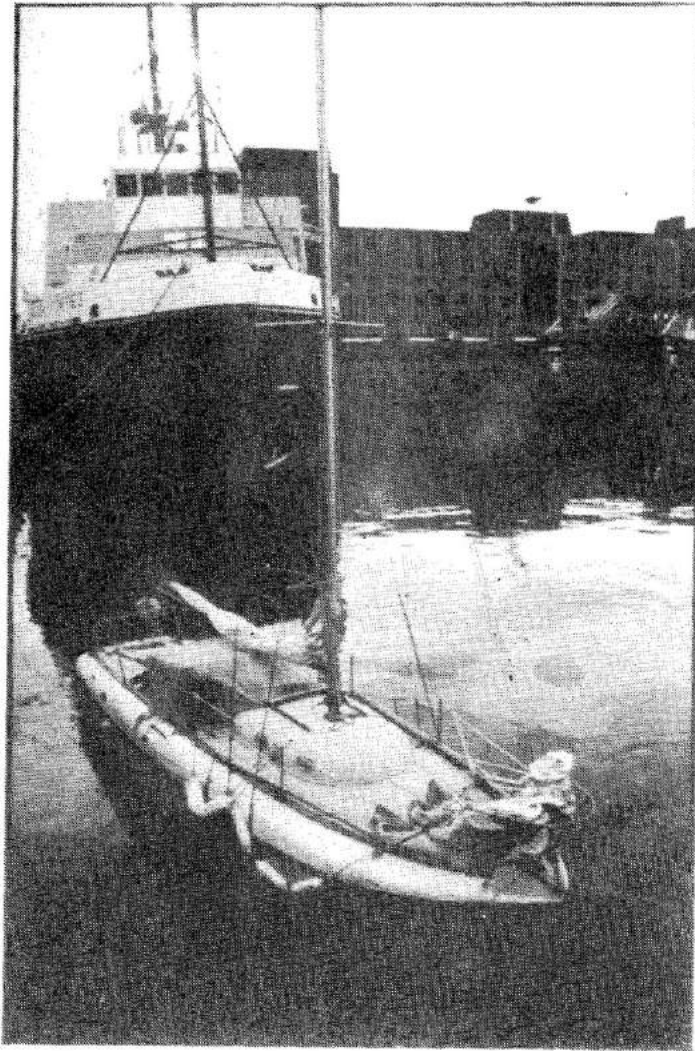


# Atlanta

1987/1988



# ATALANTA OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

## 29th Edition Bulletin

### INDEX : 1987 — 1988

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Honorary Secretary	:	Prof W S G Parker ( <i>George</i> ) — See A87
Honorary Editor	:	M D Rowe — See T11

## COMMODORE'S MESSAGE

In this year of accidents and awful weather I have been re-reading the back numbers of our magazine. How lucky we have been to have such wonderful contributors and such dedicated Editors. I think now we should seriously think about producing an omnibus edition, carefully edited to cut out duplication with a really comprehensive index so that the book would not only be entertaining, but also a Handbook.

This reminded me how lucky we have been in our backroom helpers. Mr Young of Fairey Marine who put my name on the drawings to stop them being burnt by the Receiver when Fairey went broke. Maurice Donovan who microfilmed them all and issues prints with advice, especially on keels. Monica Mourant who audits our accounts and, particularly this year, Ted and Jane Stearn (A183) who gave us such a marvellous Spring 'get-together' at Brooksby. Also David and Anthea Lovelock (A102) who restarted the Channel Race to Cherbourg in July. Remember also Cecile Parker our loyal and understanding Hon Secretary and many more, all working under the guidance of the Automatic Pilot — George — our Hon Secretary.

W.O.

## HONORARY EDITOR'S MESSAGE

My thanks to those who contributed articles, sketches, slides or photographs this year. I have not the space to print everything received, so several will have to be held over until the next edition. Apologies to those disappointed this year, but please keep them coming!

The East Coast Race seems to have held what a colleague would refer to as "moments of unusual interest" this year. What a pity that there wasn't a cocked camera in the right place at the right time! It's a dire warning to us all to be prepared for the unexpected and very fortunate that no injury ensued.

I sometimes receive sketches or photographs which I would love to reproduce but cannot because of the technical limitations of the printing process. This tends to be particularly true of colour slides or prints, when the contrast ratio is often inadequate for monochrome reproduction. Such was again the case this year when Ranaid Coyne sent me a set of charming watercolours on board, illustrating the log of his Summer cruise. These were executed by one of his crew, John Sibson — another case of previous hidden talent. Unfortunately, only some of these can be reasonably reproduced here but will give a flavour of the rest. Only those who saw them at the Dinner will be able to fully appreciate them.

M.D.R.

## ANNUAL ATALANTA RALLY — WEST MERSEA

August 15, 1987

R.T. McGivern — LYDE A73

Course: Committee boat (Nass Beacon) to Bench Head Buoy Port to Committee boat.

Saturday dawned bright and sunny with a light to moderate westerly breeze.

The usual collection of Atalanta's had gathered with a newcomer joining the East Coast fleet — JAUNTY A100.

The official race kick-off time was 0950. LYDE A73 and JAUNTY only made the start with minutes to spare (both crews still recovering from hangovers).

Having hurriedly bent on the sails I (LYDE) joined the rest of the fleet just west of the Committee boat, suddenly I realised the outboard was still locked in the down position and would thus cause drag whilst running downwind. To lift engine and bracket up I usually lean on the pushpit upper rail and heave up — this I did and to my horror the rail gave way (having not been locked down after a swimming session), and over the stern I went, head first!

I surfaced just in time to see LYDE and Helmsman (oblivious of my plight) sailing serenely on — fortunately a rope which is usually secured to the pushpit was trailing astern, so with a massive 'Rambo' type heave, I managed to clamber back on board, to be greeted by — "I wondered where you had gone?".

This is the first, and I hope, the last time I will start the Atalanta race over the stern on a rope.

To get back to the main event — the start gun sounded at 0950, 'ATALANTA A1', 'AMSARA A136', 'KOOKABURRA A168', and 'BLUSTER A183' were all jostling for position with JAUNTY and LYDE closing the fleet. The race was minutes old when a Spinnaker Sheet from AMSARA flew from its cleat and wrapped itself around ATALANTA's backstay. There followed a few desperate seconds and then, crack, the wood mast of A1 split under pressure and crashed to the deck. AMSARA was left with an unrestrained Spinnaker flapping from the masthead, both yachts retired five minutes into the race.

The remaining Atalantas thus gave each other a wide berth and continued on the downwind run to the Bench Head buoy. BLUSTER carrying (and filling) a good sized Spinnaker eased away from KOOKABURRA while JAUNTY and LYDE brought up the rear. Having now dried off and composed myself, LYDE hoisted its Spinnaker and gradually made ground on KOOKABURRA.

The Bench Head buoy was rounded with LYDE, KOOKABURRA and JAUNTY all within hailing distance. BLUSTER was already on her second up-wind tack and making good ground, the tide was just flooding and would therefore enable us to make good acute tacks into the westerly wind.

KOOKABURRA and LYDE had a tremendous tacking duel up the Blackwater and must have crossed each other 6—7 times — what at first was the good tack, in the variable wind would fall away and be replaced by the opposite tack.

By 1145 we had given up any hope of catching BLUSTER which was fast approaching the Mersea Shore and the line, we therefore decided handicap or not we were going to clock second place. The tacking duel continued between KOOKABURRA and LYDE with JAUNTY some half a mile astern which was doing very well considering this was only Trevor Smarts' second sail in his newly purchased Atalanta.

On the final tack LYDE eased away from KOOKABURRA (probably due to the full rig) and crossed the line 50 seconds ahead. BLUSTER having finished some 25 minutes earlier. JAUNTY crossed the line at 1234, some 35 minutes after BLUSTER.

The afternoon was excellent with warm sunny conditions, in the evening the Commodore and Mrs Odling greeted us with their usual generous hospitality at Gun House, with General Odling stressing the importance of insurance cover particularly in the light of earlier events.

#### Race Results

Yacht	No.	Rig	Finish Time	Elapsed Time	Position
BLUSTER	A183	FULL	12.01.59	2.11.39	1
KOOKABURRA	A168	3/4	12.25.59	2.35.59	2
JAUNTY	A100	3/4	12.34.22	2.44.22	3
LYDE	A73	FULL	12.25.09	2.35.09	4
ATALANTA	A1	3/4	RTD	RTD	RTD
AMSARA	A136	FULL	RTD	RTD	RTD

## DISCUSSION FORUM AT BROOKSBY

Hon. Sec.

Following the initial very successful South Coast Forum in 1985 we felt that the time was ripe in 1987 for a similar discussion meeting in another part of the country, and on the weekend of April 11th & 12th around thirty AOA members and sympathisers from near and far arrived in time for Saturday lunch at Brooksby Agricultural College near Melton Mowbray.

A discussion session in the afternoon centred around maintenance of the Atalanta hull and on metal parts. Fred Boothman (A62), who introduced the first topic, mentioned the outstandingly durable quality of the moulded hull. Rot, if any, was usually found above the water line either in the internal structure or in places like hatch slides and areas of deck where water was captive under paint. Sound repair with modern glues and especially the 'West System' was comparatively easy and quite extensive repairs were possible. The removal of a boat from its trailer was not a difficult matter according to Fred and removal onto tressles greatly facilitated repair work.

In dealing with the deterioration of metal parts, Martin Bennett (A16) drew attention to the many different metals used in construction which included iron, aluminium alloy (rudder), phosphor bronze, copper and brass. Mixed metals gave rise to electrochemical corrosion in sea water and owners were replacing some iron parts with stainless steel which aggravated the situation. Parts like iron bolts and rudder supports often appeared unaffected on the outside, but might be etched away inside and paper thin. The correct selection and siting of sacrificial anodes were essential as well as regular inspection of all metal parts. Martin also warned members who contemplated the fitting of a diesel engine that the copper fuel pipes and galvanised tanks which were originally installed may not be suitable for diesel fuel.

During this session, new members who had bought Atalantas might have been forgiven for wondering what they had sunk their money in. However, a visit to the subterranean students' bar with the usual footprints on the ceiling put a lot of Dutch courage into all of us as we proceeded to an excellent dinner.

In the evening, the merits of different cruising grounds round the British Isles were extolled by several members including the Commodore, who described his home waters and the birds to be seen off the East Coast.

On Sunday, a Communion Service in the 13th Century Church on the estate was well attended. The tomb of Earl Beatty of Brooksby and the North Sea lies in this Church and it is claimed that the ancestors of twelve Prime Ministers are buried thereabouts.

After a good breakfast, the meeting turned its attention to replacement engines. The problem, of course, is the finding of a suitable new or reconditioned engine at a reasonable expense, not forgetting the fitting costs and the need for a matching propeller. Ranald Coyne (A148) described the installation of a second-hand 7HP Renault diesel engine chosen because it fitted without raising the cockpit sole or the bank manager's hackles. It required only minor structural modifications to accommodate a modified Hillman Imp propshaft with two Hardy Spicer couplings. A new propeller was needed because the Renault engine runs in the opposite sense to the original Coventry Victor.

At the end of this session the question of boat insurance was raised. Underwriters are cagey about wooden boats over fifteen years old and are calling for marine surveys which are expensive. One member suggested that only third party insurance was essential, but others wished to have better cover for their investment. A point which will have been reinforced since April by the severe damage to boats caused by the hurricane on the South and East Coasts.

The forum ended with a demonstration of mast raising on BLUSTER and an auction sale conducted by the Commodore, who extracted good prices for owners of redundant items as widely diverse as SS shrouds, sails, drawings, sheets of the original veneer and a folding bicycle.

Clearly the forum had been an instructive and interesting affair as well as an enjoyable social occasion for members. We were particularly pleased, and as an Association encouraged, to have several new members join in. At the final lunch a fitting expression of thanks was given to our hosts, Ted and Jane Stearn for the excellent arrangements which they had made for the meeting. Ted, who has been Director at Brooksby for many years, retired recently and we are grateful to him for making room for us in a busy year. Retirement will give him, we hope, more time for sailing BLUSTER.

## 'MELANION' A24 — RUDDERS & RUNNERS

C.W. Bishop

I was not happy with A24's rudder. This seems to be a common area of complaint. Being an advocate of the "KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID" (KISS) principle, I decided to dispense with uphauls, downhauls, excess weight and metal fatigue. Having rid myself of that little lot why not introduce a hap'orth of hydrodynamics? The result is as shown in sketches. Does it work? Yes. The blade is easily raised, lowered or completely removed. It can be stowed on the after deck, athwartships on the cockpit benches or slid into the after cabin. A24 never suffered from excessive weather helm, but was a little unresponsive. The new rudder has improved her on both counts, while still retaining her ability to self steer.

Making the blade was very easy, the five pieces of ply being epoxied together and fastened with 'gripfast' nails. The hardwood fillets were glued and clamped. No nails — spokeshaves don't like 'em. When all had cured I set to with plane and spokeshave to produce the shape required. I had nearly finished when I found an article on rudder design. I was relieved to discover that I was not far out with such niceties as aspect ratio, area, thickness and the position of maximum 'beam'.

The stock was made up from odd bits of flat bar and tubing; it is not very elegant. Some improvements must be made after laying up. Suggestions welcome.

In my opinion, stayed masts should be straight. A spar under the considerable compression loads imposed upon it by standing rigging will tend to buckle if bent. Hence the high attrition rate of masts among the racing fleets. If you want a bendy mast, fit an unstayed lugs'l (fully battened Chinese?).

Running backstays are a pain and are not fitted to Atalantas. However, I had been unable to prevent my mast from bending, or obtain a straight luff to headsails. I therefore decided to experiment with running backstays. The result, so far, has been most successful. Punching to windward in a blow no longer has me peering up the pole, watching it emulate a fly rod. As the rig is designed to stand without runners, there is no rush to tend them when tacking. The windward runner can be let off before the helm is


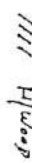


put down, and then hardened when settled on the new tack. I am, for the time being, using the sheet winches to set them up.

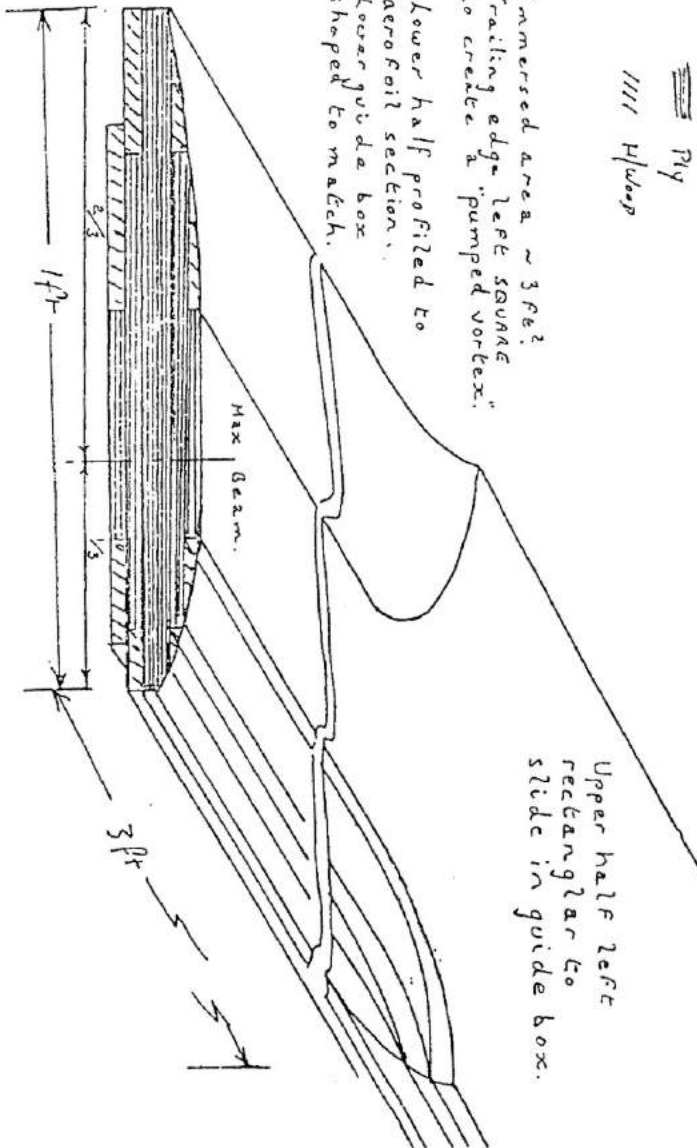
The topmast backstay chainplates were replaced with a pair as shown, and the runners led back to each quarter.

RUDDER BLADE

Six feet by one foot overall blade. Four sheets quarter ply one sheet half ply, or 6mm + 12mm. Steps filled with hardwood and splayed.

 Ply  
 1/2 Ply

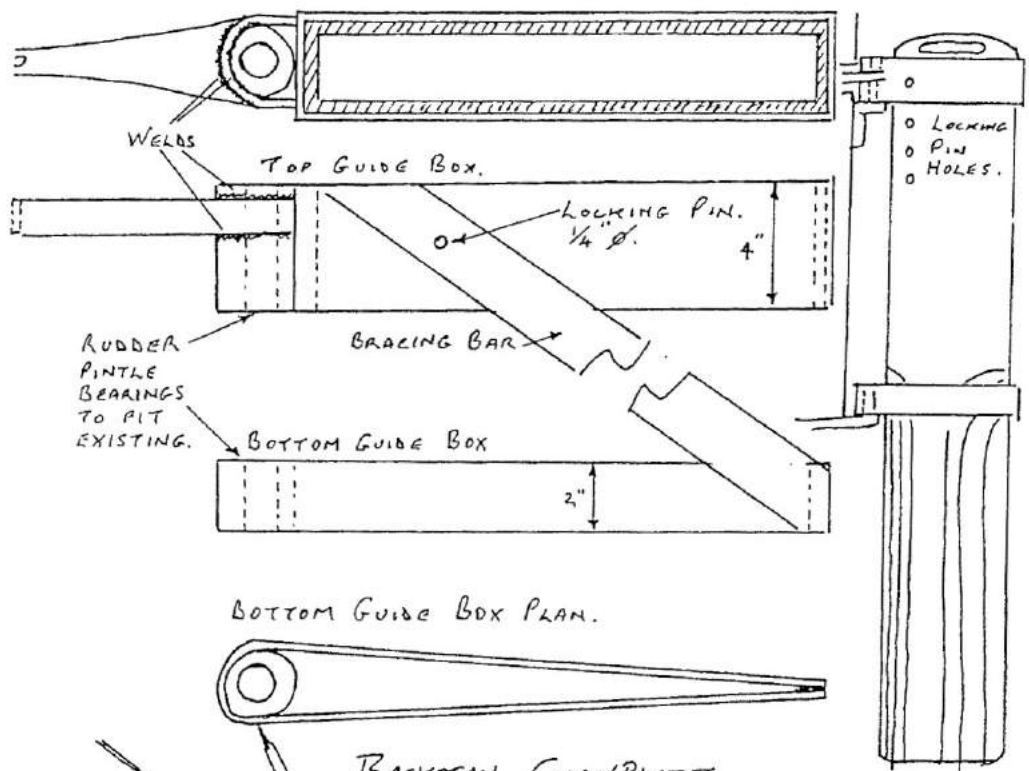
Immersed area ~ 3 ft?  
 Trailing edge left square to create a "pumped vortex."  
 Lower half profiled to aerofoil section.  
 Lower guide box shaped to match.



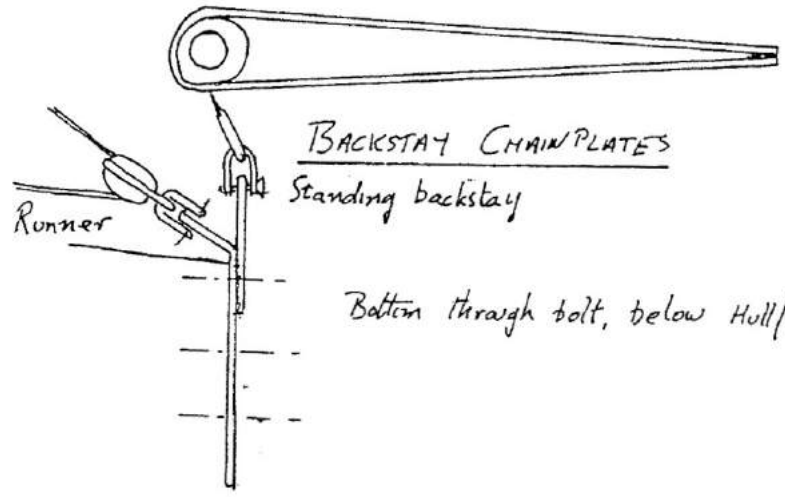
Upper half left rectangular to slide in guide box.

# RUDDER GUDGEONS

$\frac{1}{8}$ " GALVANISED M/S. TOP BOX  $\frac{1}{4}$ " PLY LINER  
 PIVOTS. THICK WALLED M/S TUBING. TILLER ARM  $\frac{1}{2}$ " M/S.



BOTTOM GUIDE BOX PLAN.



## BACKSTAY CHAINPLATES

## THE 1987 ATALANTA CROSS CHANNEL RACE

David Lovelock — A102

In order to resurrect the custom of presenting the Coupe Bernard Argot (now known more prosaically as the South Coast Rally Trophy) for a cross-Channel race, we decided to organise a race from Poole to Cherbourg, giving members over a year's notice of the intended date so that holidays could be arranged to coincide. So it was that on 19 July this year, 5 Atalantas gathered in Poole Harbour to prepare for an early start the next morning, among them SCHERZO, sailed over from France by M. Blavier to give the race an international flavour.

The 20th dawned cool and grey with a stiff breeze from the NW. The start was to be from Poole Bar at 0600 and the boats at Goathorn Point starting weighing anchor at about 0515 — quite early enough when viewing life with the optimism engendered by a warm bunk, but in reality too late to allow for a long windward leg to the Harbour entrance. AMSARA was the first to reach the sea having been the only boat to have spent the night at Poole Quay; ATALANTA MARY, motor sailing hard, was several minutes behind her with BLUSTER, GLOBULIN and SCHERZO following close astern.

As soon as it became clear that most would be late at the line, spinnakers were set and the race effectively started. AMSARA was the first away (on time!) and, followed by SCHERZO, shaped a course somewhat to the East of ATALANTA MARY and BLUSTER who both allowed themselves to be carried West on the tide. GLOBULIN, with a large roller reefing genoa but no spinnaker, struggled hard to keep up but was clearly going to be at a disadvantage unless conditions changed.

After a couple of hours, away from the lee of the land, the weather pattern became clear: a fresh NNW wind was giving competitors a dead run and large following seas, while fitful sunshine did little to overcome the chill of the air — and nothing much was going to change. For once ATALANTA MARY's small (three-quarter rig) spinnaker was an advantage; the boat was always, if only marginally, under control even with her cut-down rudder (sceptics please note!) and her few gybes and broaches were the result of momentary inattention. In BLUSTER, who had pulled ahead, the big masthead spinnaker was clearly giving problems and we were not

surprised to see it struck down and a genoa hoisted instead. Away to port AMSARA had reached the same conclusion, but had a small spinnaker to hand which was duly set. SCHERZO, also away to the East, was suffering damage to her spinnaker gear as well as mal de mer amongst the crew and also changed down to a Genoa. Throughout the fleet the prudent mariner would have shortened sail a great deal further, but the heat of the race and the conditions prevailing dictated otherwise. GLOBULIN, somewhere astern, was having an unhappy time. Her genoa was in tatters and she had no alternative foresail to set. To bring the boat under control the main had to be deeply reefed and she eventually retired from the race.

Unfortunately, the constant activity on deck in the rest of the fleet had rendered the hourly VHF 'phone-in' impractical and although GLOBULIN called regularly for the first eight hours, her problems were unknown to the other participants.

As the day wore on it became clear that the crossing was going to be exceptionally fast and the Westernmost boats would not have a full flood tide to carry them up to the East. Courses were adjusted accordingly. The main problems now were the difficulty of keeping up the intense concentration on the helm, and the steady attrition of gear in the heavy conditions. Poles, sheets, sails, battens, blocks and other fittings were all taking more punishment than they could stand, and more crews were feeling the effects of the weather. Despite this, there was still excitement and exhilaration and a growing confidence in the ATALANTA's ability and strength when pressed to the limit.

In poor visibility the leading boats sighted the French coast in mid afternoon. In ATALANTA MARY no landmarks could be discerned; the RDF was used to ascertain the bearing of Cherbourg and a new course (approximately south east) was laid. Off to the east a sail was sighted which, as we closed, was recognised as AMSARA. Much to our concern she was well placed to beat us to the finish. As we converged we regretted our lapses in resolve earlier in the day and willed the boat on every inch of the way. About a mile from the finish we were within hailing distance but steering crossing courses; the entrance was still not clearly visible and it was by no means certain, bearing in mind the constraints of wind and tide, which boat was making the better heading. ATALANTA MARY had the advantage of local knowledge and so it was, with bated breath, that she crossed the line at 1556, just 4 minutes ahead of AMSARA, still under full sail. We had no way of knowing whether

SCHERZO had beaten us to it, but doubted that she had bettered our average speed of over 6 knots. Once within the harbour spinnakers were dropped, not exactly in the manner suggested in the seamanship manuals, and berths were found in the marina. BLUSTER and SCHERZO were alongside by 1800 but nothing had been seen of GLOBULIN for many hours and the 'Rear Link' had not been advised of her arrival elsewhere. It was almost midnight before she limped in and our growing concern evaporated.

We all spent a day in Cherbourg exchanging yarns and ideas and making good minor damage before going our various ways. In retrospect, the race, which involved only one point of sailing, was not a particularly fair test of boats or crews, but for most of us it was a rewarding experience and one worth repeating. The only sadness was the lack of south coast based participants. We are provisionally marking 17 July 1989 (having a rest in '88!) as the date for the next race, and would be grateful for suggestions for the course — perhaps a Solent start or a Channel Islands finish would be popular.

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#### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN ORDER OF FINISHING

A102	ATALANTA MARY	:	D LOVELOCK
A136	AMSARA	:	D MAY
A183	BLUSTER	:	J STEARN
A35	SCHERZO	:	B BLAVIER
A87	GLOBULIN	:	G PARKER (Retired)

## 'SHERPA' F47

C.M.A. Roberts

Undo the keel bolt nuts a few turns and tap with a leather hammer. That is what it says in the instructions. So I did. It is about all you can do in a Fulmar, because the space between the keel bolt head and the nearest locker is not wide enough to swing any kind of hammer to much effect.

When your keel bolts have quite clearly been seized up for several years and all attempts to remove them have failed, the pressure is on to do something.

But what?

Fire, easing oil, and a leather hammer had all failed, and the start of each sailing season had been delayed by trouble in getting the keel down.

So I tried a four pound hammer, but all this did was to flatten out the nut heads so that I could not get the tommy bar into the holes to operate them. I did, however, after much bashing, manage to get the top clamping bolt out. It was in good condition, so I replaced it and put in a grease point. One down and two to go.

They refused to budge.

I retired to the bar of the Keyhaven Yacht Club for inspiration. None came, so I called in the Yard.

After much bending of knees my old friend the sledgehammer was prescribed, and between us, that is to say myself, the sledgehammer, and a Very Strong Man From The Yard, we achieved absolutely nothing.

We will have to drill holes in the hull so that we can get a pneumatic drill to bear, said the VSMFTY.

Not on your life, I said. No one is drilling holes in my Old Faithful.

Well, you could cut away the face of the locker that is getting in the way. Then you could get a bit of a swing with the hammer. Painful, but with a suitable anaesthetic, bearable. I retired to the bar of the Keyhaven Club for the anaesthetic and then performed the operation.

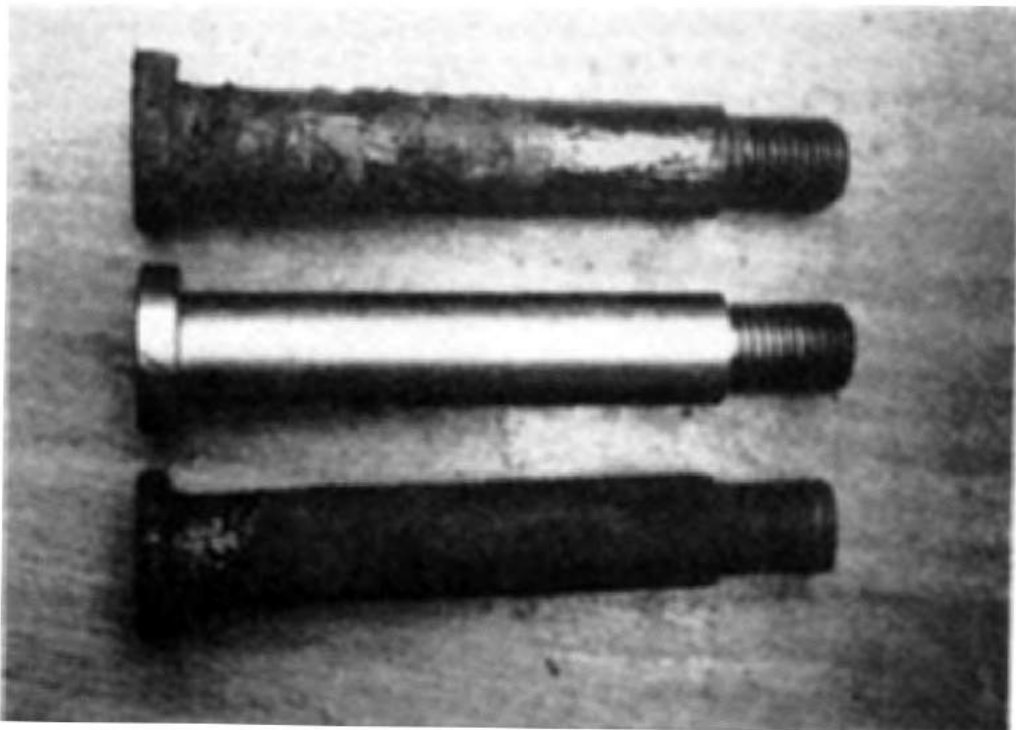
We then took the nuts off the bolt heads, the Yard and I, and we took it in

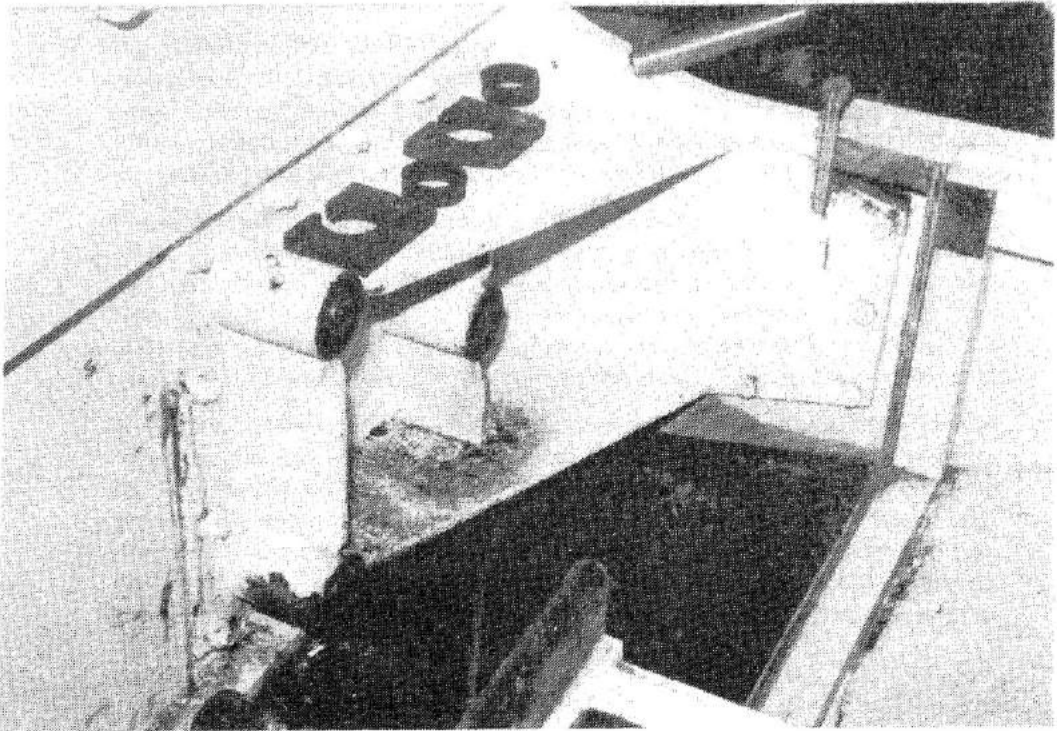
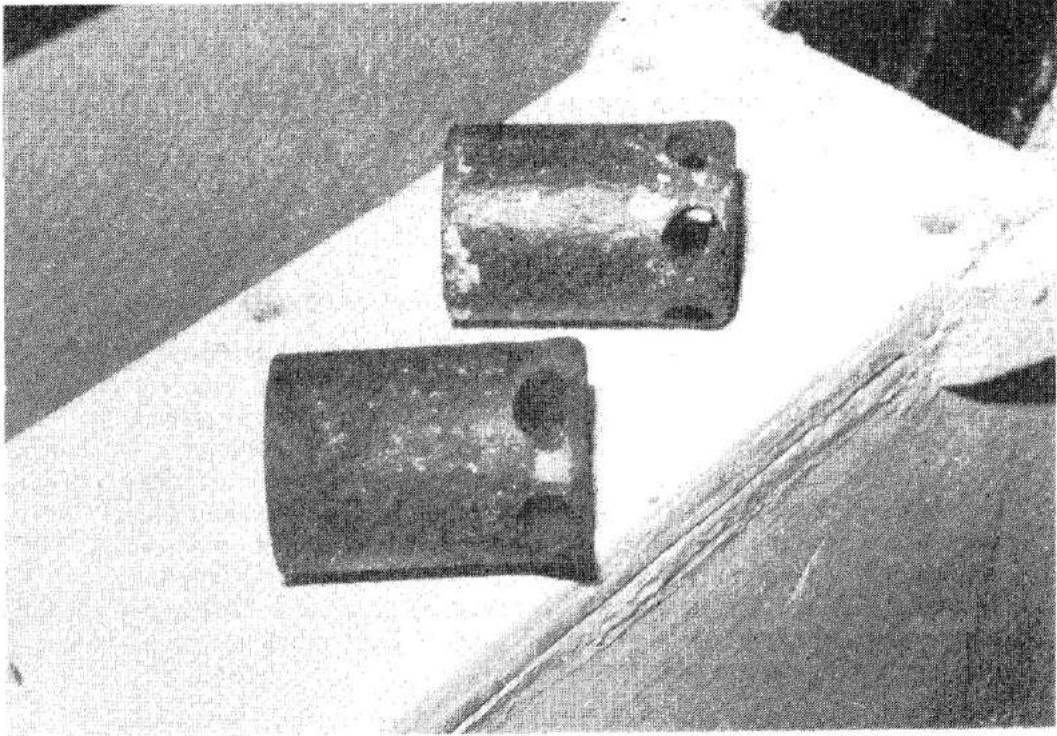
turns to swing the hammer. The threads were ruined, but the bolts came out, and considering they had been in there for 25 years they were in quite good condition.

Such drastic action, of course, could never have been taken without prior thought for the consequences. It so happened that the Yard had an old stainless steel propeller shaft out of which could be made new bolts at twenty pounds a time. It actually came to a bit more, but it was still a bargain.

And this year, despite the weather, I had some trouble free sailing.

1. *New bolts for old.*
2. *The nuts after much bashing.*
3. *The bolts half through after treatment with a sledge hammer. The locker cut away. The wooden collars on top of the casing were an attempt to hold in a reservoir of penetrating fluid at the bolt head.*







## **'MELANION' A24**

**C.W. Bishop**

'MELANION' was sitting on a farm trailer the day I bought her.

Her hull had been stripped of paint, primed and undercoated. The weather being clement, painting was soon completed. Her decks had been fibreglassed, of which more anon. Mast, sails and rigging appeared serviceable. Initial forays into the Engine Room resulted in a disaster area being declared. The engine, a French cast iron lump of future intractability, was lifeless. I decided to launch, engine or no. After all she is a sailing vessel, is she not? 'MELANION' sat on the slip in Ramsey harbour, awaiting the tide, and at the appointed hour the first requirement of any ship was fulfilled. She floated. While I puddled about with dinghy and warps, my son experimented with the keel winding handles. Yes, you guessed, neither of the keels moved.

Right, priority number one: free the keels. Two: breathe life into sulking 'Frenchman'.

Many weeks later. The Keelcase baffleboards had been removed and vast quantities of straw, hens feathers and general farmyard detritus dug out. Gallons of penetrating oil, diesel and lubricants various together with heavy hammers, blowtorches, hydraulic jacks, foul language, prayers, libations to Neptune, Davy Jones et al failed to shift those two gert lumps.

O.K. P.1 failed, try P.2. I shall draw a veil over this episode. Suffice to say the whole kit and caboodle was eventually loaded onto a trailer and taken to West Marine in Peel. Upon arrive our 'French Friend' was craned out and lowered into the cavernous boot of a big old car (this action accelerated the cars ageing process rapidly) and was taken home to play. The merry men at The Yard were left to beat the keels into submission.

In the fullness of time The Yard removed the keel. How they achieved this miracle I dare not ask, for the state of the bolts was nothing short of horrendous. New bolts were made, grease nipples fitted and all reassembled. Meanwhile I had replaced piston rings, recut valve seats and generally 'dollied up' Le Moteur. The tender loving attention of an aircraft engine fitter had failed to produce reliable sparks from the magneto, so the ignition system from a Fiat 126 was put to use. Franco

Italiano Auxilary (HELP).

Boat and engine were finally reunited and launched, again. At last, I cried up mast and at 'em. No great problems here, the able assistance of Steve Cubbon A155 being most welcome.

The first sail, a little jolly in Peel bay, and the following voyage round to Ramsey repaid the B.S. and T. with interest.

There followed a couple of seasons of relatively trouble free sailing, with trips to the ports on the Solway. It was the third season, while motor sailing past Ross Island, to make the tide to Kirkcudbright that the engine went on strike. This turned out to be due to a broken oil feed pipe, causing the main crankshaft bearing to weld itself solid. No facilities to fix that little joker, the cumminandy box ain't that big. Well I did state earlier "she is a sailing vessel", so the remainder of our cruise was completed without the plaintive pleading from crew to "turn on the engine, we've had enough of this". After a second rebuild I must state that the 'Cast Iron Lump' has a heart of gold.

Now, all this time we had been putting up with leaks from above. One highly suspect area was the fibreglassed desks. Never, never fibreglass over wood, unless the wood is there as a mould only and the integrity of the structure is totally bourne by the g.r.p. Water will find its way into the timber, and unable to evaporate, when weather permits, accumulate. This will weaken and rot the wood and also break down the bond between glass and wood. When I removed the g.r.p. (Goddamn Rotten Plastic?), I cried. The state of my poor decks was somewhat similar to those of 'The Mary Rose' when she was brought to the surface. However, wood is good and after a breathe of fresh air, that which had been soaked and soft became sound and solid. The greater damage had been caused where g.r.p. and wood were still stuck and my hamfisted attempts to part them had splintered the wood. The after deck was no great problem, and replacing laminates on a relatively flat surface progressed well. The fordeck was a different bag of worms, and the result is less than pleasing aesthetically, but I no longer have deck leaks. In October of last year, I was asked if I would like to set up a small works to produce a new timber preservative. The fellow making this proposition was none other than Mr. J.A. Forster who had invented and produced Finigans Hammerite. I agreed.

So, what's 'new' about this timber treatment?.

Let's start with the basic ingredient. This is a fine particle size resin with excellent penetrative qualities, resistant to ultra violet light and weather. Water vapour permeability ensure moisture is not trapped in the wood and flexibility prevents cracking. We add to the resin a compatible biocide, to prevent the formation of algae, fungi and other nasties that will attack the timber. Pigments are then stirred in. The end result is an aqueous solution that can be applied to decks, or other timber surfaces, to give a non-slip waterproof finish.

Only one brush coat need be applied.

On surfaces that are not walked upon, varnish or paint over one coat of BURGESS WOODSEALER will give a superb finish. The resin will increase adhesion, the pigments delay U.V. degradation and the biocides kill any bugs. WOODSEALER has been tested at sea for three seasons and it has also been subjected to accelerated weathering tests, by an independent laboratory, for four years with no detectable deterioration, confirming my own sea trials.



## 'JOHARA' A148 — SUMMER CRUISE 1987

Ranald A.M. Coyne

**19th June** Crew on board at Ravensglass late evening. Ranald Coyne (skipper), Trina Coyne (ship's girl), Michael Sefton (ship's joiner), Barry Brewster (ship's doctor).

### **20th June**

0605 Slipped mooring, wind F3NW, visibility good, leave the estuary under mainsail and motor.

0640 Cross the bar, up Genoa, off motor and start beating north west in general direction of Mull of Galloway.

0930 The Irish Sea as usual is a bit bumpy, beating is proving rather unproductive so we start motor-sailing.

1200 Beer issue. The sea is rather lumpy, it is the first day out and some of the crew decline beer issue — is this a bad omen? When some of the crew also decline lunch we decide it is a bad omen, but nevertheless press on.

1600 Earl Grey tea and cake, the crew appear to be brightening up and we are now running under the lee of the Scottish coast.

2020 Enter Isle Whithorn harbour and secure alongside. Drinks on board, dinner aboard, drinks ashore, drinks aboard, the crew are obviously now in full trim.

### **21st June**

0720 Cast off and motor out of harbour, visibility very clear weather very calm.

0725 Temperature gauge rising rapidly, switch off motor and clear the water filter which is well and truly blocked with Whithorn mud.

0730 Re-start motor.

0740 Off Burrow Head, favourable tide the sea is like glass and visibility is very clear.

- 0942 Scares abeam about quarter mile to starboard rather different from when we passed them a year ago.
- 1035 Mull of Galloway abeam, we can still see the cooling towers at Sellafield 50 miles away and still no sign of any wind.
- 1223 Slight wind from SSW, hoist spinnaker and main and switch engine off.
- Spend the rest of the day making north partly under power, partly under sail, but what wind there is is behind us and sailing is very pleasant.
- 1750 Set spinnaker still with light winds from south south-west.
- 2000 Position Mull of Kintyre lighthouse 335 degrees C 19NM, slight rain.
- 2100 Radio link call home just to tell wife not to cash the life insurance in yet!
- 2200 Wind still light SSW visibility varying and light rain, we decide under the present conditions to leave the spinnaker up and skipper turns in.
- 2330 Trina and Mike on watch, position approximately 7 miles south of Mull of Kintyre, large object seen off the port bow, skipper out of bunk p.d.q. Passed through five large buoys all about 10 feet long and unlit. Visibility is now rather poor, but a torch establishes that some of them are painted in red primer and they are pretty close. Who is in the wrong place, us or them.

Radio Belfast coastguard who confirm that some salvage operations are in progress 6 miles south of Sanda. By this time we have managed to get further bearings which confirm our position as being several miles west of Sanda.

<i>Sanda Light</i>	<i>043 M )</i>	<i>55 11' N</i>
<i>Maidens</i>	<i>195 M )</i>	<i>5 42' W</i>
<i>Rathlin</i>	<i>305 M )</i>	

*Depth approx. 100m*

Our fix puts us right on course and we are still very uncertain about these buoys, but over the next few days

we meet with two other yachts who have come up this way in daylight and seen the buoys and subsequently gather that a month or so afterwards navigation warnings included these buoys.

2350 No wind, getting wet, start engine and haul down spinnaker.

### **22nd June**

0030 Mull of Kintyre light visible abeam which finally confirms our position.

0400 Wind westerly, Gigha fine on starboard bow, up main and Genoa, off motor.

0530 Approaching Gigha and alter course for Sound of Islay.

1000 Motor on and down sails, we are now approaching Sound of Islay with no wind at all.

1155 Come alongside in Port Askaig. The usual problems in coming along in Port Askaig with very strong tide.  
Crew ashore to test the beer.

1310 Cast off under motor and sail.

1610 Anchor in West Loch Tarbert on the Island of Jura. A fantastic sea loch but with rather a lot of rocks around. There are however good leading marks for finding the way in.

### **23rd June**

0835 Weigh anchor; calm, slight rain, moderate visibility; motor out north entrance of the loch.

0930 Clear of West Loch Tarbert, variable winds, make course for Iona, passing close to the north end of Colonsay.

1015 Two whales close off the port beam.  
Wind varying and we alternately motor and sail still heading for Iona.

1235 Radio link call to my office, partly for business and partly to confuse my secretary who as usual is unconfusable.

1535 Off Ardalanish, we are now making west and wind is dead in the west so we drop sails and motor through the Torran Rocks.

- 1640 Anchor off Iona; crew ashore to provision.
- 1740 Weigh anchor and make course for Gometra, passing close to Staffa.
- 2125 Anchor in Acarsaid Mhor in Gometra.

**24th June**

- 0900 Start engine before weighing anchor. Again find filter completely clogged, this time it requires a major strip down of the system, but eventually all is in operation again.
- 1030 Weigh anchor under power, another day of light winds and we motor/sail our way over to Coll passing through the Treshnish Islands.
- 1500 About half a mile off the Coll shore a very peculiar object visible in the water just in front of us which appears to be travelling rapidly through the water against wind and tide. It turns out to be a submarine periscope and at this stage we have a submarine close to starboard and a whale close to port. Shortly afterwards on the VHF we hear an irate fisherman complaining to coastguard that "them bloody submarines shouldn't be allowed".
- 1615 Anchor in Loch Eatharna in Coll and the crew insist on visiting the pub, the skipper reluctantly agrees to accompany them.

**25th June**

- 0840 Weigh anchor and motor over to the pier to collect one of the crew's hat which was left in the pub.
- 0900 Cast off wind is north-east 2—3 and we make course for Canna.  
  
Not very good progress as the wind makes round towards the north-west, but we have a good sail.
- 1600 About 4 miles north of the Cairns of Coll, teatime — change of brand, today we will have Lapsang Souchong instead of Earl Grey.
- 1630 Wind drops and on motor. After this what wind there is is dead on the nose and we motor sail up to Canna.
- 2200 Anchor in Canna.

### **26th June**

Day off — round the island walk, in the evening Trina and skipper visit McKinnons and check their whisky supplies. Having replenished these we then assist in depleting them again.

### **27th June**

0920 Weigh anchor and sail north towards Dunvegan. Another day of variable wind, crew get concerned at 1105 when there is a securite VHF warning of an easterly gale soon, but we proceed up north, part motor part sail. By the time we round Dunvegan Point it is raining hard but very calm.

1840 Anchor off Dunvegan Castle and check that the anchor is secure.

### **28th June**

0100 We are well anchored and the wind is now blowing about F7E.

In the morning we clean up ship.

1440 Move over alongside pier.

1510 On the VHF we hear 'GRACE' A127 who is over in Harris, have a chat with her on the VHF and hope that we may meet later on during the week.

1900 Change crew — Mike and Barry return south and we are joined by Ian Smith (ship's engineer) and John Sibson (ship's buoy).

1930 Cast off under power.

1940 Up main and Genoa, off engine.

2110 Anchor off Isay Island. An intriguing little island about a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide with 30 or 40 empty houses on it. Crew ashore to explore.

### **29th June**

0745 Weigh anchor under mainsail only.

0750 Up Genoa, shortly after this we are clear of the top of Isay and make course for Loch Maddy.

0930 Man overboard drill, retrieved in one and a half minutes — not bad for this crew.



Very nice day but with wind freshening. We experience trouble we have not had so far, although we were sailing visually we did have a compass course which we were not paying much attention to and it proved to be rather wrong. We assume that this is just that we are being careless, it's the sort of day it doesn't really matter.

- 1200 Wind getting much stronger SSW4/5; enter Loch Maddy.
- 1220 Come alongside in Loch Maddy, wind is much stronger now and we have considerable problems getting alongside without bashing the mast against the linkspan on the pier. In avoiding the damage somehow the skipper half fell in, much to the amusement of the rest of the crew. Crew ashore to provision ship.
- 1325 Warp boat round on the pier and cast off under power, nice fresh wind now SW5 and we sail down the coast to Loch Eport. This is a very narrow entrance and difficult to find, but the skipper have been in there several times before.
- 1555 Anchor in Loch Eport, one of my favourite anchorages, immediately under a peregrine's nest. Crew ashore to fish for supper. Takes two hours to catch three nice brown trout and we go back out to 'JOHARA'. In the meantime, another yacht has come in, 'BLUE MIST', so we row round her until we are invited on board for drinks. Later on 'BLUE MIST's' crew come on board 'JOHARA' for drinks after supper, but by the time they have finished it is getting rather windy and when they go back to their boat, they inadvertently forgot to look over the stern of 'JOHARA' before jumping into their dinghy; retrieve them from the water and eventually send them back on board their own boat.

### **30th June**

Nasty, wet, windy day. Don't bother to lift anchor and fish rather unsuccessfully.

### **1st July**

- 1105 Weigh anchor and motor out of the loch.
- 1125 Off the entrance to the loch, up main, fully reefed and switch off the engine. Wind SW6, but we are in the lee of the land and shortly afterwards hoist number 3 jib.

A very exhilarating sail right down the east coast of the Uists in the lee of the land all the way except when passing the gaps between the island, close hauled and travelling rather rapidly.

1830 Drop anchor in Eriskay harbour and crew ashore.

**2nd July**

0750 Weigh anchor and leave Eriskay under engine and mainsail.

1810 Up spinnaker, off engine, wind F2SW.

An interesting day, visibility is not terribly good and we are making for Canna, so we are rather surprised when the first thing we see is Oigh Sgurr ahead. Take a fix and find that we have a triangle of error several miles across. Thinking back to our trip over to Loch Maddy a few days previously we realise something is wrong with the compass, but we are unable to trace the problem.

A further problem arises that the previous day we have sprung a leak above deck in the bow and all the loo rolls are saturated. We think that the winch handles at the foot of the mast would make good loo roll driers, this is fine, but as they dry there is rather a streamer effect and 'JOHARA' begins to look like a charabanc after a football match.

1024 Man overboard drill. Two and a half minutes.

1415 Off compass hill in Canna and we proceed on towards Loch Scavaig.

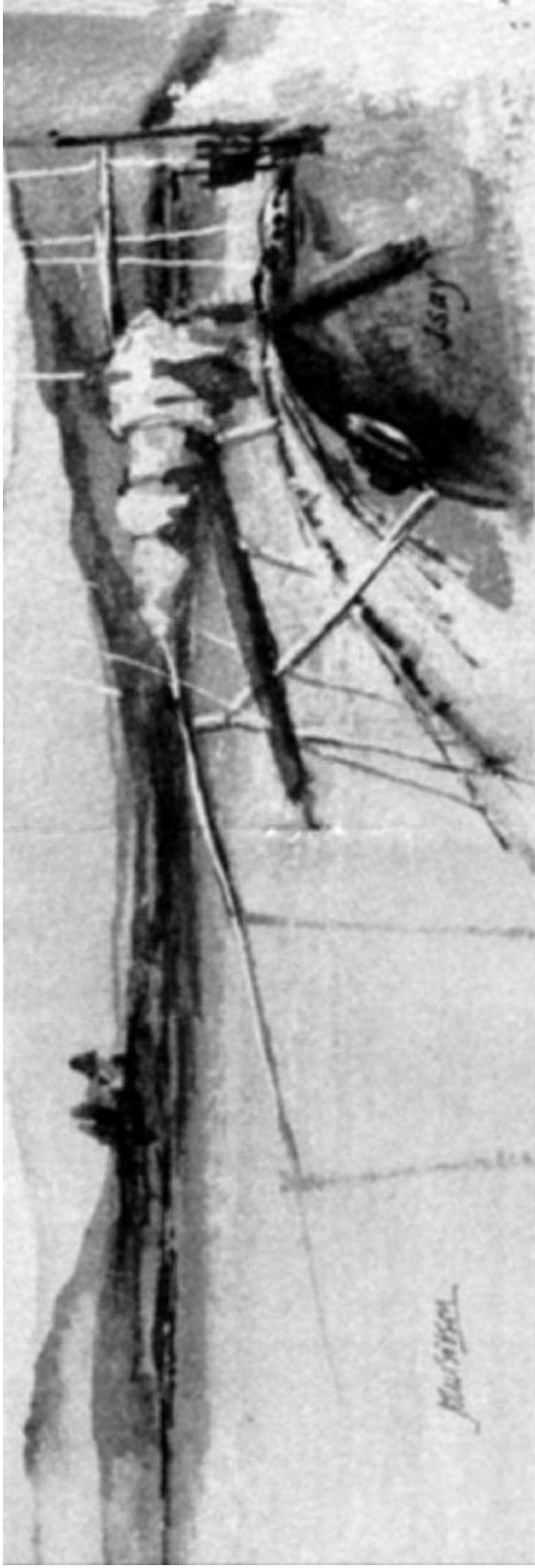
1655 Wind has now dropped; we are just off the coast of Soay and put out a mackerel line. After one or two mackerel, the third mackerel comes in with a Portuguese Man of War on the next hook, line is cut.

1830 Enter Loch Scavaig under power and drop anchor, this time under an eagle's nest. Crew ashore for walk around Loch Coruisk.

**3rd July**

1000 Weigh anchor, F3 south, motor out of the loch under power.

1145 Wind dropped and motor on.



- 1225 Wind is picking up again very rapidly, motor off and put up main with one reef and No. 2 jib. Making over towards Arisaig.
- 1320 We are now just off Elgol, wind is getting much stronger and we have mainsail fully reefed with No. 3 jib up. In order to get round the Point of Sleat we are now moting as well as sailing.
- 1645 Half a mile south of Point of Sleat, making over towards Arisaig with poor visibility.
- 1715 For about 10 minutes we are surrounded by a school of bottle-nosed dolphins.  
Finally, we manage to find Arisaig in what is now the mist and after some concern, decide we have chosen the right entrance and go in — fortunately no errors.
- 2000 Anchor in Arisaig.

#### 4th July

- 0800 Weigh anchor and motor out; wind SW3—4, visibility very poor.
- 0850 Problems with slipping propshaft, think we have probably got some weed on the propeller, but in leaving Arisaig Harbour it is not recommended that you stop to clear propellers.
- 0945 Now out in the Sound of Arisaig No. 3 jib and fully reefed main, wind south west 4, heave to and try to clear propshaft. We find that the problem is not the weed but the coupling on the shaft is loose. Extracting broken studs at sea is great fun, but we manage.
- 1045 Propshaft repaired and under way again motor sailing towards Ardnamurchan. Still having compass problems, but at this particular stage they are irrelevant as this is an area of serious compass anomalies. We motor sail very close to the north coast of Ardnamurchan inside Bo Faskadale.
- 1505 One and a half miles north of Ardnamurchan light visibility is now very poor and the log has also died.
- 1600 Estimated position one and a half miles west of

Ardnamurchan, light visibility 100 yards. Skipper is now on the foredeck with MacBraynes timetable in one hand, which shows two steamers due in different directions, and foghorn in the other hand.

- 1650 Visibility improved, with a good wind behind us we spinnaker up and go rapidly into Tobermory.
- 1825 Anchor in Tobermory. Crew ashore for quick bar supper.
- 1955 Weigh anchor, motor over to Drimnin on the mainland.
- 2030 Anchor at Drimnin, ashore for a social visit.
- 2220 Weigh anchor and motor down to Loch Aline.
- 0145 Drop anchor in Loch Aline.

#### **5th July**

Clean ship and leave her for our next visit.

A very successful week; 440 odd nautical miles covered, 71 hours under sail, 28 hours motoring and 38 hours motor sailing.

