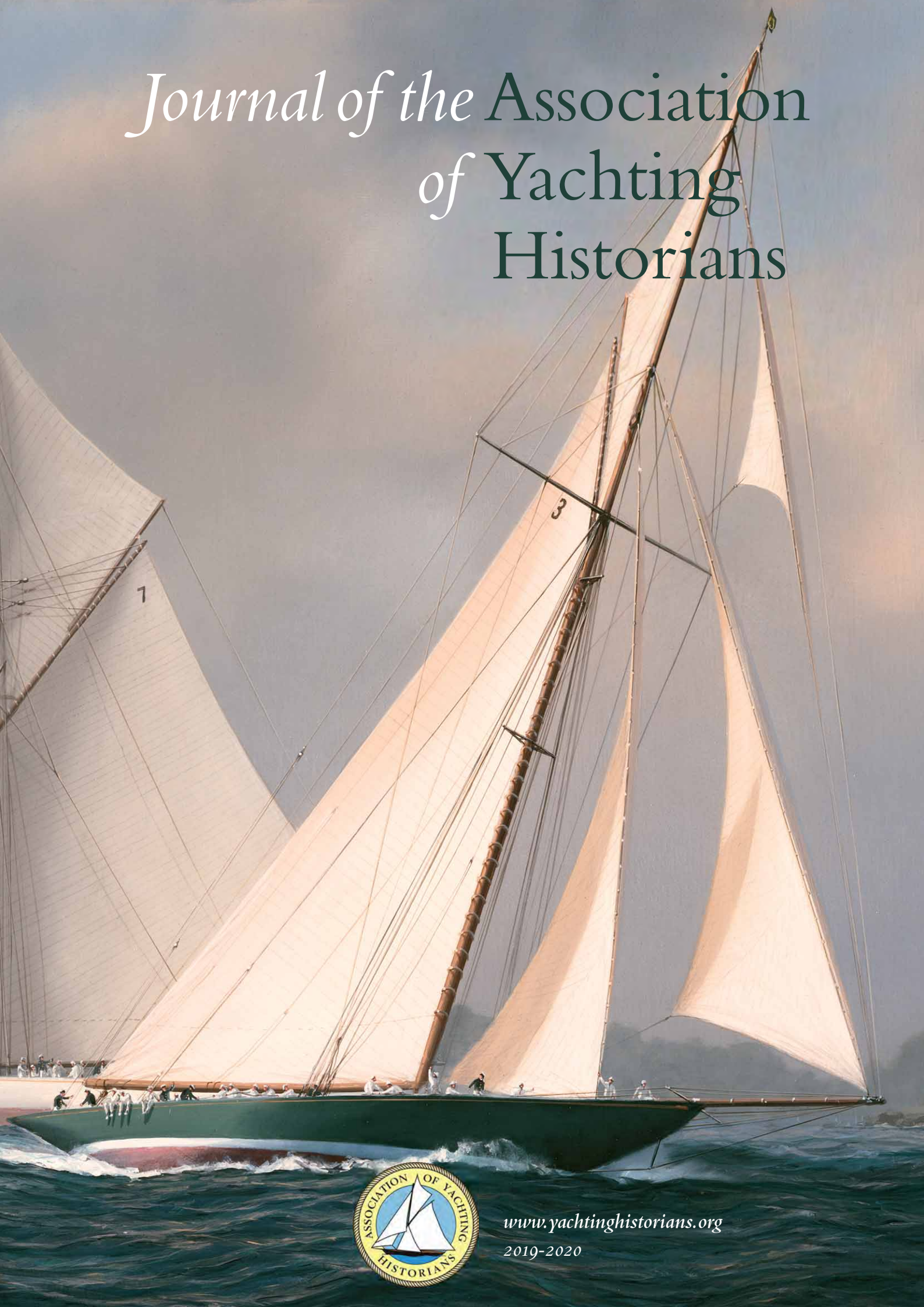


Journal of the Association of Yachting Historians



www.yachtinghistorians.org

2019-2020


The Jeremy Lines Half-Model Collection



*Half-model of Peggy Bawn, G.L. Watson's 1894 "fast cruiser".
Model built by David Spy of Tayinloan, Argyllshire*

Over many years our friend and AYH Committee Member the late Jeremy Lines assiduously recorded half-models of yachts and collected these in a database. Such models, often seen screwed to yacht clubhouse walls, may be only quaint decoration to present-day members of our Association, but these carefully crafted models are primary historical artefacts. They may even have been actual design tools, as so-called builders' models in a time before boats were built from plans on paper. The half-models are often the only accurate record of significant yachts and they illustrate the evolution of yacht design.

At our visits to major yachting centres, even in his late seventies Jeremy could be found at the top of a borrowed step-ladder measuring the models and recording every detail on the inscriptions. Now Jeremy's extensive research can be viewed on our website. The database comprises over 1700 models with, where these can be found, dimensions, names and dates. In posting this database on our website we have respected the privacy of the owners of the models by omitting their names and the locations of the models, but with their permission we can put interested AYH members in touch.

We strongly recommend continuing Jeremy's work and adding to this database, firstly by identifying as yet unrecorded models and then, as far as possible, following his format. Now that anyone can study the list, we hope that the collective knowledge of our AYH members may assist in filling in more details of the models and contributing to this important part of our yachting heritage 


Access to research sources

At our last AGM, one of our members asked how can our Association help members find sources of yachting history publications, archives and records? Such assistance should be a key service to our members and therefore we are instigating access through a special link on the AYH website.

Many of us will have started research in yacht club records and club libraries, which are often haphazard and incomplete. We have now started the process of listing significant yachting research resources with their locations, distinctive features, and comments on how accessible they are, and we invite our members to tell us about their experiences of using these resources. Some of the sources described, of course, are historic and often not actively acquiring new material, but the Bartlett Library (Falmouth) and the Classic Boat Museum (Cowes) are frequently adding to their specific yachting history collections.

This list makes no claim to be comprehensive, and we have taken a decision not to include major national libraries, such as British, Scottish, Welsh, Trinity College (Dublin), Bodleian (Oxford), Cambridge, and the Caird (NMM Greenwich). We do, however, invite our members to add to the list by suggesting many more locations and collections.

With all the institutions and bodies mentioned, their usefulness for research is often dependent on finding the right person with a good general knowledge and a genuine interest in their collections. Identifying a named enthusiast, whether staff or voluntary, may be critical, therefore, in directing one to lesser known yet related sources.

We hope this new service will be welcomed by our members 

The Association of Yachting Historians is an international organisation which was formed in 2005 to bring together the expertise and enthusiasm of all those interested or active in the pursuit of the history of yachting.

We encourage research and the preservation of yacht history records, and we encourage the exchange of information between our members, and between yacht club archivists and those working in maritime museums, helping them to maintain a database for future generations.

We arrange relaxed but informative group visits to appropriate places of historical yachting interest, where we are often privileged to see material not generally available.

We welcome new members, who we hope will share their knowledge and experiences with us all.

Please visit our website: www.yachtinghistorians.org for full details and for membership application details.



Journal of the Association of Yachting Historians

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Cover photo: White Heather and Shamrock racing off Elberry Cove, Torbay in the 1920s. [From an original painting by Tim Thompson www.timthompsonmarineart.com]

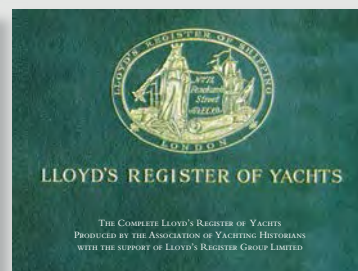
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www.yachtinghistorians.org
2019-2020

For many years our annual Newsletters and, subsequently, the Journal have been the principal contact for the members of our Association, but we have been working hard to expand and improve our website (www.yachtinghistorians.org) in order to provide a better service to our increasingly international membership.

There are several new additions to the website planned or already accessible, including all our past Newsletters so ably edited by our former Hon. Secretary, Rosemary Joy, details of our projects, visits, access to research sources (*see opposite page*), and members' news which we hope you will contribute to with information about your own publications, research activities, experiences and memories.



Both these digitised libraries are now available to purchase via www.yachtinghistorians.org

As you know, a core function of our Association is to help members to find key primary yachting history sources and we are delighted to report that we have recently completed our second major project, the digitisation of *The Yachtsman* from 1891 to 1939. This is now available in a searchable memory stick (*see p. 24*), and we are confident that its distribution will exceed the earlier digitised *Lloyd's Register of Yachts*.

Our social programme for 2020 is looking exciting, with our AGM weekend on 14th/15th March combined with a visit to the Upper Thames Sailing Club, and the postponed visit to Venice re-scheduled for a date just after Easter. Full details of these visits, together with general news updates, will be displayed on our website and circulated in our regular Newsletters.

Fair Winds,

Hal Sisk
Chairman


The Cruising Association kindly provided coffee on arrival, and after a morning committee meeting we were joined by a goodly turnout of AYH members who mingled happily in the bar until lunch was announced.

After the AGM an EGM was held to approve plans to restructure the Association, of which all members had been previously notified, and there were no dissenters to the proposals. The full Minutes of the AGM and EGM will be available on the AYH website in the members' section.

After the meetings Jeremy Batch, the CA administrator, gave us a brief introduction to the work of the CA library, which we were kindly invited to view at our leisure, and we then welcomed two speakers. Kathryn

Preston spoke first about the G.L. Watson Archives, elaborating on the description she provided originally in the AYH Journal of Winter 2018, and illustrating her talk with many interesting photographs and plans.

Stuart Bligh, Head of Research and Information at the National Maritime Museum Greenwich, focused his talk on the Museum's **Yachting Collections** and appealed to members of our Association for help in supporting those collections. His full talk is presented here.

It was decided to combine our 2020 AGM with a visit to the Upper Thames area, and we have chosen the weekend of 14th/15th March 2020 at the Upper Thames Sailing Club, Bourne End. Please see our website for more details in due course 

Yachting Collections at the National Maritime Museum

Stuart Bligh

*Head of Research and Information,
Royal Museums Greenwich*

It was great to have the opportunity at the 2019 AGM to highlight the rich collections we have at the National Maritime Museum relating to the history of yachting and yacht building.

For one reason or another these collections are not always prominent in our catalogues and galleries and this is a situation we are keen to rectify, we hope with help from the AYH and its members.



Above: Yachts on Windermere c.1910. Francis Frith Collection [By kind permission of the National Maritime Museum Greenwich]



Amongst the collections highlighted during the talk were:

- the art collections which contain some fantastic, and in some cases dramatic, images including *Running Ashore*, an oil painting by Charles M. Padday (see below).
- the large photographic negative and print collections that hold many images of interest to yachting historians dating back to the late nineteenth century. The collections are organised alphabetically by ship/boat name and also topographically. Collections that feature images of yachts and yachting include the Davies collection (*Flying Cloud* etc.), the Francis Frith & Co. collection, the Irving collection and the Stewart Morris (Olympic sailor) collection.
- manuscript material including the archives of yacht-building companies, particularly yacht designs and plans, such as William Denny and Camper & Nicholson. One example shown from the Denny Collection were the plans for the yacht *Shamrock II* which was a British America's Cup challenger in 1901. Other collections include Alexander Stephen & Sons, Barclay Curle, Fairey Marine, J. G. Fay and J. I. Thornycroft.
- significant collections relating to yachting organisations, institutions and designers including Atalanta Owners Association, Crowther Sewell & Pafford (brokers), Uffa Fox, the Royal Yachting Association and the Royal Cruising Club.
- a collection relating to John Fisk (MSS/79/014) who won the International Catamaran Challenge Trophy in 1961 in a wooden constructed catamaran that he designed with Rod Macalpine-Downie called *Helicat*. Fisk was based at the Chapman Sands Sailing Club on

Canvey Island and the collection includes correspondence 1959-1966, photographs and press cuttings of the International Catamaran Trophy and other races, 1961-1962, and of Fiske, Macalpine-Downie and their catamarans including *Body & Soul*, *Thai IV*, *Helicat* & *Boadicea*.

- significant items from the object collection including a model of a cruising yacht c. 1930 by Morgan Giles Ltd (SLR 2528), a yachting trophy won by *Valkyrie* in 1891 (PLT0258), and even the mascot teddy bear 'Humphrey' belonging to skipper Tracy Edwards which was on the racing yacht *Maiden* during the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race (ZBA1778)!

Most of these collections and objects are currently only available to view by appointment so if you are interested in finding out more please contact our Plans and Photographs department by e-mail at plansandphotos@rmg.co.uk. You can, however, search the Fine Art (oil paintings and prints and drawings) and object collections on our Collections Online:

<https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html#!cbrowse>



Above: *Running Ashore*, an oil painting by Charles M. Padday probably from between 1910 and 1930 [By kind permission of the National Maritime Museum Greenwich]





Above: A crewman on the model of Reliance standing aloft on the truss. That was his work station for which he got 10 cents extra per day



Centre: Hand-sculptured figures of Charlie Barr with afterguard Nat Herreshoff and Oliver Iselin

Right: The model of Reliance takes pride of place in the main hall of the Yachting Heritage Centre, Flensburg



Northern Germany 5th-7th October 2018

Some 20 of our members enjoyed a fascinating trip to Kiel and Flensburg in Northern Germany in 2018 and the full report, compiled by Hal Sisk and Kim Lyal, can be viewed on the AYH website.

One of the places visited was the **Yachting Heritage Centre in Flensburg**, which is currently presenting an exciting exhibition entitled: *The America's Cup – The history of the oldest and one of the most fascinating trophies in sports*. Centrepiece of the exhibit is a model of the America's Cup winner in 1903 *Reliance*, brought over by AYH member Sandy Lee from the Herreshoff Marine Museum (see *AYH Journal 2016*) and re-erected at the Centre. Sandy sent us the following summary of this ambitious undertaking:

'Herreshoff Marine Museum's 37' tall one sixth scale model of 1903 America's Cup winner and last and most majestic of the "great ninety-footers" was shipped in June to the Yachting Heritage Centre, Flensburg, Germany. Shortly afterwards I made the trek to fully rig the model for the first time ever.

'I had two weeks to complete the model. Topsail, jib topsail, spinnaker and balloon jib rigging had not yet been mapped out or fitted on to the boat. We were completing a prototype 3,000 miles from home resources. We busted blocks, pulled pad eyes from the deck and puzzled over rigging, but two weeks later with the help of German riggers we had an amazing transformation with towering rigging and spars to the ceiling, and I was

struck by how magnificent the original must have been. Our miniature certainly is!'

The America's Cup Exhibition includes exhibits, images and films, many of which have never been accessible to the public before, and is due to run until April 2020 – see www.classic-yachts.com

Venice Spring 2020

We had ambitious plans to visit **Venice** towards the end of 2019 but the combination of Brexit delays, the Venice Biennale and overflowing hotels made it prudent, we felt, to postpone the visit until the Spring of 2020, and now the provisional dates are for just after Easter in April. More details will be circulated to members and posted on the website in due course. However, the tentative programme which we hope to implement then, should include:

- Private tour of the **Arsenale**, a remarkable reminder of the power of maritime Venice
- Visit to a **Gondola** "factory"
- Private boat trip to the **Lagoon and island of Torcello** on a traditional 'trabaccolo' – a two mast fishing barge
- Possible Reception at the local Venice yacht club, the **Compagnia della Vela** – whose offices and club rooms are located adjacent to the Piazza San Marco.

In the meantime, we are trying to arrange a more local visit to the Upper Thames area to coincide with our AGM in March 2020. Please see the AYH website for further details nearer the time 🚢



The Hamble Star

A small boat survivor with a keen sense of adventure

David Munge

Albert Luke designed this remarkable sailing dinghy almost 100 years ago. Luke & Co. was a boat-building firm, established in 1829 in Limehouse near London. They moved to Oakbank at Itchen Ferry in 1868, and in 1895 settled at Hamble. Here they designed and built yachts of all sizes, as well as providing all kinds of services to the yachts visiting or having a berth at the river. The river Hamble was a popular place to “lay up” yachts for the winter.

There are at least three members of the Luke family known as boat builders: W. S. (Walter Smith) Luke (1844–1904), and his sons Walter G. Luke (born 1868) and Albert R. Luke (born 1875). The name of the yard changed over the years from W. S. Luke to W. G. Luke & Co. (1895), to Hamble River Luke & Co. Ltd., and finally to Luke Bros.

When W. S. Luke died in March 1904, his sons took over the yard: Albert (“Bert”) as designer, and Walter managing the boatyard. After the First World War, during which they had built flying boats, Luke Bros. concentrated on yacht building again. They had moved a bit up-river, just north of where the present Royal Southern Yacht Club opened their premises in 1937. It expanded to Satchell Lane and was known as Top Yard or North Yard, which is now Hamble Yacht Services.

It was 1925 when Luke & Co. designed and built the first ‘Hamble Star one design’ sailing dinghy which became a popular racing



Above: Stars at Erith in the 1950s

Left: Hamble Star with Gunter-rigged main

Bottom: Star racing on a close fetch



dinghy with the local Hamble River Sailing Club. The Star is a carvel-built, hard chine, Gunter-rigged, centreboard open dinghy. ‘Open dinghy’ means no decking, so you had to learn to sail them dry, or bail. 14’ overall, with a waterline of 11’ 6” and a 5’ beam, she





Above: An ideal rig for young people learning to sail

Above right: Cruising the canals in Holland



draws 9" with the plate up, and 2' plate down, and the sail area is 120 square feet.

In modern boat-building terms, the Star would be an oddity, as few hard chine boats are carvel-built; add to this the use of 7/16" mahogany planking and ½" and ¾" bent timbers, it becomes clear that we are dealing with a rather different 'animal' from the average boxy plywood designs of today. This construction method is really strong, which probably is the reason why Hamble Stars are still sailed, albeit in small numbers, today.

After the Second World War, a remarkable character came on the scene and had a huge influence on the future of the Star class. Michael Strang Robinson ('Robbie') (1910-1999) came from a keen Hamble sailing family and was also an enthusiastic supporter of the Hamble Star. Not only that, but in his professional life he was the 'Keeper of Pictures' at the National Maritime Museum, London, and was an expert on the paintings of Willem van de Velde, the elder, and Willem van de Velde, the younger. (*See Editor's note)

Robbie took his first Star up to the Erith Yacht Club, on the tidal lower Thames, in

around 1950, and there built up a fleet of Hamble Stars, which he used mainly to train children how to sail. It seems from Erith Yacht Club's archives that the boat was used for learners, 10-12 year olds, who by 14 years of age would become excellent helmsmen. The Star's 100 sq. ft. main sail set in a low Gunter rig was ideal, and the jib of 20 sq. ft. could also be managed by young people. The mast, gaff, and boom all fit into the boat, so the boat could be used for pulling/rowing, and most boats were fitted with a sculling notch, although sculling is a skill very rarely seen today. The ability to stow all the boat's spars within the hull had many additional benefits, and the boats were easily transported on double-decker road trailers.

With his professional interest in van de Velde paintings, Robbie came up with the idea of combining both sailing and painting, and he organised annual trips for young people from Erith to go to Holland. The undertaking, charmingly recorded in Robbie's family photo collection, shows a true 'Swallows and Amazons' spirit. Initially, the trip was done by boat, and involved four dinghies, two helmed by Robbie and his friend Ron Chittenden, and two each crewed by two little boys. The





boats were sailed up to the Port of London and trans-shipped onto merchant ships, which dropped the four Hamble Stars off in Harlingen, in Friesland, Holland. They would then cruise the canals of Friesland, often down to Amsterdam. The crews camped on the boats, and self-catered. A tent was rigged over the boom, and the crew slept on bottom boards stowed on the thwarts. These cruises continued way into the 1980s, although latterly the transport to Holland was car and trailer.

*Above left:
Transportation by road
(note 'classic' vehicles!)*

*Above right: Cruising
in Friesland*

*Left top and centre:
Camping en route,
showing tent rigged
over boom*

*Left bottom: 'The
ability to stow all the
boat's spars within the
hull had many
additional benefits*



Members of Erith Yacht Club, led by Sid Gascoyne and Brian Crickmore, maintain the boats, at one time numbering 13, and use them for sail training, but in 2015 to make way for more modern dinghies at the Club it was decided that some Stars should be sold. By chance an old friend of the author, classic boat aficionado Jonty Sherwill, mentioned this in conversation to Mike Blackman, a Bursledon-based business man, who soon after bid unseen for eight of the Hamble Stars, then brought them back by truck to the Hamble after many years.

Since this episode another Hamble Star has come to light and been donated to Hamble River Sailing Club by the daughters of a past member of the Club, Alan A. Cooper. Named *My Dinky Do* this is a superb example expertly home-built by Alan and his father in 1949, and which had been kept in dry storage for around 50 years. With sail number 82 of around 150 total built between 1925 and the 1960s, this boat has the original cotton sails, wooden spars etc. To try and ensure the boat's future it was auctioned at the Club's Centenary Sail Past on August 6th, 2019 and was bought by an experienced local shipwright Rob Flack, who plans to restore her fully for sailing 🚢

Editor's note: Willem van de Velde the Elder (1610/11 – 1693) was a marine painter and official artist of the Dutch fleet for a time. Some of our members may recall an article in the AYH Journal Winter 2017 commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of Medway, in which we described some of the exploits of a certain Admiral Michiel de Ruyter. According to a biography of the Admiral, on the evening of the Four Days Battle of 1666 Willem van de Velde is rumoured to have asked Admiral de Ruyter permission to have a galley row him around for a good view of the proceedings so that he could paint scenes of the battle.





David Jaffray Maw

*War hero and accomplished
Class II Ocean Racing Skipper*

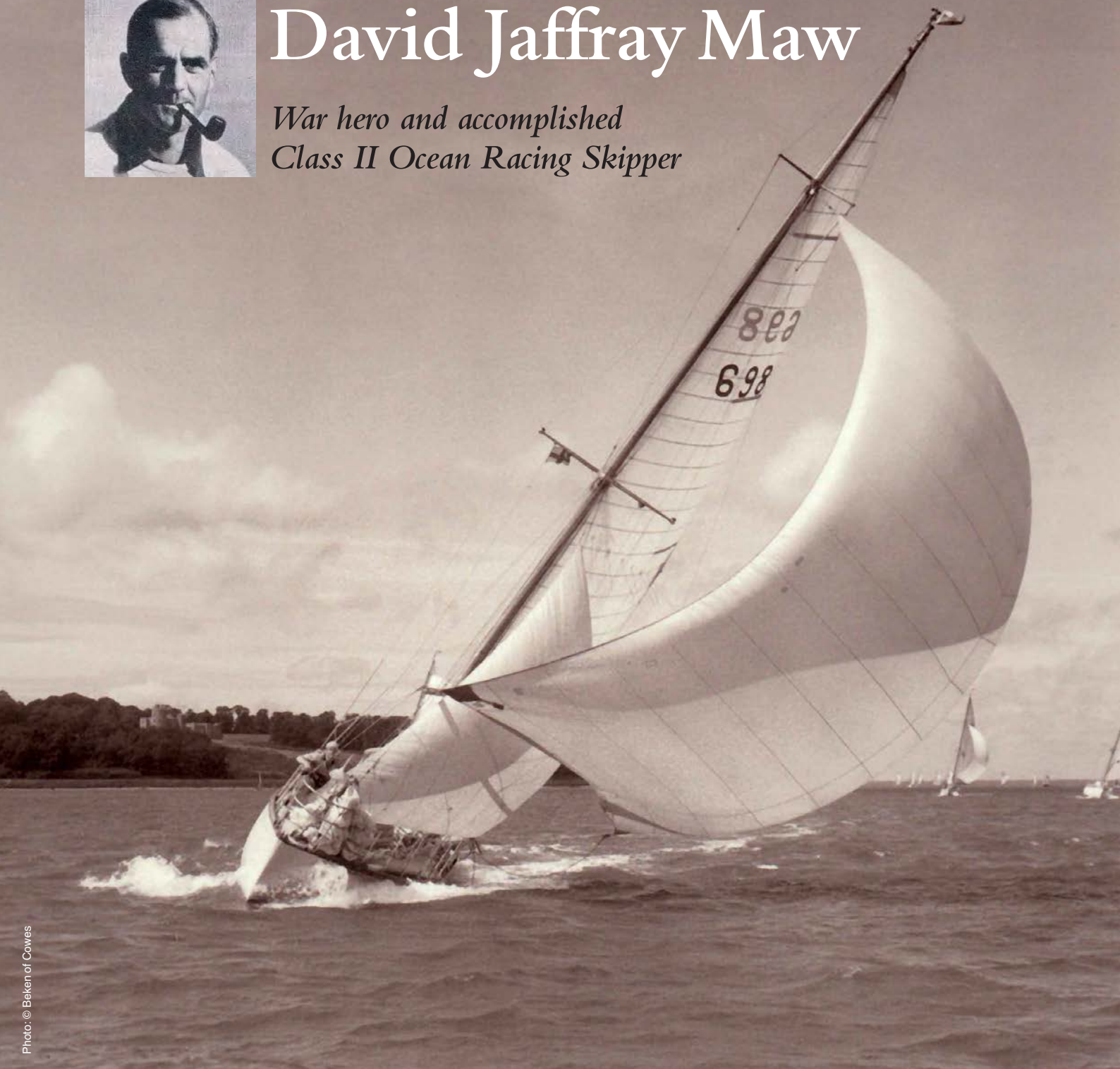


Photo: © Beken of Cowes

*Top: D.J. Maw, owner
of Bluejacket
[Source: Yachting
World Annual 1958]*

*Main image:
Bluejacket (ex
Phizz) in the 1950s*

Philip Knight-Jones

David Jaffray Maw was born in 1917 in Reigate. He was the youngest of four sons born to Mowbray Trentham Maw and Mary Jaffray Maw. His older brothers were all RAF officers.

David Maw joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps and was awarded the MC for courageous efforts fighting in Crete. He was a POW and escaped twice and was beaten up by the Gestapo. After the war he continued his service in the Territorial Army.





David was a great offshore sailor and sailed many races from 1957 until 1969 in *Phizz*, *Clair De Lune* and *Rocquette*, all of which were sailed as *Bluejacket* for the RAFYC. David was Rear Commodore of the RORC in 1966 and 1967.

David bought *Phizz* in 1957 and renamed her *Bluejacket*. As the owner/skipper he raced her regularly from the 1957 season to 1960, then sold her to Russell Anstey and she was renamed *Phizz* again. She is now owned by me and my brother.

Ken Newman recalls, "My first Fastnet was in 1957 in *Bluejacket*.... This was in even rougher seas than the infamous 1979 Race.... Eventually we were the final boat to finish, twelfth out of 40 starters. That was, without doubt, my worst ever Fastnet. In commemoration of this, I am proud that the RORC now awards the Ken Newman Endurance Salver to the Fastnet finisher with the greatest elapsed time."

David then bought *Clair de Lune* from A.E. Bird and raced her as *Bluejacket (II)* from 1961 to 1964, winning the Class II RORC points championship in 1962. In 1965 David bought *Rocquette* from Peter Nicholson and renamed her *Bluejacket III*. He raced her until 1972.

Shaun Peck, who sailed with David on all the *Bluejackets* in 40 RORC races from 1958 to 1969, and is himself an accomplished offshore

sailor with several over 1000 mile passages under his belt, regarded David as a father figure and wrote "I shall remember him as a very kind and generous friend and the best skipper I have known!"

The late Jeremy Lines, who was voluntary archivist at Camper and Nicholson, also sailed on all the *Bluejackets* and in 2018 recalled, "My wife and I went to see David in Jersey in the early 1990s, he was a marvellous skipper, I was honoured to sail with him."

In 1967 David moved to Jersey where he was a member of the St Helier Yacht Club. In 1972 he sold *Bluejacket III/ex Rocquette* to Martin Sharp of Cowes who renamed her *Vanity I*. In his later years David suffered from poor health and died in Jersey in 1999.

More details and a history of races can be found on these links: Phizztory A history of a Class II Ocean Racer
https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B_TEfE6koyWvVzhDMmpObndHdGc

Postscript

David is remembered to this day by the current owners and crews of *Phizz* and *Rocquette* which still take part in regular classic yacht regattas in the UK and France 🚢

If any readers have memories to share about sailing with David or aboard any of his yachts please contact me by email:
knight-jones@clara.net

Above left: Phizz 2009. [By kind permission of Roy Hicks]

Above right: Rocquette [By kind permission of Gildas Kerys]



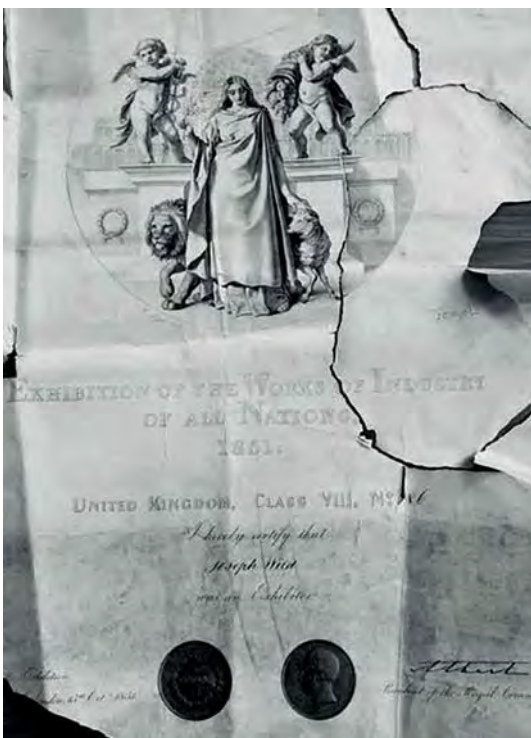


Joseph Weld:

An early yacht designer

Ian Dear

In search of a connection between the early 19th century yachtsman, Joseph Weld (1777-1863), and the marine painter, J.M. Gilbert, who painted Weld's famous cutter *Alarm* in 1830, I visited the Weld family archive at the Dorset History Centre. The connection was there; but at a time when a vessel's builders were also its designers, I found intriguing evidence too that left me convinced he was the sport's first true yacht designer.



Top: Joseph Weld (1777-1863)
[Source: 'Memorials of the Royal Yacht Squadron' by Montague Guest and William B. Boulton, 1903]

Above: Certificate from the Great Exhibition of 1851
[Courtesy Dorset History Centre D-WLC/F80]

Right: One of several colourful race cards in the Weld archive – this one shows the entries (including *Alarm*) for the Royal Yacht Squadron Regatta on Saturday, August 19th, 1854 [Courtesy Dorset History Centre D-WCH/2/8]

Weld was a founder member of The Yacht Club, which was formed in June 1815. Based at Cowes the Club soon established a reputation for the swiftness of its vessels and its close association with the Royal Navy, and in 1833 was renamed The Royal Yacht Squadron. Weld had several yachts built for him that competed in its races, the 85-ton cutter, *Arrow*, and the 193-ton cutter, *Alarm*, being the fastest and most famous. Weld supervised their construction and the archive has evidence of where he acquired the knowledge to do this. For instance, a magazine clipping quotes Weld's nephew as saying that 'Mr Weld's first yacht was a condemned smuggler called the *Ranger*; from her he got his ideas, for a bow amongst them, but he had a natural talent for ship building from his boyhood.' And a scrap of paper in Weld's handwriting describes how he employed a one-time smuggler as the Master of one of his yachts. The man began as a ship builder and 'afterwards took to the sea and became one of the most successful free traders this country ever produced. Vessels were built towards the latter end of [the] last war by him and by others.... for the smuggling trade, so fast that few could be caught.'



Several members built yachts with the explicit purpose of out-sailing their naval equivalents, in particular the much-maligned naval brigs. So successful at this was the Earl of Belfast's brig, *Waterwitch*, that in 1834 the Admiralty was obliged to purchase her. This may have prompted Weld's interest in improving the type, for in the archive is a draft letter to the Admiralty where Weld offers






© National Maritime Museum Greenwich

Left: J.M. Gilbert's painting of Joseph Weld's 193-ton cutter *Alarm* winning the Royal Yacht Club's Lady's Challenge Cup in 1830. Note the smoke of the finishing gun by the boom of *Alarm*

Below left: Lord Belfast's 330-ton brig *Waterwitch*. Launched in 1832, she proved herself faster than any naval brig [From a contemporary print. Source: 'Memorials of the Royal Yacht Squadron' by Montague Guest and William B. Boulton, 1903]



'my services to build a model of the ship of the experimental brigs', and that it would be 'constructed of such dimensions that the minutest calculations can be made in the most accurate manner.' Another note confirms that the model would be 'built from the lines of his yacht *Alarm*, 193 tons, of his own construction.' The letter proposes that the model be 'laid before your Lordships for approval and should it meet the approbation of your Lordships to request permission to superintend the building of one in the dockyard at Portsmouth. It perhaps may be thought presumptuous in me making this proposal but it has been from my early days my study as well as my amusement.'

There is no record that their Lordships replied and the draft letter is undated. However, a tattered certificate in the archives shows the model was built and that Weld exhibited it at the Great Exhibition of 1851, in Class VIII (naval architecture, military engineering, guns, etc.), and that no: 186 was 'a model of a 12-gun brig of war, built on scientific principles, calculated to insure fast sailing'. Unfortunately, the model probably perished in a devastating fire that swept through the Weld family seat, Lulworth Castle, in 1929 

Editor's note:

1. In the *Field's Yacht Racing Calendar and Review 1888* (pp.134-135) a report entitled 'Yacht Racing Sixty Years Ago' related by Charles Ratsey, of the sail-making firm, gives more details of *Waterwitch's* influence on the competitive nature of yacht racing in those early days:

'About the year 1832 there was a favourite gun brig named *Pantaloon* designed by Sir W. Symonds; she used to sail through Cowes Roads with a deal of boasting, and that was one of the inducements with Lord Belfast to build the brig *Waterwitch*, and of the same dimensions, about 100 feet overall and about 29 feet beam. I remember distinctly, when the *Waterwitch* was building at East Cowes, that Mr Joseph Weld, of the *Alarm*, came up to look at her on the stocks, he then and there expressed the opinion that she would beat the *Pantaloon*, as she had a longer and better bow. The *Waterwitch* was launched, and fitted out with all guns, weights, shot, etc., as a man-of-war; it was either said or thought that the English Government would purchase the *Waterwitch* if she succeeded in beating the *Pantaloon*..... They had a trial, and the *Waterwitch* beat the *Pantaloon* on all points of sailing.....

'In the year 1834 Lord Belfast challenged any square-rigger afloat round the Eddystone and back for £1000. Mr. C.R.M. Talbot, of the *Galatea*, accepted the challenge... and in the latter part of September a day was appointed to start from the Nab.....[at the conclusion of the race] *Waterwitch* rounded the Nab about twenty-five minutes ahead, and won.

'There were seventy hands on board the *Waterwitch* in the match, several belonging to Cowes, and I am (so far as I know) the only survivor.

'After this H.M. Government purchased the *Waterwitch* and sent her out to the West Coast of Africa, where she proved a terror to all the American-built slavers.'

2. Another report in the same issue of the *Yacht Racing Calendar and Review* (page 135) describes the sad fate of Weld's famous *Alarm* at the end of her racing career:

'The *Alarm*, schooner, which has been on the mud in Lymington river since 1869, was sold by auction at Inman's Yard, on Sept. 6... There was a large attendance, several coming from as far as Great Yarmouth, but they were rather dismayed when they looked upon the once celebrated schooner, as the tide flowed in and out of her. She was purchased for £400, and then resold, according to the inventory, her hull fetching £41, and her sails £200; the selling her piecemeal realising £620.... The hull of the *Alarm* was bought by Messrs Pollock and Brown, of Southampton, who will break her up at that port. The presence of the *Alarm* at Southampton has attracted many "old salts" to the wharf to have a look at her. She is being gradually broken up.'



Testing Times for *Dolly Varden*

A famous Ratsey heirloom is home again but needs a lot of TLC



Henrietta Smyth on behalf of Ratsey & Lapthorn and the Classic Boat Museum Cowes

For over two hundred years the unique qualities of Ratsey & Lapthorn, sailmakers par excellence, have been epitomized by the popularity and success of the wide variety of yachts that have been proud to carry the family firm's sails and rigs. As William Collier writes in the Preface to his comprehensive biography, *Classic Sails*, 'From the earliest origins of yachting on the Solent Ratsey & Lapthorn played a leading role in its development.... Until the 1960s every British challenger for the America's Cup was equipped with Ratsey & Lapthorn sails and from 1903 all American defenders set the firm's canvas.'

Of the early yacht races the best accounts that survive were written by Charles Ratsey, who joined his father's firm in 1830, and who frequently sailed on board the large yachts that were trying out Ratsey sails. Reporting in *The Field's Yacht Racing Calendar and Review of 1888* (pp.134-135), Charles wrote proudly: 'I can say that I cut out all the sails for the *Waterwitch*' and records the following particular incident involving that classic yacht 'The *Waterwitch*..... cruised with the Channel Squadron [and] proved herself highly satisfactory; and on one occasion the Admiral (Sir Pultney Malcom) sent for G.R. Ratsey on board the *Donegal*, and, meeting him at the gangway, said, "I want you to tell me what there is about your sails that makes them so far superior to those of all the fleet." Immediately afterwards a paragraph appeared in *The Times* of Oct. 1, 1832: "The Board of Admiralty having expressed its very great admiration of the beautiful symmetry and



standing of the sails of the *Waterwitch* yacht, made by Mr Ratsey of Cowes, have ordered that the sails of the men-of-war shall in future be cut in a similar manner."

Charles Ratsey was succeeded in the business by his son, Thomas ("Tom") Ratsey, who became the driving force behind the firm's future success. With his motto of 'There is to be only one standard of work in this loft and that is the best', Tom was a real innovator and the boat that was most frequently used to try out his new ideas was his own yacht *Dolly Varden*, a familiar sight on the Solent, and believed by Uffa Fox to be one of the fastest cutters of her length in the world. As William Collier reports in his biography: 'Ratsey raced her avidly, used her for countless experiments and lived aboard her in the summer.'

This classic racing yacht was originally built as a fishing smack (Itchen ferry type) in 1872 by Samuel White of Cowes, and was



LLOYD'S REGISTER OF YACHTS.												
1911-1912												
1	2	3	4	5			6		8	9	10	11
Yachts' Name.	Type.	TONS.	DIMENSIONS.			BUILD.		Engines and Boilers.	Particulars and Builders.	Owners.	Port belonging to.	Classification.
Official Number.	Material of Build.	Registered Tonnage.	Length.	Breadth.	Depth.	Builders.	Where.	Particulars and Builders.	Alterations, &c.	Owners.	Port belonging to.	Classification.
Signal Letters.	Sailmaker.	Thames Measurement.	Length.	Breadth.	Depth.	Designers.	When.	Alterations, &c.	Owners.	Port belonging to.	Port of Survey.	Character for Special Service. Date of last Survey. Equipment Letter.
151	Dollydo III.	Wood	Sew L	—	2	20'0"	5'0"	2'3"	Simpson, Dartmouth 1909	Petrol Motor 4Cy. 3"-5"	J. Dawson Paul, jun. Yarmouth	
152	Dolly Varden	Wood	Cutter	11'4'8"	17	36'8"	11'2"	5'9"	J.S. White Cowes 1872	Boulton & Paul, Ltd., Norwich	Thomas W. Ratsey Cowes	
98488									Sail area 1663'2			



converted into a cruising/racing yacht before passing to the Ratsey family in 1888 who owned her for many years. She is entered in Lloyd's Register of Yachts for the year 1911 with Tom Ratsey cited as the owner.

When she came into the ownership of the Ratsey family she was altered again – her square forefoot was cut away, the hull strengthened and her internal ballast replaced with a lead keel. She became a testing ground for new sails and rigs, including the mitre-cut jib and the famous 'peepholes' (also known as Ventury holes), which allowed wind to pass through, supposedly improving the performance of a downwind sail. These experimental sails were used on a variety of classic yachts, including the Royal Yacht *Britannia*, and the J Class yachts.

Dolly Varden continued to win many races well into the 1930s, and was clearly rated very highly. Included with *Britannia* and

Endeavour II in a series of 25 John Player & Sons cigarette cards produced in 1938 by the Imperial Tobacco Company Limited, is an illustration of *Dolly Varden* with Bermudan rig (taken from a painting by Charles Pears), and the text on the reverse of the card describes her thus:

Above: Extract from Lloyd's Register of Yachts 1911 showing *Dolly Varden* entry

Two main photos: *Dolly Varden* in 1921, showing the Ventury holes and a curious rig

'In the earlier days of racing, open sea races were generally only considered for yachts of senior tonnage. Recently, however, small cruisers have raced under Ocean Racing Rules, and some of the older craft have acquitted themselves with credit. The boat shown in our illustration is that lovely old vessel, Dolly Varden, built at Cowes in 1872, and for many years used as a cruiser. Her measurements are modest, being 36 ft. overall with comfortable lift and beam, and a 6ft. 5 in. draught. Recently, owing to the growing popularity of ocean racing, Dolly Varden has been fitted with the modern Bermudian rig and lengthened cabin top seen in the picture. Her great achievement was to take third place among 50 starters for the 220-mile Coronation Race of 1937, a fine compliment to the Ocean Racing Rule evolved since 1929.'



'Racing Yachts' cigarette card 1938 showing *Dolly Varden* [Text and image reproduced by kind permission of the Imperial Tobacco Company Limited]



....Testing Times for Dolly Varden



Below: Dolly Varden returns to Cowes, 21st November 2018



Above: Awaiting restoration in the Classic Boat Museum Cowes

After Tom Ratsey died, Chris Ratsey continued to race in her, and she was eventually sold to Clare Lallow and was later used by the Lallow family as a houseboat. Sad to relate, after such a long and illustrious career, she ended up in a field where she spent 25 years before enthusiast Grahame Knotte and a dedicated group of friends rescued her with ambitious plans to restore and get her sailing again. Unfortunately, however, the funding was not sufficient and she faced a very uncertain future. The Classic Boat Museum in Cowes received a call for help, and every effort was made to bring her back home.

Dolly Varden finally returned to Cowes on 21st November, 2018 with the generous help of Red Funnel and Kingswell Heavy Haulage. A few miscellaneous parts travelled with her, such as her flags, and will be preserved along with the boat itself until such time as, it is hoped, the means become available to bring this famous old lady back to her former glory.

Mark McNeill, Chairman of the Classic Boat Museum, praised her rescuers and commented: "With our limited resources we certainly could not afford to restore her, but bringing her back to Cowes was seen as a key part of the Classic Boat Museum's purpose. We were advised that she was in relatively good condition considering her 146 years, and should be preserved, as there are very few surviving yachts of this age."

Let's hope the Museum's good intentions are rewarded! ⚓

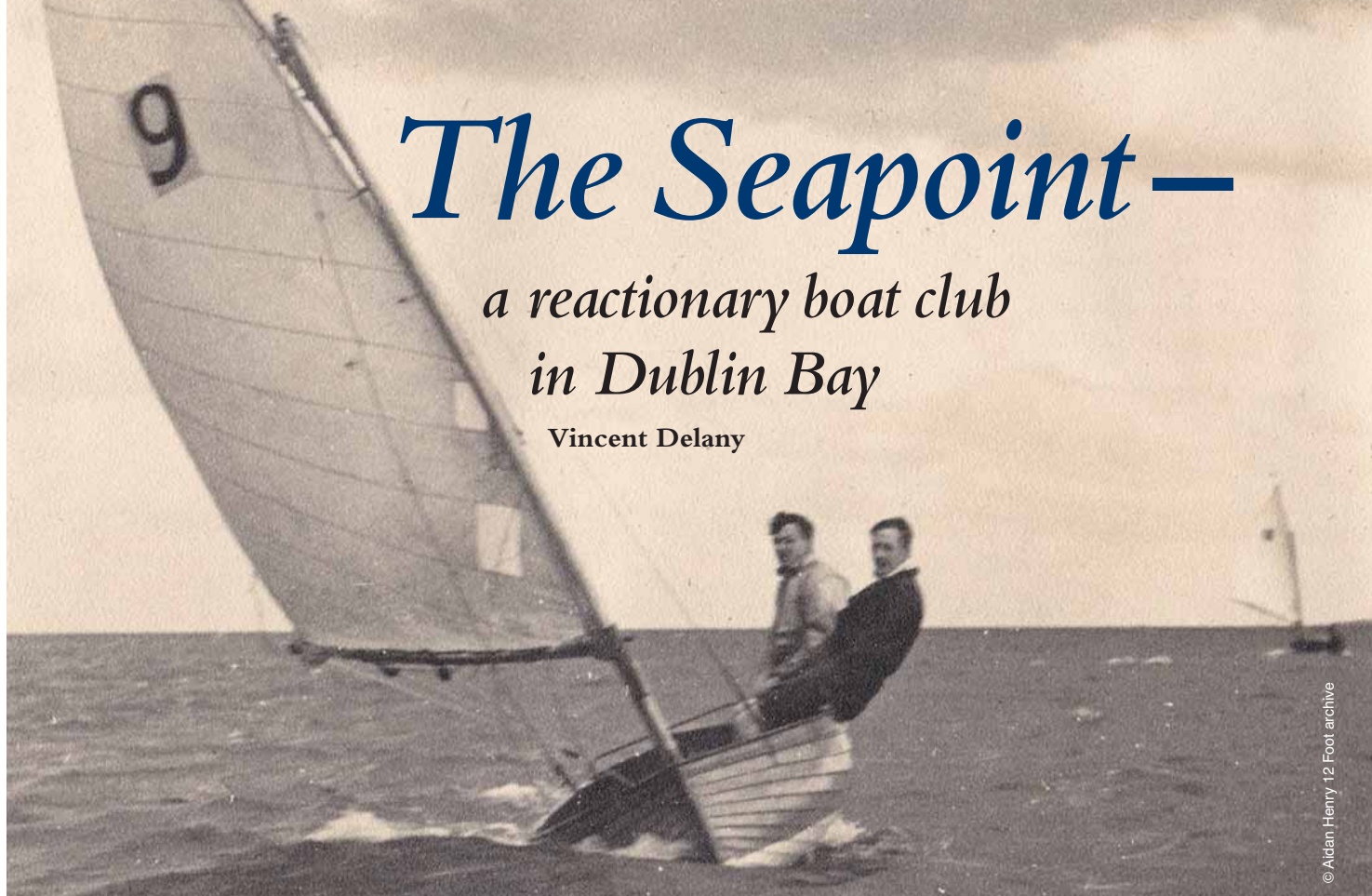
*With my grateful thanks to Dr. William Collier for permission to quote from his biography: CLASSIC SAILS, The Ratsey & Lapthorn Story (1998).
www.ratsey.com/ratseysails*



The Seapoint —

a reactionary boat club in Dublin Bay

Vincent Delany



© Aidan Henry 12 Foot archive

*Above: International
12-foot dinghies in
Dublin Bay*

Dublin in April 1916 was a violent place, with conflict between those looking for a new society and those desirous of maintaining the status quo. Did the Rising affect the residents of the south Dublin suburbs? In Blackrock Urban District life generally continued as before, except for a meeting of local residents which was held in the historic 'Martello' Tower at Seapoint on 27th May 1916 in order to establish a new boat club for the residents of Blackrock and Monkstown. The following resolutions were proposed and carried:

1. *To establish a new boating club to be called 'The Seapoint Boat Club.'*
2. *To limit the membership to twenty-five persons.*
3. *To fix an entrance fee for members at five shillings.*
4. *To purchase a punt or small boat costing no more than £2, for the general use of the members, and to purchase a lock and chain to secure it. A fund was to be put in place with each member paying half a crown towards the cost of the dinghy.*
5. *To employ a boatman for twelve shillings per week to look after the members' boats, to row the members out to their moored boats, to pull the boats out of the water in the event of bad weather, and to work between the hours of 9.30 am till 9.00 pm starting 3rd June 1916.*

Was the Seapoint club different from the established yacht clubs in Kingstown, located within the shelter of Kingstown Harbour

only a mile away? It appears that most of the early members lived within walking distance of the Seapoint Martello tower, so it was established as a convenient local club. The yacht clubs in Kingstown were perceived to be conservative clubs for men. The Seapoint, on the other hand, aspired to be a progressive family-based club, where boys could learn the skills of seamanship during the summer and where their sisters could learn rowing skills etc. Membership quickly grew from 16 members; by 1918 there were 37, necessitating a change to the early club rule restricting numbers, and at its peak (in 1923) there were 134 members.

Activities consisted of yachting and rowing, with races being held weekly from May to September. An entrance fee of a shilling per boat was charged per race, and there were three racing classes:



Right: Gadget (No. 8 previously K29 – now called Cora) in 2018 sailed by Mark Delany at the Irish 12 foot championships in Dun Laoghaire

Below right: Redshank (No. 5 – now called Dorado) in 2018



Class 1: Keelboats of between three and ten tons (Thames Measurement) of which there were ten boats entered in 1928.

Class 2: Boats under three tons. This class survived with eight boats until 1925 and thereafter disappeared, and despite strenuous efforts by the committee, they were unable to revive it.

Class 3: Open boats and canoes. This class operated with up to five boats until 1924 when they were replaced by six B.R.A. (Boat Racing Association) 12-foot one-design dinghies.

The club rented the Martello tower from Blackrock Urban District Council for two shillings and six pence per week and utilised the adjoining public slipway which the Council agreed to keep free of weed and slime. The boatman laid moorings a short distance off the tower where the prevailing wind was offshore. The members had a social responsibility and organised entertainments for wounded soldiers on 28th July and 25th August 1916.

The Council of Aonach Tailteann (the national equivalent of Olympic Games) held a Regatta on 9th August 1924, where three medals were won by members in the small cruiser handicap races.

The success of Captain Payne from the Royal

Munster Yacht Club in winning the International Dinghy Championships at Brussels in 1924 which was sailed in International 12-foot dinghies, drew the attention of all sailors to the merits of this type of boat. This was the earliest international sporting success of the fledgling Free State. Dr W.M.A. Wright proposed in 1924, 'That it is in the interest of the [Seapoint] club that a one-design 12-foot class be established in lieu of the present No.3 class and that the committee take such steps as may be necessary to start same.' Mr. Michael Mahony of Dun Laoghaire confirmed that he could build and fit out 12-footers for racing for under thirty pounds each. Six members agreed to purchase boats which were allocated by ballot. They carried bird's names: *Cormorant* (No.1, H.J. Wright), *Kittiwake* (No.2, A. McGoogan), *Seamew* (No.3, W.B. Conyngham), *Curlew* (No.4, Thomas Kelly & J.R. Felton), *Redshank* (No.5, W. Synott-Glenn) and *Ibis* (No.6, John Wallace). Their first race was on 13th June 1925, and quickly provided the best competition within the club.

In 1926 the club held a further ballot and the winner S.T. Robinson agreed to buy a 12-foot dinghy which he called *Kestrel*. Despite several suggestions at General Committee level to hold another ballot for a 12-foot dinghy, the only other ballot held was one for a stopwatch. Nevertheless, Lt. Col. Hon. Claud Maitland Patrick Brabazon of Bray purchased an English-built boat called *Gadget*, K29, which arrived in the club in July 1928.

Sadly, following a drowning accident, there was a decline in the numbers of boats racing in 1931, and in the following year a decision was made to wind up the club.

The 12-foot dinghy was the first international dinghy class in the world, which enabled the Irish sailors to compete against their British and European counterparts. The significance of the Seapoint Boat Club was its role in building this type of dinghy, and the dinghies were subsequently sold to other clubs around the bay, creating fleets in Howth, Sutton, Malahide and other east coast clubs

This author is interested in hearing of English clubs where the B.R.A. 12-foot dinghy (subsequently International 12-foot dinghy) was sailed. We are aware of Royal Corinthian Y.C., Sussex Y.C., West Kirby S.C., and Southport Corinthian Y.C.s



Bristol Channel Yacht Club

Modern Pursuit Race recalls the great days of large yacht racing

Ronald Austin, Hon. Archivist of the BCYC

Reproduced by kind permission of the artist Tim Thompson

A pursuit race with a difference recently took place around Swansea Bay, organised and hosted by the Bristol Channel Yacht Club (BCYC), and although the fleet was very mixed, with everything from a Topper to a Formula 18 catamaran taking part, the commemorative cup presented to the overall winner recalled the great days of large yacht racing in Swansea Bay over a hundred years ago.

The Bristol Channel Yacht Club, a corporate member of AYH, was the first yacht club to be established (1875) in the Bristol Channel and has long been at the centre of yacht racing in Swansea Bay. In 1896 a large regatta was held in the Bay and was known as the Royal Regatta since *Britannia* was joined by *Meteor*, *Satanita*, *Caress* and *Alisa* in the main yacht race for a gold cup. Following the success of this event an attempt was made to establish such a regatta as an annual fixture, but the idea of a race in local waters for the large yachts remained dormant for a few years until Alderman J.H. Lee (a great uncle of Ronald Austin, the Club's current Hon. Archivist) was Mayor in 1907 and an approach was made by interested local individuals to the Mayor, the Bristol Channel Yacht Club and to the Harbour Board. A

favourable response was received. The Mayor also received a response from Sir Thomas Lipton, who indicated that he would support the regatta if possible. A meeting was held in London in 1908 and the Yacht Racing Association allocated Saturday, 29th May 1909 for a Regatta to be held in Swansea Bay. A substantial sum of £1200 was raised for prizes and expenses (although the major prize, a cup, had been purchased in 1898), and, rather unusually for the time, the Regatta committee also agreed to bear the major costs of towing yachts to Swansea and on to the next major regatta afterwards at Queenstown. Sir Thomas Lipton agreed to tow as many yachts as possible with his steam yacht *Erin*.

In the end, only two large yachts sailed in the Saturday race for 23 metre class yachts: *White Heather II*, owned by Mr M.B. Kennedy, and *Shamrock*, owned by Sir Thomas Lipton. After almost four and a half hours' sailing *Shamrock* won the race by just over five minutes. *Shamrock* was sailed by Captain Edward Sycamore who had previously sailed in challenges for the America's Cup. For winning the big race each member of the crew of *Shamrock* received a guinea and the crew members of *White Heather II* each received fifteen shillings.

Above: White Heather and Shamrock racing off Elberry Cove, Torbay in the 1920s. Shamrock was owned by Sir Thomas Lipton and was a totally different yacht from his five America's Cup challenger yachts also called Shamrock.





Above: Sir Thomas Lipton and trophies at Osidge. Ref. GB1752.LTC/11/1/11 [With thanks to Unilever Collections, Unilever Art, Archives and Records Management, Port Sunlight]

Above right: Pursuit Race 2019 Presentation of the Lee Cup to winners Oscar Chess (left) and Will Harrison. Far right is Mr. G. Cottle, Vice Commodore of the BCYC

At a dinner held in the club house after the race, Sir Thomas Lipton received a trophy for winning the race that in future years took pride of place in his trophy collection. Today the cup is in the collections of Glasgow Museum. Sir Thomas also spoke about his proposed next challenge for the America's Cup. The large yachts subsequently sailed at regattas held in Swansea Bay during the years 1910, 1913, 1926 and 1929 (see the BCYC website for more history: www.bcyco.co.uk).

In 2007 a cup, the Lee Cup, was donated to the BCYC to commemorate the centenary of the year when Alderman J.H. Lee was Mayor of Swansea, and is competed for annually, nominally as a prize, for winning a pursuit race around Swansea Bay. This year the proud winners were Oscar Chess and Will Harrison.

Memorable visit by the AYH

The Minutes of the Association's 4th AGM recorded that 'In April 2009, 17 members paid an enjoyable visit to the very hospitable Bristol Channel Yacht Club at Swansea.... The BCYC had put on a large and interesting display of their Club's history, emphasising again the value of these expeditions, which not only increased our own knowledge and influence, but encouraged local people to realise the importance of valuing their own history.' Prior to the meeting Rosemary Joy gave a talk and film show on the subject of 'The big class-racing in the thirties' and at the meeting the late Maldwin Drummond presented a lecture 'After you, Mr Lear'. Following the



meeting, the late Jeremy Lines (see AYH website regarding his half-model collection) wrote as follows:


'Dear Ronald,

I would like to thank you for your hospitality on Saturday and your tour of the club and its artefacts. Also the notes that you wrote make a very good readable record of the club history.

As Maldwin said I think you can be proud of the work you have put in to have the early records transferred to the County Archive Service, you must be the first!'

Jeremy then goes on to describe, with his customary attention to detail, one of the two half-models displayed on the interior wall of the BCYC club house (which can be seen in the background of the modern photograph showing the Pursuit Race prize giving in 2019):

'I have looked fairly carefully at your 'mystery' model and think she is a good example of the 'plank on edge' cutter before they became too extreme in the late 1880's. It would seem that she would have been built between 1880 and 1885 and although it is difficult to be sure it is likely the model is at the scale of 3/4" to 1'-0" which would make her 38'-0" overall with a beam of 6'-6" and a Thames Tonnage of 6.25. Obviously very good for her handicap before the Length and Sail Area rule came in!'

The half-model on the left in the photograph is that of *Trixie Wee*, owned by Mr. A.G. Moffat, one of the original officers of the Swansea Corinthian Sailing Club (founded 1891) 



Publications

Alfred Mylne (1872-1951)

The life, yachts and legacy of Scotland's Greatest Yacht Designer

Clare McComb describes the new Biography

Written history is often concerned with people who thrust themselves forward into the blaze of publicity, relishing the limelight, but historical impact is sometimes delivered through quieter personalities: Alfred Mylne, designer, builder, competitive and cruising sailor, was one of these more retiring types, and there has, so far, been no personal and professional biography, perhaps for that very reason.

While lacking the rumbustiousness of men like Uffa Fox, he influenced and directed the development of yacht design in the first half of the 20th century alongside Fife, Nicholson, and Morgan Giles in the smaller classes. But he avoided being photographed, only stepping out from behind the scenes when the press asked him a direct question, or when it could not otherwise be avoided.

A large-format, lavishly illustrated book is under preparation which will tell his story, pieced together from fragments of other people's memories, the scattering of his own personal documents and the letter books and other records from the business. Mylne is often described as "the oldest continuously operating yacht design business in the world." David Gray, who owns the firm nowadays, has commissioned an account that even non-sailors can enjoy, as the more technical aspects of Alfred's work are already splendidly covered in Ian Nicolson's two books.

What comes across from the research is Mylne's quiet determination; he held very clear views about what marked out the wide range of craft he designed and built. He insisted on three things: that they should be fit for purpose, that they should be designed to last,

and that they should be constructed using the finest quality materials and craftsmanship. More than 200 have survived to date.

He was a very respected technical consultant for the International Rule from its inception in 1906, through all the changes pre WW2; he was called in to advise on the America's Cup before WW1, and *Britannia's* rig in the early 1920s. Both the R.O.R.C technical committee and the YRA insisted on his input in the 1930s. However, in his heart he was a man of the Clyde. He had known the waters from a lad, and he loved racing there in the handicap classes in second-hand boats, while others were contesting more glittering prizes in the Continental and Southern regattas. As an expert helmsman for his many famous and wealthy clients he was respected, even feared down in England, but never in his own designed yacht, or under his own name.

One special relationship which the book's research has uncovered was his friendship with the great Sir William Burton whose prowess in Mylne-designed 52 footer, 6 and 12 metre racers was to catapult both men into the headlines. Another is that of Mylne's ownership of *Medea*, the yacht he took over when his brother died, in which he both raced highly successfully, and cruised peacefully, in his later years. Cruising offered him an escape from business worries and social engagements. It was where he and his wife could shut out the demands and interruptions of his professional world.

The re-birth of the shining 12 metre *Jenetta*, launched in the summer of 2019 from Robbe and Berking's yard at Flensburg, shows that Mylne's racing designs can still hold their own with the best of the best. The existing boats and hundreds of drawings are a precious legacy. It is to be hoped that the new biography will ensure him an appropriate 21st century reputation.



Above: Alfred Mylne 1872-1951 [Mylne Collection]

Morgan-Giles Heritage Collection

Heritage project to be boosted by new biography

V. Jane Shaddick, archivist and historian

2020 is the centenary of the setting up of the Morgan Giles Shipyard at Teignmouth and to mark the anniversary a two volume biography of the designer is being produced, ready for the event.

Frank Morgan-Giles is one of the select group of designer/builder/racers from the early years of the last century whose stories remain untold. The biography is based on letters and family documents, as well as printed material, and is planned to complement Frank Morgan-Giles's wife Ivy's pre WW1 journal which was published last year. It traces Frank's development as a naval architect, builder of his own designs and historically important competitive sailor from the start, including his early experiences with Abraham Pengelly at Shaldon, the development of the W.E.C dinghy into



an international class and his relationship with Uffa Fox after the 1920s.

The biography is part of the Morgan-Giles Heritage project, which is a collection of associated professionals and family members, chaired and funded by Frank's grandson Richard Palmer, who is also a dedicated and increasingly international racer of MG boats. There is a small but growing collection of these, plus an extensive archive researched and managed by Jane Shaddick, another Morgan-Giles granddaughter. In 2020 there are plans afoot for a celebration at Teignmouth which will showcase and celebrate the Morgan-Giles Heritage, plus other exciting developments already in the pipeline.

Left: 1909 Shaldon regatta. Centaur, Phantasm (18, helmed, designed and built by Frank Morgan-Giles) and Clumsy. All W.E.C. 14 footers. The photograph is from Ivy Carus-Wilson's own collection (Mrs Morgan-Giles). Not only taken by herself but also developed and printed by her.



Lighting up yacht racing history

John Player & Sons cigarette cards – ‘Racing Yachts’

Henrietta Smyth

The Series ‘Racing Yachts’ illustrates the following classes/yachts:

No. 1: *Britannia* 1839–1936

No. 2: ‘J’ Class
(*Endeavour II*)

No. 3: 12-Metre Class
(*Marina*)

No. 4: 8-Metre Class
(*Sagitta*)

No. 5: 6-Metre Class
(*Lalage*)

No. 6: RORC 25ft. to
35ft. Class (*Maid of
Malham*)

No. 7: Cruiser Class (over
75 tons) (*Thendara*)

No. 8: Cruiser Class (25–
75 tons) (*The Blue Peter*)

No. 9: Cruiser Class (9–
25 tons) (*Dolly Varden*)

No. 10: 30 Square Metre
Class (*Waterwitch*)

No. 11: Dragons

No. 12: Star Class (*Lady
Betty*)

No. 13: West Solent
Restricted Class (*Squirrel*)

No. 14: East
Coast One-Design Class
(*Kuala*)

No. 15: Solent Sunbeams
(*Harmony*)

No. 16: Solent ‘Q’ Class
(*Saga*)

No. 17: Redwings
(*Prawn*)

No. 18: ‘X’
One-Design Class
(*Palassie*)

No. 19: International 14-
Foot Class (*Alarm*)

No. 20: National 12-Foot
Class (*Farandole*)

No. 21: Snipes (*Gipsy*)

No. 22: Sharpies
(*Taeping*)

No. 23: Thames Raters
(*Caprice IV*)

No. 24: Dublin Bay 21-
Foot Class (*Innisfallen*)

No. 25: International
Canoe Class (*Solitary
Snipe and Wake*)



Browsing in one of my favourite Collectors’ shops here on the Isle of Wight, I recently came across a very attractive set of 25 John Player & Sons cigarette cards dating from 1938. The Series was called ‘Racing Yachts’, and was beautifully illustrated from paintings by the marine artist Charles Pears R.O.I. (Royal Institute of Oil Painters). On the reverse of each card there is a brief but informative text about the class or individual yacht featured, providing a fascinating snapshot of the classic yachts of the period, from *Britannia* and the ‘J’ Class to Redwings and Thames Raters.

I was eager to know more about the Series and how it was produced, so I contacted the Headquarters of the Imperial Tobacco Company Limited in Bristol (in 1901 John Player’s business was merged with 12 other tobacco companies to become the Imperial Tobacco Company) and I was referred to their archive collections at the B Bond Warehouse and at Bristol Culture (M Shed Museum), where the archivists were extremely helpful.

I learnt that almost all Imperial Tobacco’s cigarette cards (known in the trade as ‘stiffeners’) were designed and printed in Bristol by Mardon Son & Hall Ltd. (who were a constituent company of Imperial Tobacco too) and sent to Nottingham, where there were several factories, for insertion into packets.

After some delving, Andy King, the enthusiastic Senior Curator of Social, Industrial & Maritime History and Working

Exhibits at Bristol Culture, unearthed a typescript report entitled *The Production of Cigarette Cards in the Artists Department*, written in 1945 but surveying the series that were issued in the decades before. The type is quite faint but it gives a clear picture of what was involved in creating and producing the different series.

It appears that the subjects for the series, selected by the issuing Branch, usually came from a range submitted by the I.T.C. and included series originated by them and others purchased from “outside” artists. In the case of the ‘Racing Yachts’, described as one of the I.T.C.’s ‘outstanding’ series, the “outside” artist chosen was the popular illustrator, Charles Pears (1873–1958), who had not only been an official war artist in the First World War, but from 1913 to 1936 had become well known as a prolific poster artist. He was also a keen single-handed sailor, and wrote and illustrated several books on the subject, including *From the Thames to the Seine* (1910), *South Coast*





Cruising (1931), and *Yachting on the Sunshine Coast* (1932).

The production of cigarette cards on various subjects was clearly a huge concern. A large volume from the Bristol Archives held more revelations, as Nicola Hole, Archives Assistant, discovered: 'It gives the date of order for the "Racing Yachts" series as 27.5.38, quantity 6 mills [millions of cards produced – they were very popular!], price per 1,000 stiffeners is 7/5d, size large..... The dates of issue were 8.7.38 and 22.3.39 and the dates of withdrawal were 21.10.38 and 11.10.39.'

The typescript report from the Artists Department goes on to describe the number and activities of personnel involved in the production of cigarette cards of all types, as follows:

'PERSONNEL ENGAGED. In the Artists Dept. (during 1930–39) the following were engaged on stiffener production:

'In making sketches and preparing them for blocks
9 designers (full-time on stiffeners)


2 photographers (part-time)

4 photo-litho retouchers were employed (part-time) in the reproduction of three series of stiffeners printed photo-litho (1934–38).

'Our Editorial and Library Staff of 5 was fully employed on work connected with stiffeners and albums.'

The dedicated team had to gather subject-matter for pictures and texts, and prepare photographs and/or sketches in colour and descriptive texts.

This could take anything from one to several months, working sometimes on 10 to 12 different series at the same time, and according to the report a total of approximately 511 series were prepared by the Artists Department between 1922 and 1939 for the Imperial Tobacco Company's various Branches.

Collections of old cigarette cards, often carefully preserved in dedicated albums, are, of course, familiar to many of us from our early days, whatever the subject matter, but as a result of my research I will certainly regard them in a different light in future, seeing them as not only a window on the past but as a faithful record of their subject prepared by a talented, enthusiastic and extremely hard-working team under the auspices of the Imperial Tobacco Company 

With my grateful thanks to the Imperial Tobacco Company Limited for permission to reproduce images of some of the 'Racing Yacht' cards in this Journal, and to Andy King, Senior Curator of Social, Industrial & Maritime History and Working Exhibits at Bristol Culture, and Nicola Hole, Archives Assistant at Bristol Archives (B Bond Warehouse). www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-archives





1891-1939

As part of our commitment to make scarce material relating to the history of yachting more readily available to researchers, the Association of Yachting Historians, with the active support of various individuals, libraries and yacht clubs, has undertaken to scan the entire series of *The Yachtsman* from its inception in April 1891 to the end of 1939 (92 volumes). The total number of pages scanned is in excess of 38,000. No institution has a complete run of the magazine, including all the twice-yearly Special Supplements. So, tracing the full set of issues proved to be a long and laborious exercise.

When it was first published *The Yachtsman* was the only magazine, anywhere in the world, that was wholly dedicated to the sport of yachting.

Its weekly issues boasted yachting news and intelligence from yachting centres not only from around the British Isles but also from Europe, North America, Australia and other parts of the world; detailed reports on yacht races; tips; correspondence; model yachting and canoeing, together with suitable advertisements. Later issues would also feature the development of the marine engine and motor boating generally, as well as the early advance of the seaplane. Above all, each issue featured a whole page photograph of the finest yachts of the day, taken by the very best marine photographers. It soon became the new journal of record.

Such was *The Yachtsman*'s initial success that in 1894 *Yachting World* appeared on the scene, copying *The Yachtsman*'s winning formula, and in 1908 *The Yachtsman* could proudly claim on its front page "TO ADVERTISERS – the sales of THE YACHTSMAN exceed those of all other yachting journals published in this country put together."

The Yachtsman remains an invaluable source covering the era which has been called the

Golden Age of Yachting. In the period from the 1890s to the start of World War I, with the spectacular large racing yachts, the emergence of many small one-design classes and the International Rule of 1907, an enduring foundation was laid down for the worldwide sport. In that period yachting enjoyed unprecedented and never equalled widespread popular interest. In addition, *The Yachtsman* carried detailed background reports on all the America's Cup Challenges of the period, from experts in both Britain and the USA. All these wondrously beautiful creations and developments were carefully documented and illustrated in the pages of *The Yachtsman*.

How to obtain your copy:

The data is held on a USB memory stick obtainable from the Association of Yachting Historians via our website: www.yachtinghistorians.org under 'Projects'.

The cost is **£95.00** (£85.00 to AYH members) inclusive of postage and packing. Payment may be made via the website by bank transfer or PayPal.

