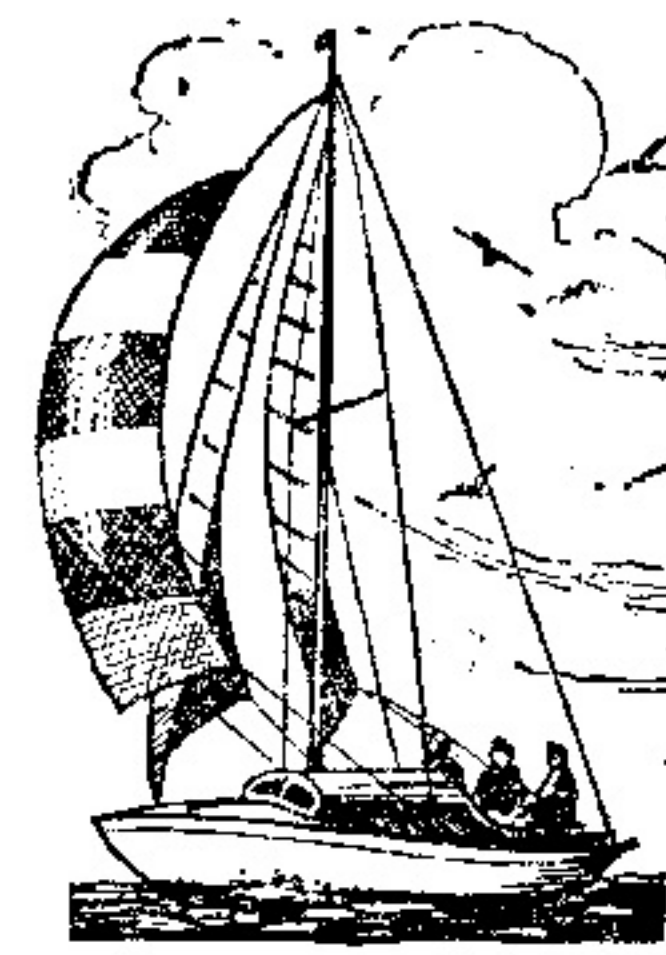
THE Silhouette is a boat that is readily trailed to a distant cruising ground for a holiday, and many of us wonder what the snags would be if we took our boat for a change to a different area. This guide attempts to describe the River Blackwater as a small cruiser man would find it. It would be interesting if other members in different areas would follow suit; it would be of great interest to hear of the different nature of the sailing area.

The River Blackwater is pinpointed at once by describing it as the next but one estuary North of the Thames. In between lies the Crouch. Perhaps the most notable feature of the estuary is the almost completely unspoilt nature of the shore line, in spite of its proximity to London. Only a few small villages and caravan camps are dotted along the shore, and even these are often hidden by the dyke wall from the seaward side. In between the villages the dyke wall is mainly deserted, even on a fine weekend, and in winter it is possible to walk for miles along the dyke wall without meeting any creatures other than the local wild life, which consists mainly of seagulls of various sorts, and occasionally geese and wild duck.

The limit of navigation for a Silhouette with its sails up is the road bridge across the river at Maldon. Maldon is an old port, with its interests in commerce rather than sailing. The South coast man, used to yacht marinas and floating filling stations, will find the Blackwater generally lacking in facilities, and Maldon seems almost to go out of its way to resist any influx of present day yachting aids. There is no suitable launching spot for trailer craft, and the parish hard which would be ideal, has been allowed to be covered by a deep mud bank, and is definitely not to be recommended. The port dries out at half tide, and would not be the best choice for a holiday centre, unless sheltered water and access to shops and hotels were a paramount consideration.

The best way to describe the river is to take an imaginary sail down stream from Maldon to the sea. Starting at the road bridge, the first part of the journey lies past the commercial waterfront, then past the Thames barges moored at the quay, and on past the short promenade until the Island of Northey appears ahead. We have so far been heading South East but now must turn North along the main channel past Northey. The channel on the South side of Northey is blocked for most of the tide by a road across. This road must have been a hazard to navigation for a long time, for it was involved in the Battle of Maldon between the Danes and the locals in A.D. 991.

Proceeding along the main channel, we have Heybridge basin on our left, a canal basin in which quite large yachts can berth in safety, and with a number of moorings outside, still unfortunately drying out at half tide.



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Making a starboard turn at the tip of Northey, we find the caravan camp of Mill Beach on our left. As the name suggests there is a reasonable beach here, and the ground is clear of obstructions for anchoring offshore, but once again the mud appears at low tide.

We now have a long reach along the North-East shore of Northey, and by the time we reach the Eastern end we are in a channel that can be navigated by a Silhouette at any state of the tide. The wooded Island of Osea is now ahead, and again we have the choice of taking the main channel, or a course round the back of the island over a road. In this case the road is well submerged at high tide and is a useful short cut to the seaward end of Osea, particularly useful when you are bucking the last of the flood, as the current is less strong than in the main channel. There is, however, only the village of Goldhanger to visit on the North channel, so we will take the main channel to the South of the Island, which has much more to offer.

To starboard, as we sail past Osea, is a creek, leading to the holiday village of Maylandsea Bay. Although Maylandsea has a number of permanent dwellings, including a yacht yard and chandlers, and has moorings for large yachts, it is so difficult to find, by both road and sea, that many people who have lived in Essex for years have been heard to doubt its existence. By road, it is reached by a narrow private road indicated by the smallest of signposts, and by sea Maylandsea is not marked on the chart, and is not on Maylandsea Creek.

Osea Island is, like Northey, private land, but there is a beach along the South side, used by all the boating fraternity. At the Eastern end of Osea the channel is deep and well out of danger of drying out at low tide. Timber boats too big to get further up the river unload here into barges but the traffic is only occasional, and presents no difficulty to cruising yachts.

On the South bank of the river, beyond the end of Osea, from Stansgate to Stone extends the best beach on the river. It is about a mile long, and it is possible on a fine weekend to anchor here, and be entertained by a variety of aquatic activity that would do credit to a Giles cartoon.

The next port of call is easy to see from anywhere on the river. The village of Bradwell is clearly marked by the twin buildings of the nuclear power station. The power station is a useful addition to the

river, in addition to warming the whole river by a small but measurable amount, and providing a landmark visible for miles round, its building involved the construction, at Bradwell Quay of the finest launching ramp on the East Coast. Bradwell Quay can be reached at any state of the tide, but navigation at low tide is tricky, and the approach must be made from the seaward behind the small island that shelters the Quay. The channel has a violent dog-leg in it, and to follow it a boat must leave the beacon at the Eastern end of Pewit Island to starboard, and keep close to a line of witheys on the shore of the Island, until a pair of white triangles are brought into line. At this point the boat must make a sharp left turn, cross the creek, and complete the journey to the Quay along the South bank.

The witheys are tree branches stuck in the sea bed, usually on the edge of a channel or sand bank, and appear to be able to stand up to the worst the weather can do. They are often encountered, apparently in the middle of the river, marking a sand bank, and are the only indication of shallow water. The village at Bradwell Quay consists of little more than a pub and a few houses, and all the activity is concentrated on the Quay. East of Bradwell there is very exposed farm land, with a couple of farms and the Saxon chapel of St. Peter at the extreme Eastern tip of the land.

Leaving Bradwell to investigate the remaining places of interest on the river, we cross to the North bank. Omitting the small town of Tollesbury at the head of its creek from our itinerary on this trip, we proceed at once to West Mersea, probably the best all round yachting centre on the river. Here there are chandlers, yacht yards and a good public hard for launching boats and it is the only town other than Maldon to possess an hotel.

To sum up, the River Blackwater represents probably the best of the East Coast cruising grounds. It has all the disadvantages of too much mud and too little beach, but with a judicious use of the tide, and a knowledge of where the good beaches are to be found, a very pleasant holiday can be spent on the river.

Associate Members

By Ernest Large

I WAS quite taken aback last month by the number of Associates who found time to write in response to my paragraph in the *Journal*. Thank you all for your interest, and for the details of new craft. In this connection it would be a help if as well as telling us about the type of yacht you have bought, you would also let us have the sail number (if any), name, and home port, or usual sailing grounds.

Bill Chambers (Sail Number Registrar) tells me that he usually hears from newcomers purchasing Silhouettes for the first time, but rarely hears who the boat has been sold to when the first owner

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changes his craft. It would be a great help to association records if all changes were notified.

A foreign-going owner asks whether the S.O.I.A. might help in obtaining the *Passport du Navire Etranger* required since last year by all vessels sailing in French waters. It would be fine if the S.O.I.A. could obtain this document on behalf of its members, but apart from the work involved, it seems a little impracticable, since under present French regulations it is issued at the port of entry, by the Douane after inspection of the British (or other national) passport. In practice, it is not difficult to obtain this "green card" in France, always provided that one can find a Douanier who is in the least bit interested. We found last year that it was necessary to be pretty insistent, since our customs man clearly thought we were making a lot of fuss about nothing. We finally extracted the document from him by making him copy out all the details of the ship and her owner from a Lloyds insurance policy. The magic of "Lloyds" and the big red seal seemed to impress him more than our halting French.

Maybe the S.O.I.A. could help here by issuing a certificate of ownership arranged in such a form that the French officer had merely to copy the information direct on to his *Passeport du Navire*. Relieved of the problems of translation, he might view the whole operation in a more friendly light. In the first instance a letter signed by the S.O.I.A. secretary, giving the above information in French should suffice, but if there is sufficient demand a printed form might follow. It would be interesting to hear how other ships fared on the other side last season.

The Silhouette Owners' International Association

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

The Silhouette Owners' International Association exists to promote the interests of Silhouette Owners throughout the world. The annual subscription is 20s. (USA \$5). Bankers: Westminster Bank Limited, Hornchurch, Essex.

March folly

FOR years I had crewed on boats of various sorts and sizes, from dinghies to twelve tonners, but I had never been able to afford a boat of my own. March 22, 1963 was to be a milestone in my boating experience.

A year or so before, I had seen a Silhouette in St. Helier harbour, and had read about them in the yachting magazines. After a visit to the 1962 Boat Show, and a long chat with Mr. Hurley's staff on their stand, I decided that a Silhouette was a boat that my wife and I could handle, and afford to buy.

Then I received a letter from a Mr. Eury, of Guernsey, offering me a second-hand Silhouette. How he knew my name and address I am not sure, but, after an exchange of letters, my wife and I decided to fly over to Guernsey to take a look at the boat. She was a Silhouette

Regional Groups

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

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

Mk. II (Sail No. 582) and her name was *Yvette*. We both fell in love with her at first sight, so we discussed terms with Mr. Eury. He said that he would repaint her and deliver her to Jersey for the agreed sum.

We returned to Jersey and after deliberation we decided to buy *Yvette*. I was, at last, to be the owner of a real boat.

Mr. Eury suggested that I might like to go to Guernsey and sail *Yvette* back to Jersey with him, so that I might familiarise myself with the boat. I naturally agreed, with eagerness. The date was set for March 22. After what seemed months of waiting, the day dawned fair, and accompanied by a friend of mine, David (poor unsuspecting chap) we boarded the British Railways steamer *Caesarea* bound for Guernsey, loaded with a blanket each, charts, oilskins and a rucksack of tinned food and other odds and ends.

The sea was slight, wind Force 3 from the North or thereabouts, the BBC more or less confirmed these facts, and so we sailed full of high hopes. At 08.00 the wind was on the increase, and the sky becoming overcast. As luck would have it, the First Officer was an acquaintance of mine, and when off La Corbierre Lighthouse we were invited onto the bridge for a look around. We noticed that the wind had risen quite considerably, to I suppose, between Force 5—6, and the sea had formed into quite sizable waves. The First Officer knew we were going to collect a boat, and he advised us to wait until the next day before making the return journey.

We docked at St. Peter Port, Guernsey, and what a charming

little town it is, with its wonderful deep water harbour. Visiting yachtsmen have no difficulty in entering and leaving the port. There is an excellent Yacht Club, and a very good shopping centre, the people are most kind and helpful too. We had agreed to meet Mr. Eury at the Conought Café, and our walk around the quayside was very unpleasant, as the wind had shifted to the East and was bitterly cold with occasional showers of sleet. However, after a cheering cup of steaming coffee, we felt much warmer, and decided to walk to the old harbour and have a look at *Yvette*. She looked wonderful, and I was most eager to board her and make a start, but this was not possible. Mr. Eury confirmed what the First Officer had said; the wind was too high, and the sea too rough, so we must wait until the next day.

Before lunch, Mr. Eury took David and me over to his workshop at Vale, where he was carrying out some repairs on one or two boats. He had a couple of *Yachting World* Bass boats in the corner in the course of construction. David had a good look at them, with a view to buying, but decided that they did not have sufficient freeboard for his liking.

After a pleasant lunch with the Eury family, David and I were taken back to St. Peter Port, where we had some shopping to do, and also to make trunk calls to Jersey to let our families know that we were unable to sail today, and would probably make the return trip in the morning. We walked round buying a few odds and ends. The cold wind became more intolerable every minute and at 16.00 we could stand it no longer, so we found a café that had a bar; unfortunately, according to Guernsey law, the bar was closed. After smiling sweetly at the girl behind the counter, we managed to persuade her to fix up two large coffee-cognacs and after two more we felt much warmer, and so out into the biting cold again.

Our next objective was a visit to the harbour radio office, which is situated at the pier head, to ask the duty operator for a weather report. This he kindly gave, and we were invited to have a warm by his fire, for which we were extremely grateful.

We were to have our evening meal with Mr. Eury, who had also offered a bed for the night, which we gladly accepted. He met us at the town church, and after another quick look at *Yvette* we set off for his home. The meal over, we chatted about the trip for next day, then David and I set off for the nearest inn and supped liberal quantities of rum. We turned in at 10.30 thankful for a warm bed.

We rose at 06.00, feeling refreshed, had a quick breakfast, packed our bits and pieces and waited for the 06.45 BBC weather forecast. The wind was given as Force 3, dropping to Force 2 from the North East, visibility good, but with a chance of haze. The question was, To go or not to go. Mr. Eury thought it was 90% certain that we should sail, but he wanted to go down to the harbour and study the weather from there, for himself.

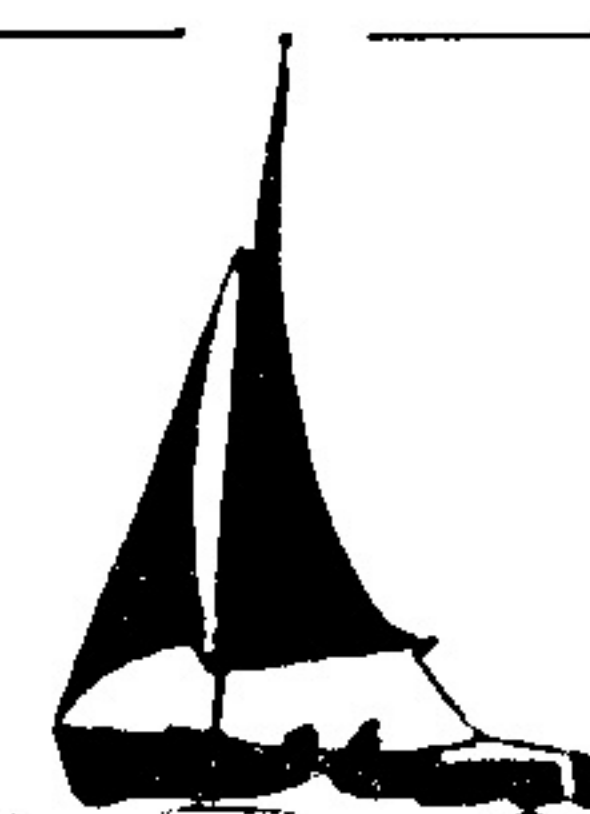
We drove to the harbour. Everything looked bright in the early morning sun, visibility was about 9 miles—one could see Sark very

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well, also Herm and Jethou and it was much warmer than the previous day. On the way to the quay we stopped at a small shop and bought provisions, then carried on to the old harbour where *Yvette* was moored. She looked beautiful, gently riding up and down on the slight movement of the water, her red hull with its white moustache, cream decks and varnished combings and hatches shining in the early morning sunshine.

After bringing *Yvette* to the steps, we made ready to sail, mounting the Seagull, bending on the sails and generally making things shipshape. While making ready for sea, I noticed that the light wind was freshening, but took no notice. As I stood on the foredeck, a thought crossed my mind, this boat was mine and yet not mine: I was not the Skipper yet, only crew.

Just after 08.00, our means of retreat, *Caeserea* passed through St. Peter Port pier heads bound for Jersey. We therefore had to sail home in *Yvette*, return by air, or wait another 48 hours for the *Caeserea* to return.

To be continued.

Painting glass fibre

By D. J. Neilson

ALTHOUGH the colour in glassfibre boats is permanent, after a time the gloss goes and the surface becomes grazed and scratched. I have an 8ft. glassfibre tender, which broke loose in a gale and had been badly dented and holed above the water line. I therefore decided to have a go at repairing it and painting it a different colour to match my boat. I first repaired the hole with "ISOPON" (most "do it yourself" shops sell it, or Halfords). I also filled in the cracks and dents with the same material, which is easy to work with a putty knife. I then machine sanded it smooth when the "ISOPON" had hardened. I also lightly machine sanded the whole boat, to produce a matt surface, but this might be better done by hand, as described below.

The main difficulty in painting glassfibre is in getting good adhesion for the primer. Glassfibre, as compared with wood, has a greasy surface, and it is necessary to remove the gloss and to remove dirt and grease. I used soap powder for degreasing (detergents are greasy in themselves), followed by liberal quantities of clean fresh water. How-

ever, there was not much gloss left on my tender in any case, and it might be advisable to degrease with one of the commercial degreasing preparation (but do not forget to wash it down afterwards). It is essential, before degreasing, to remove the gloss, and wet or dry paper is probably the best for this. When you have degreased—which should be done shortly before painting—do not touch by hand, as the sweat from it will form a film on the surface and affect adhesion of the primer.

I used "Little Ship" metallic grey primer satisfactorily, but I believe that Rylands has developed a special primer for glassfibre. When you have overcome the problem of making the primer stay on, the rest is easy. Two coats of undercoat followed by an enamel top coat will do the trick, rubbing down lightly between coats. If you use polyurethane paints, paint as directed for wood.—*D. J. Neilson.*

New year on the Exe

By C. J. Guscott

1965 came in with a party at the Exe S.C. On Wednesday, January 20 nearly forty members and their friends gathered to talk, listen (occasionally), look at some films and slides of the past season, and push up the bar profits of the Club. This year we persuaded George Hurley, President of the South West Group, and his wife, and Fred Hawkins and his wife, to come up for the evening from Plymouth. Once again our ladies turned up trumps in the provision of a delicious buffet spread, to which the best compliment that could be paid is that it disappeared very rapidly. Thank you again, ladies. Pat and Les Pithers again organised a draw, this time for a luxurious cushion made by Pat. This was won by Richard Trevithick, who bore it off muttering something about how nice it would look on the bunk. We have since heard that Pat, his wife, has said in effect "Not Eliza Doolittle likely!"

There was a certain amount of talk about a projected voyage to Cherbourg in company. More about this appears elsewhere. If anyone is interested, don't forget to let Richard know. If it turns out that the weather is impossible for crossing we should try to do something locally.

At the short business meeting at the start, both Bill Sleeman, Fleet Captain, and myself, Hon. Sec. decided definitely to stand down to let in some fresh blood. Frank Troulan was elected as Fleet Captain, and Richard Trevithick as the new Hon. Secretary. The only other business was the presentation by George Hurley of the Fulford Cup to Tim Holt, winner of the race for Silhouettes in Exmouth Regatta Week. Brian Hardiman, the runner-up also received a cup.

The new Hon. Secretary's address is: Trevimider, Hermosa Road, Teignmouth.—*C. J. Guscott.*

Passage to Cherbourg

By Richard Trevithick

IT has always been my ambition to sail across the Channel to the North Coast of France. As a boy living in Plymouth I used to watch with envy the large passenger liners coming and going, and the busy throngs of people disembarking or embarking at Millbay Docks from the large Great Western tenders which ferried people to and from liners anchored inside the breakwater. Three years ago my dreams started coming true in so far that I purchased a Silhouette, Sail No. 267, which I promptly christened *La Mouette* having read with avid interest many years ago Daphne Du Maurier's *Frenchman's Creek*. For the first year I kept my thoughts to myself, but last year gave voice to them in the company of Cyril and Jean Guscott. They were received with interest, and I decided to repeat them elsewhere. Interest here in the Teignmouth and Exeter area is very good, and my crew John Lockyer cannot wait to get going. However, one cannot put such thoughts into action immediately without a great deal of preparation, for the voyage itself is a fair undertaking obviously entailing, as it does, crossing the major shipping routes.

First things first. Navigation. How is *my* navigation? I sat down and pondered deeply; then decided it was not good enough, so approaching Cyril and Jean we decided to attend a Navigation Class, which we did, and now feel a little more confident. I think if one contemplates such a voyage one should look at it in all its aspects, navigation possibly being the most important, particularly in such a notorious stretch of water as the English Channel.

Apart from navigation, what about the boat, is she capable of doing it? The answer is, "Yes," of course she is. Secondly, always supposing the skipper is capable, what about the crew, is he or she

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up to it? Here again, the answer is in the affirmative. In the past two years or so, John has proved himself an efficient sailor, and quick to learn. We have been out in a gale Force Six, gusting Seven, and I can think of no better way of judging a crew's performance than when out in really rough weather. Of course, being a teenager he suffers a little from an over optimistic outlook at times; however, we have had several long voyages together, and I have no qualms on this point.

As to the vessel herself, John and I have started to strip the paint off the hull in readiness for repainting in the Spring. We have added extra lockers, decided we required a new rudder pintle, added navigation lights, and what is of paramount importance, we are putting a radar reflector at the mast head. This will give us an image equal to a two or three hundred foot coaster, which is very necessary, when one considers the density and speed of channel traffic. We shall also carry ten gallons of fresh water, and I have managed to buy a couple of tins of ship's biscuits for emergency purposes only. (So if we do not turn up for Plymouth Week, you can imagine us ploughing our way through a seven pound tin of hard tack, somewhere in mid-Channel).

How is my wife taking all this? Well, naturally she is a bit disappointed that she will not be coming along herself, but with three children, it is a little difficult to get away; also she has had very little experience in sail, so that this time, we feel it wiser for her to stay at home, though she may fly across and join us for a couple of days.

We propose sailing from Teignmouth during the last week in July and taking about ten days in all. The actual crossing will be made from Teignmouth to Cherbourg, a distance of about one hundred miles as the crow flies. Then from Cherbourg, along the coast Eastwards, passing Barfleur and the D Day beaches, and on to Le Havre. If time permits, we would like to sail up the Seine to Paris, but this I feel will not be possible with the limited time at our disposal. However, we shall endeavour to spend a day in the French capital, travelling from Le Havre by train.

Members of the association definitely interested and who will be going, all being well, are Cyril and Jean Guscott, Russell Lee and Bill Kirby, and very probably, Peter Crampton and Dennis Waterhouse from Plymouth. It seems possible that members who are coming to Plymouth Week might be able to wangle a few days extra time off and join the party, leaving their boats down here ready for the Week. If any other member or members are interested, and would like to know more about it, please let either John or myself know, and we will write to you. Our addresses are:

Richard Trevithick,
"Trevimider,"
Hermosa Road,
Teignmouth,
Devon.

John Lockyer,
6 Westbrook Avenue,
Teignmouth,
Devon.

Letters to the Editor

SIGNALLING.—Morse signalling can be of vital importance. Unfortunately, it has turned out to be very difficult, in a small boat in high sea, to direct a small signal lamp, and simultaneously to flash in such a way that the receiver really can interpret the signal information. It is better to use the top-light, which in my case lights up the horizon all round. This lantern is always visible. The Morse key has in my boat been coupled up parallel with the switch for the top-light. This arrangement is simple, only an ordinary bell push, like those on house doors. I have placed the sender in the bulk-head nearest the ceiling at the sliding shutter, where it is both sheltered and within easy reach. At Morse signalling the flashes must be made very slowly. —E. Scott Grinnal, Gibraltargatan 60, Göteborg S, Sweden.

IN THE ADRIATIC.—I got very flattered when in the last number of *The Silhouette Owner* I saw that my small article had been included in the judgment of the Log Competitions. I had never thought of being able to participate in competition, since I do not reckon myself as such a skilled sailor that I should have some sailing experiences to give away. My real hobby is underwater archaeology. Since the matter was brought up, I wish to mention that the distance covered was 290 miles, and the longest day's run 40 miles, thereof 30 miles out in the open sea. I have no real hardships to report, except one afternoon near the Island of Brac with flashes of lightning and thunder claps, (*Ruscan* has an aluminium mast) followed by a heavy *Bora* (the dangerous North-Easterly wind from the mountains).

I am not quite satisfied with the sailing properties of *Ruscan*, which I ascribe to the fact that I have had her too heavily trimmed in the stern. I have established the same thing on photos of other Silhouettes. Therefore, I wrote to Hurleys asking them if the boat should be trimmed with regard paid to the water line. Presumably my English is quite as bad as my sailing properties, since I got the answer that the water line is painted according to Tucker's directions, and identical on all boats. I should therefore appreciate a piece of information if, when sailing, the Silhouette should be trimmed so that the water line is parallel with the water surface. In order to attain this I had thought of placing four diving bottles, the anchor and the chain cable in the forepeak, in order to counterbalance the outboard motor, the petrol tanks and two persons in the cockpit. If I could get an answer to the trimming question I would be very pleased, since the possibilities of exchanging experiences here on the Swedish West-Coast are very small. *Ruscan* will probably make a new trip to Yugoslavia this coming summer, but this time in the Northern archipelago. —E. Scott Grinnal, Gibraltargatan 60, Göteborg S, Sweden.

TO THE MED.—About one month before taking delivery of a new Eventide sloop, I saw fit to change my job and accept the post of English Representative to a hotel run by an English firm in Ibiza, the third largest of the Spanish Group of Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean. My wife and I

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therefore found that we should be living all the summer and a fair portion of the winter in Ibiza, something like 1,200 miles due South of our normal cruising ground of the Thames Estuary.

We had already been bitten by the sailing bug, ably assisted by three years grand fun in *Seawitch* our glassfibre Silhouette, and looking forward very much to our new toy, now named *Caliente*. So we decided that come what may, we would take her with us. I immediately discarded any day dreams about sailing from Plymouth, Biscay-wise to Gibraltar and thence up the Med. to Ibiza as being very much beyond my capabilities, and even further beyond my nerve. But I did play around a little with the idea of going via the French canals to Marseilles, and then crossing the Med. to the Balearic Islands. However, the craft was brand new, its owner never having sailed anything bigger than a Silhouette and his navigational experiences limited to coast-hopping and twenty-four two hour lessons at the Chatham Adult Education Centre. Besides, time was beginning to press, as we were due to open the holet on a deadline not many weeks hence.

The decision was taken, therefore, that we would travel in that truly land-lubbers way by trailer crossing the Channel—France and the Med. without as much as getting the wheels wet. The job of towing, which would have been too much for our car carrying the family and piles of luggage, was given to a firm in the West Country which has done many journeyings on the Continent, and I must say that I was very impressed by the efficiency and precautions that were taken once the boat had left the bottom of the garden.

Having dealt with the sheaf of papers necessary, and obtained all the tickets for our sea passages, we were off one Monday morning on the same Channel Ferry as *Caliente*, and straight into a howling gale and Channel sea at its most unpleasant. However, once in France the weather took a turn for the better, and with the sun gradually getting hotter as we went South, we did a little sightseeing among the ancient cities of Mid and South France. In fact, we dawdled so much during that week that the Eventide beat us to Barcelona, and had arrived there on the Thursday evening, an exceptionally fine effort as I know from experience that to travel at more than 20mph is quite impossible with a two ton load on the back.

We found the Eventide tucked away behind some sheds on the waterfront at Barcelona, and with no signs of being any the worse for wear after her long journey and attracting only a minimum number of the inevitable international sightseers. We wine and dined, the driver, who had earned our respect and grateful thanks, and then said goodbye, his part of the job now being at an end, and us still 160 miles from friends and destination, with, a car full of luggage and a 6 tonner.

There is only one ferryboat a week from Barcelona to Ibiza and it is no more than an ordinary passenger steamer which carries a limited number of cars which are hoisted aboard in slings worked by the ship's own derricks. This is all very well for Mini-minors and Fiat 600's and at a pinch for longer cars, but when the deck men found their office had booked a passage for two tons of very bulky boat, topped by a thirty-two foot mast, a great deal of very fast Catalan was spoken, some of which I am almost certain was not altogether wholesome.

We spent two hours nail-biting and waiting while it seemed that every other car in Barcelona was hoisted aboard, while we sat with our bulky baby on the quayside. Eventually, about half an hour before we were due to sail, things started to happen. An argument took place as to whether the boat would come off the trailer when lifted, and another with regard to lengths and distances, and another about weights and breaking strains, and then the slings were under and she was lifted. Of course, she stood farther away from the ferry than the cars, so that immediately the wheels were off the ground she swung into the side of the ferry boat. *Crunch*—West Country workmanship being tested to the full! Then up, a swing over, a wheel nearly caught in that wire, the mast is getting perilously near that porthole, and then

rather too quickly down, a bounce on the springs and there she is, sitting on the deck. An excited, gesticulating foreman then bustled his way through the enormous crowd that had gathered to watch the fun, and made unmistakable signs that he wished me to show approval of his brilliant efforts both verbally and otherwise. Honour satisfied, we went below to our bunks for the thirteen hour overnight journey.

The warm black Mediterranean was so calm that it almost reflected the bright stars and the great white gash of the milky-way, which is always so much more impressive in the lower latitudes. The night soon passed and we woke to look through the porthole and see the island sliding by, and our new hotel standing out most imposingly on the shore. After a quick shave and a breakfast of a glass of orange squash, we were up on deck waving to friends. The deck hands by now seemed to have got use to handling us and our accoutrements, and very quickly and efficiently the boat was over the rail and standing on the quayside, looking as though she was thoroughly enjoying her first taste of the Ibiza sunshine. We had arrived safely, but with our deadline quickly getting too close for comfort, we were unable to launch immediately so it was work first, and *Caliente* was popped in a potato store to await her moment of glory when she would be launched in the blue waters of the Mediterranean and sail out into the sunshine. But that's another story.—P. E. Hopper, 64 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate, Kent.

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