

Atalanta Owners Association
66th Annual Bulletin 2025 - 2026



**Produced by the Atalanta Owners Association
www.atalantaowners.org**

From the editor

At the beginning of November 2025 it felt that the final demise of the annual Bulletin was just around the corner if not actually upon us. With only one contribution to hand and only rumours of more to come this years edition was looking extremely minimal to say the least. Fortunately, once again, the last minute arrived and some fortuitous additions and considerable creative efforts by members has resulted at last in a pretty wide-ranging content.

However, I would again urge members to plan ahead with some thoughts on getting themselves in a position to gather Bulletin material together ***well in advance*** of the end of the year and apologies for any typos that have slipped through!

So please, it is not essential to wait until next November to send in a contribution, everything will be welcomed and we can hope to maintain the enjoyment of reading next years Bulletin.

editor@atalantaowners.org

Cover photograph, A38 The Beaver in British Columbia

Contents

From the Commodore		3
Fleet review		5
Orwell to Oxford - A102	Alistair Rodger	6
Peanut Diary - A31	Brian Burnett	10
Another generation of Fairey sailors - T12	George Taylor	20
From the archive - A113	Richard James	22
A1 Goes to Cowes	Mike Dixon	24
To Jaunty and back - A100	Phil Pusey	26
Sugar Plum's adventures 2025 - A142	Greg Manning	28
Tall Ships in Aberdeen	Jonathan Stearn	35
Chamois, work in progress - A147	James and Teddy Shacklock	41
A visit to The Beaver - A38	Stephen McCann and Gabby Budden	44

From the Commodore Jonathan Stearn

Although there are fewer Atalantas in good sea-going condition, and there is a public perception that a well-found small sea-going yacht should be of around 30 to 40 foot in length and equipped with an array of electronic navigation, communication and safety equipment, it is good to see that some Atalantas are still making adventurous voyages safely with the minimum equipment really needed for a safe passage.

In our favour, weather forecasting has greatly improved in reliability and it is possible to consult and compare several high quality forecasts before setting off on a passage of a day or two. But, as the weather is becoming less settled with more frequent summer storms, time is sometimes required to wait for the right weather, which requires flexibility (working from home). However, Atalantas are also ideally suited for inshore passages in shallow water less reliant on good weather windows and adventures can also be had in the rivers and waterways inland from our shores.

We need to preserve our Atalantas in sailing condition, and to do that we need to encourage, inspire and train the small boat sailors of the next generation, and help them to appreciate the joys of sailing on a quiet evening up a muddy creek, making a landfall after an overnight passage, and of learning the many skills needed to maintain our boats. There does seem to be a renewed interest in wooden boat building and sailing, and as a lot can be achieved with not much money I am optimistic for the future.

This Bulletin addresses many of these themes, and I thank the authors for taking the time to put their contributions together and share them with us. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Fair winds for 2026

Jonathan

Atalanta Fleet Review 2025 – What has changed since 2022?

We continue to try and document objectively the status of the ‘Fleet’, based upon the method outlined in the 2022-2023 Annual Bulletin. We update the conditions of boats and what they are currently doing (sailing, being restored etc). The current status of individual boats is shown in the 2024-2025 Yearbook published with this Annual Bulletin. The charts below compare the situation in 2022 with now, based on what we know. Notable changes in 2025 are:

There are twenty less boats in existence, as far as we know, since 2022

Five of these we haven’t heard for over 15 years and they have been marked ‘Presumed Lost

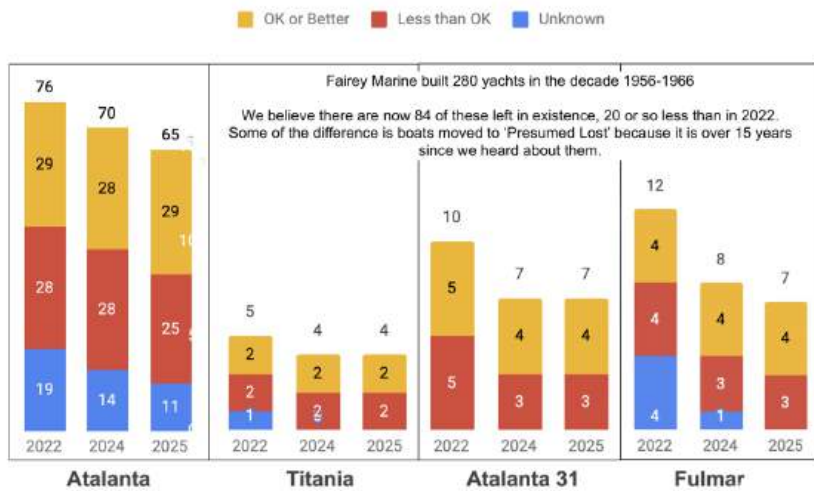
One boat has been destroyed this year

There remain two sailing Atalantas for sale, and at least three restoration projects

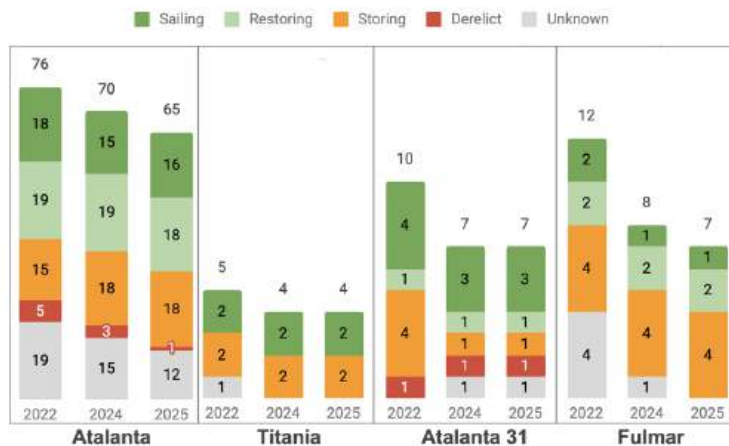
Of course, you may know of other changes – please tell us!

Please email: webmaster@atalantaowners.org

Boat Conditions - 2022 to 2025



Boat Status - 2022 to 2025



Atalanta Mary A102 Orwell to Oxford

Alistair Rodger

Well it kinda happened like this... I had it on my bucket list to go through London up the Thames. The Thames, like Everest, "was there" and by all accounts an easier goal.



Then to compound my fragility on the subject somebody decided to have the AGM in Chatham. Well there is no point paying for storage if I don't use the boat so the idea stuck. With pretty hazy outlines and very little idea of timescales, I committed to the task. Booking holiday for me is a big issue and this would take time. So the idea was to split the journey up so I could show my face at work every now and then. So when Steve offered to help with somewhere to moor up things became more real.

So this is how it turned out...

I picked my weather windows very carefully and with lots of time. The first hop was still pretty cold and my sleeping bag was struggling so I also had a big jumper on to sleep. I was



quite comfortable during the day. I was also blessed with pretty good weather. I left the boat for 2 weeks in the Blackwater and struggled home with public transport. In fact, public transport was a recurring problem throughout this trip.

Crossing the Thames I think the thing that concerned me most was the shallow at the mouth of Colne/Blackwater which I had passed over the previous year.



This leg was the big hop to the Medway and the AGM. I managed to enter the Medway as a front passed but I picked up a bouy near the yacht club and entered the marina the next morning. I arrived a week before the AGM, but the weather wasn't good. However I managed to cycle out to Lower Halslow which I would very much like to "mud out" near. I won't dwell on the AGM this is covered elsewhere. Suffice to say I was well impressed by the yacht club the organisation of our association

and generally had a good time. We did manage a day poking about Mary and comparing fittings and fixtures.

After the AGM I sailed with Ian Pollard out to Queenborough which I wish I had



known about on the way in.

The next leg was up the Thames so I booked St Katherine. Now I guess I must be a nervous person but until you have tried a thing it is unknown. I had not been on a boat up the Thames let alone skippered one single handedly. Now, that sounds flippant and dangerous but I had read the pilot guides and had my back out plans. The worry was the distance (about 40nm) and needing to be on time as St Katherines only locks in a couple of hours around high tide. The take home is the speed at which the river can run particularly around Tilbury.

The beauty of the Atalanta is being able to take the mast down in St Katherines and carry on up river. To do the trip you could then trailer the boat back home. Sea - river - road; but I seem to think more boats die on motorways than at sea.

After a couple of days and a few

beers in old London I headed up to Tilbury and to the locked 'upper Thames'. There is more on this on the website. To speed the story up I basically do a right turn at Hampton Court and on until Oxford.



I was surprised and delighted to have the St Katherine marina staff take pho-



tos on my way in.

I was fortunate / ignorant / wise enough to book into "Bossoms Boatyard" as it was beside Port Meadow and a lovely place to be. Designed more for narrowboats there were no 'moorings' rather Mary was nosed onto the mud bank and I put a kedge anchor out the back. She was at risk of a narrow boat working free from its tethers which as



best as I could make out were only on the bow.

When in St Katherine's Dock they spoke of a classic boat festival they hold in September and also the 'Trad Boat Festival' I think I have heard of this before but not gone or looked into it in great detail. So I looked it up and as a hot moulded design Mary was eligible. Unfortunately it was on in July so I had to hang about.

What is not to like about Trad, it is a celebration of wooden boats exhibiting boat building skills and marine craft. As well as mooring up on a meadow with more than one big beer tent.

One of the major attractions is the "Lit-

tle Ships" which if I understood correctly had just returned from Normandy. One of the most spectacular boats was GELYCE, built by Camper & Nicholsons at Gosport in 1930, as the tender and yard launch to Sir Thomas Lipton's last challenger for the America's cup; the J-Class yacht SHAMROCK V.

www.nationalhistoricalships.org.uk/register/1670/gelyce



The Thames Traditional Boat Festival also had a number of historical vehicles, ampicars and military vehicles, boat



jumble and a traditional “makers” tent. They work with The Thames Vintage Boat Club and want to promote vintage boats and boatbuilding. There were a lot of boat builders particularly Abbey Boat Builder from Norfolk showing an



historic speed boat. I understand it is an expensive event to put on with camping, toilets, security and parking. I thought It was an honour to be able to take part in such an event and ideal for a Duckling and glamping tent.

Getting home was not the reverse of assembly. I had one week of holiday to get home. Fine, the water flows that way doesn't it? The problem is high tide at Teddington is 13:00, and high tide at St Katherine's is 12:00, it takes an hour to go up river. So I missed my docking and lifted the mast on a buoy outside Erith Yacht Club. Then a night at Queenborough and a quick dash up the Middle Deep and home in time for the sunset.



There is too much to put in such a short article and I haven't finished posting all of the trip. So I will give more information on the website over winter.



A31 - Peanut Diary 1969 -1979

Brian Burnett



The year before this story began I was using a length of string with a lead weight to determine depth of water, my compass was from a WW2 aircraft, marinas were rare, small craft electronics non-existent and wooden boats still very common.

Wendy had sailed with her dad all her life, and taught me to sail. A fortnight after getting married in March 1968, we embarked on a 1,000 mile 'honeymoon-cruise' on my newly purchased 7 metre plywood boat, Pleiades - along the South Coast, over to France, on to South Wales ... ending up in Bridgwater.

We had sold Pleiades, and proposed to build a larger vessel. Wendy's dad, Capt. Bill Urry, used his extensive boat knowledge and network of contacts, and found us an unfinished hull at Fairey Marine. Many years earlier, he had a Fairey Marine 24 foot prototype of an Atalanta class. He then upgraded to a 26 foot Atalanta (A26). Fairey Marine then produced a 31 foot version, but only 10 of the 12 hulls were completed, as much cheaper GRP boats were then being

produced, making wooden craft less marketable. The company was selling off the two remaining hulls, we bought one, and we arranged for the hull to be delivered to where we were living near Bridgwater.

I built a temporary 'greenhouse' extension to a garage at the property we were renting so that the boat was fully covered. The hull had no internal structure other than a few frames, and the deck-moulding was not connected to the hull, but had a few spaces where the cockpit and hatches were expected to be. The hull weighed about three-quarters of a tonne, and deck was c.300kg. With the deck lying on top of the hull, the whole thing looked like a giant peanut - hence the name.

Being short of money, we scrimped too much on tools and equipment. Black and Decker power tools were in their infancy and not powerful enough for the work I was doing. I burned out several power saw attachments – and would have done better to have invested in professional tools. Jobs that appeared

simple were turning into major ones. My experience of both boating & DIY was very limited.

Our first task was to fasten the deck to the hull. I ordered several hundred pounds worth of timber, fastenings and glue from a supplier in Yorkshire. Inevitably, I made mistakes in the types of materials I used, but I'd been reading as much as I could about the essentials of boat design and materials. Due to shortage of funds we had decided to alter the design quite significantly from the original. Most significantly, we used a two-masted ketch rig instead of a single mast sloop (after Bill Urry found us two unwanted masts at Proctor's), twin fixed bilge keels instead of twin lifting keels, a lower cabin head-room (5'10" instead of 6'), with no deck-house on the aft-cabin. I took care to fit a strong bulkhead under the main-mast, to weigh all timber and other materials to ensure the finished boat would be the correct designed weight, and to ensure the mast, sails, keels and rudder would correctly balance.

A couple of months after starting the project in the spring of 1969, I was opening a can of GRP resin. It was very hot inside the 'greenhouse' cover. The litre can had a metal seal under the screw cap. I bashed it with a screwdriver, the seal flew off into my right eye. I was temporarily blinded and in intense pain, and left with permanently blurred sight in that eye.

I soon gave up my day job deciding to spend my time working on Peanut. On most days, I'd be working 12-15 hours, and was making encouraging progress. Wendy was still teaching, providing our income, and often putting in a few hours helping on the boat. We occasionally took off a day to go bird-watching or exploring the Somerset countryside, but in retrospect, I wish I'd kept my program-

ming job (as the pay was quite good), paid someone else to work on the boat, and taken more time off to develop our wildlife interests. On the other hand, after achieving what we did, we both felt a lot of satisfaction in doing almost all of it ourselves.

In August, we moved to Wirral for Wendy to start teaching at a new school. We arranged for the boat to be parked in a private parking area used by removal vans – only 300 yards from the shore, behind the boat club at Heskwall – and we lived in the part-built boat for a few weeks before moving into a beach hut nearby. As the cold weather of Autumn and Winter came, we found everything in the hut became damp, so we also rented a one-room flat for a short time.

I started a teacher training course in January 1971 and we moved to a newly built house in Buckley with a field of rough grassland behind, so we were able to have the boat hull moved into the garden, which it just about fitted. The house was unfinished when we first saw it, so we paid extra to have a fairly large garage built on the side – to use as a workshop and store for the bits of boat gear we had accumulated.



That Summer, Wendy started as deputy head at Buckley CP school, only a few hundred yards from our new

house. We were still able to put in many hours working on Peanut. It made a big difference having the hull in the garden as we were able to squeeze in the occasional hour or so with water and electricity close to hand. Neighbours were obviously very interested and intrigued by the boat with a house in the garden, and our next-door neighbours, Fred and Emma, often plied me with hot drinks, usually laced with whisky, in the cold weather, and gin and tonic in warmer weather – both hindering my work efficiency.

That Autumn, Wendy and I both started on a 2 year BOT Yachtmaster Course, very different to the RYA (Royal Yachting Association) courses replacing the earlier ones, in 1973.

After visiting the London Boat Show in January 1972, we bought a Saab 18hp twin marine diesel, a motor designed and made for small fishing boats. The motor came with a gearbox, variable-pitch propeller and shaft. I was very pleased with myself in drilling the 18-inch long hole through the hog for the propeller shaft, and finding that it was perfectly aligned with the engine, as the channel had to be drilled exactly at the right angle and in the right place. We also had to lift the engine up 15 feet above the ground, swing it over the boat, and lower it down into the engine compartment. We did this using the main-mast as a derrick, with a team of friends, ropes and pulleys, etc. It was a tense time, but went as planned.

Later that year my dad borrowed a pot and furnace and we used this to form scrap lead we'd collected from various sources into a keel shoe bolted onto the foot of each of the two steel keels. I had designed the hollow keels, to be made from sheet steel into an aerofoil shape, and had them made by a local blacksmith before we left Somerset. Each



weighed about a quarter of a tonne in their unfinished state.

In January 1973, I was awarded Certificate in Education (teaching certificate). Part of the course I did (specialising in maths), we had to produce a special study, and I wrote mine on Design and Construction of the Sailboat – based largely on my experience with building Peanut. That same month, I started teaching.

The boat was now a terrible burden, and I was wishing for a bonfire-night accident. I would gladly have sold the thing for 'peanuts'. We had spent £2,000 (almost the price of a house!) and a lot of time ... and damaged eye! We pressed on making slow progress, thinking of a launching in Spring 1975, then we had a terrible shock. Several times we had had warnings of some houses being built on the waste ground behind our house, but nothing had happened. This time, a number of piles of bricks suddenly appeared on the field. We had to move the boat before any building started as the field was the only way



out of the garden for the boat. A week's feverish activity had our craft ready to float – if not really fit to take to sea. Up to now, I'd become adept, with the help of rollers, heavy planks, and 2 one-ton car jacks, at shifting the 3-tonne hull, moving it around the garden, tipping it over to fit the keels, etc.

The Launch

We managed to get the boat onto a trailer, and she was finally taken to Hoylake where we planned to launch the following day. We spent the rest of the day and evening working on the boat on the road beside the public slipway at Hoylake – preparing for the launch. We had to sleep on board for security reasons and at 10:00, one day in July 1973, Peanut had a glass of champagne thrown on her bow by my mother, and the lorry slowly backed the trailer down the slipway into the water. We had a little trouble getting off the trailer as I confused forward with reverse gear, but we were soon afloat and at anchor. We spent the day anchored a couple of hundred yards offshore, drying out at low water – on the bilge keels – and checking that all the necessary gear was working properly. At 01:00, just after midnight, we set off on our maiden voyage – Wendy, my father and myself. We negotiated the winding channel in the dark without any trouble and had a good sail to Rhyl where we had already laid a mooring

Peanut's First Season; late Summer 1973

On the 4th of August, we sailed round from our Rhyl mooring to Conwy, and had several forays around the Menai Strait, including going through the Swellies, a potentially dangerous winding channel with fast tides and treacherous rocks. After a few days going right round Anglesey, we returned to Rhyl to pick up our own mooring. On most

cruises, we took my parents and friends. We had Peanut craned out on the 29th September, along with several other boats. During that short season, we covered 220 miles, c.90 under power.

Peanut's second season, 1974.



Peanut was craned in to the water at the end of March. There were still jobs to do and we were both working, so only had weekends on the boat. Sometimes, we took 2-3 children from the primary school where I worked. Several people at the sailing club in Rhyl took every opportunity, depending on tides, weather and work commitments, to take their boats out to sea to sail around for a few hours, and then return to their moorings, but Wendy and I generally only went to sea if we wanted to go somewhere.

For much of the summer in 1974, we didn't take Peanut out to sea, but spent many weekends doing odd jobs on the boat while at our mooring. However, we sailed around Anglesey again, and sailed to the Isle of Man in spite of some uncertainties as to how to correctly read the echo sounder. After going right round the Island, calling in several

harbours, we returned to Rhyl. That was the last cruise of the 1974 season.

Peanut's third season, 1975

Peanut spent the winter out of the water at Rhyl Yacht Club, where we often worked at weekends as there were still things to do since we first launched the boat prematurely two years earlier unfortunately we suffered a couple of break ins and the subsequent time spent repairing the damage delayed our launching. We had to rent the crane for a few weeks later, but we then found that our mooring had disappeared – possibly sabotaged by an unfriendly fisherman as mooring spaces were unregulated at that time, and space was limited. So, rather than sort out a replacement mooring, we decided to leave Rhyl, and see about finding a mooring at Conwy.

Deep-water moorings were all taken, so our mooring was on a sand-bank towards the Deganwy side of the river. It meant that we would be sitting on the sand for much of every day, unable to go anywhere until the tide floated us. With our bilge keels, Peanut would stand on the sand without falling over, although was often sloping one way or

another depending on the ever-changing shape of the bank. A disadvantage was that it was more difficult to get to the boat – either by dinghy when the tide was high enough, or by struggling through the soft, ucky mud in wellies from the Deganwy shore, something we only did a couple of times.

After a weekend cruise with a couple of kids from school, we sailed up to Scotland with a colleague from school and his girlfriend. We sailed to the Isle of Man then on to Larne in Northern Ireland. Members of the local yacht club welcomed us warmly, taking us to their homes and showing us the town. 'The Troubles' were still major problems, and it was strange to see road barriers manned by armed officers, and police-stations with concrete defences surrounded by tall wire fences. To get into clubs and pubs, one had often to undergo checks. After an entertaining and interesting couple of evenings at Larne, we sailed on to anchor in The Wig, Loch Ryan, for a night before going on up the coast of Ayrshire, eventually anchoring in Loch Riddon, where we were joined by my parents to spend three peaceful nights anchored in a small bay, walking ashore, pottering about in our wooden



sailing pram-dinghy. It was a wonderful time for all of us in such fine weather.

From Loch Riddon, it was a short sail to East Loch Tarbert, which was to become a favourite stop in future years. After a night at ELT, we anchored in Loch Ranza at the north end of Aran. On our return to Wales, we left Girvan one afternoon, pressing on overnight, often using the motor as winds were intermittent and light. However, we were now finding that the engine overheated if we ran it for more than half an hour unless keeping boat speed below 3 knots. This was disappointing as, up to now, the closed-circuit engine cooling system provided us with extra cabin heating in cold weather and also a drying cabinet for damp clothing, which had been useful when we had wet weather. We arrived at the Conwy entrance just as the tide was turning against us, the engine was too hot to use safely, and the wind was very light. However, we crept in up-river very slowly under sail, managing to pick up our mooring under sail before the tide pushed us back out to sea again. What a relief!

Over the next few weeks, I converted the indirect close-circuit cooling to direct sea-water cooling enabling us to use the engine at full power whenever needed. I had originally designed a system for the engine cooling water to run through the keels, but I now realised that when calculating rate of heat-transfer, etc., I'd not taken into account the thickness of the steel-plate of the keels.

We left Peanut on her mooring during the Winter, but early in 1977, there were severe gales which did a lot of damage, so we had the boat transported to our garden, where she became a well-known landmark for people in the area. While conveniently close to the house, I fitted lockers, bookshelves, pulpit, lifelines, etc. during the Spring.

At Easter, I handed in my notice to finish at the end of the academic year – July 1977 – and became a house-husband. For a while, we had been holding down two jobs, working on the house, van and boat, and not having time for much else, so we decided that it would be better if we had one job with one of us at home. Wendy was earning more than I was, and I was more use at home.



Peanut's fourth season, 1977

In early August 1977, Peanut was craned in at Deganwy railway dock. We had several short cruises up the Straits, often with school children, friends and/or family, but we were thinking more about next year, when we hoped for something more ambitious

Peanut's fifth season, 1978

A few years earlier, some of our friends from the Merseyside Naturalists Association had shown us slides about their annual trips to Shetland, and

this made us want to get up there – in the middle of the school Summer term. After giving up our school-teaching jobs, preparing Peanut adequately, we sold the house, and bought a little house which we rented out to friends who were having their own home rebuilt. To help finance our cruise, we advertised, for ‘paying guests’, and the 11 people we had during the season helped pay for our time on the boat that Summer.

Peanut was craned in on the 12th April, and after a few days, we set off – Isle of Man, Firth of Clyde, Crinan Canal, by-passed Oban, Loch Ewe on the 16th May. Next stop was Ullapool. Then to anchor at Tanera Mor, Summer Isles, where Frank Frazer Darling spent time living on the Island. After calling again to Ullapool to take on fuel and water, we went on to Lochinver,

In the morning of the 25th, we anchored in Handa Sound, and landed on the Island, an RSPB reserve, where the warden, a Liverpool lad, showed us round. On to Loch Laxford, rounding Cape Wrath soon after being overtaken by Sea Spirit, the Gordonstoun sail-training boat. Passing along the cliffs on this coast, we were close to the highest sheer cliffs in Britain at over 280 metres (not far off 1,000 ft) before turning into the Kyle of Tongue, and anchoring just south of Rabbit Island. In the late afternoon, Sea Spirit sailed in. The skipper, Lt. Geoffrey Greenhalgh, shouted across asking us, out of courtesy if we minded them anchoring nearby, and within a short time, the boat was at anchor, and the youngsters on board were diving and swimming in the loch. We were invited to go on board for a drink with the skipper and his mate, ex-CPO Barney Robinson.

In the morning, Sea Spirit lifted anchor at about 06:30, when we were still in bed. We watched her sail off – and

straight up the beach! We leapt out of bed, and tried taking a line to attempt to pull Sea Spirit round, but we were too small. As the tide dropped, Sea Spirit lay over on her side, and the Commander and Mr. Robinson came over to sit on our level boat for coffee, while youngsters splashed about in the sea. As the tide was rising again, our two visitors returned to their vessel, and we lifted our anchor to continue eastwards.

When we got to Scrabster, we visited the Community Centre to use the facilities, including baths. While cruising in Scotland, we often used fishermen’s missions to have baths or showers, and to use washing machines for our clothing and bedding.

We spent the 1st of June at Scrabster, and the following afternoon, just after 3 o’clock, we motored into the Pentland Firth headed for Orkney. Our first ‘paying guests’ had joined us, Pat, who was to sail with us many times in future years, and Don, an editor with a daily newspaper. The Pentland Firth is notorious for its strong tides and powerful tide rips, which can be extremely dangerous in strong winds, so we had ensured that we’d chosen a time of weak tidal streams and light winds. The passage was still quite lively, with Peanut being bounced about unpleasantly at times, although not dangerously. In the evening, less than 5 hours after leaving mainland Scotland, we dropped anchor at Long Hope, South Walls island, just outside the SW corner of Scapa Flow, feeling relieved having passed safely across the Firth. We were now in the Orkney Islands, and had sailed (including motoring) nearly 400 nautical miles since leaving North Wales about five weeks ago..

Northern Isles

We spent three weeks around the Orkney Islands, calling at many interesting

places, spending time ashore visiting archaeological sites, such as Skara Brae, attending the mid-summer dance at the Sailing Club in Kirkwall, and making new friends. My dad had joined us at Scrabster, and stayed with us for nearly a month before returning home.

From Orkney, we called in at Fair Isle, then on to arrive at Lerwick, Shetland, on the 29th June. At Fetlar, we were greeted by the local shop-owner and family, spending the evening with them, and taking them out for a short sail. At Mid-Yell, we spent time with Bobby Tullock, the local representative of the RSPB, and well-known local folksinger.

When leaving Fetlar to go further north, we were in perfect calm, crystal clear visibility. We'd been motoring for a couple of hours up the east coast of Unst when very suddenly thick fog enveloped the coast and crept rapidly over us. I'd carelessly not been checking our position as we'd been able to see clearly where we were, so we spent an anxious two hours cautiously motoring up the ragged, rocky coast. Eventually, we steered into the coast and entered a bay. We could clearly see the sandy sea-bed through the crystal clear seawater, and the white breakers along the shore through the thick fog. Soon we heard voices from the shore, so I shouted out, 'Are we at Haroldswick', and a voice called back, 'Drop anchor where you are, and come ashore.' When we got ashore, Stuart said he'd been waiting for years for someone to wreck their boat so he could claim salvage. However, he invited us to his home for a meal that evening, where his wife, Sheila, and children, Clive and Karen, welcomed us. We were able to use their bath and washing machine for our clothes. The following day, Sheila drove us up to the RAF station at the north end of Unst to refill our gas bottles. Everywhere one goes, local people show

such friendliness and kindness, and yet there are those around who steal, injure and cause such chaos and mayhem. We took the family for a short sail after having our gas-bottle filled, and spent a second evening with the family. The following morning, we left, and sailed north again. Haroldswick is the most northerly village in the UK, and on this day we sailed north around Muckle Flugga and the tiny outlier Oosta (Outstack), the most northerly point of the UK. The weather was cool and grey, and the uncomfortable swell left me feeling somewhat queasy, a feeling I'd not experienced before on Peanut. Even Wendy, who'd not been seasick before, was not feeling too happy. As we sailed down the west coast of Unst, we kept a lookout for the albatross that was reportedly living amongst the thousands of gannets nesting on the cliffs, but no luck.



On our way south, on the 15th July, we left Lerwick at 11am, and moored up at North Haven Pier, Fair Isle, in the evening just after 8. We spent a day on the Island, before continuing south to anchor in Linlet Bay, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, then visited Auskerry, and anchoring in the afternoon at Copinsay to see the sea-bird cliffs from the top of the cliffs, eventually crossing the Pentland Firth for the fourth time, and entered Lybster Harbour on mainland Scotland that afternoon.

We calculated that we'd now trav-

elled 1,000 nautical miles since leaving North Wales in the Spring. From Lybster, we continued south, entering the Moray Firth, and meeting the now-famous dolphins living there for the first time. This was quite exciting as they followed us in, swimming in front, alongside, underneath, all around. We finally moored up at the quay in Inverness at 9 in the evening. We felt that our cruise to the Northern Isles had now been completed, although our sailing season was far from finished.

Return to Mainland

The following morning, on the 21st July, we motored into the Beaulay Firth, and spent a couple of weeks visiting several harbours in the area before passing through the Caledonian Canal, having been joined with my mother, dad and his brother and wife.

In the next three weeks, we had 'paying guests' (PGs) while we sailed around Mull and other islands off the West Coast. Few of our PGs had much if any sailing experience, and were not interested in learning to sail, but just wanted relaxing, different holidays, visiting new places, and seeing wildlife. On the 31st August, we set sail to return to North Wales, with just one PG. We called at Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland, Larne and Portavogie, then headed for the Isle of Man, and on to Conwy.

During the season, we visited 78 different places, 29 different islands, and had 11 PGs. It was an exciting, interesting season, one of the best of my life.

After having had such an interesting and enjoyable time in 1978, we decided to go a step further in 1979, and see if we could make a success of chartering (i.e. taking PGs) in 1979 and planned a full summer cruising on the Scottish West Coast.

Peanut's Sixth season - 1979.

We booked the crane for a day in early April. On the day of the launch, we went down to Deganwy Dock and started to load our gear onto the boat before the crane arrived. However, it came early so, instead of packing things away



in lockers, etc, we just piled it all in the boat in heaps everywhere, as we would be able to clear up at our leisure once we were on our mooring. The crane came over, and I slipped the large webbing straps around the hull before clipping them onto the crane's hoist. The lift went well, and the crane swung the boat over the water and gently lowered her down. Once she was afloat, I undid the straps, and the crane started to move away. I went down below to get something, and saw that water was coming in. The boat was sinking! I leapt out and shouted for the crane to come back. Fortunately, it hadn't gone far,

and it lowered the straps down for me to put around the hull. This was more difficult with the boat in the water, as I couldn't get underneath, but it didn't take too long, and the crane started to lift. But, the boat was now too heavy, and the crane started to tip up, and we had visions of it crashing down off the dock right on top of the boat. However, the crane driver knew his stuff, and he just held the boat sufficiently high for the water to start draining out again. It was then that I realized what had happened. During the winter, I had taken out the depth-sounder transducer, but in our haste to load the boat when the crane had arrived, I had hurriedly put down the floorboards without noticing that I hadn't replaced the transducer. So, while the boat was hanging, the water drained out, and within a few minutes, I was able to refit the transducer, and the boat was lowered back into the sea.

After a few days pottering in the Menai Straits, on the 16th April, we set off from Conwy, headed for Scottish West Coast for our season of chartering. As we didn't have any PGs for the run up to Troon, we took four 10 yr old children from the school where we both had been working as supply teachers. We had a few days on the Isle of Man, sailed up to Port Patrick, and on to Troon where we took the kids to Glasgow to put them on the train to go home.

From Troon we sailed on via the Crinan Canal to Oban, our main base, and had a busy season taking people to various islands, harbours, anchorages around both the Inner and Outer Hebrides. There were moments of disaster (mostly minor), danger, discomfort and embarrassment, but also of fun, great interest, excitement and great satisfaction and pleasure.

The summer of '79 went well. We had

about three dozen different people with us at different times, and many became good friends. We ended the season with a healthy bank balance. We sold the boat, the house, the car and the furniture, and searched for a larger vessel which would become our home and our business. We finally bought 'Xim'. We could not afford her, but she was the only boat we could find suitable for what we wanted at a price which was not completely out of limits, so we took out a large mortgage and prepared for 1980. We sailed in Xim for 18 months – from Lymington to the Scillies, West Coast of Scotland, down the East coast to Lymington, to Scandinavia, across to Shetland, down to Lymington, across to France, down the inland waterways to Mallorca, and back via Canal du Midi, Biscay, the Netherlands, to Poole. After a divorce, I bought another boat, Squirrel, and continued chartering for a further 8 years until marrying again to Susan, who didn't take to being cold, wet, frightened and sea-sick – and finally running into rocks on the North Wales coast in 1992. So ended my sailing career.

Editors Note: Peanut is still listed in the ownership of Robin Vick in Beaumaris but with no contact details since 2018 - please contact one of the AOA officers if you have any further information

T12 - Another generation of Fairey sailors?

George Taylor



With a revitalised trailer [new front half, tow hitch, galvanising and rebuilt running gear] there was clearly no excuse to leave Harrier languishing in her nice dry boatshed for 2025.



With a young family; ages 4, 3 and just walking - all devotees of Swallows and Amazons - there was an ideal opportunity to encourage them aboard by moor-

ing up in a mud berth at the National Trust quayside at Cotehele House just down the coombe from the house in Cornwall where the throngs of visitors can stand admiringly on the quayside and eat their ice creams.

The aft cabin - and indeed the remainder of the interior is still to the original Corinthian standard and somewhat spartan. Fortunately an obliging grandparent [your editor] had just worked out



how to operate a sewing machine so was commissioned to supply a full width platform and cosy upholstery to provide sleeping accommodation to the aft cabin to an approved standard.

With a few introductory picnics on board, which were well received despite the inevitable Cornish drizzle, an initial expedition was organised with appropriate victuals from the Swallows and Amazons cookbook.



No great offshore passage making is envisaged for the immediate future but Viv has successfully steered down the Tamar to Cawsand despite the lack of the appropriate RYA certification. A watchful eye is however essential when crossing the track of the Torpoint chain ferries but overnighting at anchor is hopefully the start of many years of family sailing, there is talk of a crossing [by ferry] to Brittany to indulge in warm sunshine and white sand - we shall see!

The addition of a Duckling to the messing around in boats options was also seen as a great improvement



although there is a tendency to row in circles with somewhat mismatched rowers!



From the archive

Richard James

The following article was inspired by a little project looking at adventurous sailors in late 1950s boat designs. The project was comparing the motivations behind Tony Peck attempting a circumnavigation in A113 Aku (see Bulletins 1961-62 and 1962-63 or search A113 on the website) with Edward Atkinson building and sailing a self-built Even-tide 24 Borer Bee from Singapore to England. More of that comparison in the future, but the research identified that John Riding, who crewed with Tony Peck, was something of a serial adventurer. He designed and built a 12' boat, crossed the Atlantic in it and was later lost at sea during a circumnavigation.

“ATALANTA ATLANTIC CROSSER DOES IT AGAIN IN A 144 INCH BOAT”

John Riding was born in Southport and after school attended Southport Technical College. He then went to sea as a Royal Navy Cadet Officer, but was forced to leave the RN due to ill health.

On 28 November 1960, Tony Peck and John Riding departed the UK to attempt to sail westward round the world - a two-year, 31,000-mile journey. They were sailing Fairey Atalanta - Aku - A113. Their route was: UK to Canary Islands to the West Indies, then through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific Ocean to Tahiti, Tonga, Port Moresby, the Cacaos Islands in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius and down to South America. However, the trip was abandoned in The Galapagos Islands when Tony Peck became ill. It is unclear when John Riding left Aku.

In 1962 John Riding became skipper of a 55ft ketch called TaiMo-Shan, and while he was based in La Rochelle,

France, he designed and had built a 12-foot plywood boat called Sea Egg. In early 1964 he sailed her back to England. He applied to enter the annual transatlantic yacht race, but was barred as the event organisers felt that he could not carry enough food and water for an Atlantic crossing. John wanted to prove them wrong.

John set off from Plymouth in July

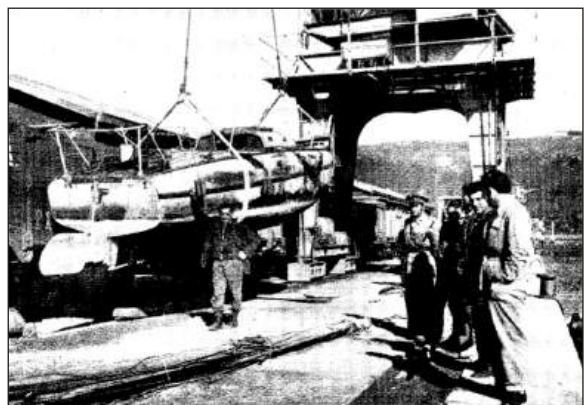


Aku leaves the River Hamble

1964, aged 24. He successfully crossed the Atlantic Ocean and dropped anchor in Bermuda to complete an incredible journey.

John was 6ft 4 inches tall and weighed over 16 stone, and during his trans-Atlantic voyage he slept, cooked and lived in an area the size of a basic bedroom wardrobe. Getting into his cockpit cabin was like crawling underneath a bed.

Surviving on a diet of tinned meat,



Aku ashore in San Juan de Nieva for keel repairs

tinned porridge and the odd sausage, and was entered into the Guinness Book of Records the following year for a single handed trans-Atlantic voyage in

the smallest craft ever to do so.

Sadly, nine years later, in 1973, John and his trusty Sea Egg met an unfortunate end, when the experienced sailor, halfway through a circumnavigation, disappeared somewhere in the notorious Tasman Sea between New Zealand and Australia and the epic seafarer was never seen again.

Postscript, Ridiculously small boats



Aku meets James Wharram

across the Atlantic

Fulfilling Riding's wish to break a world record, the Sea Egg was in the Guinness Book of Records as the smallest boat to ever make trans-Atlantic crossing. In 1993, Hugo Vihlen crossed from Canada to the United Kingdom aboard a boat named Father's Day which measured in at only five feet and four inches long. Mr. Vihlen's crossing took him four months, the story of which was published in a book called 'The Stormy Voyage of Father's Day.

'References:



Aku meets James Wharram

'The Voyage of the Sea Egg' by John Riding, published by Pelham Books (out of print)

'Sea Egg Again: From Atlantic to Pacific' by John Riding, published by Pelham Books (out of print)

Southport Visitor 'The Saga of John' 19th March 2020 (search Pressreader/com)

Southport Visitor 'Continuing mystery of Vanished Yachtsman' 19th March 2020 (search Pressreader/com)

Videos; search 'John Riding Sea Egg' on Youtube and efootage.com,
<https://www.efootage.com/videos/61775/john-riding-sea-egg-sailboat>

<https://www.efootage.com/videos/61792/john-riding-sea-egg-sailboat-2>

Southport Visitor, 19 March 2020 and 26 March 2020

https://www.pressreader.com/uk/southport-visitor/20200319/281822875876531?srsid=AfmBOoovgfyfuE5SHBVK_YPxy0yN2ZSHBpQVkBn-BJ-2jThYofBgGEW1k

https://www.pressreader.com/uk/southport-visitor/20200326/281801401053858?srsid=AfmBOoqXc0pDaXIXmWIAeKbzk7KyyAtCQJiqESMiuvtGIWhks2_vf59X

A1 Atalanta goes to Cowes Classic Boat Museum

Mike Dixon

Over the winter of 2022 – 2023, in consultation with the rest of the family, I very reluctantly concluded that after 30 or so (with a gap) years, my days of Atalanta ownership were over.

Paradoxically, I had never owned an Atalanta 26, though I had owned a Titania (T4 Gellie), an Atalanta 31 (A31/4 also Gellie) and A1, the prototype Atalanta, as well as, along the way, a Dinky and a Duckling. So I had a kind of affinity with the marque. In 2023, Atalanta went on the market, various free websites and with a broker. Over the course of ten months, I dealt (unsuccessfully) with several phone calls and email exchanges.

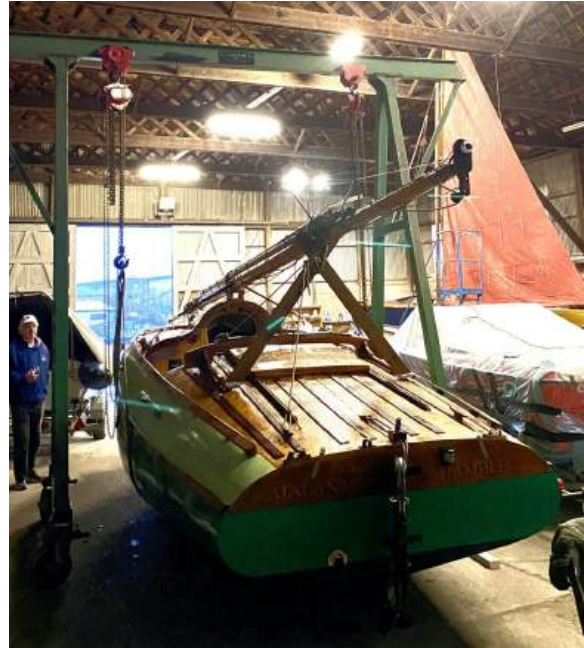
There was a bizarre enquiry from a potential buyer purporting to be from New Zealand, wishing to buy the boat unseen and then ship her to New Zealand. When I was asked for my Pay Pal details a distinct rodent aroma terminated further contact.

I did get one genuine enquiry from a prospective buyer who spent a few hours with me on the boat but sadly withdrew a few days later.

Here we were, at the end of the season with no buyer. Atalanta was lifted from the water and brought back to the barn in Alconbury. I was left with some dilemmas. I wanted the boat to go to someone who would look after her. I was reluctant to give her away. But go she must as I could not see me going through the sale process for another year.

More family consultations followed before we hit on the idea of donating

her to a museum. But where? I then remembered that I knew someone from the AOA's involvement with the Uffa Fox event in Cowes in 2022. That person was (and still is!) Mark McNeill, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Cowes Classic Boat Museum.



I got in touch and over the course of a few weeks, agreed with Mark how Atalanta could become an exhibit at the Museum.

In early February 2024, Nick Philips and I delivered Atalanta to the Museum in Cowes and handed her over. She was initially transferred from her trailer to storage in the Belfast Shed in Newport.

Her ownership was made over to the Museum, but complete and ready to sail. This latter condition was a stipulation of her being accepted by the Museum. The condition was set up by one of the original benefactors of the Museum who would pitch up and take one of the exhibits for a sail.

Postscript: I spoke recently (September 2025) with Mark and he reports that

Atalanta has been moved from the shed in Newport down to the Museum itself at Cowes. So, she's a bit closer to being exhibited, but not there yet. Mark went on to say that he was hopeful that she would be exhibited next year. Fingers crossed!

www.classicboatmuseum.com



A100 To Jaunty and Back

Phil Pawsey

Having had a few years sailing a West-erly Pageant where I seemed to stumble from one calamity to the next, I decided to limit myself to a small dinghy in the spirit of Roger Barnes of the Dinghy Cruising Association.

With a sail from the River Exe to Lyme Regis with a friend my enthusiasm was rekindled. Sitting at the kitchen table surfing boats for sale on my Iphone, I stumbled upon A169 Elle and realized if I was to write a specification for my perfect boat it would be an Atalanta 26. But I would sooner have a diesel engine so I am afraid I discounted Elle.

I then found the AOA and my choices opened up. As luck would have it I was helping Shaune move his MacWester 26 up the Exe to be lifted out for winter and A177 Quinteffence was moored off Cockwood so Shaune and I decided to go have a look. She was down stream so it would be limited to looking from ashore.

Living in Devon it seems everything is at least 100 miles away “up the line” so to speak but my granddaughter was having a birthday party near Stow on the Wold

so I decided to go up on my BMW R80 RT motorbike as a bit of an adventure and call in to see A177 Quinteffence on the way. She was being lifted out on the Friday, then on to the party on Saturday and then see A100, Jaunty, on Sunday then home.

Friday morning started well and off I went to Cockwood to see A177, when I got there, she was nowhere to be seen so I phoned Tarn who said he was on the slip the other side of the river at Exmouth. I said “it looks like I’m not meant to see her, I have to crack on to Stow on the Wold.” By the time I got to Exeter I thought, well its only 12 miles to Exmouth, (12 minutes on a Beemer), so off I went. In Exmouth I phoned Tarn, “where are you” Tarn said “I thought you weren’t coming so I’ve set off home towards Ottery St Mary.” Set the sat nav and off I went, not easy on 2 wheels, Tarn had stopped in a layby and sent a pin, I couldn’t get it to work. Then the rain started. I aborted and set off towards Stow on the Wold in serious rain and spray.

Eight miles short of Taunton Dean, Grace the BMW gave up and stopped. The RAC came out, I knew more than he did but we agreed the coil had died. So, I was to be recovered, but the Iphone wouldn’t



worked only for texts as it was too wet. Morale was low. After a while the phone dried out and worked so I wondered if Grace might do the same, I changed the plugs and she ran in a fashion. I loaded up and set off. I got to the Taunton Deane services and she stopped again.

Then miraculously I was going to be recovered in 10 minutes time but they couldn't take us home straight away because so many people were being recovered. The recovery lorry arrived and the driver said he had just had a heart attack a couple of days ago so would I push the BMW, (Grace), up the ramp. Grace went into storage I was given a courtesy car which I could use to continue my journey.

The birthday party passed without incident and Sunday morning dawned with me setting off to Stokenchurch.

Derrick Ardron was poorly but I met up with Simon. Talk about love at first sight! No not Simon! Jaunty!

I just had such a wonderful feeling about her, as if I had gone back in time before all the electronics and political correctness. To when fittings were properly designed and made.

I set off towards home in good time so thought I would try and see A177 again. Not to be, Tarn was out for dinner. I believe in fate and a guiding power which I call the Universe so after five failed attempts to view A177 Quinteffence I felt that was just not to be the boat for me.

I still hadn't done a deal on Jaunty and she was 215 miles from home. I know Series One Land Rovers have towed across Europe. My truck is a 2001 Discovery 2, but the electrics are a nightmare and I felt she may just get me to High Wycombe but would be unlikely to get back towing 3.5 tonnes.

My concerns were discussed with Derrick and within 24 hours we had agreed

a price and that Simon would deliver her with Derricks more recent Discovery but Simon was concerned about doing it on his own but I arranged to go up as co-driver. A deposit was paid and Simon extricated Jaunty from the back of a barn with various other barn dwellers moving a vintage lorry and assorted paraphernalia to make it possible.

I hired a van and drove up early on the Tuesday morning to help tie things down. Unfortunately, Derrick was too poorly be involved so my hoped for tutorial didn't happen. Simon had done a tremendous job preparing boat and trailer, one trailer hub had partially seized so he had freed that off and put the wheels back on.

Simon picked me up at 6.30am and we hitched up and set off. We took a bit of a convoluted route to get to the M4 to use the widest and least congested roads. Once on the M4 we settled to 50mph, Simon driving of course. On the level or up an incline she was fine but the slightest down hill and we started a bit of a wobble. If Simon just applied a bit of brake she settled and the wobble stopped.

We stopped for a pee near Swindon and I checked the trailer wheel nuts which were okay. Then again off we went to Sedgemore services on the M5 and then to Taunton Deane for fuel. It was all done at a steady 50mph, I found Simon to be excellent company and we chatted very easily. "Welcome to Devon" appeared and then suddenly, without incident, there we were, home. It was only about 1.30pm so I thanked Simon, we said our goodbyes and he set off back to High Wycombe.

I was so tired I didn't check her over and I should have done, both hatches were slightly open. I went to bed for a nap and in true Devon style the heavens opened.

Sorry Jaunty, lesson learned, put you first in future.

A142 Sugar Plum's adventures 2025

Greg Manning

The waters surrounding the UK are strewn with isolated rocks, reefs and skerries. Historically hundreds of ships and thousands of seamen perished when they foundered on these. It was recognised that there was a need to somehow avert these disasters by building some kind of lighthouse on them. The first recorded attempt was when Henry Winstanley built a wooden structure on the Eddystone rock eighteen miles south of Plymouth in 1696 which had sixty candles to warn passing vessels of the danger. Unfortunately for the brave Mr Winstanley, he died when the enlarged replacement structure was carried away in The Great Storm of 1703.



Winstanley's final tower in which he perished in The Great Storm

The wooden structure was later replaced by a stone lighthouse seventy two foot high, the building supervised by the engineer John Smeaton. It operated between 1759 and 1877 before its upper part was removed and is still

a feature on Plymouth Hoe. Smeaton cleverly decided that all the stones had to be dovetailed together to add strength to the structure.

In Scotland the first lighthouse built on an offshore rock was the Bell Rock built between 1807 and 1810. This structure still stands and is in use to this day. The supervising engineer was Robert Stevenson whose son and grandsons all went on to be engineers building lighthouses.

The biggest and most challenging lighthouse was built by Allan Stevenson, Roberts's son. It was in the Atlantic at Skerrivore fourteen miles south south west of the southern end of island of Tiree. It is one hundred and thirty seven feet high, so as to withstand the possibly hundred foot wave that can be prevalent in the area. (The author can testify to these waves existing.) It was calculated that the pressure exerted by the waves was just under 6,000 lbs per square foot. The tower weighs 4308 tons with a base of 42 feet. Allan Stevenson calculated that there was not a need to dovetail the stone blocks for the lower part of the tower as their weight alone would ensure their security.

Work started in 1838 with an attempt to build what was termed a barracks on the skerries. This was the normal practice to provide some accommodation so those working off shore could stay for a time in fair weather. Alas it was not fully completed by autumn and was washed away in a storm in that November. The following year work started again with the construction of the barracks and work on the actual lighthouse. It took 217 working days to prepare the foundations ready to accept the 170 stone of the first course. A working day was seventeen hours with two and a half hours for breaks. There would have been engineers, draughtsmen, clerks,

masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, seamen and no doubt cooks too, some working offshore and some at the shore base. Added to the practical difficulties of working on an offshore rock that could be overwhelmed by seas was that there was no forecast to give warning of inclement weather.



Construction of the Bell Rock lighthouse with an adjoining office / accommodation structure

Over the winter and when offshore work was not possible work continued on shore. In total one hundred and fifty men were employed of which twenty seven were masons. One essential for such a major project would be a shore base but none existed within a practical distance. A harbour and pier together with all the necessary workshops, offices, yards and accommodation was built at Hynish on the south of Tiree. Other than the first few courses all the stone was quarried on Mull and brought to Hynish to be dressed. The stones weighed between a ton and two and a half tons and were dressed to a tolerance of 1/16th of an inch. Each one had to not only fit with its adjacent stone but also be formed to the external profile of the structure and include such shaping as stairs, landings, doorways and other necessities of a functioning lighthouse. All the gins, winches, derricks, cranes, staging, scaffolding and formers were purpose made on site so the harbour at Hynish had to be substantial in order

to tranship many thousands of tons of material as well as meet the domestic requirements of the workforce. It also remained the supporting base for the lighthouse and its keepers until 1892.

When I read about the harbour at Hynish some years ago I decided that had to be on Sugar Plum's list of adventures. I initially looked at both the Clyde Cruising Club and Imray pilotage books but there was no mention of Hynish. This left me pondering, how could what must have been a substantial harbour and pier not be mentioned?

I looked on the OS map and the 1/50,000 did show a pier and a museum and the 1/25,000 also marked an Old Signalling Tower, proof that Hynish harbour and pier did exist. Other than the Imray chart I did not have a chart of the area so I looked on Google Earth and there was clearly a harbour. Some photographs could be viewed on Google Earth which showed a fine looking harbour and pier. It could be seen that there was clear water on the approaches to the pier but possible some skerries too.

An adventure to Hynish has been moving up the list for a few years and came to the top this year. 2025 has not been a good sailing year for Sugar Plum. She rode out two named storms and in both cases needed repairs to her steering mechanism after violent and prolonged swinging on her mooring. All summer the high pressures centred to the south of UK meant that the depressions and associated front skimmed past the north west of Scotland with only brief ridges of high pressure giving short periods of fair weather. Timing these short periods to fit in with lifes other demands didn't result in any good sailing.

During an overnight visit to check all was well with Sugar Plum I carried out

the passage planning for Hynish. I had Admiralty Chart 2171 and 2207 that covered the route from Arisaig and included the NE third of Tiree. I had previously contacted a chart agent who was unable to advise me of which chart would cover the SW two thirds of Tiree. Roy my previous co-owner had bought the Admiralty charts downloaded onto Memory Map and Sugar Plum does have these on an i-pad. Charts are meant to automatically change when needed. Alas my ability to use any IT system is sorely lacking and I have already discovered that the i-pad uses more current than can be supplied when permanently switched on.

I sail single handed, am adverse to bad weather and am a hanker with boom roller reefing so I decided that I would need at least three days of guaranteed fair weather to make the trip, probably more if I wanted to dry out at Hynish pier overnight.

My friend Stevie keeps a yacht at Whitehills on the south coast of the Moray Firth. His annual aim is a trip



Sugar Plum leaving Arisaig on a fine bright morning with Stevie on the helm

to Shetland. By mid August he hadn't manage one. I volunteered to crew for him making a nonstop passage possible. He did however manage a trip to Stromness in Orkney arriving back only a few hours before Storm Floris!

Mid August arrived and the forecast showed a few days of fair weather. Stevie could have sailed to Shetland but would need some certainty of being able to return so instead he very kindly offered to join Sugar Plum and I on our adventures. A trip to Hynish was on.

On the fifteenth of August we drove from Aberdeenshire to Arisaig in high spirits and some anticipation. While I stowed the victuals and cooked an evening meal Stevie replaced a cheek block that had been damaged during Floris. We woke the next day to a bright clear day which boded well as we motored from the mooring to the open water. There was little wind but it had a northerly component so with the genny up we gained just a little benefit as we set off for our first waypoint abeam Arnamuchan point albeit a bit choppy. Coming abeam was Ardnamuchan with the higher ground of Coll appearing over the horizon. I love maps and charts and had great fun trying to identify what we could see. Obeying the military maxim of "Time spent on recce is never wasted" we explored Loch Eatharma which was our safe haven for the trip. There were a number of yachts on visitor's moorings but still eight available. Preferring a quieter anchorage for the night and to be closer to Hynish we continued on to Loch Breachacha with its two castles and a stunning beach. The anchor went down at 16:15 and we enjoyed a fine evening. The ship's cook was a little over enthusiastic and cooked enough minced beef for two main meals. The ships log doesn't record whether the spirit locker was broken open!



Loch Breachacha with its two castles and stunning beach

The seventeenth was an early start, well early for two gentlemen of a certain age, the anchor coming up at 07:45, with a blue sea and sky we motored off to Hynish in calm and perfect conditions. I still had the niggling doubt in my mind, why was Hynish not mentioned in any yachtie pilotage guide.



Sugar Plum alongside the pier at Hynish

As we neared the edge of chart 2171 I flashed up the i-pad but it did not automatically change to the next one. It did however list the next Admiralty chart, 1778 Stanton Bank to the Passage of Tiree, as well as the relevant Antaries charts. I summoned up all my IT skills and did manage to get chart 1778 displayed on the i-pad. It was not ideal being at a 1/100,000 scale. Otherwise things were all going to plan.

As we approached Hynish at just after eleven o'clock fenders and mooring lines were rigged, the pier became obvious and steering a course that had looked clear on the Google Earth view the Antairis was selected on the i-pad. It is a very small and detailed display but it was clear that there were no hazards ahead. The water was so clear it would have required a very big effort to bump into any sub surface obstruction! It was HW neaps and we passed the end of the pier in 4 metres and came alongside in 2.9. A problem then presented itself; the top of the pier was at head height with no steps or ladders and the only mooring bollards were set well back from the edge. Stevie brought Sugar Plum alongside and by chance there were some old rusty metal protrusions. I manage to get a footing on one of them and taking the midships line with me managed to get ashore. Once ashore Sugar Plum was moved ahead to be clear of the rusty metal protrusions. It

is lucky that conditions were calm as Sugar Plum was somewhat insecure as I had so far to go to the individual fore and aft bollards that were set back from the edge of the pier. Stevie was able to find a tiny gap in the masonry and with a bowline tied round his chest with our combined effort he was heaved ashore.

Once ashore I needed something to secure the midships line, not to secure Sugar Plum but so it would not slip back down onto the deck. I wandered



The strange culvert at the head of the harbour

off to the nearest building looking for a boulder or some such only to find some picnic tables outside what looked like a cafe. It seemed deserted but there was a waitress inside and I asked whether they were open. The answer was that lunch was served at twelve.

I found a suitable boulder and secured the midships line. Stevie and I then explored the pier and harbour. The stone work was immaculate but then



The signal tower showing the two windows facing towards the Mull, the four facing Skerrivore on the other side

it was built by masons used to working to 1/16th of an inch! The harbour was silted up with sand as was the pier and at the head of the harbour was a strange culvert. We met only one member of the public who pointed us towards the little museum relating to the Skerrivore lighthouse. It was very interesting and the detail filled in many unanswered questions one of which was the purpose of the strange culvert.

A reservoir had been built above the harbour and when necessary the contents were released to flush the sand.



Stop Logs to protect the harbour from storm waves but all now unused. Note the grooves in the harbour walls beyond.



The silted up harbour with Sugar Plum out there at the end of the quay

Our forbears seem to have approached problems with much more ingenuity than we have today. The next thing was to see the lighthouse. It was as clear a day as it could be but even having walked to some higher ground there was no sight of a lighthouse!

Before lunch we walked to the Signalling Tower, it had windows facing towards Mull and four in the direction of the light house. Imagining the centre of arc of these windows as being the direction of the lighthouse I was just able to make it out on the horizon. The one thing I gleaned from this is that they must have had a very good telescope if they were able to signal to and from the lighthouse from this tower.

Time for lunch, when we returned to what I had thought was a cafe we were advised that lunch was either sea bass or roast pork. It was Sunday so a roast meal was a must. It turned out that the cafe was actually a hotel and although there were three waitresses and only us it was usually busy. Never would I have expected that arriving at a deserted harbour on the south of Tiree that would

I be tucking into a Sunday Roast!

Before leaving we had another look round the harbour. Once again the practical approach to problems by our forebears was to the fore. The stone blocks and associated rusty metal work at the harbour mouth suggested some ingenious arrangement for lifting guillotine type gates or something similar for maintaining the water level in the harbour. There were some new looking stop planks with two slots for them or what was there before to fit into. With the amount of silting and lack of use for the harbour they seemed too new to ever have been used. It remains somewhat of a mystery.

Time to leave, a lady was taking some pictures on the pier so she was co-opted into holding the midships line while I dropped the fore and aft lines. She had been born on Tiree but lived in Glasgow and was on a nostalgic visit. She did indicate that she hadn't anticipated being given the responsibility of a boats security as being part of her visit! I hooked the top of my foot round the



Leaving Hynish showing the pier, harbour, signal tower and the buildings all needed to run the Skerrivore Light

main shroud to guide it onto the deck as I lowered myself over the edge, relieved the lady of her duties and pushed off.

It was a happy crew that chugged back to Loch Eartharma but a little surprised to find all the visitors mooring occupied. At the last moment whilst preparing the anchor an unoccupied mooring was spotted. Having had a Sunday roast at lunch time the mince beef had to stay in the saucepan in the bilge, but the spirit locker needed its stocks reduced as the end of the season was in sight!

Monday the nineteenth dawned clear and bright and once again an early start was made as not only was there the long passage back to Arisaig but also the drive to Aberdeenshire was the plan for the day. The forecast was for NE3-4 so the whole day would be on the motor. As we left the shelter of Loch Eartharma the sea state was higher than we had expected and looking at the tidal flow atlas and the forecast we didn't anticipate an improvement. Occasionally Sugar Plum would fall off a wave and bury her bow into the trough of the next one. This hardly helped progress but luckily the cockpit didn't get too much spray.

One benefit of the Fairey Atalanta is that if the heads are in the fore peak the fore hatch needs to be open to give enough head room thus providing a amazing loo with a view! Needs must, and on this occasion it was more like a theme park ride being a cross between a flume and a rollercoaster!

Luckily after a few hours the conditions did improve and the ships log states that we were back on the mooring in scorching sun shine. We did remember to eat the remaining beef mince before a happy and satisfied crew drove home.

Editors note; there is a very watchable BBC film on Youtube about the last manned lighthouse - Bishops Rock

The Tall Ships In Aberdeen

Jonathan Stearn

The Tall Ships Races are not really about racing, or learning to sail, or preserving old ships and the skill to sail them, although all these elements come into play. It is really about the trainees, aged 15 to 25: showing them a different way of life, opening up possibilities and inspiring them.



Some of the larger Tall Ships in Aberdeen, and the crowds

The Tall Ships Races in 2025 started from Le Havre in France and progressed via Dunkirk to Aberdeen, and then on to Kristiansand in Norway and Esbjerg in Denmark. Aberdeen had not hosted the Tall Ships fleet since 1997 and planned for it to be a big event. As the members of Ocean Youth Trust Scotland (OYT Scotland) living locally,

of which I am one, were the only organised group with any recent experience of Tall Ships, we were involved at an early stage with the planning for the event, particularly the recruitment, selection and briefing of the trainees to be sponsored by Aberdeen, and the volunteers, who would help run the event.

Aberdeen initially planned to attract 50 tall ships, sponsor 100 trainees from Aberdeen or Aberdeenshire to sail the legs either to or from Aberdeen, and attract 400,000 visitors over the four days that the ships were in the harbour. In the end, 49 ships visited, they sponsored 244 trainees, 111 of them fully, and attracted some 496,000 visitors (according to the local paper) which generated an estimated £32.2 million for the local economy. One concert also generated £31,000 for the RNLI.

The trainees selected for sponsorship were those that might get the greatest benefit from the experience. The impact on the trainees was significant, with a post-event survey reporting that 98% stated that the programme had a significant impact on their lives, around 70% reporting that they had gained skills in teamwork and communication and learned responsibility. Interestingly 30% said that they are now considering a maritime career.

My involvement with this event was in two phases. From a meeting in September 2023 I was mainly involved in helping Aberdeen City Council to man stalls in a variety of locations to encourage potential trainees and adult volunteers to apply for the event. In the summer of 2024 potential trainees also had the chance to have a day-sail out of Aberdeen aboard Swan, an ex-herring drifter from Shetland and I was lucky enough to help out on four of these day sails. After January 2025 when applications closed, the emphasis changed to publicising the Tall Ships visit at other venues

and events and then helping brief and equip the trainees for their voyages. They each received a kit bag containing Helly Hanson waterproofs, boots, hats, gloves, sunglasses, a water bottle and other items.

When the Tall ships actually arrived, on or before the 19th July 2025, I ceased being a volunteer for the Coun-

teers had helped with so much of the organisation of the event, Alba Explorer was given a prime berth at the end of the harbour adjacent to the stall that we ran, jointly with The Association of Sail Training Organisations (ASTO), the Chief Executive of which just happened to have been one of our Staff Skippers. This was great for our publicity and also



The corner of the Aberdeen harbour for the smaller Tall Ships

cil as I had been lucky enough to get a Sea Staff berth on OYT Scotland, Alba Explorer, a beautiful Challenge Class steel cutter, built in 2000, that had raced round the world twice (east to west - against the prevailing winds) as part of Chay Blythe, Challenge business. Unfortunately the business failed as not enough people could be found to pay very large sums of money to get wet, cold and tired. The boats and equipment were however very well maintained.

Because the OYT Scotland volun-

helped raise some funds for the Trust by selling mugs and other merchandise.

My first job on Sunday 20th July was to help marshal the trainees on the Crew Parade through the streets of Aberdeen, which was followed by the Crew Party. These trainees were only due to join Alba Explorer the following day, but since the delivery crew had already departed they were allowed to join the fun early. Monday started with victualing for 18 people over ten days; a multi-shopping trolley visit to Tesco followed by

trans-shipment via cars, the Tall Ships supplies base, more trollies and then bag carrying down the gangway and along the pontoon to eventually stow the victuals.

On Monday a mini-AOA meet was held aboard Alba Explorer as Mike Dixon and Greg Manning were visiting the Tall Ships. Mike was a VIP guest and also attended the Captain's Dinner, having been heavily involved in their last visit in 1997. Unfortunately, time for socialising was short as we had our 12 trainees arriving that afternoon. These were all Aberdeen sponsored trainees, aged between 15 and 17, the vessel having been chartered by Aberdeen Council for this leg of the event. After being welcomed on board and stowing their gear, the trainees went off to a free concert.

The next day, Tuesday 22nd was sailing day and we started with the various safety briefings, drills and vessel familiarisation. As we were parked in the inner-most corner of the dock we were almost the last to leave, and un-berthing the fleet took a long time, but eventually



The Current, Past and Vice AOA Commodores

at 1500 in the afternoon we did leave the harbour in a flat calm and made our way towards the race start line, offshore Aberdeen. Due to the lack of wind, our start was delayed twice, but eventu-

ally the wind did arrive and we started at 1945. The wind built to a force 6 to 7 from the north. As our course was more or less due east, this was a fast reach and a bit lumpy so many of the trainees were not eating much, but only a few were sick. Going straight from land, out into the North Sea, is a bit brutal when you have never sailed before! However, sailing fast at night in close proximity to several large sailing vessels was an unforgettable experience. I also got to sail past the Montrose and Arbroath oil platforms which I had not previously seen but had worked for a year mapping the subsurface structure and reservoirs beneath them.

After the night, a day and another night at sea, the next day dawned clear and the wind began to drop. Because we had such a fast sail, we reached the race finish line off SW Norway on Thursday 24th at 0239 and 41 seconds with an average speed of 9 knots. This leg now became a Cruise in Company, a chance to visit some other ports and socialise with the crews of other Tall Ships before we were due in Kristiansand. Our first port of call was Farsund which we reached in a dying wind at 1150 BST (1250 CEST). After lunch the crew went off to the beach for a swim while some of the staff relaxed in a seafront bar with an alcohol free beer (we are a dry ship when trainees are on board).

The next day we set sail eastwards for Baly, arriving in the early afternoon. This small fishing village is famous for its underwater restaurant, which we did not visit as Norwegian restaurant prices in general, and this one in particular, are sky-high. Instead, we played volleyball with the crew of a German vessel also visiting.

The following day, Sunday 27th, initially in company with the German schooner Esprit, we sailed further east to the sheltered anchorage of Olavsundet by



The Cruise in Company route

the island of Helgoya. We wanted to tie up to the rock face in typical Norwegian fashion, but were unsure of the depths, so anchored while we sounded from the dinghy and then moved alongside the rock. The crew went by dinghy to a nearby beach for another swim while I reconnoitred the island. As Olavsundet is such a well-protected anchorage it was used by the Germans during the war and the island had been heavily fortified. The numerous bunkers, tunnels, some of the armaments and the remains of a radar station had been preserved, which the crew explored the following morning.

We were also joined here by the Colin Archer designed Norwegian vessel *Ryvingen* with two families on board. These are very seaworthy wooden vessels, massively built for rescue work in the north of Norway. This one was in beautiful condition. The restoration and maintenance costs of these classic vessels is paid for by the Norwegian government as long as they remain authentic. Would it not be great if the British government did the same for *Atalantas*?

The next day, after the crew's exploration of Helgoya, we sailed east again for Arendal where we arrived in the evening. We did not have long here, but it was fun to be moored in the middle of

a busy town with several others of the Tall Ships fleet. The following day, there being no wind, we motored back west to Kristiansand, navigating close to the coast between the off lying islands. Many of the vessels of a similar size to us were berthed together, but a 20 minute walk away from the larger ships. The festivities in Kristiansand included a crew parade followed by a prizegiving. Although we did not win any prizes for speed, we did get the prize for having the youngest Skipper. There were also sports, a party on a nearby vessel and the main crew party. This was situated on a nearby island in a bay facing away from town, and was provided with plenty of good food, loud music, a secluded beach and a ski slope made from real snow!

After our two days in Kristiansand it was time for a change of crew, and most of the sea staff also. As my flight back to Aberdeen was the same one that our and other Aberdeen sponsored trainees were on, I was co-opted as a chaperone. Much time was spent hanging around in Kristiansand and Bergen airports, but we eventually all arrived back in Aberdeen on the evening of 1st August.

So what did the voyage achieve? Although we did not sail a great dis-



Alba Explorer and Ryvingen moored against Helgoya in Olavsundet, SW of Kristiansand, Norway

tance, only about 450 miles, we did visit five interesting Norwegian ports, which were new to all of us, in beautiful warm and sunny weather. Although some of the crew will probably not sail again they all had an eventful time and gained their RYA Competent Crew certificates. Hopefully it will have broadened their outlook on life. One trainee in our crew has applied to do the RYA Day Skipper theory course with us this winter and I know of others keen to do more sailing. We have seen several of the older trainees off other vessels apply to become volunteer Bosuns with OYT Scotland and some of the Ships Liaison Officers apply to become Sea Staff. The Council employee given

the job of Aberdeen Sail Trainee Manager for the event has now joined Sail Training International (STI, who run the Tall Ships Races) as Commercial Executive. There are also rumours that OYT Scotland may be in the running for STI awards in January 2026 for the Sail Training Volunteer of the year and Young Sail Trainer of the year.



The prize giving ceremony in Kristiansand

Although many people were responsible for making the event the success it was, I would like to make a special mention of Emma Wadee, the Project Manager who ran the event for the Council and Hollie Weatherhead the Sail Trainee Manager and Project Officer. They were highly efficient and most enjoyable to work with. Lastly, the Aberdeen based OYT Scotland volunteers did a great job advising the council, helping the project get off the ground, and later providing significant volunteer manpower to make the event happen.

A147 Chamois, work in progress

James and Teddy Shacklock

A chamois is a sort of alpine goat and unfortunately our pet goat was involved in a car crash on the A34. This has delayed us sailing on our alpine goat for quite some time however it has been quite the experience repairing her and we would like to show you our efforts to put her back in the water and what we have learnt.

If we want to keep Chamois we need to get clued up on how goats work. So



the crash damage was the perfect opportunity to learn about how to maintain Chamois so that she can live a long healthy life in our hands (and so we don't die at sea).

The picture on the left shows a crack at the bow where the bowsprit had hit



the road in the accident and caused the wood in the stem at the front of the boat to pull apart and split. The crack is a lot worse than it looks and goes all the way

through maintaining a width of about 3 millimetres all the way. Fortunately it was repairable by pumping resin in with a syringe and the repair is shown on the right.

Whilst repairing the crack we discovered some rotten wood in the beams either side of the stem which we replaced with some more of the same wood and tidied up with some wood filler. We did the same on the starboard side but it was easier as the rot was not as close to the stem so we were able to clear out





a regular shaped indent into the wood. This rot was caused by a crack and some delamination in the fiberglass from the accident which caused rain water to seep in [fresh water and wood don't go well]

The next problem on Chamois was a leak at the bottom of the hull where the veneer meets the hog. The wood here was rotten which allowed water to seep through. The most likely culprit is fiberglass delaminating and letting water get stuck between fiberglass and wood.

I'm not sure whether the fiberglass delaminated in the accident or it was caused by a really big fish bumping into the boat (something like that) or maybe the fiberglass was just old. I could not find photos of the rot but the wood had almost turned to soil. I suppose rot is to be expected on a wooden boat that has not seen salt water in over a year. Repairs involved lying under the boat in the rain. The local scout group has also taken an interest in Chamois and hopefully one day Cham-

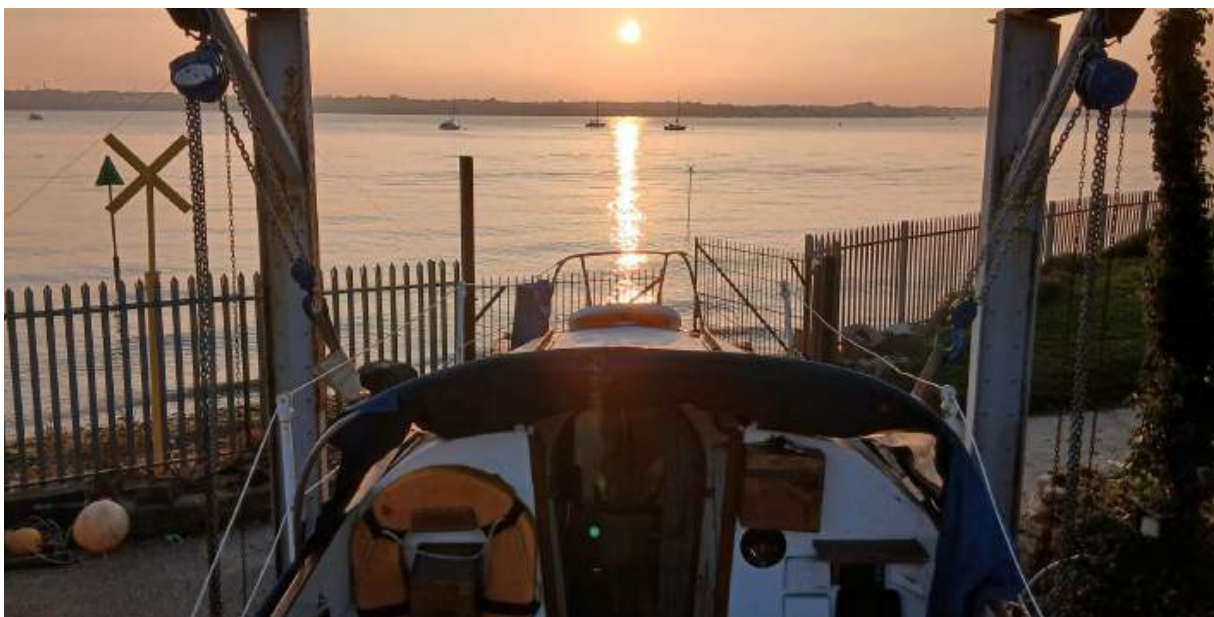


These pictures show how I repaired the port side. I learnt a lot on this as it was my first time laminating. I really gained a lot of skill working with resin and wood and also learned how two part paint worked when I had to strip uncured paint off the hull (in my defence the part on the can that said it was two part was covered by paint).



ois will be giving scouts sailing lessons raising the next generation of sailors

As I write this Chamois is sitting on the launch trolley waiting for a water test. All the damage is repaired and we are just waiting for people to operate the winch and some calm weather. There is still one problem as the engine has an alarm which I suspect is the batteries not charging for some reason. But it is good to know that there is only one more job to do before we are on the water.



A visit to A38, The Beaver

Stephen McCann

Looking at an old AOA Bulletin I came across a rather fab picture of A51 Bacardi in Alaska, I then saw that it had been moored in Sooke on the Western side of Vancouver Island – exactly where my sister had just moved to a year ago! I started digging around and even made her paddleboard around Sooke Inlet to see if A51 was still there. Alas she drew a blank and then I realised that she'd moved to Duncan on the other side of the island. Alas, but I could find no trace.

Thought no more about it but then we decided to head to Canada to see my sister this summer. I realised that A38 The Beaver was also over there and through Nick he connected me to Gabby, the current owner. I tongue-in-cheek asked whether I could come and do an inspection as the AOA Secretary...



If you have not been to the West Coast of Canada, it's hard to find words that do it justice, sailing across (albeit by ferry) to Victoria in Vancouver Island is a magical experience – behind you the Rockies, in front of you the Gulf Islands

– the ferry even wends its way between islands as you get closer.

There's something wonderful about being part of a group of people around a shared interest where strangers would at least entertain the notion of speaking to a total stranger. Never mind offering to take them sailing. And that's precisely what Gabby did. A week into our holiday, and after a few texts and phone calls to prove that I was not mad, Gabby invited us to travel over to Saltspring Island to take a spin.

We arrived again by a mystical ferry journey and docked in what seemed to be an oddly small jetty for the size of the ferry! I explained to Gabby what I looked like (in fairness probably summed up as a generic-middle-aged-man) – we met her and her father in law, Graham, a native of Northumberland.

Claire, Rafferty (17) and Ionie (13) jumped about the pickup where we stopped by the house to get some life-jackets – we met Nina, Grahams wife, which turned into a cuppa and a slice of cake (harbinger of later..!)

Winding through the roads of the island, we came down a steep narrow road to Long Harbour. It was amazing, stepping from the car we walked to the shoreline to see A38 on a most beautiful mooring. A quick pump of the inflatable, we rowed in turns to the boat. The local seals popped their heads up to see what was happening.

I was blown away – she was in incredible nick and had a really fetching paint scheme. On climbing aboard, I was taken aback at the stunning varnishing and the quality of the finish – Concourse d'Elegance stuff. Naturally, the kids started grumbling that A89's paint job was not as nice and why can't we strip back to wood and varnish!!

After a bit of ferry back and forth, we were all set. The Beaver has an out-board which did not seem to impact the balance of the boat and quickly came to life as we slipped from mooring.

The Beaver has all the original fittings and wire halyards – the only element that is missing is the roller-reefing clutch at the gooseneck – so if anyone has a spare one –I know a keen recipient.



Swiftly moving through the water we made our way down the narrow inlet past beautiful houses hugging the steep sides.

Soon we made it out onto the open water and it was time to see how she took to sail. It was a beautiful day and we had decent wind in an open stretch of water between Prevost Island and the



South East of Saltspring. It was amazing to have such freedom to manoeuvre, thinking about the busyness of Southampton Water to Cowes, there were only a few other vessels out.

It was a nice F4 and as we turned away from the wind, she came to life. Heeling right over, we got a squeal from Lonie, and zoomed along. I was really impressed by how well she sailed. We caught the odd big gust dumping the freeboard in the water – solved by easing the main when the squeals again got too loud from Lonie.

Gabby and Graham were great company and we talked about all sorts. After an hour on the water we turned back and had a wonderful fun down wind sail. Coming back into the mouth of Long Harbour we passed a ferry that had



docked on an even smaller jetty and felt the sun on our backs – being in an Atalanta under sail, we naturally could see the binocular wielding folk admiring (my assumption...) our sleek form and natural sailing skills...

Dropping sail, we covered a short distance under motor and then regained the mooring. I could not stop smiling and nor could the family.

Gathering everything up we then headed back to Gabby's where we really lucky to meet her grandfather and former owner of A38, Harry Budden. He was recovering from an accident which prevented him from sailing with us. It was a real privilege to hear the story of how he came to own The Beaver and his own exploits around the world. However, I'll leave that part of the tale to Gabby...

Graham and Nina were incredible hosts, rustling up an absolute feast and fed us all, we were taken aback by their hospitality and were very grateful for their looking after us.

With the day at an end, the ferry beckoned and we were again kindly dropped off and with a happy heart we heading back to the 'main island..' somewhat envious of the magic of Saltspring and her people.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to Gabby for being so open to strangers, to Graham and Nina for their hospitality, and to Harry for sharing his story. Safe to say, the Brits have a job to match this when Gabby et al come over – we'd love to take you sailing (on a slightly less impressively varnished boat....)

From Gabby Budden:

When I took ownership of my grandfather's classic wooden boat three years ago, I quickly learned that inheriting a vessel like The Beaver means inheriting both responsibility and tradition. Built for the ocean and shaped by years of steady use, she carried the marks of time with dignity. I spent that first season bringing her back to good working order – sanding, sealing, tightening, and tending to the details that wooden boats insist upon. By the time she returned to the water, she felt ready for new passages. Her mast had rotted at the tip, which had to be cut off and replaced. She sat under a tarp for 3 years while COVID hit, and my grandfather was living in Tasmania. This means she had 3 years of water damage to the hull, and well, every last bit of her! Wooden boat... am I right...

Since her return to the water, The Beaver has given my family two memorable summers throughout the Southern Gulf Islands of British Columbia. She has carried us between Salt Spring, Galiano, Prevost, and Wallace Island, offering leisurely afternoons at anchor, quiet coves to explore, and that familiar wooden-boat charm that draws everyone in. My family and friends have quickly grown attached to her, especially the two little – now seven and five – who are endlessly excited simply to be aboard. For them, The Beaver is a floating adventure: a place to peer over the rail at jellyfish, hunt for treasure in the cabin, and declare themselves the "official crew," even if their only job is handing out snacks. Watching them fall in love with the boat in their own way has become one of the greatest joys of restoring her. Honestly, being on the beaver brings me childlike joy.



I owe a tremendous amount of the restoration's success to my father-in-law, Graham Tweddle, a tinkering-loving, retired electrician with a mind for creative solutions. Honestly, I was mainly his assistant, and the credit card for the never-ending bills, but under his guidance, I learned more than I ever imagined, including how to sail. Graham brought a lifetime of experience on the water, and his patience, skill, and enthusiasm turned every repair into a

the water. This project, and everything I've learned from Graham, has been as much about people as it has been about a boat.

My grandfather acquired The Beaver in 2000, the same year I was born. I grew up with her trailed out in the yard in Nipissing, Ontario, where she doubled as a jungle gym for my childhood adventures. Occasionally, we would join my grandfather for a sail, exploring the wa-



lesson and every outing into an adventure. Watching him work, problem-solve, and share his knowledge was inspiring, and I can't overstate how grateful I am for his generosity and guidance. Once we finally got The Beaver out onto the ocean, he passed along all the sailing wisdom he had collected over the years, instilling in me not only competence but also a deep joy and respect for being on

ters and soaking in the quiet moments on the docks, watching frogs, and running around the boatyard at the marina while he worked on her. The constant tinkering, sanding, and repairing made it clear from an early age that The Beaver was much more than a boat- she was a true labour of love.

A vessel once cared for by my grandfather is being rediscovered by the next



generation. The Beaver has become more than a restored boat- she is a gathering place, a steady companion, and a bridge between the family history behind her and the memories we are now creating aboard her.



Atalanta Owners Association

2026 Calendar of Events

*Events as at 1st December 2025
Check the website for latest list and more details.*

**Members and non-members are welcome to all of our events.
If you can't bring your own boat it is very likely there will be spare berths.
Please contact the organiser.**

Date	Event	Contact
Tuesday 27th January	Winter Tea time - In the Zoom bar at The Two Keels Inn at 1930. The Zoom link will be provided nearer the time.	Jonathan Stearn
Weekend of 21st-22nd March	Social Weekend - A shore based social weekend open to all, centred around Greenwich. Attractions, in addition to good company and Atalanta talk, include the National Maritime Museum, Cutty Sark, HMS Belfast and more. Dinner at Enderby House, Greenwich on Saturday. More details early in the New Year.	Steve McCann
Saturday 21st March	AOA AGM. This will be held during the Social Weekend for those that wish to attend. It will be scheduled to avoid disrupting other activities at 5pm. Location: the historic building The Old Brewery, Enderby House, 23 Telegraph Ave, London SE10 0TH	Steve McCann
May TBC	Humber Yawl Club Regatta. Free berthing and slipway. Four races on the River Humber at Brough. £10 entry.	Ian Pollard
Saturday 15th August	West Mersea Town Regatta and Atalanta East Coast Race. The West Mersea Regatta is running as usual and Atalantas race within the Regatta for the 'Atalanta Cup' and wooden model trophy. A fun day! mersearegatta.org.uk	TBC
17th October	Laying Up Social - In the Zoom bar of the Two Keels Inn at 1800	TBC

Local Get-togethers

It is hoped that there will be a number of informal get-togethers organised locally. These might be ashore or afloat, depending on where boats are and attendee preference.

Why don't you take the lead and organise one if you would like?



T12 off Torpoint



Copyright Atlanta Owners Association 2025

Printed and bound by Wensum Print, Norwich