

Atlanta Owners Association

2009—2010
51st Annual Bulletin



**Atalanta Owners Association
2009 – 2010 Bulletin**

**51st Edition
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Message from the Commodore

Now we know what the weather has in store for us after the last couple of years, maybe we must change our sailing expectations. If we prepare for another season of wind and rain we are certain to get the weather we all wish to experience! Or maybe it doesn't work like that!!

One thing is hopefully going to happen, the "Round Britain Rally". The team of organisers have been hard at work producing the working legs and I understand that many are logging on for various sections. The compilation of logs should make good reading for our next Bulletin and I wish all those organising and attending the very best of conditions. Hopefully we can follow activities on our website as the Rally takes place.

I look forward to meeting old and new friends at the AGM/Dinner January 16th.

Colin Twyford, Commodore



Message from the Editor

Well another season has closed and yet another wonderful selection of articles has turned up on the doorstep (or inbox in most cases). Atalantas are still sailing all over the world and there are articles in the following pages to prove it. As you would expect there are also a wide selection of articles dealing with maintenance and improvements.

In fact with an exciting season ahead of us with plans for a round brittain relay, as well as local cruises all being planned, I hope that this Bulletin inspires us all to get our boats out there on the water in the coming season. Lets hope that the weather favours us in 2010!

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I have enjoyed preparing it! A huge thank you to all who have contributed articles. Without your input this Bulletin would not exist.

Good sailing in 2010.

Trevor Thompson



Hard Work, Frustration and an Excellent Shake Down

by Rob Wooley

The 2009 season was approaching fast. It was now the second week in March and with our first trip planned for the 21st May it was time to get preparations under way. Little did I know as I pulled the winter covers off *Epenetus* that my early season plans were about to go somewhat adrift.

Checking around the hull I found two small areas of soft laminate which on the surface appeared to be only very minor. As I started to dig it soon became apparent that the cause of this lay under the rubbing strake, which was then removed. As Saturdays go, I've had better (I must admit), because, the more I probed, the more I found and within a couple of hours I had eleven areas of soft laminate and three holes! It appears that the unknown adhesive used to fit a large part of the rubbing strake had broken down and allowed moisture to penetrate into the hull to deck joint, where it had lain undetected, slowly seep-



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Before (unfortunately one of many examples)

ing along the laminates, doing its worst for some considerable time. Interestingly the worst area was around the star-board chain plates where the laminates had rotted from the inside out due to the

moisture being trapped between the hull and the packing piece, which on inspection had rotted practically all the way through at one point. I now know that it takes approximately the same amount of time to rot through 1 ¼ inch of solid teak as it does an Atalanta hull, which is around a third of the thickness.

As we all know, repairing damage to laminates is not a difficult thing to do and there has been a lot of very useful information published on the subject, but it can be a very time consuming job. However, nothing gets done by looking at it, so the following weekend armed with an eight by four sheet of Agba, epoxy, Stanley knife, chisel and a staple gun I set to work. Despite numerous interruptions from just about everyone who happened to be walking through the boat yard (plus being at the mercy of the weather), the repairs were completed over five weekends. It was interesting the amount of attention the repairs attracted, although by the end of the job I did feel that if I was interrupted to explain the construction and repair techniques for Atalantas just one more time my head might just explode. By now we're well into April and the hull and decks are



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And after repairing

sound once more, hopefully for a good number of years to come, but now I had a dilemma. Do I paint over the repairs, refit the rubbing strakes and go sailing, we could still make the Brixham Heritage Regatta on the 21st May - or, now that I've started, do I take the chance to overhaul as much as possible? With only weekends available and working on the theory that when it comes to boats an hour saved now usually costs you ten hours or more in a year's time, there really wasn't a choice, was there? Sailing time just had to be sacrificed and the following jobs completed:

- Rub down and total repaint with three coats of Joton 88 vinyl guard primer and three coats of Pioneer top coat
- Chain plates re-seated
- Hull to deck joint sealed with epoxy and new Iroko rubbing strakes fitted
- Toe rails repaired and overhauled (I think the time to replace them is coming up soon, maybe a year or two)
- Hatches and engine cover repaired
- Rubdown and re varnish the mast
- Running and standing rigging overhauled
- Chart table replaced
- Two bronze mushroom vents fitted to improve ventilation



Epenetus on the water at last

- Instrument wiring renewed
 - Bumpkin and Hasler SP3 Wind Vane fitted
- Plus all of the usual pre season stuff like servicing the engine, antifouling, checking keel mechanisms, servicing rudder and steering gear etc.

There are still a lot of jobs to complete, like scratched windows to renew, internal fittings to replace, aft cabin to fit out, fore cabin to repaint, cockpit coamings to replace etc, but nothing which will come to any harm or cannot wait for a while. I can't delay any longer. I've been flat out all week and working on the boat in the yard at weekends for months now, the sun has been shining and I've been watching boats leaving Axmouth for France, the Channel Islands, Falmouth, the Scilly Isles and all ports in between. For the sake of my sanity it's time to go sailing.

Launch day

Well it's the last weekend in June, the sun

is shining and it's launch day at last. With the aid of the club hoist the mast was raised and *Epenetus* was lifted with no problems and gently lowered into the water, so far so good. The keels and rudder lowered as they should and no signs of any leaks, perhaps all is going to go off without incident for a change. Wrong! After many attempts to start the engine we were left with one flat battery and one dead battery. Still after half an hour, and a little improvisation, we were in business and motoring off to our new pontoon berth (infinitely better than the old trot mooring).

Shake down time – A weekend trip to Brixham as it turned out

The fourth of July might mean something to our American friends but this year for me and George it was shake down time at last. High water at Axmouth was 0450 so we slipped our lines at 0520 (a little late as ever) and worked our way out into what had been forecast as a southerly 4 to 5, perfect for sailing west. Surprise, the Met Office was slightly adrift with their forecast, as we discovered on approaching the harbour entrance, thick sea mist and force 2 at best. I knew that I should have got up earlier and walked up to the beach to check, then I wouldn't have rigged the number 1 instead of the Genoa.

Motoring out and just clear of Beer Head the mist cleared and the wind came in. Just as well because at that point the exhaust note changed, bad news. On inspection the engine was running dry, impeller trouble! Fifteen minutes later and a bit of jiggery-

pokery and all was well once more.

We set the sails and put *Epenetus* on a course of 220 magnetic, engaged the new (to us) Hasler wind vane and off we went. Our force 5 came in from the south and the Met Office was suitably redeemed. The Hasler vane performed fantastically with no more than a few very minor tweaks required over the next four hours (mainly to avoid net markers) as *Epenetus* romped along in the sunshine never dropping below 4.5 knots.

A call came in on Channel 6 from another Axe Yacht Club boat which was heading



Brixham in the sun

for Brixham, so we decided to be sociable and join them.

Problem number two, the sliders on the mainsail jammed in the track so we then had fifteen minutes of fun trying to get the main down. Oh what joy! Still a short while later we were tied up on the events pontoon in Brixham and enjoying a well earned beer or two.

Sunday morning and after a late and lei-

surely breakfast, along with some debate on the weather forecast (south 4 to 5 going south west 6 to 7), we slipped our lines at 1120 and were clear of the breakwater with our sails up by 1145. We had a fantastic sail back with a lightly reefed main and number 1 jib in winds of a good 6 and occasionally 7, accompanied by some lovely big waves coming from astern. Once again the wind vane put in an admirable performance with only a couple of lively incidents when the steering lines became detached from the tiller whilst surfing down waves (a little modification required I think).

Arriving back off the Axe at 1630 we were somewhat early for the 1810 high water.

However, we dropped the jib (ripping the fore hatch off its hinges in the process) and took a sail by the entrance. Not good, breaking surf in the river mouth!

I should explain at this point that the entrance to the Axe is very narrow (approx 20 feet wide) with a shifting bar and a ninety degree turn to port just inside the entrance. Add to this around an hour before high water the river in the entrance will be flowing at anything up to six knots, and there is no stand—it's going in or coming out. I know it sounds terrible but treated with a little respect it's not that bad and once inside the harbour is beautiful with total protection in all weathers.

What to do? Faced with a south west wind

and a building sea the options are usually to hide in the lee of Beer Head, wait until high water and re-assess, or go to Lyme Regis. Well in the gusts the wind had more than a bit of south in it so Beer Head looked a little rough. The logical option is to call up Lyme Regis harbour master and see if we can get in there. At this point the weekend started to go a little wrong. I picked up the radio and keyed the microphone, pop! All power lost in an instance! Plan B, get the hand held. No, that would be sitting on top of the fridge in the kitchen at home, just where I had forgotten it on Saturday morning. Oh b****r!

The sky darkens and the wind starts to come up, this is not so good. Nothing for it we'll go in, perhaps by high water the entrance



© 2009 Rob Wooley

Going well under reefed main

will be a little better. After a short trip across the bay in search of some elusive shelter in the lee of Beer Head, I try to drop the main. Well you guessed it the mainsail jammed in the track and had to be lowered with a mixture of jiggling it up and down and brute force whilst all the time trying to hang on.



The elusive shelter behind Beer Head

The engine was persuaded to play ball and it was back across the bay to the harbour entrance. We were still too early, the river was running and there was still a lot of surf in the entrance, however there was enough water. The keels were raised to 3 foot 6 and the brakes slackeden just in case we clipped the bar. We lined *Epenetus* up with the wave train and the river entrance, waited for our wave and approached at full speed, surfing into the river, at what must have been in excess of thirteen knots over the ground. The current pushed us tight towards the wall as expected and the stern missed the wall by no more than six inches as we took the turn to port . With the adrenalin pumping we were home, having had a fantastic sail covering 28 miles in 4 hours 45 minutes, giving *Epenetus* a good workout, the crew was still in one piece and having managed not

to break anything too expensive. Now that's what I call a shake down cruise.

Interestingly just over an hour after tying up on our pontoon, a Westerly Pageant arrived in having left Brixham just five minutes behind us. The crew were exhausted, speaking of an uncomfortable and often wet trip, finding it hard going to keep a good course. All rather strange. *Epenetus* had made light work of it whilst we drank coffee, ate lunch and generally had a very pleasant trip. Don't you just love these Atalantas?



Three Men in a Boat

by Peter Crane

In early September Ciaran and I took the opportunity to go for a sail with Trevor in *Calista* T10 – *Ereina* A9 having taken up the position of a Fairey at the bottom of the garden, still awaiting repairs due to minor damage to owner.

It was a grey and blustery day, probably not a day to go to sea and most certainly unlikely to be enjoyable. However, *Calista* is kept on the upper reaches of Milford Haven, so it was decided to attempt the tidal limit of the Eastern Cleddau, which had thwarted us before.

We set off under reefed main and partly rolled jib (looking forward to fitting roller reefing on *Ereina* - no more choosing jib size and then having to change it). Taking the helm, I was surprised when Trevor recommended going about while he was still standing in the cockpit. The boom cleared his head but on *Ereina* you would have sore ribs.

The upper reaches differ completely from the industrialised lower Haven, with steep, wooded banks in some places and in others fields gently sloping down to the waters edge. Early progress was interesting due to the sheltered nature of the home reach, with almost no wind, followed by calm and gusts after the first corner, still beating to windward and keeping an eye on the depth sounder. The

next leg was more of a reach with *Calista* creaming along, passing the place where A12 was dismantled at the beginning of the year.

We had come up well ahead of high tide, so the main was stowed before we went onto a run (more of a crawl) trying to trace the diminishing channel. It was still well before high water so the hook was dropped and Trevor prepared lunch of soup and fresh baked bread. The smell and taste of the bread has convinced me to fit an oven into our boat.

After lunch we set off gently under engine following the channel as best we could, but it was not far before the depth suddenly reduced followed by a solid sounding bump from the partly raised keels, but almost straight back into “deeper” water.

I think we may have hit the remains of LAMMAS FORD, a post medieval crossing for wagons and carts. This site is only known from documents (Historic Environment Record) and is marked approximately in this location. However, I cannot find any reference to the remains of the possible timber constructed quay we saw further up stream



© 2009 Trevor and Dinah Thompson

Two old men still talking in a boat!

© 2009 Trevor and Dinah Thompson



A narrow channel leads past two separate islands

Last night's tide was 6.7 metres at HW and we made it all the way with a minimum depth of 1.2 metres just after the second island, and then a full 2.2 metres in the pool all the way up to the mill.

Alex, Cara and I went for a sail - in what started out as an easterly force 6 and steadily decreased to a calm. We motored the last mile around the islands, before we turned round and sailed back down under genoa.

A brilliant evening!

Progress slowed as the river narrowed. We could see Blackpool Mill, our intended destination, in the distance.

However, as we edged round two small islands, even though there were the remains of what appeared to be a timber quay on the adjacent mainland, we grounded, with even the stern riding up slightly as the skeg touched. We gently edged back into floating depth and resolved to head back before the tide turned. This manoeuvre proved to be more difficult than anticipated due to the wind, tide and lack of keel to enable the turn. We therefore used the anchor to hold the bows while the current swung us around. We then headed back. After a while sails were re-hoisted, Ciaran took over the helm and we had a cracking sail back to the mooring. It may have been a grey old day, but we had a great time and are determined to come back next year with our own boat on a bigger tide to complete the journey.

Many thanks, Trevor, for a great day out!

I can now report that we have made it all the way up to the Mill in *Calista*!!!!



Black Pool Mill at Last!

Sea Trials & a Classic Boat Rally

by William Kennoway

A31/6 *Caperdonich* took part in the Thames Festival Classic Boat Rally held at St Katherine's Dock on the 12th and 13th of September, which was part of the Mayor of London's Thames Festival extravaganza of street music and theatre, markets, and pyrotechnics.

The Classic Boat Rally brought together a collection of yachts and boats which have a connection to the River and its Estuaries, and included a river pageant of working boats. The Rally followed an informal race up river, and boats were on display to the public with many crew in period costume. *Caperdonich* was invited to be an entrant in the Rally by the organisers, the Classic Sailing Club, and got an honourable mention in The Times article on the Rally.

Ashore at St Katherine's Dock there were various nautical stalls including a figure-head carver, coracle maker and oyster seller. Over 40 boats took part including oyster smacks, Thames barges, racing launches, and a veteran lifeboat. The photo below shows *Caperdonich* berthed alongside *Katrine*, a 1910 Whitstable smack complete with crew in Edwardian attire.

The Rally had an excellent social programme, which included a champagne reception and supper, and a rally dinner with jazz band.

Highlight was the late night black tie bash in the *S.S. Atlantica*, which turned out to be the interior of one of the buildings in St Katherine's Dock decked out as the interior of a 1930s transatlantic liner, complete with dance orchestra and roulette tables.



A31/6 Caperdonich at the Thames Festival Classic Boat Rally.



© 2009 William Kennoway

Caperdonich's crew en route to S.S. Atlantica.

In getting to St Katherine's Dock, *Caperdonich* was still officially on sea trials, as she only went back in the water in late August, after a four year restoration at Pin Mill.

This is *Caperdonich* in the slings ready to go into the water at Pin Mill, showing her new non-standard stern ladder and gin seat.

Her first sea trial was meant to be com-



© 2009 William Kennoway

Caperdonich in the slings at Pin Mill.

bined with the West Mersea Town Regatta on 22nd August. Sadly a combination of over-optimistic passage planning, strong headwinds and an engine problem meant we never made it to West Mersea, only getting as far as Clacton and having to retreat back to Titchmarsh Marina in the Walton Backwaters.

Hence the sail to St Katherine's Dock was *Caperdonich's* first proper sea trial passage. This time there were no mishaps and we got to St Katherine's Dock in two days, including 65 miles to the Medway on the first day in the teeth of a strongish westerly wind.

On the second day we had a pleasant surprise sailing up the Thames. We had to find somewhere to drop a crew member off early, and so stopped at Erith Sailing Club's pontoon - and who should step out to take our warps but one Colin Twyford who kindly ferried our crewmember to the station. *Caperdonich* then had visits during the Rally at St Katherine's Dock from Colin and his wife Janet, Norman Dorrington, and John Ingleby and wife Mariana.

The passage back to the Orwell was eventful, but for the wrong reasons. We made the mistake of going onto the

© 2009 William Kenneway



Caperdonich safely back at Royal Harwich Yacht Club on the Orwell

pontoon at Queenborough and had a very bumpy night when the wind got up. And we found that the oil filler cap had blown off (stripped thread) and emptied all but a litre of the engine oil into the bilges. Mercifully the engine was OK but we had an expensive wait at Chatham Marina waiting

for a diesel engineer to sort out the stripped thread

This was the Thames Festival's first Classic Boat Rally. It turned out to be one of the most popular events in the Festival programme, so there will be another Rally in September 2010. By that time *Caperdonich* will have moved to her permanent home north of the border, so there will be a vacancy for an Atalanta.



© 2009 Colin Twyford

The storage box and support beams

The Rear Deck

by Colin Twyford

We are all aware that there are only three layers of laminate on the decks of the *Atalanta* and *Titania*. They have been there for about fifty years and owners have rubbed them down, cleaned them, stood and even jumped upon them. The sun has burned them and the rain has softened them when the paint or varnish has been worn away. No wonder that we have problems with them. I have written about my solution for the foredeck some time ago and would like to suggest that the rear deck, where most of us come aboard, suffers a great deal of abuse too. Some fifteen years ago I decided that something was needed to stop the movement and flexibility, so I inserted two supports from the hog to the deck-head (photo to left). One just at the rear of the hatch opening was about 1½" square, it



© 2009 Colin Twyford

The after support hinges down

was located into a housing on the centre beam (illustration 2) and a brass bolt secured it to the Hog. Not only did it support a vulnerable section of the deck, it also gave a very good support to occupants of the rear cabin when rising from the bunks. Another support measuring 2" x 1" was placed about two foot from the transom,

located into a housing on the centre beam (illustration 3), it was hinged to the hog and could be lowered down to lie flat if required. A year later I acquired one of the storage boxes made by Fairey to lie between the bunks, so the rear support was shortened to lower onto the top of the box (photo to left). When lowered or removed neither support will impede the use of the emergency tiller if required.



© 2009 Colin Twyford

Useful hooks for clothes



© 2009 Colin Twyford

The socket to locate the support



Simply Sailing

by Norman Dorrington

I am impressed by the ability of the Atalanta to sail under jib alone. Not just running with the wind but across the wind and even into it.

You probably wonder why anyone should try to sail into the wind under jib alone when two sails or even the main alone does it more efficiently.

Let me explain.

At Tollesbury, due to tidal restraints, it is only possible to get an afternoon's sailing on a few days in the month. Unfortunately these do not often coincide with the best weather. On a number of occasions, after

sorting out dates and various commitments, I have arrived at the marina to find it blowing a gale and not very conducive to sailing.

Adding to the difficulty is that I usually have to sail alone. One of the drawbacks of being eighty-three is that one's contemporaries do not feel up to sailing. Sadly, for others, the only sailing experience left is discussing with Noah the windward capabilities of the Ark.

Just such a day was the 20th October this year. The last sail of the season as the sailing insurance stops at the end of the month.

I had some doubts in the marina but when I got out of the shelter of the harbour the wind was much stronger and colder than I



© 2009 Murray Reid

Kookaburra and Bluster during the East Coast Race

expected. I decided I would just run out in to the estuary, circle round, and come back in. At least I would have been on the water.

However when I reached the deep water I stopped the engine and decided to have a try. I unfurled the jib and set off towards the Nass, logging 4.5 knots. I don't do much more under engine.

Things still looked pretty bleak and as I gazed out over the miles of grey sea I realised that there was not another vessel in sight in any direction. I felt I had the whole of the southern North Sea to myself.

One of the pleasures of single handed sailing is that there is plenty of time for contemplation.

I ignored the power station and romanced how these waters have not changed for hundreds of years. The Roman grain ships would have sailed through here to Maldon, the Vikings to pillage, and smugglers to find a remote creek. Northern colliers to Heybridge Basin with coal for Chelmsford.

Thames barges creeping almost to the centre of farmers' fields to load. Oyster dredgers to Goldhanger Creek and dozens of fishing smacks, with their tan sails, working the sand banks.

On every one of these craft there would have been a chap at the tiller pitting his wits against the wind and the tide.

Just before the Nass I came about and headed on a reciprocal course for the Thurslet Spit. I don't try to sail through the wind. I roll in about half of the jib and then wear ship.

Reducing the sail stops it from wrapping round the forestay when the wind is dead astern. Eventually I returned to the Bradwell outfall and then across to our

creek and crept past the moorings at 2 knots due to the outgoing tide.

Despite the weather I had enjoyed three or four hours sailing under jib alone and not had to struggle with hoisting and lowering the main,

I keep saying it is time that I gave up. If it is to be then at least the final sail was a good one.



Summer Interlude

by Dinah Thompson

The soothsayers at the Met Office predicted a sizzling, so-called barbecue summer in 2009. To start off they seemed to get it right, and we had a hot May and June. Trevor and I were looking forward to balmy evenings at anchor whilst we lingered over a glass of wine and a cordon bleu meal.

Eventually we found a week when the boys were off doing their individual activities and so decided to snatch the opportunity to go off on *Calista* in search of those balmy evenings. We were going to take Lily (our Border Collie) and the proviso was that Trevor wouldn't do anything to frighten her (or me). We loaded the dinghy with all the kit required for a week – dog food, dog bed, dog towel, dog bowls, dog lead, dog toys, not to forget dog and dog lifejacket – gosh it was just like taking the kids off on the boat when they were toddlers. We got everything onboard safely, stowed it and had lunch in the cockpit. The sun shone, which seemed a promising start.

Eventually we hoisted sail and sailed off the mooring, heading downstream towards the entrance. It was a lovely afternoon, and *Calista* trickled along in the gentle breeze. Lily spent part of the time in the cockpit watching the world go by, and when she got bored with that went to stretch out on Trevor's bunk in the saloon.

We were in no hurry, just relaxing and enjoying the peaceful

surroundings. We decided to spend the first night at Neyland, where the Milford Haven Port Authority has conveniently placed a pontoon. As usual there was a clutch of children bouncing along the walkway, a line of fishermen spaced out along the pontoon, some speedboats, and numerous sailing dinghies drifting around in the approaches. The fishermen got the message that we were coming alongside and pulled in their lines with good grace, and we were soon tied up. Lily watched the various comings and goings with interest, and patiently waited for us to finish dinner before letting us know that she wanted to go for a walk. Whilst Trevor cleared up the dishes Lily and I went ashore. We walked along the beach and then up onto the road towards Llanstadwell. There is another pontoon there, but we weren't sure whether it dried out to mud or stones, and as passing tugs could send wash ashore at the critical moment of drying out/lifting up had decided the Neyland pontoon (it doesn't dry out) was a better bet for *Calista*. Lily and I had a lovely walk, she behaved, and as a bonus she found an abandoned ball. She carried it back to *Calista* in triumph.

The next morning dawned bright and spark-



© 2009 Dinah and Trevor Thompson

It's a hard life sailing on *Calista*

ly, with a fine breeze, and after breakfast and a quick walk ashore, we left our berth. We hoisted sail and headed out towards the entrance to the Haven. Trevor was planning on going out to Solva, giving the anchorage at Skomer a miss because we wouldn't be allowed to take Lily ashore.



© 2009 Dinah and Trevor Thompson

Solva harbour at high tide

The island wardens are mindful that the tame bunnies and puffins wouldn't stand a chance if dogs were allowed onto the island to play. To start off Lily was fine, sitting in the cockpit, but after a while she started to get very fretful. It is a bit like a crying baby – is she hungry, thirsty, bored, or does she need her nappy changing? We decided that the doggy equivalent probably meant that she needed her nappy changing, so put into Angle Bay and after picking up a mooring, rowed ashore with Lily. She was thrilled to be ashore and dashed back and fore, chasing seagulls. Angle is one of our favourite anchorages in the lower part of the Haven with a pub overlooking the anchorage, a quiet village, and some beautiful walks. Lily approved of the walk, and it turned out that her problem was that she was thirsty (and probably bored by sailing). She rarely drinks from a bowl, preferring stream or puddle water, so the bowl thoughtfully provided for her onboard was not to her liking. Near the head of the bay there is what looks like a fortified Scottish tower house. Our walk brought us out in the

farmyard next to the tower house, and we realised that it was possible to visit the tower. Dodging the swooping swallows who were taking food to their nestlings inside, we ducked through the door and climbed up to the top of the tower. It is strange how even after decades of visiting Angle we had never been inside the tower before. Back on *Calista* we dropped the mooring and sailed off towards the entrance. Leaving the Haven there was a long swell, but sufficient wind to sail. The tide was right for us to go through Jack Sound, passing between the mainland and Skomer. There were one or two other yachts in sight, and ships at anchor in St Bride's Bay, a few seabirds, but otherwise peace. In passing Trevor pointed out an anchorage he had discovered on one of his solitary sails. Once through the Sound we poled out the jib and goosewinged across St Bride's Bay. I took out my book to read, Lily joined me, resting her head on my knee and Trevor trailed the mackerel line. It was remarkably peaceful. We were in no hurry to get to Solva as we wouldn't be able to get inside until the tide

had risen a bit more. Once we reached Solva the tide still wasn't high enough for us to enter so we anchored inside the entrance and rowed ashore with Lily. She took her ball with her, but unfortunately managed to drop it over the side in her excitement. It sank. However, she soon forgot her disappointment in the joy of running on the sand. She is not



Lily (the dog!) and her best friend

one of those dogs who likes swimming so we were surprised when she jumped in before we had beached the dinghy. We walked up the harbour, Trevor inspecting the visitors' buoys, and keeping our eyes open for Pete, Louise and Ciaran Crane. Pete had broken his arm earlier in the season and we knew that *Ereina* (A9) was not in the water, but we thought Pete and his family might be taking advantage of the summer evening. Everyone else was out, but Pete and crew obviously had better things to do with their time.

We returned to *Calista*, and when the tide came in moved to one of the visitor's buoys. A balmy evening with glass of wine then ensued, before we turned in for the night. At 6 in the morning Trevor leapt out of bed. He had heard another yacht grounding as the tide dropped, and decided that it didn't sound healthy for *Calista*. There was the gentlest of poptles, but this other yacht was graunching up and down along the sand. Trevor quickly got the engine started, I dropped the mooring and we moved to pick up one of the free fishing boat moorings further

inside the harbour. It turned out that this mooring didn't dry. Having picked it up we went back to bed. After breakfast we were just getting ready to go ashore to speak to the harbour master about a mooring when the fisherman from the mooring behind us returned. Not knowing whether we were on his mooring we were prepared to move. We weren't on his mooring. He was however unnecessarily rude, which gave us a bit of a sour taste. We eventually got ashore and went in search of the harbour master. He said that we were fine where we were temporarily, and was happy for us to borrow Pete's mooring when the tide came in. We then had a hot walk through Solva and up to Pete's house, hoping for a cup of coffee when we got there. Disappointingly Pete wasn't there but we left a note and went back to *Calista*.

Moving onto Pete's mooring was not one of our finest moves and is perhaps best glossed over. Suffice to say that trying to manoeuvre within the harbour with keels and rudder up, and crossing over between trots of moorings, with beam wind and tide, is likely lead to an embarrassing entanglement. Fortunately there was no damage to



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On our way home

the other boat.

We went for a long walk in the afternoon, taking our swimming costumes with us. It was so hot that I was looking forward to a dip, but the bay we chose had huge boulders and it proved impossible to get into the water safely. Back in Solva we treated ourselves to an ice cream and then went to look for a shop selling teabags. A leaflet I picked up at the harbour had the essential clue – the shop was way out beyond Pete’s house and not down in the village at all. There was still no sign of Pete, so back to the boat for dinner.

The next morning we woke to torrential rain, not that that made any difference to Lily’s enthusiasm for a walk. Back onboard, and dried out, there was a cheery

knock on the hull, followed by Pete’s cheery face. It was a pleasure to see Pete again, so we had a coffee and a blether before he had to drag himself back home to do some work. With the rising tide we decided that we should wend our way back to the Haven, but wanted to get some water first. Crossing through the trots we made sure we had more keel and rudder down, but still managed to have another close encounter. It turns out that Pete’s solution to the problem is to jump overboard and actually tow *Ereina* onto her mooring. Anyway, we got so fed up that we decided that we would forego filling some containers and just hope that we wouldn’t run out.

Our sail across St Brides Bay turned out to be another gentle one, with not a lot of wind. As we crossed the bay we gave some thought to Pete up in his office, enviously watching us sail into the mist. The drizzle lifted eventually, the sun came out and we had a dry sail across the Bay, through Jack Sound, and into the Haven. The night was spent at anchor in Dale with a run ashore for a walk with Lily. Dale is one of those places which seems dedicated to yachting, dinghy and board

sailing, with people spilling out onto the road outside the pub, beer glasses in hand. We walked past them and headed off to cross the fields and headland. It was a lovely evening again, and we all enjoyed stretching our legs. On the way back we decided to join the merry throng outside the pub with our own beer glasses in hand. The morning saw us upping anchor and heading back up the Haven to the mooring. It had been a brief but pleasant interlude, and neither Lily nor I had been frightened. What more can you want?



Hiran To The West Mersea Regatta 2009

by Colin Twyford

As the autumn was spent on home projects, in the spring I needed to wait for the weather to improve before doing the normal seasonal maintenance plus hull repairs to the damage received at last years West Mersea race. This resulted in a very late launch and no sailing before August. At least the bottom was clean for our trip to the West Mersea Regatta and Atalanta

race.

Wednesday August 19th *Hiran*, Peter and I left Erith Yacht Club at 1250hrs, just about the top of the tide. With a good weather forecast and a 3 – 4 wind it should have been a good sail, but as always the wind was on the nose and we wanted to maintain 5 knots through the water to arrive at Queenborough at a reasonable time. We would need to leave there early on Thursday. Our Beta performed happily till we got to Gravesend and a shift in wind direction allowed us to turn the key off. A belt change was needed on the engine and the

spare was a difficult job to attach (should have done it on the mooring). However we were sailing really well showing just over 7 knots through the water at times. Of course this was too good to last and a shift in wind direction occasioned a return to the key. We arrived at Queenborough at 1740 hrs, log reading 25 miles and had a much needed meal and an early night.

Thursday August 20th
Awake at 0415 hrs and a quick coffee to leave at 0440 hrs in a flat calm with no wind for the first 3 hours. When it arrived (as forecast) we had reached the Swin Spitway. It was of course on the nose and we could see the latest Wind Farm on the Gunfleet Sands that had obscured the buoys on the way up the Swin. The frustrating thing was that we had just turned about 90 degrees to port to enter the Mersea Bay



Hiran on the pile moorings at West Mersea

and that SW would have given us a good sail all the way from Sheppey. The wind was a good 5, gusting 6 to 7, and with wind against tide it was quite choppy going into Mersea. Nearing the Nass Beacon we were almost surrounded by Kite Sailers. They swooped around at incredible speeds and were impossible to predict, so we crossed our fingers and hoped they would miss us. Motoring on to the piles at West Mersea at 1205 hrs, log reading of 44 miles. Cleaned up *Hiran* and phoned Mike Thorley A141, arranging to meet him at the quay in the morning to top up fuel and provisions. The wind remained strong and on the beam till nightfall.



Bluster close astern

Friday August 21st

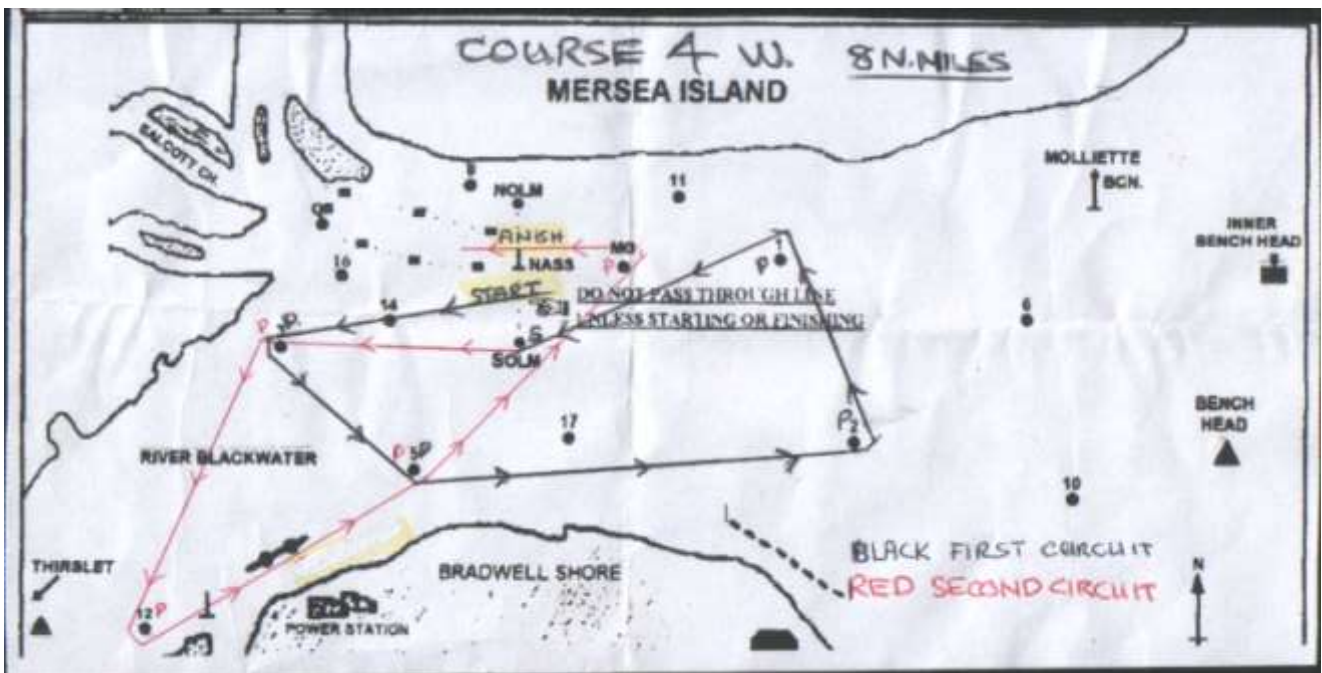
Mike had bought some extra cans to enable us to fill the tank and drove us to the garage and shop, then took us to inspect *Rakia* in his garden. She looked in very good order and Mike has threatened to launch her this year (*date now estimated as Jan. 2010*). After a coffee and chat we returned to the boat just as our Vice Commodore, Jane Stearn, and crew were bringing *Bluster* alongside us. Once *Bluster* was secured we topped up the tank and almost immediately I was phoned by our New Zealand member, Murray Reid A87. He was on the quay with Yorkshire man, Dominic Dobson, (A90) waiting to be collected. They were to crew with us for the

race. I took the inflatable and crossed with some caution, as the dinghies were sailing flat out through the moorings. As I emerged from alongside a moored fishing boat I was struck on the bows as I tried to avoid the two young ladies who were intent on demonstrating their sailing skills. I received a good soaking but managed to stay in the dinghy. If it had been a rigid dinghy I would certainly have been capsized. Crew collected and returned to *Hiran*, where there were still efforts to secure the two boats to the piles. The wind was gusting and laying *Bluster* on our port side. Unfortunately our stern line was led through the rear fairlead taking the weight of two boats

and was ripped out with the sideways strain. So if anyone has a spare 5" bronze fairlead I would be most obliged to hear. A pleasant afternoon and evening with the occasional drink, food and much chat ensued before we bedded down.

Saturday 22nd THE RACE We slipped the piles with time to spare and motored out towards the start line. Passing one moored boat we were hailed by Margaret and Bill Odling's daughter, Lizzie Dumas, who wished us luck, then a small boat requested a tow to the line. She had no engine and there was little wind so we were happy to oblige, she was 99 years old and would be starting in the same classic class section as the Atalantas at 0910 hrs, the third race start. We motored across to A168 *Kookaburra* to greet Norman Dorrington and his crew, our Hon. Sec. John Ingleby, then *Bluster* joined the mass of boats waiting for the various starts. The wind lightened but we were able to stay on station. The Committee boat radioed a delay to the start of the first race at 0900 hrs, whilst they made contact to the powers that be and requested an increase of wind, which duly arrived about half an hour later. The first two races were started then we prepared for our

start. The gun went off but with an immediate recall, as many had drifted over the line. This allowed us to improve our position nearer the line. After a short delay a restart was fired with *Bluster* in the lead but she was recalled along with another boat for jumping the gun. The advantage was with *Kookaburra* and *Hiran* in close company. We headed for the first mark which we suddenly realised was the wrong one, so a change in direction was needed. (*I mention at this point that the hand drawn map of the course (illustrated) and the various buoys that are marking the 13 different courses have no bearings or positions given and you are only aware of the course to be taken just before the start gun*). Fortunately for us the boat we had towed earlier was passing us in the light airs and showed us the way, sadly no reciprocal tow was offered to assist us. Rounding the first mark we took a higher line than most of the fleet and *Bluster* was ahead of us at the second mark. Dom and Murray did sterling work with the keels and we slowly got ahead of *Bluster* only to hear the dreaded scrape of contact below. I went to the keels to check but it was the rudder that had fouled and stopped us. Once freed we found that *Bluster* had also fouled so we maintained our



lead. Rounding the downwind mark the wind became variable and sails slackened throughout the fleet as we drifted towards the start/finish line to begin the second lap. A slight change in the second lap took us further into the Blackwater to a mark near Bradwell Marina, again we took a higher line (will we ever learn) and *Bluster* took advantage of the flood to retake the lead. At about this point many of the boats were withdrawing as with the light winds they needed to return to moorings etc. With *Hiran's* superior downwind performance we were able to pass *Bluster* again and even increased the distance on a beam reach to the final turn and tack to the finish. A welcome blast from the Committee boat was much appreciated by us. Returning to the piles and the inevitable race discussion, we prepared to go ashore for the traditional celebration supper at the Scout Hut.

Sara and Mike Thorley (A141) were our hosts for the evening and with 19 seated it was a memorable event. Daphne Sinclair, Jane Stearn with her son, grandson and friend, Norman Dorrington, his son, John and Mariana Ingleby, Rick Wick and friend, Dave Allen, Murray Reid, Dominic Dobson, myself and friend Peter. I hope I have not forgotten anyone. The fish and chips were soon demolished and we were presented with a wonderful selection of desserts, cheese and beverages. The Wooden Trophy is to be presented at the January Dinner. On the Sunday Daphne was going to visit Margaret Odling and



© 2009 Murray Reid

The racing crew on board *Hiran*

promised to send her all our best wishes and love. We staggered back to the town quay whilst the fireworks thundered and flashed overhead to find that the spring tide had left tenders on the mud, right up to the end of the staging and we had to take off the outboard and lift the inflatable to the centre front to find enough water to launch. It was an interesting ending to an enjoyable day.

Sunday 23rd *Bluster* was making an early start and I am afraid that with the exception of Peter, *Hiran's* crew were too lazy to rise and wish them a good journey. A leisurely breakfast was had by all and Peter took



The sun setting after a memorable sail

Dom and Murray across to the quay for their journey home. When he returned I realised that we still had Mike's fuel cans and took off with them in the dinghy, trying to take a short cut I forgot about the ebbing tide and went straight on to the shallows, raising the outboard I was forced to row through the mud before I was stranded completely. With much hard work and cursing I reached clear water, the only consolation was that I had entertained a considerable number of people and I believe I heard some applause. Leaving the cans for Mike to collect I returned to *Hiran*. Peter and I spent a lazy day tidying up and relaxing with an early night.

Monday 24th The forecast was SW-SSW Force 1-2 with possibly light showers. I woke 0600 hrs to find Peter in the cockpit admiring the magnificent sunrise, one of the finest I have seen. After a quick breakfast we left the piles at 0655 hrs in a flat calm. No sign of wind till we reached the Whitaker and a slight SSW turned up, on the nose of course, so it was to be the motor as usual. When we arrived at Blacktail Spit there was still 4 hours of flood to come, so the intended stay at Queenbor-

ough was rejected and we continued up the Thames. It was a disappointing journey with no sails up, but when we reached the Dartford Crossing and passed under the

Queen Elizabeth Bridge, we had the first puff of wind on our port beam. With only 2 miles to go we pulled out the foresail to arrive at EYC in some style and tied up alongside our club ship *Folgefonn* at 1655 hrs, a log reading of 54 miles in exactly 10 hrs. It was a very restful trip after our eventful one last year.

Footnote: On Sunday Oct. 11th we had our first sail since the WM event. Returning to EYC under engine, it immediately dumped all the oil into the bilge. **I had forgotten to change the oil filter**, which on inspection was rusty and had burst. A sobering thought was that our earlier sail from WM had been 10 hours under engine! We could have had a repeat of last year's difficult journey but with wind on the nose! (***Take heed with your engine servicing***).



Modifications to a vertically lifting rudder

by Bernard Upton

Over the last two and a half months I have been installing a new lifting mechanism on the rudder. It looks like a medieval gun carriage, but it works very well. A89 sails well however much (or little) rudder is in the water. It works because the hoist is directly over the axis of the rudder stock. The black roller allows plenty of movement to the 6mm lifting cord, which passes through the transom above the original entry for the cables. There is a small leading block to keep the lifting cord centred, and this goes off at an angle to a lead block on the cockpit bulkhead. This is attached to a standard tackle and otherwise is the same as on all other Atalantas.

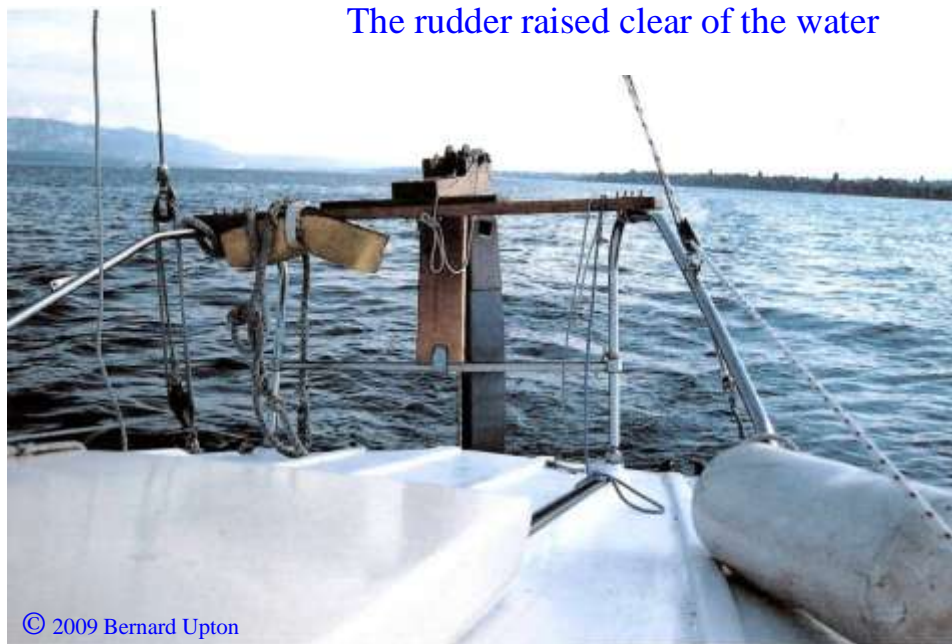
Little effort is needed to hoist the rudder.

In the past the rudder has been kept on the after deck when in harbour to reduce wear in the rudder gear, but with this arrangement it can be left in place—and just hauled completely clear of the water. It also means that the rudder can be painted with ordinary gloss paint rather than anti-fouling paint.



© 2009 Bernard Upton

The rudder raised clear of the water



© 2009 Bernard Upton

Sailing with the rudder partly raised

Launching and Recovering *Aquilo II*

by Richard Hall

I've been out for a sail and now I am back in West Bay harbour ready to recover *Aquilo* onto her trailer. I back the trailer into the water until nothing can be seen except the winch tower at the front of the trailer. The wheels have totally disappeared. In fact the trailer is so far in that the towing hitch is only just above the water. I leave my accomplice, Dan, in charge of the trailer and winch and re-board *Aquilo*. I restart the engine, cast off and line up for the recovery. All I can see is the front of the trailer. There are no side guide posts or anything. On the top of the winch tower is a set of lead marks which show me the centre axis of the trailer. (Why don't other people do this?) I motor in with the engine in gear and on tick over trying to line up with this centre axis. No, I'm not right, I've sheared off slightly. Bung the engine in reverse, and a quick splash on the throttle stops my forward motion. Back to tick-over and slowly pull back from the trailer.



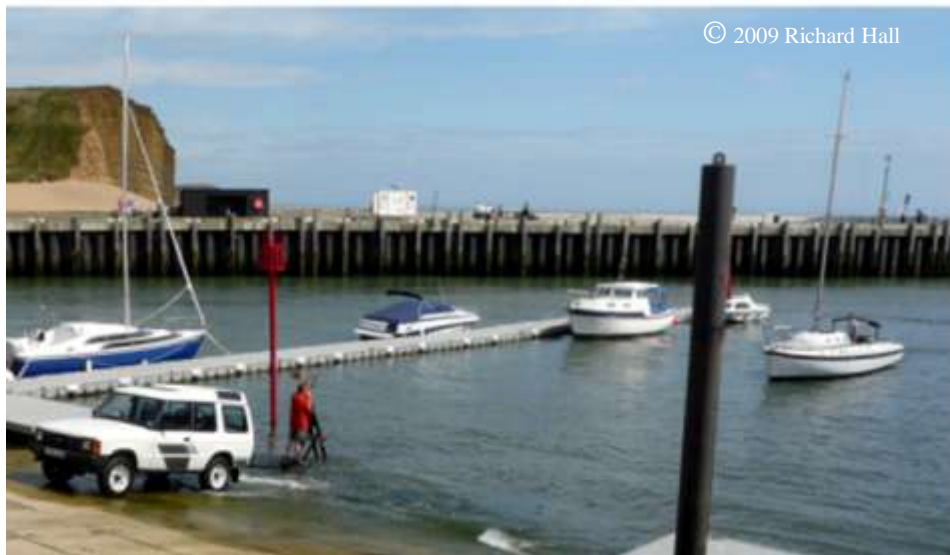
© 2009 Richard Hall

Lining up with the trailer

When I'm well back I re-engage forward and try again. This time I'm better aligned with the trailer's axis. Just before I reach the trailer I slip the engine into neutral. *Aquilo* glides on and then comes to rest touching the trailer but about six feet away from the winch tower. I re-engage forward to hold *Aquilo* where she is, and go onto the foredeck and grab the winch strap which Dan has just lobbed to me. I hook on and he gently winds in, first taking up the slack and then slowly drawing *Aquilo* forwards to her correct position on the trailer. I nip aft and kill the engine and then raise the rudder blade and lash it up. Dan has now started the Discovery and after a wave from me pulls us slowly up the ramp and onto the level concrete area above, so that we can sort *Aquilo* out before trailing her home. I check that, as I thought, she is on the trailer in exactly the right place give or take one inch or possibly only a half inch. Is this all in my imagination? No it works. This is in fact, an account of my last recovery at West Bay.

Right. How was this all achieved? I'd better start at the beginning. When I bought *Aquilo II*, she already had a trailer which, after a quick check to see if everything was O K, was used to tow her back from the Hamble. Like other Atalantas on other trailers they rested very high at the bows. For *Aquilo* the keel towards the bow was probably 12 ins or so above the top of the chassis. As the towing hitch is fitted to the top of the chassis then *Aquilo* is positioned some 10 ins or so above the hitch. This meant that the waterline, which is some 6 ins higher than the keel, would be 16 ins above the towing hitch. Even on a steep launching ramp I would probably need to

back the Discovery well into the water. This was totally out of the question. *Aquilo* would have to be lowered on her trailer, at least at the front. With a sloping ramp, the back would be plenty low enough. I drew out the profile of the keel using drawings I had and checked the measurements against *Aquilo*. I



Where is the trailer

then pivoted this profile at the rearmost support i.e. the aft cockpit bulkhead, and to my amazement the keel touched at two points along its length, corresponding to the first of the two strong cross members of the trailer which also supported the wheels, and the cross member in front of that. This was the lowest I could get her without raising her at the back. As it was she would now have a slight bows down attitude as opposed to her current slight bows up. Any more and the slope would be unacceptable. So how did this leave the bows? She should now be only 4 ins above the chassis i.e. I would have lowered her at the critical bows end by 8 ins. Even on a steep ramp of 1 in 7 this would save backing the Discovery 56 ins down the slope.

But would this work in practice? I had noticed when I had jacked *Aquilo* up to take her off the trailer that she was incredibly stiff and would not take a twist. I reasoned that if she was only supported athwart ships at the aft cockpit bulkhead then that would be all the athwart ship support she would need. So I carefully jacked her up at the bows using a support about 8 ft back from the bows. *Aquilo* was pivoting about the rear support at the aft cockpit bulkhead. I then carefully removed the two other cross supports from the trailer and gently lowered her until her keel

rested on the two cross members of the trailer as I had hoped she would. She now rested on the keel and the only athwart ship support came from the one under the aft cockpit bulkhead. She was indeed some 8 ins lower at the bows. However when rocked sideways she did move relative to the trailer, which worried me until I supported the trailer just under the aft athwart ships support and found she didn't rock at all. The rocking was caused by the trailer flexing! *Aquilo* is stronger than the trailer! Now let's get to the nitty gritty. How was I going to position *Aquilo* on her trailer when the trailer is totally underwater and out of sight? The first picture shows the problem. Where is the trailer?

This is the new ramp at West Bay near Bridport. Unfortunately it has been positioned opposite the entrance to the harbour which allows the swell to come through. As can be seen in the picture the swell, even on this fairly calm day, reaches up past the front of the Discovery. Not very deep but bad enough. So I have added a 5 ft extension bar between the Discovery and the trailer. Just enough to keep the Discovery out of the really deep water. This extension bar has a hitch on the front and a ball on the back. It also means that the trailer has to run on its jockey wheel. This has to be done



© 2009 Richard Hall

The leading marks, and the crew standing by

with care as there is a lot of weight on it. In fact I try not to change the direction of travel whilst *Aquilo* is on the trailer as this causes the jockey wheel to swivel round causing a large sideways strain on the jockey wheel support, which has in the past bent. By standing on the front of the trailer Dan, too, can keep out of the worst of the water. He would get quite wet if he was standing on the ramp! This is what I proposed.

Raise the two keels so that they draw about 30 ins. Cut two “V” slots in the aft athwart ship support so that as *Aquilo* moves forward on to her trailer, but still floating, the two keels engage in the two “V” slots and centre the aft part of the boat relative to the trailer. Then as *Aquilo* moves forward, the keels touch the bottom of the slots and start to ride up, slowing and holding *Aquilo* in the correct athwart ship position. Then by winching *Aquilo* from the front and providing some “V” rollers for the keels to run on, the athwart ship position should be maintained. All that is needed now is a “V” roller at the bows to centre the front, and she will be

correctly positioned over the trailer. Again as *Aquilo* is pulled up the ramp she will settle on the aft support as her two keels slowly retract still maintaining the all important central position. Would this work in practice? Launching turned out to be no trouble as long as the trailer was deep enough in the water or else *Aquilo* would not clear the aft support as she is deep chested. It

took quite a bit of nerve to drive *Aquilo* on to the trailer knowing that if she did not align properly with the trailer she would hit something before she would stop! However once there *Aquilo* was held in place by keeping the engine in gear at tick over, so allowing me to connect the winch strap at the bows.

Then Dan can winch her forward to the correct position on the trailer. This whole technique relies on engaging the two keels into the two “V”ed slots and allowing them to stop *Aquilo* as the keels hit the bottom of the “V”s and slide up, so easing what is in fact a collision with the trailer. In order to avoid any problems with hitting different parts of the trailer if I should fail to correctly align *Aquilo* with the two “V”ed slots I needed to remove any obstacles. The only real obstacles were the mudguards. By making them removable they could be removed during launch and recovery so that, hopefully there would be no nasty scrapes or bumps. The key is lining up with the trailer using the lead marks. First at some distance when the lead marks really come into their own. It is imperative that *Aquilo*

is correctly aligned as I first have to pass the deep chested forward part of her hull through the deepest part of the athwart ship support and then align the stern section so that the keels engage in the top of the “V”ed slots. In the closer position the keels engage in the slots, slide to the bottom and then gently slow *Aquilo* till she comes to rest with the bows some six feet short of the winch tower. There is quite often a little wiggle if I’m not completely central with the trailer as the keels are pushed sideways by the sides of the slots, which in turn push *Aquilo* sideways.

At this point with the engine at tick over in forward gear *Aquilo* is fairly stable. One additional benefit of this is that I can look down the keel boxes through the water and see first the keels engaged in the slots and later when *Aquilo* is being winched in, with them resting on the rollers. This means I can tell that *Aquilo* is in the right place on the trailer while she is still afloat. The only downside is that if I fit keel rubbers I won’t be able to see. I’m thinking of trying keel rubbers made out of clear PVC commercial door curtains this winter, in the hopes that they will stop the water sloshing around in the bottom of the cockpit whilst sailing, without restricting my view of the keels when retrieving *Aquilo* onto her trailer. The picture of the trailer shows where I have cut the two “V”ed slots. Again, as if it was meant to be, there were already two metal vertical supports adjacent to the “V”s for extra strength. Also the two lines of “V” rollers on which the keels run as *Aquilo* is winched into her final position, rest on top of two box section supports which were also there before I started any changes to the trailer. As can be seen the only projections above the chassis are the mudguards. These can be unpinned and removed leaving only the comparatively soft tyres to run into if *Aquilo* comes in at an angle. The two central keel supports can clearly be seen as can the front “V”ed roller. This could be a much bigger “V”ed

roller as *Aquilo* does not always centralise on this small one.

How has it worked in practice? I’ve used this method for the last two seasons and although not all were without incident, I’ve always managed to launch and retrieve. Last season it was on a very steep ramp at West Bay and this year on a very gently sloping ramp at Portland and it works equally well. As it is, I normally keep *Aquilo* at home in a barn incurring no cost, and launch her when we want to go sailing. If I had craned her in and out instead of launching and retrieving, the cost would have been very high. This year we left her at Portland Marina for a week each month (June to September) retrieving her back to the barn in between. Again if she had been left at the marina for the four months and craned in at the start and craned out at the end, the costs would have been even higher.



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The modified trailer

A Lady, Yes. A Land Lubber, Definitely!

by Carol Hall

It was suggested I might like to write something about sailing in an Atalanta, from a lady's point of view. However, I think I should point out that while I am a lady I am also, most definitely, a 'land lubber'.

It was 32 years ago, when Rich and I got together, that I agreed to go sailing with him if he would go riding with me! This worked very well as we had 4 daughters and several friends who liked horses and 2 sons who liked boats. We did spend considerably more time riding, it has to be said. However, I do have vague memories of us hiring small sailing boats (14ft ish) like Enterprises and Wayfarers and on one occasion a Drascombe Lugger. I have particularly fond memories of us going out (sometimes with the boys) in my Uncle John's Folk Dancer. This was on a mooring at Falmouth and the worst bit was going to and from in a little dingy!

A chance look at a holiday programme showing the delights of flotilla sailing in the Greek Islands, had us putting this on our 'wish list'. In 1991 and 1993 we did flotilla holidays in the Ionian Islands. On those occasions we and two friends had a Moody 346. Looking back, Rich was very clever - the weather was great and the countryside delightful. During the day we explored the islands and little coves, then as we were mooring up for the evening the engine went on for whatever nautical negotiations were necessary, whilst heating the water for the shower. In no time at all we were able to just step ashore and walk to the local taverna for our evening meal - none of that awful dingy thingy which often resulted in wet feet, not to mention other parts of ones anatomy!

Of course these holidays were not cheap. Trips to Southampton Boat Show followed and we heard about shared ownership but whilst we had thought this a possibility, I found that the boats on offer felt very claustrophobic down below.

Even now Rich isn't really sure what set him off checking out the Atalanta Association. Perhaps he saw the name in a sailing magazine which triggered a memory of seeing one when he was sailing as a teenager. Whatever it was, it hadn't dawned on me that he was thinking of buying a boat. True to form Rich told me all about what he had found on line regarding the Atalanta Association and he was keen to join it and get his hands on drawings of the boats. So this is what he did. In due course he found the Drawings Master's name and contacted him.

Now this is where it gets a little spooky. It turned out that the Drawings Master was Maurice Donovan who had lived in Winscombe, the same village in Somerset that I had grown up in. Not only that, but he lived in the same road as my uncle, who had spent time over at Maurice's house whilst Maurice was building *Aquilo II*. Maurice mentioned that he had sold the boat sometime ago but believed it was possibly up for sale. He went on to say that if we were interested in having a look at it, he would be happy to come with us and should we actually think of buying her he would check her over with Rich. It suddenly dawned on me that Rich was seriously thinking of the possibilities and I had to request that we went and looked at the boat, on our own at first, because if it felt as claustrophobic as those other boats it would be horrible.

So, Rich agreed and off we went to look at her. She was at MDL, Hamble Point. She sat on her trailer, looking rather smart. We

climbed on board, so far so good. Now the test. We went below, into the saloon and sat down. Without hesitation I was able to say it was great. Plenty of space and head room. So the next visit was with Maurice. Whilst he and Rich clambered all over her, I sat comfortably below reading a book. I did also notice important things like somewhere to make coffee.

Well the rest is history as they say. What is bizarre, is that at no time did it cross my mind that I might not like going out in her. I suppose that my previous experiences had all been positive ones and my fear of water hadn't managed to surface! Also my subsequent times on *Aquilo* were also on dry land, in fact, in our yard. This was while Rich was doing various things to get her ready for the water. Many a cup of coffee etc. were consumed whilst sitting in the cockpit.

Whilst my fear of water hasn't gone away and I really cannot get involved with the launching and retrieval part of the operation, I can honestly say I enjoy every minute I am on board, with just a few exceptions. Such as being down below making lunch when she is wallowing or being on the helm when she is heeling to the point I can only see water below me! This is when the 'Hyacinth' in me comes out and I am heard to say "Richard" in a certain tone of voice.

What I particularly love about her is the way she is absolutely in her element when in the water. Not like some other boats you see, who seem to be pussy footing about in fear of getting their bottoms wet. Also, we often found ourselves heading out of the marina, into Portland harbour and on out into Weymouth bay, whilst others in the marina seemed reluctant to go out. Goodness knows why. It was a bit windy - Rich says gusting force 6.

The other thing I love about *Atalantas* and their owners, which I particularly saw at the 50th Anniversary do, was what seemed to be a sheer joy of making use of things that were not necessarily designed to be used in that particular way. For example using the hydraulics from an aircraft's undercarriage to raise and lower the keels. Rich is continuing this tradition using a wheelbarrow wheel as a roller for the mast.

One of our sons and one of our daughters and several friends have now experienced some fun time on *Aquilo*. In fact our youngest grandson was happy to be on board with his dad, grandpa and me as we motored from our berth at the marina at Portland round to the slip where Rich and Dan got *Aquilo* back on to her trailer, ready for the trip home.

So, there you are. *Aquilo* is snug in the barn for the winter and Rich has made a list of jobs to be done. I am putting in a request for a real summer next year.



A modest voyage in Solone

by Keith Viewing

For those that come and go from the tropics the clean white cliffs of the Downs are visions of Paradise. Too soon the glide path descends into the gloom and for ever comes that much treasured quotation from the classics; ‘where are we?’ (or words to that effect), says Odysseus to Athene as he is washed-upon the beach. ‘It is known to thousands and to all of the people of the sun, and to all of those that live on the other side, towards the western gloom’. And so the elegant introduction by Dinah to the Autumn Newsletter rang the bell of a wonderful memory whose detail fades, even as the white cliffs disappear in the mist.

We had not sailed for a full four years, not since the grand 50 th. Anniversary at the Hamble, and there was some hesitation when the boat was launched. A few drips from the seals, and were those in place, or perished? Never mind, there was breathing space for a new exhaust silencer to replace those awful shards and oil-spats scattered about in the bilge and the laconic remarks of the engineer. He was well used to such things, and said that ‘it was amazing, it just fell to bits when we started her up’. Well, more is expected than that of the Perkins 4107 of antiquity, and by Royal Appointment. The most telling concern, however, was the comment by the MD of the yard. “Ah yes, well, I expect you will remember, it will all come flooding back!”

Onboard for three full weeks; a few days to re-adjust to the First World where everything seemed to work very well, and very much better than four years ago. That the weather remained out of control seemed odd in the circumstances, and as Dinah records; ‘long spells of torrential rain, and gales’. The gales were impressive, even a mile or so inland sheltered by a huge hangar and beyond the pool by the great mass of the Priory and encircling trees of substance. There were four ropes out to windward to hold us off the pon-

toon, and another to the mast as the gusts laid hold.

But eventually there came a window, north 4-5-6, and the high water stand of the flood served to take us to the entrance and out to sea through that fearfully narrow passage they call ‘The Run’ between land and the tail of the spit. The gentle curve of Highcliffe Bay was to the left (north), the mass of Hengistbury Head to the right (south), and clear ahead the Needles on the west extremity of the Isle of Wight. The locals take all of this as read, no doubt from years of experience, but for us it remained an adventure.

Not really N 4, as the wind increased steadily, and at times to 5, and even 6; but 4 with gusts of + 6 as the wind came from the cliffs and sent you bowling along, jib rolled and main spilling to lee as far as the traveller would go. The flood was under us to Hurst Castle, and that unusual low profile relic from the Napoleonic wars was seen somehow submerged in the water with only the barest trace of shingle to connect to the land. Change course from east to south, gradually, to take in the dramatic curve of the bay. No danger from the Shambles Bank, well up-tide, but there is the shallow ledge that extends south from Hurst well into the channel that separates the Isle of Wight. Now a jumble of water in the tide race, the bow plunges in the surge, several steep waves together all driven by that gusty wind over the race. The merest splash comes aft, with so much warning on the Atalanta that you could dodge it too.

There was time to take in and to wonder at that great red-brick fort of WWII, on the Island Bank, but where were the gun ports? Was Hurst actually too low to be attacked from the gun-decks? Where were those ghosts of Howe and Drake as they drift with the Armada and send the long boats to find chain-shot from the farmers of the day? Yarmouth seemed pretty full and we were happy enough to stand on, with an occasional tack as the wind came NE for a while. Then the entrance to Newtown River; Perkins on,



Solone anchored in Newtown Creek, Isle of White

main neat and tidy on the boom, and into the river on the last of a swirling flood. Good to be in, and no trouble to remember that string of moorings along the western arm of the stream. All were occupied, white for visitors and red for the blessed, no room at the Inn.

Follow the stream to the SW, one boat after the other, and only one that had appeal for me, a ketch rigged Cornish Pilot, very business like and a shoal draft too. Even more boats beyond, but as the man had said, ‘---all come flooding back!’ And there, on the edge of the saltings, that magic sign, ‘No anchoring, oyster beds’. But there was space to anchor, and so we did with a Danforth on our chain. Mud bottom, it was bound to hold! (our 35 lb CQR was just too much to handle and was left at the Yard).

And the wind blew again, and again, and the Danforth was unable to bite deep in soft mud (oh for the solid grey-blue, Thames Estuary best), and dragged all

over the place as the boats were wind-rod on the ebb. But now, in the very cold pitch black night of high summer, too tired to think of anything sensibly and better to try for a vacant mooring for someone was certain to have gone home. Or even to the east creek where there was protection on the weather shore. Perkins on, the Danforth skating easily in the ‘oggin, move a-head, careful in the gusts, gently up the moon path but a running tide and best not touch the bottom, one boat after the other, and even to the head of the trot; nothing! Swing her round with a little keel down, hope not to touch, and now back to the oyster beds.

Never easy to move down the moon-path, all in shadow, and another matter altogether. Pitch black, wind aft but more control now, and drift against the ebb, one boat after the other; they take shape as a dark-grey mass against the pitch of the night, a nightmare of the first order. No riding lights, why should they? And all asleep, sensible people!

Now tight round the stern of the last boat clear of the oyster beds, to find our slot; but there is an anchor to change, and how will that be done? No time or space for games, so dig out the 200 ft warp from the aft cabin with the boat-hook, then the 20 lb CQR borrowed from the Yard. No chain, but a good reliable anchor-bend is tied to the ring, and now for another circuit as a strong gust comes to blow us off. Careful on the turn, then tight as you dare around his stern again (evasive looks when he moved out), but now in position, and let go.

The dawn in that place was magic. Early light gave a wonderful glow to the green and yellow strips of the saltings, the ribbon of pale-grey clay beneath the lush grass of the meadows all in contrast to the vivid blue of the river. All was peace, except for the north wind and wherever the robins had gone. But the Canada geese were there, rising with the sun, and in flights of twenty-five to thirty, say three hundred in all, as they swept in-land for the day. The curlew were there also, and dunlin and oyster-catchers, working alone or in pairs or in small groups along different levels of the shore, all sorted by length of beak and no squabbles. No other boat was near; we were all alone.

The Warden had followed the sea, a Master Mariner, the greatest responsibility night and day, and then a Marine Surveyor. ('Here lies Keith, he tried hard, please give him another chance'). A good man, 'Would you wish to offer a small donation to the Trust?'. No problem, 'Oh, by the way, anchoring is free'. And so it was for that windy time as the high remained stable, and so did the low of lows along the coast of France. One forecast succeeded another with the great benefit of an enforced rest, all aches and pains dissipated, given over to the joys of nature. The Canada geese one morning found the approach to the saltings difficult and chose to swim in line

ahead behind their leader, who clearly knew a thing or two. Undisputed! Individual flight leaders uttered the occasional quack to their groups in the line, but all had complete trust in the Admiral! There was a lesson for us all. And nor was that trust misplaced as he selected a path for all to scramble up the bank-with dignity.

The 20lb CQR came in at last, well done, and well done for the anchor bend! Muggins, on that dark and windy night had not bothered to mouse the free-end of the rope after the second half-hitch! Bend over, boy! Take that-and that! The second half-hitch was just not there for our anchor warp was secured only by the first half-hitch with the standing part of the rope jammed tight by the round turn on the ring. And so the moral is to carry a little 5 mm line on the pulpit where others, who find our boats unusual, may believe it is some latter-day aid to air-flow (they giggle about the contrast to a Laser); but we know the real advantage on a dark and ghastly night!

The way home, when another lull between the gales offered 4, gusting +6, required some thought. A previous experience in Hurst narrows on the Spring-ebb had almost put us onto the Shambles Bank. Difficult to judge the distance-off from the sand spit, unless a couple or a dog are seen. We were too far off, and with full sail in a good wind and the Perkins on, were able, just, to clear the bouy. Frightening. For that reason we held very close to the shore and were rewarded accordingly. An extended Folk-boat, about 30 ft, swept past, all lithe dark-green hull, battleship-grey deck and low-profile house, single-handed, wind-vane working and the master, tall and business-like, no fancy colours for him, a veteran sailor. 'Yes', he said, found it in Sweden'. And then what we all wish to hear as he took in the wonderful design of the Atalanta, safe, and furl your main from the centre-cockpit with rounded top-sides to encourage the flow "Nice boat".



Seasonal Migration of A142 *Sugar Plum*

by Greg Manning

Sugar Plum lives on a summer mooring in Loch Gairloch on the west coast of Scotland. Not to be confused with Gare Loch on the Clyde. In the winter she lives, like all Atalantas should, in a cosy shed, in her case in Aberdeenshire. Each year Roy and I have a dilemma as to how to get her to and from her summer mooring. Craning facilities are not abundant on the west coast and sailing round requires big weather windows. This year the decision was made by my son's request for a family long weekend on the boat in May. A trip through the Caledonian Canal would be ideal for my grandchildren's first taste of life afloat. In preparation for this trip, knowing May's weather in Scotland might be driech (NE Jockaneese for damp and miserable!), we invested in a new boom cover to replace the cut up sail we had trialled the year before.

After a hectic period of maintenance, this



The new cockpit tent in action

year it being the turn of the cockpit to be fully stripped back and refurbished, we craned in at a marine engineering yard at Inverness. Perhaps not a good choice as the quay side was muddy grit. Not an ideal baptism for our newly spruced up cockpit. The engine started first time, but alas the alternator did not want to play. We had replaced the normal ancillary drive belt with a poly V. Guess who crossed the wiring? Every other dynamo or alternator I have owned has had "Murphy proof" connections, but obviously the little Japanese man who made the Kubota engine for the Beta 10 had no Irish ancestors! Luckily Beta were quick off the mark and the error only cost me £172!

The delay saw us moving from the River Ness to the Canal against the ebb and Roy managing the "going ahead with the shoreline moving backwards" trick. More rev's restored progress!

The travel arrangements for the various members of my son's family were so confusing that I stopped asking who was arriving when and where, but luckily my wife was in attendance as co-ordinator and taxi

driver. By the evening of the 28th of May the male contingent were tucked up on *Sugar Plum* in Seaport Marina and the Ladies were ashore in a Travelodge.

My oldest grandson, Fergus, was convinced that he heard pirates in the night. As no dubloons were missing from our treasure chest in the morning it must have been ducks! It was a clear bright morning as we started up the

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money was on Callum, the youngest! Once on Loch Ness we did manage a few tacks in light airs with Allison, as a novice, doing remarkably well. Alas, fantastic though the weather was, it was no good for sailing. Honour was satisfied as my wife had seen the sails up from a lay-by on the A82

In the middle of Loch Ness my son decided to go for a swim. Chilly in May! Luckily for me a responsible adult had to stay on board.

By early afternoon we were tucked up in the little private harbour at Drumnadrochit, where the crew enacted some role play as tourists in the Loch

May in Scotland can be sublime

Muirtown Locks with my daughter-in-law, Alison, as a day tripper in the most fashionable buoyancy aid. Crew training started almost straight away with the constant advice to “walk, don’t run”. My son and I both had mental bets on which grandson would be swimming first! The canny

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Chilly swimming in May

If only there had been some wind

Ness Experience Centre, before Allison ended her day trip to catch the Easy Jet south.

We enjoyed a pleasant evening entertained by the hire cruisers all trying to moor up, a pleasure slightly spoilt now they all have bow thrusters!

Amazingly the 29th was another good day weather wise. The log uses a word not



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Swimming in Loch Lochy with snow on Ben Nevis in the background

normally associated with Scottish meteorology “hot”.

If only there had been some wind! The night was spent above Laggan Locks with card games and the whole crew in jovial mood.

It was a hat trick, the 30th was hot too and my son decided to swim again. This time in Loch Lochy with snow still on Ben Nevis as a backdrop. Fittingly, as we both are Commando trained, in Achnacarry bay, home of the war time Commandos.

By the time we were locking down the eight locks of the Banavie, better known as Neptune’s Staircase*, the novelty of locks for the boys had worn off. They were allowed to retire to the rear cabin with their game boys. Our last evening was spent moored on the outskirts of Corpath with a fine view to Ben Nevis. We had another enjoyable evening in good weather with the boys trying for the last time to fall in the canal, or so it seemed.

It was a very satisfied Grandad that saw a Son and two Grandchildren onto the train at Corpath station the next morning for their torturous journey back to the south of England.



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Transiting the last locks to the sea basin

* A staircase is a flight of locks were the top gate of one is the bottom gate of the next or vice versa.



Spectacular scenery - made perfect by the weather

Once I was sure that Roy was en route for the next leg, I locked down the last two locks into the sea basin behind a wind farm servicing catamaran whose propulsion system did not seem to have a “Slow Ahead”.

It was still a clear day when Roy arrived at 1600 and we locked out into the Loch Linne. With a light S’ly wind we motored with a fair tide through the Corran Narrows. It was a fine night, but with no favourable wind the motor was on overtime.



Roy and Steve—the crew for the homeward journey

Our new autotiller was working well so we each had a good turn off watch. We passed Ardnamuchan point at 0500 but as we turned northbound the wind settled from the north F3/4 with a short sea. Speed was down to a little over 2 kts! Unfortunately *Sugar Plum* only has clearance for an 11 inch propeller, whereas a 12 inch one would match

the engine and provide substantially more thrust! After a long day we managed to get through Kyle Rhea on the last of the flood tide. The plan was to motor for a second night but after passing under the Skye Bridge we were down to 1½ knots in a very short choppy sea and the wind up to F5/6. A ballot was taken and it did not take long to count the votes for a return to the Kyle of Lochalsh! What a difference an hour makes, secure on a pontoon, a quiet evening and a fine meal.

The forecast for the next day gave NE’ly F4 occasionally F5 and it looked a lovely fine morning. NE’ly should have given some shelter for most of the way to Gairloch. We set off early, well early for two retired gentlemen, at 0730. The day started well as we made 4 kts against a N’ly wind that quickly increased to F5 with no hint of there being any easterly component. SOG was soon down to 2 kts! Roy and I both chose to ignore the occasional drop in RPM, a cry for help from the en-

gine. Luckily it waited to fail until we were picking up our mooring at Shioldaig in Loch Gairloch at 1800.

We spent the evening bleeding the fuel system and feeling less than happy bunnies that our engine of only three seasons had let us down. Or was it my installation of the fuel system that was at fault?

Our season on the west coast was not overwhelmingly successful. Not only was the weather not kind but alas Roy was constrained by waiting to go into hospital for an operation. As well as a couple of day sails we did manage a few longer trips. We visited the Summer Isles, Loch Torridon and Stornaway, something we have wanted to do for many years. This trip was marked by me feeling queasy but after a nap and recycling my breakfast I amazingly felt fine!

All too soon it was time to think of returning to the east coast. Roy, by this time, had had his op and was convalescing. No sailing for him! The return trip was



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A pontoon mooring typical of those along the canal

planned in three legs. The first to Fort William with Steve, the second along the Caledonian Canal with Micky, and then the last leg from Inverness to Whitehills with Steve again. Let me introduce you to the central characters. All of us are retired North Sea helicopter pilots having all had previous military or naval flying experience. Steve is a yachtmaster, Micky is a novice sailor, whilst Roy and I are somewhere in between.

From here onward not many photos were



Bay for a break. At 1630 we set off motoring initially against the last of the flood tide and once through Kyle Rhea motor sailed on the No1 jib and main. After a good meal and with the wind increasing the engine was given a rest. Last light saw us abeam Mallaig with me taking in the first reef. The thirty five miles of the Sound of Sleat normally takes for ever but soon the wizzometer was showing 6½ knots and the loom of Ardnamurchan light could be seen. By now with a good sea building and the wind up to a good F5 I was feeling a bit queasy. The head sail was sheeted in behind the main to reduce its effect and I had to go and pole dance round the mast to roll in as deep a reef as possible. We had decided that those conditions were not suitable for the autotiller and so we took it in turns to cat nap in the cockpit.

Micky on the trip home

taken. This may give a hint of things to come but here is a library photo of Roy on the left and Steve on the right.

Steve and I made a 0630 start from Loch Gairloch on the 15th of September with a forecast NW'ly 3 to 4 and drizzle. It came true, except the drizzle did not really materialise. We had a cracking good sail starting with the No 1 jib and main and then being brave enough to have the genny and main goosewinged. Well as Steve is a yachtmaster I can afford to be brave! This was our quickest trip ever down the Inner Sound and by 1415 we were passing under the Skye Bridge well ahead of plan, and too early to have a favourable tide through Kyle Rhea, so we moored in Balmacara

I was concerned that if I became incapacitated due to sea sickness that Steve would not be well placed in the conditions having to handle a boat with which he was not that familiar. Luckily as we rounded Ardnamurchan Point the wind dropped and it was time to shake out the reefs. I did feel that pole dancing round the mast in the dark, handling the topping lift, the halyard winch, the boom roller and pawl as well as the sail hanks and watching that the mainsheet claw did not foul the sail, would result in a recycled night meal of Christmas pudding! Having done it though I amazingly felt better!

As we approached Ardmore Point we were faced with a yachtmaster shore based test. The first was a tug showing lights to indicate a tow "ever so long", but no tow became visible. Perhaps he was practicing for Christmas! The second was a cluster of

lights that were all white. This was followed by a shopping centre and four blocks of flats showing its starboard aspect. As it came abeam we realised that these two sets of lights formed an enormous bulk carrier! It must have had fun coming through the Sound Of Mull!

It was time to recharge the batteries. When will someone manufacture an LED tricolour that ticks all the boxes? As the engine had to be running it was put in gear and as the wind continued to drop the motor sail became a motor with sails. Dawn broke as we passed the entrance to Loch Aline and Steve went below to snooze. As I anticipated having to motor all the way once we turned northbound in Lynn of Morven I set up the auto tiller and busied myself tidying up after the night's excitement.

Surprise, surprise, once in the Lynn of Morven we were able to sail and soon, with a reef and the No 1 jib we were close hauled making a good 4 kts. That is until we came abeam the super quarry south of Loch à Choire, where we had to start the engine to give way to a bulk carrier coming off its mooring. So our previous bulk carrier became more of a mystery! It was turning into a really pleasant day as we motored up Loch Linnhe and passed Fort William. We entered the sea lock at 1530 and locked up the next two locks to the transit moorings with Ben Nevis as a backdrop.

This is when I admitted to Steve that I had some large sirloin steaks on board and that he did not have to live on sausages that had made up the previous night's meal!

We woke early to thick fog and walked up to the Banavie Locks and were lucky enough that no boats were coming down so without delay we locked up and moored *Sugar Plum* while we returned to Gairloch to collect our car and go home to mow the grass.

The next leg was the Caledonian Canal. My crew for this was Micky. He and I had completed our Army Helicopter Pilots course together in 1972, and had had lots of adventures in life together but very few of them sailing.

Whilst Micky is a highly competent guy, he is not an experienced sailor and so when we set off with the forecast of SW'ly F8 which would be increased by the funnelling effect of the Great Glen I knew we were in for some "fun"! I impressed upon Micky the need to get the stern line ashore first whilst negotiating locks in the prevailing downwind conditions.

Once in Loch Lochy I was not sure what sail to hoist so I started with caution, the storm jib, 2.6 kts. Then we made 4 kts with the No 1 poled out using a telescopic whisker pole made from two of Jimmy Green's plastic boat hook ends, two bits of 1" B and Q dowel and a piece of a TV aerial pole. It was really made for the genny in light airs and was doing fine until progressively an uncomfortable chop built up and, when we were making 5kts, it disintegrated with a very loud crack! Not enough articulation for the higher clew of the No1! We sailed the length of Loch Oich and arrived at the top lock at Fort Augustus to moor for the night. The log records "in a most un-seaman like way". Let me explain. As we arrived at the pontoon there was a suitable space between two cruisers, embarrassingly hire cruisers. I turned right (helicopter pilots do left and right!) through 40 degrees to manoeuvre perfectly into the space. Micky, as I had previously told him, took the stern line ashore and secured it. The wind then swung the bows the 40 degrees downwind! I felt very silly but luckily my rope throwing skills, even into wind, saved the situation if not my pride!

The Fort Augustus locks usually attract a throng of tourists and a carnival atmosphere exists, but not at 0830! The wind was still SW'ly once we were on Loch Ness, initial-



cal tape failed, the boat hook became a harpoon and Nessie must have thought that Captain Ahab was after her. The loss of thrust on one side caused us to start a sharp turn which backed the genny. Now nearly cross wind the angle of heel increased. I picked myself up from the leeside of the cockpit and released the sheet and Micky responded quickly to my order to release the preventor. Not that it made any difference but he had to be given something to do! The engine started first time and we turned into wind to get the sails stowed. It was only then that we realised just how strong it was! When the boat was tied up we did the British thing and had a cup of tea before hoisting the No1 jib on its own and continued on our voyage still making 5kts.

We arrived at Muirtown flight too early to lock down so had a stroll on the tow path before dinner, a G and T and an early night. The next morning we

were lucky again with the locks being in our favour and the weather being fine. By 1000 we were secure in Seaport Marina.

The last leg of the trip was to Whitehills on the Moray Firth where *Sugar Plum* would be craned out. Steve and I set off on the 27th of September. We had done the same trip last year. Then the wind had become unfavourable to enter Whitehills, so in failing light we had taken refuge at Lossiemouth. The forecast this time was for W-SW F5/6 veering NW F4. With the forecast of the wind decreasing we set off at 1500 and after locking down and out off the sea lock with only the No1 jib we were making 5kts under the Kessock Bridge with the

Alison modelling the latest in buoyancy aids

ly F4. Up went the main, well sheeted in to keep it off the shrouds and crosstrees, together with the genny. A preventor was fitted to the main and an improvised pole for the genny made from the boat hook with a loop fixed to one end with some electrical tape. This was secured to the main shroud and away we went at 5 kts. The wind increased and so did the speed, 6 kts and by the time we were abeam Foyers which is half way, 7kts. It was windy and I had thought to reduce sail but we were cracking along and everything was in equilibrium. All good things must come to an end and it would not need the Marine Accident Investigation Dept to analyse how we lost our equilibrium! The electri-

wind, by Steve's assessment, occasionally F7. By 1730 we were passing the usual cluster of dolphin watchers on the beach at Chanory Point but not a dolphin in sight. Luckily the wind had dropped as forecast but remained SW'ly so we were goose winged under full main and No1 jib. It was a temporary lull as by the time we were north abeam Nairn I was doing my pole dancing act at the mast to take in a big chunk of a reef. The night progressed with the sea getting choppy and uncomfortable and, it being late September in Scotland, it was not a warm one! No points were awarded for recognising the lights of an oil rig under tow but the lights from various fishing vessels kept me failing my shore based test! We had a bit of drizzle and I notionally spent the money on some new cosy boots at the next boat show!

By 0400 the lights of Whitehills were in sight. I had a GPS waypoint a few cables before entering the safe sector of the Whitehills entrance light, which oddly is red. To my surprise we were in the red sector before we reached the waypoint. Steve and I did lots of cross checking and we were both convinced that the light was erroneous. Steve wisely suggested that we should not motor until well inshore to avoid fouling the prop on the numerous pot marker buoys. Instead we lowered the main and made our way under just the No 1 jib. Where we anticipated coming into the safe sector the red light turned amber and became difficult to pick up amongst the sodium street and harbour lights. We were both concentrating hard when I was distracted by an odd wave that rushed past us followed by another which went under the boat. We were surrounded by a pod of dolphins having great fun escorting us into Whitehills. What a fantastic end to a long cold driech night!

By 0515 we were snuggled into our respective sleeping bags and *Sugar Plum*

was safely home.

P.S. The engine fault was traced to air ingress due to a leaking bleed screw on the sediment filter. After we craned out and unstepped the mast we found the forward joint on its lower six feet had parted. New Year's resolution, must be kinder to mat-
ture ladies!



Radar Reflections

by Simon Garratt

With many boats thinking of taking part in the round the world (Britain) rally I thought it might be worth sharing my radar reflector installation (*Gambol A17*) with everyone.

It has been a while since the *Ouzo* tragedy (August 2006). As a result this loss the MAIB commissioned a report into the effectiveness of yacht radar reflectors – you can view this at www.MAIB.gov.UK or use the links below.



The conclusion of this report was that “It is recommended that poorly performing radar reflectors are not fitted as it is possible that the user could be lulled into a false sense of security believing that their chances of detection has been enhanced.”

It also recommended that The RCS of the radar reflector should have a minimum consistent RCS (radar cross section) of 2m². The report states that the “Plastimo 4” tube reflector is not considered suitable due to its poor performance. It is also recommended that the 2” tube reflector is not suitable since the performance of this target will be even lower”

The Echomax 230 shows good peak and average RCS performance compared to its competitors but its stated performance level falls to around 0.2m² above an elevation angle of 10°. The Firdell Blipper 210-7 is slightly down on the Echomax 230 in terms of peak and average RCS performance but has a very similar stated performance level.

The report concluded that “either the active Sea-Me, POLARef and the Standard or Large Tri-Lens radar reflectors are the best reflectors at heel and elevation angles of over 10°”.

It was this report and the performance of the Viking Standard Tri-Lens (the peak RCS was about 3.75m². It is very consistent up to an elevation angle of 20° with the average RCS only varying

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by 0.07m². It utilises three luneberg type lens reflectors spaced 120 apart and is encompassed by a moulded plastic case) which persuaded me to take back the Plastimo tube reflector purchased but unused and purchase a standard tri lens. For some reason, which I can not understand, it is not widely available but it can be purchased from www.marine-super-store.com at a cost of £130.

As you can see from the photos not only is it the best performing reflector it is also a great fit on an Atalanta mast – it's easily fixed on with an aluminium bracket held on with four rivets.

These few words really do not do this report justice and I would urge everyone to at least have a quick look to at least see how the reflector fitted to their boat performs – badly in most cases!

I had a bumpy trip back from Holland (an easing force 6 on the nose) last year in the dark, and it may just be coincidence, but I did feel that when crossing the busy shipping lanes feeding Europort that the ships were going round me.

http://www.westmarine.com/images/wa/Radar_reflectors_report.pdf.



http://209.85.229.132/search?q=cache:Kti7Ci5-EMAJ:www.westmarine.com/images/wa/Ra-dar_reflectors_report.pdf+radar+reflectors+on+s
[This study was commissioned by MAIB as a result of the loss of the yacht mall+craift&cd=9&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk](#)



The Kittiwake Story

Or My first written telling of my first adventures with the Fairey Titania T6 *Kittiwake*

by Paul McGovern

“Hello”.

“McGovern?”....”Yeah”. “Jake here, how are you?” “I’m good, how are you doing Captain?” “I’m good...say...are you still looking for an old wooden boat project?” “Will it sail me the hell out of Jersey for the winter?” “I think it will, you gotta see this...go online now and check this out.”

Atalanta Titania T6 *Kittiwake*? Virginia Beach, solid, twenty years dry, mostly garage kept, free to the right person!

So I am in Virginia Beach after convincing the owner that even though I was third to respond to his ad for the boat, I wanted to see the boat and be able to pull the trigger should the first two respondents not work out. I am soon looking at what seems to be the Beatles’ Yellow Submarine, in blue and white, in the driveway of a very typical lagoon strewn, modest but ample beachy ranch home sort of neighborhood just a few miles from the Norfolk, Virginia naval base. She looked like she would bob like a cork in any kind of weather as I step aboard. All the while Lincoln, the son of the last owner, was talking about the great care taken of the boat all the while out of water, and it showed. I went below decks and started stomping



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Hoisting to her below flight deck berth

around a bit to see if I could put my foot through the floorboards, which happened to be the hull itself! As I look around it is like a time capsule. Silvery light green mildew covering everything in even strokes that only time can paint. The glass chimney on the hurricane lamp and the face of the clock stopped in time it couldn’t measure, looking back at me with warmth and character. As I acclimated to the boat, she revealed a charm so distinctive that I decided I would have her...and soon Lincoln agreed. We poured over history. Documents, photos,



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T6 sailing ‘round the *USS Intrepid*



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Interior cleaning in process

warranty slips and invoices from companies from around the world supplying her in steady fashion. She was not fancy, that wouldn't do for the Commander, she was clean, well provisioned and mostly whole. The previous owner, passed on, had sailed another slightly more famous vessel, the USS Aircraft Carrier *Intrepid*. The *USS Intrepid* in the mid-1960s was stationed in the Mediterranean with the *Kittiwake*, as Commander Smith's personal sailing yacht. When not sailing, she tucked away right under the flight deck. What with her

step-able mast, single hand rigged of course, her retractable twin solid steel, nearly center mounted keels and she even came with her full tri-cable rigging for the crane lift. After all, it was peacetime in the early sixties and they were serving in the warm waters off Spain, Italy and Greece and life was good.

The Commander had passed away years prior after sadly contracting Alzheimer's disease. The children noticed



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1959 Ford 102E series, 4 cylinder flathead industrial engine

the early onset as he was readying *Kittiwake* for the water after a long time in dry dock but having a hard time with reassembly and such. A few years passed.... and then so did he. Ten years or so more and it was time to find a proper place for *Kittiwake*. In honor of the Commander, this vessel was not to be stranded, disassembled, parted out, or neglected.



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A little rot!



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Hull work scraping, refastening and putty

This boat was to sail again and I gladly accepted that responsibility. The mast was in rough shape, having been kept outside under an inadequate eave cover causing her rear seam to split variously over the length. Her rudder had been unfortunately damaged in the driveway and discarded. This left me to source marine grade aluminium to cut from scratch a new blank to be fashioned and painted. As a homebuilder of many projects, my electric handheld jigsaw was the tool of choice, well the only tool I had for this job, and it took the better part of an hour to cut out the rough shape. (It took several hours after the cutting was complete for my hand and arm to stop rattling as if still holding the laboring saw!) The rest of her, in all her dismantled glory was in good shape. Spare parts in triplicate; Lincoln's mom had even sewn new



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Six coats on— six to go!

covers for the berth cushions which were kept in the attic in like new condition as if she had just finished the last stitching. The main and jib, storm and spinnaker along with spare sails that will have to teach me when and where to use them were all here. There were few assembly instructions and certainly no hint of where many of the pieces were to go, but there was a proper shop service manual for the engine. A grand jigsaw for a man with a dream and a love for wood, water and travel.

So along with scrapbooks of pictures and letters written to battery manufacturers and sailmakers and the very engineers at Fairey



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Mast re-glued

Marine who attested in writing when questioned on where to mount the bilge pump, "our vessels do not leak", along with the original letter from the British officer who had to sell *Kittiwake* due to an embarrassing situation involving a young lady, not his



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After 2 long days of loading and before BBQ, me and my Father, dirty and ready to go

wife mind you, and many photos of T6 sailing the world. I packed everything up in my van, loaded the boat onto a flatbed car carrier and drove her 300 miles home. No small order, mind you; two very long days of collecting, packing, jacking and blocking and jacking and blocking and jacking and blocking to get her lowest point 3 feet in the air so I could drive the trailer underneath her because the tires of the trailer were badly dry rotted and English sized, on old fashioned split rims also English sized for which I could not find replacement nor repair in short order. Off came the axles and regretfully left behind. Near dark on Sunday night the *Kittiwake* was finally perched upon the flatbed for the 40 mile per hour top speed, 300-mile ride home from Virginia Beach, Virginia to Forked River, New Jersey. Leaving after farewells with Lincoln and a damn good meal of BBQ ribs and cornbread we arrived unscathed and tired as the sun came up and dreams began to see the light of day. Another story altogether but very noteworthy, this would be the last time of many spent joyfully toiling on a beast of a project

with my father. God love the fathers of the world, the mothers that they are!

The unloading and blocking and showing of T6 to the kids was fun stuff and very heady! The mast was my first big project and required some thought and finesse. I first photographed every detail for documenting the reassembly. Then I removed and marked every piece and fastener storing everything in various jars and boxes. My pull scraper cleaned her to bare and a lot of hand sanding

smoothed the old surface and brought out that beautiful spruce scent. I chose dry resorcinol mixed with water to glue the seam that had separated

from rain and age. I had had good results with this glue years before when I worked at the Balboa Boatyard in Newport Beach, California. I spoke to knowledgeable friends and decided to use multiple large hose clamps at 6-inch intervals over the 28 foot (or so) mast length to hold tight the freshly glued seam of the hollow mast. Two days to set, a bit more sanding and she was ready for 12 coats of marine varnish whose brand I cannot recall. Then scraping of the hull, top to bottom, stem to stern was not nearly as bad as it could have been and the confirmation of what great condition she was in made everything very satisfying. Lots of fasteners were showing their age and



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Kittiwake on her trailer frame loaded on the car trailer



At home in her new marina off the Cedar Creek of the Barnegat Bay, NJ, USA

so were retired and replaced with new. I had to repair and replace some lengths of her rub rails so I sourced some quality mahogany and fashioned a steamer for the task and made right any compromises. I learned her every inch and screw, replacing pounds of brass and bronze and don't forget the occasional aluminum hardware (or is it aluminium?) I painted her in the same colors as the Commander, blue below the rub-rails and white above. White cabin top, dark tan non-skid deck and clear coat on the sliding hatches and inside the cockpit. I cleaned the interior but did not paint as it was in better than fair shape.

I scoured over pictures and emailed to the AOA across the pond. Without the help of many of the ever helpful and resourceful AOA staff, Maurice Donovan comes to mind, my many small projects would have been much more daunting. After the mast, hull, rub rails and fittings came the engine. A 1959 Ford 102E series, 4 cylinder flathead industrial engine. As I mentioned, the Commander had many spare parts including water pumps, switches, fittings, spark plugs and valves. I rewired the entire engine compartment to avoid any potential hazards. I rebuilt the SU AUC 746 carbure-

tor, generator and refitted gaskets on the water pumps and the seawater inlet valve. The cooling system pipes and fittings were quite disassembled and a lovely puzzle to piece together but finally all were assembled properly and fastened tight. The old flathead Ford motor had been put up with Marvel Mystery Oil as many as 20 years earlier and when ready to turn over, cranked and started in short order. I was ready for launch and launch I did. She sat in slings overnight as a precaution and in the morning, she was dry as can be inside. Score one for the Fairey engineers, proven right,

as their boat did not leak a drop! I started the motor and took her out for the first time in nearly twenty years on a very exciting and wonderfully uneventful first voyage under the command of a much less experienced but no less spirited captain. She sailed beautifully into a 10 – 15 knot breeze on a warm, sunny spring day in her new home waters of the Barnegat Bay, New Jersey, where she resides today happy and safe.



First time under sail in 20 years!

Where are they Now

Atalanta			A57	Odyssey	USA
No	Name	Home Port	A58	Winterset	France
A1	Atalanta	Suffolk	A59	Julietta	Cardiff
A2	Tellula	Lost at sea 1981	A60	Achates	Honiton
A3	Andana	Destroyed	A61	Elissa	France
A4	Snuffbox	Destroyed	A62	Coco	Canada
A5	Diaphony	Buckinghamshire	A63		Unknown
A6	Unknown	USA	A64	Paradox	USA
A7	Alouette de Mer	Anglesey	A65	Joann	Wivenhoe
A8	Arabesque	East Africa	A66	Roamara	Faversham
A9	Ereina	Solva	A67	Bajan	Canada
A10	Unknown	USA	A68	Curlew	Manchester
A11	Tomboy of Terhou	Destroyed	A69	Laq Laq	Caterham
A12	Ione	Dismantled 2009	A70	Catalina	Eire
A13	Rollin' Home	Destroyed	A71	Blue Jackaroo	Ramsgate
A14	Loutre	Wrecked on mooring	A72	Rondar	Suffolk
A15	Artemis II	Chichester	A73	Lyde	Fishguard
A16	Dervorguill	Derbyshire,	A74	Equanil	USA
A17	Gambol	Sandbach	A75	Shang	USA
A18	Aries	Unknown	A76	Inshallah	Unknown
A19	Valare	Destroyed	A77	Blue Goose	Unknown
A20	Acantha	West Kirby	A78	Marianda	Ireland
A21	Chuff	Denmark	A79	Frisk	Somerset
A22	Mary Jane of Moreton	Wales	A80	Talanta	Usk
A23	Gypsy	USA	A81	Windjammer	Holland
A24	Melanion	Anglesea	A82	Jacaranda	Co. Durham
A25	Virgo	USA	A83	Flying Fox	Bridgewater
A26	Detour	Yorkshire	A84	Desiree	Unknown
A27	Sabot	USA	A85	Kicky-Wicky	USA
A28	Unknown	USA	A86	Sassi	Staffordshire
A29	Meteor	USA	A87	Methuselah	New Zealand
A30	Trio	Destroyed	A88	Tenga	Canada
A31	Dolfijn	Belgium	A89	Colchide	Switzerland
A32	Alchemy	Destroyed	A90	Mourne Goblin	Bradford
A33	Pam	Canada,	A91	Yarina	USA
A34	Cricket	USA	A92	Sea Major	Bangor
A35	Scerzo	France	A93		Portugal
A36	Aquila	Broken up in 1990	A94	Hazel G	Unknown
A37	Pegasus	Unknown	A95	Hiran	Erith
A38	The Beaver	Ontario	A96		Unknown
A39	Epenetus	Axmouth	A97	Joanne	Ross-shire
A40	Dalriada	Canada	A99	Toko	Cobham
A41	Gale	USA	A100	Jaunty	Hastings
A42	Pumula	South Africa	A101	Patience	USA
A43	Ponente	USA	A102	Atalanta Mary	Queen Camel
A44	Vaga	Ireland	A103	Puffin	USA
A45	Tammy Norry	Yorkshire	A104	Arosa	York
A46	Theodora	Dorset	A105	Taka Maru	Kings Langley
A47	Walrus	USA.	A106		Unknown
A48	Feli	Orkney	A107	Xapu	USA.
A49	Terrapina	Glasgow	A108	Solvendo	Melton Mowbray
A50	Escape	USA	A109	Beltine	Destroyed
A51	Bacardi	Canada.	A110	Trienyje	Germany
A52	Ecco 1	Belgium.	A111		Unknown
A53		Unknown	A112		Unknown
A54	Eala	Unknown	A113	Aku	Wrecked in the Galapagos
A55	Sue	Monmouth	A114	Claudia	France
A56	Yambo II	Lost at Sea 1982	A115	Sabrina of Croyde	Lymm

A116	Quadrille	Switzerland
A117	Turtle	Helston
A118	Sunstream	Destroyed
A119	Walrus	Ashurst
A120	Cameo	Unknown
A121	Kotora	Rutland
A122	Jellicle	Unknown
A123	Coramanda	New Zealand.
A124	Helene	Norfolk
A125	Polaris II	Mexico
A126	Apple	Destroyed
A127	Grace	Lochgilphead
A128	Echo	Tintern
A129	Sea Rouge II	USA
A130	Castanet	Retired Glasgow
A131	Strega	Lost at sea.
A132	Aeglin	Leeds
A133	Scallywag	Glenrothes
A134		USA
A135	Bloom	Faversham
A136	Amsara	Unknown
A137	Baby Seal	Ashbourne
A138	Sweet Sue	Guernsey
A139	Delia Ann	Destroyed
A140	Kate	London
A141	Rakia	E. Mersea
A142	Sugar Plum	Aberdeenshire
A143	Clymene	Guildford
A144	Cyn	Eire
A145	Rollin Home	Bo' Ness,
A146	Le Bateau Ivre	USA
A147	Chamois	Perthshire
A148	Johara	Ramsgate
A149	Britt	USA
A150	Salizanda II	Austria
A151	Mistura	Fintry
A152		Unknown
A153	Serenity	Destroyed
A154	Deannie	Cumbria
A155	Miranda	Peel, IOM,
A156	Xirt	London
A157	Quatorze	Destroyed
A158	Jane Duck	USA
A159	Lindora	Rhu Marina
A160	Moyra	Destroyed
A161	Amber Ellen	Rosshire
A162	Solone	Christchurch
A163	Sounion	Children's playground
A164	Scarweather	Croydon
A165	Sloeberry	Horsted Keynes
A166	Hullaballo	Dorchester
A167	Mathilda	Sweden
A168	Kookaburra	Woodford Green
A169	Mateva	Belgium
A170	Tilacious	Norway
A171	Touch	London
A172		Switzerland
A173	Peace	Destroyed
A174	Cordy	Isle of Wight
A175	Inyoniya Manzi	Switzerland
A176	Persephone	Unknown
A177	Quinteffence	Somerset
A178	Endeavour	Destroyed
A179	Emma Duck	Surrey
A180	Cascade	Unknown

A181	Cirdan	Destroyed
A182	Skimmer	USA
A183	Bluster	Woodbridge,
A184	Aquilo II	Bridport,
A185	Petrel	Tynemouth,
A186	Ilversden	Destroyed

Atalanta 31 Owners

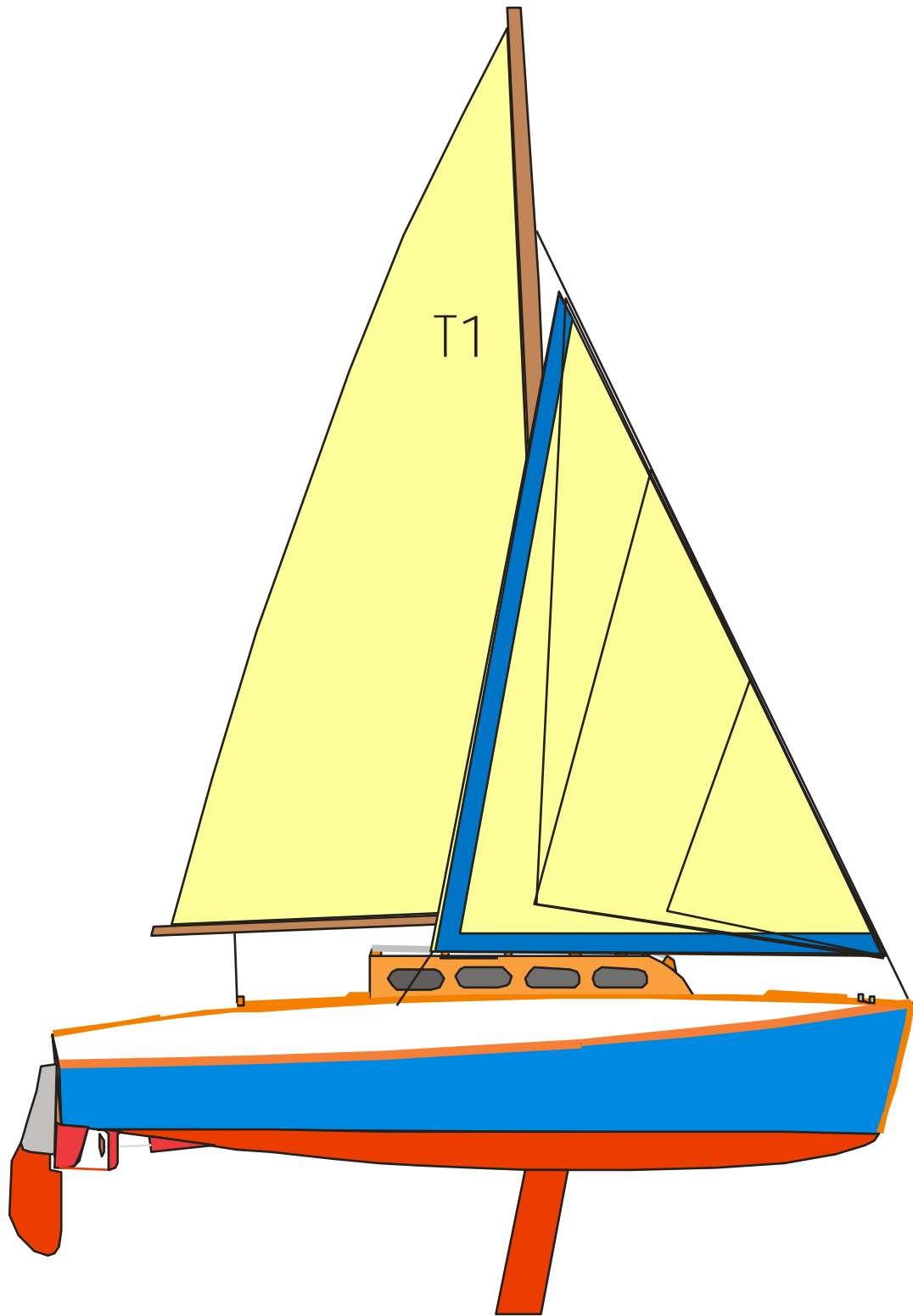
No	Name	Home Port
31/1	Sancerre	Owslebury
31/2	Freedom II	Australia
31/3	Baloo	Germany
31/4	Gellie	Stonehaven,
31/5	Elpenor II	France
31/6	Caperdonich	Pitenweem,
31/7	Moby Dick	Chichester
31/8	Trio of Playford	USA
31/9	Destiny	Netherlands.
31/10	Zambra	Needingworth,
31/11	Petesark	Falmouth
31/12	Peanut	Beaumaris

Titania Owners

No	Name	Home Port
T1	Nuru Albahar	Eire
T2	Hyskier III	Helston
T3	Midsummer	London
T4	Brother Jack	Isle of Man
T5	Solway Tide	Destroyed
T6	Kittiwake	USA
T7	Missey Mouse	Unknown
T8	Fringilla	Unknown
T9	Tarquilla of Aune	Unknown
T10	Calista	Milford Haven
T11	Nyeri	Manchester
T12	Tilly-Ho	Templecombe

Fulmar Owners

No	Name	Home Port
F1	Tangaroa Tu	Peterhead
F2	Steel Deal	USA
F3	Dunsheen	Bridport
F9	Petronella	Unknown
F13	Lucky	Inverness,
F14	Noggin	France
F19	Valis	Preston
F23	Dodo	Hamble
F26	Driftwood	Lincs
F27	Stormbird	Unknown
F31	Frodo	Dorset
F37	Gabiotta	Eire
F47	Sherpa	Norfolk
F48	Vanity III	Unknown
F49	Merlin Ann	Wooton Bridge
F52	Banshee S	Swanage
F53	Pilgrim	Pembroke
F54	Blue Bell	Norfolk
F62	Ariel	Channel Is.
F64	Faerie Queen	Unknown
F?	Wild Goose	Gairloch



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