

# BULLETIN 1980

## PATRON

Her Royal Highness The Princess Anne, Mrs. Mark Phillips, G.C.V.O.

## OFFICERS OF THE CLUB

*Commodore:* Major-General C. W. Woods, C.B., M.B.E., M.C.

*Vice-Commodore:* D. Pitt-Pitts, Esq.

*Rear-Commodore:* R. S. E. Chamberlain, Esq.

*Rear-Commodore:* Mrs. E. Caulcutt

## Editorial

Our Patron, Her Royal Highness, The Princess Anne honoured us with her presence at the Cruising Dinner in February. It was a memorable evening for those fortunate enough to be able to attend and an historic occasion for the Club. Of the actual evening, no words here could justify the pleasure the event gave us; but in the historical context the Royal visit should serve to remind us of the members, the secretaries, the staff, the Flag Officers, and especially the Commodores who over fifty years have brought this Club to its present position and it would serve a double purpose if it stimulated us to consider the future, learning from the successes of the past.

On an evening in July Her Majesty The Queen Mother passed through the West Solent in the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. A large number of members went out in their yachts to greet her and from the Club was sent a message of good wishes to which she most graciously replied. Those of us who were able to be present will never forget the spontaneity and warmth of the cheering which expressed the feelings of everyone.

But the year was not only made of colour, happiness and success. A few things went wrong, mundane yet essential jobs had to be done and there were times for pondering what it is that distinguishes this Club from the others which we all might join, and what is it that separates sailing from the other sports which we enjoy.

The lure of sailing was described by an Irishman as the "fascination of what is difficult" and maybe he was right. No other sport has such a variety of difficulties ranging from the impossible to the boring; some are exciting, some frightening, and there is never any shortage of them. The sense of self preservation makes most of us agree that for a good season's yachting excessive difficulties are to be circumnavigated and this applies equally to yachting administrators who must submit to having a restricted course to steer if they wish to avoid disasters.

In many directions there are obvious yardsticks with which to measure progress; apparently yacht clubs enjoy no easily describable rules for success; solvency is obviously essential, but vast accretions of wealth have no necessary

merit; wooden buildings house some highly successful clubs, others have need for jetties, piers, sauna baths, squash courts and multi-bars; some capat clubs have no entry qualifications, others demand a total involvement with the sport; some succeed with one hundred members; we do just fine with three thousand, and every one of these is entitled to measure the activities of his club with his own standards.

Club success may be difficult to calibrate but its catalyst is membership involvement; in overall design and in small detail we are tremendously aware of our debt to the many members who give their time and their skills. The Burgee in the Hall was not bought, it was made and given; the dinghy rescue fleet and the tally safety system are not hired; the Club flowers and the Christmas decorations don't just happen, and the filling of envelopes to all members has not been automated. Much can be seen, a lot remains unnoticed.

Everything should be open to comment and improvement. At present this "Bulletin" is remarkable for being free, totally non-professionally written, carrying no money-producing advertising and having no note disclaiming the views of contributors. This Editor disagrees with none of the expressions in the miscellany of articles about members and their boats which make up this magazine; but there is an inbuilt modesty of description which could be misleading. "House Notes" perhaps properly does not mention that we were described this year in the leading national yachting paper by a visitor as "the most high powered sailing club in all England with a chef who prepares superb nosh." "Racing" would be incomplete without a typical quote from another unsolicited testimonial which described our Europe National Meeting as being "organized and run with precision, flair and competence." "Cruising 1980" makes 40,000 miles seem almost matter of fact; the Pacific, the Arctic and the Mediterranean quite ordinary; and when in an after dinner speech the Captain of the Cruising Class said how glad he was to hear that the racing side of the Club was O.K. there was no opportunity for reply. The Cruising and the Racing are thriving.

In a Club the size of ours there is inevitably and desirably some separation of interests, and without this specialisation we could not attain the standards we have come to expect. But unnecessary divisions can produce unnecessary difficulties. Any dichotomy between amateurs and professionals must be abandoned as even the titles are ill-defined, inaccurate and unnecessary; the cricketers stopped the gentlemen versus players match decades ago and happily now everyone has Christian names. Similarly the split between social and sailing interests can be vastly over-exaggerated; just no one can think only of sailing all the time and equally no one fully can enjoy this Club without an interest in yachting. The separation between dinghy sailors and keel boat sailors has gone; dinghy sailors are always in demand on racing keel boats as they tend to know how to sail faster and by instinct rather than by command they sit on the upper edge of the yacht.

There exists no real clash of interests between cruising and racing. At the conclusion of the Fastnet Race winning yachts are seen to take on loads of children and go cruising, whilst many of our cruising members have distinguished records in offshore racing. The curious pleasures of life mid-channel quickly wear a bit thin and surely almost every cruising man at least "presses on" whilst even the hardest-bitten racer appreciates the scenery which is the common back-cloth to all who sail. C.H.I., L.H.I. or Fairway all look a bit similar at four a.m. on a wet windy July morning whether viewed from a cruising boat or a racing machine. This Club has an especially happy relationship with the

two senior specialized Clubs whose standards we respect; the Royal Cruising Club we are delighted on occasions to assist through their use of our Clubhouse, and the Royal Ocean Racing Club we enjoy helping whenever they choose to start a race from the West Solent.

Difficulties are the spice of the sport and the graduations of these difficulties for the cruiser-racing yachtsman are comprehensive. Again, cricketers who have had longer to evolve, have divided their sport into three levels, Test, County and Village: in the Solent we have the Admirals Cup Competition, the Solent Points Championship and the West Solent Cruiser - Racer Association, in all of these our members have been involved as competitors, winners and as officials; no tournament is essentially better than the other, it is just a question of finding which appeals most to the individual; (better than the cricketers we now have with our "Fun Racing", an event in which the whole family can participate.) Costs at international level are colossal but it is thanks to the ingenuity of the R.O.R.C. handicappers that it is no longer mandatory at National level I.O.R. Racing to have a "W registration" boat to win; the earlier models with their old-age allowances still can win and if you are crewing on them you have a good chance of being fed properly rather than a diet of Mars Bars and beer. The W.S.C.R.A. handicapping system continues to produce good racing for those who view with suspicion the need for highly sophisticated measurements.

The Everest of competitive yachting could be the America's Cup and it is with a little apprehension but great hope that we wish well to our members who are already starting to plan the next attempt to recapture this prize.

To overcome the difficulties of communication much work goes into the production of News Letters, Programmes and Notices in the Hall which sometimes seem to go unread. No collage of this year would be complete without mention of some of the colourful events which have taken place. The "Home Brew" evening was an unqualified success and there is even talk of holding a "Fish Smoking" event on the forecourt in the summer: the Club bus to Earls Court in January is a civilised way of travelling to London and it is not compulsory to go into the Boat Show when you arrive: the Picture Show attracts great interest and our series of winter lectures have, hopefully, been entertaining and informative. None of these could take place without vigorous membership involvement.

Anybody who has had lunch in the competitors marquee at Easter will know that there are problems about the forecourt; the water comes in and up through the paving slabs, dependent on the springiness of the tide to a depth of about nine inches, which insures that only dinghy sailors with wet feet can enjoy the facility. This is a too flippant approach to a most serious problem which has concerned us for many years. Our limited riverside site with all its advantages carries with it the inherent factors of an unstable river bank; strenuous efforts are at present being made to formulate a plan which will certainly make entirely secure the Clubhouse and possibly enable us to increase the area which the Club occupies. To everything there is a price.

Some difficulties are of great magnitude: to the Olympic Games this year there was sent no yachting team from Great Britain. This Bulletin is not the place for detailed political controversy; the disappointment to two of our members who surely would have been selected to sail in the Soling Class is overbalanced by the belief that to withdraw was correct and, indeed, the Executive Committee wrote to commend the R.Y.A. on their decision. Some of our

members were involved in the fishermen's blockade of the major ports of France; fortunately none was hurt though the reports which arrived back in the Clubhouse made holidaying there sound alarming; one of the more shrewd observers of the scene noted that the audacious blockade breakers were generally in hired or borrowed boats.

About our title there is no difficulty. The Royal Warrant was granted in 1938 and re-inforced last year when Her Royal Highness Princess Anne graciously agreed to become our Patron. Our existence in Lymington owes everything to the foresight of our Founder, Major Potter and his friends who in 1923 bought an old Admiralty Boat house from which our present Clubhouse has evolved; with the occupation of this site comes an obligation and it is no accident that our entire racing programme, with one notable exception, is open to non-members. The title "Yacht" with us covers virtually every craft that floats.

Finally, most certainly we are a Club, a group of like minded friendly people with a common interest. We have this year elected some one hundred new members and they are all welcome, but at the end of the year we are without some members and to those who knew them well their absence causes a sense of emptiness; no amount of facile writing should disguise the fact that Clubs are about people and yacht clubs are about people and their boats.

## Racing

The 1980 summer will not be remembered for its good weather but nevertheless there were plenty of events organised by the Club to lure the racers to sea whatever their type of boat.

For the cruiser-racer the Spring Series attracted an entry of eighty, considerably higher than in 1979, and this must be an indicator that owners want to make the maximum use of their boats and are quite prepared to start to tune up for the coming season early in March.

The entry for our Solent Points Championship race in April was similar to previous years and the Bacon Trophy was won for the second time by Sir Maurice Laing in *Loujaine*.

Sixty yachts came to the line for the Poole race which was sailed in strong East to North-East winds giving a lively run on the passage there and a good beat on the return home, with a most enjoyable evening in the middle at the Parkstone Yacht Club and in and around Poole. *Smokey Bear* won the Parkstone Trophy and *Garnele* (Peter Ruston), *Merlin* (R. D. Bryce) and *Buckshee* (Jacques Delacave) all featured in the results.

Our two year experiment to run three 100 mile Short Offshore Races did not prove popular and will be dropped in future programmes with the exception of one race which will become part of a series of three races with the Royal Southern Yacht Club's Wight by Night race and the Island Sailing Club's Poole Bar Buoy race for an overall Trophy in May and June next year. This series will be supported by *Yachting World* and called the Triangular Series.

On the match-racing scene the courses were laid in Christchurch Bay instead of the Solent and this provided much better racing. Unfortunately, the second day for the OOD 34 Owners Championship had to be cancelled due to lack of wind but a decisive winner of the first day was Bruce Banks. The Royal Lymington Cup was won by Harold Cudmore and our members George Tinley and Phil Crebbin were highly competitive with five and six wins respectively out of

the nine match races. A large number of people helped with this prestigious event, not only serving on the Steering and Race Committees but also in the preparation of the boats and provision of accommodation and the Club is much indebted to them as well as to the Owners who were generous enough to lend their boats. Dunhill sponsored the Royal Lymington Cup in 1981 but unfortunately they have said they are unable to continue. This is a costly event to arrange and we are trying to find another sponsor for 1981 and the future.

The weather for the weekend of Contessa 32 races in June reduced the expected number of entries and the strong to gale force westerly winds were certainly a good tester for the few all-lady crews who ventured out to get in some practice prior to the Macnamara Bowl races two weekends later. Fortunately the sailing instructions provided for competitors noting their positions at the finish as the Club launch collected the Race Officers from the Platform soon after the start, fearing that if they did not return then they would be marooned for a very long time!

Thanks again to owners kindly lending their Contessa 32's, one hundred and eight ladies assembled the first weekend in July in eighteen boats to race for Macnamara's Bowl. The series was completed in good sailing conditions in the nick of time before the heavens opened on Sunday afternoon for a deluge of rain. A team of ladies from Vancouver, Canada, arrived to practise a week earlier and were much admired, not only for their looks, but for the way in which they had raised money in Canada for their fares and their dedication to winning the Bowl - which they did! The Wednesday afternoon and Thursday evening races are enhanced by the local ladies practising in Contessa 32's and indeed the Wednesday afternoon cruisers are virtually non-existent following the event, although Thursday evening racing is gaining in popularity. Rosemary Taylor won the Wednesday series and the Jorem Platter for the second consecutive year in *Blue Heron* and Chris Wilson and Tony Harris's *Gone With the Wind* won the Thursday series.

The Sailing Committee, appreciating that not everyone wants to compete in deadly serious racing, introduced three "Fun" races into the programme. These races, held on Sundays, were angled at families and were organised by Hugh Marriott and Chris Gwyn-Evans who thought up a number of intuitive, athletic and highly amusing antics for the competitors, the details of which were handed out at a briefing in the Clubhouse at 10 o'clock on the morning of each race. The starts were indicated by a hooter when all the boats were assembled at anchor on the starting line with their sails down; the finishes were at Newtown, Hurst and Beaulieu with some of the boats rafted up; and much fun was had by all. These races will be repeated next year.

An appalling weather forecast caused the Ware and Power Cup motor/sail races to be postponed for 24 hours. Unfortunately this prevented some of the Bar Yacht Club boats from competing and so it was not possible for a team race to take place between the two Clubs for the candlesticks. Nevertheless, the competition was fierce in the early stages of the race and the Needles Coast-guard soon reported to us that two boats had hit the wreck off the rocks but both had sailed on. The Ware Cup was won easily by Adrian and Margaret Bevis in *Nabob* and Hugh Wilson's anxiety, when Sir Arthur McDonald's *Bacchante* was sighted off the Durns Point boom proceeding at high speed, was unfounded as she failed to save her time on *Arpege*. It is a pity that more members do not take part in this race as all who do so derive a great deal of enjoyment from plotting how and when to use the engine to their best advantage.

The Potter Ship race is always fun and with the quadrilateral course, fixed certainly since the war, conditions vary considerably from year to year. The ebb tide and north to north-easterly wind this year resulted in a race without a beat to windward and for many it was quickly over. Dick Weguelin was a narrow winner in *Min-y-don* and defeated Helen Tew in *Mary Helen* by only a matter of seconds.

The time when we keep our fingers crossed most is for the Dinghy Meeting at Easter when the water is cold and enthusiasts arrive from far and wide to take part. This year we were lucky. Christopher and William Moore won the Easter Goblet and the Twins Cup in their Cadet *Starkers*; the other prizes and trophies were scattered amongst members from many other Clubs, the furthest being the Liverpool University Sailing Club.

The Newtown Camp for Cadets and Mirror dinghies in August did not obtain the necessary support to make it worthwhile the organisers going ahead with the arrangements this year. We are much indebted to Carol and Graham Mann who have ensured that the camps in previous years were such a success. Under Club "Situations Vacant" another organiser is sought for a dinghy meet of this type. Indeed, whilst we are on the subject, we are always seeking members who are able to help with our extensive sailing programme, with a real need for the able bodied and strong who can assist in the laying of marks and their recovery during the major events.

The dinghy entry for the Junior and Annual Regatta in August is never so large as at Easter but has a greater member participation. Some lively racing took place from the Club Starting Line whilst the Cruisers and XOD's raced from the Platform Line. Robin James won the Harkaway Cup for the best overall result in the small handicap class and the Langtry Cup was won by *Indulgence* sailed by Peter Bruce.

The Club took on the organisation of the International Europe Dinghy National and Open Championship over a long weekend in September in the hope that it would encourage some of our younger members to compete. This, however, was not the case and only two members raced in a fleet of thirty-eight. The first day's racing was cancelled because of high winds but five races were sailed over an Olympic course laid to the east of the mouth of the river on the two remaining days. There were competitors from Holland and West Germany with the Open Championship Trophy going to Germany.

The Kings Cup for the boat with the best points in R.O.R.C. races entered under the Royal Lymington Yacht Club burgee was won by John Bassett in *Solent Oyster* and the Saluki Salver for the similar best Solent Points Championship result was Tony Taylor's *Smokey Bear*.

The Jack in the Basket Trophy for the outstanding yachtsman/yachtswoman of the year under 30 years of age has been awarded jointly to Robert Weguelin, Simon Nunn and Jessica Nunn for the design, building and campaigning of the mini tonner *Hissing Sid*.

We are again very grateful to those who help us year in and year out in Committee Boats, Mark Boats, Rescue Boats, on the Platform, in the Club Starting Box, the Dinghy Park and launching ramp, with Protests, in the Office working out results, as well as in the Clubhouse during major events.

Eileen Caulcutt

## Lymington "X" Division — 1980

The continued success of the Lymington Division of the "X" Class can be attributed to a number of factors. The boat is superbly adapted to the conditions where it sails. The class association is well established with a committee which regulates development in a disciplined manner, and which is composed of dedicated and enthusiastic people. High on the list of these must be mentioned Joan Braithwaite, from the Lymington Division, who was elected Class Captain last November. She deserves our thanks for undertaking this demanding and time-consuming job.

Since the "X" Class is an entity of such long standing it follows that any annual report may have, on occasion, to include mention of the deaths of members who have sailed with us for many years. This year we have sadly to record the passing of Air-Vice Marshal Gerard Combe, c.B., Lieut-Col. "Hook" Sangster, and Richard Creagh-Osborne.

Gerard Combe bought No. 105 *Blue Phantom*, a Hamper boat, in 1955; she was built the year before. In 1958 he teamed up with "Hook" Sangster and they sailed together until they retired in 1977 when they were both elected Honorary Members. They did very well and won the Jade Cup in 1962. They used to follow that old custom of flying a string of pennants from their main halyard to signify their race successes during the season. Even after he gave up racing such was his enthusiasm that Gerard Combe would follow the action from his red Mini and was known to phone up competitors afterwards and enquire of them why they had done this or that. People like Gerard Combe and "Hook" Sangster do a lot to establish the *esprit* of the "X" Class and help substantially to ensure its continuity.

Richard Creagh-Osborne was a distinguished sailor of world class well before he joined the "X" Class in 1961. His wife helmed and he crewed No. 36 *Dolphin*, an old Berthon boat, as a very successful team. They won, or were placed, in practically every race they sailed from 1963 to 1966 when Richard won the Captain's Cup at Cowes. He was a great innovator who questioned, and improved things, and got results. He didn't keep all his know-how to himself but was always helpful and willing to pass on to others the nuggets from his mine of information. After giving up *Dolphin* he joined Joan Braithwaite in a partnership with No. 160 *Merlin* and they formed a formidable racing combination which continued until the illness which later resulted in his death forced him to retire. We miss him and extend our sympathies to his family.

The 1980 sailing season was dogged from the outset by atrocious weather and not surprisingly our turn-outs were not so large as last year. That Mount St. Helens has a lot to answer for! Despite the heavy winds and frequent rain forty races were sailed. At the end of the season we were pleased to welcome a strong contingent from the Parkstone Division and one of them went and won the Autumn Series. This just goes to show that we cannot relax.

We sailed team races against Parkstone, Yarmouth, Itchenor and Hamble and won them all, even though the first two were "away".

Thirteen Lymington boats went off to Cowes Week to tangle masts with all-comers. Seven of the top twenty in the overall results were from Lymington. Eric Williams in *Tortoise* won the Captain's Cup and Lymington convincingly won the Philipson Shield. This demonstrates the high standing of the Lymington Division within the class and the level of competition is extremely high. This manifests itself not only in tactics on the water but also in the attention to

detail which is applied to the boats themselves, in sail trimming, mast tuning, and generally in the application of modern thinking and ideas.

If readers get the impression that the "X" Class is about to destroy itself through imitation of America's Cup or Olympic competition practices they may rest assured that this is not so. The history of the "X" Class is packed with instances where people jack up the level of competition only to be eclipsed in turn by others who, in turn, get eclipsed. That's life! "X" sailors set great store by *apres sail* either at tea after every race which can then get post-mortemmed then and there or over something stronger at the periodic get-togethers we have in the closed season. In these we like to sit at the feet, and absorb the wisdom, of experts, which frequently gets forgotten before the long dark evenings give way to a season when it could possibly be applied. In a pleasant place like the R.L.Y.C. bar it's great to sail an "X"-boat. Come and join us!

Nicholas Dover

## XOD CLASS PRIZES

Ladies Race . . . .	Josephine	Gillian Devonshire
Crews Race . . . .	Josephine	Tim Stevenson
Family Handicap . . . .	Persephone	The Fields
Gerald Gray Cup and		
Thursday Evenings . . . .	May Day	John Cooper
Sunday Series . . . .	Estelle	Frank Atkinson
Saturday Half Points and		
Wednesday Runner Up . . . .	Zest	Richard Smith
Saturday Points Jade Cup	Anitra	George Tinley
Wednesday Half Points		
Wade Cup		
Jubilee Cup		
Candlesticks	Tortoise	Eric Williams
Persephone (Yarmouth)		
Wednesday Points - Hotham		
Saturday Runner Up		
Allott Cup		
Persephone (Lymington)		
Cock Boat Cup		

## Cruising — 1980

The "Lighthouse" always starts the next year's cruising programme. The 1979 event should, for the first time, have seen some 100 boats at the Needles approximately ten days before Christmas. Unfortunately, the weather gods decided otherwise, but nevertheless, about 50 boats managed to make Yarmouth in Force 8 - 10 winds. Before Christmas the Yarmouth Lifeboat, under Dave Kennett, delivered parcels on the South side of the Lighthouse, because of a fresh Northerly wind. The transfer was witnessed by Chris Bowen, then Commodore, from a member's boat.

In the New Year the "Cruising Dinner" had the honour of entertaining our new Patron, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne who presented the Cadiz and Quains Cups and the Jack in the Basket Trophy. Although not strictly in composition a Cruising Dinner, the evening was totally enjoyable. In future



priority attendance at these annual dinners will be given to owners whose cruises have been entered in the Cruising Book in the Chartroom.

The popular cruise planning evenings were as well patronized as ever and perhaps the entries in the cruising book bear witness to the fact that these discussions widen members' horizons. This coming winter the meetings will be repeated and even added to.

1980 was the turn of the Le Havre Yacht Club to visit us. For once we were blessed with tolerable weather at Whitsun (not Spring Bank Holiday) and we were delighted to entertain the crews of about a dozen French boats and a shore party led by the President of the Club and his wife M. & Mme. Pesle. These visits seem so short, but we appear to pack in plenty of action and our members thoroughly enjoyed the party given by the French crews in their boats alongside the Club pontoon.

Cruises recorded clocked up about 40,000 miles, but we do know that there were others not entered in the book. Remember, if you wish to have priority at the Cruising Dinner, fill in that book. The cruises themselves stretched from Lymington - California and to the Arctic Circle in North Norway. A lady member's single-handed Atlantic crossing from Newport - Lymington; and others to Finland, West Scotland, Spain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, North and South Brittany and the Mediterranean and North Africa. Certainly when cruising in the nearer waters of Northern Europe the Royal Lymington burgee can be seen in numbers second only to the more specialised cruising clubs.

Flag etiquette has certainly improved, but certain niceties are still occasionally not observed. The writer was slightly non-plussed on two occasions when, having a cockpit lunch at the Club Pontoon, crews from alongside boats walked straight across the cockpit area. It is normally customary to pass across a neighbouring boat via the foredeck; a procedure which is most important when visiting foreign ports.

Once again the "Goathorn Meet" was dogged by bad weather. Taking the view that the "Meet" was more important than the place and in view of a very poor forecast for the Saturday, we switched the location to Beaulieu River. Some 14 boats attended and their crews had an enjoyable if slightly blustery weekend.

Those intending to put in logs for the Cadiz and Quains Cups, and parents who wish to chase their young to challenge for the Lentune Pen, should note that all logs must be handed in by the end of January 1981. By our cruising record this year, we should have a bumper entry.

Best wishes for the cruising year of 1981 and may the 1981 sunshine be less watery and the sunsets less fiery than in 1980.

**Brian Macnamara**

## **Liemba's Cruise from Lymington to California**

On September 9th Chris Bowen orchestrated our family and friends into a farewell party at the start of a 9,640-mile voyage to California in our Nicholson 35 *Liemba*, and their good wishes brought us fair weather all the way to Spain. Fog off Portugal did not prevent us sailing into the heart of Oporto where the Port Captain welcomed us to his bustling city with port and cake for breakfast!

Pleased to reach 40°N without encountering anything over force 6, we were unlucky to meet the worst weather of our voyage between Cascais and Madeira -

a week of strong or gale headwinds and one night lying a-hull to force 10 – but emerged with a sheared pulpit bolt as our only damage and much confidence in *Liemba*. Madeira was more enchanting than La Palma, Canaries, our last stop before crossing the Atlantic. Both islands had good clean harbours however and excellent provisions.

Although we left for Barbados as near the end of the hurricane season as we dared the winds were pretty good, and we covered the 2700 miles in 23 days. Only in the last week were there the fierce squalls that can be so tricky to manage. Twin genoas, flying-fish, the ocean swell, warm nights and the smell of freshly-baked bread were the essence of this trade-wind crossing.

We spent three months cruising the Windwards and Leewards between Tobago and the Virgins and could have doubled that. For much of the time family or friends were with us on holiday and we enjoyed the perfect Caribbean sailing. There were still worries: in one of Grenada's lonely bays we were fired on by Cuban troops. The bullets were a few yards short, but an ugly reminder of the political undertones. I saw more charter yachts than in 1973/74 especially in the Virgin Islands, but we found peace in parts of the Grenadines (just out of season), N.E. Antigua, parts of the St. Barts / St. Martin / Anguilla group, and especially the reef-strewn windward coast of Martinique. This last is thought too dangerous for charterers, but with a French chart and a hard day's slog to windward we reached some beautiful spots and ate excellent seafood.

The trades were strong in February for the 1,000 - mile passage to Panama with several days of force 7, storm jib and trysail. The San Blas islands, 80 miles east of the Canal, were magical: a patchwork of unspoilt reefs and cays, friendly Indians and a sense of being in another century. Quite a contrast to the technology of the Canal; the transit only cost \$37 but, tied to a motor yacht helmed by a "cowboy" who accelerated into the lock-wall, we were lucky to emerge unscathed.

From here Sally and I were faced with 3,000 miles to San Diego, California, for much of which we had headwinds, adverse currents and no one else on board to help us. The west coast of Costa Rica provided some lovely stops with the volcanoes of Central America as a backdrop, and before entering Mexico we sailed within half a mile of the continuous beach that lines the Gulf of Tehuantepec for 340 miles to get protection from possible offshore hurricane-force winds. It was an eerie journey so close to the surf! The last 750 miles (Baja California) was especially difficult with strong headwinds, a lot of motoring, a lonely coast (Baja is mostly desert) and anchorages of the utmost desolation. In calm water off a lagoon entrance we motored into a submerged whale, which then surfaced abruptly just 6 feet away and its huge bulk terrified us. It was docile however and did us no harm. After so long in such solitude it was a stunning contrast to enter the civilisation of San Diego on May 23rd, and we are still learning to adapt to it!

Nicholas Davies

## Fubb's Cruise to the North Cape

I have always wanted to do a long cruise and bought *Fubbs* with that in mind. A long cruise meant to me, and still does, the North Atlantic tour leaving in September and getting back in May the following year. Peggie doesn't care for long passages and likes her husband to be handy to cope with domestic

responsibilities and possible family emergencies. She thought eight months away was too long, she wasn't too happy about three and a half months away either. So I started looking for a cruise that held some degree of adventure and which included places of scenic beauty not often visited by cruising people.

C. C. Lynam's book "*To Norway and the North Cape in Blue Dragon II*" started me off thinking of the North Cape. He made several visits to Norway in 1911 and 1912, leaving his boat over there between visits. Since that time there have been several yachts who have sailed to North Norway and all reported that the scenery is superb, the people very friendly and that continuous daylight - even continuous sunlight - is most invigorating. This we found to be the case but we were lucky in that North Norway in 1980 had the best summer for fifty years.

I estimated that it would be possible to do Lymington to the North Cape, back down the Norwegian coast and home again from Bergen in 3½ months. James Crawford, who had been in the battle of Narvik and Naval Attaché after the war, encouraged me very much to have a go.

The North Cape is way north of the Arctic Circle, further north than Iceland and Alaska but, thanks to the Gulf Stream, is ice free. The glamour of such a goal attracted Bobbie Wallbank who had sailed with me many times and Tita Smellie who came for the full time and David Ashe, a friend of Bobbie's, who joined after the first month. They formed the backbone of the crew. They had given up their jobs for this cruise so I felt no small responsibility to ensure that the cruise was a success and worth the difficulty of finding jobs again. In addition we started off with three stalwarts, two of whom, named Pope, had been to the Azores with me: they had the tough first month. Two young nephews and a Naval friend joined for the trip home from Bergen. In between we had a succession of friends who came for two weeks and Peggie and Margaret who came for three weeks - these were picked up at various ports down the Norwegian coast.

We were lucky in that we made each of the crew change dates, so necessary with Apex fares, without difficulty. In all sixteen people were on board at various times. In retrospect it would have been less restrictive, and involve less lost time in crew changes, if it had been possible to arrange crews to sail with us for four weeks instead of the shorter times.

Not a little argument took place regarding the best route. The logical route is West Coast of Scotland, Lerwick, Lofotens and back down the North Sea. We were strongly advised that our achievement of rounding the North Cape would only be obtained if we made the Lofotens very early on. As it is about 250 miles shorter to Lerwick via the North Sea we took this route. I wondered very much if we were right when we took a very long time to get round Dungeness against an Easterly, 5 - 6. Unlike two previous voyages who had North-East gales off the North Norwegian coast we were lucky and made the Lofotens non-stop in ten days.

Coming home from Bergen also caused discussion as I wanted to come home the shorter direct route but the crew wanted to circumnavigate the United Kingdom and do the West Coast with its shorter passages. This, in the end, we decided to do.

**Gabriel Clay**

## Winning Macnamara's Bowl — 1980



Thank you all for giving us the opportunity to come and sail in this year's Macnamara's Bowl. It was a great experience for us and we really enjoyed and appreciated the hospitality extended to us.

When I decided in February to put together a team to come over to England for the event, I did not anticipate the work and time involved; thank goodness for an understanding family. Perhaps the biggest job of all was picking the team. Fortunately there were several good sailors to choose from, but it wasn't until I used a logical approach and picked people for the specific jobs involved that I was able to select a team.

Then the fun began. For the first while, practice and chaos went hand in hand. It took us two months before we actually started working as a team and gained enough confidence in each other so that we could concentrate on our own jobs, rather than looking at what each other was doing. Luckily, Holly and her husband had just bought a new three-quarter tonner which they offered for our use. Tim only got to sail on his new boat about three times in the next three months. I question whether I could be that unselfish. We practised three times a week from March onwards. Cathy McPherson's boyfriend filled in for anyone that couldn't make a practice so that we wouldn't have to shuffle duties. He was such a big help that I was tempted to buy him a bra and skirt and bring him along. Between practices we met and went over rules, tactics, sail trim and protest procedures.

After finding out how expensive the air fares were, we decided to try and have a fund raising dinner. The executive of the Yacht Club approved of the idea, and with the help of the Club Manager we went to work on the details. This venture took us over a month to set up, but was well worth the effort. The Club put on an excellent dinner, we collected over seventy door prizes, hired a band, and set up a gambling casino in the upstairs lounge. It turned out to be a great night with 180 people attending. Everyone had a great time and we could hardly believe our eyes when we realized that we had made enough for all of the air fares.

After the dinner there were so many people who felt they had a stake in our trip, we really felt pressured to do well. So we entered all of the local races; some were disastrous, but when we crossed the finish line ten seconds after a two-tonner one night we knew we were on the right track.

June arrived before we knew it and everyone got really excited about the upcoming trip. Susie and I were the only two on the crew who had been to the South Coast of England before, and felt really good about taking the others to a place that we both loved. June also brought bad news for us. Freydis was given a promotion and was also in charge of a Convention at the end of June and felt that she couldn't come. This news threw us all for a loop. We decided to ask Judy Day if she would come in Freydis' place. I had sailed with her before and thought she was great: the rest of the crew knew her socially but had never sailed with her. We were all delighted when she accepted and she did a super job and was great company.

Ken Robinson had been looking after the preparations for our arrival in Lymington and in his usual way had everything organised for us. We all stayed with him. He had arranged a car for our use and had taken care of all the details we couldn't handle from this end. Peter Dunford kindly lent us his boat *Blanco* and was a phenomenal help in getting it ready. The boat was in perfect

condition, so all we had to do was some tuning and complete the safety requirements set out in the Contessa rules. Jeremy Roger's staff was also a great help; they got us a new spinnaker pole, helped us put on a few new blocks and even checked over the motor for us. The Contessa 32's are a great boat for class racing, and even though we weren't used to racing in the 30 knot winds we had at the beginning of the week, we all felt secure in the knowledge that the boat was well built and able to stand any conditions offered.

By the weekend we had checked all the equipment on the boat, had sailed every day, and felt we were ready for the Regatta. Luckily, the wind had died down, and other than lacking local knowledge, we felt we had a chance to do reasonably well. The racing was close, the competitors were good, and the hospitality was great.

Thank you for inviting us. We had a super trip, and the Macnamara's Bowl looks great in our trophy case at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club.

Lynne Brown

## The Tale of Hissing Sid

*(Dedicated to the local employers whose consistent enthusiasm and facilities helped to make the whole thing possible.)*

*Hissing Sid* is the result of a joint desire to own and race a yacht that incorporated our own ideas and rule interpretations, to produce a speedy, easily handled craft. These aspirations were forced into IOR shape, the decisions to build made, and the finance scraped together.

The first difficulty was finding locally a sound, dry, structure, easily heated in which to build the hull and deck. I eventually tracked down an associate who lived near Beaulieu with a disused deep litter shed. This, when cleared out and partitioned off, proved ideal and in early January our shipwright commenced building the plug, then forming the hull and deck by moulding sheet foam and a thin grp layer over the outside. The unskilled element then started the major time-consuming task of fairing and finishing. Meanwhile, the other components were prepared – spars at Needlespars, sails at Hoods and the hollow steel keel in Suffolk. Collecting the keel involved us in a 400 miles round trip in one of the Jeremy Rogers service vans.

With the hull and deck joined and nearly finished, we moved to Lymington, *Hissing Sid* needing only four people to move it, in order to fit the keel, rudder and deck fittings with the proper jigs to ensure accuracy of alignment.

Then came the hull measurement and launching and the race to get it rated IOR mini-ton in time for the trials. This involved complying with safety standards and making the boat float in IOR trim. The spars we collected on a Saturday morning from Locks Heath with a mast trailer some 30 feet long! I believe that surprised even David Hunt. As *Hissing Sid* had turned out to be so light (1,100 lbs with keel) we needed considerably more ballast than anticipated. With the lead in the keel we made up the difference with railway line reinforced concrete – mixed on the pontoon and shovelled through the forehatch.

Eventually, with trim, ballast and sail adjustments, the rating arrived at 16.5 ft. just in time for the Southern area trials. These were incorporated in the Chloride Level Rating week. Our practice race was a 500 metre dash on a Thursday evening, with a result best forgotten. The night before the trials at

Cowes saw us still sawing off surplus boat and bolting on fittings until the early hours on the floodlit afterdeck of the *Jolly Roger* (support boat). This proved decidedly unpopular with the other competitors who seemed to need to sleep!

The trials were run on an intermittent gale basis, with all but one race run in breezy conditions, with rain or sleet laden squalls not uncommon. Two races each day meant "cruising" around under reduced rig for an uncomfortable lunch. Our long offshore was the Round the Island race, and with 11, 5, 3, 8 out of 16 we needed to do well. Our reasonable start was followed by a mediocre beat, rounding Palm in 4th place. The high speed three-sail reach to St. Catherine's saw us in the lead, only being passed by several J24's and a 40 footer. The following run in seemingly hefty seas (including jibe), surfing into the middle teens, was met in different ways by the crew - one with grim determination, one with eventual fortitude in the face of overwhelming odds, and one with a groan every time *Hissing Sid* fell off a wave or the spinnaker collapsed. After that the rest of the race paled into insignificance, apart from the retrospective satisfaction of leading all bar one of the mini-tonners into the Ryde Sands horseshoe, and being the fastest at bouncing our way out over a 100 metres of shallow shoal. Eventually we finished a distant second to *Silver Dream Racer*, giving us second overall mini-ton.

After the trials *Hissing Sid* managed one or two local races before being sat back to front on a Contessa trailer behind the Landrover.

*Hissing Sid* left for Edinburgh at 5.00 a.m. Saturday morning and arrived with a fly-spattered transom through Edinburgh city centre at 11.00 p.m. festival time. On finding the Royal Forth the secretary kindly gave us permission to leave *Hissing Sid* manoeuvred into the Club forecourt overnight, whilst we sorted out our campsite. Over the next few days *Hissing Sid* was re-measured and scrutineered, but a technical hitch on a sail size adjustment resulted in only just making the time limit. *Hissing Sid* was launched at Port Edgar under the Forth road bridge and motor-sailed round to Ganton Harbour.

The whole series was sailed in a lot of wind, taxing the boats and crews in the extreme, with the exception of the first Olympic course which was windless for the first four minutes. Fortunately for the other 34 competitors a fresh 3 - 4 arrived from behind the committee boat and peeled the yachts off the line on a spinnaker reach to the windward mark. Being the furthest from the new breeze, we had to sit until the motive power arrived. We were subsequently the last to round the windward mark by some 200 metres. To our amazement the race was continued and due to later uncertain circumstances, we missed the two hour time-limit for protesting the race committee. The other Olympic courses were good tests for the boat; in the second we were recalled and started several minutes late yet finished 6th, and in the third *Hissing Sid* led for the first round until a ripped spinnaker put paid to fast reaches and finished 4th. The short offshore was a little uneven as we were in the half of the fleet who, misunderstanding the committee boat's instruction, beat to the wrong mark instead of fetching to the right one from the start. The long offshore (55 miles) took us out to the North Sea via some nasty rock promontories in near gale conditions. In fact we ended the 15 mile run under main and twin headsails, in order to preserve the boat and crew for the long beat back. As it turned out the wind moderated and veered to give us a long fetch home to Granton in a sloppy, left-over sea. Unfortunately for them, some of the leading boats were caught out by the wind shift and lost out quite badly thereby giving us 7th place. Therefore with our 24, 6, 15, 4 and 7 we finished 9th overall, earning us the

designer built and sailed trophy. The event being Drambuie sponsored, resulted in every participant taking home a bottle, winners receiving more – in the event a crate!

On the whole, the event was well run, and in particular *Hissing Sid's* reception and treatment by the Royal Forth was very generous and very much appreciated.

*Hissing Sid* is now for sale and coming out favourably under the new IOR rule changes will still be a very competitive boat for next season but it would be useful if we were able to realize our investment in order to have the opportunity of developing a successor, not necessarily mini-ton, from the worthwhile experience gained.

Jessica and Simon Nunn, Robert Weguelin

## Racing for Fun — August 30th, 1980

The Race Committee met at a quarter to ten to decide on the final course. At ten o'clock was the briefing for the third and final fun race of this year.

The course: "For five minutes from the Start, back the main and sail backwards to the starting line. Somewhere between the starting line and the first mark drop over the lifebuoy and turn 180° and try to pick it up before someone else does.

"Round the first mark, put another sail in place of the mainsail, assuming that the mainsail is ripped. Sail down to the second mark, Berthon. Between the first and last mark, children aged 16 and under transfer from boat to boat getting signatures from as many helmsmen as possible."

Somewhere between Berthon and Sowley boats had to anchor and hoist one crew member up the mast. From Sowley to finish as much child swapping as possible had to be done.

It was a beautiful day, with a wind force of 2 - 3 and it was blowing from the north north east. We started at eleven o'clock by sailing backwards. *Charmed Quark* picked this up very easily and went shooting over the starting line. Then came the lifebuoys which was great fun. *Canzonet* and *Abigail* dropped their lifebuoys overboard; *Canzonet* got *Abigail's* and *Abigail* got *Canzonet's*. *Barnacle* got *Abigail's* and then *Melody* got *Canzonet's*. *Abigail* got hers and so did *Canzonet*.

After rounding Delta everybody had to assume that their sail was ripped so they put up another sail. Child swapping was also taking place and it was great fun with children jumping from boat to boat getting signatures. This was a great challenge for the helmsmen as they were also sailing under a jury rig.

Between Berthon and Sowley one crew member of each boat had to go up the mast and the youngest got two marks and that was a girl aged six from *Browzer* and the oldest people also got two marks and they were the helmsman of *She Bean* and Mrs. Ridout from *Abigail*. Then we sailed on to Beaulieu, child swapping and trying to get the right children on the right boats.

The winner was *Charmed Quark* and the helmsmen were Hugh Marriott and David Wagstaff. Despite the fact that they sailed all the way from Sowley to Beaulieu without any children at all! Eight boats rafted up together and had drinks and lunch and the children rowed and sailed.

Julia Gwyn-Evans (12 years)

The highlight of the year for the House was the honour of the presence of our Patron, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne at the Cruising Dinner at the beginning of the year. Many members and all the staff put in a great deal of time and effort to make the occasion the very great success that it was, and the Club owes them all a great deal of thanks.

The rest of the year has been one of almost ceaseless activity. Amongst the many events, we were delighted to be able to accommodate the Royal Cruising Club for their supper party here, prior to their annual meet, in their centenary year. We were also very pleased to entertain the Spanish visitors competing in the race from Lympington to Bayona at the end of Cowes Week.

This year, once again, we held our Barbecue. However, the weather forecast being bad, it was not at Hurst Spit but by the very kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. James McGill, at their splendid barn at Bucklers Hard. It was a great success and no one was disappointed in not being able to sail to the event, least of all the organisers. Running the barbecue ashore makes life very much easier.

Our programme has been very much as in previous years with supper dances, with bands rather than discotheques; with lecture suppers; with speciality suppers such as the Goose Supper, the Fish Supper or the Game Supper. The New Year's Eve Party is such a success that it was already fully booked by the beginning of November. Clearly, to be fair to all members, we will have to review the booking arrangements for next year.

Your Committee is very aware of the growing pressure on the Club, particularly from outside bodies, to run events here. On the basis that the Club is for the members' own use, we have been cutting down on some organisations which either have very few members of the Club within them, or have nothing to do with sailing. As far as possible, those major events which disrupt the normal life of the Club are kept to only those occasions which involve many members. Your House Committee welcomes any suggestions from members that would improve and assist in the running of the Club.

**Sebastian Chamberlain**