



DOGWATCH

The newsletter of the South West Gaffers



Contents

**Presidential
Ponderings**

**Secretarial
Scantlings**

New Members

Fowey Classics

**Brixham Heritage
Rally**

**Brixham Heritage
Regatta 2025**

**Fowey Classics
Rally**

**Dittisham Small
Boats Rally**

Events

**Photos from Fowey
Classics**

All material for DogWatch 58 should be sent to Oliver Peterken (sweditor@oga.co.uk) as soon as possible and no later than 31st December.



Roger and Ollie Wickham in their self built *Elfor* at Dittisham (photo Paul Pearson)

Welcome!

In this issue, we have reports on the Brixham Heritage Rally, Fowey Classics as well as the small boats at Dittisham. There is a full schedule of sailing events, lunches and talks for the remainder of this year and next.

There is a new small boats rally at Mylor on the Carrick Roads for July 2025 which can also accommodate the larger brethren. Having towed a quarter tonner down the narrow lane to Dittisham, I can tell you that Mylor is a doddle.

Oliver Peterken - Editor

“Kirsebær”

From The Poop Deck

Presidential Ponderings

Martin Elliott “Roxanne”

I suppose this could be the Autumn woes edition of Presidents Ponderings for this issue of Dog Watch. The nights are drawing in, good sailing days are becoming infrequent and plans are firming up for winter storage for our boats.

In our particular case, the yard have asked that I reduce as far as is possible the gross weight of Roxanne – it seems that if yacht handling machinery had eyes – they would be bulging when faced with the 9200kg as indicated when lifted by crane last year! However, this is shaping up to my advantage in that it presents the encouragement to completely clear the vessel of all the unnecessary accumulated clutter over the last few years. And also making the winter programme of refit and renew much easier to deal with.

Whilst on the subject of woes, we were at Charlestown harbour on the 10th October for an afternoon pint at the Pierhead pub (apologies to those gaffers not yet retired) and we witnessed the distressing sight of the ex-Norwegian trading ketch “Kajsamoor” lying on her side and flooded in the inner harbour. On the 30th September Charlestown was hit by severe Southerly gales and the lock gate was very badly damaged causing the harbour to become tidal. This resulted in the vessels that had not evacuated drying out at each low tide. I surmise that the stresses on the hull planking may have been too much for the “Kajsamoor”, whose overall condition of the vessel was not looking too good.

Back to more relevant Dogwatch matters. The invites to the laying up lunch / AGM and prize giving will be circulating shortly and I would very much encourage members to join us. It is the perfect opportunity for a very sociable afternoon and an excellent lunch. It is being held again in Fowey at the Gollants club who

look after us very well. As South West Gaffers, we do suffer the geographical problem of our elongated patch. Despite the attempt by the committee to mitigate matters by alternating between Fowey and Brixham for our “laying up” and “fitting out” events – it does result in travelling for many members. If anyone has an idea for other solutions to this problem, then please contact a committee member.

Speaking of committee members, may I make a personal plea for everyone to take a moment and consider their own position and potential to join us at some point in the future. It is in fact very interesting and an opportunity to present new ideas and discuss issues, it is also not too demanding of your time.

Secretarial Scantlings

David Patuck “Susan J”

While the summer weather has been disappointing, one thing we have not lacked is plenty of wind!

It has been good to see many boats and crews at the various events in the SW Area, some new to the Area or returning. I am looking forward to reading about some of the events in this and future issues of “Dogwatch”. Several members work very hard to organise these events and hopefully the secretarial side, of administration can only improve with adaptable computer templates available, should anyone need them.

Looking at the South West Gaffers WhatsApp, some of our members have been further afield, in the Netherlands, Brittany, the Channel Islands and the Isles of Scilly, amongst others. It is also clear that some skippers are still working hard on repairs and other problems with their vessels. Many solutions are described and suggestions made, which are very useful to read about.

After more than 12 or more years, Mike Garlick has now retired as **SW Trophies Officer**. This is an important role, with around 15 or so impressive, often handmade, trophies allocated winners of the 3 classes in the SW Annual Race, 2 classes at Dartmouth Regatta and for other endeavours by SW

SW Gaffers Officers

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The SW Area of the OGA [website](#)

OGA [website](#)

Instagram: [instagram.com/southwestgaffers](https://www.instagram.com/southwestgaffers)

Area Bank details: Metro Bank "South West Gaffers" Sort code: 23-05-80 Account No. 40530002

South West Gaffers are the South West Area of the OGA-
 The Association for Gaff Rig and Traditional Sail

to winners of the 3 classes in the SW Annual Race, 2 classes at Dartmouth Regatta and for other endeavours by SW members. If any member would be interested in taking on this role, of keeping track of these and storing the few un-awarded ones, please do get in touch with swsec@oga.org.uk

In the meantime, the trophies will be on display, before being properly awarded, at the Laying Up Lunch in Fowey in November. Results of the Annual Race in July are already published in the "[SW News](#)" tab in the SW Area of the OGA website. One award is for the boat and skipper coming the furthest to the Annual Race. If you think you came further than Weymouth, then please let me know!

We also no longer have a **Merchandise Officer**, now that Paul Jolley has stood down. In the past it has been possible for members to order items of clothing, badges etc directly. This could be restarted, possibly with the same firm, Riviera Embroidery, that does the National OGA Merchandise but we need a SW member to come forward to organise it!

** Now that the sailing season is coming to an end, I have started to learn how to edit the SW Area of the OGA website. Some of you may have already noticed that the "[SW Events](#)" tab on the Area section of the OGA website now starts with future and the most recent events, as you scroll down. Other events of interest in the SW, will be in a separate tab. The links from the "[SW Calendar](#)", and the calendar of the National "[OGA Events](#)", do work but you need to scroll down, to the details of the specific event.

I have also been able to update the "[SW Contacts](#)" and add items to the "SW News" tabs. Gradually the text is being simplified. I am grateful to Barbara Runnalls, who has agreed to step forward and to assist in these matters. Our aim is to try and keep the Area pages simple, up to date and of increasing usefulness for members. The "Almanac" document, circulated to members earlier in the year, is becoming out of date and we will be formulating a plan as to how this can be made more contemporary in the future.

In the next issue of Gaffers Log, you will be getting details and invites to register for the OGA AGM on the 12th January 2025, in Gloucester. As an Area we are tasked with assisting the Scottish Area in running the event. This will mainly involve guiding people to various sites of interest.

New Members

The following new OGA members have signed up in the past four months requesting the South West Gaffers as their Area:

Welcome to the following:

Geoff Bowker 6777 *Lilly* Weymouth

Jon Hall 6780 *Blueprint* Dartmouth

Jonathan Simper 6775 *Sally* Saltash

If you haven't, please add your boat name and details to the [OGA online gallery](#).



Fowey Classics (photo David Patuck)



Piccotee II at Fowey Classics (photo David Patuck)

Fowey Classics 2024

Tim Price Picottee



Cynthia close tacking with *Little Tern* (photo David Patuck)

Once again we were treated to the festival of sail that marks out the Fowey Classics. Out of the 21 entrants there were 13 Gaffers. Our welcome and excellent reception dinner at the Royal Fowey Yacht Club on Tuesday 30 Jul was due to be followed by racing on Wednesday. The absence of wind, however, postponed that to Thursday and replaced it with a day off or the picnic at Pont Mill. This made Thursday a full day starting with a fascinating and inspiring talk on the Atlantic Challenge International (<https://www.atlanticchallenge.org/the-challenge>) which is an organisation developing traditional seamanship in our youth. 15 nations compete with teams of mixed gender crews sailing Bantry Bay gigs who are then challenged with a series of tasks.

Racing in Fowey Bay took place in fine weather and reasonable NNW wind which produced a flat sea and allowed a start out in the bay. In the evening there was a nautical quiz held at the Fowey Gallants Sailing Club. The following day there was a parade of sail in the harbour squeezed in between movements of a china clay carrier. There followed a further race from the harbour mouth into the bay. The westerly wind created a fair swell which meant the committee boat sheltered in the harbour entrance resulting in a short start and



Periwinkle (photo David Patuck)

and finish line.

The prize giving at Fowey Gallants was accompanied by the quite excellent meat or fish barbecues that makes the club so well renowned. The RNLI then finished off the evening with an impressive fireworks display: sadly peppering a £10m superyacht with spent powder and rocket cases just seen in the photo.



End of regatta fireworks (photo David Patuck)

Members' results were: The Gribben Cup for best small boat – **Mike Wood** *Pelican IV*; Wee Willie Trophy for best dressed boat – **John Gallagher** *Periwinkle*; Gypsy Moth Mizzen Mast Trophy – **Martin Elliot** *Roxanne*; Spirit of Fowey Trophy – **Mike Wood** *Pelican IV*.

Once again we have to thank Karen Thoms, Graham Slack and the committee for laying on another wonderful event.

Brixham Heritage Rally

September 2024

Penny Jolley

After record numbers at this year's Brixham Heritage Regatta earlier this year to celebrate the sailing trawler Provident's 100th birthday,

An informal 'skippers briefing' was held on the pontoon and, despite a weather forecast that promised little wind and much rain, all the participants headed out on Saturday afternoon into Torbay for a sail in company along a sausage-shaped course around 2 buoys laid by the regatta bosun, Dave Wilson.

In the event, the fleet was treated to a steady NE F3 and some welcome sunshine with the



Escape, a Colin Archer sailing lifeboat owned by Andy Pomeroy of Dartmouth (photo Penny Jolley)

the autumn Brixham Heritage Rally was a slightly more modest affair.

A small but select gathering of heritage boats which included *Escape*, *Little Tern*, *Arabella* of Torquay, *Orthops* and *Meltemie* (both new to BHR), and *Krka*, flying the flag for the Junk rig boats, assembled on the Brixham Town Pontoon on Friday 6th September.

rain holding off until most were moored up and getting ready for the social. Some excellent sailing gradually petered out as the wind fell away completely.



Orthops, a Robert Clark design Bermudan rig, owned by Carole Porter of Falmouth (photo Penny Jolley)

The Royal Navy aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth conducting operations in the bay provided a surprising and an impressive backdrop to a very pleasant afternoon's sailing.

Afterwards, rather soggy heritage crews retired to Brixham Yacht Club to join the K1 Dinghy National Championship crowd for a very tasty and buzzing evening barbeque. The rum and the beer flowed as we settled in the Jubilee Room for Heritage regatta reminiscing of the summer and planning the looming winter's work plan!

We look forward to next year's Heritage Regatta when we shall be welcoming the Brixham Trawler Leader and the Irish Herring Netter Brian Boru from Dublin, together with members of the Dublin OGA and the Cruising Association of Ireland. The plan is to 'gather' SWOGA boats with the Irish fleet as they progress along the SW coast to Brixham for 23-25



HMS Queen Elizabeth standing by (photo Penny Jolley)

Advance Notice: **BRIXHAM HERITAGE REGATTA 2025**

24-25 May

Paul Jolley

Following the success of this year's Regatta when Provident joined us from Scotland to celebrate her 100th birthday with 42 boats attending, we are now planning next year's event. The plans are to celebrate the links between Brixham and Ringsend (Dublin).

After finishing his studies at Trinity College, Dublin in the 19th century, the Rev. H. F. Lyte became the Vicar of Brixham, where he wrote the hymn "Abide With Me". Describing the wealth of Dublin Bay fishing to his flock led to a fleet of 80 Brixham Trawlers, complete with their families, setting sail for Ringsend. There they established a lasting fishing community. The boat building, rope making, and general maritime skills enriched the local area as well as developing the Irish fishing industry.

The proposal is that Leader (a Brixham trawler currently based in Ireland) and her sister ship Brian Boru (an Irish Herring Netter) will come to the Brixham Regatta with a sail in company of Dublin Bay OGA boats. Southwest Gaffers boats will be invited to join the sail in company from their home ports as the fleet heads up the Channel to Brixham.

Put the date in your diary as the weekend will be good craic with Irish folk music, good company and of course we may need to do a bit of sailing as well!

Please also note that the 2025 Heritage Rally will be on Saturday 6th September.

Dittisham Rally

16-18 August

David Bewick

For many years, Gil and Carolyn Hayward have been the main organisers of the rally but they stood down last year and made absolutely sure that they were not going to be dragged into organising anything this year by leaving the country, albeit temporarily. This meant that things had to be a little bit different this year



Race winner Mike Dixon in *Teal* (photo: Paul Pearson)

South West Gaffers' Dittisham Rally is unusual in that it takes place alongside the village regatta. In fact, the Parade of Sail and the Gaffer Race that the participants of the rally take part in are actually regatta events and are not organised by us at all. However, in return for helping to create something of a spectacle for the village with these events, we are allowed the rare privilege of being able to park our campervans in the car park overnight and to pitch our tents on the Ham. It is this genuine "win-win" arrangement that makes our Dittisham Rally possible.

and so our event began on the Friday evening with a barbeque of the beach. We were fortunate to have a reasonably balmy evening and so, with a few drinks and some gaffer chat, we got off to a good start.

All the South Devon village regattas usually take place in the first or second week of August and are tide-driven. This year, the tides could not have been less helpful, with high water on the Saturday at 17:39. This meant there was a lot of waiting around before things could get going on the water but the Parade of Sail took place at 14:00. This was largely without incident but the fickle winds meant that

a bit of judicious paddling/rowing/motoring was required to keep some semblance of order.



Dittisham Regatta race (photo Paul Pearson)

The Gaffer Race was due to start alongside a Dittisham Sailing Club race at 15:00. The variable winds frustrated the race officer, who was running the two separate races, and it was a little while before they settled so he could set courses with proper windward legs. By this time, the wind strength had picked up a bit, too, and it proved to be too much for one of the local boats (a Cape Cutter 19) that lost the top of its mast and did not even make it to the start line. The rest of the fleet got off fairly tidily and beat up to the windward mark where the eventual winner took a wrong turn (unusually, it was a starboard hand mark) before sorting himself out. The fleet enjoyed a good race in a nice breeze over five laps of a triangular course. As is always the case with a handicap race, no one had any real idea where anyone had finished until the results were processed but I don't think anyone was too surprised to see which two boats came out top on corrected time.

The Saturday evening festivities began with the prizegiving (see full results, below). Line honours and second on corrected went to the local skipper Peter Hammond with his impressive cutter-rigged Shrimper. Mike Dixon (Teal) and David Bewick (Aberrare) received the Wynn memorial and Grog trophies, respectively, as the first and second OGA boats home on corrected time. Supper was a fairly simple "DIY" affair this year but

the atmosphere in the clubhouse was very convivial.



Oliver and Sandra Peterken in Cornish Coble *Kirsebær* (photo Paul Pearson)

Sunday started very well with the now legendary al fresco Red Lion breakfast. Unfortunately, the options for the usual cruise in company were limited by the late high tide and most of the crews decided to pack up and leave after breakfast rather than wait around all day for water.



John and Jenny Tully in their self built *Jenny Wren* (photo Paul Pearson)

Two of the visiting boats did stay for a "potter" on the Dart, though.

Many thanks to everyone who took part in this event and contributed to a very enjoyable weekend.

Events in the South West

For more details see also [OGA Events Page](#)

SWG Laying Up Lunch and AGM

16 November Fowey Golants SC

The traditional end to the sailing season.

Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

OGA AGM

11 January 2025 Llanthony Priory, Gloucester

See Gaffers Log. Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

SWG Lunch and Winter Talk

1 February 2025 Plymouth Area

A talk by Jim Shekhdar, a pacific rower. Further details to follow.

Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

SWG Fitting Out Lunch and Talk

12 April 2025 Brixham YC

An illustrated talk by Topsham-based boat builder Jon Seal on clinker built boat building and its future.

Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

Brixham Heritage Rally

24-25 May 2025 Brixham

Contact: www.brixhamheritageregatta.uk Penny Jolley

French OGA Rally

5-6 June 2025 St Malo

More details to follow as they become available.

Falmouth Classics

12-15 June 2025 Falmouth

Contact: www.falmouthclassics.org.uk email: info@falmouthclassics.org.uk

SWG Helford River Rally

16-18 June 2025 Helford River

Contact: Tim Price timpriceabroad@hotmail.com

Open Day Plymouth Yach Haven

21 June 2025 Plymouth Area

Contact: [PlymouthYacht Haven](#)

SWG Mylor Small Boats Rally

4-6 July 2025 Coastlands, Mylor Harbour

Contact: Oliver Peterken oliver.peterken@mac.com

SWG Plymouth Rally and Annual Race

24-27 July 2025 Mayflower Marina

Contact: Mike Forwood swevents@oga.org.uk

River Dart Rally and Dittisham Regatta

mid August 2025 Dittisham

Contact: TBC wearesailing@gmail.com

Brixham Heritage Rally

6 September 2025 Brixham

Contact: www.brixhamheritageregatta.uk Penny Jolley

SWG Laying Up Lunch and AGM

mid November Location TBC

The traditional end to the sailing season.

Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

Photos From Fowey Classics



(photo David Patuck)



(photo David Patuck)



Barbara Harris crewing aboard *Susan J* with Julie Patuck (photo David Patuck)



Ships Dog Molly accepting her prize (photo David Patuck)