

Atlanta

1992 - 1993



ATALANTA OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

34th Edition

1992-1993 BULLETIN INDEX

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Patron : Maj Gen W Odling CB OBE MC DL

Commodore : Charles Currey Esq

Hon Secretary : Prof George Parker

Hon Editor : Michael Roberts

Frontispiece: MISTURA at Greenwich

THE COMMODORE'S MESSAGE

Charles Currey

George, our Honorary Secretary, has decided to continue his outdoor activities - still in a sitting position - but this time astride a one horsepower mount with a reduced chance of becoming thoroughly wet with salt water. Oh dear, we have lost another outstanding team in George and Cecile. Their contributions have been marvellous - the organisation perfect - but this is what we would expect from a proper professor after all!

Thank you both for all you have done for so long and let's hope there will be a little spare time for you to keep in touch with us all.

So now we welcome Colin Twyford as the new Honorary Secretary and are really grateful to him for taking it on. I know that we will all support him and Janet and any new Atalanta interest around his Medway area.

Good luck and splendid sailing in 1993 - see you all at St Ermins in the New Year.

EDITORIAL

Michael Roberts

Last year it was Roamara which was raised from the all but dead. This year Solvendo - found by Geoff Beaumont in a boatyard condemned to a slow and ignominious end among the brambles. Survivors all, Atalantas sail on, a floating memorial to Alan Vines and Uffa Fox.

To David Allen of Roamara, and Dave and Brenda Dallow of Mistura - a tribute. Their boats, at immense effort in time, energy and organisation, were on display at the Wooden Boat Show at Greenwich. The one, Mistura, a shining example of a boat restored to perfection. The other, Roamara, at the beginning of that process which will one day bring her back to her original state.

David Allen had arranged for sponsorship so that restoration work could be in progress during the show on Roamara. She was dried out, and the work could have gone ahead, but heavy rain during the delivery journey and intermittent rain during the show severely curtailed this part of the programme much to David's disappointment. Nevertheless the two boats were there, the before and the after, and the culmination of a stirring effort of organisation, co-ordinated by George Parker, our intrepid but, alas, retiring Secretary.

David Walworth has written again, this time with his log, The Memorable Mystic Cruise. In addition to this cruise, he and Michelle took part in the 100 mile New England Solo-Twin race. There was little wind and

few boats finished, but I quote from his letter, "It was a beautiful clear night, lots of stars and a meteor shower. Dawn found us ghosting along the South Shore of Black Island which is all cliffs 300-400 feet high. Fog from the fields on top of the cliffs was pouring down like a waterfall as the sun rose."

He also had trouble with keels, of which perhaps more another time, has met another Atalanta owner, and pays tribute to George Parker. "George has done an excellent job ... I always enjoyed corresponding with him."

So, thank you George, from us all. And best wishes to your successor.

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL WEST MERSEA RACE 1992

By Simon Cooper AROSA (A104)

The 1992 Atalanta Dinner. Our Hon Sec's wife, Mrs Parker, asked me if we would like to come to the annual Atalanta race. My brother and I discussed it for two seconds and said, "Yes," we would try to come.

Friday 14th August - West Mersea, at dusk. I was paddling the six foot rubber dinghy loaded with baggage, sleeping bags and provisions, the length of the pile moorings looking for Arosa which was supposed to have been put on them. She wasn't there. Returned to the pontoon jetty. A telephone call established that she had been put on a completely different mooring. Eventually found her, transferred luggage and provisions, cooked supper, turned in at 1.00 am.

Saturday 15th August. Nosed into the pontoon jetty at 8.00 am (bottom of the tide) to pick up our racing tactician. Feeling smug after overhearing someone saying, "Why hasn't that yacht run aground?". Reversed out and came to an abrupt halt. Smugness evaporated.

9.10 am, out at the starting boat. Many beautiful yachts including Atalantas 'Hiran' (A95), 'Arosa' (A104), 'Baby Seal' (A137), 'Johara' (A148), 'Bluster' (A183) and Titania 'Calista' (T10). The Classic Yacht class (the programme defined a classic yacht as being a "wooden yacht designed and built before 1965" so presumably we all have "classic yachts") was starting with the Atalantas so there were about 30 boats making for the start line. The weather was fine, the wind force three from the south-west - perfect conditions.

The start was to the west with a beat to No 3 mark on the north side of the Blackwater opposite the Bradwell nuclear power station. Arosa led at the first mark with the beautiful Johara (varnished topsides and dark green hull) second and Bluster third. The next leg to No 12 mark on the south side of the river was also a beat which was rounded with Arosa still retaining her lead, but with Bluster now up with Johara.

The next leg was a run west along the Bradwell shore to the point followed by a reach towards East Mersea. On the run Johara and Bluster hoisted spinnakers and started to make up on Arosa which does not carry a spinnaker. Johara suffered a spectacular broach and thereafter continued without her spinnaker. Bluster caught Arosa at No 2 mark, off Bradwell Spit. It was at this mark that a large gaff-rigged Dutch boat came steaming up from behind, and although not having an overlap, demanded that Bluster give them water. The response from Bluster was sufficiently robust to deter the Dutchman from forcing a passage and as he changed course his massive bowsprit swung across only inches from Bluster's and Arosa's backstays.

From No 2 mark the course to the next mark, No 6, was a broad reach with Bluster managing to keep her spinnaker doing useful work and pulling well ahead of Arosa. Arosa's crew was agonising over whether to hold on to the genoa and risk being overburdened on the next leg which was to windward, or to change down to No 1 jib and risk losing further ground whilst doing so. The decision was made to change headsails which was to prove the right one. Johara, with a self furling jib, had no such problems.

The next leg to windward and seawards was the most crucial and hard fought leg of the race with the three leading boats passing only feet from each other when crossing tacks. At the windward mark Arosa was back in the lead with Johara just in front of Bluster. On the next leg, a reach to No 1 mark off the Mersea Island shore, Johara and Bluster engaged in a gentle luffing match.

The order round No 1 mark was Arosa, Johara and Bluster and this remained the same during the final beat to the finish, all three boats crossing the line within three minutes of each other after three hours of racing.

The race provided excellent sailing and exciting racing amongst some of the loveliest yachts to be seen anywhere. Ted Stearn deserves the other competitors' thanks for organising the event, which at one time looked as though it might have a record nine entrants, but unfortunately 'Jaunty' (A100) and 'Touch' (A171) were prevented from racing because of injury and 'Kookaburra' (A168) had crewing problems.

In the evening the crews and supporters were entertained to dinner by Major General and Mrs Odling in the magnificently restored 16th century barn at Gun House. Also at dinner were the Honorary Auditor and the Honorary Secretary and Mrs Parker.

At the end of the evening Ted Stearn dropped a bombshell by mentioning to the author, "You know the winner has to write a report on the race for the Atalanta Yearbook"

MISTURA (A151)

By Dave and Brenda Dallow

After three-and-a-half years of extensive re-fit, Mistura was dropped from her trestles on to Achates' trailer for her first journey. This was to have been to Pensarn in North Wales but, with arm-twisting from George Parker, the destination was now to be latitude 51.4°N, longitude 0°. The course M54, M6, M1, M25 and M11. Time of departure 0200 hours, ETA 0600 hours on Wednesday, June 3rd 1992. For she was on her way to the Wooden Boat Show in the grounds of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, where she was to form part of the Uffa Fox display.

Back in early spring, we had sat in Mistura's cockpit amidst wood shavings, glue, pots of paint, dust, extension leads, planes and chisels, and thought, "What have we done?" We'd just received a phone call from the Hon Sec asking if he could have Mistura for the Wooden Boat Show, and I'd said "Yes". With a good proportion of her fittings and fixtures in the loft, garage and spare room, would she ever be ready in time? It was an uphill task, but with help and encouragement from Fred Boothman and Paul Harris she was finished in time, albeit minus her engine.

As with most Atalantas, the re-fit took much longer than anticipated. There was the usual battle, lasting many months, with keel bolts and keel boxes. With all fittings removed, the re-lamination and strengthening of the aft deck and part of the fore-deck was carried out, using epoxy resin. The lower part of the hull was in very good condition, but the aluminium rudder pintle had rotted out the skeg and this had to be totally replaced. All her steel work was taken off and re-galvanised and the hull stripped back to bare wood.

As most of the rotting and de-lamination was in the decks, I decided to coat the hull topsides in epoxy resin, and with two-pot paint, this had made a very hard, durable surface. Her new livery is gold with cream topsides and boot top, with her original wooden mast and boom re-varnished.

The major changes have been an SL400 toilet - one of many purchases from Bewley Boat Jumble - a complete new electrical system and the old Coventry Victor engine replaced by a 10 hp Bukh diesel engine, the installation of which has caused more problems than even the keel bolts!

Her rig was converted some years ago to mast head, by using a second set of spreaders above the three-quarter point, with cap shrouds, as well as the original three-quarter rig - which gives a rather unusual appearance. For ease of sail handling, we added Plastimo furling gear to the genoa.

The interior was in good condition and, other than repainting and varnishing, is refitted as before. New berth cushions and a double bed in the

aft cabin to give more comfort and togetherness have made Mistura into our new floating home.

At 0100 hours on June 3rd, after very little sleep, the crew - my nephew Ian, good friend Maurice and myself - assembled in the kitchen for a cup of coffee, and made last-minute arrangements, before hitching up Mistura. We were all ready to go when a car drew up and a cheery voice wished us well. It belonged to my nephew Mark, on his way home from a party, and as he went to his bed we went to the M54.

After an uneventful trip, we arrived at Greenwich with the sun rising over the Observatory, and we raised Mistura's mast for the first time in warm sunshine, under blue skies. With help from the Museum staff and organisers of the show, we manoeuvred her into position, and realised that the Atalanta was one of only three cruising boats in the exhibition. We were quietly having lunch on board when a lorry-load of scaffolding arrived and a Cockney voice announced that this was the platform for the viewing of Mistura. It was to be 26 ft long with steps either end and, "Ow 'igh do you want it, Mate?" A far cry from the garden steps which had leaned against her hull for the last three years.

We erected a frame tent to house the Atalanta model, George's splendid exhibition of drawings and photographs showing the history of the Atalanta, and the stand was ready for the public. That evening, Dave Allen arrived with Roamara (A66) to be worked on during the Show by young craftsmen.

I was able to work in London during the days of the Show and sleep aboard Mistura. This meant I could enjoy the flavour of the Wooden Boat Show and attend the reception for exhibitors - a new experience.

The Show opened to the public on Thursday - a wet, grey day. George and Cecile Parker manned the stand for the day. Friday was no better, and Ted and Jane Stearn did an admirable job in spite of the weather. My thanks to all of them in looking after Mistura so well.

Friday evening, the First Mate arrived and she was welcomed to Greenwich with a firework display off the pier. Saturday, although grey, was dry and we were joined on the stand by Colin and Janet Twyford. The interest in the Atalanta and the enthusiasm of some of the visitors was remarkable. The day passed very quickly and we accepted an invitation to dinner with Janet and Colin, and the chance to see Hiron (A95) at Erith Yacht Club. Fred and Melva Boothman came from Hereford on the Sunday - a very busy day with a stream of visitors along the viewing platform. George and Cecile returned in the afternoon to help dismantle the stand, and Mistura was made ready for the return journey within an hour of the close of the Show.

Our four days at Greenwich gave us an opportunity to meet more Atalanta owners and we made friends with other boat owners from this very interesting Show. We met the intrepid Margaret Dye of Wayfarer fame, and the daughter of Alan Vines, who came on board and shared nostalgic memories of childhood holidays spent on the original Atalanta. It was a novel experience spending our first nights aboard Mistura in Central London, surrounded by the magnificent buildings of the Maritime Museum, and a pleasant surprise later was to open our copy of the Practical Boat Owner and see her picture in colour*.

Mistura was launched mid July at Pensarn, to join Achates, Blue Jackaroo and Lyde, and as our first season comes to an end, we look forward to the 1993 season to explore Cardigan Bay and beyond.

* See P.B.O. October 1992 page 28.

SOLVENDO (A108) SO FAR

By Geoff Beaumont

It was March 1991 whilst visiting Littlehampton. As one will, I wandered into the Marina a little up the River Arun from the Hillyard sheds. It was there I saw her, unkempt, neglected, sitting upon sleepers supported by oil drums. Fully rigged, her classic lines maintained a proud dignity amidst her plastic companions, despite her drab, aged garb.

Enquiries revealed her to be for sale as had been the case for five years. Inspection revealed her to be in water up to the cockpit drains, but everything appeared to be in original and sound condition.

After some delicate and tactful dealings I agreed purchase and this revealed to my surprise a purpose built HM trailer (included) amidst brambles and undergrowth, with tyres still inflated if somewhat cracked.

May; got boat and trailer together and I arranged to have them taken pick-a-back to her new home, Wakefield, on the 8th May arriving 9.00 pm. Thirty minutes assisted by friends and she was alongside the garage. Time to reflect in the local.

The following months were spent stripping the entire boat of paint, and what a lot of paint too! The only rot, or rather delamination, was in the afterdeck at the transom joint. This was attributable to some thick wooden blocks being added, badly, with what appeared to be bath sealant.

Winter saw the engine removed, (Coventry Victor 12/14 hp flat twin petrol) and overhauled, which really amounted to strip, check, rebuild with new piston rings and all gaskets, and repaint green. The WIPAC magneto was rebuilt by WIPAC. As new £40. Now all ready to install.

Spring; the keels. I think I had been avoiding them. However, with the aid of my friend, some planks and a trolley jack, the keels were lowered out horizontally with the boat still on the trailer. One pin refused to move even with the aid of a two ton jack and lots of penetrating fluid, but to a lump hammer and some choice swearing it succumbed.

The topsides are now primed. Below the waterline will be epoxy coated, and I am tempted to varnish to coach roof and tumble. It seems criminal to cover this beautiful wood with paint! Should I apologise now?

It is now October 1992. How Tempus Fugit! Still, I will reassure myself and reiterate; this is a pleasure and not a commitment, so why does everyone ask when will it be finished? I have enjoyed it so far. I still do, and have every confidence that I still will. So to all fellow owners - Manyana. Potential owners welcome. It's therapeutic and worthwhile. (You could buy plastic!) More later.

METHUSELAH - ATALANTA 26 (A87)

(ex GLOBULIN)

By Michael Joughin

Having owned an Atalanta 31 in the 1960s I asked George Parker if he knew of any 26s for sale which in the hands of our very able local boatbuilder (Norman Whyte Quality Boats, Findhorn) could be renovated to "new" condition. A couple of years later George sold me his own Globulin and took to horses instead!

The objectives were: (and I confess boats to be my one extravagance)

1. A "new" 1992 Atalanta 26 equipped for single handling by an elderly gent. If one is dependent on crew you cannot, in a busy life, sail at short notice when weather and tide are right.
2. Ability to sail within very shallow Findhorn Bay when North Easterlies make the Bar inadvisable. So shallow rudder control had to be solved without increasing existing 20" draft with keels up.
3. A reliable diesel for motoring when the wind drops and the tide won't wait, but which allows fall back motor sailing and mooring pick up.
4. Ability to dry out upright reasonably clear of bottom puncturing stones or mooring blocks.
5. Sail handling, slab reefing and mooring carried out from cockpit so that Methuselah, the elderly owner, never has to go on deck.
6. All safety, tools and other gear stored in cockpit lockers to reduce up and down trips below deck.
7. Accommodation for two family/two sex local or West Coast cruising.

The "as new" was achieved by removing all fittings and stripping 30 years of paint off the hull down to the wood and giving everything two coats of West resin before building up three undercoats and then two enamel coats in Fairey Marine traditional blue and white. A gold line sets off the hull sheer a treat.

A real improvement on the original design is the vertically dropped "in box" rudder. The box at 20" draft is marginally shallower than the new skeg and has sufficient surface area with board retracted to give full control. I sail in the Bay with 2'6" keel to give early warning and to protect skeg and rudder heel. If gusty I sail comfortably well reefed.

Methuselah's control is achieved by bringing all halliards, slab reefing line, rudder raising lines and mooring pick up hook back to the cockpit, and by having a rudder "notching rack" on after cabin lower wash board and an Autohelm 1000 on starboard cockpit seat. Depth, log, wind and compass are mounted either side of forward companion way.

A deeper skeg - 20" - was fitted to protect the propeller, to keep the bottom off the ground, to give fixing and protection to the rudder box and to help directional stability when sailing. To keep the boat upright on the putty small bilge keel runners were added. Rudder down draws four feet.

These have all been a great success. She goes to windward in tramlines with an apparent wind angle of 40 degrees and a 95 degree span between comfortable tacks. Both the "notching rack" and the autopilot sail her better than Methuselah.

The diesel is a Yanmar 9 HP GM10 and with a three bladed 14 x 7 propeller allows cruising at six knots (with 5.5 knots silently and effortlessly) and will go to 6.7 knots at full throttle. To start with we could only get 4.5/5.0 knots and even then the engine laboured and belched black smoke. Once we realised we had made the new engine space watertight - and therefore too airtight - and had provided more air by an intake fan in the air intake then the problem was solved. This installation gives economical and punchy motor sailing and good low speed control.

The one area which needed expensive rebuilding was the cockpit and its lockers. They had to be ripped out and rebuilt - again West resin treated. We built them round the life raft. Kedge, safety gear, flares and spare water to starboard and fenders, warps, wash boards and tools to port. The engine space is sound deadened and watertight. Unfortunately the only bit of the boat we did not resin and treat was the inboard side of the keel cases and both have a slight but irritating weep which will have to be tackled next winter.

The accommodation is dated by modern domestic layouts but for limited cruising with small numbers is adequate. The comfort which matters

- in the cockpit - is splendid. Methuselah is now a delight to sail. She is very sea-kindly with a comfortable confidence-giving motion. Her sail handling and engine installations make for easy and therefore safer handling. Purchase and refit costs total about 75% of a new and fully equipped GRP 26' sloop.

She is well mannered and is, I guess, as a 1992 Atalanta, unique. I am sure that Uffa Fox would approve. Norman Whyte and his team have made a quality job at a cost which would be the envy of any South coast yard.

NOT MORE JOHARA!!

By John Greenhough

The 1991 West Mersea race served its purpose in making StJohn realise that a larger headsail would not cure weatherhelm in an Atalanta. The effort of helming in that race was too much for our scratch helmswoman, but later when StJohn was bathing he noticed how easily the rudder lifted when it was thought to be constrained by the downhaul, and further research showed that the faster Johara sailed on a reach the more the rudder lifted, with the resulting increase in weather helm. Therefore the main technical work has been to increase the purchase to hold the rudder down when sailing, at the risk of knocking off the transom if we hit an obstruction. In fact the chance of that is slight as the keels would touch first and give the helmsperson time to release the downhaul. Now the helm is feather light at all points of sailing and motoring. The other technical change was to reduce the pitch on the propeller which seems to make the engine work less hard but strangely has increased fuel consumption. It seems that propeller size and pitch is not a precise art.

It is now appropriate to touch on the 1992 West Mersea race when Bluster (A183) saw the stern of Johara and Johara came second to Arosa (A104) which was sailed more expertly than the others. In the end the helmsmanship is all. Johara's crew were still pleased with the result and more work on the learning curve will improve our performance.

Our principal disaster was the state of the hull when we took her out of the water at the end of last season. The bottom, so carefully stripped and painted with six coats of International on the advice of the local chandlery, was a black squidgy mess which only wet and dry would remove. Worse, the two coats of Yacht Enamel had to be sanded away before we had a key for another coat of anything. I took advice at the International stand at the Boat Show. Guess what? We had done the wrong thing. The International agent should have known better than to advise Yacht Enamel. Now we must repaint with more primer and put on two coats of Interspeed 2000 instead (price about £60+ a can!). In the event the Interspeed we bought was so

lumpy that it was unusable, and as we only had one week-end to do the job we used Nautix Hard Matrix Antifouling. This may be perfect for French waters but it is a disaster in River Ribble mud. It merged with the mud in four weeks to make an irremovable coating which grew 100 million pin head barnacles in the waters of the Blackwater, Orwell, Deben, Orfe and Alde (and the drop of sea in between during two weeks). Fellow yachties in these waters use Woollies undercoat instead of anti fouling. If anyone kows anything better please tell, or that will be our substance next year. We never stripped the hull from the waterline to the rubbing strakes as I promised. Perhaps in 1993.

And now for the love interest! Sailing in the race in West Mersea this year on Calista (T10) were Kim Gardner and her friend Melanie, and on Johara (A148) Bertram Greenhough and David Ferguson, all aged 11. They met at General and Mrs Odling's famous barn at the after race supper and the result was that the two boats sailed together for the next four days and when they parted the children promised to write to each other each month. Write - in these days of the telephone and instant communication! No doubt stranger things have happened on Atalantas.

TWIN RUDDERS FOR ATALANTA MARY (A102)

By David Lovelock

Followers of the fortunes of Atalanta Mary will recall that in 1979 her rudder blade snapped off on a passage between the Solent and Cherbourg, and in 1989 she lost her rudder and skeg while running up-channel to participate in the ill-fated Rye to Boulogne race. Over the years many Atalantas have suffered similar fates, and after our second accident I resolved to seek out a radical solution to minimise the risk of further similar incidents.

Design

I have always held the view that the original design of the Atalanta rudder left much to be desired. Faireys modified it twice and might have done so again had production continued, and generations of owners have come up with a range of alterations in size, shape and material. I had an idea that twin rudders might offer significant advantages but not knowing of any Atalanta with such a modification (is there one?), I needed to do some research before embarking on such a project.

My main source of reference was the book "Rudder Design for Sailing Craft" published by the Amateur Yacht Research Society (AYRS). One of the most useful tables in the book shows the normal range of rudder area coefficients for yachts of different size. A boat's rudder area coefficient is the ratio of its immersed lateral area to the area of its rudder and skeg,

and I had long held the intuitive view that the Atalanta's coefficient was unnecessarily high. In round figures, the areas concerned (in square metres) are:

For the hull:	2.0
For 2 keels (they are far enough apart to have a cumulative effect): $2 \times 0.6 =$	<u>1.2</u>
Total fixed area	<u>3.2</u>
For the rudder & skeg:	0.7
Rudder area coefficient: $3.2/0.7 =$	<u>4.6</u>

According to the AYRS book normal figure for a boat of eight metres would be about 10, so a rudder area of about .35 square metres should suffice. As my first priority was to minimise the stress on the steering gear, this reduced area was taken as a target figure, noting that if a twin rudder system was used the windward blade might sometimes be largely ineffective, so each blade should be close to this area.

The next reference to the AYRS book was to establish limits for aspect ratio - the ratio of vertical to horizontal measurements - and any figure of between 0.5 and 2 was shown as being acceptable for the proposed application. My second design priority was to eliminate the troublesome lifting gear: experience had shown that in a tight, shallow anchorage the lifted rudder was awkward and vulnerable and sometimes got forgotten when getting under way, and when sailing in really shallow water the rudder was impossible to use up or down. Sketches showed that a fixed rudder with the target area and an aspect ratio close to unity could be hung on each quarter, either from the transom (with skegs) or under the hull (in balanced form), without exceeding the keel-up draft.

There were many unquantifiable factors to be considered in choosing the configuration. On the one hand an under-hull arrangement would be more efficient and could be of balanced design. On the other hand, I was anxious not to give up any aft cabin space to internal steering gear and to build in ample strength so that the boat could take the ground safely - and upright! I was also keen to keep the rudders well aft to minimise the loss of handiness under power which was certain to follow removal of the centreline rudder. In the end I opted for the transom-hung arrangement which is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. The skeg area was increased beyond the recommended 25% to give the largest possible bearing area at the hull, and a heavy rudder post and knees included.

Construction

Anyone wishing to fit twin rudders is likely to have his own ideas and

methods, so it would be inappropriate to set out full constructional details here. However, a few facts are given for interest and guidance.

The solid Iroko rudder post and knees were inexpensively cut to shape by a joinery shop, templates having been provided. The rudder and skeg were laminated from good quality WPB plywood using West resin and later faired to a streamlined shape with portable power tools. I would have preferred to use heavy galvanised fastenings and fittings throughout, but in the time available could only obtain stainless pintles and, for the longer fastenings, stainless studding. The skegs, rudder posts and knees were all faired closely to hull shape and bedded in thickened West resin. The tiller arm was a problem until I ran across agricultural gate hangers of just the right size in a country shop - mine were black steel, but galvanised ones are available. Flexible boots made from butyl rubber sheet (pond lining) close the transom openings.

It was necessary to make changes to the steering wire system. Figure 3 shows the repositioned turning points and a new sheave on the centreline. To support the latter an additional extended knee was installed, which also strengthens the keel to transom joint where the old rudder post has been removed.

In Use

We tried the twin rudder system under a wide range of conditions this year and were well satisfied. Despite being unbalanced the helm was light under all conditions. The boat went about quite well and we were only let down on one occasion when excessive reefing left her badly balanced. On the run we felt that the bigger twin skegs added a lot to stability and ease of steering: we had a merry time plugging a spring tide over Poole Bar on a dead run before a stiff south-easterly wind, and despite wild waves we always felt comfortable. Not surprisingly, under power the boat was not quite as handy as before. We found that it was still possible to kick the stern about when berthing, but not as hard, and the turning circle at speed was greater. Astern, a bit more speed was needed to give steerage way.

Inside the aft cabin the slight intrusion of the new knees is more than compensated for by the lack of lifting and lowering tackles and a general feeling of tidiness. But best of all is the freedom from having to worry about whether the rudder is up or down! We also feel far more confident in the strength of the steering gear, and Figure 4 tells why.

I would certainly recommend the change to anyone. Given the same problem again, with hindsight, I would make the rudder area about 10% greater by increasing the horizontal length. If I did not have an inboard engine I would seriously consider the under-hull alternative. But I am very

happy with what we have achieved and look forward to next season with confidence. If anyone wants more details or would like to come and look at Atalanta Mary in her new configuration, please get in touch with us.

LE BATEAU IVRE (A146)
THE MEMORABLE MYSTIC CRUISE
By David Walworth

This year the cruises were short. For Columbus Day weekend, 9-12 October, it was decided to sail from Bristol, Rhode Island, to Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut. We would rendezvous there with various family members, as parents Jim and Dorothy Walworth and sister Diane and her husband Paul Duva all live around an hour away from Mystic. Sister Nancy and her husband Bob Chant were to come up and sail with David and Michelle Peterson.

Our first inkling that things might not go as planned was when we were informed that Bob had cracked his elbow playing basketball. The cast was scheduled to be removed 9 October. It was decided that Nancy and Bob would also meet us in Mystic.

Unfortunately we overslept Friday and had a late start. Michelle is finishing her doctoral thesis in Cell Biology and is currently on a bizarre schedule, arriving late Thursday as a consequence. This late start put us out of phase with the tides. On to the log.

9 October - Friday

- 1445 Wind SSE 15-20 knots. Drop mooring, No. 4 and full main, as anticipate increase in wind. Cloudy, drizzly.
- 1645 Tacking down the bay, long and short tacks.
- 1820 Under Newport Bridge. Now partly cloudy, which is nice as there is a full moon.
- 1850 Off Fort Adams, which is at East Passage, the Eastern mouth of Narragansett Bay. Discover that we can fetch Point Judith, about ten miles distant, our destination for the night. Close hauled on port tack.
- 1950 Abeam Brenton Reef light tower. Boat going well, some spray and the occasional solid bit of water when the helmsman hits a wave wrong. Outboard motor bracket keeps popping into the down position. Finally, after several trips aft to pull it back up while the boat is bouncing around, it is lashed into the up position. Vow to unbolt the bracket this winter and immediately throw into the trash.
- 2030 After going below to plot a couple of bearings on the chart, it is deemed that the chicken stir fry planned for dinner this evening is postponed until further notice.

2200 Lights on the Point Judith Harbor of Refuge breakwater are sighted and, even more importantly, understood. We ease sheets and run in. Soon the fun begins. We sail back and forth a couple of times in an attempt to figure out the best place to anchor. We are unsuccessful on the first attempt. End up being right in line with the surge from the harbor mouth. Try again! Haul the anchor up and yours truly just leaves it on deck without tying it down. Dumb. We fall off, tack, and the anchor goes over the side between the legs of the pulpit. Manage to rush forward and grab the chain before all 150 feet disappear over the side. Looking at the chain rubbing against the paint am reminded why I don't use expensive polyurethane paint. Manage to make the chain fast to the bollards and get the sails down. The chain is of course hung up on the keel so she is lying beam on to the wind. However, by motoring onto the other tack, if you will, manage to free the chain and try again. The Harbor of Refuge is artificial and shaped like a V with the point facing south. Motor upwind into the point of the V and successfully anchor in the point of the V at 2330. Michelle makes soup and strong rum and tonics.

10 October - Saturday

- 0815 Getting underway. Had intended to get underway earlier but night was rocky as several quite strong squalls blew through. Underway at 0600 wasn't going to happen. This was to have the inevitable result.
- 0825 On course for Watch Hill, close hauled on port tack. Wind WSW 15-20. Discovered this morning that the Chart Kit with the charts for Fisher's Island Sound and the Mystic River are safely at home. At least it won't get wet. The Chart Kit on board goes as far as Watch Hill, and Mystic is six miles beyond that. Why did I think that this Chart Kit went past Watch Hill? Reading the Coast Pilot very carefully.
- 0930 Change to big genoa. Wind now 10-15, getting hazy.
- 1100 Make chicken stir fry for lunch. Very good.
- 1200 Fog coming and going but wind still steady.
- 1230 Wind going light and westerly (where we want to go), fog closes in, current turning against us. Engine on.
- 1250 Visibility 200 metres, can hear Watch Hill horn.
- 1315 Fog lifts, get fix off of Watch Hill light and water tank on shore. We are 1.75 NM ESE of Watch Hill light.
- 1345 At Watch Hill. Now we get to figure out just how well we can understand the directions in the Pilot. Never sail without a chart!

- 1615 After blundering about for a while, we gradually sort things out. Fortunately Michelle has sailed out of Mystic a couple of times before. When we started seeing boats with home ports of Mystic on the transom we knew we were on the right track. Made the 1615 opening of the Mystic River highway bridge.
- 1630 Tied up at Mystic Seaport. Our welcoming committee wants to know why we're late.
- 1730 Whisked away to Diane and Paul's for showers and Paul's wonderful homemade pizza.
- 2000 Driving back to Mystic with Nancy and Bob. Had declared that we were not going to come all this way and then not sleep on the boat. It becomes dangerously foggy on the road, consequently, Nancy and Bob elect to spend the night on board. Fortunately, they had brought their sleeping bags in the car.

11 October - Sunday

- 1200 Underway from Mystic Seaport to make the 1215 drawbridge opening. Took a good look at a chart of Fisher's Island Sound this morning. Made sense of the previous day's blunderings. At least now we have a fair current.
- 1240 Railway bridge downstream of highway bridge finally opens. Were considering rafting up with other boats and sharing rum supplies.
- 1315 Wind light, mostly SW. Set big genoa and full main.
- 1450 At Watch Hill. Had to motor for a little while, now beam reaching under asymmetrical spinnaker. Back on chartered waters. Playing around with various amounts of keel. It seems that if there is some wind, but not so much that ultimate stability is an issue, can benefit from having the keel almost entirely raised, enough to fill the slot (new keel flaps this winter). However, in quite light stuff, the boat seemed to require more keel down, probably not generating enough lateral resistance from speed alone at slow speeds, which I suppose makes sense. Michelle makes cheese and bacon quesadillas.
- 1835 Drizzling for last hour or so. Wind has gone away. Am informed by Michelle (from within the sodden folds of the spinnaker) that the spinnaker sticks to itself and is more difficult to pack when wet. Motor on.
- 2000 Anchor down in Pt. Judith Harbor of Refuge. Much smoother operation this time, nothing like practice. Making linguine with clam sauce for dinner, Michelle mixes rum and tonics.

12 October - Monday

- 1000 After nice breakfast, underway for Bristol Harbor. Big genoa, full main, wind 15 kts NW. Beautiful clear day, rather brisk.

- 1035 Close reaching, off of Pt. Judith, having turned North to head for West Passage into Narragansett Bay. Expect prettier leaves on this side of the bay. Where was this weather three days ago?
- 1300 Under Jamestown Bridge. What a day. Try to get Michelle to make some soup for lunch. Am informed that she is not hungry yet, is enjoying the sail and if I am hungry I can go below and eat a tortilla. With salsa if I am ambitious.
- 1500 Pass a beautiful old gaff-rigged cutter, probably English built around the turn of the century.
- 1600 Pick up mooring in Bristol Harbor.
- 1900 After showers, am taken out to dinner by Michelle to Aidan's Pub, where they serve quite good Guinness, especially for this side of the Atlantic. Food is also very good.
- 2030 To bed early, Michelle reading a mystery, I, perhaps inspired by all the fog on Saturday, feel an urge to re-read "The Riddle of the Sands". The Harbor of Refuge is also similar to what I imagine anchoring among the sandbanks must be like, just a low stone breakwater which doesn't give much protection from the wind, with the waves breaking against it.
- 2035 Fall asleep. Michelle, of sterner stuff, makes it to 2040.
A great weekend, as is usual on Le Bateau Ivre.

THE VOYAGE HOME - GELLIE'S GALLIC GALLOP (T4)

By M R Dixon

Friday 17th May 1991 What with one thing and another, Ian Silk and I didn't get away over the Bridge of Dee until about 1730, making a detour via the STA schooner "Sir Winston Churchill" moored in the York Basin at Glasgow so that I could pick up my 'yottie' hat, inadvertently left there the previous week - but a vital piece of my personal sailing attire.

Saturday 18th May 1991 Our plan had been to spend the day sorting out the boat, acquainting ourselves with the gear and so on, but as we had made good progress and the forecast was favourable, I decided to sail on the afternoon tide.

The flood tide was making fast and the wide expanses of sand were quickly becoming islands and then disappearing completely. We rowed up alongside, lobbed up the last minute shopping and the oars, and then made fast the dinghy. What a pair of wuzzuks - basic seamanship lesson: 1. make dinghy fast, 2. climb aboard, 3. transfer gear.

Well, here we were. After donkeys' years at sea, I was about to set sail in my own boat for the first time. Ian and I had discussed the voyage at length during the planning stage and agreed three key objectives:

1. To get as far as possible by late Tuesday 28th May (Ian had to be at work the next day).
2. Visit all the countries round the Irish Sea.
3. Celebrate Ian's 40th birthday with Guinness in Ireland!

The start of the voyage was inauspicious. The weather turned dull and drizzly, and the wind was light and (as was to become the norm for the trip) on the nose. We milled around for a couple of hours before starting the engine, but within half an hour we had alternator problems necessitating a fiddly upside-down-in-the-engine-compartment repair job. What with the earlier tension, I was the nearest I've ever been to being ill at sea, and I regret to say I failed to do justice to the meal Ian had prepared. Later on though, the wind filled in and we enjoyed some pleasant sailing for the rest of the evening, raising Maughold Head light on the north east point of the Isle of Man at 2230. We even managed an hour's sleep each!

Sunday 19th May 1991 As the tide was setting us north, I decided to motor the remaining distance into Laxey Bay (about 5 miles north of Douglas). It was still dark and with no features to check position I approached the anchorage cautiously, so much so that Ian was hanging onto about 50 feet of chain dangling off the bow roller with me assuring him the anchor must be on the bottom as the echo sounder was showing only 10 feet. It transpired that the sounder was actually displaying 10 fathoms; Ian can be terribly polite when he tries.

We sailed from Laxey at 1130 bound for Puffin Island which marks the northern entrance to the Menai Strait between Wales and Anglesey. It turned out to be one of the most enjoyable sails of the entire trip with the wind just free, allowing us to sail steadily at 4 knots. It was too good to be true though - a resounding crack as the genoa clew cringle failed. We set the number one jib and I effected a repair by sewing a length of rope round the clew to act as a makeshift cringle. Another problem was becoming apparent - the whipstaff shaft was extraordinarily tight in the sleeve passing through the bulkhead. Clearly something would have to be done soon, but meanwhile we were more than happy to allow Gellie to steer herself - which she did for ten hours without either of us touching the helm.

Monday 20th May 1991 Although the wind had veered, the tide was setting us to the east and by 0300 it was clear we were not going to lay the entrance, so we put a tack in to the north west for an hour, before tacking again and entering the strait between Puffin Island and Anglesey, fetching up to the anchor at 0630.

I had already decided not to transit the Menai Strait until the following day, but as it looked as if we would have to move closer inshore anyway, I re-checked the tides and distances involved to see if it was feasible

to have a bash at the passage that afternoon.

The tricky bit of the passage is the mile or so between the two bridges just upstream of Bangor. This narrow section is known as the Swellies (or as the locals say "Sue-ell-iss") and is described in the Admiralty Pilot as ... "Owing to the rocks and islets, the narrowness of the channels, and to the strength of the tidal streams, with very little slack water, navigation through the Swellies is dangerous and should not be attempted without an experienced pilot." Yes ... well ...!

With engine on, and with Ian at the helm, we weighed anchor and got under way. The channel is well buoyed, and as we got closer to the shore, life became more comfortable as the seas flattened out. I was watching the tell-tale signs to confirm the flood tide was flowing, noting speed and distance to go. Clearly the timing was looking OK - crucial, as you must arrive in the narrows bang on high water when the tide is slack for ten to fifteen minutes. The trick is to go up one side on the flood and down the other on the ebb.

In the event, the Swellies were transitted without incident, thanks to the Admiralty Pilot directions which were, as ever, clear, unambiguous and precise. (One classic bit is "steer 263 with the south chimney of the cottage on Gored Goch right ahead" ... not the north chimney mark you, the south one, and this on a cottage not much bigger than my back lounge.) We emerged from under the Britannia Bridge with the first of the ebb just away at 1600.

Tuesday 21st May 1991 As our next port of call was to be in Eire, I had to clear Gellie (and ourselves) with Customs. I 'phoned the Customs in Holyhead to check the procedure and was advised to "leave the C1328 in the box at Port Dinorwic". Fortunately I knew what a C1328 form was - I even had one! Having duly filled out and posted the form, stocked up with some chandlery items and listened to the forecast, we sailed from the pontoon at 1800, but not before "ye ancient yottie mariner" on the pontoon prophesised doom and gloom about crossing the Caernarfon bar on an ebb tide with a westerly wind.

It proved a doddle! With the ebb tide, we bumbled down past Caernarfon again, fairly shot through the narrows between Abermenai Point and Fort Belan, and had crossed the bar by 1930. We set the sails and, apart from one short but thick patch of fog enjoyed a really fine evening's sail.

Wednesday 22nd May 1991 This was Ian's birthday, and I'd promised to get him to Ireland, but what a slog it turned out to be! In the small hours the wind died completely before veering west/north-west.

Nevertheless we made Howth marina at 1600 and were allocated an empty slot for the night.

Thursday 23rd May 1991 Ian skippered the next leg - heading north for the first time, aiming for Ardglass in Ulster. We sailed at 1330, to catch the north going tide up the Irish coast, passing inside of Ireland's Eye - the delightful craggy islet off Howth - and Lambay Island.

All afternoon we sailed gently along, not particularly fast, but enjoying the peace and quiet for a change.

Friday 24th May 1991 The peace didn't last long! The wind swung right round to the north west and then to the north, leaving Ian with no option but to motor on. Dawn broke - a grey morning with deteriorating visibility.

Gellie was off Ardglass shortly after 0900. Visibility was about five miles so we were able to check progress along the coast without difficulty, motor sailing up past the entrance to Strangford Lough. Noon saw us approaching South Rock light vessel where we altered course four points to port.

Macmillan's has two lines on the marina at Donaghadee and cautions that the entrance is tricky and available only four hours either side of HW. Even though we were right on LW we decided to take a look anyway - we could see masts above the wall and apparently some 15 feet above us, but couldn't make out the entrance until we were almost on top of it - a narrow cleft in the rocks with a couple of rusty rock coloured beacons marking the limits. Clearly we were not going to get in, so we pushed on round the corner, mooring up alongside the fishing vessel Achieve at 1630, twenty seven hours out from Howth.

The 1800 shipping forecast was predictable - north-westerly force three, moderate visibility - we were becoming resigned to winds on the nose and indifferent visibility.

We sailed from Donaghadee just before 2000, slipping inside of the Platters and Mew Island and across the entrance to Belfast Lough.

Saturday 25th May 1991 By 0300, the tide was turning against us, so, as planned, we nosed our way into Cushendun Bay - stooging for an hour or so - before anchoring just as dawn broke. We got our heads down for a couple of hours whilst the tide flowed south. Off again at 0800, hugging the coast until the tide turned in our favour. The visibility was deteriorating by the minute but I decided to carry on, switching on the engine to give us that extra knot or so. Hovering around the traffic separation scheme in the North Channel with visibility less than a cable is not to be recommended!

I guess it must have been about 1230 when Ian cocked his head and asked, "Did you hear that?" "What?" says I - I am somewhat older and no doubt deafer. After a couple of minutes I too became aware of this sort of muted "boingggg" lasting for about two or three seconds. Try as we might, we couldn't trace the source of the noise although it seemed to come from

inside the boat. After a while we realised it was extremely regular - 26 seconds.

Consulting the chart confirmed that we were slap bang in the middle of a submarine exercise area, and even though we had the engine running, I switched on the echo sounder for good measure.

Fortunately the visibility started to improve, (useful for us perhaps, but not particularly relevant for submarines), and away over on the port bow was a frigate (turned out to be HERMIONE). All the while, the "boingggg" was becoming "BOINGGGG", so I called up the warship, gave our position and asked if they knew anything about it. "Don't worry!" they nonchalantly replied, which I thought was pretty blasé, but then I suppose I might have just screwed up their war game.

By now (1330) the wind had died completely and the tides further up the Sound of Jura were not favourable, so I decided to head for Gigha to top up the fuel. As we were only stopping a couple of hours, I decided to head for the steamer pier at the south end of the island, and there it was we moored up alongside the fishing vessel REYNARD at 1548. Scotland at last! I was advised to avoid going up the inside via the Sound of Jura and the Sound of Luing - "you always get at least six hours of foul tide" - instead "shoot across to the Sound of Islay, pick up the tide at the south end, up through the Sound and you still have a further six hours of favourable tide up the Firth of Lorne, altogether 10 to 12 hours of favourable tide".

So that's what we did. We sailed at 1720, and although the tide was against us, we got to the south end of the Sound of Islay just as the tide turned with us. It was getting murky to say the least, and with darkness closing in too, it looked as we were in for an interesting pilotage. The passage is quite straightforward as there are few dangers always assuming you can see something of either the lights or the land. Yes ... well ... neither the lights nor the land were that obvious until we were on top of them ... hummm! It wasn't too much of a problem though, we did pick up the lights in the gloom. The passage was fast with the tide astern, and we achieved the fastest time of the trip - 10.1 knots - as we were ejected out of the north end of the Sound at midnight.

Sunday 26th May 1991 The wind was at last free - wonders of wonders - but only force two. Never mind, it was bliss to have the engine off and to bumble along at two knots or so.

We were a couple of miles from the Garvellachs when the Decca decided to throw a wobbler. Visibility was still only half a mile, so I had Ian steer due north until the problem resolved itself. Twenty minutes later, land sprung up all around us as the visibility improved dramatically, so I was able to fix our position positively and resume our course.

By now it was evident that we were not going to make it to Corpach that afternoon in time to lock into the Caledonian Canal, and as I figured we might as well hole up somewhere comfortable, we headed for Dunstaffnage.

We berthed there at 1300 and spent the afternoon doing the necessary, and sailed from Dunstaffnage just before midnight with Ian 'in command'.

Monday 27th May 1991 The earliest we could lock into the Canal was 0800, and I had worked out that we could cover the distance comfortably with the flood tide. It was a fine night - flat calm but enjoyable none the less. Ian piloted us up past Port Appin and at 0400 we shot through the Corran narrows. On schedule, we arrived at Corpach at 0600. Bang on time, the canal staff arrived and we entered the canal at 0815.

There was some delay while HM Customs patrol launch locked down NEPTUNE's staircase, but this gave our first official guests the chance to clamber on board - Terry Small and Judith Pashley. Great to see them both.

Thanks to the kindness of the two lockkeepers at Culloch and Kytra who opened up for us long after official closing time, we made it to Fort Augustus, where we treated ourselves to a pub meal and a couple of pints.

Tuesday 28th May 1991 It was 1100 before we finally cleared the locks at Fort Augustus and out into Loch Ness, as we had to wait for the staff to lock up a whole raft of boats. We had another superb day - even though the wind was again on the nose.

Although Ian was willing to stay another day, it was dependent on us clearing the sea lock that evening. As the day wore on, this was becoming less and less likely. At Dochgarroch locks, the keeper kindly let me 'phone ahead to Caley Marine at Inverness where I confirmed the availability of a medium stay berth. And so it was that the voyage came to a temporary halt when we moored up at Caley Marine at 1740. Ian departed a couple of hours later to catch the train back to Aberdeen.

Wednesday 29th May 1991 Well, there we were; two of the objectives met, Ian's 40th 'Irish' birthday and all the countries round the Irish Sea visited. And not too bad on the progress either - 499 miles.

Saturday 8th June 1991 The plan was to get back to Stonehaven by Sunday evening, so GELLIE was hovering at the top lock at Muirtown by 0800. A quick trip to the shops from Muirtown basin and then down to the sea lock and out into the Beaulie Firth by 1020.

Yet again the wind was on the nose, but the tide was ebbing, so we made reasonable progress out under the Kessock bridge, passed Fort George and into the Moray Firth.

We were off Burchard when the 1800 shipping forecast came through - south or south-east force 5/6 increasing 7/8 for a time. I figured as long as

the wind remained in the south-east, we'd be sheltered enough - at least until Lossiemouth. We passed the Halliman Skerries with the distinctive beacon, and I tacked in towards Lossiemouth. After discussion with David, I decided to head across Spey Bay - if the wind did really pipe up we could always return to Lossie.

The evening was turning dark - clouding over completely, although the visibility was excellent. Life on board was beginning to get uncomfortable though, with a short steep sea developing. By mutual consent we decided to head for Buckie for the night.

Sunday 9th June 1991 We entered the harbour just after midnight and headed up to the top dock (David's local knowledge coming in useful), where we berthed alongside the fishing vessel CRIMOND.

We motored from Buckie just after 1100. The wind was down to force 2, but there was a long swell setting along the coast from the east. I spoke with NORTHIA, one of Shell's tankers anchored offshore, but there was no-one on board I knew from the 'old days'. We had GELLIE moored in Whitehills by 1430 with the Harbour Master, Mr Pirie, on hand to take lines. By the time David and I had GELLIE ship-shape, Jimmy and Sheila Bisset arrived and, after a cuppa, we all set off back to Aberdeen.

Friday 14th June 1991 We returned to Whitehills, with Ian back as crew at about 1600 and sailed at 1730. At last the wind was fair - north-westerly force 3, and within an hour we had the spinnaker up. Progress wasn't spectacular, but we were timing the passage so as to be off Fraserburgh at 2300, just as the south going tide started to make. On rounding Kinnaird's Head at 2300 we executed a spinnaker gybe - heady stuff this sailing! - and with the tide fairly flowing, we flew round the corner.

Saturday 15th June 1991 Off Peterhead the wind, such as it was, backed, forcing us to hand the spinnaker and an hour later the wind died away completely. However, in time, with breakfast and a very nasty moment with the paraffin stove over, we were delighted to see the wind pick up, again from the north-west. Up went the spinnaker again and off we went. The tide helped and we made a respectable speed down past Newburgh and Balmedie. We were called up by the Coastguard as we passed by Cove - it was Ian's wife Hazel checking on our whereabouts.

And so it was we came round Garron Point and into Stonehaven Bay - where the wind died again completely!

Never mind, we'd made it. I had waited a long time for this, bringing my own boat into her home port, and I think it fair to say Ian and I were well chuffed when we picked up the mooring at 1624.

The trip was not remarkable - thousands of people do it every year. But this was my own first, so that made it unique.

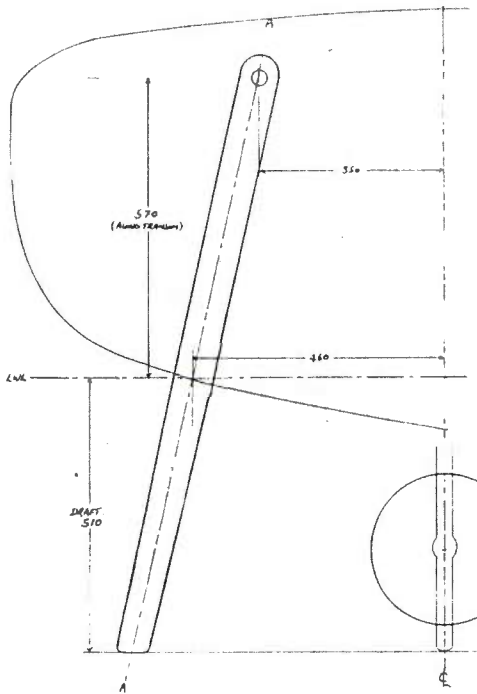


Figure 1: Position of Port Rudder
(The Starboard is a mirror image!)

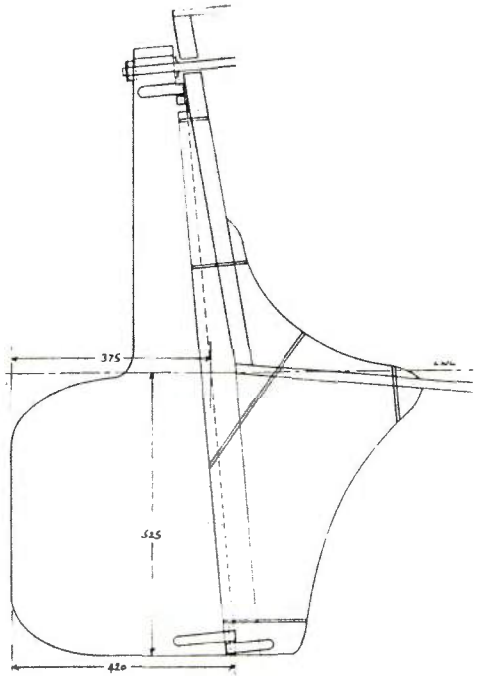


Figure 2: Section through Rudder, Skeg & Aft

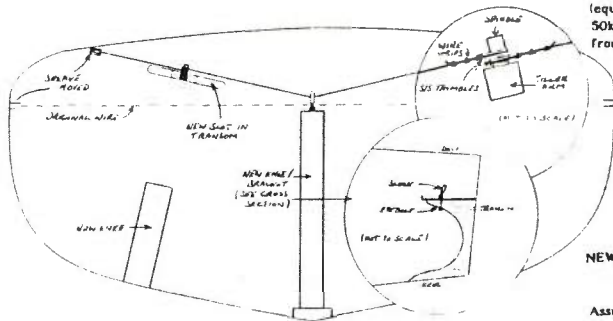


Figure 3: Arrangement of Steering Wires

ORIGINAL DESIGN - ALL STRESS ON ONE RUDDER/SKEG

Assume max. force on tiller arm of 333kg (equivalent to pull of 50kg on whipstaff 1m from bearing)

Resulting forces are 204 kg at upper and 564 kg at lower bearings (ie over 0.5 tonne pull on bottom of skeg!)



Balancing force of 416 kg at rudder's centre of effort

NEW DESIGN - HALF STRESS ON EACH RUDDER/SKEG

Assume max force on tiller arm of 139kg (equivalent to pull of 50kg on whipstaff 1m from bearing)

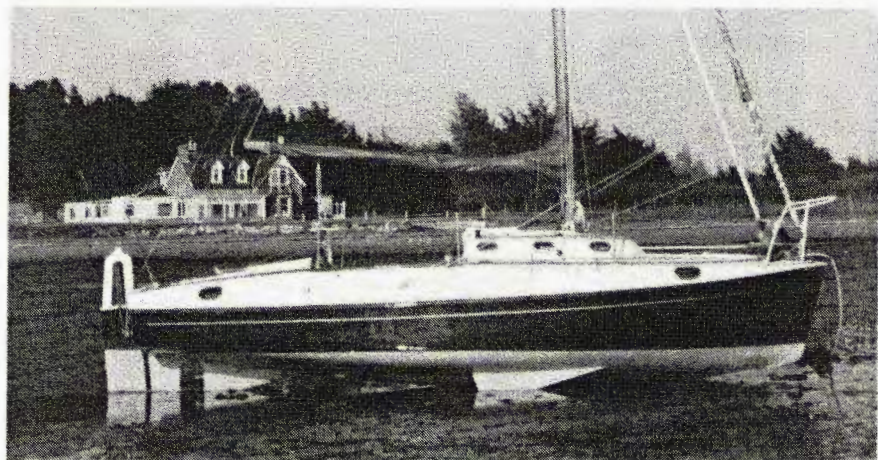
Resulting forces are 169 kg at upper and 90 kg at lower bearings



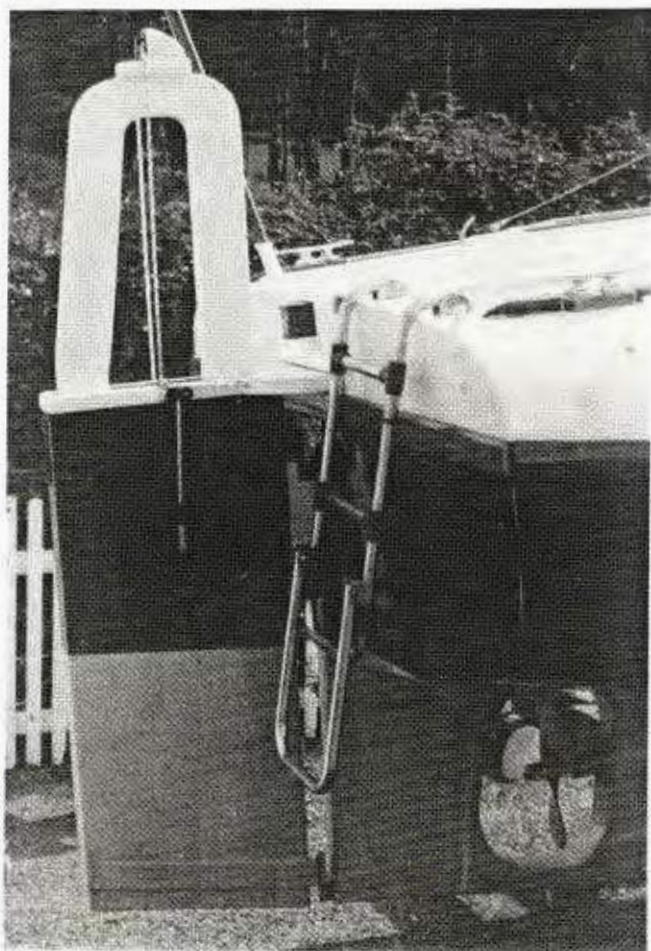
Balancing force of 119 kg at rudder's centre of effort

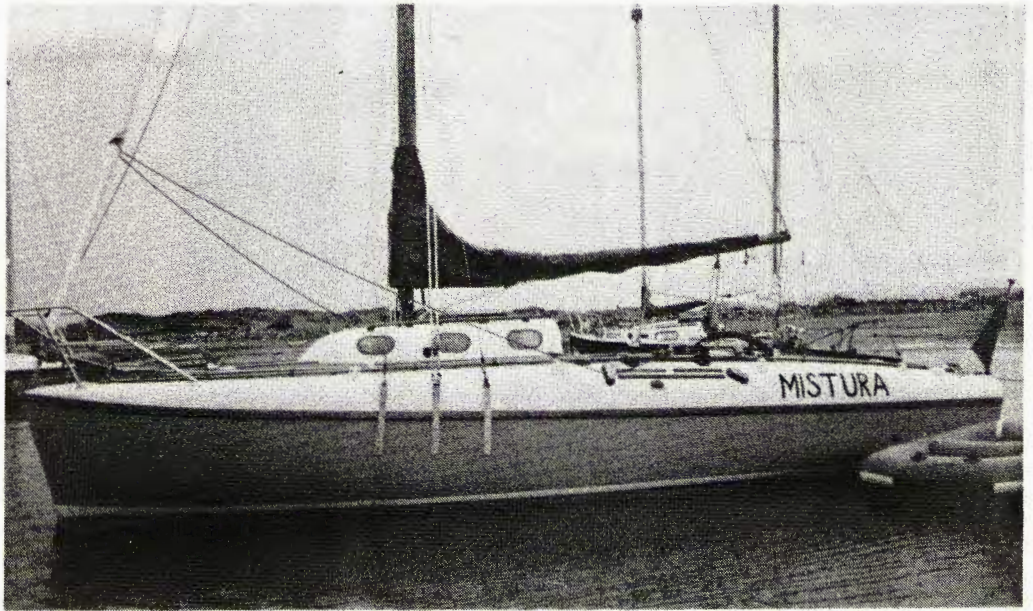
Figure 4: Forces Acting on Bearings

See "Twin Rudders for Atalanta Mary"



See "Methuselah"

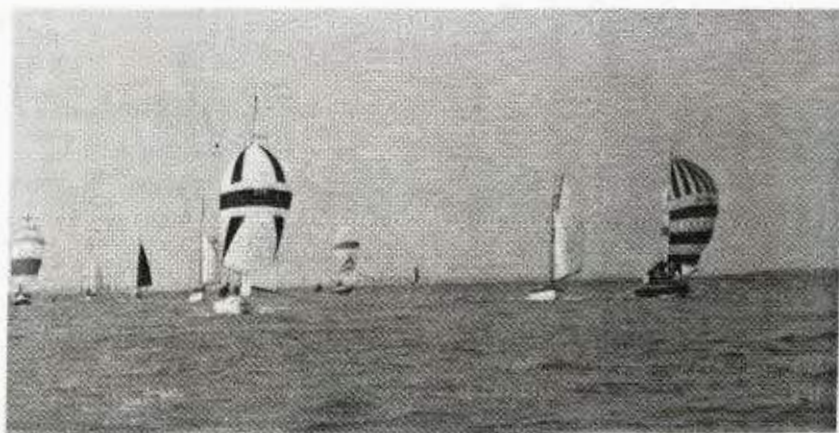




See "Mistura (A151)"



See "Not More Johara!!"



Above right: Johara



Left: Johara!!

Below: West Mersea Waterfront

