

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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Happy ending

THERE could not have been a more decisive settlement of the months—indeed years—of dispute about “racing trim” than that reached at the AGM last month. The Silhouette is essentially a sailing cruiser, but naturally, among the thousands who put to sea in Silhouettes, there are some who want to race. Attitudes to racing differ. Some of us are content to have a go against boats roughly matched with our own, to enjoy the fun, and are equally content to see more skilful skippers round the buoys half a mile or more ahead of us. Others take racing much more seriously, and among the graduates from racing dinghies there are some who feel strongly that, to be fair, there must be strict rules and limits about what is or is not permitted in the boat. For years this has been a peculiarly difficult problem in the SOIA. How can an outboard be equated with an inboard? How can a non-feathering propeller be equated with a feathering job? How can a family using their boat as their home, with all their gear and galley stores inevitably on board, because there is nowhere else to put them, be expected to race on fair terms against a boat more or less stripped to the bare woodwork of her cabin? All this was most thoroughly debated at the AGM on a resolution moved by the South West Group calling for a set of recognised rules for racing, including the requirement that “boats should be in normal cruising condition.” This seemed a sensible enough proposal; but what *is* “normal cruising condition?” Suggestion followed suggestion, from the requirement that so many gallons of fresh water per head of crew ought to be carried,

to demands for the inevitable plastic bucket. Again, all very sensible, and clearly reflecting good seamanship, but what is “normal” for one skipper is by no means always accepted as “normal” by another. And if you have strict rules, somebody has got to enforce them; and there must be sanctions of some sort against non-compliance. As an association primarily to promote good fellowship and to encourage cruising, we are not well placed to administer regulations of this kind. It all seemed a morass of difficulties in which we might go on floundering for ever until somebody made the profound suggestion, “Why bother?” This was put to the meeting formally as an amendment to the South West Group’s resolution, and was carried by an absolutely convincing majority on a show of hands. The South West Group’s representatives then showed real statesmanship by agreeing with complete good humour that their resolution should be withdrawn; it had been put forward, they explained, primarily to stimulate discussion, and in view of the obvious feeling of the AGM, nobody wanted to press it. There could not have been a happier ending to a perplexing business, nor one that showed the SOIA in a better light. Clearly, our members feel that there are enough inspectors in the world without wishing to add them to our kind of sailing. No doubt there will be a few who do not like this decision, and who feel that the definition of racing trim should be strict if there is to be serious racing at all. We respect this feeling, but would urge any who may still share it to accept the obvious will of the majority in good part. Racing can be perfectly serious if all skippers and crews set out to get the best out of their boats and their own skill, without worrying about whether Rival X is carrying a full jerrican of water, or whether Rival Y has a spare plug for his engine. The international *sailing* rules for racing, of course, govern every Silhouette race that is ever sailed; that is not, and has never been, in question. What the AGM decision means is that Silhouette owners can now meet in races without any feelings of sharp practice because the kit and stores on one boat do not match those on another. It is a declaration of live and let live and of respect for the other man’s freedom that is profoundly impressive in a world growing steadily more unfree for the individual. Three cheers for Silhouette sailors.

The world on a table

JOHN and Helen Anderson write: “We find it hard to say how very deeply moved we are by the utterly unexpected presentation made to us at the AGM. The globe that now stands on a table in our sitting room is quite the nicest thing that anyone could have chosen for us, and it is a constant reminder of our long and happy voyage with the SOIA. As we look at the globe it is apparent what a lot of sea there is in the world—and we can’t help thinking how much happier the world would be if some of the traditions of the sea which the SOIA embodies could be reproduced on the troubled land. Thank you all very much indeed.”

Secretary's notes

I WONDER how many other organisations, Clubs or Associations, could possibly run an Annual General Meeting, without having some form of balance sheet to present to their members? And, among those that could, I wonder how many would raise as little objection as we had at our meeting at The National Liberal Club on January 6. Our treasurer, complete with all the precious documents in his brief case, had trouble with his car en route to the meeting, phoned to let us all know that he would be late, and this announcement was received by all those present without comment. Thank you, fellow members; it shows a wonderful faith in your committee, and it is much appreciated. The AGM, apart from this rather serious omission, was perhaps one of the best we have ever held. Lively discussion took place on rules for racing, chiefly at Plymouth, and the general feeling was well expressed, that Silhouette owners race for fun, and want the very minimum of rules, regulations, and examiners to enforce them. Unbiased I ought to be, but I must confess to being delighted.

* * *

Brian Heaney announced that all was going well with the organisation for the cross-Channel trip at Whitsun, although he had to make it clear that this would be the last year we shall be welcome—en bloc—at Dover. Hovercrafts will make that port unsuitable for sailing in 1969, but that should not detract from this year's event, which bids fair to be another record turnout. But I learn with dismay that, owing to business commitments, it is possible that Peter Moyes, won't be able to be among the fleet. This is serious, as Pat, his charming daughter, with a command of French that could only be equalled by a native, acted as a most invaluable interpreter last year. It would be well worth finding her a berth to assist us more ignorant "Tommies."

* * *

For the first time for some years now we had an election of officers for the Association. Olive Butt is now officially the minutes secretary; Olive has done the job for a few years now, so it is time we recognised her much-appreciated efforts. Eddie Butt, is going to assist in the *Journal* distribution. The resignation of Eileen Morgan as Supplies Officer was announced, and she was accorded a warm vote of thanks for her work in this really exacting job.

* * *

Everyone present enjoyed the party after the meeting, although the new driving and drinking laws had a certain effect on those who attended by car. The food was good, and the "Vinland" film was well received (although we all felt for John Anderson giving two commentaries in one evening). It was a fine start to the new year, and a regular Silhouette success.

* * *

I thought that it was an extremely good Boat Show this year, with many interesting exhibits to inspect. But it did bring home how

much prices are rising. The Mark III Silhouette, is close on £700 now, and is still perhaps the best value for money that can be had. We appeal to all owners of the Mark III, to write an article for our *Journal*. Members want to know, how do you think she sails compared with the older Mark II? Does she point better? Is she as stable? All these questions, and a lot more besides, one hears wherever sailing folk gather. I like the idea on the Hurley 20 of the sliding shelf fitted under the deck over the quarter berth, which can be pulled out and clipped onto the side of the cooking space, which is similar to the three-berth version of the Silhouette. This shelf forms a valuable working top for cooking and washing, and could be easily adapted for a Silhouette. Mike Seymour has another idea, which he has fitted to *Defiance*. This is a similar shelf fitted to slide under the deck over the quarter berth, but in this instance the shelf consists of a very shallow (some two inches or so) box, into which the skipper's shore-going suit is carefully laid. We must get cracking with the wood-working tools soon, but I am at a loss to know which idea to use.

* * *

We read with regret that George Hurley has decided to retire from too active a part in the business that bears his name, owing to ill health. The Association is indebted to George for many favours, especially during our Plymouth Weeks, and we all wish him every happiness in his new found freedom. We trust, too, that a few sails in his own boat will soon bring the bloom back to his cheeks. I am informed, nay, assured, that the present directors of the firm, will do all in their power to carry on the good work started by George, and that we shall have the same welcome at Plymouth, and the same facilities, as in the past.

* * *

Mr. J. T. Daniel, 71 Highdale Avenue, Clevedon, Somerset, has now taken over the secretaryship of the Bristol Group, from Cyril Watts. Owners in that area are invited to get in touch with him on all local matters.—R.A.G.

Letters to the Editor

HALLIARDS.—Some time ago my wife and I were rigging our Mark II, and she tied the ends of the sail halliards together, like the cord on a window blind. The length of the halliards were such as to permit making fast on a cleat as a double rope, instead of a single one. This arrangement avoids any risk of the downhaul end getting up to the mast head! I cannot see anything wrong with the practice on the relatively small sails we use. I feel that the free ended halliard comes from the days of heavy sails, where more than one hand was needed to haul the sail up, and also from the days of mast rings which did allow the halliard to be let go and the sail to come down with a run. This could quite a smart "evolution." What do other readers think of my wife's idea?—R. N. Pegg, Lantern Cottage, Glynceiriog, Llangollen.

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.

Cups and trophies

WE were delighted to welcome at our annual party Miss Priscilla Cairns, who sailed with Dr. David Lewis and his family on their wonderful circumnavigation of the world in the catamaran *Rehu Moana*, and who attended to receive the SOIA's Open Cruising Trophy on Dr. Lewis's behalf—Dr. Lewis and his wife Fiona were abroad at the time. We were also proud to welcome, with Miss Cairns, her parents, Mr. Justice Cairns and Lady Cairns.

In a letter written after his return to England, Dr. Lewis writes: "I have just learned what a great honour the Association has paid me. All my thanks to the Silhouette owners. The cup itself should, I am sure, repose in safety on the Cairns's mantelpiece, and I will get the delightful miniature inscribed, to stay with me on my travels."

Because Dr. Lewis will depart shortly for further Pacific voyaging, we felt that the cup, which is held for a year and has to be returned,

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>Hon. Sec. E. K. R. Sweet, 126 Ham Drive, Ham, Plymouth.</i>
Poole.	<i>Hon. Sec. E. R. W. May, 2 The Circle, Moor-down, Bournemouth, Hants.</i>
Bristol Channel.	<i>Hon. Sec. J. T. Daniel, 71 Highdale Avenue, Clevedon, Somerset.</i>
Midlands.	<i>Hon. Sec. P. F. C. Whiteman, 308 Chester Road, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Warwicks.</i>
North-West.	<i>Hon. Sec. Brian Heaney, Lower Lee School, Beaconsfield Road, Liverpool 25.</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>
Scarborough.	<i>Hon. Sec. Stephen Lushington, 3 Hetton Road, Leeds 8, Yorkshire.</i>

might fitly stay in England with Miss Cairns, and that the miniature normally given to our trophy winners at the end of their year of cup-holding, should properly be presented to Dr. Lewis now. As his letter shows, he has readily fallen in with this suggestion.

The trophies were most graciously presented by Mrs. Jean Guscott, the wife of our Commodore. The *Suzanne Trophy* (presented by Robert Tucker) went to Ron Fairman and his family, and the *Silhouette Owner Trophy* to Brian Heaney and family for their enterprising cruises across the Channel and in the Baltic.

Reflections at the AGM—I

HAVING attended yet another AGM and party, I alternate between thinking, "Haven't I got a lot of friends in the Association," and, "Aren't there a lot of people that I don't know." This may sound odd, but it only goes to prove what a large number of members turn up to the annual get-together. As a regular at both this and the Plymouth Rally, it is little wonder that my circle of friends has grown since the first time I went along, and was befriended by someone who had been before, and was able to introduce me to their party. I hope that no one came this year and went away again without making fresh acquaintances. If any did, it is a great pity, and can be remedied by their

coming to the Rally, where they won't have a chance to go away with the same result. After all, we all have the same love of sailing and pottering and, having bumped their neighbours at moorings a couple of times they are bound to speak to them (if only to curse or say sorry).

A lot of our members are attached to the various Groups with their joint sailing and social activities, but there must be many, like me, who are non-aligned and sail in different areas each year where the sight of another Silhouette preceeds a scramble into the cabin to find the list of members to look up her sail number. This is usually followed by a wave and a shifty glance to try to confirm what you knew all along, that you are sailing a Silhouette as it ought to be sailed, and far better than that chap over there. If, however, he is overhauling you, it is time for the crew to get some instruction on the tiller, when everyone knows you can't sail at your best. The final outcome is usually a visit on board, a natter and a drink. It is surprising the variety of tinned drinks that one finds being kept cool in the bilges. From casual meetings like this, it's quite usual for friendship to follow, with arrangements to cruise in company, or to go to the Rally together.

We hear quite a lot about flag etiquette and when to haul them down, but to my mind the most important thing is to keep the Association burgee flying as long as it can be seen as a mark of recognition and invitation to other members. While many members have allegiance to their yacht clubs, few clubs are so universal as this Association, and it is this spirit of friendship which must play a large part in its continued success.—Neville F. Povey.

Reflections at the AGM—II

SAILING for women crews is somewhat nerve-racking; no matter what goes wrong you can be sure she's to blame. I find that my faults range from being guilty of the racing flag jamming half way up the mast five minutes before the gun at that all important race at Plymouth, to being completely responsible for our boat coming in next to last in the same race. Fortunately, over a cup of tea at the R.P.C.Y.C. afterwards, I find that this generally applies to most of my friends.

One thing that always surprises me; considering the huge membership of the SOIA, 50 to 60 boats at Plymouth is really rather small. This, to my mind, is a really *great* holiday, both for sailing and social life. We have been four years running now, and it is an accepted fact with us that Plymouth week constitutes our summer holiday.

Although at the A.G.M. there was a lot of talk about racing rules, this shouldn't put newcomers off. Certainly there is racing at Plymouth, and quite a large number of people take it seriously, but I think the majority of Silhouette owners are quite happy just to complete the course. Few helmsmen can have quite such a handicap as my husband—if the sun is shining he has to follow the course which gives me maximum sunbathing; he's not allowed to get too far in front (this

hasn't happened yet) or too far behind (more usual) as I don't like lone sailing, and if it's raining he has to race with me still in bed.

We have already fixed to go to Plymouth Week again this year, together with many others. Let's hope that this year will see a lot of new faces—you'll find it well worth while.—Gillian Povey.

SII 2, first of class? *By G. E. Elliot*

SOME six months ago the word Silhouette meant simply a shape. At that time we walked into a boatyard with no particular purpose, except curiosity. Squatting unevenly on a bent trailer, among the many gleaming glass hulls, we noticed an odd wooden boat. Although a coat of paint had been slapped on to the hull obviously to conceal any blemishes, she looked, at first sight, a mess. Nevertheless, she had an air about her, and some form of attraction which caused us to buy her at once—an act of madness, remembering the sound advice about expert surveys; or of divine providence, as it later turned out to be.

The shipyard's representative (she had been traded in for a new yacht) departed on a long cruise that same day, so when we arrived to collect our purchase on the morrow, there was no one who could answer the many questions which I had listed in the meantime. We knew that she was a Silhouette, and on her sails, comparatively new, were the figures S II 2. She had no name that could be discovered at that time, so she was called *Mary Rose*.

We trailed *Mary Rose* home on the old trailer, and set to work. Everything removable was removed, and any suspect rigging replaced with new Terylene or nylon. The paint, and what remained of the varnish, was stripped down, and she was completely repainted with polyurethane, and revarnished. The old and battered outboard was replaced by a new Evinrude Longshaft 3 H.P., and a new trailer, with proper brakes and a winch was ordered. All this took weeks of work.

In the meantime I set about tracing her ancestry. First I wrote to Hurley Marine, who gave me Robert Tucker's address. I wrote to him, and he immediately telephoned me from London to say that S II 2 was a notable craft—in fact, the first Mark II to be launched. Later he wrote in more detail.

The original Mark I (16ft. 6ins.) class consisted of some 80 boats. The Mark II was designed in 1954, and the plans were published in *Rudder* (in USA) in 1955. She was the first triple keel yacht ever built. She was designed as a miniature cruising yacht, *not* as a dinghy with a lid on it. Furthermore, plans were made available to the amateur boat builder. Before the advent of the Mark II the keen but impecunious cruising sailor was restricted either to "do it yourself" conversions, or to ancient yachts.

SII was designed primarily for America, but Robert Tucker was so pleased with the design that he decided to build a personal craft of his own. At about the same time a Major Hamilton, in Sussex,

became interested, and an order was placed with Harry Phillips, the well known boat builder at Rye. This latter boat was craftsman-built to the highest specifications, and with the very best materials available. The Rye boat was launched first in 1956, but Robert Tucker rightfully claimed the privilege of wearing No. 1 on his sails. So SII 2, or *Mary Rose*, can claim a certain pride of place in the large Silhouette fleet.

General production of the Mark II started in 1957. Lee and Boswell of Yarmouth built about two dozen, and No. 7 was the first to be exhibited at the Boat Show. Beta Marine built a dozen or so, then George Hurley, who up to that time had been building caravans, was approached, and became interested in building the Mark II, with marked success and in ever increasing numbers. The Mark II was followed by the round bilged Mark III.

SII 2 spent her life, until we bought her, at Rye, where she was known as *Impala*. Originally, she had an inboard motor, which apparently was not a success, as this was removed some years ago. At some stage the mast was re-stepped one foot forward of the original position, presumably to facilitate going about—she is as nimble as a cat in this respect now. Her previous owners in each case gravitated to much larger craft in due course, as I shall also when *Mary Rose* has taught me more, though it will be difficult to part with her.

There are many years of good sailing in front of her yet, as her timbers are as sound as ever—I have learnt to appreciate the meaning of the adjective “stiff” in connection with a boat, and I have complete confidence in her. She must have outlasted, and will undoubtedly continue to outlast, many of her younger sisters, most of which, by comparison, seem lightly built. Her new paintwork, white hull, red bilges, and lovely varnished mahogany is not very professional, but from not too close a range, and with her blue sails she looks what indeed she is—a thoroughbred. *Mary Rose* now sails from Newhaven, and this past summer has already more than repaid the hard work put into her rehabilitation. As I write this she is resting proudly on her new trailer snugly tucked under a “Polytarp” (but with through ventilation) outside the *front* door, not at the back, where an ordinary boat would have been parked. I am interrupting my homework on coastal and even celestial navigation to write this. And I must end with a question—what has happened to SII No. 1—the first of class, which was second afloat? Does anyone know?

Spring cruising lectures

THE Royal Cruising Club and the Central Council of Physical Recreation have arranged a splendid series of Spring Lectures to be held at the Little Ship Club during February, March and April. For those who do not already know the Club, it is at Bell Wharf Lane, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4. The lectures start at 19.00 hours and tickets cost £1 for the series, or 5/- per lecture. Details from the Central Council of Physical Recreation at 26 Park Crescent, London, W.1. Single tickets may be had at the door.

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