

PLYMOUTH WEEK — AUGUST 7th - 14th

The Silhouette Owner

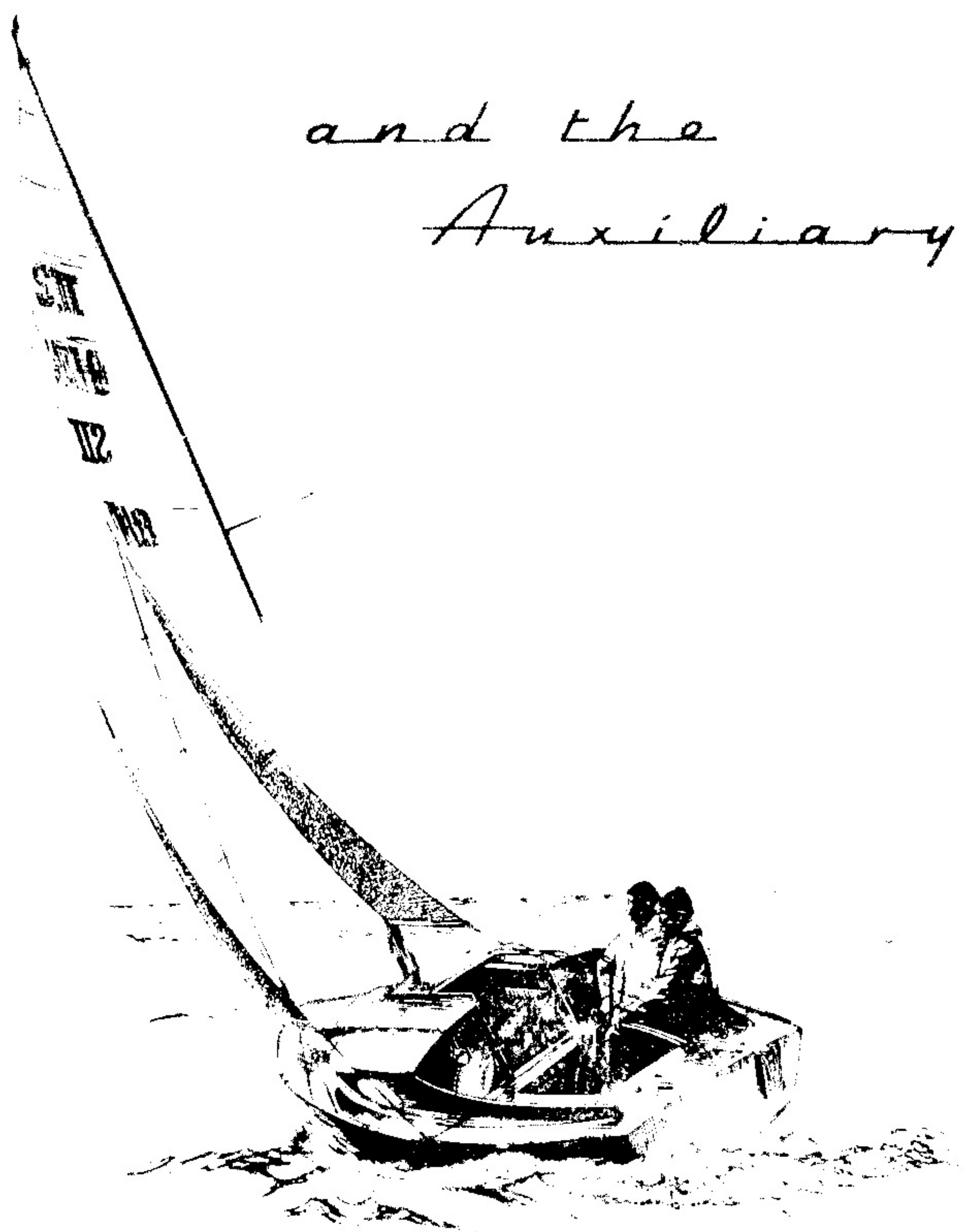
*The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association*

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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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Vinland Voyage

JOHN ANDERSON is leading an expedition which plans to sail in May in search of Vinland—the early Norse colonies in North America. Two notable members of the SOIA, Reg Garrod, our immensely hardworking Hon. Secretary, and Peter Comber, winner of the Open Cruising Trophy in 1964, are hoping to sail with him. The expedition is sailing in *Griffin*, a 45-ft. cutter formerly the club yacht of the Royal Ocean Racing Club. The crew will probably be six in all. The expedition hopes to leave Britain in the first week of May to sail for Julianehaab in SW Greenland, the home of Leif Eiriksson who made a colonising voyage to North America around the year 1001 of our calendar. Taking a departure from Julianehaab, or as near as the ice conditions may permit, the expedition will try to reproduce Leif Eiriksson's voyage from such sailing direction as can be deduced from the old Icelandic sagas. After crossing the Davis Strait, *Griffin* will navigate southerly with the Labrador Current to make what seem to be the most natural landfalls on the North American coast. It is hoped that by allowing *Griffin* to be influenced as much as possible by the prevailing currents and tidal streams, the expedition's landfalls may be much the same as those of the Norsemen a thousand years ago. There are some fascinating descriptions of these landfalls in the

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old sagas, and it is hoped that *Griffin's* landfalls may perhaps be identified with some of these old descriptions. If so, this would be an interesting indication of where the ancient Norse colonies — established four centuries before Columbus — may have been. New interest in these early Norse settlements has been created by the discovery by Yale University of a medieval map of Vinland, believed to have been copied—from a much earlier original—around 1440, or half a century before Columbus sailed. Scholars at Yale and at the British Museum, who worked on the map for nearly eight years before a word about it was published, believe the map to be genuine: if so, it is the only known Pre-Columbian map of any part of the North American continent. The Vinland Expedition is being organised by *The Guardian*, and *The Guardian* hopes to report its narrative daily by means of a Marconi Kestrel radiotelephone—the system used will be the same as that organised by *The Guardian* for reporting the Singlehanded Trans-Atlantic Race. Reg Garrod has undertaken the job of radio operator and he is studying hard for the necessary Radio Operator's Licence from the marine wireless department of the Post Office. Peter Comber is acting as Supplies Officer, and is collecting food and stores. If the expedition can help to locate where these old Norse colonies were it will cast useful new light on a fascinating chapter of human history. John says that he seriously considered going in *Mary Lane* (S II 397) but decided reluctantly that she just wasn't big enough for the radio equipment needed. He has no doubt that she would have made Vinland happily. If the expedition can't sail in a Silhouette, at least half the party are members of the S.O.I.A. *Griffin's* owners, the Iverson family of Dover, have generously lent her for the expedition.

Secretary's notes

SKIMMING through the pages of the back numbers of *The Silhouette Owner*, I believe that the appeal made in last month's issue by our good friend Alasdair Garrett, was the very first time that our readers have been asked to contribute to any fund or organisation. I feel that we are fully justified in the choice, as, surely there can be no better cause, or one more worthy of your support, than the Royal Lifeboat Institution. It is supported entirely by voluntary contributions, and has only one aim—to render assistance to those in peril from the sea, without distinction of nationality, race, class or creed. So even if you cannot see your way clear to fill in a form of covenant as suggested (we all know that boat owners are naturally impecunious folk) I am sure that the Institution would welcome any amount, however small. But I wonder why the R.N.L.I. does not welcome associate members, on the same lines as the R.Y.A., where interested sympathisers are allowed to contribute a guinea, purely for the small membership card which pronounces that he or she is an associate member of the organisation. What do they get out of it? Nothing, simply the satisfaction of supporting a live, worthy body. Suggest it at one of your future meetings, Mr. Garrett, and I'll wager you raise a lot more, a lot more easily, than from your covenants.

* * *

Recently, I had the sad duty to inform members that The Yorkshire Group was no longer an active body, after receiving a letter from the secretary stating that enthusiasm had waned in that part of the country. But now I am delighted to report that I have had an almost irate letter stoutly denying this statement, and assuring me that there are many active and enthusiastic members in the area. At the time of going to press, it is not possible to publish any names, but it seems quite certain that the Group will be flourishing again, and we shall be able to announce the name of the new secretary shortly. What better news could one have at the start of a sailing season?

* * *

Does anyone know of a firm requiring extra labour during the holiday period? One of our younger members, who lives in the Birmingham area, writes, "I wonder if you might be able to help me as regards a job in the summer holidays? I have been trying to find someone who requires temporary labour during the summer holiday season, in connection with boats, the idea being that I would be able to sail my *Silhouette* during my spare time". Any offers or suggestions on this would be passed on to the writer.

* * *

Another member writes to say that he has two 1961 Stuart Turner 1½ h.p. engines, complete with vari-prop installations, fuel tanks, exhaust and silencers, all in perfect condition, which he would like to sell to some impecunious enthusiast for £90, the pair. These are in the Canterbury area, and again inquiries will be passed on. Eddie Coxell



would still be pleased to receive any back numbers of the *Journal* to complete his sets, which are loaned free to members. So please bear this in mind when carrying out the usual spring clean.

* * *

Many times the question has been raised, as to why is it that the Association has Honorary Flag Officers. It is a question easily answered, as this is the Association's way of saying Thank You to people who have worked so diligently in the past, as well as some who are still putting in every effort to help the organisation. Francis Chichester, a man we all must admire, is a very good friend of the S.O.I.A., a loyal supporter of most functions, and not ashamed to wear our burgee from the crosstrees of *Gypsy Moth*, even in a lone trans-Atlantic race. Bernard Collins, Stan Morgan and John Anderson, are three founder members of the Association in its present form. John, of course, is still not only President, but performs the most important task of producing this publication. Bernard, was Commodore for the years up to 1962, when he handed over control, still an active member but now too busy to help with executive duties. Stan was Commodore in 1963, and is still very active as secretary of the Crouch Group. Jack O'Brien and George Oliver, both stalwart workers, as treasurer and secretary respectively, until private commitments forced them to retire from office; these, then, are the men that make up our list of Honorary Flag Officers, and in this very inadequate way we convey our thanks.

* * *

The report of the A.G.M. of the Exe Group in last month's *Journal*, raises what has now become almost an hardy annual—should we alter our name to include small cruisers other than *Silhouettes*? We are always happy to hear of a member buying a new boat which is not a *Silhouette*, and stating that he or she is continuing membership as an Associate, and we do make it as plain as possible, that we

welcome other craft, in our midst. But is this enough? Should we include some extra words in our title, to denote that we also cater for the other owner? This is a subject that could be debated through these columns in time to make a decision at the 1967 A.G.M.

* * *

It was a fine weekend, the boat had been stripped out and well rubbed down inside, when our hero wanted to paint the cabin interior. He hied himself to the nearest (and the only boat chandlers open) to purchase some cream paint, but alas, the store was out of stock of that colour. Not to be outdone and waste such perfect painting weather, he purchased a small tin of yellow, and the same size in white, one being gloss, the other undercoat. Returning to the boat, he vigorously mixed the two together, to produce a perfect matt finishing cream. But something in the colourman's art went wrong—so if you see a Silhouette at Plymouth with a brilliant yellow interior, it will be a safe bet that the owner is still trying to convince his wife that he actually *chose* that shade of paint. (His arguments are losing conviction already; by then they will be thin).

* * *

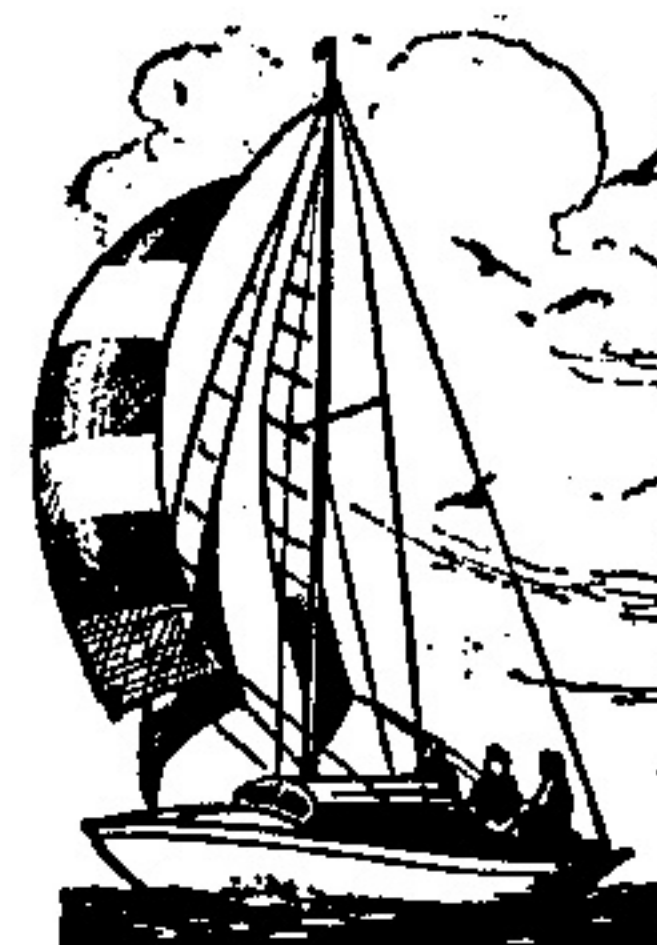
This is the time of the year when boats are moved from their winter quarters and launched for the coming season. when paint and varnish are applied with loving care. But don't forget to spare a few minutes for the faithful old trailer, a spot of grease and some air in the tyres, can pay dividends. After all, you will need it for your trip to Plymouth in August.—R.A.G.

Exe Group

SUMMER burst forth in a most delightful manner at the last meeting of the Exe Group at the Exe Sailing Club, when a Fashion Show was staged to a large gathering of members and friends. Showing many varied styles of yachting and sailing wear, a total of 41 changes were displayed by four very nautical models. The women's styles were modelled by Barbara Hardiman and Dora Sleeman, and the men's outfits by Brian Hardiman and Les Pithers. The Show was sponsored by Bill Sleeman, who introduced and described each outfit, which ranged from the more sophisticated clothes for going ashore, to the really down-to-earth gear for off-shore and rough weather use—here, particular emphasis was on *really* waterproof clothing.

The ever popular thick-knit sweaters in traditional Norwegian patterns, both for the skipper and the crew, were much in evidence in a varied assortment of styles and colours. Many of the women's garments drew envious eyes from the women present, and no doubt some husbands have already received hints for birthday presents, etc., before the launching date!

To bring the audience back to reality, the Show concluded with Brian and Les discarding their sailing wear for paint-stained trousers,



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paint brushes and scrapers—a symbol of what is before us all before the days of leisure are here.

A raffle organised by Pat Pithers for a ski hat and Skarsden scraper was well patronised.

Members are looking forward to the next meeting, when the Group are entertaining some of Her Majesty's Customs Officers who are going to give a talk on their experiences on the "other side of the law"—this should prove to be a very enlightening meeting.—L. B. Pithers, (Hon. Sec.) 16 Belvedere Road, Exmouth.

Cruise to Calais

ARRANGEMENTS for the Whitsun cruise to Calais are pretty well complete. Dover Harbour Board has given permission for the berthing of boats before the trip, and has generously offered assistance. A list of traffic signals for boats entering or leaving Dover Harbour has already been published in the *Journal*. Unfortunately it is rather long to give again, but duplicated copies may be obtained by sending a stamped, addressed envelope to the Harbour Board. Boats will be allowed to lie in Wellington Dock—the dock gates are opened one hour before high water. Trailers should be parked in the car park near Townwall Street—this is just at the back of the Royal Cinque Ports YC. Inquiries about this Calais cruise, which should be a splendid Whitsun adventure, to Harry Maloney, 42 St. Thomas's Road, Finsbury Park, London N.4.

Denmark Rally

THE sub-committee investigating the practicability of holding our International Rally in Denmark in 1967 has continued its inquiries about costs. The most feasible transport for boats so far discovered would appear to be by Swedish-Lloyd to Gothenburg, which offers fares of £20—£30 return per person (depending on cabin accommodation), with transport for one boat free for every four fare-paying passengers. From Gothenburg across the Kategat to Denmark is about 50 miles. It might be possible to arrange transport for boats by small cargo steamer from King's Lynn to Aalborg for about £67 per boat,

passengers making their own arrangements. This seems rather expensive. Roll-on-roll-off transport from Immingham to Gothenburg would be about £33 per boat and £16 per person—these rates subject to a reduction according to the numbers travelling. The committee is still awaiting rates for shipment by the Baltic Steamship Line from London to Copenhagen. This is an interim report only, and more details will be published later.

Letters to the Editor

VICARIOUS APOLOGY.—Through you, Sir, a vicarious apology to Ray Smith on behalf of my unknown colleague, who so unceremoniously dismissed a Silhouette from his church gate. It was a Saturday, and I can only assume that the "Here-comes-the-bride" signal had been received. All the same, I think a little missionary work is indicated—beginning with the offer of a short cruise? Canon J. M. W. Adam, The Vicarage, Preston, Lancs.

MARGATE.—The Margate Yacht Club will in future cater for small sailing cruisers such as Silhouettes, Leewards, Felicities, Caprices, etc. A series of handicap races and short weekend cruises in company will be organised for 1966. The officers appointed are Mr. A. Storm Bate, class captain, and Mr. Adrian Marks, class secretary, to whom all inquiries should be addressed. At the moment it is proposed to hold one short race, and one cruise a month. The cruises will be to ports of call with a scope of a two-day cruise, including Calais on August Bank Holiday.—Margate Y.C., 14 Fort Hill, Margate.

MEASURING SPEED.—I want to fit a knotmeter, speedo, call it what you will. My reason for this is that to get the best trim on the sails, you need a yardstick to measure your performance. Having looked at a number of proprietary items ranging from £50 upwards, and having some small electrical knowledge, I figure I can do better than this; in fact a speedo shouldn't cost more than £6—£7. There are several possibilities.

(1) The simplest way is to make up a "log" type propeller and attach this to a small Japanese DC motor. As the motor revolves so, if you connect two leads to a sensitive voltmeter, you get a reading fairly proportional to your speed range of say 1—5 knots. (2) So make up or buy for about 10s. a small propeller with a magnet in it; wind up a small coil of fine wire; build a small 3-4 transistor amplifier; and feed the result into a mileometer. (3) Obtain a strain gauge, similar to those in use in aircraft component checking, mount this onto a stainless steel blade, and measure through a small amplifier the deflection of the blade as speed changes. (4) Use a top grade wire wound potentiometer, a spring arm, and a couple of step up gears, and clamp this to the transom. Couple through a sensitive meter, and read the speed off the dial.

Lots of Silhouette owners must have thought about this sort of thing. How many have solved this problem? Any help would be appreciated and I hope of interest, if we can make something up probably quite a few owners would like to make up something simple.—J. G. Watts, 148 Locks Heath, Southampton.

PATENT LOGS.—Not essential on short trips; one can soon learn to estimate one's speed, even in the dark, and thus obtain one's approximate distance from the clock, checking one's guess by an occasional fix if possible. After all, in good visibility, time is more important than distance—one wishes to arrive at point A by slack tide, dusk, opening-time or whatever. Exact distance can be found from the chart later for the benefit of the log. Out of

sight of land, however, it is best to borrow a log (or, in extremity, buy one). I made mine from a "Surplus" gearbox, very compact, and a cycle mileometer, as some I've seen look big enough to stop a Silhouette.

I also endorse Mr. W. R. Parker's remarks about spring shackles on the halyards: these save lots of time when changing sails, and there's no shackle pin to get lost at the crucial moment. However, I tie the jib sheets on with a lashing, as I find shackles catch horribly on the rigging going about: several turns followed by a reef knot hold tight and undo easily, using nylon parachute cord with tails of about a foot long.—David L. Smith, 21 Park Avenue, Hull.

R.D.F.—We were glad of our Pilot Pal coming from Shetland to Orkney, though we only used it to confirm dead reckoning. We assumed a handy bulkhead to be at right angles to the centre line, held the set by hand as near horizontal as possible, and got readings within 5 degrees, 8 minutes, which is all a compass will give you in a small boat, anyway. The apparatus is now known as the "Orkney Finder".

Lament on a Captain

Why does the male
Under motor or sail
Get so terribly angry at sea?
If I fumble or grope
Or pull the wrong rope
He is positively horrid to me!

"Will you kindly obey"
My darling will say
"More closely the rules of the sea?"
"Get below to your bunk!"
That boat you've just sunk
Was close-hauled, and you running free!"

"No, I don't want to know
Why the echoes can show,
I know where I am", he will sigh.
"You fool, we're aground
Why didn't you sound?
You bloody old woman!" he'll cry.

"What! You don't want to crew?
And cook meals too?
You're frightened to jibe when you run?
You can't mean when I shout
'Quick about, you old trout!'
That you don't think that sailing is fun?"

You can't mean to state
When you threw that large plate,
That you don't enjoy sailing with me!
That our life when afloat
In our beautiful boat
Is not all you expect it to be!
—Rhona Pinkney.

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.

Cygnet in the Channel By M. Macdonald Spenser

AROUND lunchtime on Sunday, August 15 last year it dawned on my wife and me that by a little domestic wangling we could escape to sea in *Cygnet* for the next three days. Where to go in that time from our base at Fowey—East or West? Soon answered—to the East lay Plymouth, our favourite haven, and besides, the Silhouette Rally was on there at the time, although we had told both Mr. President and Mr. Hon. Sec. that we should not be attending this year. We had last seen these amiable gentlemen a few weeks before, when just as we were about to shoot *Cygnet* under Abingdon Bridge on the upper Thames they had hailed us alongside for a gab. You will gather that *Cygnet* of Fowey is a much travelled bird!

A quick look at the Coaster's Bible showed that to catch the East-going stream (and I am an ardent stream-catcher in 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. A. V. Hudson, 70 Greenway, Southgate, London, N.14.</i>
Solent.	<i>Hon. Sec. J. R. Caulder, Sellafield, Orchard Lane, Hermitage, Emsworth</i>
South-West.	<i>E. K. R. Sweet, 12 Battery Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth.</i>
Poole.	<i>Hon. Sec. E. R. W. May, 2 The Circle, Moor-down, Bournemouth, Hants.</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>
Tees Bay.	<i>Hon. Sec. R. T. Swarbrick, 21 Raby Road, Stockton-on-Tees.</i>

we should have to be off our moorings at Golant, a couple of miles above Fowey, by 06.00 on the Monday morning. Plainly, a night aboard was indicated, for I am allergic to pulling about the anchorage in the dewy dawn. That is why on Sunday evening, closing-time at the Fisherman's Arms in Golant was closely followed by a paddling party down the village hard, during which the Sabbath calm was rent by some pretty hard language. I still think it was the weed which caused me to launch myself instead of the dinghy, but the disrespectful, who were present in some force, thought otherwise and said so, loud and clear.

In the Fisherman there had been a good deal of ribaldry about our declared ETD next morning—the doubters being egged on by the landlord himself. That is the trouble of frequenting a pub kept by one's old First Lieutenant, an Executive Officer of the highest quality, but a master of polite insubordination in his day. (But I would be the first to admit he runs the most pleasant pub I known in the Duchy, and we have been the closest of friends for more years than I care to recall). However, at 05.45 next morning my wife and I were waving steaming mugs of coffee at other "Fishermen" as they pulled blearily past to start their day's fishing, boat-hiring or other less reputable aquatic employments. By 06.10 the old Seagull was pushing us down the river against the last of the flood, and we passed out to sea between sleeping Polruan and a Fowey just beginning to stir.

Off Punch Cross we made sail to a light breeze, North by West.

setting our genoa wing-and-wing with the mainsail, to make an offing sufficient to catch the true wind a mile or two offshore. Sure enough, it piped up as expected when we were a mile and a half off, and with a satisfying, but controlled bang we gybed the main and sailed on to a broad reach. Control was necessary indeed, because the wind was by now a steady Force 4 and it was all we could do to carry the genoa (but of that more anon).

Perhaps this is the time to explain that *Cygnets* of Fowey might be classed as a Silhouette III. Originally, she had a mast stayed like a Chinese fiddle, enough piano-wire for a Bechstein grand and parrot-perches to take all the gulls in Fowey. Now she wears a rig allowing a selection of jibs to be set from the masthead to a short bowsprit, using Wykeham-Martin furling gear to which the jibs, or the genoa, are quickly secured by clip-shackles. The luffs are kept taut by a High-field lever which bows down the bowsprit, after the sail has been sent aloft—the lever, on the foredeck by the hatch, heaves in on a bobstay which runs from the stem-band at the waterline, through a sheave at the end of the bowsprit, and so to the lever. This is to ensure that the luffs of the headsails are really set up and efficient to windward. One does not see many cutter-rigged boats these days, but many of those that are around set jibs which sag like a businessman's bow-window and can be of little real use to windward. Our forestay-sail sets from its old position on the mast, but the stay now runs to the stem-head. I shortened the sail on the foot, to allow rigging a club-boom from a gooseneck on top of the samson post, so the sail sets entirely before the mast. Its sheet is double-ended, acts as a horse and, as it leads aft from a block on each side, can be used for self-steering (sometimes!). By this arrangement the foresail does not need to be tended on going about, and in narrow waters the boat is as handy as a gimlet. Both staysail and mainsail are loose-footed and reef in the old fashioned way, with reef-points, one row in the staysail and two in the main. In both, reef-cringles at tack and clew shift into clip shackles, the booms have light nylon topping-lifts, and to reef either is the work of a moment, especially if I do not bother to tie the reef-points, as is often the case, being a lazy sailor in my old age. The mainsheet runs on a horse too, consisting of brass sail-track bolted to an ash beam secured to stanchions on either quarter. The stanchions support guard-rails, running forward to other stanchions, port and starboard. The guard-rails will shortly sport ply dodgers, with the boat's name writ large on them. I was once nearly run down by a coaster off the Dodman—he merely meant to come close to see who I was, at a time when, sailing single-handed, I was down below on very urgent business and could not answer his hail. I rig guard-rails because I sail a good deal single-handed, and have nearly been out of the cockpit several times in bad weather; I also need them to clip the safety harness on to. Backstays are double, and spread to each corner of the transom to take the weight of the jibs or genoa; lower shrouds lead a little forward of the mast, and upper shrouds lead well aft. Perhaps all this sounds

complicated, but it is the fruit of experience, some of it bitter, in ships large and small. *Cygnets*'s rig, and much else about her I have not mentioned, is intended to make single-handed sailing easier, safer and more fun, and I have always at the back of my mind the possibility of being caught out in weather when, to quote the original Beaufort scale, "... fishing vessels, pray God, are safe in harbour". Not that I make a practice of going out in such weather, but for all my grey hairs I have been caught out in it, in spite of the best efforts of the Met. Office and the B.B.C.

But I digress. Once off the land, using the hand-bearing compass and lining in the position accurately, on the chart. (Incidentally, I waterproof my charts with a solution used for sloshing on wallpaper in kitchens or bathrooms, and it takes pencil well, or allows it to be rubbed off equally well). To get a fix was not easy because, as I mentioned, we could only just carry the genoa by dint (and dint is the word!) of sitting out on the side decks to keep the boat upright, or as near as we could contrive. I wanted a careful fix for two reasons. First, I intended to see just how fast a Silhouette could go in what I took to be ideal conditions. Secondly, I was determined to avoid a red face on this passage to Plymouth. The last time I left Fowey bound for Plymouth I merely guessed my distance off when the time came to turn to the East, with almost dire results. Visibility was pretty good at the time, although I could not see Rame Head from Fowey entrance. But then Fowey has been my home port for some years, and I had made the passage frequently—hence the guess at my position and the optimistic position I put on the chart. I gaily set course on the bearing for clearing Rame Head, assuming I was two miles off shore; within the hour visibility came down to heaving-line range, and three hours later I nearly rammed the wreck in Whitesand Bay!

For the next hour *Cygnets* fairly snored along (do swans snore?), and I use the word because when she is going at something approaching her maximum speed there occasionally comes up from below that kind of noise, which I can only suppose is due to some vibration-period in one or both of her bilge-keels. I have, of course, checked the keel-bolts, but it still happens and I do not worry about it any longer. In mid-flight, or mid-snore, if you wish, I was performing one of those complicated Yoga exercises forced on the middle-aged who go below in a Silhouette to answer the call of nature, when an odd thing happened. I took the opportunity to put on a pair of shorts, and this demanded a refinement of Yoga undreamed of by the most devout fakir. I was about to bring the evolution to a triumphant conclusion when *Cygnets* flung me all of a heap on the weather berth, banging my delicate shell-like a painful clout on the boat's side. As I lay there, tingling ear pressed against the cool paintwork, and muttering lower-deck incantations, I distinctly heard a funeral bell, not once but repeatedly. A vague memory stirred of a similar, but intentional occasion years ago, when, lost in a fog, and listening for a submarine signal. I peered out of the hatch and there a mile or more off to port

was the bell-buoy on the Udder Rock, completely inaudible at that range in air, but clearly so through the water.

A second fix, using the transit beacons above Talland, showed that, estimating for one knot of favourable stream, I had been sailing for the past hour at a trifle under five and a quarter knots, which I believe is near the maximum for a Silhouette, whatever means of propulsion is used (see previous claims registered by speedometers or calculated from Old Moore's formula). I carry, but was not then towing, Mr. Walker's admirable log, a device for which I have the greatest respect and affection in big ships, but regard as a liar comparable only to the Yacht Club Bore in small ones. By all means use it as a guide, but not as a mentor in small ships at low speeds—say five knots or thereabouts.

But now my dented (or should it be dented?) butt-end plainly indicated that the genoa must come in, if pleasure was the object of the exercise. It was furled in seconds, thanks to the late Major Wykeham-Martin's brainy gadget, and we broke out the staysail, which had been hoisted in stops on leaving harbour. For another twenty minutes we charged on at a slightly less, but still exhilarating pace, when for the umpteenth time the Wizard of Looe had us nicely. I may have more to say about this chap later, if I can find printable words to do so, but at this point the wind headed us, and within ten minutes had gone round to East, then vanished up the galley funnel, Re-setting the genoa, steering various courses, some towards Looe, some towards Cherbourg, and even sticking a knife in the mast did little good. We were left tumbling about in a field of lobster-pots off the Rennies Rocks. Incidentally, using the word "various" in a maritime context reminds me of the time when my juvenile had wrote in the log, "Hands variously employed", which being translated meant I had not the vaguest idea what the hell they had been up to.

Reluctantly, for I am not circus strong-man, I hove the Seagull out of its locker, remembering to clip on its safety lanyard before putting it over the transom. As usual, it fired first time, and, again as usual, conversation lapsed. Having a largish and lively family, my wife and I find that one of the blessing of passage-making in *Cygnét* is that we can chatter to one another without interruption, or stay blissfully quiet if the mood takes us—frankly, we mostly chatter. This contrasts somewhat with sailing in round-the-buoy races with one's wife as crew, when very frequently conversation, as distinct from orders and reports, descends into the realms of recrimination and abuse. Although both of us can raise quite a number of decibels when the need arises, we just can not compete with Mr. Seagull at full chat, so the mate descended in to the bowels of *Cygnét* to prepare the stand-easy brew. No sooner had we drunk it down than the Wizard's spell was broken—it does not usually extend beyond the Knight Errant Patch in most weather. The wind came back, North by West, light and steady, so tipping the Seagull up on the transom we sailed gently up to Rame Head, past Penlee Point and altered course into Plymouth Sound. As

often happens with an offshore wind in the Sound, a stiffish breeze was blowing out of Cawsand Bay, and we surged past the Breakwater Light in fine style at 11.00 exactly. By the time we had reached the Melampus Buoy, however, the wind had vanished—out of respect, no doubt, for the Queen's Harbour Master, whose barge was circling the area sedately. No doubt also, the crew felt they ought not to waste the taxpayer's money, so they were doing a little fishing for the mess, or so we supposed, for we saw a fat mackerel hove into the boat!

Of course, the O.H.M. might have been playing policeman to see that no heavy-footed power-driven tub disturbed the large gaggle of Silhouettes we noticed dreamily drifting and dozing in the sunshine. Spread out from Drake's Island to the Cattewater, their racing flags indicated that they *were* racing, but plainly this was a new kind of race, involving sailing backwards. This is a most difficult feat in a fore-and-aft-rigged vessel, but only too easily done in a square-rigger—just hesitate for five seconds too long in giving the order, "Mainsail haul!", and you will see what I mean. Some of the Silhouettes we saw being most successful in this race, and some must have been making all of two knots astern—some one suggested later that the winner of that particular race should have been awarded a special trophy consisting of a silver-plated heads handle, suitable mounted on a polished plinth of marine ply (BSS 1088, of course).

Stepping quietly, we passed our sister-ships. Not surprisingly, we easily found a clear berth in Sutton Harbour, but no Berthing Master to tell us where "living aboard" ships were to lie. Suspecting that he might be discharging his duties from the Royal Corinthian Club, we hastened there to find him. Imagine hastening up the wall of Sutton Harbour and you will appreciate how keen we were to Do the Right Thing and Obey the Officer's instructions. The fact that the bar of the Corinthian opened just as we entered was coincidental, of course, for the sun was just over the yardarm by then.

Plymouth is one of the most welcoming ports I know, so allow me to draw a fairly opaque veil over our progress from the bar of the Corinthian to our awakening the next morning on board *Cygnét*. The contrast with our corresponding awakening last year could not have been more complete. This year, sunshine streaming in through the cabin windows awoke me about 07.00—last year it was the crack of our neighbour arriving violently alongside in the middle watch, dragging down, unattended, on us in the never-to-be-forgotten gale. On that occasion *Cygnét* was at the lee end of the line, and knowing the holding ground in Sutton Harbour for what it was, we had laid out our 25 lb. C.Q.R. anchor, with its two fathoms of heavy-link chain, on ten fathoms of 1½ins. nylon line, backed by the kedge and an equal length of warp on that. Nylon slip-warps from each quarter held us a couple of fathoms off the wall, and the whole bag of tricks seemed at one time to be holding at least half a dozen boats from dragging down on an old Appledore ketch berthed in the northeast corner of the basin. In retailing this I am not intending to boast of my forethought or

seamanship, for many others at the Rally did much the same, but it is a tribute to the C.Q.R. anchor and the strength and elasticity of nylon line. Sailormen are conservative folk (not politically, of course), and in their world are often suspicious of something not devised by their kind. But in my opinion the chemist who invented nylon, and the chap who thought of the plough anchor, deserve to be canonised by sailormen, especially those in small ships. Someone told me that the C.Q.R. anchor was the brain-child of a University professor—since I swallowed the anchor (not C.Q.R. but Admiralty pattern, which is useless in small vessels) I have been working in a University as an administrative dogsbody, and the thought that my teaching colleagues may be bright enough to invent so useful a gadget makes me view them with increased respect. Who knows, one of them may take it into his head to try his hand at designing small sailing boats, then Robert Tucker may have a little competition. About the nylon warp—I will hazard another opinion. Rigged with a couple of fathoms of chain between the anchor and the warp, I doubt if there is any call for a Silhouette, or a much bigger boat, to use a chain cable, provided the warp is long enough. This would save a good deal of weight and cost, but it is only fair to add that anchoring on a long warp means a good deal of swinging-room, and that may not always be possible. Of course, one may sometimes be able to cut down the swinging-room by backing up the anchor with the kedge, but I must recall that others may be as lazy as I am. One more point about using a nylon warp—anchored for a long time, or in bad weather, it is vitally important to guard against chafe where the warp comes in over the bow roller. I use a length of polythene hose to do this, threaded over the warp at that point and kept in position with short lanyards.

Not having signed on for the Rally, we felt it would be an intrusion to join the Cawsand party which had been organised for the Tuesday. We were sorely tempted, for Cawsand is a lovely place, and the programme arranged looked like being fun. Instead, we decided to laze round to the Yealm and moor there for the night, perhaps, or return to Plymouth if we found the river too crowded at this time of the year. Accordingly, we motored out of the Cattewater and off Mount Batten we spread our wings to a smart breeze, still North by West as on the previous day. Wing-spreading is the correct analogy, for once again the invaluable genoa unrolled from its gear and bellied out to port, the mainsail stood broad off to starboard and we fairly shot across Jenny-cliff Bay. This set of sail I much prefer to the pantomime of playing with a spinnaker, that prima-donna of sails. As I keep reminding you, I am the laziest of sailors and dislike any sail that needs as much tending as a spinnaker—the darn thing is a giddy marvel as long as you can keep it shaped like Mae West, but you are in dead trouble when it collapses into a 1920 flapper profile.

As we passed out of the Eastern entrance to the Sound, a submarine was swinging compasses inside the breakwater, using the Eddy-stone Light to find deviation by the distant-object method we guessed.

Cygnets has two compasses, one in a strong box binnacle in the cockpit by the companion-way, the other in the cabin secured to the forward end of the coachroof. The cockpit compass is a modified aircraft grid-steering one: the other is a cheap car-type, used for keeping an eye on the course being steered by the crew as I take my ease on my bunk. Neither has any special deviation, but they needed careful siting and for all that they are swung from time to time during the season.

But once again I deviate myself! Off Shagstone Beacon it was the genoa that had to be gybed this morning, not the mainsail. This is sometimes a messy business, involving some poor chump going on the foredeck to light the genoa sheet round the forestay and getting wet as often as not into the bargain. I have also seen the foredeck hand leave the ship without permission on these occasions—shot gracefully like an arrow from the bow as the genoa unexpectedly filled like a cannon shot on the other gybe. But not so in *Cygnets*: nobody leaves the security of the cockpit, and all we do is pull the line which furls the sail, put the helm over, and unfurl the thing on the opposite side. The which having done, we fairly whistled round the Mewstone and into Wembury Bay.

The reach across to the Yealm entrance was sheer delight, the sun beat down, the water sparkled and the wind was steady at about Force 4. In no time at all, it seemed, we were in the entrance and bowling down the transit made by the first pair of leading marks. In that weather and at that state of tide the leading marks, of which there are two pairs, are not necessary to get a Silhouette in, but if you do not go into a haven very often it is a good idea to do it “by the book” from time to time, just to keep the eye in. This is particularly valuable when marks are not always easy to identify in some conditions of light, or are small and inconspicuous. However, that morning the exercise was of academic importance, but another hazard presented itself. Right across the bar was a wall of dinghy sails of all colours and classes—a sailing school at play. This particular hazard is comparatively new, and it can in broad daylight be more testing than running into a drifter fleet at night. The driftermen do know the rules, usually show the correct lights, and it is up to you to give them sea-room; but the makee-learner dinghy sailor frequently does not know the rules, may not know how to do the needful if he does, or if he has right of way does not appreciate that you may not have sea-room to get clear of him. I recall once being roundly cursed by a couple of youngsters in a small boat as I brought a ship into Dartmouth many years ago flying flag D, because they were tacking out and conceived they had right of way. Flag D? Do look it up, if you do not know it, and then learn the “single letter signals”. But I must not seem to do injustice to the instructors of the Yealm sailing school; their pupils behaved impeccably, and it was a pleasure to watch them as they learned to manage their boats in quite a stiff breeze of wind for dinghies.

Off Misery Point we lost our commanding wind, rigged the Seagull and within half a cable ran into yet another new type of maritime

hazard—the ubiquitous polythene bag, which lovingly entwined itself round the screw. For this, and other hazards in confined waters, I keep handy in a cockpit locker our little Danforth kedge-anchor. The warp is made up to run clear in an emergency and to bung the hook over the side is the work of an instant. The warp is not secured to the ring but is skewed to the anchor in case the latter comes fast in a mooring, a power cable or something equally gripping. Skewed? Rum words these sailor fellers use, don't they? But the language of the sea is precise and worth learning—besides, it saves a heap of explaining and in many cases, time in an emergency. On this occasion, however, we did not need to anchor; we hung off an obliging moored yacht, while I cleared the screw. The owner was interested in our Silhouette, and said many nice things about her; he was also quite impressed with my suggestions as to what the original owner of the polythene bag should have done with it instead of setting it afloat.

(To be continued)

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WE extend a warm welcome to the following new members: W. T. Field, 3 Corbett House, Hollywood Road, Kensington, S.W. 10; G. A. W. Neville, The Elms, Rushmere, Kessingland, Nr. Lowestoft. 832 *Sula Bassana*, Broads; A. B. Melville, Braesyde, St. Mary's Road, Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. 475 *Quintet*, Crouch; R. O. D. Johnson, Brook Farm Cottage, Gt. Staughton, Hunts. 1457 *Raggle Taggle*; B. Jones, The Ferns, Westonsoyland, Bridgwater, Somerset. 1653 *Gypsy*, Burnham; A. R. Caseley, 21 Fifth Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex. *Chiquita*, Leigh; L. G. Taylor, 20 Greemead Avenue, Everton, Nr. Lymington, Hants. 230 *Impala*, Keyhaven; R. A. Lanyon, 5 Highfields, Newlyn, Cornwall. 1029 *Cwylan*, Newlyn; P. Carver, 23 Hamlyn Cottages, Shillingford Abbott, Nr. Exeter; W. H. Rider, 26 Cannon Close, Coventry. 1748 *Pass Me By*, Padstow; L. D. Needleman, 145 Earlham Grove, London N.7. 1713 *Irene*, Crouch; K. J. Richards, 79 Oxford Road, Moseley, Birmingham 13. 1536 *Sea Urchin*, Severn; R. S. Snell, Spring Lawn, Ravensdale Road, South Ascot, Berks.; J. Tappenden, Ghyllmead West, Ghyll Road, Crowborough, Sussex; T. B. A. Rice, 96 North Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset; 183 *Sequel*, Poole; J. F. Thornton, 40 Central Avenue, Eccleston Park, Prescott, Lancs; Mrs. Joyce Lewis, 32 Nightingale Lane, Wanstead, London E.11. 1822 *Skua*, Blackwater; W. T. Cooke, 15 Fox Wood Lane, Acomb, York; A. S. Fenemore, Coral Lodge, Bosham Hoe, Chichester, 1459 *Eft*, Chichester; B. Wade, 40 School Lane, Illingworth, Halifax. 1767 *Julie*, Lakes; A. Rehling, 30 Straadjaegervoj, Dragoer, Denmark. 1892 *Nicheline*, Dragoer; B. W. Heweston, 56 Dewsland Park Road, Newport, Mon. 1837, Milford Haven; G. Edwards, 11 Segontium Terrace, Caernarvon, Wales, 762 *Cordelia*, Caernarvon; R. S. Proffit, Well House, Elton, Nr. Chester. 1983 *Mellisa*, Rhyl; M. J. Aspelng, 38 Havensbourne Avenue, Shoreham-by-Sea. 1407 *Toosie*, Itchenor.

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