

# February 1996 Newsletter

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## **Secretaries Introduction**

### *Subscriptions*

Please note that the subscription for the Roach Sailing Association has been increased from £2 per member to £3. The committee members felt that this new subscription would ensure that we continue to cover the costs of running the Roach Sailing Association. The 1996 subscriptions are due now and should be sent to Norman. I have included a payment slip in this letter. River licences for 1996 are now due. The price is £9.50 and can be obtained from Norman at the AGM, but if you would like them sending by post, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope when sending Norman the dues.

The RSA committee note that, according to our records, some 40% of our members have not paid their subs for 1995. Those people will receive a note with this letter and could they please check and, if our records are correct, forward the outstanding subs to Norman - thanks. Partially due to this fact in 1995 the RSA had an excess in expenditure over income of £108. We must correct this in future.

### **A.G.M.**

The 1996 A.G.M. will be held on Sunday 17th March 1996 at the Wardroom on Wallasea Island at 7:30PM. Please note that the current committee members will be up for re-election and new members may apply at that time. If you have any other issues that you would like to raise at the meeting, please let me know and we will schedule time for discussion. Also note the other date for your diary which is the laying up supper, (what already!), on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1996 at the RBYC.

### ***The current members are:***

Norman Bishop - Chairman and Treasurer    John Martin - President  
Dai Williams/Caroline Gibb - Racing Officers    John Langrick - Secretary

### ***Other members of the committee on your behalf are:***

Nigel Bishop    Richard Kirton    Mike Dallimore  
Michael Figg    Rodney Choppin

### ***A welcome to new RSA Members!***

Can I take the opportunity to welcome three new members to the RSA. The first is Jenny Sapnell who races with Geoff Howlett in Trish, The second new member is Richard Bessey who is restoring a strip planked sloop "Mud Puddle", hopefully ready for next season. Last but not least, Ian Dawson who sails a Leisure 23 sloop "Hastaway". Of course all sail from Paglesham! Membership is certainly on the increase!

### ***Thanks for the articles***

After my plea for members articles in the last newsletter, I am grateful for some excellent contributions from our members. In this edition I have an entry from Dai Williams, (you will see why Dai was awarded the Seamanship Cup last year), and historical articles from the pen of Ron Watts and Harold Winterbourne. Please continue to send or give your articles to me.

### ***New Races***

Many years ago the RSA used to have dinghy races around Potton Island and up to the Mill at Stambridge and back. Many members still sail dinghies around the old courses. This year we are pleased to announce we will again run these dinghy races, to be known now on as the **Paglesham Yacht Race** and the **Lifeboat Cup**. We have cups that have been used in the past for these races, to be presented to the lucky winners. The dates are now in the 1996 racing calendar and, to whet your appetite and give a taster to the event to come, I have included the account of one of these earlier races, so you know just what you will be letting yourself in for. See the article "The last Race" page 4, and remember that we have a reputation to live up to!

### ***New Racing Cup***

Dai Williams, our Racing Officer has donated a cup to the RSA to be called **The Champions Cup**. It will be awarded to the boat with the best results for the seasons races. Points will be awarded for races and the winner will be the boat with the most points. The scoring will be as follows: 4 points for starting, 3 points for finishing, 1 for every boat beaten, 1 for first, ½ second, ¼ 3<sup>rd</sup>. The worst two of sever race results are discarded making the results drawn from five best races of the series. Our thanks to Dai for this generous donation.

### ***John Langrick***

***Secretary RSA (Phone 01702 588199)***

## **Hello Hostellers!**

Many of you will be aware that there is a second sailing association that is based at the Paglesham slipway. The Hostellers sail the Wayfarer dinghies that can be seen to the east of the slipway. They cruise the east coast way up to Southwold. Their Association shares much the same principles as the RSA in that sailing, good companionship and the preservation of the Roach area are far more important than posing in expensive club houses! Mark Smith who is their secretary, has expressed an interest in sharing some of our activities and I have told him that they would be most welcome. I will send a copy of this newsletter so they are aware of our events for 1996

## **Yard News**

All visitors to the yard cannot fail to notice the work continuing on the sea wall. The Paglesham section should be completed within the early part of this year so hopefully we may have the pathways on top of the sea wall restored from the current mud bath.

We have many new boats laid up in the yard plus the 'usual crowd' including myself. I have been installing a stove in my cabin this year and work started early. Seahorse, Felidae, and Geluk are laid up in the West field, and Stormfageln, Haloween, Aigir, Aperitif, Hastaway and myself are in the East field. Gemima Puddleduck, Franchesca, Dormouse and Marshmallow are in mud berths with Paisana, Ruth, Triumphant and Stortebecker remaining on the lonely moorings. The two open boats Memory and Samphire have moved further afield to take up residence in Paul and Nigel Bishops gardens. Bill Groom is back working on Ripple, hopefully she may be back in the water in the spring. And ... one never can tell, perhaps Heather might vacate her 'parking spot' this year too!

Maurice Bailey and the boys have taken Band of Hope around to the yard at Rochford for some major surgery to her hull. I guess Maurice was fed up with emptying the better part of the Roach out of the poor old girl. I don't know if you have noticed, the Roach seems to flood faster these days. Currently her hull is swathed in a steel corset, ready for ferrocrete next year. All volunteer labour will be gratefully accepted when serious building work starts in the spring. One never knows, we could re-concrete the slip with whatever is left over.

**Stop Press** - Another yacht has joined the fleet. Caroline Gib has obtained a TEOD (No 23) called Bluebird, which raced against her grandfather's TEOD in the 1920s. Current status - 10 ribs replaced and one plank refashioned.

## 1995 Race Results

**Paglesham Pot - Lady Hamilton Shuttlewood Cup - Samphire**

**Jack Cote Trophy - Memory**

**Gracilda Cup - Tess**

**Roach Plate - Tess**

**RNLI Race - Swanti**

**Seamanship Cup - Tess**

**Whittaker Cup - Stravaig**

!

### Income and Expenditure Account for Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1995

<u>Income</u>	<u>1995 £</u>		<u>1994 £</u>
Anual Subscriptions	158		197
CHA Plaques	243		351
Bank interest	6		
	---		---
		407	548
<u>Expenditure</u>			
R.Y.A Subscription	32		32
CAYF Subscription (1994)	6		-
CAYF Subscription (1995)	6		-
Printing and Stationery	-		7
Postage	29		30
Cup Insurance	52		-
Cup Engraving	22		19
Crouch Harbour Authority	243		351
AGM speaker (Charles Stock)	25		-
Excess Exp/Inc, for dinner	57		21
Flowers	17		-
Presentn to former sec	26		-
	---		---
		515	460
Excess of Exp over Income	£(108)		
Excess if Income over Exp			88

Balance sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 1995

#### Assets

Balance at Bank 31/12/95	517		609
Stock of Burgees -:-	<u>32</u>	£549	<u>48</u> £657

#### Accumulation

Balance 1.1.95	657		<u>569</u>
Excess Exp/Inc	<u>108</u>	<u>£549</u>	
Excess of Inc/Exp	-		<u>88</u> £657

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Hon Treasurer

## The Last Race

*Race at Paglesham on 16th September 1961  
Boatshed to Millbuoy buoy and back  
Wind gale force - westerly  
Start at 3:pm*

The smoke-filled "Public" of the Plough and Sail  
is crowded with "the Brethren", this dark Sunday morn  
of late October as we sup our ale, in little groups  
we stand around; - the voices rise and fall -  
"Memory's cried off", Bill says, "his bottom's foul",  
"Is that his reason?", "Jack says we call it off"  
"It's been a lousy season".

From round the panelled walls the ships of yesteryear  
Listened, watch perchance suppress a tear for times long past,  
Our eloquence, our wit; our deep contention,  
Novel development, ingenious invention,  
Do not impress; "Have done" they seemingly implore,  
"You talk too much, we've heard it all before".

Mine host calls "time"! The issue's undecided,  
We straggle out, un-hurrying to the lane  
Full hard the wind and scurrying clouds still hurry  
Across the watery sun that shines in vain.

Now on the hard - like gagging gees assemble  
The dinghy racers, - Paglesham's "ghost club",  
Sans Commodores, Race Officers, Committees,  
Adjudicators, Treasurers- or Subs.

For, gentle reader, you must be aware  
This village - which e'en spurns a Parish Council,  
Nurtures the last true Englishmen  
Who care naught for the Bureaucrat, the High Official,  
Ucase, Decree or legalistic snare!  
Heirs of Watt Tyler and John Bull!  
Decision taking must be shared by all!!

Time moves slower, Not for these the craze  
Of fickle fashion whiz-kids of insolent gorge,  
They're not yet sure they accept the "Act of Union",  
Even the race flag's still the Cross of George.

Up spake King Varcoc - Lord of Handicappers,  
"Wind over tide will make your launching grim,  
Wind's getting worse, so when the flood's abated  
Conditions, I fear, make your chances slim".  
It's the very last race of the season  
And twice postponed, sadly some move away,  
Still keen, some shuffle undecided,  
For many have come miles to race today.

Then out speaks Bunny Richards - "Coral's" master,  
"A ducking is the worst - and that's no care,  
We will set forth - a challenge to disaster,  
Come lads. Who'll follow a single dare?"

So Coral, Heron, Swan and Kraa make ready,  
Their prowess and their seamanship to match,  
Surging excitement tempered by judgement steady,  
Watchful each crew, advantage quick to snatch.

Now near the "line", seeking out the best station,  
Foaming confusion, wind-swept pitch and toss,  
Tense and tight-lipped they're waiting the gun,  
(Though - truth to tell - we've a preoccupation  
Not to capsize 'ere the race has begun).

At last through the turmoil of breakers and tempest,  
Comes the faint boom of Brown Bess from the shore,  
Heron's away! fairly riding the wave crest,  
Kraa! Coral! then Swan! - give a cheer for these four.

Heron's still leading - close hauled on starboard,  
She'll take the best water by Wakering Creek,  
Cunning old Ulysses! Coral is closing her,  
Straining the windward position to keep.

But - woe to the brave - in a welter of spindrift  
That treacherous spit there is hidden from view,  
"Heron's stuck on the putty. She's over, they've bought it",  
One less to compete, now we'll chivvy those two.

Thus I shout to the skipper, for we all know our chances  
Of winning depend on our windward attack  
For once running free, our small size makes it certain  
They'll surely outsail us before we get back.

So about and about, as we press her to windward,  
Swan and Coral by-passed, we are well in the lead.  
Soaking wet, and both bailing, but happy as schoolboys  
We'd hate to have missed this, it's living indeed.

Oh! Beware of conceit and of pride overweening,  
Upon the port tack, Kraa is struck by a squall!  
Harold luffs-up to save her, the halyard has parted!  
Down comes the mainsail, the gaff, boom and all!

Oh deep consternation! Woe! Alas our chances!  
This is a blow which is hard to survive!  
"Quick, old lad - go to the shallows, jump out and keep bailing,  
Whilst I clear the mess and new halyard contrive".

So with a will, in less time than I've taken  
To pen these crude lines, we are back in the race,  
To catch Coral, who's leading, with Swan closely after,  
There's still just a chance if we keep up this pace!

Then, ah, luckless Coral, she's started a plank!  
She's obliged to heave-to and bale out by the bank.  
When at last into Millcreek - we're rounding the buoy!  
First Swan, second Kraa, we're still in, what joy!

So we goose-wing our foresail, and ease off the mainsheet,  
Shift our weight aft, see she's up on a plane!  
Helped by the ebb which by now is well started,  
Running for home with the speed of a train.

Relax! Swan's ahead like a bird on the wing,  
Running free with her much bigger canvas outspread,  
"With some luck we'll be second", so says my good skipper.  
The race to the swiftest! The race is the thing!

On high, clouds have lifted, breaks out the bright sun,  
Salt encrusted, we're drying out, limbs all benumb,  
Time to take stock of our gear's wear and tear,  
"Never taken such a pasting before", I declare.

Nearly home now. wind's still force 6, gusting 7,  
There's the big shed, just a mile to go!  
"Never before did I see", quoth old Harold,  
"dinghy mast bending to shape like a bow".

Scarce had he uttered, when comes fearful crash,  
Strikes our good Kraa, surging home with such dash,  
Splintered mainmast! Seas strewn with the wreck,  
Plunging green seas, we're awash to the deck!

Shouts the skipper, "This looks like the end of the trip,  
We're left with small option to abandon ship,  
If the buoyancy holds, we may yet reach the line,  
It's been a great race, though our luck's out this time".

"But hold on. keep on bailing, I'll clear up the wreck,  
And lash up the gaff to that stump on the deck,  
Now hoist up the jib-see, that gives us fair drive!  
Hurrah for a jury rig, boy we'll survive!"

And so to the finish, for a gun and three cheers!  
That memorable race earned us lots of free beers!  
For Paglesham sailors are quaint, they're non-U.  
Their garb is outlandish- their language is too!  
They've some splendid eccentrics, and never one bore,  
They love "guts" and good sailing - well, need I say more.

But, if ever, God forbid it, you're on a lee shore,  
Your rudder is busted, gale buffeted sore,  
In such straits may I pray most devoutly you can,  
Always have at your side a stout Paglesham man.

*By P.W. "Perry" Perryman August 16th 1975  
(Harold Winterbourne Skipper)*

The following extract was from the Southend Standard October 1961

### **Boat Race**

The last race of the season for small boats took place at Paglesham on Saturday in a strong SSW wind. Four boats started with Swan late on the line and Heron giving up quite soon, after running aground. Kraa took the lead from Coral until she had to run ashore for repairs. This left Coral ahead of Swan and Kraa until she filled up and had to heave-to in order to bail out. Round the buoy at Mill Creak the order was Swan first followed by Kraa and Coral. During the run home a squall dismasted Kraa which carried on well under jury rig. Final order was; 1. Swan (P. Bishop) 16.49.30; 2. Coral (A. Richards) 17.01.50; 3. Kraa, 17.04.50. Swan, after starting late, was sailed very well in particularly heavy weather.

## **Paglesham People**

### *The Years Roll By-by Ron Watts*

The lane has been partially surfaced'. I read these words in the Autumn Newsletter with a tinge of sadness. It seemed a little more of the character of Paglesham has ebbed away. I suspect, though, that such sadness is not widely shared. To those who are there all the time, a change quickly becomes the accepted norm, particularly if, as in this case, there are positive benefits such as less dust and an absence of potholes to test car suspensions. At the other extreme, the casual visitor sees a place only as it is and does not appreciate what it is that has changed even if they realise change has taken place at all. It is only to old codgers such as myself who knew the place well but then abruptly disappeared from the scene and so to live in the memories of yesteryear who really see and regret changes.

According to a scrappy remnant I have of a log of the time, I first visited Paglesham in 1950. Bound from Erith to Pin Mill a sudden and marked deterioration the weather came while we were in the Swin. An unfortunate mishap resulted in the compass being smashed and by the time we had groped our way into Shore Ends, the boat, a 21' gaff sloop, was leaking steadily. The following day we crept into Paglesham to lick our wounds.

Over the next two decades, my summer wanderings in boats were, in some years to take me to the Roach, in other years not but never was the stay for more than one night. Change there must have been over this period. Building up of the essential sea wall following the 1953 flood and the installation of the floodgate; construction of houses such as Cobblers Row and Compass Rose; construction of the pumping station at the bottom of the lane etc. But, as an infrequent visitor I was oblivious to such change, excepting the place as it was seen each time.

My log for 1968 shows the first signs of recognition that change took place. It records horror at the changes at the Plough and Sail and lamented the loss of the character I had come to recognise over the years. No doubt, if a radical programme of change were put in hand now, nearly thirty years on, some who know the pub now will express their regrets and talk of the loss of character in the same way as I did then.

As an aside, later in that 1968 season when sailing with a friend we left Fambridge bound back up the Swin to Erith but diverted into Paglesham because of a bad forecast, picking up a mooring just off the shed. A little while later a coaster, the Calyx, came down from Stambridge and anchored in the fairway quite near to us. We gave the crew a step ashore to the pub for the evening, learning that they also had stopped a Paglesham through fright at the forecast. Overnight the forecast proved right in every respect and we looked out in the morning to see the Calyx high and dry on the Potton shore, having dragged right through the moorings on that side but fortunately causing little apparent damage to boats.

Marriage in 1969 meant my home moved from Kent to Leigh-on-Sea so from 1971 onwards we kept our boat at Paglesham. Looking back to Paglesham as it was then when our close acquaintance started, the field to the left side as one came down the lane and used for the winter storage of boats was divided from the lane and also from the dinghy park along inside the sea wall by screens of large mature shrubs and bushes. To the right hand side of the lane was the 'car park', a small field divided from the lane by a

fence and used primarily as it's name suggests, as a car park. The office hut, the stores to the side of it and a store hut opposite were the sole developments on the landward side of the sea wall. Over the other side of the seawall the walkway down over the foreshore was narrow over its whole length, being only just wide enough to take a dinghy trolley. The biggest problem was, though, that the bottom of the slope alongside the shed was separated from the walkway by mud which, though hard enough to walk on without problems, was death to narrow wheels on dinghy trolleys.

Of the changes which occurred during the seven seasons we sailed from Paglesham the most easily acceptable were those which occurred on the seaward side of the seawall. A major change but one to all intents and purposes invisible to casual onlooker was the putting down of much more concrete, making life with the launching and recovery of dinghies much easier. The quay was also extended with the extension quickly melting into the scenery as though the quay had never been any different. Most noticeable of the changes was, though, the installation of the dolphins in front of the shed for boats to lie against while scrubbing rather than having to be legged up as hitherto. Again, they quickly blended in as part of the landscape.

Oh that changes on the landward side of the sea wall could have blended in so easily. The scrubs and bushes around the boat storage field which had broken the winter winds as well as providing visual screens, were bull-dozed away to leave a bleak, open vista in which the boats stood out as alien objects. On the opposite side of the lane, the car park disappeared to be incorporated in a much larger area dominated by a newly constructed building shed. So, what had previously had been a remote, rural landscape in which the only signs of commercial activity had been the roof of the old shed peeping over the seawall and partial glimpses of boats through the scrubs and bushes became exposed in all its glory as a commercial working site.

In 1978 we sailed away to a new mooring and ultimately a new home in Suffolk and for various reasons it was I think 1986 before I once more sailed into the Roach. It was midweek and about midday with not another boat stirring as I sailed up through the moorings thinking that, from the river at least, it was just as I remembered things. With a choice of about a dozen empty moorings I chose one where the state of the mooring pennant suggested it had not been in use for some considerable time. Eager to see ashore and with a telephone call to home an urgent necessity, I jumped into the rubber duck and headed for the shore with visions of a pint and a pie at the Plough and Sail. It was not to be.

*Editors note: What happened next indicates that at least in this aspect the yard today has changed for the better. More recent visitors will note that the yard personnel today do try to be most courteous and helpful. I do not believe that Ron's experience would happen today! There may be many yachtsmen who have visited Paglesham in the late 80's and early 90's who have met with a rude reception on the slip way. I met another yachtsman at the Classic boat festival this year who tells a similar story. I am pleased to say that those responsible have gone and I believe those times have now passed.*

*It does seem a shame that some rude people could have tarnished the memories of some visiting yachtsmen. From an RSA point of view I suggest we all try and put this behind us, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to finally close this unhappy era. The Roach, Paglesham Boatyard (the current owners) and the RSA will always welcome visiting yachtsmen. Please pass on this message!*

*But note, I must point out, as in most aspects of boating today, there is a small fee to cover maintenance of the moorings. Should the visitors moorings, owned by the yard, be used overnight, there is a charge of £5 and a charge for £1 lunchtime. The letterbox in the side of the black shed on the slipway is to be used as a courtesy box. Anchoring in the pool, or to the East or West of the moorings is, of course, free. Back to Ron's article..*

I went back on board without seeing anything on shore at all. Back on board I had a leisurely lunch and dropped the mooring some two hours later. I have since sailed up to Paglesham on numbers of occasions to enjoy the unchanging scene afloat but I have never bothered to go ashore. I had pleasant memories of the yard and village and had looked forward to returning there to walk once more up the lane to the pub; the dream was shattered through that unwarranted and unnecessary exchange.

Maybe I have not gone ashore at Paglesham from my own boat since that time but, invited to join 'Meris' for a day sail I did, in summer 1995 arrive at Paglesham by road. When I got to the bottom of

the lane and looked around I had no doubt the Paglesham I knew had gone forever so perhaps the 'partial surfacing of the lane' is not a reason for sadness as I had thought: the time for sadness has already passed and whether the lane is surfaced or not is an irrelevance. However, although Paglesham as a place may have changed irretrievably, there is the consolation of knowing that friendships forged during those few years in the 70s have survived. In the end it is people who count, not places.

## En route to Les Sables D'Olonne

### *Dai & Caroline*

Sitting here in the monsoon rain (16 Sep) and cancelling our 0530 hrs departure for Pin Mill we thought we would start to record some of the highlights of our 1995 trip to South Biscay.

In summary we logged over 1300 Nautical miles and visited forty odd harbours marinas in forty-eight days.

It all began in the rain leaving Paglesham, loading up six trolley-loads at Wallasea in the rain, departing 13th June at 1300 hrs just after the rain (13 must be lucky). Tess was now six inches lower in the water due to two bikes, one generator, one barbecue and life's little luxuries such as tea bags, and ginger beer, dozens of charts, pilot books, golf umbrellas and twenty-five gallons of diesel completed the manifest. Note. French diesel is filthy and currently about £2.60 per gallon versus £1.05 to £1.10 in UK - essential to filter fuel going in your tank.

We took the ebb (HW Burnham 1321 hrs) down the Crouch, rounded the North side of East Barrow to Barrow No 7 then SW Sunk Beacon into Black Deep Nos 9 & 10, thence south of Long Sand to No 9 Edinburgh. Then N Edinburgh channel to Tongue Sand Tower, E Margate, west of Elbow and arrived Ramsgate entrance at 1905 hrs - 6 hours 5 minutes without rain. Tied up hurriedly on pontoon in South side (not the new pontoons now on NE side of harbour) departed for our favourite Thai restaurant near Royal Temple (Nok Chui). Excellent cuisine but do ask for MILD versions which they will provide for any of their dishes. The medium variety is a sure cure for frostbite.

Our next objective was Eastbourne which being sixty miles distant it is not possible to carry favourable tide and the total trip took 12 hours 35 minutes. This is a very pleasant marina (lock in 24 hrs) with good views of the north side of the Seven Sisters (we always count eight!). Very helpful and pleasant staff and the best toilets and showers you will find including (top priority!) sockets for ladies' hairdryers. There is an ASDA nearby, reasonable restaurants and cinema but Eastbourne is at least 2 miles away.

Next day (15 June) we had a very pleasant sail to Brighton in 3 hrs 30 mins. (Log reading from Wallasea 119.7 NM).

Spent the evening with lifelong friends who joined us from their home at Horsham. Next day exploiting our knowledge of the marina and Brighton we hopped on to the free marina land train to join Volk's Electric Railway which runs along the beach (past the one for Naturists) to Brighton Pier - we finished up where we started still in the marina after a circular tour "we don't go to Volk's until July" said the lady driver.

We always enjoy Brighton and this was no exception - the flamboyant Lanes, (but note oysters at Wheelers' œ25 per dozen compared with £4.90 Orford and £2.50 at fishmongers at Crouesty near Gulf of Morbihan), our favourite Italian restaurant Donatello's in Brighton Place (£5.50 for 3 courses) and second hand book-shop in Duke Street!

**Sat 17th June** - RAIN and WIND - try to watch Rugby World Cup but delayed by rain!

**Sunday**.- Eventful trip to Cowes via Looe channel, 8.5 hrs and cumulative log 167.2 NM.

**Monday**. - Lunch at Royal Corinthian (Island Sailing Club closed for food on Mondays) - lovely beat to Yarmouth after lunch - not for the first time in the Solent we seem to outfoot and outpoint most craft outpointing a 70 foot plus Victoria! Yarmouth £8.00 per night.

**Tuesday 20th June**. - Ashore by water taxi, 60p, to second hand book-shop and find Fiona Grafton's "Cooking Afloat" after 8 years search! With W wind forecast we head for Studland bay - 3.5 hrs on the nose motor sailing but worth it. On hook in bay and peace after the skiers go home.

**Wednesday 21st June**.

0840 Weigh anchor - no wind - motor sail 55 miles and 10 hours to Braye (Alderney). Water taxi £1 each way. Good meal at Harbour Lights pub.

**Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June** - Wind NE 4-5, 3.5 hours sail to St Peter Port. Excellent meal at "Waterfront" restaurant next to Royal Channel Islands YC. Excellent facilities in marina - hair driers provided free.

**Friday 23rd June.**

**0430** Leave St Peter Port. Interesting to find that friends in "Blue Moon" in a Maxi from Salcombe who sailed east of Roches Douvres made up time on us compared with our route west of Roches and we arrived together at Lezardrieux. Marina fee 98 fr, approx €12.90.

**Saturday 24th.**

**0555** start heading for new marina at Trebeurden.  
**1025** Chateau Costaeres at Ploumanach abeam.  
**1100** Barometer fallen to 1024 mb.  
**1230** On pontoon Trebeurden - 6.6' over sill at HW -3.5 hrs

If you are about to eat do not read on - we had an excellent Frits de Mer except I had a big live pink slug exploring my dish! obtained 40 fr discount.

**Sunday.** Crossed Lannion Bay and Roscoff and Ile de Batz came abeam at 0910 hrs

**1330** Off L'Abervrac'h  
**1415** On mooring (white for visitors) at La Palue - free taxi ashore on the hour.  
**1800** In Yacht Club - screaming kids and pompous Brits - very disappointing.

**Monday 26th**

**0605** Leave L'Abervrac'h heading for Chenal du Four. Wind NE but only force 2-3 and only slight swell.  
**0755** Le Four tower on port beam.  
**0900** Barometer down further to 1022 mb.  
**0955** Abeam Pointe de St Mathieu at southern end of Chenal du Four and decided to head for Douarnenez bay.  
**1030** La Parquette abeam - spiral black and white stripes  
**1225** Around Cape Herre  
**1315** In marina at Morgat - logged 435 miles since Burnham. This turned out to be one of our favourite harbours - a beautiful beach - good shelter, 24 hrs access, picturesque caves, excellent restaurant at reasonable prices. (La Grange de Toule Boss with garden). Dinner in evening 74 fr and 13 fr wine.

Met and made good friends with skipper Jim Lewis, Mike, George and Dennis from Royal Falmouth YC. They lent us a chart - could not get the one we wanted in either Morgat or Crozon after a 3 mile hilly cycle push and ride. The French only buy one chart every 20 years - they say the rocks don't move!

**Wednesday 28th June**

**1000** Commence preparations for passage through the notorious Raz de Sein.  
**1135** Clear Morgat - weather light with easterly wind.  
**1245** La Vieille on starboard beam  
**1515** La Platte on port beam  
**1715** Audierne - on mooring in 25'. Lovely evening - little or no swell

**Thursday**

**0845** Slip mooring  
**1120** Around Pen March headland  
**1341** Karek-Greiz (ugh) buoy.  
**1545** On mooring Benodet after trip up beautiful river Odet - logged 500 miles. Good meal on front (La Voile d'oro).

### Friday 30th June

Ashore for shopping and lunch.

**1405** Slip mooring.

**1725** Tied up in La Foret - 25 years after first visit. Excellent creperie and Cidre Le Foret Fourneant.

### Saturday

**0615** Le Foret

**0730** Le Dragon port beam.

**1140** A4 Port hand mark Lorient channel.

**1245** Lorient - Kerneval marina.

**1330** Cycle to restaurant (down channel) - super views across channel to the south and super cafe for Crepe St Jacques and Crepe Chocolat and lemon with Cidre Feroniere (135 fr). Join in wedding reception - great music in the open air.

### Sunday 2nd July

**0640** Leave Lorient

**0700** Heavy overhead thunder, rain and fog - vis 100 yds. Decca and GPS tell "porkies" - cannot locate next waypoint so go on reciprocal bearing and locate starboard hand mark in edge of channel.

**0735** GPS recovers and we get quick visual on identified rocks and proceed seawards. I still believe the very heavy electrical disturbance affected GPS at the height of the storm.

**1015** Quiberon town on beam.

**1125** La Teinnouse - clearing many narrow channels.

**1330** La Trinite after 2 hours pleasant sail - nearly rammed 3 times by French boats and once by a Brit during harbour entry. Town too crowded and noisy and oysters in market much too expensive.

### Monday

Leave La Trinite and reach Port de Crouesty near entrance to Gulf Morbihan in 1 hr 50 mins. Best meal yet in La Marina restaurant, 6 oysters, grilled Tuna with Ratatouille and tomato mousse, grilled sardines, jacket potatoes, chocolate mousse. raspberry mousse. coffees and pichet of house Rose - 98 fr.

### Tuesday 4th July

**0845** Leave Crouesty for Pornichet.

**1425** Tied up in Pornichet. Many shops in marina, mostly shut. Ghastly French toilets.

### Wednesday

**0830** Leave Pornichet for Ile de Yeu.

**1430** Tied up in marina Port Joinville 146 fr!!! - the harbour is considerably cheaper but usually crowded. Nearly all the cars we saw were mini size or smaller - very basic and of unknown manufacture.

### Thursday 6th July

**0915** Leave for Les Sables D'Olonne.

**1730** Tied up at Les Sables after spinnaker run and total log now 675 nautical miles.

*To be continued!....*

## To Maldon this time!

### *John Langrick (Ed)*

Weather forecast for Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August 1995 was for strong North East 4-5. I had a couple of days free and set off from Paglesham on a falling tide in Swanti, my Gaff Cutter. The wind was obviously unaware of the forecast and it was blowing steadily from south. As I sailed through the moorings I called out to Dick Sandwell who was just boarding Stormfageln. Dick was of a like mind and was also making a break for a couple of days. "Where are you going?" he hailed. "Going to try and make the Blackwater if the wind holds", I replied. Dick indicated that he would follow me.

The wind continued to blow a force 3 from the south as we made steady progress down the Roach and Crouch. No tacking needed today! As we passed Shore Ends, George Ventris sailed past in Sea Horse, returning from his holiday further up the coast. "Nice sail you have got there", said George. (George has loaned me his old Gaff Sail from Myrine). We exchanged photo calls and continued our passages. By the time I reached the Ray Sand Channel, Dick had caught me and by now the wind was dropping as we both ghosted up the channel towards Brightlingsea..

It was one of those afternoons when the sea became still and our reflections were a mirror of tranquillity as we tried to make the best of the dying wind. We decided to try and make Mersea, and with the help of the 'Iron Topsail', picked up a mooring close to the Languard buoy in West Mersea. This being my first visit Mersey, I was keen to go ashore. The main channel dries to a narrow gut-way at low tide and there is scarcely room to sail past in a dinghy. Boats are moored so close that you wonder why they never touch.. or do they? I was arriving at dead low water and the dinghy outboard touched bottom on approaching the jetty. Something I will watch out for in future. I also noticed that many moorings have large concrete blocks as anchors. These could be seen to the north of the slip-way in the bottom of the gut-way, again something to be aware of.

On my return to Swanti, Dick invited me over for dinner, and not being in the habit of refusing a good nosh, rowed off to Stormfageln with the last of a bottle of whisky for 'afters'. Dick is a splendid cook, and after finishing dinner and the bottle, I returned for a quiet night on the mooring. I was planning to try and sail to Maldon. With a 4:50am tide, that would give me a chance to look around Mersey in the morning and then take the early flood to Maldon.

The morning was wet and miserable. I took the Dinghy to the long floating causeway at the foot of the boatyard. Note that there is also a boatman who will pick you up should you ever arrive with no other way of getting ashore. I wanted to look in the shed at the top of the slip-way because I was told that my first boat 'Mary of Chester' was under re-fit there. By the time I tied up at the hammerhead, the rain was pouring down and I dashed to the small café for some breakfast. After a while the rain stopped and I went to see Mary. Certainly she was there, with transom removed as the current owner was planning build a counter stern (something she had managed to do without in all her 105 years!).

After the next shower, I collected some provisions from the small shop and return to Swanti. While the rain started to beat yet again on the cabin roof, I started to read 'Magic of the Swatchways' for what must be the tenth time. (I must remember to get some more books on board). One of the first stories in the book is an account of leaving Maldon early one summer morning, listening to the birds over Northsea island as the ebb took him downstream on one of his adventures. "I wonder if it is like that today....".

And so, as the young flood started and the wind now blowing steadily from the North East as predicted, I sailed off at a great pace towards Osea Island. The wind remained over the starboard quarter allowing me a good 5 knots. The dinghy was standing on end some of the time and by two o'clock I had managed to pick up a buoy at Heybridge. My plan was to approach Maldon one hour before high water and to try and make the Hythe. I still had a couple of hours to kill so decided to go ashore to sample the ale in Heybridge Basin. It was good. need I say more! I had never navigated to Maldon and so felt it sensible to restrain myself to the one pint. I guessed a clear head was sensible.

It was now 3:30pm with high tide at 5:00pm. I could wait no longer and so set off to try and make Maldon. This last half mile I decided to make under power. I had once made the journey in a sailing barge and could only remember that the channel meanders somewhat. Still if a barge can make it... Although the channel does wind, I remained in at least two fathoms as I followed closely the well marked channel. With no problems at all I approached the Hythe.

There is a splendid new floating Pontoon on the Hythe next to the Queens Arms, and a harbour master who could not be more helpful. There is plenty of space for crafts up to 35' next to the pontoon, with space for larger craft next to the Quay. Any craft with a moderate draft should be fine next to this quay as a fin will simply sink into the soft mud and, if secure, will remain upright as the water dries completely. The Barges tie up further south on the Hythe. There is also a splendid new shower and toilet block on the Hythe. The Harbour Master will let you have a key for a small deposit. The charge for laying at the Quay was £5 per night, which is excellent value, it costs as much in the car park for a day! The harbour Master waived the deposit as I was planning to leave at 5:00 in the morning. It is just a short stagger from the boat to the Queens Arms and, after a good meal and too much to drink, I climbed into my bunk on Swanti to be ready for my early start.

I needed no alarm in the morning as another boat tied alongside also planned to take the same tide, (just as well!). I missed breakfast, hoisted sail and slipped my mooring in darkness. The wind was blowing a steady force 1-2 from the North, directly astern as I set the sail at the top of the tide and slipped slowly past the barges for my return journey. The barge Wivenhoe was also coming to life. Slowly her large diesel pushed her into the channel and she followed me into the dark. I kept to the shallows to Starboard as Wivenhoe slowly punched ahead, drifting slowly with her green starboard light reflecting in the black water. Thus I had a guide for the rest of the narrow channel until, after turning to port and passing Heybridge, I lost sight of her round Northsea Island.

It's true, all you can hear are the birds over Northsea Island! The morning horizon was now tinged with red and gold as I picked out the bleak towers of Bradwell silhouetted on the horizon. The light airs and slow ebb took me past the moorings about 20 feet from the boats all facing the other direction off to my port. The echo sounder was showing a good 10 feet when all of a sudden the alarm sounded and silently I stopped, water now ebbing around my stern. Looking over the side I could see that I was being held amidst what appeared to be a large clump of weed.

Imagine the thoughts that went through my mind.. Aground at Heybridge! I can just see the next RSA Newsletter where I had to own up to the fact that I sat out a tide opposite the pub in the Basin. What shame!!

Panic stations had me dashing to start the engine and putting it into reverse try and pull away from the weed. I could not move backwards. Oh well, let's go for it! Pushing it into forward gear and opening the throttle. Slowly I inched forwards and within minutes was free. Whether it was a shoal or some other underwater obstruction, it had collected a mass of weed that extended to the surface of the water. Since then I learnt that it is the best water very close to the moored yachts. I will know better next time!

By now the wind was freshening from the North and moving East again. I was able to make excellent progress until I let go the anchor off Osea for breakfast. Further upstream the crew of Wivenhoe had the same idea. To me, bacon and eggs taste great after sailing for a couple of hours. As they sizzled in the pan, I took a look around my temporary mooring. Another Dauntless was moored off to my starboard close to the island. With dinghy astern and all hatches closed, it was clear that the occupant had better things to do this time in the morning. After a hearty breakfast and a few more chapters of Maurice Griffiths, I weighed anchor, waving to my fellow Dauntless, on a heading for the mooring I had taken on my first night in West Mersey.

My plan was to wait for the flood and take the last 3-4 hours down the Ray Sand channel and back home. On reaching Mersey. I started the engine as I needed to navigate due north into the wind and the tide was still ebbing. The engine started, but when put into gear, would hardly push me through the water... what is happening? Closer examination by peering over the transom answered this question. I had a large clump of the Heybridge vegetation wrapped completely around the propeller. Was I glad I had the dinghy. I hove too and furled the sails. The anchor was away in about two fathoms of water and I climbed into the dinghy with kitchen knife in hand. This made short work of the weed which bound

like a cloth around the propeller. I weighed anchor again and slowly punched wind and tide onto the first mooring in Mersey. Saved again!

Too early for lunch I set down to read a couple more chapters. The radio forecast winds 5 to 6 from the NE. A great wind to get home. That and the tide with me should mean that I will be back in Paglesham in no time. And so, after lunch with a reef in the main, I set off East against the early flood to the Bench Head and then South through the channel. I reflected that during this passage from my start in Paglesham I had barely a single tack! However, after passing the Branklet, the wind slowly dropped. Shaking out the last reef in the main gave me enough drive to reach the mooring and pick up my buoy.

A wonderful sail, a great experience and my thanks M. Griffiths for the inspiration!

## **Roach Fairways News.**

### ***Paglesham Pool***

You may remember from the September 1995 newsletter that the Roach Area and Fairways Conservation Committee (RAFCC) objected to the proposal for a barge mooring in Paglesham Pool. Although permission was granted despite our objection, we have managed to secure an number of caveats that will ensure navigation within the pool. The intended barge is to be moored fore and aft, hence removing the potential to swing and obstruct the pool. The Barge is to carry correct navigational marks and no vessels are to be permitted to moor alongside. The barge is to be maintained such that it's appearance should not be unacceptable. The Committee believe this to be a reasonable outcome and feel that we have been able to avoid what could have been an unpleasant eyesore as well as an obstruction to local waters.

### ***Moorings at Paglesham***

It was noted that during the season, we often see boats rafted up on the moorings in the river. This is not only a hazard to other boats in the mooring but also puts undue strain on the mooring itself. This is also plain bad manners to treat another's moorings this way.

Also, it has been pointed out that many visitors use the yard moorings overnight and at lunch-times and pay no consideration to the fact that, if the yard moorings are used, then there is either an overnight charge of £5 or a lunch-time charge of £1. This will inevitably sour relationships with the mooring owners for all visitors.

The RAFCC will write to the yacht clubs at Burnham, (who, in our experience, seem to be the worst offenders), and ask that a note could be placed on the club notice boards reflecting concern in these two matters. It is important to good relations that all visitors and members of the RSA respect the right of the yard in this matter.

### ***Chairman of the R.A.F.C.C.***

Norman has chosen to resign his seat on the Crouch Area Harbour Authority as representative of the R.A.F.C.C. The committee took a vote and Dai Williams has agreed to take the seat, with Nigel Bishop as second. John Martin has agreed to join us on the committee. The committee members are now:

Dai Williams	(Chairman)
Nigel Bishop	(Second)
Norman Bishop	
John Martin	
Rodney Choppin	
John Langrick	(Secretary)

Any other members who would like to serve on this committee, then please let me know at the AGM.

# Roach Sailing Association 1996 Sailing Programme

**Start times:** *Boats with handicap 124 and above 1000hrs*  
*Boats with handicap 123 and below 1030hrs*  
*Course for Dinghy races to be decided on the day, meet on the slip at 10:30*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Tide (Burnham)</b>	<b>Ebb avail fr 1000 hrs</b>
<b>19 May</b>	Paglesham Pot	LW 1326	3hr 26min
<b>25&amp;26 May</b>	OGA Crouch Rally		
<b>1 Jun</b>	Pyefleet Weekend Cruise	HW 1256	
<b>5-9 Jun</b>	South-East Boat Show at Shotley		
<b>16 Jun</b>	Paglesham Yacht Race - Dinghies	HW 1344	
<b>20-23 Jun</b>	OGA Lowestoft Cruise via Southwold		
<b>23 Jun</b>	Whitaker Cup	LW 1142	1hr 42mins
<b>29 Jun - 7 Jul</b>	Classic Boat Festival at Shotley		
<b>14 Jul</b>	Lifeboat Cup (Dinghies)	HW 1240	
<b>20 Jul</b>	Cruise to Fambridge	HW 1605	
<b>21 Jul</b>	Race Fambridge to Branklet Spit	HW 1644	
<b>27 Jul</b>	OGA East Coast Race		
<b>4 Aug</b>	Jack H Coote Trophy	LW 1046	46mins
<b>18 Aug</b>	Shuttlewood Cup	LW 0939	
<b>24&amp;25 Aug</b>	OGA Mistley Rally		
<b>24-31 Aug</b>	Burnham Week		
<b>8 Sep</b>	Gracilda Cup (Ladies' Race)	LW 1640	6hr 40mins
<b>14 Sep</b>	Pyefleet Weekend Cruise	HW 1419	
<b>22 Sep</b>	RNLI Race	LW 1436	4hr 36mins
<b>6 Oct</b>	Roach Plate	LW 1423	4hr 23mins
<b>19 Oct</b>	Laying-up Supper (RBYC)		

Dai and Caroline

