



EASTCOASTER

The Newsletter of the East Coast Old Gaffers Association

November 2017 Issue 113

Forestay

The last sailing events of the year are now complete, and this issue sees reports from July, August and September. It is not too late to get your memories of events down on paper though, so please send me your articles.

It is always sad when a boat needs to be sold, and this year Brian Hammett reluctantly put his beloved *Avola* up for sale. Luckily she soon found buyers in Keith Watson and Julie Osbourn, so will be staying in the East Coast Gaffer fold.

This is a good time of year to think about repairs and renewals. Last year we decided to replace all *Robinetta's* dead-eyes, and after a season's use they have proved themselves. They are simple to make without a lot of specialised tools or much wood working experience, so why not have a go?

The AGM will be held at the Walton and Frinton Yacht Club again this year, on the 11th November at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to attend both the meeting and subsequent meal (at 8pm), but we must know numbers for the meal by the 4th, so please make your bookings as early as you can. You will find the Agenda and menu choices below.

Next years celebrations for the 55th OGA anniversary will be discussed, and if you have any issues to raise you are welcome to do so.



Jane Louise photo ©
Sandy Miller

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SOUTHWOLD RALLY 2017

By Lorna Hill

With a realisation that many of the East Coast boats were either away sailing in distant waters, or heading over to Holland, it was decided to focus on open boats for the annual jaunt to Southwold this year.

The weather was kind to us, providing a good sailing breeze to enable the contingent of open boats to enjoy a good sail up the River Blyth. Andrew Osborn experienced some teething trouble with his new rigging, but elected to sort out the matter and declined the offer of a tow from the Southwold Sailing Club launch, who kindly escorted us up river. The remainder of the small fleet negotiated the twisting River Blyth with John & Maxine Owles's *Summer* making a splendid sight against the large Suffolk skies. Following a 'river bank' landing, the crews enjoyed refreshments at the nearby White Hart before making the return trip back to Southwold.



Launching at Southwold

photo © Lorna Hill

With all boats safely ashore and back on their trailers, we enjoyed a few beers in the Southwold Sailing Club, before adjourning to the Harbour Inn for Supper.

SWALE MATCH 2017

Words Roy Hart, race photos Victoria Shoreland

Great plans were made for our annual pilgrimage to the river Swale, which is really my totally favourite weekend of the year. Everything stops for this annual adventure, going “forrin” from Essex to Kent, Harty Ferry, Oare creek... and in some years Faversham and climaxing in the match/race on the Saturday morning. Force 4, warm light winds westerly! Blue skies and wonderful peaceful sunsets. That’s the dream.

Back to reality; we planned to sail my 19’ memory *Greensleeves* in company with *Almita*, one of the fastest gaffers, who used to clean up on the Southend shores from the 1920’s – 2000’s, and Dick Durham’s *Wendy May*, a very solid gaffer.

High water Burnham was at 3:34 am on Friday 28th July. I arrived at 5:30am and borrowed Priors dinghy to fetch *Greensleeves*. I ran her aground on the concrete slipway to scrub off, with the plate ½ down which took 30 minutes. There was a very strong tide running, and I clouted the corner of Priors concrete pontoon so scraped my new topsides. A great start, I think not!

Harry Lyme, one of the best, arrived to crew for me spot on time at 8 am. There was a strong south westerly, blowing 5 to 6, so I put in 2 reefs, with working jib, plus a 4hp outboard on the back. We sailed down to Shores End and decided it was too dangerous to go down to the Swin with this strong wind right on the nose. We motor sailed back to the River Roach and anchored in the Yoke fleet until the Havengore bridge opened.



Havengore Bridge

This offers a better wind angle for the Swale. We went through the bridge at 2:45 pm. It was very shallow over the Broom Way with our mate *Almita* following.

Greensleeves kept well up to windward with working jib and engine, while the waves swept the decks. I had that not such a good idea feeling as we were soaking wet and cold, but inside the lee of Warden Point, we set main with 3 reefs, then sailed over Leysdown flats and entered the Swale south of Ham Gat, with still enough water under *Greensleeves*. Motored in the shallows and picked up a mooring off Harty Ferry.

That evening we enjoyed hot coffee and Irish stew, with the hatch boards in and wonderful warmth from the stove. We turned in to our bunks in our damp clothes but hot water bottles warmed us up and the clothes came off. The number of anchored yachts and barges were well down.

Early on Saturday morning we enjoyed hot drinks and bacon rolls on *Wendy May*. Thanks to skipper Dick Durham.



Wendy May

photo © Victoria Shoreland

Greensleeves got a reasonable start in the match but I was still wind shocked from yesterday and had too many reefs in. Should have sailed much harder! We did have a very good tacking match with a smart open gaffer, *Ivy*. It was very close and at the finish they beat us by 1 minute. Anyway we won the Linea cup, 3rd in class 2a. After the race I relaxed with a glass of sloe gin and a nap then listened to an afternoon play before taking *Greensleeves* to Hollowshore and moored alongside a motor barge.



Cygnnet of London

photo © Victoria Shoreland

It was still wet and windy, but the food was great, massive pork buns loaded with crackling etc. and Goacher's breweries dark ale. The band played, the prizes were presented. (*Almita* also came 3rd in her class) and far too many beers were drunk, even as the scaffolding was taken down on the beer tent.

In one torrential down pour someone remarked it reminded them of "Titanic".

As the band play on in the storm another competitor, new to gaff sailing, remarked he purchased a complete set of top brand sailing waterproofs at great expense, which were tested for rough ocean conditions. It leaked like a

sieve. At 8:45pm the tide was draining away and we had to go, as we draw 1'6 even with plate up. Harry and I slept like logs.

We left the anchorage at 8am. The rain cleared and we made Whittaker at noon, then motored with main tight to Burnham for lunch at 2:30; an uneventful return trip.

VESSEL

Class FINISH time ELAPSED time

EDME	3	12.06.14	3h 51m 14s	1st Class 3
CROW	2	12.17.03	3h 47m 3s	1st Class 2
NIAGARA	4	12.17.12	4h 17m 12s	1st Class 4
ETHEL ALICE	1	12.22.23	3h 37m 23s	1st Class 1
MIROSA	3	12.28.02	4h 14m 2s	2nd Class 3
MARIA	1	12.32.38	3h 47m 38s	2nd Class 1
MARJORIE	3	12.42.12	4h 27m 12s	3rd Class 3
HANSER	2	12.43.37	4h 13m 37s	2nd Class 2
IRONSIDES	4	12.46.14	4h 46m 14s +10m	3rd Class 4
REPEDITOR	4	12.46.46	4h 46m 46s	2nd Class 4
ALMITA	2	12.46.47	4h 16m 47s	3rd Class 2
BONITA	2	12.47.34	4h 17m 34s	
LADY OF THE LEA	5	12.47.36	4h 47m 36s + 10m	1st Class 5
FALS CAPPA	9	12.49.36	3h 49m 36s	1st Class 9
PRIVATEER	1A	12.49.59	4h 4m 59s	1st Class 1a
RYAN'S RACER	2A	12.52.58	4h 22m 50s	1st Class 2a
CYGNET	2	12.58.16	4h 28m 16s	
BIRD OF DAWNING	1A	12.58.40	4h 13m 40s	2nd Class 1a
CALISMARDE	9	13.01.25	4h 1m 25s	2nd Class 9
IVY	2A	13.08.52	4h 38m 52s	2nd Class 2a
GREEN SLEEVES I	2A	13.09.42	4h 39m 42s	3rd Class 2a
ELFREDA	9	13.15.56	4h 15m 56s	3rd Class 9
EMELINE	1	13.17.48	4h 32m 48s	
WILLIAM & MARY	1	13.20.39	4h 35m 39s	
LINNÆA	2A	Retired		
LUCY B	1A	13.34.47	4h 49m 47s	3rd Class 1a
ELINOR	2	13.47.00	5h 17m 0s	
OLIVIA MARY	1A	13.58.00	5h 13m 0s + 10m	
ALBATROS	6	14.15.18	5h 0m 18s	1st Class 6
NISSA	9	14.16.49	5h 16m 49s	
WENDY MAY	2	14.16.57	5h 46m 57s	
BERYL	2	Disqualified		
TWEE GEZUSTERS	6	14.39.40	5h 24m 40s	2nd Class 6
FIVE FARTHING	2	14.40.15	6h 10m 15s	

To every entrant who sailed in on the Friday we take our hats off. Entrants were decimated this year due to the weather. Most years there's up to over 14 sailing barges and many large smacks and Bawleys racing flat out. The entrance fee is £15 per boat, including a beautiful handmade jugs and a small booklet on last year match plus historic stories of N Kent maritime folk law.

If you own a gaffer or classic Bermuda you do not have to be a member of any club. There is no handicaps first boat wins. The crack is so good one family friend flies in every single year from Monaco to join the crew of Sailing barge *Marjorie* for the match and evening festivities. The Swale match is very special. Long may it continue for generations.



A range of boats at the match

photo © Victoria Shoreland

Many thanks to Victoria Shoreland who was on the committee boat and allowed us to use her photos. You can see more on her website.

<http://www.eattolive.org.uk/swale-barge--smack-match-2017>

AUGUST CRUISE

The August cruise got off to a great start in Ipswich Wet Dock with the usual fun regatta. Tarquin Wilderidge came with his family in the crabber *Jane Louise*, only for weekend alas, but threw himself and family into every activity. In fact Hannah his daughter made so many friends she was reluctant to leave.



Rafted up in Ipswich dock

photo © Ian Clarke

Michael Robertson claims he has been chasing the Concourse D'Elegance trophy ever since joining the OGA in 1992, and this year he won with a perfectly turned out *Lillibullero*. Thanks to Teamac Paint for sponsoring this award, and the whole regatta.

Once the fun and games were over, the Sailing Barge *Victor* moved from her

berth across the dock to moor at the marina's hammerhead. This let the gathered gaffers board from their pontoons for an excellent meal aboard, catered by Alice Hill, daughter of the area president.

On Monday, the fleet sailed to Walton Backwaters to enjoy an evening ashore at Stone Point, then on to West Mersea for Tuesday evening. The popular 'Crazy Race' from last year was re-named 'Gafferteering' and proved to be great fun with buoys to 'bag' for points in the Wallet, Colne and Blackwater finishing with an evening barbecue on Osea Island.

Thursday morning found the bleary-eyed gaffer fleet arriving at Heybridge Basin for an early lock in at 0700. After a day to recover in Maldon there was a 'drink as much as you like' brewery tour! A firm favourite, with plenty of entrants, is the Two Rivers race which includes the Junior Helm, Lady Helm and Lady Skipper events. The race ended with the fleet anchoring in the Pyefleet, with plans for a Safari Supper. By mid afternoon, the wind had increased significantly though and the organisers succeeded in securing moorings for all in Brightlingsea, where the Safari Supper was a resounding success.



Rely takes the President's cup

photo © George Hutley

On Saturday, the winds were still howling and only three boats set out for the President's Race, the final event of the week, before the prize-giving and supper at the Colne Sailing Club.

Victor Ludorum Overall Points 2017

Boat name	Class	Seaways	Two Rivers			Overall Position	Prizes awarded
		Bells Passage	Gaffere ering	Ladies / Junior	Total Points		
Clytie	Classic	13	1	2	3	1	Victor Ludorum, Points trophy
Cygnnet of London	Classic	1	20	10	11	8	1st Seaways Bell
Emanuel	Classic	20	20	20	40	=17	
Kelpie II	Classic	20	20	20	40	=17	
Kestrel	Classic	3	4	6	7	=3	
Lillibullero	Classic	20	20	20	40	=17	
Witch	Classic	14	2	20	16	11	
Crow	Modern & Racers	12	20	20	32	15	
Lili	Spirit of Tradition	5	20	3	8	5	
Plum	Spirit of Tradition	11	20	20	31	14	
Reverie	Spirit of Tradition	8	5	1	6	2	Two Rivers Trophy, Lady Helm
Titch	Spirit of Tradition	9	8	4	12	9	1 st Lady Skipper
Windotter	Spirit of Tradition	20	20	20	40	=17	
Electron	Working	2	20	5	7	=3	
Juanita	Working	4	6	20	10	7	
Rely	Working	10	7	7	14	10	Presidents Cup
Transcur	Working	6	3	8	9	6	
Hussar	Bermudan	20	20	9	29	13	Two Rivers Bermudan Trophy
Maid of Tesa	Bermudan	15	20	20	35	16	
Ostara	Bermudan	7	20	20	27	12	Amphora Trophy

Once again the August Classics saw a great mix of boats, racing, cruising, and having fun in one of the best sailing areas in Britain. A great deal of work goes into setting up the week, especially when the cruise moves down the coast from the Orwell to the Blackwater, so thanks to everyone in the organising committee for producing such a great event.

MALDON REGATTA 2017

by Lena Reekie

We sailed up from Faversham in *Crow* on the Thursday's 2pm HW and anchored early evening just below *Pioneer* CK18 for the night. Next morning we moved down to the entrance where you can anchor in deep water, close to the stony beach on Mersea, - perfect to walk Crew, our little Patterdale terrier. On the way back to the boat we noticed Jamie Clay and his wife in *Firefly* silently, gently, just stemming the incoming tide. One moment it looked as if she was going to be sucked in to Brightlingsea - but no, she made it! What a beautiful boat and lovely seamanship!

We then set off towards Bradwell for diesel. As *Crow* only draws 2 feet with the plate up, Bob decided to



Crow's Crew

shortcut and motor across Mersey Flat. Half way over, the depth sounder stopped working. Would we have to miss Saturday's Race and Regatta? Some gentle swearing, checking the connections and wriggling the wires and - lo and behold, we read that we were in 1.6M and could carry on.

Having filled the tank in Bradwell Marina we decided to stay on that side of the river for the night rather than cross to West Mersea where I believe many enjoyed a good meal and lively music.

Saturday morning and the Race is about to start. The line is between the Nass Beacon and the tug *Jean T* from Bradwell Marina. The gaffers are starting at 08:10, after the smacks and bawleys.

The wind is southerly and the chosen course takes the fleet east to race mark 6 (Blackwater Estates) left to SB, then south to mark 10 (Ellistons), back north to 1 (Quest) and back south to mark 2 then east towards Thirstlet Spit buoy and the finish off Osea.

There wasn't much wind to start with - which frustrated some skippers - but conditions improved the closer we came to Osea. *Crow* did not excel as usual, but we had a lovely time.



Firefly off Brightlingsea

I was a bit disappointed not to see as many of the gaffers as I had expected among the Smacks, Modern Yachts, Classic Wooden Yachts and East Coast One Designs. But of course big, beautiful *Hardy* and *Firefly* were there.

Reverie came off with a flying start, sailed by Ed Roberts and 3 other Young Gaffers leaving the old owners, Pete (the Knife) Elliston and Sarah at home.

Roy Hart had come up from the Crouch in his little Memory *Greensleeves I*, with crew Harry Lyme, and as always sailing a brilliant race and won a couple of awards.

Crow was awarded a lovely little trophy 'The Maldon Mollusc' - apparently for coming last on handicap.

There really wasn't enough wind for *Crow* to excel in the Race but we had a lovely time.

After lunch Bob let me take the helm for the Parade of Sail to Maldon town quay, the Hythe. It was a good wind and perfect warm and sunny day so I am sure competitors and spectators alike enjoyed the afternoon. I certainly did! The commentator, announcing the arriving vessels, got a 'telling off' for

saying that *Crow* is a steel gaffer. NO! Cedar stripped planking!

It is then great fun to arrive near the quay and, before finding a berth, round up to starboard and ground on the mud within enough time to take the sails down before floating off again.

We were invited to tie up to a local large motor vessel on a hammerhead which was perfect as we had to leave at HW at 3 next morning. We took Crew for a walk before joining all competitors for a party with free beer, cider and live music in the Sail Loft Boatyard. Then the price giving for both the morning Race and Parade of Sail.

Alberta was 1st of the large smacks and *Lizzie Annie* of the smaller smacks; Jamie Clay was first gaffer in *Firefly*, followed by Roy in *Greensleeves I*.

It was nice to catch up with Clive Church of *Rhumba* who was first in Class 4 Classic Bermudans. We also met up with Alan Thorne and Sue with Springer spaniel Bobby in their Camper & Nicholson *Fals Cappa*. They entered the Race and Regatta after 2 weeks cruising on the East Coast. They are also based in Kent, at Hollowshore, and enjoyed the event so much that they will now join the OGA and attend as many other events as possible.

After the price giving we joined Mike McCarthy in the Little Ship Club for a drink in the bar. Mike had as usual helped out on the water in his motor cruiser; we are always so pleased to see him and grateful for his presence. He had reserved a table upstairs for Bob and me, the crews of *Greensleeves*, Roy and Harry, *Fals Cappa*, Alan and Sue, Yvonne Mitchel and himself. In such good company we enjoyed an excellent meal, served by very lovely ladies - but I did miss the regular OGA team.

Unfortunately HW was 3 AM so the crew of both *Crow* and *Greensleeves* had to get up early to catch the early ebb. Roy and Harry carried on and apparently had 'a romping sail back, arriving in Burnham about 10:30'. Bob and I decided to anchor off Bradwell beach to catch another hour's sleep and maybe talk Crew ashore before the long trip back to Faversham against the SE wind. Stupidly we overslept and by the time we got to Bench Head we already had the flood against us; it seemed ages to reach the Spitway and the favourable tide. As on the way up on Thursday it was very lumpy in the estuary; we considered turning more to starboard and aim for the Medway

with a better slant on the wind, but in the end we headed straight for the Swale.

We arrived on our quay in Faversham 10 min before HW. Crew was very happy.

It is a long round trip from Kent to do the Maldon Regatta but we will be there again next year.

Many thanks to Gerry Courtney and her team in Maldon and of course to the EC OGA.



Crow racing (on the Swale)

photo © Victoria Shoreland

MAKING DEAD-EYES

By Julian Cable

A rather spectacular failure we had on the way from Douglas to Holyhead in August last year proved that *Robinetta's* existing dead-eyes are laminated plywood. They had been showing wear for a while and we had already replaced one with one made from sweet cherry at the start of the 2016 season, but this one shattering under tension showed it was time to replace them all. While sweet cherry is nowhere near as hard as lignum vitae there is a lot to be said for using native species on a traditional boat.

I got some nice sweet cherry from the Birchanger Woods Trust. The tree was damaged in the great storm of 1987 and was finally felled recently. Most of the wood is likely to be picked up by the local wood turning community.

The best way to make dead-eyes is probably with a lathe. I don't have one. But I'm not too bad at spar making and it turns out that gets one most of the way.

Spar making is all about turning squares into circles. The basic process is to make a square into an octagon and keep doubling the number of sides until its round enough to sand.

I worked out that if I made a very short spar I could slice it into discs and round the discs and then drill holes and I'd have dead-eyes.

Other boats I've seen have steel bindings for the dead-eyes, particularly the lower ones. *Robinetta* has wire loops on top and bottom so my eight dead-eyes would be identical to each other.



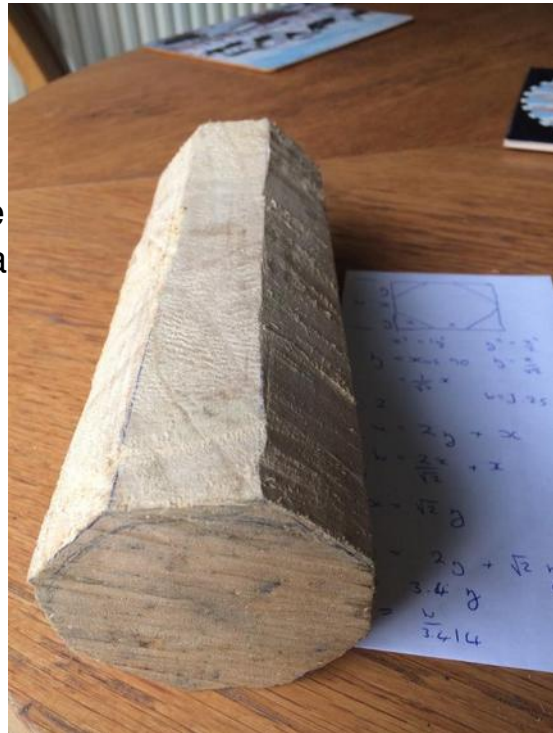
First I cut a piece of cherry to square. A hand saw is not a quick or efficient way of doing the rough cuts but it is a really good way of getting enjoyable exercise.

Then I cut the corners off to make the blank octagonal.

The traditional way of marking it up is to use a spar gauge. This will 'magically' draw the lines the right distance from the edges. This is really only necessary for a tapered spar. It just implements the $1/\sqrt{2}$ rule that comes from $\cos 45^\circ$, or Pythagoras if you prefer.

In this case I did the sums and measured it. It came out OK.

The important thing is that the newly exposed parts should be the same width as the remaining part of the original sides.



Then it was a matter of planing the corners off until I was happy enough.



The old dead-eyes were 2" thick and I could get four from this piece so I sliced it into four equal pieces and then used the electric router to make the faces more parallel.

Now I had four thick discs.

I cut the groove for the wire rope and the holes next, while the discs were still nice and flat.



A 'core-box' bit in the router cut the grooves. I put the disc in the work-mate and clamped a straight edge to run the router along and slid the router along the edge to cut a straight groove across a chord of the cherry disc. Rotating the disc in the work-mate through 90° three times let me make a square groove. Rotating it 45° once and then 90° three more times and the groove was octagonal. 22.5° and then 90° three more times and it was ready to use the rat-tail file to finish. It's quicker than it sounds.

The holes for the rope are strictly 'blind sheaves'. This means they are doing the job of the sheaves (pulley wheels) of a block, so they should be as round as possible too.

So I used the spar concept again. I drilled straight holes through and then put the drill in at 45° from both sides.

I left the holes with sharp corners while I rounded off the edges of the discs.

This was the final turning of right angles into smooth curves. First I ran a 45°

chamfer router bit around the edges. Then I used a flat rasp to take off the four new corners and then again to take off the eight new corners. A round rasp did similar duty taking off the sharp corners of the holes.



Then it was time to start sanding. I used 60 grit and then 120 grit carbide paper to smooth them enough for Alison to take-over and varnish.

The process worked well enough that I just duplicated it to make four more.

Fitting them was a bit fiddly. When the old dead-eyes are already out it's very tempting to try to just squeeze the new ones in.

That worked for some of them. For others I had to cut off the serving keeping the wire loops tight round the dead-eyes and then re-do it afterwards. That's probably what one should always do.

The new dead-eyes have done a season now. I'm pretty pleased with them. If I did it over, I'd make the grooves for the wire a bit shallower.



New dead-eyes in use as Robinetta heads beneath the Menai Bridge

The East Coast AGM is nearly here!

The Walton and Frinton Yacht Club will host the event again this year and they have set aside their upstairs bar and rooms.

Everyone is welcome to come along to the meeting, which will start at 19:00. The bar will be open from 18:00, with a meal available at 20:00. This year we are having a carvery, but there will be baked plaice or vegetarian lasagne available too. All meals are £15, and include a choice of desert

Please book your meal by November 4th, with the forms sent to Clare Thomas.

Payment by cheque (payable to East Coast OGA) or online to 20-54-30 account number 80676179 including your name as the reference please.

Please return this form either by post to Clare Thomas, Green Farm Barn, Barham Green, Ipswich IP6 0QF or email (clare.thomas@btinternet.com).

Orders must be received by Saturday 4th November 2017 – NO LATE BOOKINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

The AGM agenda is as follows:

Welcome.

Apologies for absence.

Approval of minutes of last meeting & matters arising.

President's report , including plans for 2018.

Secretary's report.

Treasurer's report.

Matters to take forward to National AGM

Election of officers & committee.

Any other business.

Provisional date for next meeting.

Presentation of prizes/awards.

Backstay

Last issue was a bumper size, while this is back to the normal 20 pages of A5. There is a lot more flexibility to change things around with a newsletter than a proper magazine like Gaffer's Log! That said, both are dependant on getting contributions from the members, and I really appreciate the contributions I receive!

The next issue of Eastcoaster should be available to download from 1st February, and to do this I need all contributions for that issue by 24th January at the latest.

Please send your photos and write ups to me via post to 146 Stortford Hall Park, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 5AP, or through e-mail to alison.margaret.cable@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.



Lillibullero in fine fettle

photo © Beverly Daley-Yates