

The Silhouette Owner

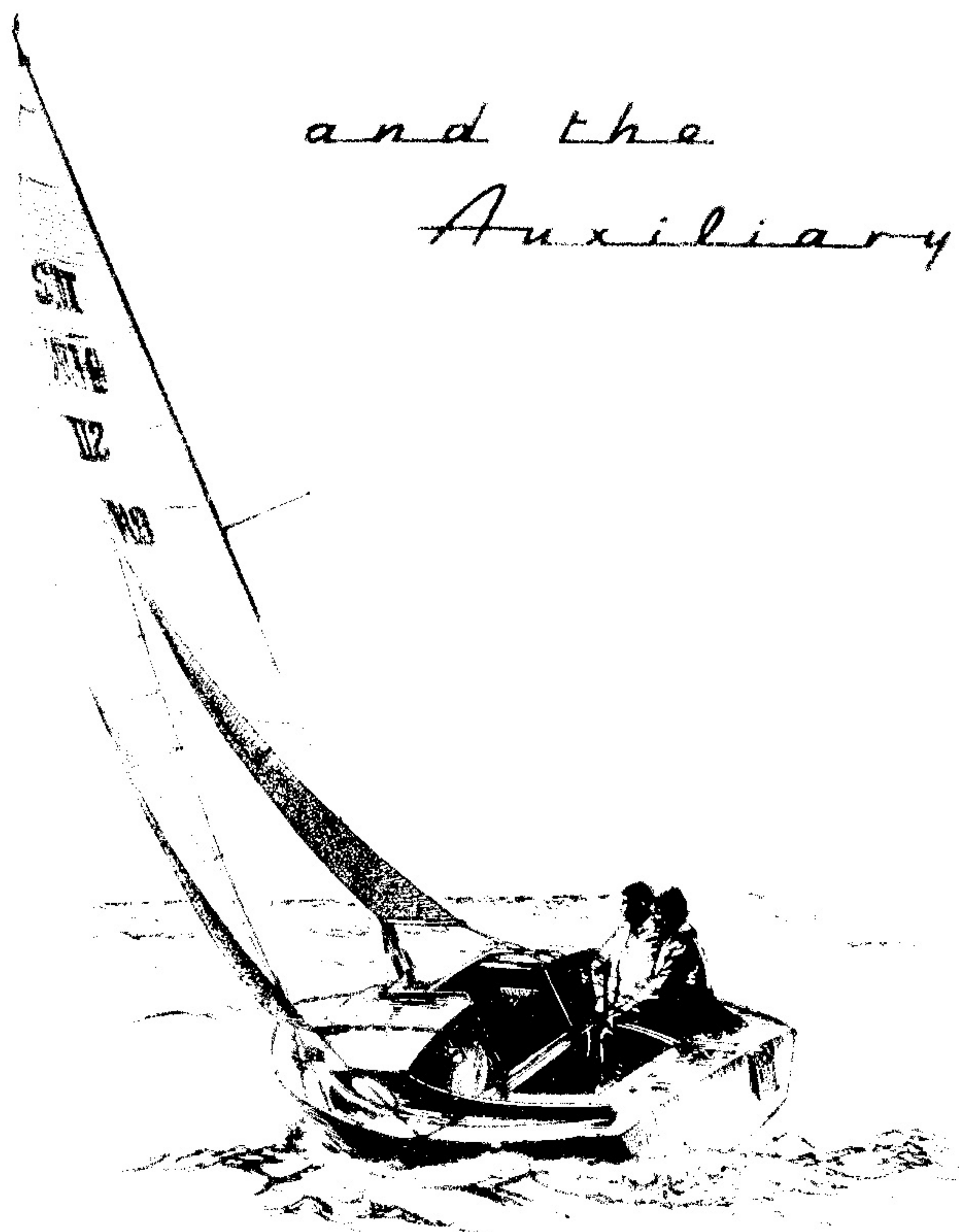
*The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association*

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FEBRUARY, 1966

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

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Looking Ahead

SOME four hundred people turned up for the SOIA's annual London party on January 8—proof indeed (if any were needed) of the vitality of the association, and of the continued appeal of the Silhouette. Everyone seems keen on our proposed rally in Danish waters at Copenhagen next year—a new adventure for our tenth birthday as an association. If we can bring it off (and that depends wholly on ourselves) perhaps Copenhagen will be but the first of a series of international rallies. We might alternate every other year, between Plymouth and “going foreign”—Holland, France, the Adriatic; there is no limit to adventuring with the Silhouette. But our rallies are high days and holidays—everyday life must go on too. Over the years we have built up a notable record of small boat sailing in the Silhouette Class—we are probably the best-recorded class in yachting history. But no one can record the doings of SOIA members unless members themselves keep records in the first instance. Last year's log competitions were a bit disappointing: Mr. De Dotteville was a worthy winner, and Mr. Smith's *Tammy Norie* keep the cruising flag flying nobly; but there are not enough logs entered. This was particularly maddening at the party, where conversations with Silhouette owners revealed all sorts of interesting voyages, none of which has been recorded. This is not only a pity—it is a bit of a blemish on our seamanship. A log is not something that one may or may not feel inclined to set down

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after completing a passage—it is an integral part of navigation. Every master of every boat should keep a log, even for a passage of a few hours. Course and estimated position should be noted at regular intervals, and so should the weather changes in wind force or direction, starting and stopping of engine, and every incident that affects the boat and her crew. Such a log need not be elaborate—it can be kept in what used to be called a penny exercise book (though now it probably costs 9d.). And it is invaluable: if fog comes down, or you are driven off course, the log is the only means of working out a position by dead reckoning with any confidence. If, by ill-chance, you suffer a mishap of any sort, the log is the best evidence for any inquiry. And if you keep a rough log, as you should in any case, do write it up briefly afterwards and send it to the *Journal*. These pages are not alone for experts, or for the most ambitious among us: they are for everybody. Please help us to maintain the widest possible record of the doings of our Silhouette craft and people.

Silhouette Owner Trophy

FIVE years ago the *Silhouette Owner Trophy* was presented to the association by John and Helen Anderson, to be awarded annually for the best log of a cruise in a Silhouette by a crew including a woman—she may be master, mate, navigator, deckhand or cook, but there must be a woman on board. In past years some notable logs have been entered for this trophy, but in 1965 women seem to have stayed at home—more probably, cruises with women on board unhappily

went unrecorded. This lack, however, has enabled us to interpret the conditions for the trophy to include a voyage through life, and the trophy for 1965 has been awarded to Rose Garrod, wife of our Hon. Secretary, Reg Garrod. It was presented to her by Alasdair Garrett, editor of the Royal Cruising Club's *Journal*, at the Silhouette Party in January. No award has been better earned. Rose and Reg put an immense amount of devoted work into navigating the SOIA, and we are sure that all members will join with us in wishing Rose and Reg fair winds and friendly tides as they voyage on together.

Secretary's notes

THE Annual General Meeting held at the National Liberal Club on Saturday, January 8, attracted a very large representation of members and friends. Our Commodore offered the chairmanship of the evening to our President, who opened the meeting in the usual way. After the minutes of the 1965 meeting, the Treasurer's report and the adoption of the balance sheet, reports were given by the Editor of the *Journal*, the Secretary, and the Group Secretaries, all of which were accepted by the members without criticism or counter proposals. The Committee was re-elected *en-bloc*, having been nominated no fewer than one hundred and twenty times, by the nomination forms enclosed in the December issue of the *Journal*.

The venue for the 1967 Rally brought forth lively discussion, and many and varied were the questions asked about the proposed trip to Denmark. When the matter was finally put to a vote, it was all but unanimous in favour of giving the Committee full power to try to organise the Rally in Denmark for next year, which will be the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Association. This now means that the Committee will investigate every avenue with the purpose of trying to arrange convenient and reasonably priced transport for boats and crews to Copenhagen, for a fortnight during the 1967 summer season, news of which will be published in the pages of future *Journals*. The final decision, as to when or whether to book the date with the Danish Yacht Club, will depend on the amount of support that is forthcoming from actual entrants. Your secretary would, therefore, like to know, if you are interested in attending such a Rally; what time of the year you think it would be most attractive; and, above all, any suggestions for getting the boats over to Denmark reasonably, speedily and efficiently. And please write quickly, for we have little time to spare — eighteen months is not long for organising such a venture.

A Christmas card to the members of the Association from the commodore, officers and members of the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club, was displayed at the A.G.M. for all to see, which together

with a notification from the R.Y.A. of its annual general meeting, a letter from independant television announcing its sailing programmes, and an invitation to enter a decorated float in the Easter Parade to be held at Battersea Park on Easter Monday, concluded a very successful meeting. As our chairman pointed out, your committee would welcome comments, and a little criticism can be healthy at times.

Some four hundred people were present at the cocktail party held immediately after the meeting, and a very friendly, happy, time was had by all, this year with larger accommodation and a well presented Plymouth film, and a most generous list of prizes in the Bo'suns Draw. Was it the best party ever? Perhaps it is not for me to say, but certainly it was well up to the standard we expect for any "Silhouette do".

I am delighted to be able to report that George Smith is making excellent progress, and is getting favourable comments from his medical advisers. He is now at home, and although it will still be some time before he is fully recovered, the progress is considerably better than at first expected. George thanks everyone who wrote to him while in hospital, and I am sure will still be pleased to hear from you now he is at home.

The post cards enclosed with this edition of the *Journal*, are the result of a proposition, made by John Caulder, secretary of the Solent Group at a recent committee meeting. He is of the opinion that many members would like to be kept informed of the activities of their local Group, but do not always know what is going on. If you would complete the enclosed card, and post it TO YOUR LOCAL SECRETARY he will then have a much better idea of how many interested owners there are sailing in, or near, his area. In future, all new members will be supplied with a similar card on enrollment.

It should be noted that our Rally at Plymouth this year immediately follows the Port of Plymouth Sailing Association's annual regatta, which consists of a full week's events, many of which are open and suitable for Silhouettes. It is well worth considering if you intend to spend a fortnight in the West Country this year, having the week before our own Rally, so that this event can be included Mr. P. Harvey, the honorary sailing secretary of the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Y.C. can arrange moorings if required.

To the best of my knowledge, so far no challenge has been issued for the International Paints Trophy, held by the Crouch Group, but one is eagerly awaited this year. Any group contemplating such a challenge can be assured of a warm welcome, and it is not necessary to trail your own boats, for ample boats are available in the area. They can be drawn by ballot to make the contest as fair as possible.

The general idea is for the visitors to make a weekend trip of it, when one day can be spent in acclimatising oneself to Crouch conditions, and the race sailed the next day according to the prevailing weather conditions. Full details from the Crouch Group secretary, Stan Morgan.

* * *

Harry Maloney has this year undertaken to edit the printed list of members, which it is hoped will be distributed in April. Please help him with this mammoth task - and drop him a line if you have changed your address, your boat, or your sailing area.

* * *

The Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club has given its blessing to our proposed trip across the Channel at Whitsun, and it is hoped that this time we may be favoured with better weather than we were five years ago. Skippers and crews will be able to enjoy the hospitality of a French port, and sample the tax-free wines as well as experiencing the never-failing thrill of making a foreign landfall. All details will be published, but the general idea is to rendezvous at Dover on Whit Saturday. Whether you come by sea or trail, every possible facility will be afforded.

* * *

Our Editor is always asking for copy—at the party I heard of a woman skipper who sailed from the Blackwater to Dover and back. I wonder why we have never read about it? Are our women members shy about writing for these pages?

* * *

Soon be time to start painting and varnishing, hope all your brushes are clean.—R.A.G.

Views from Sweden

By E. Scott Grinnal

THE SOIA *Journal* has this year given many interesting viewpoints and new ideas for improvements. I entirely share Mr. D. F. Lecocq de Dotteville's opinion about the necessity for a 6 h.p. motor. When I sailed in the Adriatic Sea in the summer of 1964 I had a motor of 2.5 h.p., and several times I met with hard weather with inshore winds. The motor was hardly sufficient to drive the boat forwards. On my return to Sweden it was therefore replaced by a Penta E-7 of 6 h.p. With this latter motor I have been out in open sea in strong winds and have not experienced any difficulties.

On the other hand, on our type of boat it is not worth while having a more powerful motor. This last summer I could make a comparative test, since in Yugoslavia I met Dutch sea captain (Leo Ball) in his Silhouette *Stormball*. This was a four-years-old Silhouette with a wooden mast and deeply loaded. She was equipped with two Crescent motors of 7 h.p. each. With one motor he made 5.75 knots, which was



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a little slower than our Penta on *Ruscan*. With both motors in operation he made 6 knots. The Penta E-7 operates with a separate tank, hence filling is simpler than with the Seagull. The cover of the tank is, however, of the self-ventilating type, which means that if it is kept under deck, petrol gases penetrate into the cabin. The cover should therefore be replaced by a type with a tight-fitting air-valve. To get more room in the cockpit I have the tank under the deck, with a duct to the motor well.

Mr. Robinson asks for viewpoints on lighting. Hurley has installed my lighting, which is very well done. The top light illuminates the horizon all round, which is correct if it is used as riding light. Since I have greater need of it as a course light, I have painted the glass black at the inside of those sectors which are not intended to shed light. I also use this light as a Morse light with an ordinary bell push mounted in the cockpit under the tiller. I am very interested in an installation of spreader lights, but I have found out that I have to make all the fittings myself. However, I wish to warn against using spreader lights when the boat is in motion. It is true that light will be shed on all the sails, and that safety will be increased, but the risk of losing the capacity of seeing in darkness is very great. Night sailing takes much energy from the battery, and when I recharge it I utilise the electric outlet on the Penta. The current must, however, be rectified, hence I ordered AEG to build a rectifier for me, which cost 30s.

The compass has caused both me and many others great trouble. The worst problem has been to find a place free from influence from the fields of force of the motor. It is also necessary to think of the fact that an ordinary transistor radio, even if it is shut off, influences the compass. I have now procured a Silva compass, intended for small aeroplanes. It is ball-shaped, provided with adjustable compensation magnets, and illuminated. It was easy to mount in the port-bulkhead in the cabin, rather high up near the washboard. When it is not in use, it is protected by a stainless metal case. The compass is very reliable; unfortunately, it is rather expensive.

I can answer Mr. Tod by saying that in my opinion, the Pilot Pal is not influenced by the motion of the sea. The deflection has been exactly the same. After having tried it on different places, I found that the best was to fit it to the inner side of the starboard bulkhead in the cabin. A special fitting keeps it up along the bulkhead, but

allows it to be brought down when the direction finder is to be used.

A patent log is a "must" when it is the question of long passages; otherwise it is an unnecessarily great expenditure. *Stormball* had a Sum log, with the under-water part placed between one of the side keels and the middle keel.

The mast support is an interesting matter. *Stormball* had no mast support at all, only a supporting beam, which ended at the sides of the boat, and did not reach the keelson. Mechanically seen, this beam must only have distributed the mast pressure to the sides of the boat, which I believe is less suitable. Anyhow, this system seems to have functioned satisfactorily for several years, and the gain in space was really great. I myself use the mast support when I am sailing, but remove it in harbour. My intention is to make a screw coupling, with a turnbuckle.

Stormball also had a rolling genoa, which seems to be a very good idea. I myself intend to apply a Swedish design, which allows easy hoisting and hauling down of the genoa without taking down the mast. When necessary, the genoa will replace the forestay.

In my opinion, Inglefield clips are not safe enough. I consider ordinary shackles best, even if it takes some time to screw them on.

When I should have set sail on my last night in Yugoslavia last summer, I happened to draw out the boom from its peg. The boom fell on the head of my wife who fainted. Afterwards she declared that she disapproved of this system. I have now loosened the end fitting on the boom, put the peg into it, and riveted the peg to the inner side, so that it cannot be removed. The end fitting was again riveted to the boom. Each time I take down the boom I must accordingly screw off the peg from the mast holder. In other respects the boom functions as before, and it is possible to take in sail in the ordinary way.

Boom crutches seem to be a great problem. I have solved this problem so that at suitable height on the aft stay I have fitted a plastic ring with lashing yarn. When necessary, the boom is secured to this ring by means of a shackle. One (or better, two) things, are now superfluous, since instead of using an ensign-staff I tie the flags to this plastic ring.

It often happens that I have to make long passages in wide solitary waters, and therefore I have procured a rubber boat. Most ideal is inflation with carbon dioxide which, however, is very expensive. I purchased instead a large Japanese rubber boat, and have drawn an air duct to the cockpit from a pair of diving bottles. A rejected reduction valve has been converted, so that it delivers air at 2kg. over atmospheric pressure. This air fills the boat promptly.

Since here in Sweden we start the sailing season when the temperature of the water is only 7—8 degrees C, cushions of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch flexible Frigolit are now being prepared. These cushions will insulate the sides of the berths.

I am planning to sail in the Adriatic again in July this year, from Zadar to Dubrovnik and return, and would be pleased to learn if anybody else would be inclined to make such a trip. Sun and salt water without tides are included in the guarantee.

Blackwater Group

THE Blackwater Group has been going through a rather trying time, losing its Commodore (A. G. Banks) because business has transferred him to Bristol, and with its Hon Secretary (R. W. Sharples) not available for re-election for personal reasons. The Group, however, has been fortunate in finding good officers to succeed Mr. Banks and Mr. Sharples, and at the A.G.M. the following were elected: Commodore, W. Langsdale; Hon. Secretary, A. V. Hudson; Hon. Treasurer, E. Whitehead; Committee (in addition to the officers), G. D. Howland, D. Welsford. Financially, the Group is in good shape, with a balance in hand of £13 18s. 11d., and it hopes to arrange an attractive programme of cruises this season. A newsletter is to be issued to members monthly or every six weeks giving details of forthcoming events, and the Group's news will also be posted on a notice board at the bottom of Mr. Whitehead's garden at Mill Beach. The Group has also decided to ask Cardnell Brothers for permission to post notices on their yard's notice board. With three committee members moored on the same trot off Cardnell's yard there is a nucleus on which a strong group can be built.

A vote of thanks to the retiring officers was passed at the AGM, and everybody wishes the new officers every success. Anybody who sails on the Blackwater should get in touch with Mr. Hudson; the Blackwater Group is a most friendly band, and newcomers are assured of a warm welcome, and any help or advice they may need.

French Holiday

By Michael Ellis

THE holiday was over. We had seen France. We had sailed from Calais round Gris Nez to Boulogne, drunk wine and swapped yarns with some Dutchmen on board their Folkboat. We had slept at Boulogne, and rocked and rolled to the tune of the French fishermen as they swept out of harbour from 3 a.m. onwards, making our little yachts bob and jump as we all clung desperately to the rusty old iron barge that had to serve us all as a mooring pontoon.

We had braved a small storm off Gris Nez, and had reduced canvas from Genoa to jib, to storm jib, to cross fingers. After two choruses of *Those in Peril* the storm quickly abated, and all we had to combat then was just an adverse current, a wind smack in our teeth, and a

The Silhouette Owners' International Association

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

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Seagull engine that coughed and gave up merely because there was dirt in the carburettor.

All through the holiday, we had never quite managed to hear the 6.40 a.m. shipping forecast. The skipper on the first morning in France had undertaken the job. He carefully set his small travelling alarm clock for 6.30 a.m., but unfortunately forgot to pull out the little plunger. (This, of course, assuring us all untroubled sleep until 9.30 a.m.).

The following morning at 6.30 a.m., I half awoke to the alarm clock's tinkle, just in time to see the skipper's arm extricate itself from his sleeping bag and turn it off. At 8.45 a.m. Mike shook me and admitted that he had fallen asleep in the intervening period between 6.30 and 6.40 a.m. He reassured me however, that everything was under control as we were in time to catch the 8.55 weather forecast.

We busied ourselves with the task of getting up, while we listened to the music. As the 9 o'clock "Housewives' Choice" struck up we looked at each other and said nothing. Not much point in turning it to

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. A. V. Hudson, 70 Greenway, Southgate, London, N.14.

Solent.

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

South-West.

Hon. Sec. V. P. England, 8 Belle Vue Rise, Hooe Hill, Plymstock.

Poole.

Hon. Sec. E. R. W. May, 2 The Circle, Moor-down, Bournemouth, Hants.

Bristol Channel.

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

Midlands.

Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, 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

Tees Bay.

Hon. Sec. R. T. Swarbrick, 21 Raby Road, Stockton-on-Tees.

the Home Service by then. It was quite obvious that this thing was bigger than all of us, so we didn't bother any more.

The soft drink cans came in useful to prop up the hatch at night for ventilation. This was usually the skipper's final task before retiring. Unfortunately for me usually he could never resist the temptation of opening it first and having a small swig. The next thing I heard was a curse from Mike, the crash of the hatch coming down, and half a pint of Coco-Cola emptying itself all over my bed. I slept swathed in towels and murderous thoughts.

In the question of the language barrier the skipper had the whole problem sorted out. He was absolutely dogmatic in his complete and utter refusal to speak anything but English. He would, however, try to assist the foreigners by speaking in a very high stilted voice, making the most terrifying facial expressions, and gesticulating wildly with his arms. Anything more than this he would consider pandering to the peasants. Sometimes, when confronted with a particularly reluctant Frenchman, his pidgin English would become so choked and strange that even I would have difficulty in understanding him. If I did relieve the situation occasionally by speaking some of my limited French, he would become hurt, and say that I had done it just to annoy him.

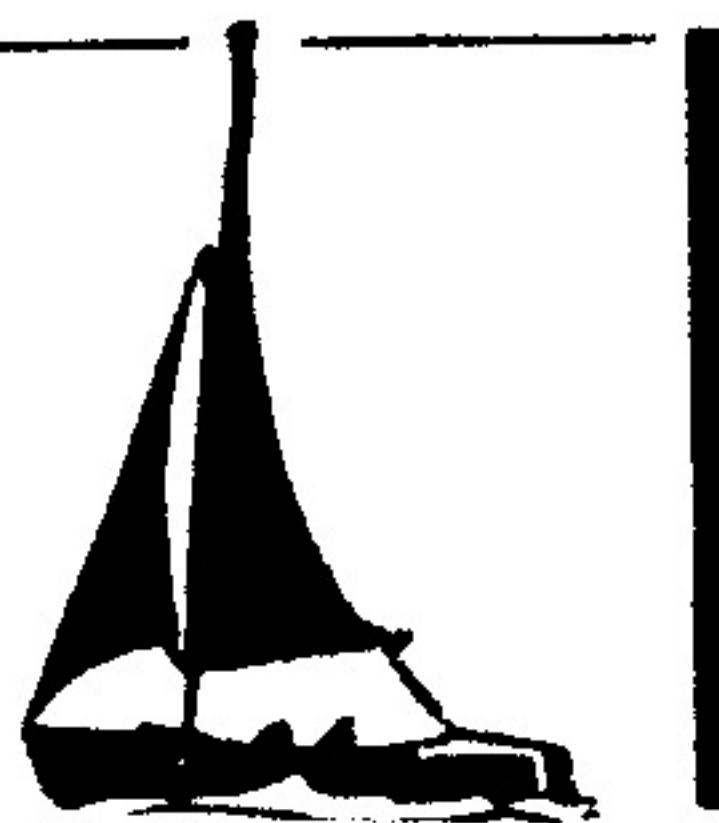
Somehow, he always remained under the impression that he was getting through to them. To illustrate his complete mastery of the situation he once insisted on going into a sweet shop all on his own.

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Valerie and I remained outside, and watched through the window. A young girl attended to him. When Mike began his fandango a look appeared on her face, something between utter amazement and absolute terror. She looked over at us for reassurance that this big man meant her no harm. Eventually the skipper made her understand that he would like to buy some fruity bon-bons. She therefore weighed him out something equivalent to our quarter-pound. What she did not know, of course, was Mike's voracious, insatiable appetite for sweets. When he went into his dance routine again in order to inform the stupid child that he actually wanted *three pounds* of sweets, she understood him to say that he had changed his mind and did not want them now. She therefore emptied them back into the tray in the window, and looked across at me with one eyebrow raised. After virtually resorting to weighing out the bon-bons himself, he managed to get what he wanted. He left the shop in triumph, came out and said "There you are, no trouble at all!" I glanced through the shop window as we made our way down the street. The girl was just disappearing through the door at the end of the shop, her head shaking slowly from side to side. She had bewilderment written all over her back.

Auto-suggestion is a strange and curious thing. The week before going on holiday, the skipper (always proud of his physical prowess) illustrated one evening how easily he could vault my front hedge. This he did, but unfortunately his shoes slipped on the paving stones on the other side and he crashed rather heavily on his right elbow. He bravely conducted himself in true stoic manner as we endeavoured to staunch the flow of blood with swabs and running water. From then on his injury was always referred to as his "Rulton Elbow". Strange as it may seem, by the end of the holiday my wife and I both appeared to be suffering from "Rulton Elbows!"

The fishing trip had proved somewhat unsuccessful. We had seen a fellow-yachtsman moor up to us in Boulogne, and watched him as he and his family feasted themselves on fried mackerel, caught merely by trailing a spinner over the stern of their boat. With faces flushed with excitement, and mouths positively drooling with anticipation of the forthcoming feast, Mike and I pushed off from Calais to try our fishermen's luck. We had purchased 100 feet of line, 25 feet nylon (not very thick) 4 wire arm spreaders, and 4 beautiful little spinning fish, each armed with three deadly-looking hooks and one small weight. Half an hour of side splitting fun was then enjoyed as we tried to unravel this lot in a boat that pitched rather dangerously in a most

boisterous sea. The weight proved to be too light so the skipper, undaunted as usual, hauled in the line and fetched one reel of 18-gauge copper wire and a pair of mole grips. This successfully sunk the line, where it lies to this day.
—To be continued.

Party Draw

RICHARD LEVICK, artist and member of the Up-River Yacht Club, left the Silhouette Annual Party more than pleased with himself. He had viewed with envy the items of marine equipment to be won in the Bosun's Draw organised by Eddy Coxell, and decided that the Prout Folding Dinghy was just what he needed. Later that evening he was seen struggling out of the National Liberal Club with it over his shoulder, having purchased the winning ticket, A 53. He had joined the SOIA only the week before, and now looks upon it as a most charitable organisation.

Other winners were:

No. D100, Mr. M. Parvin, "Sestrel" bulkhead alarm clock in brass.

No. A34, Mr. J. Barney, "Sestrel" compass and hand-bearing attachment.

No. C85, Mr. J. Enalsh, "Hayward" nylon safety harness.

No. C18, UNCLAIMED, Brass gimballed oil cabin lamp.

No. A81, Mr. J. Young, Folding anchor.

No. E22, Mr. P. Hulber, Ever-Ready electric lantern.

No. F87, Mr. B. Boston, Bottle of Plymouth gin.

The draw was most popular and successful, and with the generous gift of the Dinghy by Mr. Roland Prout and the bottle of spirits by the Plymouth Gin Company over £30 was paid in to our funds for use in other directions to the benefit of members.

Please note that Eddy Coxell still awaits a claim from the holder of ticket number C18 for the cabin oil lamp which was not among those handed to him by guests who had to leave the party before the draw took place.

New Members

We welcome the following new members:

C. C. Ardley, 104 Lambourne Road, Chignall, Essex, 729 *Nereus*, Blackwater; A. C. Evison, 10 Walton Road, Culchec, Nr. Warrington, 719; J. C. Jenkinson, 215 Ferry Road, Hullbridge, Essex, 507 *Kate*, Crouch; P. F. O'Gorman, 88 Sheen Court, Richmond, Surrey, 812 *Cariad*, Thames Estuary; Rev. Olle Rahn, Frimurarvägen 2, Lidingö 1, Sweden, 1908 *Magda II*, Stockholm.

Ronald L. Newland, 40 Westfield Road, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, *El Almirante*, (Felicity), W. Hartlepool; Peter A. Stanton-Jones, West Lodge, Barton Road, Hoylake, Wirral, Cheshire, 273 *West*

Wind, Lakes; Leslie A. R. Holmes, 8 Victoria Road, Aughton, Ormskirk, Lancs., *Stingray*, 1898, Mersey; H. R. Levick, Flat 1, 57 Hornsey Lane, Highgate, N.6, Crouch; (Miss) Audrey M. Marriage, 37 Park Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, 1255 *Blue Label*, Crouch; Maurice E. Archer, 31 The Green, Romanby, Northallerton, Yorks, 1037, *Dandy Boy*, Hartlepool; Graham S. Waters, 14 Alder Road West Derby, Liverpool 12, 1882, Abersoch.

North-East Cruise

By R. Swarbrick

THE following is an account of a sail in a Silhouette, along a stretch of the North-East coast, and while it is described as a cruise, it really might have been described merely as a pleasant day's sailing, with a night or two away from the home port. The distance between the two ports is seventeen miles (by dividers) with only one possible port of call in between, and that not very good. If the weather had turned less favourable, the trip could have been a much more prolonged affair, and might even have presented some problems. It was, therefore, planned with some care and attention to detail, as if it were to have been a much lengthier trip.

This, then, is the story of a little cruise such as any Silhouette owner may make. It is expected that it has many points of similarity with a multitude of cruises made by members of the Silhouette fleet and recorded in their log books. It was completely unambitious, and without any of the hairy-chested sailor stuff which tends to form an ingredient of most sailing yarns. Indeed, Peter Haward says in his book *All Seasons' Yachtsman*, (Adlard Coles Ltd.). "A good yachting story requires some or all of the following:

- (1) a difficult yacht, not necessarily conforming to particular opinions on seaworthiness
- (2) a crew of limited experience up against a new experience, preferably staggering
- (3) really nasty weather.

It is readily agreed that a really gripping yarn about sailing does need something of these items, and in the event, we hardly qualified, except perhaps in respect of the first part of condition (2). Still this straightforward story of a simple and short cruise has some points of interest, particularly to weekend sailors of small cruisers.

The cruise was to be in company with other Silhouettes, together with some other types of boats, during August Bank Holiday weekend and was to be from Hartlepool to Sunderland to attend Roker Regatta. The idea was to sail up on the Saturday, spending two nights aboard at Sunderland, and to race back to Hartlepool on the third day. So, some days before "The Day" Chart No. 3104 was studied, and a couple of courses plotted. The first was direct from a point of departure about one mile eastward of the Heugh (pronounced Yuff) 335

degrees mag. to the ballast buoy off the mouth of the Wear. The second was a dog-leg course, from the same point of departure to a point about one mile eastward of Seaham Harbour 327 degrees mag. followed by a change of direction to the Ballast buoy 355 degrees mag. The second course was plotted so that if a strong offshore wind developed, there would be some shelter under the lee of the land, which is fairly high on this stretch of coast. A study of the tidal streams showed that the best time to leave Hartlepool to get the benefit of the tide was about two hours after high water. Ideally, this meant leaving Hartlepool at about 07.00 B.S.T.

The fleet was to comprise three Silhouettes, *Jingle* sailed by Ron and Madge. *Blue Goose* and *Smarty* to be sailed single-handed respectively by Dick and Barry, joined by Arthur and Florence in *June* (a 24ft. Juno class boat) and Ken and Jim in the *Atalanta Hansa*. Because of other commitments (work!) some of the other boats from Hartlepool were sailed up to Sunderland on the Friday evening, the crews returning by road, to rejoin their boats late on Saturday evening. Others were to sail up on Saturday evening, again because of work. *Blue Goose*, to which this yarn particularly relates, and from whose log the details are taken, was duly given the once over and no deficiencies found. Water, fuel for the outboard, and a new cylinder of Calor gas were ferried aboard, together with provisions, bedding, not forgetting the first-aid box, charts with the attendant dividers, protractors, rulers and sailing directions. A list of these stores was made and duly ticked off as they were stowed.

The weather forecasts and isobaric charts in one of the national papers were scanned daily for a week before the trip, the B.B.C. 23.15 forecasts were noted, and anxious eyes often cocked at the weather.

The Friday's coastal forecast indicated Westerlies, Force 4 to 6 and this was reported in the 06.45 shipping forecast for the Tyne area on the Saturday morning we were due to sail. This repetition took the depressing form "Force 4—6, perhaps increasing" not a very encouraging prospect.

As already stated, it was intended to sail *Blue Goose* single-handed, but having gone aboard at 07.30 hours, I was lucky enough to have a volunteer crew in the shape of Barry, whose Silhouette had developed a small leak, and he had prudently decided that it was not wise to sail far until this had received attention. (The leak was easily remedied later).

In view of the weather report, *Blue Goose* had two rolls in the main on setting out, as had *Jingle* which also had a storm jib hanked on. The sea, however, was flat, and the wind, which was just South of West, was blowing only at Force 2—3. After a consultation among the crews it was decided to start, as we knew from experience that these conditions could be expected to continue for some time. In any event, with the predicted Westerlies we could if necessary, sail a course much closer inshore, to get shelter from the land, and motors could be used to get us into port more quickly.

We cast off at 08.58 hours B.S.T. (rather later than hoped) and sailed Eastwards to the departure point off the Heugh. *June*, being a long-legged lady, followed us out of the harbour to avoid drying out, and anchored outside the piers. We learnt later that this pause was really to cook breakfast. The *Atalanta* did likewise.

At 09.23, having estimated that we had reached our point of departure, we set course at 335 deg. mag. We covered our first mile in about 25 minutes. At this stage Barry took over and it was agreed that we should do one-hour tricks at the helm. We noticed *June* coming after the *Silhouette*, and apparently "cutting the corner" in the process.

It was very enjoyable and easy sailing on a calm sea; the sun shone, and the *Silhouettes* forged ahead at a pleasant pace. The National Coal Board's drilling rig, moored off Horden, was abeam at 10.00 hours, and we now became aware that the *Atalanta* was chasing after all of us. By 11.50 hours Seaham Harbour was abeam, the distance from the Heugh to Seaham, on our course, being 10 nautical miles. This gave us a speed just short of 4.1 knots, which we considered very satisfactory.

At this point observations indicated that we had been set inshore a little; at the same time the wind had veered somewhat, and had fallen light. So we altered course to 360 degrees mag. Also, we noticed that *Jingle*, which was at this time about 400 yards behind us, had handed the storm jib and had set the working foresail. Thus encouraged, we shook out the rolls in *Blue Goose's* main and noticed with satisfaction that *Jingle* did likewise. We now sailed much more quickly. The *Atalanta* was well to seaward of us, with spinnaker set and tramping along famously. We exchanged friendly waves as they forged ahead.

About three-quarters of an hour later, the wind freshened again, and we had Sunderland harbour entrance abeam at 13.15 hours, giving us a speed of about 3.5 knots from Seaham Harbour. (By this time the tide was no longer giving us any help, and Ron had worked *Jingle* out to windward of us). While *Jingle* and *Blue Goose* doggedly stuck to their sails, the others motored into the harbour. We had quite a beat up to the entrance to North Dock, and ultimately we turned to starboard into it. The larger boats of the Sunderland Yacht Club are snugly moored there under the shelter of high ground to the West. We tied up alongside *Sonoma*, a Clyde 5-metre, owned by our old friend Harry Lambert. Ron, in *Jingle*, was an old hand at sailing into this dock, and went in on mainsail alone. Not being sure of *Blue Goose's* performance on the mainsail alone in enclosed waters, we kept all sail on; this was to enable us to take stock. We sailed past the moored fleet and, having inspected the various burgees, I decided on a point at which I thought we could take off the main and sail up on the foresail. But it was not to be. The wind was terribly fluky at water level, and having got into irons and into a mess (under the interested gaze of the fleet) we had to show a little of the main again before we finally arrived. Our speed average for the whole trip was 3.9 knots.

We thus completed a most interesting project, and had a really enjoyable sail in company with other boats, which were never out of our sight, and, indeed, at times were within hailing distance.

We had intended to race in the Saturday afternoon's small cruiser class of the regatta, but as we had arrived later than we had hoped, we spent a pleasant afternoon eating, loafing and chatting, surrounded by boats of all sorts and sizes. In the evening we enjoyed the hospitality, beer and music of the Sunderland Yacht Club. On the Sunday it blew so hard that we of the "shrimp" variety did not go to the start for the cruiser class race, but wisely stayed on moorings. One of the bigger boats lost her mast, and one or two others had minor damage to sails and gear. However, we enjoyed being afloat in the shelter of the harbour, and continued our loafing, eating and chattering routine.

We had intended to take *Blue Goose* home on Sunday afternoon, but this was out of the question because of the weather, so I returned by road. On the Monday the fleet out of Hartlepool, joined by the *Silhouettes Renette* and *Dandy Boy* sailed respectively by Alan, now joined by Barry as crew, and Maurice, had a brisk but enjoyable race home, *Renette* arriving home first. Some days later *Blue Goose* was brought home on the motor, there being very little wind, and what there was, "on the nose"; also, visibility was down to about 1,000 yards. But that is another story.

Voyage to Salcombe

By Ray Smith

HAVING once again read this month's *Journal* from cover to cover, I marvel at the ambitious activities of others who build their own boats, alter their rig to improve performance, know all the technical terms, and make thrilling sea passages that cause me to wonder if I am the only first class idiot who fails to achieve anything that doesn't end in a complete shambles.

Our exploits could hardly inspire an adventurous article or prize-winning log, as they would only contain such informative data as "dog brought heart up in cockpit", or "skipper fell over doll's pram whilst going about". Not for us the thrill of making a landfall, except perhaps for striking a submerged rock while moored for lunch, although we have had our brief moments of glory such as the occasion when we were in the River Dart, our Stuart Turner 1½ h.p. flat out against a foul tide, when for an interminable period we remained stationary alongside a moored yacht on which a party were enjoying afternoon tea.

Although our *Silhouette* has been moored in Torquay harbour for more than five years, we have never yet sailed out of Torbay! However last year I decided on the spur of the moment to be really adventurous and trail the boat to Salcombe for the weekend. But the boat had

to be won from the harbour onto the trailer singlehanded. I shall never know why Hurley's either made our bilge keels angle from hull too wide to fit the trailer or the trailer too narrow to take the bilge keels, but I knew before I began operations that Saturday morning that I was in for trouble. I left my wife busy preparing the absolute necessities for the weekend, while I took the trailer to the slipway, rowed the dinghy out to the boat, stepped the mast; and brought the boat over to the slipway. Imagining that I might get wet up to my knees I had thoughtfully attired myself in shorts for the occasion. I might add that I am thoroughly spoilt by the warm Mediterranean and never swim by choice from our shores so I had my first shock when I jumped overboard to guide the boat towards the submerged trailer to find the water not only cold as charity, but over my armpits. One looks rather stupid in collar and tie on such occasions. I was further shocked to notice that numerous holiday-makers with little else to do had gathered three deep on the quayside above me, straining their necks to watch progress.

I immediately behaved masterfully and knowledgeably as I thrashed around in the cold water trying to marry up boat to trailer, accompanied by an aggravating swell, which made picking jelly up with a skewer child's play. First, the trailer was too deep, and in trying to extricate trailer and control the boat, my bare feet slipped uncontrollably from under me on the slimy concrete, and for a second I was completely submerged. I rose to the occasion with alacrity to witness boat and trailer sliding into deeper water.

It was then that I suddenly had a mental picture of my wife, daughter, provisions, bedding, clothing, dog and doll's pram (without which my daughter refuses to put to sea) waiting impatiently at our front door for my arrival. This goaded me to renewed effort and in spite of the maddening helpful advice from the many onlookers. I suddenly became inspired with the idea of getting the loosened trailer clamps into the shackles in the bilge keels, and tightening them up, while at the same time levering the keels with a screwdriver into tracks. But first I had to get the shackles into the keels, and this operation, accompanied by a slight swell, again soaked me up to my neck. Gradually, I succeeded and began tightening the trailer clamps and in due course both forward keels were wedged between the tracks. My theory now was that when I pulled her out, her weight would force the rest of the keels into the trailer. I was right, and deservedly proud as I dragged my prize up the slipway. I might add that I had given a 2½ hour performance. With a final bow to the crowd, and teeth chattering, I drove off into the traffic.

—*To be continued*

Letters to the Editor

SOLO ENGINE.—I would like to get in touch with one or two owners who have the 2½ h.p. Solo engine installed in their craft, as I am contemplating having one myself.—John W. Mantle, 56 Broomfield Road, Beckenham, Kent.

pints, which delivers via a flexible plastic pipe into the motor's own tank. The makers advise against doing this without stopping the engine, but we have managed to do it on the move in tricky situations—just make sure the filler cap is well secured! The refueller can be topped up in the cockpit, which is easier than hanging over the stern with fuel cans and funnels (usual disclaimer!).—D. L. Smith, 21 Park Avenue, Hull.

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BOSUN'S STORES. Terylene ties, burgees, car badge transfers, brooches, from Mrs. Eileen Morgan, 19 Philbrick Crescent East, Rayleigh, Essex. Back numbers of the *Journal* (on loan) from Eddie Coxell, 40 Louis Drive East, Rayleigh, Essex.

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