

The Silhouette Owner

*For a record of the
silhouette of the owner*

DECEMBER 1910

*and the
boundary...*



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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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Equipment

I SUPPOSE that we all get asked at some time or other what a newcomer to small cruiser sailing should buy in addition to his boat. It's easy to say anchor, warps, engine, etc., etc., but what type and weight of anchor; chain, chain and warp or warp only; if chain what size; inboard or outboard engine and so on. I suppose we all think that what we have is best or what we would like if we had unlimited money, but take a young married man with one child buying his first boat who wants maximum value for money. Now try, starting with a three berth Silhouette Mark III, give him the best value for money and advise him what to buy without extravagance remembering a suitable book on sailing. This isn't a competition but if I get enough members writing in with their ideas I should be able to write an interesting article which will be of use to the newcomer and I will have proof that members do read *The Silhouette Owner*. As a second part of the exercise we could list the items to be bought after the end of the first season as and when money is available or for birthday and Christmas presents. These in order of importance.

I shall compile my final list by working out which article and type gets the most support and perhaps I will be able to persuade the Committee to provide a small prize for the person sending in a list which is nearest to the popular choice. I can see this as a good way to get a suitable Christmas present, after all men are so hard to buy for, so you can always optimistically show your list to the family before sending it in to me but make sure that they know

exactly what you want. In the early days I wanted a combined port and starboard lantern and Gillian thoughtfully bought two; one for each side of the boat.

All letters to the Editor, please.

* * *

Don't forget to send in your entries for the log competition by the end of the month.

From the Commodore

MEMBERS will read elsewhere of the wish of our Honorary Treasurer, Ron. Fairman, to retire from office at the next Annual General Meeting. He has been our treasurer for a long time now, and it would be wrong of us to stand in his way when his business commitments force his retirement. We have come to rely so much on the team of Ron and Iris that their replacement will be very difficult; the Committee's hope is that the fund of ability contained in our membership will come up trumps again as it did when Frank Bartlett took over as Secretary.

A volunteer is worth ten pressed men (or women: why not a lady in the Treasury?) so that offers will be gladly considered.

As this will be the last edition of the Journal before the festive season, Marion and I send our best wishes to you all, with hopes for even better sailing in 1970. We would dearly like to write personally to everyone although time prevents, but we look forward eagerly to making new friendships and renewing old ones in the New Year.

BRIAN HEANEY

Secretary's Notes

BY now I suppose all the U.K. fleets of Silhouettes will be out of the water. There are so many techniques of getting the boats out and local circumstances are well worth studying. Because of back wash from the sea wall, we prefer to ground on the sand and lift by wood blocks to trailer height. If we did not have the back wash from the sea wall I am not sure whether I would float the boat on. It might be a shade quicker but not if one counts the time for dismantling the bearings and brakes to clear out the sea water. I know some people rely on sealed bearings and others do not have brakes.

* * *

The post bag continues to amaze me and I hope that we are progressing to an even larger membership. In order to get the list of members completely accurate and up to date, a letter is being sent to every member with the January Journal asking for certain information—name, address, etc. Do please fill in the details and return it to me. I know that this is asking a lot but I am trying to cut down the secretarial and administrative work. The postage account

gives an average of four letters a day being sent out by me and an average of three letters a week are received asking for correction to be made to published details. I believe that if we can once get the members list correct, it can save work all round and be of real use to members. Mrs. Heaney has done colossal work in keeping the members list as accurate as it is. So please members fill in the details in January and return the letter.

* * *

Dates to mark in your diaries please :—

Saturday, 10th January, 1970.—A.G.M., National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, 5-30; Party, 7-15.

Nominations for officers and committee to me please by 1st January, if possible.

Saturday, 8th August—15th August, 1970.—Plymouth Rally. Mayflower year at Plymouth.

and for 1971, 13th August for one week—Plymouth Rally.

* * *

Boat Show—will volunteers to man the Association Desk on Hurleys stand please let me have their names together with days and times they can do it. If you are visiting the Show spare the Association an hour or so. All you need to do is to be able to tell enquirers what a good Association we are—give them a membership application form—ask them to complete it there and then and use the bankers order form—return the form to you. You send it to me. If they want to take the form away that is alright but only to genuine enquirers please. My family and I are doing the 2-4 p.m. stint on Saturday, 10th January, 1970.

* * *

Well I Never was out for her last race of the season on 12th October. It was quite a fresh breeze. After rounding one of our club bouys about 1½ miles off shore we had a run to H.E.6 (Navigational bouy) off the mouth of the Dee about three miles and then had to work back into the wind to the finish. I was crewing for Jim and we were determined to beat the *Felicity* on which Maureen was crewing. We were giving them time so we sailed without reefing the main and I have never been so wet. We took 100 minutes, beating the *Felicity* by 26 minutes. There were a large number of guillemots about and some Crested Grebe, but we didn't stop to watch them.

Jim and Maureen (Mickey) are getting married on 20th December. Maureen who has sailed in *Well I Never* at our home base has more usually crewed in our rival's boat *Felicity*. She will presumably now be crewing in the Silhouette. Mickey did come to Plymouth for this year's prize giving.

Mike Benwell (True Blue at Plymouth) sailing his second string *Halcyon* has been notching up some good placing in his club events and so has Harry Maloney in *Wee Three*.

Our Silhouettes are not really racing boats but it is great fun to sail competitively against others as a change from cruising. It does help improve one's technique and to find out which of the many ideas seen and talked about at any meetings of Silhouette owners really pays off. Members who are anxious to try to improve their sailing of Silhouettes cannot do better than to read the recent articles July and August on this point. All inquiries received by me on this subject are referred to these recent issues.

In planning for next year's Plymouth Rally, the Organising Committee are trying to find ways to include some more cruising for those who do not wish to race and also to take out of the racing results those who do not race.

Our Commodore does not race. He is hoping to be joined at Plymouth by others who just like sailing and do not want to race. So when thinking of Summer holidays, remember Plymouth in Mayflower Year, August 8th for one week. If you have any ideas for improving the Rally Week do let me know.

Annual General Meeting, members attend and vote—friends can attend and not vote.

The party afterwards is free to members and wife or child of school age but a payment towards expenses will be requested for other guests.

Please let me have nominations for committee and officers as soon as possible. Our Treasurer is resigning from his job just when the effect of the increased subscription will really be having its effect. We must have a new Treasurer.

Some members pay their subscriptions by Bankers Order, would they please remember that the subscription was increased at the last A.G.M. to 30/-. As this was after the Bank Orders were paid it is possible that some Orders may not have been amended.

To all other members except those who joined after 1st October, 1969, your subscription 30/- is due on 1st January, 1970. Please send it without any further reminders.

* * *

A Happy Christmas to all S.O.I.A. members and their families and when it comes, good wishes and good sailing for 1970.

F.W.B.

* * *

I am sure that all members who have met and heard of our 1969 Championship Helmsman, Jim Bartlett, will join me in wishing him and his future wife Maureen every happiness—Editor.

Shipwreck

by Paddy, Plymouth

ON Sunday, July 6th, we sailed from St. Helier and set course for Granville, a town on the French coast. We planned to go round the Illes Chausey before running into Granville. The weather forecast

gave no indication of the adverse weather conditions that were to follow. We sailed past the Illes Chausey, but then decided to anchor off these islands for the night as rain had started to fall. The Illes Chausey (known as the French Channel Islands) consists of a dozen or so little islands, all uninhabited except one on which live about 40 people, all fisherfolk.

We dropped anchor off the main island at about 3.30 p.m., ate a late lunch and settled down to listen to the radio and write letters. By nightfall the rain was falling heavily and there was nothing for it but to retire for the night. We checked our position, ensured that everything on deck was stowed securely, and made sure that the anchor was well grounded.

At approximately 11.30, we were caught in a terrific wind from the direction of the French mainland. The navigator got to the hatch first and shouted "We are adrift!" By this time the wind speed was 102 m.p.h. We discovered that our anchor chain and warp had snapped and we were caught in the fury of the gale. The engine could not cope with the massive seas. We could just see a mass of jagged rocks ahead and all we could do was to hold on. Life belts were hastily put on. There was a crash as we hit a fishing-boat at its moorings and we were holed above the waterline on the port quarter. We quietly hoped that we would finish inshore rather than be swept out to sea, for such a little boat as ours could not have survived in those seas. We hung on as *Claudia* slowly bumped her way across the rocks. By now she was on her side with a four-foot hole amidships and was fast filling with water. None of us said a word. We were too busy holding on as wave after wave hit our boat and tons of water engulfed us. We later learned that the wave between the islands were 10 ft. high. Outside they were running 30 ft. high. I remember thinking "this is the end!" But suddenly a massive wave lifted *Claudia* and bore her aloft further inshore and threw her bodily on to a rock plateau. There, to our amazement, on our port side, was a flat rock, and we jumped ashore. The boat, still being pounded by the heavy seas, offered some protection as we clawed our way over seaweed covered rock, standing up one minute, the next being bowled over by the elements. We made for a small chateau that had a light in its front window where an elderly couple gave us dry clothes and cognac-laced coffee. Later they showed us to the island's small hotel where we got beds for the night. Never did a bed feel so welcome even if it did have a hard old-fashioned bolster for a pillow.

Next morning we found *Claudia* firmly wedged between two huge rocks with three holes in her port side. She was high, but far from dry! Everything on board was soaked. We spent hours removing our personal belongings while the island's children ran up and down the waterside searching for the clothes that had been washed out of the boat.

Two other yachts had been swept ashore though they sustained only superficial damage. One had dragged a 15 lb. danforth and two

3cwt. concrete mooring blocks. The danforth was twisted and buckled almost out of recognition.

That night we slept on the island again, and the following day crewed an £11,000 yacht back to Jersey, and the day after that flew to Exeter.

Before we left the Illes Chausey, my skipper mentioned to one of the French fishermen that we had been "lucky to get ashore." The old man pointed to a stone cross on the headland and said "it was the good God who saved you." And when we recall that a yacht anchored twenty yards from us with a crew on board foundered during that night and was not seen again, we indeed feel grateful.

During those frightening hours of gale force winds and vicious seas, 25 people lost their lives, a terrible reminder that the sea can one moment be a thing of beauty and tranquillity and the next a thing of destruction and death."

On August 15th I again sailed on board another Atlanta back to Chausey to gather our personal belongings and equipment from *Claudia*. On this occasion the sun shone and we spent a most enjoyable three days on Chausey swimming and enjoying the French hospitality. We were entertained like royalty by the locals and were sorry to have to return from our own "desert island."

Tees Bay Group—Further Doings

IN addition to the points series being sailed, some cruising has been done by the group. Thus, early in July, a small fleet had a weekend cruise northwards to Sunderland. The trip was made by *Curvy*, Chris Lowery, Shirley and young Arthur, *Blue Goose*, Dick Swarbrick and Sam Lucas, and *Nimble*, Maurice Archer's new boat, a Ballerina crewed by John Jameson. The weather report had not been good and at 06.40 hrs. the shipping forecast predicted west winds, force 6-7, decreasing to 5 later; not very bright! Outside sources suggested a decrease to 3-4 and it was ultimately decided to set out. By this time the tide was ebbing fast and unfortunately *Nimble* was found to be hard on the "Putty," and had to delay her start. *Blue Goose* set out with a roll in the main. The sea off the Hough was lumpy and it was wet sailing although we were soon able to shake out the reef. As we approached Sunderland, there was a big increase in wind and on *Blue Goose* we were glad to drag down a reef, when a drier and more comfortable sail ensued. *Curvy* managed to keep inshore, (it was a very close fetch in the North-West wind), but *Blue Goose* could not sail so close and had to make a couple of boards to get a lee from the land. Ultimately we tacked up the Wear entrance and moored in North Dock by *Sonoma*, our old friend Harry Lambert's converted six metre.

By contrast, the sail home to Middleton Harbour, Hartlepool, was made in delightful sunny weather with light airs from the east. Finally, we did a little motoring to make progress. It was low tide

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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 30s. (U.S.A. \$5). Bankers: Westminster Bank Limited, Hornchurch, Essex.

when we arrived at Middleton so we anchored outside, cleaned ship, had a feed and a snooze and finally made our moorings after a good weekend's sailing. *Curvy* had left Sunderland earlier than the other boats and had made the tide into harbour.

No less than seven boats sailed for Whitby for the Summer Bank Holiday cruise: these were *Calypso*, Gerry Stevens alone, *Lady Joan*, Len Chaplin and Seymour Roberts, *Blue Goose*, Dick Swarbrick and Geof. Collins, *Outlaw*, Bill Bruce and young David Millingham, (all Silhouettes), *Hill Billy*, (Felicity) Bernard Martin and Mavis, plus the children Diane and Chris., *Wendron*, Mike Alton and his sons Andy and David, and *Nimble*, Maurice Archer and John Jameson. The wind had been northerly for some days, and there were big rollers all the way, but fortunately not too much wind. At times it was possible to see only the top two feet of the mast and the burgee of

Regional Groups

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

Blackwater.	<i>Hon. Sec. A. V. Hudson, 1a Head Street, Gold-hanger, Maldon, Essex.</i>
South-West.	<i>Hon. Sec. A. Kennedy, 59 The Knoll, Marsh Mills, Plymouth.</i>
Exe Group.	<i>Hon. Sec. L. Pithers, 16 Belvedere Road, Exmouth.</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, Badgers, Backwell Common, Backwell, Bristol.</i>
North-West.	<i>Hon. Sec. Elfed Lewis, 40 Ffrioddoedd Road, Bangor, Caerns.</i>
Coniston.	<i>Hon. Sec. David Thornton, 47 Brackenley Lane, Embsay, Skipton, Yorks.</i>
Midlands.	<i>Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206 Hagley Road, Egbaston, Birmingham.</i>
Tees Bay.	<i>Hon. Sec. R. T. Swarbrick, 21 Raby Road, Stockton-on-Tees.</i>

the boat in the next trough! We all had a very hairy surfing sail through the entrance into Whitby, which we found exhilarating! Len Chaplin, who was following *Blue Goose* remarked to his crew, "If I look like that, I'm frightened!" Bill Bruce sailed *Outlaw* back to Hartlepool on the Sunday, and *Nimble* plus *Lady Joan* and *Calypso* returned on the Monday. The other boats, *Wendron*, *Hill Billy* and *Blue Goose* embarked for Scarborough on the Tuesday. Motor/sailing most of the way in a slight haze and with only light airs from the north-west. The fleet returned to Whitby on the Thursday. This was the best sail of the week, when we had a nice south-esterly wind, which gave us a broad reach along the coast. The fleet was joined by *Curvy* (Chris Lowery and family) at Whitby, where we spent a pleasant day on the Friday: Mike Alton sailed *Wendron* single-handed to Runswick Bay, his crew having "Mutinied" and had gone ashore for the day!

Saturday saw us on the way home, again under motor and sail, because of lack of wind which in any case was from the north-west. There was a thick mist when we left and gradually visibility got very bad so we clustered together for mutual comfort after leaving Kettleness abeam. Gradually however, the fog lifted, a light air came from the south-east, and we were at last able to cut engines and sail across Tees Bay to our home port in good style.

On Sunday Sept. 21st five Silhouettes and a Ballerina raced for an R.I.N.I. pennant. *Random*, Jim Ashton made a splendid start followed by *Calypso*, Gerry Stevens and *Blue Goose*, Dick Swarbrick. For once *Curvy*, Chris Lowery was some fifty yards from the line at the gun but as usual he soon caught up and after a duel with *Random*,

took the lead to sail off and win. *Random* fought hard to keep on terms, with *Calypso* hard on his heels. Meanwhile, *Nimble*, *Blue Goose* and *Jeanette*, Seymour Roberts were having a private race some distance behind. *Curvy* increased her lead on the last lap and on the final leg *Calypso* caught *Random* on a port and starboard situation which put *Random* about and allowed *Calypso* through to take second place

Retrieving Without Tears

By Mark Lester, SH 1030

LAST summer I was watched retrieving my boat by a man who confessed that he'd sold his Silhouette as retrieving was so difficult and expensive! Having towed, launched, sailed and retrieved my Silhouette on an average of twice a year for the last seven years on the Estuaries of the South West I feel that even retrieving can be easy and cheap.

An easy retrieve requires a slipway, clear water, no cross wind and a winch. Difficulties present with a soft beach, murky water, a strong cross breeze and no winch.

A soft beach can be easily overcome with four pieces of corrugated sheeting to prevent the trailer wheels sinking in. Two sheets are put in the water beneath the trailer wheels and the other two under the wheels as the haul proceeds.

Murky water and a cross wind make it difficult to align the boat and the trailer: the bilge keels so easily slant across the trailer coming to rest on the mudguards. Lengths of square section metal tubing bent to form an inverted U 24" across and 12" high have been welded onto the frame above the mudguards at 45 degrees so that once the bilge keels touch these they slide down on to their proper grooves on the trailer. Six foot rope lengths tied to the aft end of these metal tubes lie immediately below the jib fair leads, when boat and trailer are in correct alignment. These ropes are lashed to the fair leads and gradually tightened as the haul proceeds; the boat then comes to rest on the trailer in the correct position. Two large shackles have been fixed to the trailer handle two feet apart. A nylon rope is tied to the one shackle around the samson post and down to the second shackle and tightly lashed. If this rope is loose the boat may slip backwards on the trailer. Once the bilge keels are out of the water see they are exactly right on their trailer rails and fix on the keel shackles.

If the car is being used to do the haul it must rest on firm ground. A long rope with one end tied to the front of the trailer is laid out to the car where it is passed through a small circle of anchor chain shackled to the tow ball. The rope then goes back to the trailer and is tied to the trailer handle by two half hitches. (If the ropes have to be joined use a double sheet bend, as other knots with wet rope are difficult to undo.)

One person drives the car forward slowly while the second stands at the trailer handle balancing the trailer and directing the driver. Once the hard is reached the trailer wheels can be blocked and the trailer hitched on to the car.

Silhouette Mark III

by JEFF WALSH

DUE to a dodgy back, I was unable to tow *Sea Fever* to Plymouth for the Rally, so I was grateful when Fred Hawkins of Hurley Marine offered his SH *Joanna* for the week.

I was so impressed with her performance that I checked back and as I did not find a report on our Silhouette III, decided to write one for the Journal.

The model that I sailed, sail No. 224, was the standard model, internally just the same as the Mark II. Externally the boat has been redesigned, as she is now round-bilged and has larger keels, which are moulded in glass-fibre, with 225 lbs. of cast iron in each keel. This extra ballast is necessary, as the sail area has been increased to 165 square feet. With the new streamlined keels, no centre skeg and a spade rudder, the under-water section is very clean, so the boat moves through the water with very little turbulence.

As I only rigged *Joanna* on Saturday, I had no chance of any tuning, but on the Sunday race to the Yealm she was the first Silhouette over the line at the finish.

There were two Mark III's in the Rally, Ernie Sweet's *Oggie* and *Joanna*, so we had to sail and race in the Handicap class with the big stuff. If there had been six or more entered, we would have raced as a class.

The final position of *Joanna* for the four races sailed with the Handicap class was the fault of the helmsman and not the boat. We got a third and a fifth and were leading on handicap when a certain buoy was omitted and what could have been our best race was our worst.

In very gusty conditions we found that by taking 18 inches off the main with the roller reefing, which is standard, the boat can be sailed upright and with the better entry due to the round bilge, her windward performance is impressive.

I feel that our Mark III needs a new image. She handles better than the Mark II, she points higher and without the hard chine, rides the waves very easily. A more apt description would be Class 5 Cruiser-racer, as properly tuned and sailed, she will give an excellent performance against larger boats and still maintain the stability of the family cruiser.

We in the Association will have to face a problem sooner or later. What are we to go for when our Mark II needs replacing? Do we buy a larger boat with the difficulty of maintenance and trailing, etc. with no more sailing time during the season for our extra cash?

Or do we, as members of the S.O.L.A., buy a Silhouette III? It would be a miserable sight, at Plymouth, if the Handicap class turned out 40 boats and only a few Silhouettes were entered.

As I am converted back to Silhouettes, *Sea Fever* is for sale and I will be back at Plymouth next year with a Mark III. I hope that the entry for Plymouth week 1970 will show at least six Silhouette Mark III's.

For The Bookshelf

GRAIN RACE by Eric Newby. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1968. 45/-

You may recall that when I reviewed *The Last Grain Race* by this author in the August edition, I wrote, "I would have liked it to have included more photographs, but in the conditions as they were, it is surprising that the author found the opportunity to take those which he did." I now feel that Mr. Newby overstated the wretchedness of his service in *Moshulu* as this present book contains 150 pages of photographs almost all of which were taken on this passage and I can hardly believe that they could have been taken at all if I am to accept all that he previously wrote.

Be that as it may however, I have never seen such a fine selection of photographs taken on a windjammer and I have in my possession some old editions of the National Geographic Magazine containing illustrated articles by Alan Villiers who took passage in the Grain Race on more than one occasion. These are unrepeatable photographs depicting a lost way of life and to have them in one very presentable volume makes it almost a collector's piece, the owner of which would be quite proud to produce it for the benefit of visitors.

Having reviewed the earlier book there is little more that I can say except that you ought to beg, borrow or purchase this one.

Letters to the Editor

SILHOUETTE II, No. 1. May I bring the correspondence of 1958 regarding the first Silhouettes up to date? Silhouette II, Sail Number 1, has now passed into the ownership of my daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Ian Smith of Quakers Yard, Dormansland, Surrey, who hope to use her next year either on the Lower Thames or the South Coast.

Readers of the 1958 correspondence may remember that this boat was the second Silhouette built (the first being *Impala*) but being Mr. Robert Tucker's own boat and partly built by him he reserved for her Sail Number 1. I bought her from Mr. Tucker in November 1957 when she was named *Suzanne* and re-named her *Shadow*.

I am glad that she remains in the family and hope she has many more years to show Sail Number 1.—Robert Wheeler, Gilbury Cottage, Exbury, Southampton.

ONE MAN'S MEAT. Re Mr. Roger's letter in the October journal, while I agree that practical articles are much to be desired, I for one should not like to see personal logs shut out. Apart from the technical details mentioned in them, there are often pearls of wisdom on "How not to do it". These could be as valuable as any note on say how to fix

another handy shelf above the bunk! In common with many other people, I like to hear and read of other people's doings, and I am sure there are many more like me in the Association. So, keep up the variety: it's the spice of life! Dick Swarbrick, Hon. Secretary, Tees Bay Group.

REFLECTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS.—It's a far cry from the Rally and at a temperature of 105 in the shade I give you no guesses as to where I would rather be. It was marvellous to be back again and I would like to thank everyone for a wonderful week.

This letter, which I hope the Editor will publish as an article, is going to touch on a lot of things and to start with I'd like to give my thoughts on the Week. This year I did well and although not actually top I'm satisfied. Like the Major, as we call him, I've now modified my boat and we both think it a good idea if other boats which have done well in this and past rallies carry out modifications and race in the Handicap class in future as Silhouettes Mark IIa. Two good reasons present themselves. First, it gives other people a chance, not to say that we can't be beaten, but it is nice to know so and so is not casting a damper by being present. Once I hear Dipper's bow wave behind me I might as well give up, or anyone else for that matter. The second reason is that we think that the Silhouette can be improved, sorry Robert, and to remain standard rig isn't improving our image. Let us have some boats which, remaining Silhouettes but with subtle modifications, can give others a race for their money. Other reasons like safety present themselves but one I must mention is that which was noticeable to me at Plymouth this year: where were the previous Rally top boats? Is it that the competition tailed off for them and they thought they might as well do something else this year? Let us try and get them back by hotting up our boats a bit and making it even more interesting, if that is possible of course.

Seamanship had tailed off a bit I thought. I noticed several boats come in, pick up their wall rope then get out the anchor, whirl it round their heads cowboy style then cast it all of two feet away from the stern. Come, come, let's either drop it on the run in and pick up the wall rope or pick up the rope first and use the dinghy. I also noticed some boats were not bothering to put out bow and stern ropes to the boats alongside. With these if your anchor doesn't hold in a blow you prevent damage to your own boat and others by having moorings to another anchor via your neighbour. It also keeps everyone nicely in line and gives more space.

So much for the reflections, now for the modifications. I wish someone would take the trouble to take a camera round the boats and photograph every mod. which he sees, write a brief description of them and publish it as a book. One of us has a four-berth boat (adults?). One of us has a boat which shows a clean pair of heels to almost every boat of our size and more. One of us is a craftsman who says he just plays around in stainless steel but his fittings have bit by bit been replaced with lovely strong well designed ones of his own. Enough, we all know what we have done but many of us don't know what we can do until we try. Here are mine in roughly the order in which they happened.

My woodie mast was great as a bow as in bow and arrows so I bought an alloy one after the brass strap across the head snapped and left me with no forestay. I daresay that this one might part company half way down but I don't think the forestay will be left without visible means of support and it doesn't look like a bow any more. The stemhead received a roller-cum-forestay anchorage and I hence became stemhead rig. I know one person (no, don't cross it out, Editor) who reckons he goes better with the bow and a couple who say the stemhead forestay is no advantage.

A pulpit was added giving a marvellous sense of security up there. My hatch now opens up instead of slides and I think it is better for venti-

lation. Having shifted my cooker around every time I wanted to use it I thought it about time it came to roost so I ripped out the shelf under the bridge deck, put a batten across and mounted the cooker on a flap hinged to it. Now, when I want it, it just folds down and all the steam goes out of the hatch. I paid out for a split skirt when a girl friend was entering the cabin on one occasion so I have now got around to cutting up some lengths of wood to fit across between the bunks below the hatch with two fore and aft battens to hold them all together and to stop them from moving from port to starboard. As the bunks are not parallel there is no fore and aft movement yet they can be removed and tucked away if not wanted.

Electric light from a car battery is installed, the battery fitting in the space beneath the cooker. The only other marvellous mod. in the cabin is a Sparklet beer tap which quite a lot of people at Plymouth thought (sic) quite a necessity.

The halliards have been quite a menace when the sails are up, all that useless rope getting fouled up in the jib sheets when going about because they were tucked up round the cleats, now a piece of shock cord stretched from one hand rail to the other holds the coils in place down on the deck out of the way.

The edges of the deck seemed to be delaminating one year, so as the rubbing strake was looking a bit battered I took it off and sealed the edges of the deck with Cataloy resin then filled in the chunks with Isopan. I sanded it all smooth and after another coat of resin a new 2 in. half-round rubbing strake was screwed in position. It looks nicer, is a lot stronger and the edge of the deck is sealed. It took three hours to put the starboard strake on but only half an hour for the port and I can tell you that it is easier to start from the stern not the bow. The cost of the job was £6 13-0 and the wood was cut to size by the timber yard.

The mainsheet has been a great problem, the lead was chronic and this is not only a Silhouette problem. I laminated a bridge and nicked out the coaming on deck so that the sheets lead nearly in a vertical line to the boom. The tiller didn't fit under it so I bought a Mark III folding one turned it upside down and all was well. It served for two years but I was a bit hasty in the gluing and it only did at Plymouth this year due to some 20 screws and plenty of glue. It was a good answer and I have improved it again. My mainsheet lead is now vertical on to a stainless steel slide across the after end of the cockpit. The tiller was in the way so I took the rubber off and unscrewed the rubber pipe which is tapped at the end which goes into the keel. I drilled another hole vertically down just forward of the bulkhead, screwed and resined the pipe into position and put a support block at the head of it. About 2½ inches had to come off it as it is now a shorter stretch and part of the skeg had to be sawn off vertically to allow a straight lead down. I then had to fill in the little triangle at the bottom of the skeg with marine ply screwed, resined and glass fibred over and make a new rudder. This is the same size as the old one but is shaped to be no more than ¼-inch away from the hull at the top. It is also streamlined to a sharp trailing edge. Because the rudder post comes straight down the bulkhead I can't get into the stern locker so to overcome this I cut a hole in the stern deck, put a coaming round it and bought a Mark III glass fibre forehatch to cover it.

The advantages of five days work are the strength and lead of the mainsheet and the new rudder which is positive, very precise and has a lovely feel. I can now sit at the fore end of the cockpit and steer with ease making it easier to handle the jib sheets single-handed and to get the stern out of the water when going down wind in a race. The hatch allows me to get my whole body inside the stern locker to paint every corner with ease and what's more the bucket fits and can be got out in 0.2 of a second. The locker now takes lots more big things and I have much more

room in the boat. I haven't yet had a good long blow to comment on sailing properties but I certainly have not made a mess of things.

My present keels add 108 lbs. to the boat. The old ones rusted through and I found two that were of ½-inch steel, about 2 inches shorter in length and 1½ inches deeper. Their curve fitted so off came the old and on went the new. I like the extra weight for the same reasons Mr. Chettle gives in the September edition. As my metal mast is about a foot higher than the old wooden one and I had a gap at the top that looked as though I was reefed when using the old sail I thought I'd go modern and get a sail cut which was long and thin to fill up the space at the head and foot, where there is a lot more travel on the gooseneck slide, yet still retain the same area. This has brought the point of pressure forward to combat weather helm and helps me to point up a lot higher than other boats. The new sail sets beautifully and it has four battens instead of three. It cost £18 from Jeckells who also gave me a nice big sailbag. I'm thinking about the jib now.

Future mods.? A bit of luxury just to make sure of the Concours D'Elegance next year, besides which the bucket is getting old. Yes, a flushing version might be nice and will put more weight up forward. With the beer tap it might be a necessity.

That's about all, and I hope the Editor can make something out of this. One thing with the new keels, I had to bash the trailer about a bit but I had modded that last year to take a Hurley 22.

Phew, it's hot and past my bedtime, still I've enjoyed writing this and only look forward to your writings and the next Plymouth Week. Cheerio, for now.—David Barnes, SH 1472, *Naura*. M.V. British Corporal, c/o B.P. Tankers Ltd., Britannic House, Moor Lane, London, E.C.2. Written from Bandar Mashur, Mukulla Bay.

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