Atalanta Owners Association

2007—2008

Atalanta Owners Association
2007 – 2008 Bulletin

49th Edition
Contents

Front cover Photograph: "***Walrus*** A119"© by Dinah Thompson

Message from the Commodore

"Where did the season go?" is the remark that many seem to quote, as they are busy taking their boats ashore at Erith Yacht Club. I wonder how many of you are having the same thoughts. It's always something to do with the wind I am often told, which isn't surprising as that's what we rely on. However we have arrived at the important bit, what to do during the laying up period and I am sure that most of us are occupied with very similar activities on our beloved boats till launching time arrives again. There are those of you who have not seen their boat on the water during 2007 and maybe some previous years, but do not lose heart. The Association has all the answers, you have only to ask and your problem will be solved, or you will get a very sympathetic response.

I have been quite busy the last twelve months making sure that the Hon. Sec. does his job, but I am happy to inform you all that Pauline and Mike Rowe have offered their services to take over the office of Hon. Sec. They owned T11 "***NYERI***" from 1977 until 1993 and Mike was our Editor from 1978 until 1993, a task that I am sure involved Pauline as well. They have continued to support the AOA as Associate members since they parted with "***NYERI***" and Mike was voted an Honorary Member in 2002. I am sure that you will all give them your support and in turn they will give you a safe couple of pairs of hands.

A very happy and sail-full 2008. Colin Twyford

Message from the Editor

Welcome to the 2007/8 Bulletin, the first under my Editorship.

Within this edition of the bulletin you will find a wide range of articles, ranging from a family cruise to the Secret Waters of Arthur Ransome, a report on our stand at the Beale Park Thames Boat Show, to technical articles on replacing rubbing strakes, as well as the exploits of Murray Reed – who has taken "*Methuselah*" to the far side of the world (to mention only a sample). In fact this has become something of a bumper issue! I hope you enjoy reading them all as much as I have.

I have made some changes to the bulletin, the most obvious of which is the move to using colour photographs alongside the text, rather than just on the cover pages. The implications of the change are significant – which is why Mike did not do it. I won't bore you with the technicalities, or tell you how I achieved this – just let's see if it meets with your approval.

I would like to thank the last Editor, Mike Dixon, and our Hon. Sec. Colin Twyford for the help and advice that they have given me during the last few months as I have worked up this edition, and tackled the issues of printing and distribution. Of course a real thank you is owed to Dinah Thompson, who has proof read the whole bulletin, and to Magnus Thompson for his practical assistance in stapling, trimming and packing the bulletins.

Finally thank you to all of you who have generously contributed your penmanship, and photos, which have enabled me to put this edition together. Please continue to send in material (and photographs in particular) since I have already started on next years bulletin!

Trevor Thompson B Eng PhD C Eng MIET

Committee 2007 (until AGM January 2008)

Patron	Charles Currey
Commodore & Acting Hon. Sec.	Colin Twyford
Vice Commodore	Jane Stearn
Hon. Editor & Drawings Master	Trevor Thompson
Hon. Auditor	Janet Bennett

Committee

Web master & East Coast Rep.	Grahame Hill
South Coast Rep.	Charles Hammond
	Simon Cooper
	Peter Davies
	Mike Dixon
	Norman Dorrington
Promotions Organiser	Dinah Thompson
Engine Advisor	Adrian Rivett

Tarting up "*Terrapina*"

by David Gray

I had noticed "*Terrapina*" looking forlorn in the Clyde River Boatyard with a fraying plastic tarpaulin covering only the port side as it decayed, exposing the starboard side to the prevailing south west winds. At the time, my gaff yawl was keeping me busy, but I had been fascinated by the technical ingenuity of the design, a fascination born in my days on Shackletons at Kinloss when the airborne lifeboats were still on the strength.

When problems of single-handing my yawl persuaded me to sell it, I sought "*Terrapina"* again but a boatyard bankruptcy had shrouded ownership in mystery as the boat displayed no name or number. I reported to Colin Twyford and noticed A49 had been moved inside, so although no work was being done, it was drying out – a vital factor later.

Out of the blue came Colin's request to check out the boat as it was for sale. I went down with Peter Mathieson, a local boat-builder, who reckoned it was savable, though the deck and coach-roof creaked ominously, and the CV 'Midget' engine lacked cylinder pots and was sold.

I made a deal to rent a space under cover in Peter's yard in Govan (home of the string-vested philosopher R C Nesbitt Esq) for the restoration. There was a problem of shifting it, for though there was a trailer, it had a flat tyre, a rust-holed chassis and no brakes. Fortunately the yard was shared by members of the Showman's Guild who, when the ancient Range Rover, which they had hitched up to tow, distributed its sparks too liberally in the distributor so that the engine sounded like a rave-up in Iraq, they attached a Transit van to give a three vehicle towing convoy. This aroused great enthusiasm from the inhabitants of this ancient ship-building burgh, as it progressed down Govan High Street with its attendant train of hooting cars and taxis.

A more thorough survey showed that though the hull was basically sound below the waterline, the keel band had split with frost and it showed signs of having been caulked with compound. Using the festering cushions as a backrest on the gravel standing, I chiselled off the band to find the hull edges were sound. Following guidance in club articles by Colin Twyford, John Elder, Peter's assistant, shaped a new band from opepe and fastened it with bronze screws and epoxy resin into the hog.

Boatyard space not being cheap, I pressed on with sorting out the deck between the toe rails. I burnt off the paint, removed the rails, some of which would need replacing, and made patterns from lining paper. I transferred these to hardboard to correct the fit and thence to 4mm Brunzeel marine ply. As the panel size was slightly larger than standard, at 1500 x 2500mm, two foredeck panels came from one sheet joined on the centre line. Two side-deck panels came from the remainder. The aft deck showed signs of repair on the starboard quarter but, being generally sound, was left unpanelled.

The junction between coach-roof and deck proved a problem. The starboard quadrant, which joins the two, was rotten and was replaced with steam bent oak, epoxy glued and screwed to each. The foredeck junction quadrant was sound but the deck and coach-roof seemed frayed at the join. So I cut out a collar from mahogany to reinforce the deck at this juncture and laid veneers round the inside of the coach-roof fastened with epoxy to this collar, all being glued to the stringers and the new deck panel.

Then I had to decide whether to remove the existing deck or to lay the ply on top. As de-lamination was limited mainly to the exposed starboard side and round the forehatch, I coated the existing deck in two layers of warm epoxy to soak in, and then laid the plywood panels on top in a bed of ex-Navy epoxy tar, which we had in the yard.

The whole scheme was first set out in hardboard and screwed with stainless steel screws to the stringers before transferring to marine ply, which too was given a dry run without epoxy before fastening. I laid one piece at a time moving at a fast pace with an electric screwdriver in the prepared holes.

The disadvantage of this method is that the fore-hatch lip must be raised. I left this too late to remove the original rim but solved the problem by fitting an internal alloy band to raise the lip and fastened a steamed oak band to it with screws and epoxy. The hatch was rotten and had to be replaced – once again with a steamed oak rim. A rubber seal was bought from the 'Complete Automobilist'.

I have yet to fix the new toe rails, but I hope that they will obscure the join between side deck and ply reinfocing panel. If not, I will use a small quadrant pinned with brass nails and glued to hide the join.

I decided not to reinforce the aft-deck apart from the two-coat epoxy treatment, except where there was damage, which I re-veneered according to instructions from the makers of the epoxy.

The starboard waist-rubbing strake was in very poor condition and the veneer below suspect. I removed the strake and replaced some damaged veneer, but it was in general surprisingly sound, the hull needing very little work. I got John Elder to replace the waistband with a keruing strake for most of its length, using epoxy tar as bedding. John removed the rusty chain plates on the starboard side and replaced their wooden pads with pitch pine. I have yet to make stainless replacements.

I bought some agba veneer, some of it rather wavy, to reinforce and repair the coach-roof and tumblehome portion of the deck. This was left to last, to allow me to sit on the newly reinforced deck to do the work. The stapler constantly stuck but I found immediate-cleansing and occasional heating solved many problems.

The cummulative effect of all this patching produced a variegated piebald colour effect commented on by disciples of R C Nesbitt in philisophical terms, who wandered into the yard from time to time to dispense sage opinions and check progress – 'Grand paint job ye've got there. Verra' ethnic. Red Injun ah'd say. A'pachees.'

Both main hatches were in poor condition and had to be rebuilt and John Elder reinforced the deck above the aft cabin with bent oak. A few coats of primer undercoat and enamel gave the boat a waterproof finish and enabled me to think of storing it in the cheaper open air. I replaced the trailer bearings and Lorraina, Peter's daughter, did a wonderfully neat job on welding the rusted frame.

The day had been booked for departure and I went to rub down and varnish the mast. It fell apart as I shifted it onto trestles. Once again unto the epoxy. The mast was stripped of fittings, sanded, glued and clamped, varnished and stuck on deck for the trip to Irvine, where our boatyard, a cooperative one, had reserved a space. Once again the Govan showmen rose to the occasion and "*Terrapina*" now huddles under tarpaulins awaiting further rigging and hull work and an engine.

There is a vast amount still to be done but our yard at the Irvine Water Sports Club has power and a workshop. I have only begun to explore the keel situation but we have a labour intensive hoist and I am trying to absorb the extensive club literature on the subject, for which I am very grateful to club members whose recorded experience has helped me so much. Peter Mathieson and John Elder of the Clydeside Boatyard were a comforting and skilled support system on this first stage of "*Terrapina's*" restoration.

2007 AOA East Coast Event
West Mersea Regatta - 18th August

by John Ingleby – Aboard A65 *"Joann"*

It is said that whenever an Atalanta ties up with other people around, someone always spots her unusual lines and comes forward to admire and chat, and this was certainly the case when I joined Grahame Hill aboard *"Joann"* at Brightlingsea on the 17th of August. A fellow member of Grahame's local sailing club soon emerged from the onlookers, and we spent a while discussing the next day's regatta.

However, we needed to reach West Mersea before dark with both wind and tide against us, so as soon as courtesy permitted we made our way out into the Colne under power, and set sail to skirt South of the Cocum Hills beacon that marks the wreck of the **"***Molliette"*

While every Atalanta has unique features, *"Joann"* is particularly unusual in having the larger Titania-style coach roof over her fore cabin, and the normal Atalanta coach roof placed over the aft cabin, providing remarkably spacious accommodation. Moreover, her previous owner was an aeronautical engineer who fitted hydraulic keel lifting systems, as well as a rod-and-lever steering linkage (both recovered from dismantled aircraft) along with many other refinements such as a stainless steel mainsheet horse, and convenient grab rails.

Grahame has further refined the hydraulic system to make it electrically operated using the pump from a lorry loading ramp found in a scrapyard. He also added an electronic chart plotter and an Autohelm for single-handed sailing, and many of these features can be seen on Grahame's web site at www.hillgf.freeserve.co.uk/joann

After less than an hour under sail, the wind died and the rest of the trip to Mersea was taken under power. The Nass beacon marks the entrance to Mersea Quarters, and shortly after, the start of long lines of moored yachts disappearing into the distance up various channels. We were aiming to tie up on the Mersea piles, which could be seen regularly spaced out along the western-most Salcott Channel as we drew abreast of the distinctive Packing Shed. *"Bluster" (A183)* was already tied up between the first two piles, and greeted us as we steered past to moor further up the

"*Bluster*" A 183 on a fast reach (50th Anniversary Rally in 2005)

"*Joann*" A65 on her way to the start

line.

During the trip we also learned that *"Kookaburra" (A168)* would be joining the race the next day, but they were spending the night at Bradwell Marina on the south side of the Blackwater.

After settling *"Joann"* and downing a welcome supper, we launched the inflatable and motored over to join the crew of *"Bluster"* in the crowded West Mersea Y.C. bar. Still accustomed to *"Joann's"* movement on the water, I felt that "heaving" was a wholly appropriate description of the bar during Regatta week! However, this was also the opportunity to check the next day's race arrangements, and confirm that we would be competing in the event for Classic Yachts starting at 09:10.

The Saturday forecast was for stronger SW winds with greater likelihood of rain, so we motored off for the start at 08:40 dressed in foul weather gear. Once out of the channels we hoisted sail, but the whole area was crowded with other craft, including several magnificent smacks with huge areas of canvas, which seemed to bear down upon us at great speed from every direction. In the distance we made out *"Kookaburra"* and *"Bluster"* but by the time the start gun was fired we were so busy taking avoiding action that *"Bluster"* was ahead of us, and we crossed the start line due South of the Nass beacon at least ¼ mile behind. At this point we had lost sight of *"Kookaburra"*.

The first two legs of the race took us up the Blackwater towards the Thirslet beacon, and on this reach we were definitely catching up on *"Bluster"*. Towards the end of this leg, we again had to take avoiding action, and lost time rounding the beacon. At the same time, one can only stand in admiration at the sight of seemingly enormous wooden fishing smacks, racing through the water at twice our speed under such vast amounts of sail!

The return leg down the Blackwater took us close past Bradwell power station, and we followed *"Bluster"* inside the breakwater: a risky manoeuvre because the depth inside is very little more than the Atalanta's draught with keels fully lowered, and at least once we heard a keel "whispering"

Atalantas racing in the Hamble 2005

to the shingle below.

Only *"Bluster"* knows what methods were employed to pull away from us at this stage, but we did observe her shaking out the reef that was taken in earlier. The penultimate leg was almost downwind, and *"Bluster"* poled out her genoa to gain further advantage, but we did seem again to be closing the gap during the final leg, when the wind strengthened somewhat and spray came flying from *"Joann's"* bow.

We finished the race at almost midday, and *"Bluster's"* crew are to be congratulated on their well-sailed win.

Back at the West Mersea piles, the afternoon was spent very sociably as other boats from Grahame's club tied up alongside, and we discussed the day's events (and much else besides).

The AOA East Coast Event is traditionally rounded off in the evening with a fish and chip supper for AOA members at the West Mersea Scout hut in Melrose Road, where we arrived later to find the tables beautifully laid out by Mike and Sarah Thorley, owners of *"Rakia" (A141)* which they are restoring in East Mersea. The crew of *"Kookaburra"* joined us, and we learned that she had torn her sail just before the start of the race, and been forced to retire. In true East Coast fashion the torn sail was resewn within an hour of returning to her home berth, unfortunately not in time to rejoin the race. We also learned that the countdown to the start of the race is announced over the radio (Channel 77) which might have helped *"Joann"* in our hectic pre-start manoeuvres. With fish and chips (plus beer and wine) duly consumed, Sarah produced delicious desserts followed by cheese and then coffee, truly a dinner to satisfy the most hungry sailors!

The meal ended with presentations of commemorative plates to the winner and runners-up, and the winner also has the privilege of possessing the Wooden boat trophy (hopefully for no more than a year!). Thanks were also expressed to Grahame for booking the race and organising the event. We parted with promises of at least two more restored Atalantas - *"Rakia"* and our own *"Taka Maru"* (A105) - taking part in 2008.

West Mersea Regatta ends with a display of fireworks, which we watched from our superb vantage point back on the mooring piles. Whether because last year's fireworks were cancelled due to bad weather, or simply that it is always a magnificent display, the fireworks were breathtaking and seemed to go on for a very long time.

Sunday's sail aboard *"Joann"* back to the River Colne was a gentle affair, only marred by intermittent rain which nevertheless cleared in the afternoon. The state of the tide provided an opportunity to motor up the river past the Wivenhoe flood barrier and Wivenhoe itself, before turning at Rowhedge and ending up back at *"Joann's"* quiet mooring in Alresford Creek.

This was my first ever sail aboard an Atalanta, and I am very grateful to Grahame for showing me how to handle the boat safely, and his insight into many aspects of fitting out, and not least for his hospitality. It was very reassuring to see how easily all the sail handling can be done from the centre cockpit, as well as discovering features that will be "must-haves" as we go about getting *"Taka Maru"* afloat again. Among these I would include:

- Furling genoa
- Steps that can be lowered from the stern (with at least 3 rungs in the water)
- Inflatable plus outboard
- Good solid grab-handles, strategically placed
- GPS chart plotter
- Accurate depth gauge

I must also record thanks to my friend Barry Kemp for the loan of his foul weather gear - another essential item of equipment.

I look forward to the AOA East Coast Event in 2008!

An excerpt from the Diary of Evelyn Waugh, August 4th 1953

"The engagement is announced of the youngest Clifford sister to a lowborn man with no legs and two wives. A girl with any sense of humour could not choose to name herself Atalanta Fairey."

The above quote was noticed by my wife Janet in the August 2004 issue of the Saga Magazine on page 14. This aroused Janet's interest and she did some research and discovered that **Richard Fairey** married **Atalanta A. D. Clifford** in September 1955, two years after they were engaged.

Could it be that the ATALANTA was named after Richard's wife? The prototype boat was launched in 1955 and named Atalanta A1.

The Atalanta Owners' Association has always been under the impression that the Atalanta boat was named after the last Flying boat built by Fairey Marine. See page 7 of the "Atalanta: A short history".

Colin Twyford

A92 "*Sea Major*" and her crew circumnavigating Wales

Soundings

by Peter G. Martin

Checking the above word in a thorough dictionary reveals several meanings: relating to the depth of water; trying to determine people's opinion on something; diving below the water surface, as with whales. Naturally we hope that our Atalanta will never sound in the whale's sense, and the opinion of every Atalanta owner about his or her boat will be sound. So we are left with the meaning relating to depth of water, and there are several ways of measuring it.

One way is to know one's exact position on preferably the latest chart (for example with the Sat-Nav) and to read off the depth, with a brief calculation about the state of the tide. How up to date is the chart? It may not be, especially in areas with varying or increasing shoals like the Menai Strait, where we now sail, or the East Coast rivers, where we have sailed.

Another way is with an echo sounder. Almost 40 years ago, when we bought our boat, "Seafarer" echo-sounders seemed relatively cheap and easy to fix onto the boat. Unfortunately ours no longer works, so how to replace it? Expensively, I think. Have other owners any good ideas about replacement?

There are simpler and more old-fashioned methods of course. The fixed keel boat racers in our area each have several crew members and when tacking up the shoals near the water's edge, someone is detailed to hold a pole vertical on the lower side of the boat at such a level that when there is only a foot of water depth left beneath the keel, the order can be given to go about. Tacking up the shoal water is of course to avoid the mainstream of an adverse tide, or, better still to be in a back eddy. The cruising crew can also use a long bamboo pole marked in feet or parts of a metre, but it is easier to use if a little lead is cast into

the pole's lower end and thus it can easily be kept vertical. If the pole is held upside down outside a bedroom window, molten lead can be poured into the hollow thoughtfully provided by Nature in bamboo poles.

Another traditional method is a lead line, but we found that sewing the appropriate bits of cloth and leather onto the line was not very permanent. Thus we changed to multiple knots in the cord indicating various lengths in fathoms. However it is surprising how much cord is used up in the knots, so measure it after doing the knots. Also remember to secure the end of the line to the boat before casting the lead.

"Swinging the lead" is of course avoiding the work of lowering and hauling sails.

Finally the simplest method of all must be mentioned, and it is only possible in boats like the Atalanta. One very old advert for our boats said that they were "Ideal for careless navigators in shoal waters" because when the keels in the fully down position hit the sea bed they swing up harmlessly. After this secure the boat in some way to prevent it drifting further ashore; a good method is to row out in the dinghy taking the kedge (smaller) anchor with line attached to the main boat. Wind up the keels, pull up the anchor, and resume the cruise. In lightish winds sail with one keel fully down and one up; this reduces the effort of getting off again.

"*Sea Major*" in harbour

Beale Park

by Dinah Thompson

A hot, dry weekend – a real rarity this summer – saw an Atalanta, a Titania, a Fairey Duckling and a Pixie, high and dry at the Beale Park Thames Boat Show. This was the first time the Atalanta Owners' Association had had a stand at an event like this for several years, and the boats attracted a lot of admiration and interest. Amongst many visitors was Helen Lloyd from "Sailing Today". She was full of admiration and wrote several paragraphs about the boats and the Association in her report on the Beale Park Boat Show in the August edition of "Sailing Today".

Our attendance at the event was to help publicise the boats and the Association, and prove that, although 50 years old, these boats could be restored to their former glory. Besides posters showing various Atalantas or "*Calista*" T10 under sail, we made information boards describing something of the history and manufacture of the boats. We also had details of various boats for sale, which we handed out to interested visitors.

Of course no event of this nature would be complete without some form of social gathering and we held a barbeque, open to all members, on the Saturday night which was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. In fact those of us who manned the stand (and spent the weekend there camping) took advantage of our surroundings to indulge in barbeques on three successive nights.

Not only did our cruising boats create a stir at the show, but the Pixie excited lots of admiration (and many offers to buy it!).

Next year's show is from the 6th - 8th June 2008, and we may participate again.

Deep discussions about the Atalanta's design and construction

The AOA stand at Beale Park with "*Gambol*" (A17) and "*Calista*" (T10)

The Pixie in action on the lake with Mandy Garrat and Magnus Thompson

A Wooden Rudder Blade for "*Aquilo II*" A184

by Richard Hall

When I bought "*Aquilo II*" she did not have a rudder blade. However, the rudder stock was found to be sound although the cheeks where splayed out slightly. My attempts at sourcing the right grade of aluminium to make another blade were not very fruitful.

I had also been reading the articles on the Atalanta rudder extracted from past bulletins. They seemed to indicate, at least to some of the writers, that when the wind was strong the Atalanta exhibited heavy weather helm. A Yacht Design book I have talks about the requirement for the rudder blade to be streamlined in order to increase the turning force whilst at the same time reducing the drag. Thick sections work better when the angle to the flow is large, but they must be designed correctly.

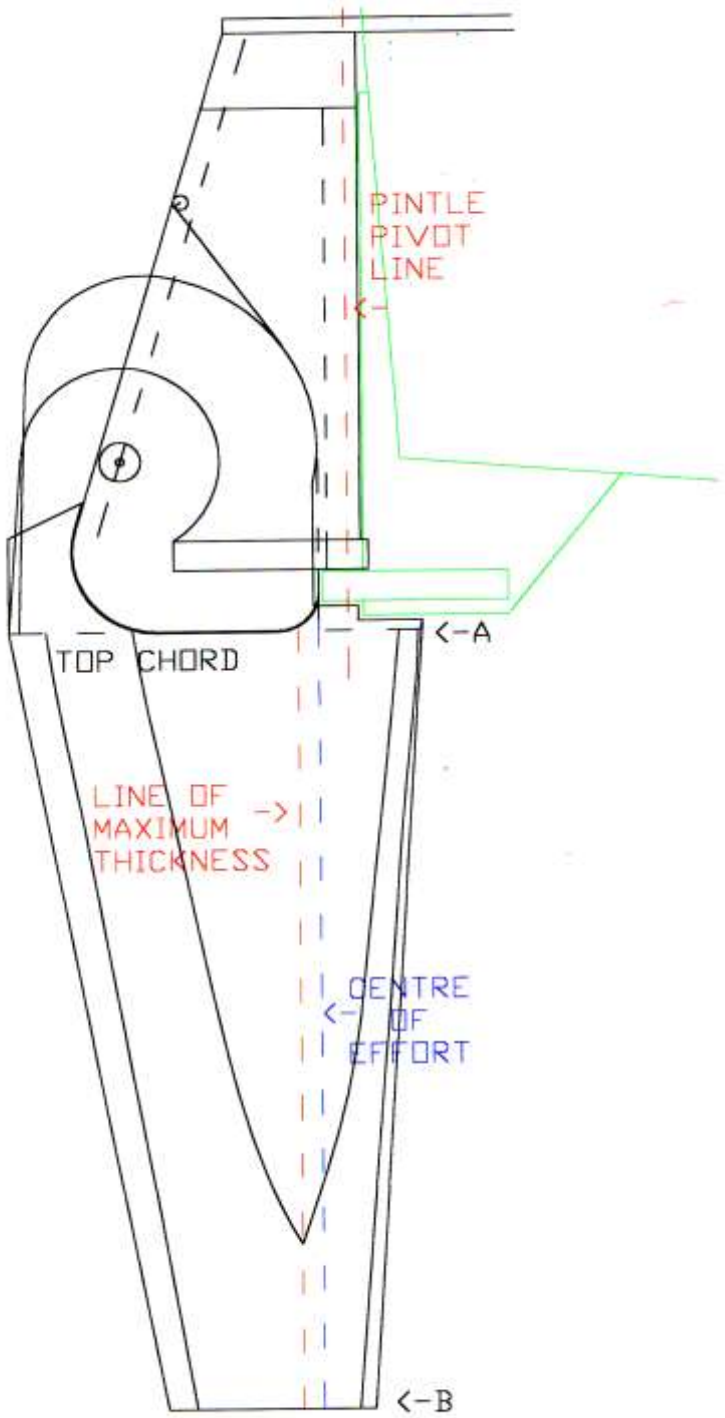
My thought was that if I could reduce the drag when "*Aquilo II*" was moving fast then there would be less likelihood that the blade would swing aft slightly by stretching the down haul bungie cord. It wouldn't take much to move the lower part of the blade back behind the pintle pivot line and so reduce the designed balance of the rudder which would lead to a very heavy helm.

Also a well streamlined section moves the centre of the sideways force forwards to a position 25% back from the nose, again maintaining a well balanced rudder.

The finished rudder blade

OK, so what could I do?

The Yacht Design book, recommends a 12% - 15% thickness ratio. This is the maximum thickness of the streamline section as a percentage of the length of the chord (the Yacht Design book defines the chord as the width of the blade from front to back at any position on the blade.) The old blade (Type III) was roughly 20 ins wide at the top including the up haul attachment. This equates to about 500mm. If we take 12% of the maximum chord length, which is at the top we get a thickness of 60mm (500mm x 12%).

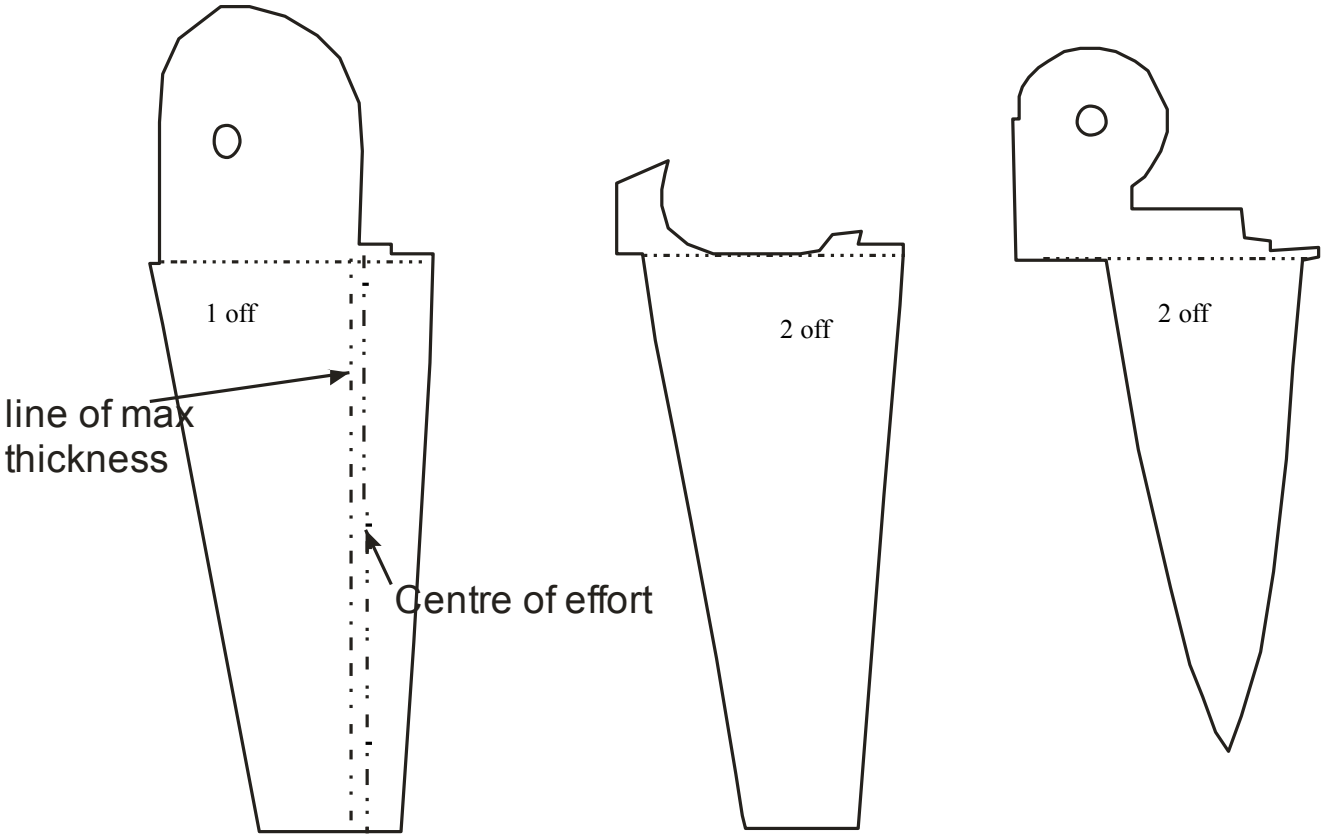


The outline shape of each section of the blade

This is five thicknesses of the 12mm plywood I have. How could I fit this to the rudder stock?

The old blade was 7/16ths (i.e. 11.11mm) thick which is just under 12 mm but, when I tried it, my 12mm ply fitted perfectly up into the stock just as the Aluminium blade would have done. The next two pieces would have to stop when they met the stock cheeks themselves. Would you believe it, the cheeks were also 7/16ths thick so the last two pieces of ply would be able go up the outside of the rudder stock cheeks.

This was beginning to come together.
I could put two large stainless plates (4ins diameter) outside this and use the pivot bolt to bolt through the lot. I would then have



The pattern shapes for the 5 layers which make up the new blade

three thicknesses of 12mm ply to keep the blade and stock together with five thicknesses of ply (60mm) for strength at the critical point, just below the stock, where aluminium blades tend to break.

I had to take this further.

The Yacht Design book recommended a taper ratio of 0.5, i.e. the chord at the bottom should be half the chord at the top. So the bottom will be 250mm (10 ins). A high aspect ratio is also good. This is the height of the blade compared to the average chord length. The old blade is 40 ins deep below the stock so 40 ins divided by the average chord (20 ins at top and 10 ins at bottom) i.e. 15 ins, gave a taper ratio of 2.7 which the design said was fairly high.

Let's review where we are.

I have a rudder blade that is 20 ins at the top reducing to 10 ins at the bottom, and is 40 ins high with a maximum thickness of just over 2 ins.

So the new blade is the same height as the aluminium blade, slightly wider at the top and narrower at the bottom. But it is much thicker just below the rudder stock. It should produce more turning force so will not have to be angled so much to get "*Aquilo II*" to turn the same, but will have less drag so keeping the rudder well balanced and the helm light.

I had to take this further because it all seemed to be working.

The symmetric centre of the section will lie down the centre of the middle piece of ply (6mm from each face). I was able to draw out the basic shape of the blade on the ply. It is 500 mm at the top, 250 mm at the bottom and 1000mm from top to bottom. The front tapers as it goes down, as does the trailing edge. The maximum thickness occurs 30% back from the nose and this should be at right angles from the top and bottom. So I started at the nose at the top (point A) marked in 30% of 500mm

(150mm) along the top and drew a line down at right angles 1000mm long, to the bottom of the blade. This was the maximum thickness line, and along with the top chord formed the reference for the rest of the blade. A line at right angles to this and 30% of 250mm (75mm) gave the position of the nose on the bottom of the blade (point B). I drew a line between these 2 points, then along 250mm at the bottom and then up to a point 500mm from the top nose. I had the symmetric section of the blade.

I had now to think about how the pivot and the blade pieces would fit in relation to the rudder stock.

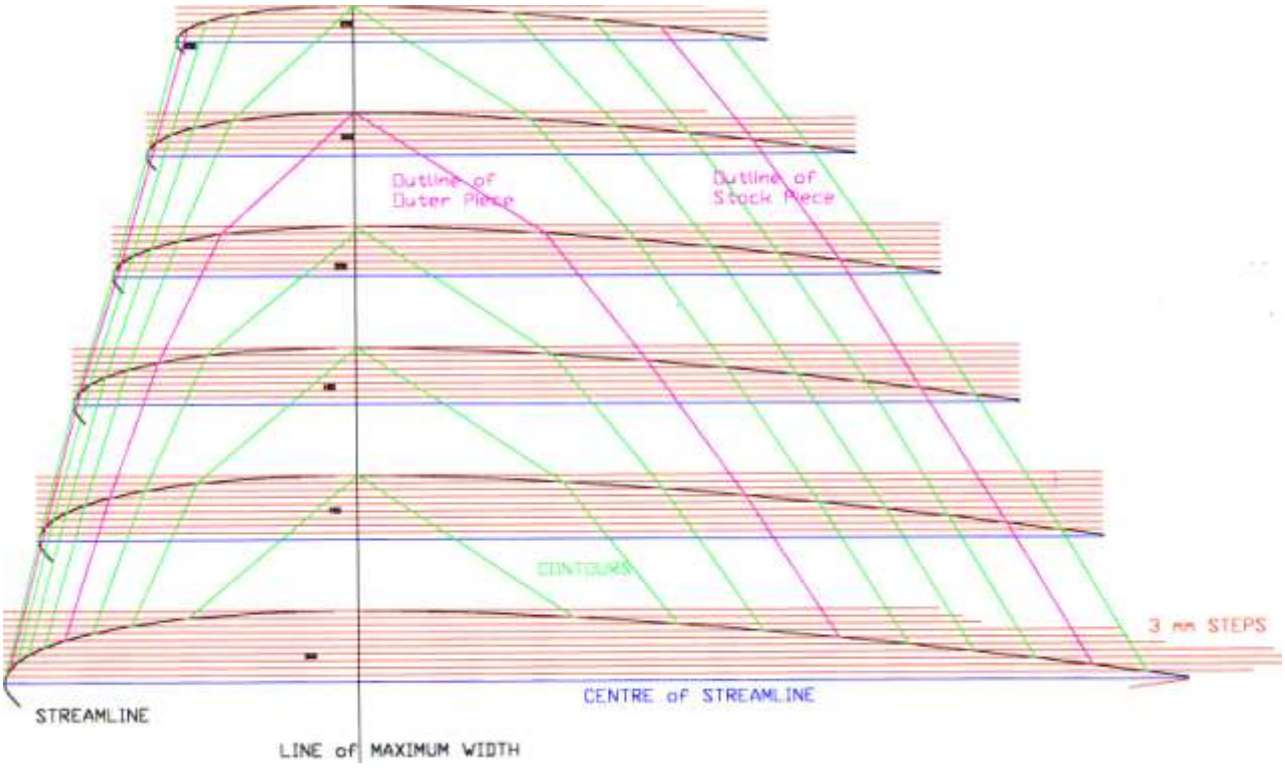
To balance a rudder the centre of effort should lie close to, but slightly aft of, the pivot line. The smaller the boat and consequently the smaller the rudder the further the centre of effort can be from the pivot line, so that with dinghies, balanced rudders are not required. In lots of ways the Atalanta is like a large dinghy, so the difference could be reasonable. For the old blade the pivot line was about 4 ins back from the front of the blade. I decided to keep it about the same. The centre of effort for a streamline section is 25% back from the nose, i.e. 125mm (or 5 ins) back from the nose at the top of our blade. The top chord on the blade lines up with the bottom of the rudder stock. I lined up the centre of effort line on the blade with the front of the stock below the gudgeon. The drawing of the stock (A 24765) shows that the pivot line is 1 1/16th ins. forward of this point at the front of the stock. Thus the centre of effort would be 1 1/16th ins behind the pivot line, which is pretty close to what I wanted and provides an easy reference between the blade and the stock.
I wanted to ensure that the blade stayed fully down even when moving fast through the water. In order to increase the force pulling the blade into the down position I moved the blade pivot point back towards the aft edge of the stock. I chose a point 8 ¾ ins up from the bottom of the stock (the old pivot point was 8 7/8ths ins up) and 1 1/8ths ins in and at right angles to the aft edge of the stock.

(I'm sorry about this mix of units, but I can see the sizes in feet and inches and, of course, the Atalanta was designed in Imperial units, but the Yacht Design book and most modern fittings are totally metric).

I could now define the rest of the shape of the centre ply of the blade.
So I drew a line from the centre of effort point (5 ins back on the top chord), 8 ¾ ins up to form the front. The pivot point was then 9 ½ ins back from this at right angles. Now this is where it gets a bit difficult to explain.

I wanted a circular top to the blade and for ease I used a round tin or a plate or something. This gave the desired effect in the stock, but it stuck out too far at the back. So I used another, smaller, round object to draw the back part of the curve. For the sake of understanding I have modified my drawing to nearly fit what I had done. This may seem a bit strange, but it works.
From the pivot point draw a 1 ins line at 45 degrees up and forwards. Using this point draw an arc 8 13/16ths ins up and over the top. Then following the line of the stock upwards draw a line through the pivot point 4 ins long (i.e. 1 1/8th ins in from the back of the stock). Now using this as the centre draw an arc 5 11/16ths ins from the top of the previous arc and down towards the aft edge. Finally draw a line at a tangent to this arc to meet the top chord of the blade ½ ins from the end. My feeling is that this bit is not critical, so any practical method of achieving the result was OK. But in order to give the maximum force keeping the blade in its down position the forward arc should be as large as possible without fouling the stock.

A small modification was now needed to the front to allow for the down haul. I al-



The true profile of the blade at each station

lowed an extra ¼ ins so that the down haul eye splice could be accommodated without it jamming in the front of the stock. I reduced the front of the blade by this ¼ ins and carried the 8 13/16ths ins radius down till they met. Now to finish off I adjusted the part of the blade above the top nose to match the shape of the gudgeon and the rudder skeg. From 1 ¼ ins up the centre of effort line I drew a line forwards 2 ins, then down ¾ ins and then forwards again to meet a line continuing the nose line upwards.

(*In hindsight I should have made a dummy of the whole of this pivoting section out of a piece of stiff card or better still, 12mm ply, drilled a 10mm pivot hole and fitted it to the stock to ensure it fitted neatly round the pintle and skeg and rotated the desired amount without fouling any other parts of the stock. I could have adjusted accordingly and got a good fit and then drawn this on top of the blade.*)

Instead I cut out the whole centre blade. It looked huge on the bench, but it was about the same area as the aluminium blade and apart from being all straight lines was very nearly the same shape as the old blade. At this stage I checked that this centre blade did all that was required of it. I drilled a 10mm hole at the pivot point and fitted it in the stock. I couldn't check it on the boat because when pivoted down the bottom of the blade hit the ground, but I did ensure it moved freely in the stock over the entire range required. Once I had glued all the blade pieces together, I would not be able to trim pieces off this centre part of the blade so I checked this thoroughly. Finally the large arc at the top was routed out by a small amount (I think the Atalanta drawing calls it spindling) so that the down haul would not slip out and down between the blade and the cheek.

The next problem was how could I build the blade and keep the right sections throughout?

This is the technical bit.

The Yacht Design book says that getting the streamline section right is critical and the amateur should not attempt to design one himself. There are several well documented sections, each applicable in differ-

ent applications. For use with rudders the book suggests using a NACA section in the 4 digit series. The NACA section is defined in the book by a table of x - y values, where x is along the chord, measured from the nose and y is at right angles to x. Both co-ordinates are given in per cent of the chord length and only one half of the (symmetric) section is defined.

I used a NACA 0012 section. The NACA 0010 section is quoted as the base, but to convert you divide the y values by 10 and multiply by 12. (Similarly for a 0015 section, divide by 10 and multiply by 15).
So I converted to the NACA 0012 section, then I drew the half section at the top of the blade by multiplying both the x and the y values by 5 (5 * 100 gives the chord length of 500mm) and by 2.5 for the bottom of the blade where the chord length was 250mm. And I drew others for chord lengths of 450mm, 400mm, 350mm and 300mm, which would be 1/5, 2/5, 3/5, and 4/5 down the blade.
But I still couldn't see how I was going to convert these cross-sections into the real thing. Then I got a eureka moment. What if I plotted the contours of the blade rather like the contours of a map. That might work.
I chose steps of 3mm as there would be 4 steps per 12mm sheet. So I drew lines on my half sections, parallel to the chord and 3mm apart starting at the symmetric centre. I then measured the distance from the nose that the 3 mm line crosses the section. Then I did the same for the 6mm, the 9mm and so on up to the maximum of 30mm.
Now the exciting bit, I marked on this blade where the 3mm contour would lie. I did this at the top, bottom and the 1/5, 2/5, 3/5 and 4/5 sections I'd drawn out earlier. These were 200mm (1/5 of 1000mm blade height), 400mm, 600mm and 800mm up the blade from the bottom. Now I joined these up with a smooth curve and I had the desired contour. I then marked the 3mm contour on the trailing edge as well. The next contour, the 6mm one would be 6mm from the central axis (the centre of the ply), and would not be on this piece of ply. So I turned the ply over and marked the leading and trailing 3mm contours for the other half of the symmetric section. I then used a router to remove the outer waste material, setting it to 3mm depth.
Now I was getting somewhere.
On to the next blade piece. The 6mm contour is in fact the shape of the next two pieces of ply (1 each side) and is slightly smaller than the central piece of ply. It still went the full length of the blade, but was narrower. I used the position of the maximum thickness (the line running at right angles to both the top and the bottom), and the top chord as the reference for each piece of ply and drew out the required shape of the blade.
These next two pieces (I call them stock blade pieces) could only go up to the rudder stock cheeks. This was easier than the centre piece. I placed the stock on the ply with the bottom of the stock on the top chord line and the front of the stock on the centre of effort line and drew round the bottom of the cheek. I carried on up the aft edge of the cheek so as to provide more support for the centre ply. However it could only go so far, as the blade must be able to pivot up to clear the sea bottom when going aground. My drawing determined this as 4 7/8ths ins at the aft end and 6 11/16ths ins at the forward end so that when raised it butted onto the aft end of the stock. I then allowed 1/16th ins gap, so drew 1/16th ins line below what I had just drawn and used this as my cutting line.
This was now my outline for these two stock blade pieces. I then cut them out.
Now for the contouring bit. I always found this exiting.
As the symmetric centre and the 3 mm contour were on the central piece of blade and the 6mm contour was the shape of these two stock blade pieces, the next contour to consider was the 9mm.
So taking the stock blade, I marked on the 9mm contour, then the 12mm and the

15mm, both for the leading and trailing edge. I then set the router depth to 9mm for the 9mm contour, and removed all the waste in to the 9mm contour leaving a 3 mm thickness of wood (this does make sense, as the 9mm contour is 3mm up from inner side of this stock blade piece). I took several passes as 9mm was a bit much to remove all in one go. I went close to the contour and then with a 9mm setting routed to the actual contour line itself. I now routed out in the same way with a depth of 6mm to the 15mm contour and finally with a 3mm depth setting to the 12mm contour. I finished one contour before starting the next so as not to lose my contour lines. I then did the same with the trailing edge contours. That's one done. I did the same with the ply for the other side making sure I had a left and right handed version. I then put these three pieces together and was able to see the streamline shape of the blade beginning to form although the shape was stepped and not smooth.

Looking good.

Now for the outer two pieces of ply (outer blade pieces). Here the 18mm contour is the shape. So I drew this out. This was a lot smaller and went nowhere near the whole length of the blade. The bit that had to go up the outside of the stock was again different and with its own constraints. These were due to the side parts of the gudgeon, which of course are proud of the cheeks.

So as before I lined up the bottom of the stock with the top chord line and the front of the stock with the centre of effort line. I could then draw the position of the gudgeon side parts as defined in drawing A 24765. In order that this blade piece could also rotate about the pivot point all parts of the blade had to be smaller than the closest point of the gudgeon.

So I drew a circle radius 4 13/16ths ins from the pivot point, till it met the outline of the gudgeon. This defined the upper shape of these two outer pieces of the blade. They were considerably smaller than the other pieces. I treated these exactly the same as the others and marked out the 21mm contour, the 24mm and the 27mm. The 30mm contour was a point on the top of the blade on the top cord and 150mm back from the nose. I routed out the waste in the same way. I then repeated this for the other half again making sure I had a left and right handed piece.

The front of all the pieces were cut the same as the centre so that they fitted nicely round the pintle and skeg.

Now I had all the pieces!

At this stage I thought it was probably worth sorting out how the pieces of the blade were going to be stuck together in the correct place. I used a couple of pieces of plastic pipe (about 1 ins dia.) which were a tight fit in the holes I drilled in each of the ply pieces. My first was near the top of the blade the second about 2/3 rds down where there was still plenty of meat on the outer pieces. I put all the pieces together, checked rigorously that the references all lined up, clamped them, checked them again and drilled two pilot holes through the entire blade. These were then opened out to match the plastic pipe. Plastic is good as when gluing it tends not to stick and if it does a bit of heat will soften it so that it will come out.

This meant I could put the pieces of ply together, using the pipes as references, clamp them and check for correct movement in the rudder stock, but still be able to separate them for any minor adjustments. Also when gluing the blade pieces together, they would not be able to slide sideways as the clamps were tightened.

For the pivot I used a 2 ins diameter pivot hole in the blade with a packing piece 2 ins

diameter by 12.5mm thick for the blade to pivot on. Then a 10mm bolt to squeeze all of it together. This straightened the splaying of the cheeks and providing more strength to the aft part of the stock.

I also had a 2 ins pipe to pass through the pivot holes to ensure they always remained in line, whilst I was gluing.

I glued each piece one at a time. Isn't it funny, no matter how many clamps you have you always run out, but by the judicious use of chocks I got them well bonded. I left them overnight to harden and then glued the next. When I had finished I had the finished article, albeit with the contours stepped. However I tried it again in the rudder stock and confirmed it was able to rotate correctly.

Now to smooth the contours. I left the top 1 ins to ensure strength at this critical point. Then I planned off the tops of the contours so that I had a smooth blade no matter which direction I looked in. The joints between the individual veneers of the ply(they showed as a black line) aided as they had also to be smooth. I finished off with a sander, and then rounded the top to the top chord. I also used pre stretched rope as both the down haul and the up haul as I could do an eye splice in the end. A hole drilled right through the blade at about the same places as the old blade enabled me to fit them securely to the new blade.

All I had to do now was paint it and try it. When I finally got *"Aquilo"* in the water one or two snags became evident. The blade stuck and when I tried to move it, the down haul slipped out of the groove and jammed between the blade and the rudder cheeks.

The first was sorted by increasing the thickness of the spacers cum pivoting pieces. I stuck pieces of duct tape on both sides of each one, and trimmed to shape. This did the trick. The second required a small length of copper tube (approx. 3 ins) curved and glued to the spindling on the centre part of the blade, and threading the down haul through that. There was no way it could slip now, and it hasn't.

I also wanted to simplify the down haul and up haul and I couldn't see that having them leading to the cockpit was much of an advantage. If one accidentally ran aground the keels would surely hit first, giving time to nip into the aft cabin and raise the rudder blade if necessary.
I removed the internal blocks, fitted a jam cleat on the inboard part of the tiller (I needed a spacer to get the line correct), and by operating from the aft cabin I could easily pull the blade into its down position.
In operation the new blade has performed well, remaining light and very positive. I have only been out in a maximum, I suppose, of a force 4, but even when heeling to nearly 20 degrees, the helm remained light. Also a quick flick with the helm was all that was needed to correct any wayward progress due to my inattention.

Note: The Yacht Design book is "Principles of Yacht Design" by Lars Larsson and Rolf E Eliasson.

West Wales Cruise

by Trevor Thompson

Barbeque on the pontoon

The first Atalanta West Coast meeting took place between the 1st and 6th August 2007. One Titania "Calista" (T10) and one Atalanta "Ereina" (A8) met at Jenkins Point in the early evening. Both sets of crews adjourned to our cottage "Milcwm" for a celebratory meal. We spent the first day sailing together down the Haven to Dale where we anchored and rafted up for lunch. Magnus and Ceiran sailed "*Puddleduck*" (Magnus' Duckling), while Peter and I caught up on some last minute jobs about the boats. Magnus likes sailing dinghies at Dale because the wind is unobstructed unlike the way it is in the upper reaches of the Haven. In the early evening we sailed over to Sandyhaven and motored into the inner basin, over the footbridge (it always tickles me to sail over a bridge), to anchor rafted up on flat sand.
Dinah drove over on Saturday and joined us for lunch, and then for a walk ashore. She was able to confirm that arrangements were in place for the next stage to Pembroke.

Next day we took the evening tide and motored out into a miserable wet evening as the light faded, and then reached under full sail up the Haven to anchor separately, this time off the power-station at Pennar Pill. The wind in the rigging, and the chain rattling kept some of us awake, but we were up early to face a promising morning.

We were able to have a hurried breakfast before starting up the meandering river towards Pembroke town itself. The river is well marked with buoys at every turn in the channel, but since the barrier master wanted us off the barrier 2 hours before HW we touched a couple of times as we worked our way around the meanders (with little water anywhere).

"*Calista*" and "*Ereina*" tied up below Pembroke Castle

We arrived as requested and there was clearly nowhere near enough water to allow us to cross the lowered barrier into the castle moat. After a wait, we eventually were able to enter and tie up alongside the pontoon in the moat by 0830. Most of the crew spent the afternoon

Sailing in company in the Milford Haven

ashore exploring the castle and town. In the evening our partners joined us for a barbeque on the pontoon. Enjoyed by all, even if the disposable barbeque was difficult to light!

Sunday morning we worked our way down the river and spent the bottom of the tide anchored at Angle. We then took the tide up to Lawrenny again, and we even managed to sail most of the way.

Next morning we went up river to Llangwm, where we went ashore for a walk. We explored the laid up boats and creeks, and ended up in the local hostelry. Peter was becoming frustrated by some persistent leaks, and we managed to hole our dinghy, both of which caused us to abandon our planned trip up to Black Pool Mill, at the limit of navigation in the East Cleddau.

The unsettled weather and a pending window of opportunity offered Peter the chance to get "Ereina" back to Solva, and the cruise ended a day early with a rush back to home moorings.
It would be possible to repeat the meeting next year, perhaps over the May half term if there is enough interest from members. We would be particularly interested to welcome other owners who are able to trail their boats, because this represents a wonderful sheltered cruising area which is not as well known as it should be. So come on those of you who have trailers - lets make it an event to remember!

KOOKABURRA (A168) 2007

by Norman Dorrington

"Small earthquake in Peru, nobody killed" is not a headline that will sell newspapers. Likewise, "Short trip in an Atalanta, no problems" would not stand much chance in a 'Most interesting log' competition, but the last trip I made this season will probably live in my memory when more exciting ones have long been forgotten.

After a terribly wet August, and problems with rheumatism, the sun shone in September and I felt well enough to try and get back to sailing.
My wife packed a parcel of bread, milk, butter, cheese, tomatoes, cereal and marmalade, and I was instructed to buy a sandwich on the way for my lunch, get a meal ashore in the evening, and use the rest for breakfast and lunch the following day. She said that if I decided not to stay, it would not be wasted. Of course I forgot about buying the sandwich until it was too late.

At Tollesbury we can get out about two hours each side of high water. As it was a mid-day tide I was able to leave on the last of the flood.

I motored down the creek enjoying confidence in the sound of the engine. After struggling with the Coventry Victor petrol engine for thirty-three years I had, on the recommendation of the Hon. Sec., installed a 13.5hp. Beta Diesel over the winter break.

The sun was shining, the sea was like glass, and there was no wind. I hoisted the sails and drifted on the incoming tide up towards Maldon. Eventually the tide turned, a small breeze sprang up from the South East and I was able to make slow progress along the West Mersea shore.

I kept on, past the Molliette beacon, until I reached the Colne buoys and turned North towards Brightlingsea. This was now against the tide and my hand held Magellan showed that I was making one knot over the ground, but at least it was in the right direction. By about five o'clock I motored into Brightlingsea and was directed by the harbourmaster to a space towards the end of the long pontoon.

It is said that if you want to meet people in a park, take a dog. If you want to meet people in a marina, take an Atalanta. I had hardly made fast before a voice said "Is that an Atalanta". Then followed the usual stuff about dropping from aeroplanes and an explanation and viewing of the keel lifting gear.

During the conversation it came out that I had had the boat for thirty-four years and, although I was now eighty-one, I could still manager her quite easily single handed. Inquiries picked up after this and I suspect it was the added attraction of seeing the ancient mariner as well as the classic boat.

There was a lovely boat moored opposite with three middle-aged men on board and they told me that it had crossed the Atlantic a number of times and competed in the Fastnet. They were interested in the Atalanta and kindly invited me over for coffee in the evening. As we sat in the cockpit they told me stories of far away places like the Caribbean, the Falklands, and even Antartica. It was like an enactment of the old classroom picture "Raleigh's boyhood", but this time the listener was far older than the teller.

The cockpit was high up, not very large and contained a wheel and a binnacle that could hold wine bottles. The chap who had gone to make the coffee asked the usual questions about milk and sugar with his head level with my feet. I thought how often I take one step up from the galley, look all round and drop back in a matter of seconds. It was a lovely boat but I felt no envy.

I did not feel like going ashore in the dinghy in the dark, so hunted round the lockers to see what I could find, and came up with a packet of soup and a small tin of corned beef. I carefully avoided looking at the sell by dates, made up the soup, fried the corned beef along with a tomato, and put it on a slice of bread which I had burnt to resemble toast. I then sat down to a very enjoyable hot meal.

Earlier I had moved the boat back a few feet to allow a small wooden yacht to moor ahead of me. There were two elderly gentlemen on board, one of whom was fairly large, and they rowed ashore in a plastic dinghy. They returned after dark. The smaller got on board. The other one stood on the side of the dinghy, it turned over and he went into the water.

I heard him say “It’s all right I’m holding onto a rope”. The other one said “I’ll get the ladder”. A chap off the big boat went over with a powerful torch and they tried unsuccessfully to get the man aboard. It was decided that he would work round the stern till he reached the pontoon and try and use their ladder there.

Unfortunately it was too short for him to reach the bottom rung. I got my ladder and put it over the edge of the pontoon and he managed to get his foot on it. It was still a struggle for us to get his trunk onto the decking and it made me realise that even in a harbour with plenty of help we could easily have lost him. Neither of them were wearing life jackets.

I decided to leave fairly early next morning as I wanted to get down the Colne before the incoming tide strengthened. Most people were waiting for more water. I said I would try backing out into the channel but the chaps on the big boat insisted that they could turn me round using bow ropes and the current. They did this very efficiently and I was able to motor away with a wave to some very nice people.

Again the sea was like glass, there was no wind, and a mist on the water made it look like a Turner painting. I motored down past the Colne buoys until I knew I was far enough to strike west to pick up the tide

into the Blackwater. The mist cleared with a slight breeze and, with all sail set, I managed to make a couple of knots over the ground. I put a cushion under my head and lay in the cockpit in the sunshine enjoying coffee and biscuits.

Eventually I arrived off Tollesbury Creek, dropped the main, and managed to sail almost up to the marina under jib. I arrived back in my berth only twenty-six hours after leaving it but I felt I had been on a good holiday. When I arrived home Maureen said that Mike Thorley (A141) had been on the phone "Just for a chat". When you own an Atalanta you own more than a boat.

Drawings

by the Drawings Master

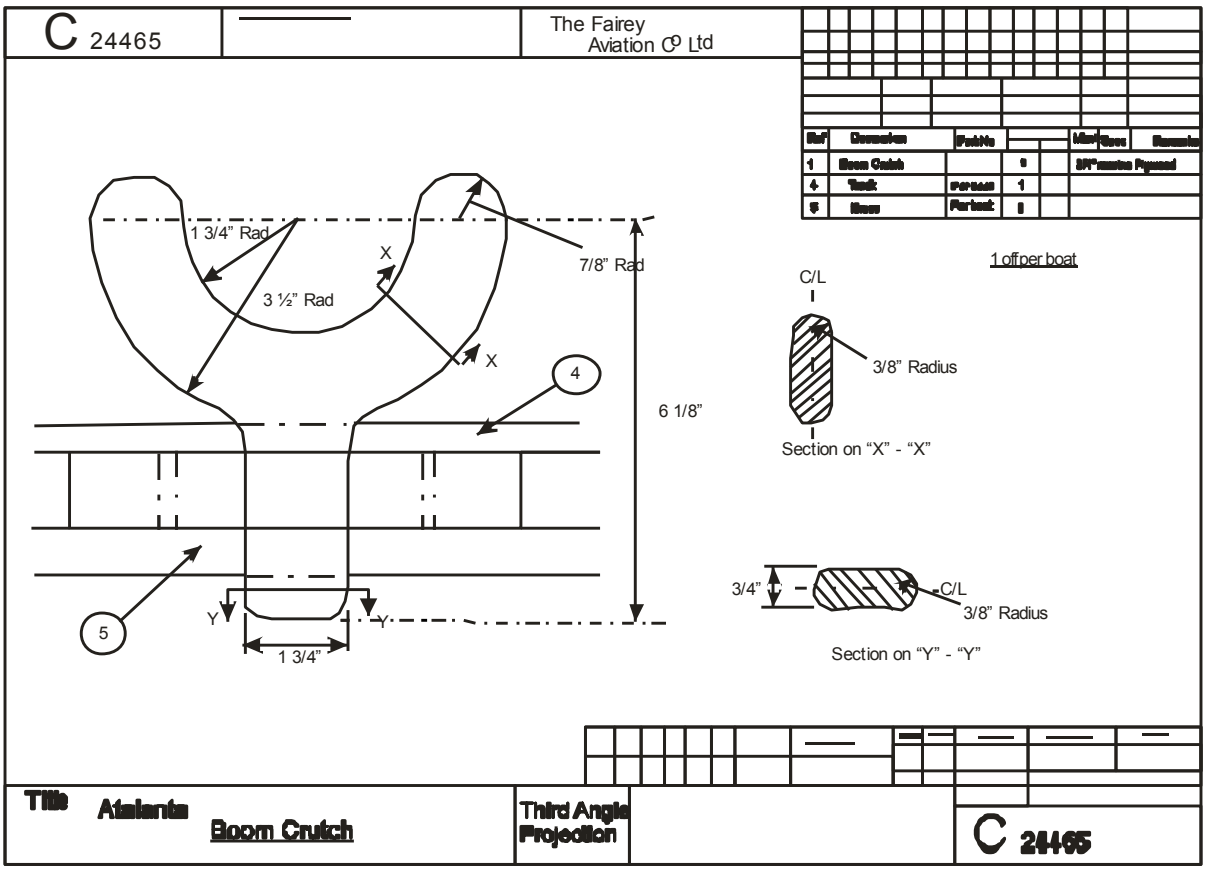
We have recently realised that we have only a small part of the complete set of Fairey Marine drawings, which are stored in the Maritime Museum.

In the long term we would like to extend our catalogue of drawings. In the meantime we may be able to use copies of member's own drawings.

Our collection of drawings did not include this boom crutch. The drawing has been re-created by tracing a blueprint owned by Simon Garrat.

If members have copies of drawings which are not on the catalogue could they please let the Drawings Master know.

Copies of the boom crutch drawing C24465 are now available in the usual way.



Atalanting in British Columbia.

by Bill Higgs

Canada as everybody knows is big, 4000 miles or so from coast to coast, traversed by the Canadian Pacific railway and the trans-Canada highway. British Columbia, the most western Province is still big.

Driving West for days across flat prairies, which are about wheat, cattle and oil, the Rocky Mountains rise suddenly and abruptly from the prairie and British Columbia starts, 800 miles of mountains terminating in the fiords and islands of the Pacific Ocean.
The largest island is Vancouver Island, known colloquially as the Big Island, alternately as Fantasy Island because of the strange happenings, sometimes Lotus Land. Eastern Canadians call it Granola Land, saying its full of nuts, flakes and seeds.

We and A51 are now based on Vancouver Island. Two Atalantas were shipped here in the fifties, A51 "*Bacardi*", and A88 "*Tenga*".

Our little town is Ladysmith, from which we departed for this year's cruise on August 1st, after the usual scramble, this time replacing the original Simpson Lawrence head. Not easy, because of frozen fittings and non standard hoses.
The local docks are called the Ladysmith Maritime Society, where volunteers restore what they call heritage boats, fishing boats and tugs.

This is good place for those who have crossed oceans to retire; John Samson of Samson Marine Design is here, he pioneered and promoted Ferro cement in the seventies; Winston with his steel "*Dove Four*", the fourth person to do the North west Passage; and a beautiful Wharram Catamaran that circumnavigated without an engine.
We slipped down the two miles or so in the Harbour, past Slack Point (one can still gather coal there) on the east side Shell Beach (a native reserve), where currently they are trying to remember how to build dugout canoes. It's difficult to find five foot diameter cedars these days!

A two hour windless run to overnight on Decourcy Island, through a really narrow entrance where the boat has to be positioned to within four feet or so, by lining up

Bill and "*Bacardi*" A51

two painted arrows on the rocks. Then a sharp turn to Port and anchor in two fathoms.

The cove and part of the island are a marine park, having a solar powered eco toilet and a hand pump. It's forested, fir, red cedar and arbutus, called strawberry oak or Madrona in England, I think.
There is a chain of islands on the East side of Vancouver Island, and to enter the Georgia Strait, which separates us from the mainland, one has proceed through one of the several passes at slack water, This year we selected Gabriola Pass. Peak currents are over seven knots. We mis-timed it slightly and had to push against four knots, so for about an hour we dodged the whirlpools and counter currents. Emerging between all the rocks and tiny islands, we headed across the twenty mile wide Georgia Strait, just far enough to need a compass course.

The wind on this coast is mostly North West or South East blowing up or down the straights and channels. This day there was just enough slant on the North West to make our course, but then it shifted and we ran the engine with the sails. To the east the coastal mountains were still snow-capped, as are the Vancouver Island Mountains to the West.

Everything seemed fine, Marilyn managed soup and sandwiches. The Autohelm 800 was doing a good job, when unbelievably the engine quit, right in the middle of the Strait. It's a two year old Mercury outboard, which replaced the venerable Stuart Turner, that in twenty years had the decency never to quit dead in open water. It would sputter, cough stumble but always got to harbour for the mechanical struggle.

I didn't want to clamber over the rear cabin in a three foot chop, anyway we don't have pushpits or life lines.
Now we could not make our course. We could head for a small cove called Half Moon bay, behind a light station called Merry Island Light, however we only had a large scale chart. Sailing this coast requires so many charts. For this 100 mile trip we had about thirty rolled up filling half the rear cabin. Have never solved the chart han-

dling problem, some are as big as bed sheets!

So all afternoon in the falling wind we picked our way in, past Merry Island Light and its surrounding rocks, with Marilyn staring at the shore and the chart. Eventually she spotted a government dock, a feature of this coast (always painted red), so we crept in. It looked just possible to dock under sail, then the wind died completely. In desperation I tried the engine and it ran at tick-over, but just as we were getting in a motor boat beat us. However they caught our lines and eased us behind.

The relief, walking in the hot sunshine on shore. We found ice creams and sat on the grass relaxing. Back on board we cooked supper, listened to the C.B.C, and slept.

Next day we faced the engine problem, thought it was fuel starvation. When a boat first gets in a chop for the first time in the season the tank is stirred, so we cleaned the fuel filter, and it started, so off we went back to our original route.

Arriving at Pender Harbour, long and narrow, rather congested, where we stayed at a hotel marina complex, with showers and hot tub. We were able to replenish our fuel and food. There is a long tall island called Texada, in the middle of the Georgia Strait, and the passage on the East side is called the Malaspina Strait. The Spanish explored this area, though Capt. Vancouver charted and explored most of this inner coast. The Spanish and British agreed not to fight, on this occasion.

Although we had intended to head directly up the Malaspina Strait, we decided to divert up a fiord called Agamemnon Channel, named by Capt. Vancouver I think. The place names reflect his difficulties, further north we would have to round Grief Point. Ten miles up Agamemnon the engine quit again, so again we crept into a cove, this time anchoring under sail.

If all else fails read the manual, mostly about safety, and consult your friendly neighbourhood Mercury dealer. In desperation, added methyl alcohol to the fuel in

case it was water contamination, then saw in the manual, don't use alcohol, it's corrosive. A vapour lock idea, rerouted the rather long fuel hose, re-gaped the plugs by guess (not having feeler gauges on board). Started O.K. but decided to go back to the nearest friendly Mercury dealer, 15 miles back to Pender Harbour.

Yes he was friendly and competent, ran the engine at high power at the dock for an hour then said "it's not fuel its electrical". Found corrosion in the cable plug and socket, adamant that was the problem, refused any payment, we had no more problems for the next three weeks, so he was right.

First time I had ever consulted a marine mechanic , but then "Seagulls" and the ilk of "Stuart Turners" are different.

Adding to the frustration I used to be an electronics engineer, and have developed transistorised electronic spark generators for gas turbines. In consumer stuff though 50 cents worth of components are encapsulated as modules and no schematics and test instructions are available.

While this was going on somebody was wanting to attract our attention, " That's an Atalanta , I used to have one , but I had to break it up for parts". He now kept his forty footer in Seattle and flew out for vacations. I presume this is a trend, having noticed the odd red ensign amongst the maple leaves and stars and stripes.

So once more we headed north up the Agamemnon channel, anchored overnight, where there was a waterfall cascading onto the beach, and had showers in the warm fresh water.
Next morning an early start, hoping to round Grief Point to Desolation Sound, we ran into conflicting tides from Agamemnon with confused seas, rolling, pitching. Atalantas in most conditions are so stable that we don't bother with secure stowage.

Caught this time though. The galley emptied itself on the cabin floor, the clutter on the cockpit seats slid onto the cockpit floor, the auto pilot leapt out of its socket from the bulkhead. We were two hours getting out of that mayhem. Maybe that's why Capt. Vancouver named it Agamemnon Channel?

Then calm, windless, purring along we relaxed, those conditions are almost meditative, reminiscing about boats and cruises past, pondering the appeal of the Atalanta.

How did twenty years of ownership flash by?

The two major overhauls, hours under a plastic shed, both times by June saying "Oh lets just get the thing into the water." Another overhaul is overdue.

Reverie ended as we hit Alfedo Rocks, why I don't know, having been up here many times. However in an Atalanta the keels swing up, so no damage. Twenty minutes later a Coast Guard Zodiac was alongside,

Most solicitous are the Canadian Coast Guard. "Are you O.K.? Are you making water? Shall we escort you into harbour?"

That's in contrast with the U.S Coast Guard. Americans are terrified of their Coast Guard who are a branch of the military, conducting the war on drugs. In the extreme they crash alongside pointing machine guns and search the boat for drugs. At least that's what Americans recount.

My only experience was in Alaska when I radio asking for clearance instructions. They were clear enough, but definitely not friendly.

For the rest of the trip the Coast Guard would appear and wave, perhaps they had been told look out for a funny looking sailboat crewed by a pair of idiots.

We had not intended to go into the next harbour, Lund, at the end of the road from Vancouver, albeit with two ferry services, not liking the place. However, being somewhat shaken after the days trials, we did so.

There is a Government Dock , jammed solid with boats tied abreast. Sure enough the Wharf Manager shrieked at us like a harridan, "Go there", "No not there here", "Why didn't you radio in that you were coming?", "Your fenders are to small".

This provoked Marilyn, who later said "I can yell like a fish wife too" (she is a former Actress), so she adopted a fish wife part . This all proved highly entertaining to the other boats.

This was the psychological low point of the cruise. We decided to shape up and pay more attention to navigation and maintenance, after then no more troubles.

From Lund twenty miles or so through one Thulin Passage, less than half a mile wide, rock strewn, and busy as a highway.

A51 *"Bacardi"*

Here all the boats heading for desolation converge, annoying were wakes of large motor boats, there are though less or proportionally less than there used to be. The coast guard (after the hourly weather forecast) urges minimising wash. The majority of boats were sailing cruisers doing about 5 knots, the worst affected were the flocks of kayakers. Kayaking has become very popular here in recent years.

I remembered Jerome K Jeromes "Three Men in a Boat", the account of cursing the steam boats on the Thames during Victorian Times. Rowing does seems to be a new trend here, there were a trickle of classic rowing boats on the water.

The whole fleet rounded one Sarah Point ready to disperse into Desolation Sound, however it was late in the day so most, us included, headed for the closest good anchorage at Prideaux Haven.

Most boats now seem to prefer anchoring by the bow and attaching a stern line ashore, so this mile long cove had boats some fifty feet apart. There was plenty of room in the middle so we anchored there.

Sometimes I ask myself "What's so special about Desolation Sound?". I first went in 1972 when I had just arrived in B.C., because of local advice. Well of course the name is appealing, though its not particularly desolate. Captain Vancouver bestowed the name, because they couldn't find fresh water, although streams and lakes are abundant. They visited a deserted native village, and hungry fleas infected both ships. The area is notoriously windless, so they towed the "Discovery" and "Chatham" with the boats.

I suppose that after sweating all day at the oars while being bitten by fleas they would give the place a disparaging name.

The boundaries of Desolation Sound are not defined, however it's generally regarded as where the tides flooding from the north meet the tides flooding from the south, an area of maybe 50 miles by 50 miles.

Tidal behaviour is mixed but mostly free of strong currents. Generally the Pacific is colder at the same latitude than the Atlantic, not having a gulf stream equivalent, but the tidal conditions in Desolation Sound result in water being warm enough for swimming,

and oysters to seed on the rocks and beaches. Once one arrives, sea conditions are so mild that one can forget about safe seamanship, and relax in calm channels and safe anchorages, swim, hike, gather oysters, fish, and hike to inland lakes.

Depending on the weather of course, which is mostly sunny and hot, but it is unpredictable. Once we were up here and it continuously rained for the entire two weeks. Surrounded by mountains there are many micro climates. Mittlenatch island is literally a desert island, sand and cactus. At the head of the fiords it's rain forest with over one hundred inches a year.

A 88 *"Tenga"*

In Prideuax Haven the Atalanta attracted attention as usual, dinghies came up to ask questions. Fashions do change. Some years ago she was ignored, or why do you have that funny looking boat? Now she is much admired. We do have a fair amount of varnish which Marilyn loves: Our deal is she does the paint and varnish provided she has a free hand.

So we have a daffodil yellow hull and pea green decks. The general shape of the Atalanta is appealing to some. That domed cabin is evocative of the similarly constructed mosquito aircraft, but also of the classic D.S Citroen. Interesting the worst problems with wooden aircraft were in climates like this, a hot dry summer and wet cool winter, since the moisture content is forever changing. Also this area is completely forested so rot spores are abundant, Fortunately agba, like mahogany, does not rot in salt water, but it does from the rain on the cabin and decks. Wood rot is unpredictable , "*Tenga*", the other Atalanta in B.C has had little problem but we have.

Usually I mix epoxy with half inch glass

Canadian winter at the marina berth

fibres and trowel the mixture into place, but have cut wood strips on a band saw, and stapled these in place. With difficulty one can find bronze or stainless staples. It's the fairing and finishing that takes the time , We are not good at that, rationalising that a boat does not have to look like a piano.

Whatever the appeal of the Atalanta looking at the register people do seem to keep them a long time. In his eighties *Tenga's* previous owner, said it was still fun to go and pump her out. Of course the Atalantas were very expensive to build, the last being sold at some £1700, the cost of a bungalow with all mod cons in that era . So an identical replica is not feasible, £200 thousand for a twenty six foot boat!

Amusingly two individuals stared in silence for a long time, then one said "It's organic", the other "It's art".

So we left next morning amongst clicking cameras heading for solitude. Which we found, a bay to ourselves, watching the stars with no artificial lights or sounds of internal combustion engines. Then there was a day of rain so we stayed in the cabin reading after stopping a leak with silicone. We had intended to cruise one of two adjacent fiords, Toba thirty miles, or Bute seventy, both are reputed to be spectacular. However it seemed that the rain was settling in and we were running short of supplies. So we reluctantly headed South in the drizzle. The problem was we took too long to get there, due to our initial travails.

Returning always seems like going downhill, the weather cleared and we crossed the Georgia Strait on a reach. Area Whisky Gulf, where the Canadian Navy practice air dropping torpedoes was not active, although last year it was, we tried to sneak across, but the Navy roared up and ordered us out, due East which would have had us at sea all night, to be avoided here due to floating logs. So we waited until they had gone and crept back on course. Full speed ahead and damn the torpedoes. But this year was O.K. By good luck the tide was slack in Dodd Narrows and we were back a day earlier than scheduled, happy and elated, only to discover the car had been stolen from the docks. What idiot would steal an 85 Saab?

To the Far Side of the World

by Murray Reid

We had been dreaming of owning an Atalanta for several years. It became an obsession. Our search had taken us up Welsh mountains, to remote inland waterways, and to East Coast estuaries. We met some fantastic people and saw a few great boats, but for various reasons, none were quite right. We couldn't make a choice and ended up dashing the hopes of several sellers and driving the Hon Sec to distraction. Nothing worked out, then, last May, after having almost given up hope, Seiko and I found her, just a mile or two from where we were living in Devon.
Across the river from Dartmouth, in a quiet corner of the Kingswear Marina car park there she was, sitting forlornly on her old trailer, with her peeling, but beautiful varnished mast still stepped. We recognised her as the Atalanta we had seen moored at the Kingswear Yacht Club about 6 months ago. I had spotted her there on the way down the River on (a very fast, and wet!) trip on "*Iolanthe*", a Fairey Huntsman I had done some repair work on. Although we had gone back to look for her a while later to ascertain who she was, she had moved and we didn't see her again… until that day in May.
We spent some time walking around her. She was called "*Methuselah*" and had a real ocean-going air about her, with her distinctive cutter rig, and classic lifeboat colour scheme! I knew that she would be the one!

A call to my mate Peter Gregson (Wooden Ships broker) who knows all the Dartmouth goings on revealed that she had recently been salvaged from the depths of the Dart. A suspected corroded screw, in the port keel box, had apparently let the water in, and she was now for sale! Gregson gave us her owner, Jonathan Cardale's, number, and we arranged to meet him in a few days to have a good look over her.

In the meantime I did a bit of research on "*Methuselah*", A 87.
I found an article on her in the 1992 edition of the Atalanta Bulletin, and a photo (when she was still named "*Globulin*") in former Hon Sec, George Parker's "Short history of the Atalanta". Spookily, in an issue of old PBOs I had recently acquired (issue Number 5 - Nov 1995 Classic Cruiser Supplement) I came across a very informative article and photos of "*Methuselah's*" restoration in '91!

From these sources and from the phone conversation with Jonathan I began piecing together "*Methuselah's*" recent history.
George Parker had owned "*Globulin*" himself from '76 until he gave up boats for horses in '91, and sold her to Michael Joughin.
Joughin who had previously owned an Atalanta 31 (in the 60's) but had been "hankering to restore one of the 26 models" for some time, changed her name to "*Methuselah*" and employed Norman Whyte Boat Builders in Findhorn on the south coast of the Moray Firth, to carry out a full refit. This included a new cockpit, engine, and coating the hull with West Resin.
Joughin also implemented a few design ideas of his own at this time, such as the inner

"*Methuselah*" in the packing shed

forestay with a self tacking jib, lifting spade rudder in a box and fitting small bilge keels so "*Methuselah*" would dry out upright on her mooring in Findhorn estuary.
When Michael Jourgin passed away in 1995, his nephew Capt Jonathan Cardale R.N. (Rtd) inherited "*Methuselah*" and duly sailed her down from Scotland to Kingswear on the Dart, where he kept her below his fabulous home.

One morning Jonathan awoke to find "*Methuselah*" with her bow down, gracefully heading towards the bottom. He quickly arranged for the marina barge to raise her and had the local engineers whip the new Yanmar out and wash it through. This quick action saved both the boat and engine from any really serious damage. She was then hauled out and parked in the car park. A few weeks later we happened along!

I met up with Jonathan the following weekend and we had a good old yarn about his many voyages in "*Methuselah*".

On the dock at Auckland

I felt that in his heart Jonathan didn't really want to sell "*Methuselah*", as he obviously loved her dearly. He revealed that he was very sad about her sinking and couldn't face the time and energy involved in getting her afloat again. He was looking for someone who appreciated Atalantas and could take her on and restore her to her former glory.

Armed with articles from the AOA and experience gained from poking around a number of Atalantas in various states of (dis) repair, I felt fairly confident in what to look out for. Jonathan left me to it for the day and I gave "*Methuselah*" a thorough going over.
Structurally her hull was in very good nick. The obvious problems looked to be as follows: The deck was sound apart from forward of the fore hatch there was some delamination caused by water getting into old fairlead bolt holes. The stem under the bow roller was a little soft, due I

Wiapapa Landing, the view from our house, and "*Methuselah's*" new mooring, on a calm evening.

suspected to the corroding of the steel bolts holding the stem head fitting on. The cabin blister had a bad crack right down the centre due to the self-tacking jib track having been bolted through with no support underneath. Water had seeped through the crack and the laminate was a little soft in the immediate area. The engine a new (it had only been installed a few months previously – the second since '91!) Yanmar GM10, had been washed out after the dunking and looked good, but was still dismantled. Down below there was a neat tide line around the inside of the cabin as evidence of her swim! But a good scrub and dry out would cure that.
I found the small hole in the port keel box below the cooker which had apparently let the water in.
The trailer looked home built, but was pretty strong, and, with a service, would do for a few more miles. As an added bonus there was a spare Atalanta keel strapped to it!
There was obviously a fair amount of work to do, but sitting in "*Methuselah's*" cockpit visualising sailing off into the spring sunshine it all seemed easy enough!
On the 1st June, Jonathan very generously sold her to us, at a realistic price that ensured we could afford to do the restoration work, and we promised that we would take care of her and get her up and running again.
We decided to take her to Baltic Wharf, Totnes, near home, where we could store her undercover to dry out and work on her over the summer.

The summer of 2006 was dedicated to "*Methuselah*". It will be remembered as being dusty from hours of sanding, and sticky with epoxy but we loved it!
There were a number of restoration projects being carried out in the shed. It was very social, and we have great memories of the numerous friends we made all beavering away on their boats, betting on who would be first to go around 'the corner' - the last bend in the river visible from the yard.

While Seiko got on with scraping down the mast and applying 10 coats of varnish, I repaired the crack in the cabin blister, scarfed in a new piece of stem, relaminated the foredeck and laminated ply under the side decks for extra stiffness, as recommended by Colin! We both worked flat out to give the old girl a new paint job inside and out. There was a bit of debate regarding the colour of the hull but we ended up with a jaunty light blue, (International Squall Blue) which I think is pretty close to the original Atalanta pale blue.

Wiapapa Landing, the view from our house, and "*Methusalah's*" new mooring, during a flash flood. Thank goodness she was in the garden!

While plugging the hole in the keel box I began to have nagging doubts as to their soundness. I was not convinced that it was merely the corroded screw that had sunk "*Methuselah*". On closer inspection the plywood, especially around the steelwork of the keel mounting structure, showed signs of seepage and possible delamination.

As I was contemplating this major task, the option of moving back to NZ presented itself when Seiko was granted a residence visa.

We had to go and despite everyone telling us we were mad, despite warnings about the cost, there was no way we were going to give up on our beautiful "*Methuselah*". I still had good contacts in NZ, which ensured it would be the perfect place to complete her restoration. She would be an ideal boat for exploring the coast around the Bay of Islands where we intended settling. So the decision was made, she was coming too!

The second attempt at lifting "*Methuselah*" off the truck

We made the commitment to be in NZ before New Year.

We called Jonathan Cardale to let him know what we were up to. He was a little surprised, but very positive and supportive. He promised to come and say a final farewell to "*Methuselah*".

From that moment on time sped up considerably! We decided to shelve any further work on the keel boxes until we got to NZ.

On the 1st September we towed the freshly painted, gleaming "*Methuselah*" out of the shed. The lease on our flat was about to run out, so we packed up all our possessions, stored them in a friend's garage, and moved aboard! For the next 3 months we had a marvellous life parked beside the Dart at the end of the boatyard!

We rigged up a cockpit tent by fastening plastic conduits to the stanchions, bending them into an arc and fastening a white tarpaulin over the top. It looked a little like a poly tunnel, but was very bright and warm. We slept in the aft cabin and used the main cabin as our living room complete with colour TV!

We began investigating the various means of getting "*Methuselah*" to NZ

The options were:

- to sail her there, …not realistic considering the time frame!
- Putting her in a shipping container. After taking all sorts of measurements and drawing plans for cradles to support her on her side we realised she just wouldn't fit. It was also going to be expensive due to the numerous crane lifts we would have to do.
- Deck cargo we dismissed as too dangerous after hearing horror stories of boats turning up at their destination with serious damage,
- RORO, we found there were regular roll on roll off ships taking vehicles to NZ.

I contacted Autoshippers, 1st Move International in Bristol. They were extremely helpful. It definitely sounded like the safest and most economical way to go. We figured that on her trailer "*Methuselah*" was about 2 cars worth! My estimate of her cubic area was 35.88 cube, which is what our Shipping cost of £2,858.94 was based on. However I hadn't taken into account the extra cubic area taken up by the mast when packed on deck. Luckily for us she wasn't re-measured on the dock!

There was a sailing from Southampton the week before Christmas. As we didn't have a vehicle to tow her with, and I was a bit dubious about the trailer lasting the distance, we booked a truck with a Hiab crane (Aardvark Boat Haulage, Exeter) to take "*Methuselah*" up to Southampton a few days before she was due to leave, to give us a little leeway.

After nearly 20 years in the UK we had accumulated an amazing amount of gear! We got rid of what we could and, rather than ship the remaining valuables separately, we made the rather foolish decision to pack them all aboard. Box after box disappeared down the hatch until "*Methuselah's*" old trailer was groaning under the weight. I was very concerned about the hull so we distributed the weight the best we could and made up extra blocks to support the keelson and padding under the hull itself.

The day of reckoning came. Little did we know it was the beginning of the most nerve-racking couple of months we had ever had!

Jonathan turned up to say his goodbyes as we nervously watched the boatyard tractor drag the protesting trailer and "*Methuselah*" to the gate.

The boatyard wouldn't let us Hiab her onto the truck in the yard so we had arranged to

"Oh what have I done now!"

meet the truck in the rowing club car park on the other side of the river at dawn the following morning.
A friend with an old Land Rover carefully towed us down the road at 6am, the trailer's brakes smoking horribly!

The truck arrived and the driver put the slings under the trailer to lift the whole lot at once. After 10 minutes of groaning and straining, "*Methuselah*" swinging wildly, the Hiab could only manage to get her a few feet off the ground. "How much did you say she weighed?" The driver estimated she weighed closer to 4 1/2 tons than the 3 we had reckoned, 3 tons being the maximum for the Hiab. Bugger! I wondered if ditching the spare keel (I knew it would come in handy!) might just give us the weight advantage we needed. We unlashed it from its bed on the trailer and pushed it off onto the ground. By now the morning dog walkers were starting to congregate to watch the spectacle. The driver adjusted the slings and prepared to go again. We were very lucky to have had such a great driver, he was as determined as we were desperate! With the Hiab's overload alarms ringing and the hydraulics screeching, he *just* managed to get her on to the truck. It really was touch and go! I cannot explain what a relief it was to see her sitting up there on the tray! There were barks and applause from the gathered throng. The driver then lifted the keel back to its position on the trailer.
I decided to go up to Southampton with him to make sure everything would be OK at the other end. The driver entertained me with stories of all the boats he had seen dropped by cranes and fall off trucks! We arrived well on time and were met by an enormous forklift, which picked up the trailer and deposited "*Methuselah*" on to the dock in a flash.

Back in Totnes we said our goodbyes, then we took the train up to London to spend a few days with friends and do some Christmas shopping.

Soon after we got there I had a call from my agent at Autoshippers. There appeared to be a problem! The shipping company (Wallenius Wilhelmsen) believed the boat should be fumigated in the UK before they put her onboard, as NZ were having a Bio Security crack- down on the importation of wood products! We contacted Wallenius Wilhelmsen to explain that although Methuselah was wood she was coated with enough epoxy, paint and varnish to seal out any nasties. The shipping company wanted to cover themselves as it would be their responsibility to return her to the UK if she wasn't granted entry in NZ. My agent assured me he would sort it out.
Poor "*Methuselah*" missed the last sailing before Christmas. We flew off to NZ on Christmas Eve leaving her sitting on the wharf.
Our first 2 weeks in NZ were spent making frantic calls. Finally the NZ embassy in Brussels sent a fax to the shipping company to give the all clear for "*Methuselah*" to be loaded. She would be inspected by MAF on arrival in Auckland to determine whether she needed to be fumigated or not.
The timing was good as there was a sailing the following day. She was loaded onto the RORO ship the "*Tamesis*" and we were able to relax a little knowing she was on the way.

We tracked the ship's progress online. It was reassuring watching her position move amazingly quickly towards NZ, and she arrived in Auckland well on time on the 25th January!

We drove down the day before to organise her entry, pay the Port discharge fee (NZ$305) and a rather hefty customs duty (NZ$3200). It took a couple of days for "*Methuselah*" to be discharged, and when we got the call, the MAF inspector took us onto the dock to open her up for the inspection.
It was fantastic to see "*Methuselah*" again. Apart from being a bit grimy she didn't have a scratch on her. The trailer hadn't

faired so well having lost a tyre at some point, although it seemed to be balanced fairly well on the remaining 3 wheels.
I slid the hatches open for the young MAF inspector who took one look at the jam packed cabins, glanced at his watch, obviously contemplating missing lunch, and asked if we had anything to declare. He took our word for it, and with great relief we passed the bio security check with flying colours.
With trepidation we organised a United Carriers truck to transport "*Methuselah*" to Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands, about 4 hours north of Auckland.
At the dock she was to be lifted onto the truck by the dock's huge container forklift so we felt OK about that. To lift her off the truck at the other end we made sure United sent a Hiab capable of lifting at least 5 tons!
A couple of days latter we met the truck, with "*Methuselah*" on the back, at our friends' yard. They had kindly offered us the use of their driveway, which has plenty of space for unloading. As the Hiab swung into action I held my breath. It lifted her with ease. Two feet off the deck of the truck however, without warning, there was a horrendous crack as the steel spreader holding the strops folded in half!
"*Methuselah*" and the trailer came down with an almighty crash, onto the tray of the truck, bouncing forwards and coming to a stop with the trailer's jockey wheel an inch from the back edge of the tray.
I almost vomited at the horror of it!
Life would be too cruel to have come this far and have "*Methuselah*" end up a pile of splintered agba just minutes from the finish line!
A quick inspection showed that there wasn't any major damage. I believe the suspension of the truck and the (3!) tyres of the trailer took the shock out of the impact. It appeared a weld in the middle of the spreader had given way. We were incredibly lucky the broken halves hadn't dropped through the deck! Eventually, spreader-less, with the slings under the trailer they got "*Methuselah*" onto the ground. She was home! We promised her she wouldn't ever be trucked or craned again!

Soon after unloading our gear and giving the old girl a clean up, we started work on the keel boxes. I decided to start from scratch rather than do a patch up job so we jacked her up and cut out the old boxes completely. (I will save that story for another article!).
As we settle into our new life here, she is spending the NZ winter in a corner of a friend's kiwifruit packing shed while we fit the new boxes, and restore the KMS's and lifting gear, confident now that, shortly, she will be floating safely and happily in the Pacific!

For those interested in such matters, a breakdown of the costs of haulage, shipping and fees (in GBP) were as follows:
Lift and Truck to Southampton: £500
Shipping: £2,858.94
Port Discharge fee: £110.00
Import Duty: £1,179.00
Lift and Truck to Kerikeri: £183.00
Total Cost: £4,825.94

PS. Recently, as a last resort in tracking down the only other Atalanta reported to be in NZ, I wrote to several yachting magazines in the hope that one of their readers has information regarding A123 Coromanda, brought out to NZ
back in the 60's. I would also appreciate any information members of the AOA may have on her.

"*Methuselah's*" online photo album can be found at:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/l_atalante/

"*Gambol's*" Family Summer Anchor (22nd July – 5th August 2007)

by Mandy and Simon Garrat

"*Gambol*" A 17 had been launched the previous weekend from Levington marina (incidentally for those who trail, this is an excellent place to launch on the East Coast with a sheltered steep slip using a wire & block so the vehicle stays at the top). The disappointing leaks (round the keel bolt brackets) of the previous season had been cured over the winter. This had involved replacing the inboard forward part of the port centreboard case, which had decayed behind the keel bolt bracket – a lot of work!

Due to high winds, "*Gambol's*" crew (Simon, Mandy Abi (4) & Rachel (2)) did not make the trip down from Sandbach (Junction 18 M6) until mid week. The wind was still strong during the short trip from the No. 9 Ward's mooring at Pin Mill (where my father had kept his boat when I was a small child) to Levington. The idea was to board the crew and stores and wait for the winds to die down - in more comfort than that afforded by a swinging mooring! Unfortunately in my haste to get underway, I forgot to turn on the seacock for the raw cooling water for the Yanmar YSE 8. I remembered in a panic and killed it before it seized. The main went up in a hurry whilst it cooled down. It started again but stopped twenty minutes later just as I was just approaching Levington Marina entrance. With a strong following wind "*Gambol*" surged towards a vacant berth and fortunately I was able to briefly restart the engine and engage astern.

With a clearly sick engine and a young crew, the already limited sailing plans were curtailed further and Stone Point in the Walton Backwaters (otherwise known as Secret Water for any Arthur Ransome fans) was reached on the Friday under sail. A native, noting the Arthur Ransome society flag, gave a "Karabadangbaraka" greeting far too early one morning as he took his dog

"*Gambol's*" crew

"*Gambol*" ashore on the beach in the Walton Backwaters

for its morning ablutions. I am sorry to report that I initially gave a decidedly blank look and not the correct response, which is the greeting backwards ("Akarabgnadabarak"). Yes of course I had to look up the spelling!

On the Monday we went to Titchmarsh Marina by dinghy to speak with the engineers, where a diagnosis of blown cylinder head gasket was given. We obtained the part the next day and sailed "*Gambol*" onto the beach to do the work. She attracted a lot of interest from those coming ashore and one yacht even coming back for a second look and photo. This person has since contacted Colin.

On removal of the head it was clear that the head gasket was quite new and not the cause of the problems. The only positive news was that the engine started but was clearly still overheating when run for any length of time.

The rest of the holiday was spent with the girls building sand castles and dinghying back and forward to Walton & Titchmarsh Marina for provisions and showers.

On our return from one such excursion, we could clearly see another Atalanta anchored near "*Gambol*". As we got closer on the fast flowing ebb, we saw that it was "*Bluster*" A 183 and Jane Stearn. She was bound for Dover the next day and then on to foreign lands. We all went aboard for a nosey and a cup of tea.

Since getting "*Gambol*" back home, the engine has been rebuilt with a new cylinder liner (the old one being badly worn, which would explain the black smoke and oil in the cooling water!), piston and rings and a thermostat. The old thermostat had broken in two and part of it had become lodged in the bottom of the cooling holes in the head, this being the cause of the partial seizing of the engine.

Overall the kids seemed to love the experience, the aft cabin worked well as a nursery and floating caravan. "*Gambol*" trailed OK and dried out with ease.
However the moral of the summer was - as advised by Cellar Marine (very knowledgeable on all Yanmar engines) - treat your engine thermostat as a service item especially if you still have a Yanmar YSE 8 with an original thermostat. The new design is much more robust.

A142 gets new toe-rails

by Roy Camus

The toe rails on A142 looked original but needed replacement for three reasons:-

1. They were broken in places; it appeared due to being over borne following the adding of fittings including a pulpit. It seems that the mast had been carried with the foot on the pulpit thus overstressing the whole area.
2. There were areas of softening of the deck due to water ingress especially in the area under the rear cleats.
3. There was compression damage to the pseudo stringers where fastenings had been used to hold both the original and added fittings.

This is what we did.

We had already devised a way of carrying the mast without overstressing the pulpit. Cheek pieces were added to the stem head fitting and the heel of the mast is secured using the mast pin. Photo 1

Photo 1: Supporting the heel of the mast

The old toe rail was removed and measurements taken to locate both the old fittings, new ones that we wished to add and some that we wanted to move.

Having found some information about steaming wood from the internet we took the advice that air dried wood was best and bought a large "as sawn" air dried plank. Cost £70 from our local saw mill. We have enough left over to replace the rubbing strake all round.

The home made steamer

Although we had chosen what we thought was a knot free plank, as we ripped it into suitable strips it sprung into all kinds of shapes! We did get enough straight pieces for our needs and some of the bends were in the right plane for the forward curved lengths of rail. Every cloud!

These strips were dressed to size allowing a slightly larger section than the original by about 1/16".

On removing the old rail's supports we found the reason for the softness of the wood below. They had been bedded in soft

The aft end in place

compound, which with fretting had sucked and trapped water under them.

We made good the laminates in the areas that were damaged and then using the screw holes from the old supports, marked the centre line for the new ones.

New supports were made but slightly different from the old ones. Instead of being round we made them racetrack shaped. This gave a little more support and allowed space for separate screws to hold the supports down without conflicting with the screws that would hold the rails. At the fore and aft ends, where they slope down, we increased the clearance at the low end of the tapered wedge to allow easier access for painting. The supports were in three widths. The full width of the rail where there was a join or under a stanchion mounting, slightly narrower under the other fittings and a similar width to the original round bobbin style supports for all the others.

These supports were bonded in place using SP106 and the screws securing them left in until after the rails had been steamed. No more water ingress under our new supports! We pondered whether this was the right thing to do at this stage, but not knowing the forces that would be needed to steam the rails into shape, we did not know whether screws alone would be strong enough.

The aft and mid sections have only a little bend and some twist, but being concerned that steaming the fore section would be difficult, we took advice from a professional. He told us that it would not be possible to steam the fore sections in situ due to the width to thickness ratio. He suggested that Fairey probably used a factory jig. He advised us that kiln dried wood was best and then gave us a solution to the problem of bending the fore sections of the rails.

First we made a steamer. The pipe was a 4" plastic drain, fitted inside was a platform made of plastic coated garden trellis to hold

Metal plates in place ready

The band saw cutting the slits

the wood in the middle of the pipe. The pipe was insulated with bubble and foil loft insulation and then an old blanket. The steam came from a wallpaper stripper ex Mother-in-Law but I am sure any boot sale would supply.

The rails were prepared by being cut to about the right length and where they landed onto the solid section at the cockpit the joints were made and screw holes cut with a plug cutter to allow them to be se-

Clamping up the aft end

cured on steaming.

The aft and mid lengths were easiest so were done first. The wood was steamed an inch an hour for the min dimension of the wood which equalled 45 mins for our sections. We had to top up our steamer with water at 30 mins. On removing from the steamer the cockpit end was screwed down and the bend and twist formed by hand progressively working away from the cockpit. They were screwed down through galvanized plates made from brackets bought from any builder's merchant or DIY shop and finally screwed down at their ends..

Glued up and fitted

The forward lengths were more difficult. Right angle brackets were screwed to the supports on the centre line with the vertical part inboard but leaving an overlap on either the fore or aft of the blocks. The aft end of the rail was drilled with a plug cutter so that it could be screwed and located onto its aft mounting once steamed. Using a fine band saw, two cuts were made from the fore end to a few inches short of the rear

The toe rail slit ready to fit

end. These cuts were stopped at different distances. This made the rail into three pieces, which were still joined at the rear so effectively we were steaming three pieces with the same width thickness ratio. Of course the width of the cuts now left the rail slightly narrow. These three pieces were tied together and steamed. When removed from the steamer the rear end was screwed down and working progressively forward the three pieces were bent round the right angle brackets mounted on the supports. The photo shows the displacement of the three parts of the rail once in place and clearly shows the difficulty that would have arisen had we not cut the rail prior to steaming and bending. Clamping was needed in three different planes. Firstly to hold the three pieces together, secondly to hold the outboard edge down to form the twist (hence the reason for the overlap between the bracket and the mountings) and thirdly to hold the whole rail back against the upstand of the right angle bracket to form the bend. Once this had been done the fore end was screwed down through the metal plates. Speed is needed. As the wood cools it loses its flexibility.

The next day, after the wood had cooled it was unclamped and copious amounts of PVA glue used to join the three pieces back together. They were then clamped back into position. Once the glue had set the rails were again removed and cleaned with a belt sander. All the rails were shaped off the boat using a router and all the finishing work carried out. The joins were formed between the fore and mid lengths and all necessary shaping and drilling carried out to take the fittings. The rails were bonded onto their mountings and screwed through holes made using a plug cutter to finish them off.

Internally, bridge pieces were made from scrap hardwood to go over the pseudo stringers thus allowing the fastenings for the fittings to be securely landed.

Finally, paint and varnish. To varnish under the rails we cut up a paint pad and mounted it on a small piece of scrap aluminium to allow us to varnish upside down.

New backing pad in place

The result, toe rails as new or even better.

Mistakes we made, lessons we learnt.

1. It might have been better to buy wood pre-cut and finished to size. It would have been straighter.
2. Achieving the correct bend in our steamed rail meant it did not exactly follow the supports we had bonded into place. We had to remove and remake one of them. With hindsight we would only bond those where there is the most bend and thus lat-

eral force on the forward length, the others would just be screwed. When the rails had been correctly bent into place, these could easily be unscrewed, accurately centred under the rail and bonded.

3. We would allow extra width on the forward length to allow for the width of the two saw cuts.
4. We would have sourced more old-fashioned G clamps. The modern "ratchet up" type did not tighten that last little bit.
5. We would have sourced a light-weight metal duct pipe for the steamer. The plastic drainpipe started to sag when it got hot. Luckily we had a suitable length of wood to hand to support it and it did survive all six steamings but…
6. Be careful the hot wood is easily handled without the need for gloves but it stains easily from contact with metal.
7. We never did resolve the issue if whether air or kiln dried wood was best for steaming. Perhaps someone will advise us!

And finally.

This is a job well within the capability of a competent wood worker. When looking for our Atalanta we saw some that had non-original toe rails. I assume that was because the owners thought the job of replacing them as original was beyond them. Not so.

The finished Toe-rails in action