The Silhouette Owner

The journal of the
Silhouette Owners' International Association

NUMBER 70 DECEMBER, 1966 PRICE 1/-

and the
Auxiliary...



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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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Yachtsman's Gale

ONE of our members, Mr. F. G. Powell, has sent us some critical and most sensible observations on our recent article on Mr. Townsend's experiences in a Force 9 gale. "An inexperienced yachtsman," Mr. Powell writes, "perusing the October issue of our *Journal*, could easily get the impression that all would be well to set off on a Channel crossing with wife and family accompanied by a Met. forecast of a mere Force 5-6. This is far from the truth. With the type of shallow-draft vessel most of us sail, usually with wife and children as crew, I consider Force 5 a Yachtsman's Gale. If there is a Force 5 in the forecast, we do not go out." Mr. Powell is right. For a small boat Force 5 is a strong wind, and since in all coastal sailing one must reckon on having to meet wind against tide, or other conditions making the sea unpleasant, a forecast of Force 5 or more is a strong indication for staying in port. This is particularly important with a young or not very experienced crew. The essence of good seamanship is to know when *not* to sail as well as when to sail, and it is no disgrace to take a look at the weather and to decide that this is not a day for putting out to sea. But there is all the difference in the world between the foolhardiness of setting out in a strong wind with a forecast of deteriorating weather, and being caught out by foul weather on a passage which has started when conditions were reasonably good, with no indication that they are liable suddenly to worsen. No one but a fool will deliberately hazard crew or vessel by standing into danger.

But a sudden change in weather is the luck of life, and one ought always to be prepared for it if it comes. The experiences of Silhouette sailors who have been caught in rough weather at sea are a heartening tribute to the seaworthiness of our boats, and to the common sense and good seamanship of men like Mr. Townsend, who know what to do, do not panic, and help their boats to bring them through a rough patch safely. We are proud to print the firsthand record of such experiences—it is by studying such records, and learning from them, that standards of seamanship are raised. The moral is clear. *Never* knowingly stand into danger; if you have any doubts about the weather, your own fitness, the fitness of your crew, or the condition of any of your gear, be responsible and wise, and *stay in port*. But if you are caught out in rough stuff, keep your head. You can have confidence in your boat, and if you look after her sensibly, she will look after you.

From the South West

THE South-West Group held its AGM at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club on November 1. About fifty members attended, and the following officers were elected for another year of office: President, George Hurley; Chairman, R. Thorne; Commodore, W. Spurrell; Secretary, E. K. R. Sweet; Treasurer, S. Kennedy; Sailing Secretary, T. Bickford.

A new office of Social Secretary was established, and J. Sprint elected to it.

The group meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the RPCYC, and we ask everyone to make a special effort to attend on December 6 when the committee will be elected.

* * *

Will Cornish members interested in starting a Falmouth Fleet please get in touch with Mrs. Thrower, 6 St. James's Terrace, Penryn, Cornwall? Mrs. Thrower has been working very hard to form a Falmouth Fleet, and I'm sure that she will be given support.

Our Fitting Out Dinner-Dance will be held in the Plymouth area, on a Friday if possible. Please let the Social Secretary (2 Grantly Gardens, Mannamead, Plymouth) know ticket requirements as soon as possible.—Ernest Sweet.

AGM and Party

FOR those coming to London for the Boat Show and AGM on January 7, it may be well worth looking into the new combined train fare and hotel accommodation offered by British Railways. This can mean a substantial saving on the normal cost of travel and a night in London. Details from the booking office at any station.

Secretary's Notes

A VERY full meeting of the National Committee was held last month, and such is the enthusiasm of these elected representatives, that nearly every part of the country was able to voice an opinion, from the North West Group, Lancashire, Yorkshire, East Anglia, Kent, Sussex, and Devon, every dialect, and every type of idea, collected together, which of course is how it should be in an active Association, but so seldom is, that we should consider ourselves lucky to have our interest so well looked after.

* * *

One of the items that caused lively discussion was the view put forward by a member that the Association should now alter its name to make it plain to everyone that we welcome owners of any other craft. But after long argument it was obvious that the name Silhouette, was cherished by all, and that while we would continue to shout from the housetops, that all are welcome to our ranks, we remained the champions of the Silhouette. (There must be a parallel somewhere; most children are thrilled with the story of David and Goliath, and it is true that the Silhouette can more than hold its own with lots of "big uns").

* * *

One interesting statement was that there are over two thousand S11, in the world, and we have a membership of one thousand; why are the other owners not taking advantage of our amenities. For one thing, they are all paying well over the rate for their insurances, so perhaps a little missionary work would be worth while. For instance, I now learn that there are nine of our boats sailing on the Dee, and not one of them members! It does seem a pity.

* * *

The Annual General Meeting and Cocktail Party will be held again at The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London S.W.1 on Saturday, January 7, starting at 5.30 p.m. This is the time, when it is up to everyone to elect the officers of the Association for another year, and while none of those existing people are wanting to retire, nominations are welcome, and no-one will be upset to see new faces elected. Previously, we have tried the experiment of asking for nominations before the meeting, this has not worked too well, so this year nominations will be accepted at the A.G.M. provided (1) the nominee is willing, (2) the proposal is seconded.

* * *

1967 is the tenth anniversary of the founding of our organisation, so it is going to be a birthday year, starting with the party. So make sure this event is recorded in your diary. All members and one adult guest, including children of school age, are admitted free. Other visitors will be asked to contribute 10s. towards expenses.

Everybody familiar with the West Country, will know of the Boatel at Kingsand, near Plymouth. Kingsand is a stone's throw from Cawsand, which by now is almost Silhouette property by squatter's rights. This establishment is now owned and run by one of our members, Major Caley, who writes to say that he will be pleased to welcome visitors anytime. I have already warned the Major that he will be swamped out during Plymouth Week.

* * *

A membership application has been received from D. Langton, owner of S11 "*Fantasie*" No. 1310, but we have an incomplete address. Please drop me a card Mr. Langton, with your full address, I would like to see you on the mailing list for this *Journal*.

* * *

A letter from "Down Under" (New Zealand to be exact), reports that Mr. Pallin has "Bolted a twenty pound lead 'slug' to the inside of each bilge keel, which has stiffened her up considerably, and I feel a lot happier, when one of those knock down type of squalls roar down the Wellington hillside and across the harbour. I have a 21ft. 6ins. alloy mast with twin backstays, a slightly larger main than normal, and there is plenty of spinnaker work in these waters." How nice it is to think of the sun shining over there when we are huddled round the fire dreaming of the spring.

* * *

Messrs. Hurley Marine Ltd. in the person of George Hurley, have written to say that the stand they are having at the coming boat show, is much larger than before, and therefore we can have a little more room for our own display. Stan Morgan, and Eileen, have agreed to handle this project, and have ambitions, of arranging a rota, so that there is a representative of the Association present during the whole of the Show. I am sure he would welcome offers to help, both with manning the stand, and presenting the display. Write direct to Rayleigh, if you have any ideas. It is the same address from which we get ties, burgees, etc. They make welcome Christmas presents, quite reasonable too—ties 17/6, burgees 12/6, brooches 7/6.

* * *

Did you notice Ron Hunt's remarks in his article last month, about harbour dues? It seems that the South Coast is suffering from a period of inflation, already complaints have come in about a new Marina in that area, where mooring fees are comparable with the rent of a council house. Alas, it seems that one has to pay when there is a shortage of anything. Perhaps our sport is getting too popular?

* * *

Nothing now remains, but according to time honoured custom, to hoist the Holly and the Mistletoe, and wish everyone a very happy Christmas.

R.A.G.

A Navigation Exercise

By Sqn. Ldr. D. J. Nicholson, R.A.F.

AT 0630 hours I reluctantly abandoned my sleeping bag and crawled out into the cockpit. It was a fresh, cold August morning, with the mists still hanging in small patches over the water. George, the engineer, slumbered below. As I was congratulating myself on my own virility in braving the elements at such an hour, some fair nymph from the motor cruiser anchored close astern of *Yam Seng* swam alongside with a cheery invitation to join her. I recoiled with horror and in a most ungallant manner retreated to the warmth of the cabin.

The sound of the kettle clattering on the stove awoke George. It always does. After a convivial pot of tea we both felt more like facing the day. And it was a special day because we had decided to dice with the big ships, out in the Channel, and see what effect our home-made radar reflector had on their scanners. As navigator, I calculated that from the Mew Stone at the mouth of the River Yealm to Les Hanois Light on the western tip of Guernsey was a distance of 75 nautical miles as the crow flies, if it flies on a heading of 143 degrees magnetic. If we made good progress we would go into St. Peter's Port, if not we would return to base.

The anchor chain came in over the stemhead roller with that cheerful clanking sound. The Seagull roared into life, and we headed out to sea. At 0800 we departed the Mew Stone under main, genoa and iron topsail. The barometer stood at 1028 millibars, indicating that we were in the centre of a large anticyclone. The wind was light and variable with 3/8 cirrostratus and hazy visibility. I hauled the inflated Campari dinghy aboard, and stowed it on the foredeck (not strictly Bristol fashion) but we could do without the drag. The fishing line was streamed, and soon a dozen succulent mackerel were being cleaned for lunch. At 1030 the wind came up from the south-west, Force 2. The engine was cut and *Yam Seng* quietly advanced on the Channel Islands at an estimated 2 knots.

Bearings with the compass gave us a succession of running fixes over the next few hours, confirming a track made good of 138 degrees magnetic and an average speed of 2½ knots. The weather was delightfully hot and sunny, but the wind fell off toward dusk and at 2000 the Seagull was pressed into service again.

At 2100 Start Point's flashing light gave a bearing of 352 degrees. The radar reflector was hoisted on a halyard with a preventor to the backstay to stop it oscillating. The sun set in a pool of liquid gold, and *Yam Seng* ploughed on into the night. Watches were organised on a four hours on—four off basis. About midnight fog began forming, and visibility dropped to 200 yards. The Seagull droned on with periodic replenishments of fuel—a very tricky operation carried out by the engineer, with one arm around the backstay and the other holding the funnel and the petrol can.

Towards dawn George called me on deck to investigate what

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lay some 12 miles to the east. With our gallant Seagull going at full chat we were barely breasting the tide. Obviously, if we wanted to spend the night in port we should have to anchor, and wait for the tide to turn. This would probably add another 24 hours to the exercise. looked like a coastline ahead; but it was only another bank of thick fog. Sailing across the main shipping lanes in fog, as we were, could be dangerous, but we had confidence in our radar reflector, and we had no collision scares with other vessels. The sun was slowly reducing the fog to mist and haze. Another fine day was indicated.

Apart from the collision hazard, the poor visibility was frustrating to me as the navigator. We had been in fog all through the night, and consequently had not been able to get a bearing on any of the Channel Island lighthouses. My position by Dead Reckoning gave Les Hanois 13 miles ahead. George was sceptical and secretly I wasn't brimful of confidence. However, a good navigator is never lost. (He may be uncertain of his position). We pressed on.

A good breakfast of bacon, eggs and sausages, cooked over the gas stove under the bridgedeck, improved our spirits and we felt, even if we were still in mid-Channel, it was all rather pleasant. A bank of mist ahead was assuming a more solid form, and at 0830 there was no doubt. It was land. After a while we could pick out some detail. There was a lighthouse and a number of large rocks, while to star-board there was just sea. Obviously we had reached the west point of an island. Could it be Guernsey? It was. George stoutly denied that he had ever had any doubts about the navigation.

We began to circle Les Hanois with George taking pictures. There was a strong ebb tide, swirling out to the westward and St. Peter's Port

and we had only three more days leave. Reluctantly we put the helm down and bore away on a course of 323 magnetic. The calm sea perfectly mirrored the hazy blue of the sky, and it was almost unbearably hot, without a breath of wind.

At 1645 a light air from the S.W. allowed us to rest the faithful Seagull. *Yam Seng* contentedly rolled along her way, pointing her shapely red prow to the Northwest. The barometer was steady on 1026, and a spectacular golden red sunset promised a fine night. Inevitably, the wind fell off, and at 2230 the iron topsail was hoisted again. The sea had become rather crinkly, and *Yam Seng* was being tossed around like a cork, without the steadying influence of her sails.

Something awoke me towards midnight, and I thrust my head through the hatchway to see an enormous vessel bearing down on us. George was already taking avoiding action. Apparently the ship had been heading steadily westwards, when she suddenly altered onto a collision course. Presumably she wasn't wearing her radar. However, this incident seemed to awaken the wind. I hoisted main and genoa, and the four hours of my watch passed pleasantly as *Yam Seng* gleefully smashed into the broken sea. 0600 and a pale pink dawn brought an end to the wind. The fuel tank was replenished, and the engine roared along while the crew had breakfast—eggs, bacon and sausages again, with marmalade and coffee—delicious. After a while a light air got up from the North East and we ghosted along. It was my watch, and I caught a dozen mackerel while the engineer slept peacefully below.

At 0800 George returned to the bridge and started his noisy contraption. I always profess to loathe machinery, but I must confess the old engine has its uses—it certainly had on that occasion last year, when we were on a lee shore off the Scillies. Our DR position, calculated from the P10 compass course vectored for tidal effect, from the Tidal Atlas, put us 30 miles from the Mew Stone, with Bolt Head 18 Miles away on our starboard bow. By 1100 the Devon coast was in sight. Bolt Head bearing 030 magnetic and Start Point bearing 040 suggested we were about 20 miles off the coast, with 25 miles to go. My DR wasn't far out! At 1450 with binoculars we identified the Eddystone off to port, bearing 300 magnetic. The Mew Stone was obviously somewhere ahead, but there was a great deal of haze which made it impossible to pick out. It is never easy, even in clear weather.

We slowly closed the land, aided by a tiny breeze from the Southwest, probably the on-shore effect. Plymouth Sound showed as a gap in the murk, and at 2000 we entered the Yealm estuary. The sunset was dramatic. The western sky was a bright crimson shading into purple. The Mew Stone and the hills behind loomed starkly, as if cut out of black cardboard. *Yam Seng* motored up through the river with its beautifully wooded slopes on either side, to our moorings in Noss Mayo creek. The church clock was striking nine as we launched the Campari and pulled across to the Swan. After 62 hours at sea those pints of Plymouth Brewery bitter tasted wonderful.

Letters to the Editor

MEDITERRANEAN SAILING.—My wife and I have spent many enjoyable holidays in France, our favourite being St. Maxime situated approximately between Toulon and Cannes. It was a delightful harbour where yachting is perfect with soft warm breezes and sun, ideal for a Silhouette. This is just one of many delightful harbours along the south coast. As we lazed on the beach this summer we planned our sailing holiday for 1967. To miss the holiday crush we feel that the most suitable period would be the last week of August and first two weeks of September. We plan to trail our Silhouette to Hyères which has a new harbour catering for small yachts. We have chosen Hyères because there appear to be several little islands within easy reach. Apart from the islands the bay of Hyères promises very pleasant sailing. The town of Hyères is also charming, with plenty of night life and good food. We shall board the Newhaven to Dieppe ferry and then motor for two days, using the boat as a caravan en route.

Should any members be interested, our estimated cost for two people, for three weeks, is £150. The breakdown figures are as follows:

Vauxhall Velox (25 m.p.g.). Fare incl. boat £50.

Petrol (approx. 670 miles each way) £20.

Other expenses to include dining out every night £75.

If any members would like to join us we shall be pleased to hear from them and any suggestions they might have to offer.—D. C. Sumner (Solent Group), 4 Minerva Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey.

WELL, WELL!—Until recently I have worn my SOIA tie with pride and, as I thought, without recognition from Plymouth to Singapore. But recently I attended the opening ceremony of a bar in Sembuwang Village, and immediately a delightful young Malayan hostess made me her personal charge and held tightly to my hand throughout the party. This greatly puzzled me for it has never happened to me before. (Old Salt's yarn). However, upon reading the Straits' Times I discovered the answer. Our insignia, with a small addition, is the same as a very ancient Chinese symbol (4th Cent. BC.), called Yin Yang. It denotes " Harmony and Oneness." It is used by a marriage bureau in Zurich as its trade mark. No doubt my hostess had also read the article. I am therefore writing to you hoping that you will point out the possible dangers of the SOIA crest. Before closing may I wish you a Yin Yang Christmas and New Year?—Anthony C. Kennedy, HMS *Diana*, BFPO Ships.

IN HOLLAND.—This year we had a wonderful trip towing *TUI* to Holland and back with an A35. Three of us lived aboard for 25 days, 21 of which were afloat on the rivers, lakes and canals. Most of the layup and early season to the end of June was spent in modifying the rig and internal arrangements in the light of experience of two seasons in preparation for the trip and it worked out very well. Several Silhouettes in Holland were very interested in this. We really must sail there one fine summer so that we don't have to say " Oh no, we trailed her! " quite so often. But this must wait until we have several months to spare.—John McCarthy, Skilgate, Taunton, Somerset.

FROM LAKE ONTARIO.—In June I at last completed my Silhouette II *Hobgoblin* (1870) and launched her into the waters of the mighty Niagara as it flows into lake Ontario. We sail either in the river or on the lake, depending on wind direction and conditions on the lake. Owing to the size of the lake, sailing here is very similar to sea sailing (without tides). The main disadvantage is the heat. That may seem surprising, but after a few hours on a small boat in temperatures over 90 deg. with sunshine and glare added, all you want is cool shade and an iced drink. So one of my winter jobs will be the fitting of a canopy beneath the boom for cockpit shade. The Silhouette has created much interest here as very few bilge keelers sail on the lakes. The most popular design is the " Shark," a 24-foot glassfibre sailing cruiser with

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.

a fin keel. However to my surprise I discovered a Silhouette, moored where I sail at Niagara on the lake, called *Slo Pok*. She is fitted with a fin keel and has ventilators instead of windows in the cabin front wall. I have also seen a similar Silhouette in Bronte Harbour, further west from here, although she had the normal bilge keels. *Hobgoblin* sails beautifully, which is gratifying after three years of construction in three different countries. (But that is another story I intend to set down on paper sometime). Keep up the excellnt work on the *Journal*; we in these far flung outposts appreciate it very much.—Mike Hobson, 437 Harvard Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

GLASS BOATS.—I was interested in the letter from Mr. J. W. Mantle, concerning excessive weather helm in his glass fibre Silhouette. SII/1849 is a glass fibre boat, whose owner I have been teaching to sail and in the trim in which I found her, she also carried a lot of weather helm when hove down in a squall. We cured this to some extent by carrying the full masthead jib even when the main was reefed down to the lowest batten, but on considering the trim of the boat as she lay on her moorings, I became convinced that she was much too down by the stern, and I remembered Robert Tucker's statement that stern heavy boats always produce weather helm—at least, in Silhouettes. A little consideration will show why this is so. Because a Silhouette has to carry the weight of her crew far aft on a water line length

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, Sellafield, Orchard Lane, Hermitage, Emsworth*
South-West.	*E. K. R. Sweet, 12 Battery Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth.*
Poole.	*Hon. Sec. E. R. W. May, 2 The Circle, Moordown, Bournemouth, Hants.*
Bristol Channel.	*Hon. Sec. Cyril Watts, 5 Vassall Road, Fishponds, Bristol.*
Midlands.	*Hon. Sec. P. F. C. Whiteman, 308 Chester Road, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Warwicks.*
North-West.	*Hon. Sec. George Smith, Woodcroft, Park Road, Hale, Cheshire.*
Wyre and Morecame 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.*
Scarborough.	*Hon. Sec. Stephen Lushington, 3 Hetton Road, Leeds 8, Yorkshire.*

of 13ft. 6 in. only, it is obvious that her quarters must be kept full. When she puts these full quarters into the water, her underwater body must assume a rather unbalanced shape, which causes her to screw up to windward. The answer is to keep her nose down and her tail up so that her transom is well above the level of the water, and she shows about twelve inches of the underside of her counter clear of the water. This is the trim shown by her designer with her crew and gear aboard. The owner does not feel happy working in our rather crowded moorings under sail alone, and so we sail with a Seagull hung on her tail. To balance this, and our weight in the cockpit, I stowed about 1½ cwts. of pebbles in bags in her forepeak. In addition, she carries forward a large CQR, with two fathoms of chain and a lot of heavy manila warp. This puts her down, when on moorings and without her crew, to the red waterline shown by Hurleys. With her crew aboard, she comes up an inch or so by the head.

With this ballast aboard, weather helm is greatly reduced. In fact, until she gets down to her gunnel it is perfectly normal. At gunnel-down position she begins to pull, so we roll a bit of the mainsail while keeping the full masthead jib. As wind increases, we roll down more and more of the main, still retaining the full jib. The farthest we have gone in this direction is to have the main reefed down to the lowest batten, and full jib. Whereas formerly, with this balance of canvas she still screwed up into the wind when gunnel-down or further, now she is much better.

Believing that weather helm is caused rather by hull shape and trim than by a disposition of sail area, I got the owner to buy her a 30 sq. foot storm jib. which we have put on as an experiment instead of reefing the main so much. The first real test she had with her new sail was in a little interport race of some 7 miles. It was sailed in a wind of Force 5/6 according to our local met office. Coming back on the windward leg, the wind moderated slightly to a good Force 5 with a big sea. She balanced very nicely but I felt

there wasn't quite the necessary drive in the little jib. The big one would have been a bit much for her in view of the sea that was running, and I wished we had an intermediate jib of about 40 sq. ft. So I unrolled the mainsail completely and bashed on. With this sail combination she only developed appreciable weather helm when hove down further than her gunnel.

Incidentally, in this race, in which our rivals were a Folkboat, a Tumlare, an Eventide and a nondescript old 30 ft. gaffer, our time to the leeward mark, approximately 3½ miles away was precisely 35 minutes, but on the slog back to windward it took us 2½ hours. I reckon I wasted at least half an hour by bad tactics. I got myself into an adverse eddy tide whose strength I had underestimated.

On another occasion we took her out in a very hard northerly wind, which in Port St. Mary means smooth water but savage squalls off the mountains. We had the little jib on her and about two rolls in the main, and only when her lee side decks were awash did she carry much weather helm. I was interested to know what the wind speed was on that occasion and our local met. boys told me it was Force 5 with a maximum strength in the squalls of Force 7.

As I write, SII/1849 is lying alongside the quay, with her mast and all gear out of her, waiting to be lifted out by the travelling crane which comes down here from Douglas, to lift out all the naughty little stop-out boats and put them to bed on the quay. Even with everything out of her except her anchor and chain and warp forward SII/1849 trims by the stern, so that there is little of the underside of her counter visible above water. Is it that because of the method of building, glass fibre boats have much more material in them aft? If so, that seems to be the reason, perhaps, why one can stow such a lot of weight forward. Indeed, it seems absolutely necessary in order to get them trimmed right.—J. Hampson, 2 Eastfield Avenue, Port St. Mary, Isle of Man.

MAIL FOR A SAILOR.—It appears to me that my address is somewhat confusing so just to confuse the issue further, let me explain. My first abode was Ince Castle, Saltash, Cornwall where my mother was in service. As she has now retired, that grand address is sadly no longer mine. We now live at 110 Hitchin Road, Stotfold, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, which is a load of codswallop for Stotfold is in Bedfordshire and proud of the fact, no doubt. Being situated in the middle of flat agricultural land, Stotfold is no good for sailing, and having sailed in the blue waters of Plymouth Sound I can't leave the place alone. So the boat stays there, and when I'm on leave I can always be caught at Major Grenfells, when the pair of us are not trying to catch up with Terry and Derek Bickford racing in the Sound. However, I do work as well as 3rd Officer in the BP Tanker Co. and I try to meet Silhouette Owners in the various ports we visit. This is where the most of the confusion occurs, as I do not usually rejoin the *same* ship when I return to sea. So some of my letters from such people as Scott Grindall in Gothenburg get sent off to the *British Fulmar* while I'm actually at home. The letter arrives aboard the *British Fulmar* via *Head Office;* then gets sent back to *Head Office,* where they suddenly find out I'm at home, but here comes the cunning bit. Unknown to the Mail Dept., Personel Dept. have sent me to the *British Beech,* so the much stamped letter is once more addressed to *Head Office* and then once again readdressed to a ship via our agents in some country, finally finding me approximately 3 months after it was sent by Scott Grindall. Still, it's nice to receive an Xmas card at Easter! It does not always happen like that (just most of the time). So, to avoid this problem I'm standardising. In future, please address any mail to me at my home address, and dear old mum will send them on to me wherever I'm sailing about. Don't let all this put off you writing letters, somewhere someone wants a letter from you!

On our last trip to Copenhagen I met Peter Mitchell who was most disappointed when I told him that the Denmark Rally was off due to the reason he thought it might be put off for money. However, he brightened

up when I said that a couple of members wanted to go in any case, myself and my 'mate' Roy Boston included. As some of you know, Ron and Iris Fairman celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary this year, and next year want to go abroad and were going to come on the Denmark Rally as a belated Silver Honeymoon. As it is off, they still want to go so they too may join Roy and myself in going over to Gothenburg with, perhaps, Terry Bickford. Peter Mitchell and F. Albert will be arranging things regarding the local boats getting to the cruising ground just north of Gothenburg at Marstrand. The England Sweden Line offers reduced rates for cars with 4 people in, and the route is direct, so if anyone wants to join us please write a few lines. No date has been arrived at, but it will not coincide with Plymouth Week as I for one want to be home for that. Wildhorses would not keep me away (except BP Tanker Company of course).—David Barnes, 110 Hitchin Road, Stotford, Hitchin, Herts.

Spray Dancer's Season

By R. Hunt (Concluded)

THE wind freed a little as we got further offshore towards Selsey Bill. As night began to fall we could see the Owers Lightship and the wind went on freeing. Mike said that we were in for a good night. When he took over at 22.00 the Owers light was abeam, and we were sailing fast. As the sun went down ahead a full moon rose astern.

Mike called me at midnight and turned in himself. While I was on watch the Nab Tower went by to starboard. The watch changed at 02.00 Mike taking the helm again. He made an entry in the log at 03.00. "Boat going like a bat out of hell, getting light, terrific sailing." It must have been about this time that I woke to hear the hiss of water past the hull. I sat up to see water 15 ft. away and pure white with foam. Mike was singing sea shanties to himself, so I went back to sleep. I was awakened at 05.00 because Mike wanted some coffee which I made, and then took over. The wind was dropping now, and by 06.00 the engine was running. We moored on against a strong foul tide, with the wind gone and the sun even at that early hour very warm indeed. At around 11.00 the tide began to turn in our favour, and with a little wind we were making better progress.

We sailed into Poole harbour and spent an hour or so getting fixed up with a mooring provided finally by the Parkstone Yacht Club. The secretary made us temporary members as soon as we got ashore, and this enabled us to use all the club facilities. We were to be grateful to that club later, for it was through them that we linked up with Dennis when he finally arrived in Poole.

Dennis was due to arrive on the weekend of July 9, but he was still having crew problems, and due to this he actually arrived on Tuesday, July 12. It was on this same Tuesday that we made our first attempt to cross the Channel, but we returned when we found that our course was dead into the wind and neither of us fancied 24 hours of thrashing to windward. On our return we went up into the town to lie alongside the Quay.

This is an excellent place to lie alongside. Water and petrol are easily obtainable at the end of the quay, and there are yacht yards

just through the bridge. There is a good chandlery just across the road. The town has everything to suit one's needs, including an excellent restaurant called the Dolphin which has a good grill bar as well as a good dining room.

On Thursday July 14 we started the crossing for which we had already sailed nearly 300 miles. We let go our lines at 08.40 and motored out of the harbour. While Mike took her out I checked the navigation, and made a list of the radio beacons we could use if necessary. We set a course of 220 degrees compass, made working sail, and by 11.00 we were off Durlestone Head. Quite quickly the English coast dropped astern, and finally out of sight. The wind was perfect, Force 3-4. Once out into the Channel the choppy inshore water calmed off into a long swell. *Spray Dancer* took the bone in her teeth and really tore along. Every hour or so I switched on the echo sounder to check the depth of water, and about 16.30 I got no reading. I tried again, but nothing, so I turned to the chart. The only place where this could happen was over the Hurd Deep, and this is 45-50 miles from Poole on this course. Impossible, I thought, in 8½ hours. I was so sure that the echo sounder had gone on the blink, that I mentioned it to Mike. He smiled, and said, " Well, I didn't like to say anything in case I was wrong, but about 10 minutes ago I thought I could see land, fine on the port bow." And there was Alderney. We were, indeed, over the Hurd Deep. At this point Dennis was some 5 miles behind us. Four hours later we sighted the Casquets lighthouse, and by 23.00 it was abeam. With the Channel Island tide under us we soon passed the lighthouse and raised the high light on Sark.

Then came the part of the trip I shall remember above all the rest. I had bought a lovely Adlard Coles pilot book of the North Brittany coast, and assumed, wrongly, that it covered the Channel Islands. Here I thanked my insistance on plenty of charts, for it was from these that we now had to navigate the little Russel channel at night. I found that the leading lights of Saint Peter Port are clearly marked on the large scale Eastern sheet of Guernsey. Having found out what to look for, we started looking, found the lights, and got them in line. " The Platte Fougere light is the wrong side," said Mike. " It's to Port of the lights, and it should be to Starboard." Thank God for two navigators. We stood out again, and sailed on for another mile or so. This time the lights came in line correctly, and we turned in to the channel.

The little Russel channel is quite narrow, and seems more so in the dark. I think Mike was a little worried about this, and asked me to take the helm, because he couldn't work out at first which way to steer to keep the lights in line. There is an entry in the log which says, " We learn by our clangers," then goes on, " No moon, by God it's dark. Just a little starlight, there is more light from the phosphoresence, a lovely emerald green." The entry ends, " A very pleasant passage, and a mine of experience." At 02.15 we dropped anchor in

Saint Peter Port. We were so pleased with ourselves that neither of us felt like turning in, so we sat and in true sailing tradition spliced the mainbrace most heartily.

Saint Peter Port is probably the most popular anchorage in the Channel Islands. It is well protected from all directions, except possibly from the East to Southeast. It is inconvenient in that a dinghy is a must, but they can be hired at around £1 a day. Yachts must anchor in the outer harbour unless able to take the ground. The holding ground is indifferent, and care is needed because of the high tidal rise. It is possible to go alongside at some states of the tide, and there is a yacht yard on the wall under Castle Cournet, with petrol and water available. The Calor gas agent is in the town behind the yacht club.

The Royal Channel Islands Yacht Club overlooks the harbour, although the view from the clubroom is obstructed by a building on the harbour wall. The club can provide all the facilities that visiting yachtsmen need, including morning coffee, afternoon tea, and the usual bar services. The town itself provides everything that one could want, and it is mostly cheaper here than in Jersey.

Restaurants in the town can be found to suit most tastes. The harbour authorities are among the most friendly that we found, and there are no harbour dues.

The morning after our arrival, Mike hailed a passing blonde, and we thumbed a ride ashore. I went to see about a dinghy, and then met Mike in the yacht club for a drink. Dennis still had not arrived, and I started to wonder why. By 14.00 I was quite worried, and began to make inquiries as to his whereabouts, as a thick mist had descended over the islands, and visibility was down to about 200 yards. At 15.15 the watchhouse at the pierhead telephoned to say that he had just come in. It was after this that his crew finally mutinied and finished his holiday cruise.

Although I tried until Sunday to get Dennis to leave his boat and his crew and come to Jersey with us, it was impossible. So *Spray Dancer* sailed alone at 13.30 on a NE by N wind Force 0-1. Although we were in no hurry, at 17.00 we had to start the engine, and arrived in St. Helier at 21.15. We tied up alongside the pontoon in Berth 5, and went ashore in search of food.

It being just after the Cowes to Dinard race, quite a number of the participants called in to St. Helier on their way home, among them G. P. Balfour's *Rumbuster*, a beautifully varnished One Ton Cup contender. Also, there was a Nicholson 26, *Havoc*. We had the owner and crew aboard for a look around and a drink. They all seemed to think that the *Hurley* 22 could have a good future in RORC and JOG events. St. Helier itself is a largish town, once I imagine, quite attractive, but like all places that become tourist conscious, it is now just that. There are no doubt just as many good restaurants in St. Helier as in St. Peter Port, but we didn't look for them.

The harbour authorities have introduced the pontoon at Berth 5 only recently, but it works well, with only the very big yachts now

alongside the wall. Berth 5 is on the port hand wall of the main harbour near the lifeboat mooring and care should be taken not to go too far up the harbour, as at half tide or less there is a cross wall just ahead of Berth 5, which dries about 6ft. at low water.

On the day before we left, we were invited to a baby show by the owners of the power boat *Algor* alongside us. Although Mike was disqualified, little Tessa from *Algor,* did take second place, and there were celebrations all round.

Our time was running out, and we began to think about going home, but the weather hadn't finished with us yet, not by a long way. We left St. Helier on Friday at 10.00 in a fair breeze, but no sooner had we cleared La Corbiere light than the fair breeze dropped to nothing. Change of plans, back to Guernsey. There we lay till Sunday morning. The wind on Sunday morning was better in direction than we had had for days. The forecast was not good, but we had to get back to the River Dart. So out we went, up the Little Russel channel, past the Platte Fougere light, and set course for home. The forecast had warned of a frontal trough, and it wasn't long before we began to feel it's effect. First, there was cloud, then the wind started to pipe until it was blowing harder than we had known before, and we were down to storm rig in 45 minutes. The sea started to get up, and soon it was raining cats and dogs, with seas 12-15 ft. high, and *Spray Dancer* performed some of the most terrifying nose-dives I ever want to experience. After some five hours of this sort of thing, the wind started to go down, and in a couple of hours we were back to working rig. The sea went down, too, but the wind began to head us, till we were 30 degrees off course, headed for the middle of Lyme Bay.

With no idea of how far we had come, we could only wait for dark, and a visual fix from shore lights. When I came on watch at 22.00, Mike reported Portland Bill light to starboard. Now we wanted Star Point. Mike turned in, and I sat on for a while, sorting out the shipping around us. While watching one of these, I saw on the horizon a faint loom, and on checking the chart, and then the light again, I confirmed that the loom was Start Point. We were well to windward of a line between Start Point and Portland Bill, actually quite a long way into Lyme Bay. So at 22.30 I went about on to the starboard tack, and headed for Start Point. We spent the rest of the night watching Start Point getting closer, and the Brixham trawlers going round us lit up like fairgrounds. By 09.30 we were moored in the River Dart awaiting Customs clearance.

Three weeks later *Spray Dancer* sailed down to Plymouth for the Silhouette Rally—a week late, but from what I heard about that week, I got the best of the weather! I spent a week cruising with three boats that stayed on after the rally, and thanks to them, what a wonderful week it was! *Spray Dancer* came home by road from Plymouth, and now she sits in her cradle, awaiting next season.

She has already made me promise that wherever we go next year, we shall not be late for Plymouth.

New Members

WE extend a cordial welcome to the following new members. A. K. Haines, *Lassee* (1285), Brixham; Donald Battershill, *Cameo* 950, Helston, Cornwall; N. R. Cann, *SII* 1449), Norwich; J. Cades, Gobions, Great Burstead, Essex, 880, Blackwater; A. W. Mack, 4 Cleridge Road, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, Hants. *Seaslug,* Porchester; A. R. Broadway, Fairfield Farm, The Causeway, Petersfield, Hants. 61; N. P. Walker, 49 Brambletree Crescent, Rochester, Kent, 1032 *Aphrodite,* Medway; L. Horseman, 55 Sackville Avenue, Hayes, Bromley, Kent, 821 *Pat,* Medway; R. B. Peachey, 11 Alfred Street, Plymouth, 1521 *Centaur,* Plymouth; J. C. Maddocks, 70 Alberta Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex, 752 *Chingrhu,* Leigh on Sea; M. P. Smith, 21 Marjorie Street, East Cremlington, Northumberland, 1230 *Therese Eleanor,* Seaton Sluice; A. Kirkman, Church House, Gnosall, Stafford; J. T. Daniel, 1 Old Park Road, Clevedon, Somerset, 500 *Chitambo,* Bristol Channel; R. Boston, 184 St. Stephens Road, Saltash, Cornwall, 1472 *Nauru,* Saltash; E. Ward, Actonville, Tower Road, St. Helier, Jersey.

Tees Bay Group

THE Tees Bay Group agreed a modest cruising and racing programme for the 1966 season, but for various reasons, including boats being sold out of the district, staggered holidays and other commitments, there was much less concerted activity among the boats of the group than was hoped. The Silhouettes *Jingle, Dandy Boy, Blue Goose* and *Tryphena* did some day sailing in company in the early part of the season, and these were later joined by *Jeanette* and *Curvy.* During this time, *Smarty* sometimes turned out, but her owner, Barry Snaith was often away crewing on larger boats racing in the North East Coast Cruiser Racing Association's events. *Curvy* was built from scratch by its owner Chris Lowery, and is a fine job and a credit to him.

Maurice Archer and Dick Swarbrick made a weekend trip to Sunderland for Roker Regatta; this proved a gruelling sail, particularly the return trip, but if it did nothing else, it increased the owners' sailing experience and proved yet again the seaworthiness of the Silhouette. *Blue Goose* also made a weekend trip to Whitby, the owner being single handed, and, with very fine and kind weather, it was much enjoyed. One associate member, Ron Newland, in his Felicity *El Almirante* did some cruising on the west coast of Scotland, which was much enjoyed, except for some anchor trouble when moving from a shore which had become very uncomfortable because of a sudden windshift. Another, Tim Neale, sailed from Harwich and did some cruising on the Belgian coast.

There are now seven Silhouettes based on Hartlepool, all members of the Tees Sailing Club, and it is hoped that there will be some points racing for a Silhouette Class on that Club's 1967 Programme.

The 1966 season has now come to an end, but a meeting has already been held to discuss next season's programme. The view was expressed that too much racing round the buoys was not wanted, and much more cruising would be welcome. A tentative programme was agreed, this to include only four races for spoons, cruises to Whitby, Runswick Bay and Sunderland. The N.E.C.C.R.A. is running a race for cruisers of 4 tons and less, and it is hoped to provide some entries for this.

Distress Signals

IN October I was able to visit the Pains-Wessex factory with a party from the National School Sailing Association. The aim of the visit was to find distress signals suitable for school sailing clubs but I was interested in signals for a Silhouette as well. We toured the factory and had an excellent lunch, but the main attraction was a visit to the firing range.

After a demonstration of the full range by Mr. Edwards I fired the Pains-Wessex range of yacht signals myself. All the signals have clear directions, and I have read the " Which? " Report of June 1964 but the first signal I fired I dropped. All this season I have carried two " Handstars " which fire two red stars to a good height so naturally I was keen to try this particular signal and I thought I knew the instructions. However, when I pulled the ring I was holding the signal too near the top. My hand got hot so I slackened my grip and the recoil of the first star firing made me drop the signal before the second star fired. Then I was shewn how to hold the signal and fired the next one correctly, being most impressed by the performance of this very useful signal. Other people made similar mistakes and a "Yachtsmoke" was fired upside down. These mistakes taught us the most important lesson—it is useless to carry distress signals unless you have actually fired them, reading instructions may not be enough. Only by firing actual or practice signals do you really know what to expect and so avoid being taken by surprise.

After that my practice proceeded without incident. The " Yacht-chute " was easy to fire—after instruction as the delay with signals that eject can be deceiving—but part of it was wasted as it disappeared into very low cloud. As " Which? " reported, the 5-Star Flare was a most useful signal, easy to use and to hold. When we had all finished playing with the fireworks we returned to the factory to discuss what we had learned. We decided that we needed a test in the water. Although we knew similar tests had been performed either they were out of date due to improvements, or did not provide the information we required.

This exercise was held on November 5 in Chichester Harbour with the co-operation of the various authorities. Do not think that distress signals can be fired without proper organisation and appropriate consent. Observers were on land, in boats and in the air. Signals were fired by two volunteers in the water. I was in one of the support

boats, and my job was to pass the signals provided by Pains-Wessex and Schermuly in the correct order to Geoff Budden in the water. While information from observation points has not been collated yet, much was learnt from Geoff's remarks in the water.

Strikers are easy to use as they call for no delicate action, but triggers may be awkward with cold wet hands. Sparks from some signals—e.g. 5 Star Flare—may be too close when you are in the water.

The main lesson learned both on the range and in the water, is that you must have practised using distress signals, and perhaps clubs can help to train members as schools will have to train staff and pupils. Distress signals have to give the alarm to rescue services, etc., that may be miles away, and, having done this, enable rescuers to pinpoint the victim. From what I have learnt I shall carry on my Silhouette.

2 Handstars.
2 Five Star Flares.
2 or more Yachtflares.

It may be a good idea to carry in my pocket on the lifejacket a pack of " Miniflares " or " Ministars."

FOR SALE. Silhouette II 2/3 berth, Stuart Turner Sail 55. Cruised Holland, France, etc. Good inventory. Lying Blackwater. £320. 18 East Lane, Wembley Park, Middlesex.

FOR SALE. Silhouette No. 980. Hurley built, marine ply. Jeckyll Terelene working sails and genoa, Seagull Century, pulpit, anchor, 25 fathoms chain, Prout, other equipment. £325. Barney, 25 Fieldend, Twickenham, Middlesex. Phone: Popesgrove 8606 after 7 p.m.

FOR SALE. Vire water cooled inboard 6 h.p. with variable pitch feathering stern gear complete. Perfect running condition, compact and ideal for a Silhouette. £65. No offers. Phone Wembley 7196.

FOR HIRE. Vivacity 20 foot 4 berth yacht for hire near Palma, Majorca. Beach side luxury apartment available nearby. £25 each weekly. 32 Flemming Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

FOR SALE. Silhouette No. 1346, with Stuart Turner P5M engine, with pulpit, roller reefing, berth cushions and echo sounder. All in good condition. Kept at West Mersea, Essex. £450. Simpson, 1 Albion Park, Loughton, Essex. Tel.: Loughton 4128.

FOR SALE. Two 1½ h.p. Stuart Turner engines with two Seawitch variable pitch stern gear units. New 1962, little used, good condition. £80 for the lot. Can be seen Canterbury. Christian Stringer, 3 St. Margaret's Street, Canterbury. Tel.: Canterbury 63276 in office hours.

FOR SALE. Silhouette II—1061—Hurley 1962—wood, two-berth, many extras including dinghy, Seagull 102—trailer (1965), pulpit, C.Q.R., compass, etc. Stored under cover, mooring available Weymouth area. £375. Beacham, 63 Worral Road, Bristol, 8. Phone: Bristol 33455.

BOSUN'S STORES. Terylene ties (17/6), burgees (12/6), car badge transfers, brooches (7/6), 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.

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

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