



EASTCOASTER

The Newsletter of the East Coast Old Gaffers Association

February 2016 Issue 106

Forestay

Welcome to the East Coast OGA for 2016

Once again we have a busy year ahead, as shown on the new calender. Some events are still in the planning stages, but the dates should not change, so book your holidays now! There are entry forms available for the first few events, so please send them in before the deadlines.

As usual a printed version of this issue is sent to all mainland UK East Coast members, while the remaining three issues of the year will be available for download through the website in May, July, and November. If you would like all the issues printed and posted to you please fill in the request form and send it with a cheque for £3 to the editor. Postage and printing costs have not changed, so the cost remains the same.

We open this issue with the Presidents and secretaries reports from the AGM, held for the third year in a row at the Walton and Frinton Yacht Club. As ever they provided a perfect venue for this event. Prizes were awarded and the difficulties of racing old and new boats together were thoroughly debated!

I hope the event reports give you a taste of what we have got up to in 2015, and inspire you to join in. We have some great things to do this winter and spring and the more people who attend our events the better they will be. You might like to try a winter project too. Making your own spars is not as great a challenge as you may think!



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by Sue Lewis

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President's Report 2015

By Robert Hill

Good evening gaffers, bermudans & motor boaters. Don't ever accuse the OGA of not being an inclusive organisation! Welcome to the 2015 East Coast OGA AGM. It seems like no time since we were here for the 2014 meeting.



photo by Alison Cable

Many thanks to Walton & Frinton Yacht Club for accommodating & feeding us yet again in their wonderful clubhouse, which seems to be fast becoming a favourite gaffer venue.

I expected 2015 to be a more “normal” year in the area with our fairly full programme of events possibly less affected by circumnavigations of the UK, Dutch cross country tours & the like, & to some extent it was. However, I think the 2013 legacy lives on with more interaction between areas nationally & internationally, notably this year with the cruise to St Malo, the Dutch Classic Regatta & an encouraging number of East Coast members joining the Trailer Section for their Norfolk Broads weekend. There is already talk of an expedition next year to Brest & Douarnenez.

2015 has also seen our website “migrate” to become an offshoot of the new improved national site as the Solent Area has done. Hopefully other areas will follow in due course. This has permitted a joint initiative between the Solent &

East Coast Areas to create a photo gallery or archive accessed through our websites. We hope to have this up and running for next season & believe it has the potential to become a valuable resource & shop window for the association as well as satisfying the typical gaffer tendency to enjoy looking at pictures of boats when we cant look at the real thing.

With our busy winter programme of events, including the ever popular Burnham Dinner, drawing to a close we were well into the year's activities before anything even started on the water.

Sailing events began with small boats at Tollesbury, before a very successful Crouch Rally, this year benefiting from the involvement of the marina at North Fambridge who organised events on & off the water. This nicely complemented Trevor & Elaine's customary hard work & organisation on behalf of the gaffers.

The Chatham Rally, Southwold, Pioneer Youth event, Swallows & Amazons, the Trailer section Norfolk Gathering, East Coast Race, August Cruise & Maldon Town all followed & are well reported in Eastcoaster.

The Pioneer event marked the East Coast's first use of the new OGA Youth Fund & as such deserves special mention. Our largest gaffer hosted a group of Brightlingsea Scouts to introduce them to gaff rig in a big way.

Unfortunately, time constraints forced a clash with our Southwold event, which possibly reduced the numbers of smaller gaffers attending. Overall, however, the day was a big success & is likely to be repeated. If so try to turn up with your boats, support the event & let the youngsters see some other gaffers.

This year we owe a huge thanks to Ipswich Council. At a relatively late date they moved Maritime Ipswich to the week before that originally planned in order to accommodate a cycling event in the town. Although this caused the August Cruise subcommittee some initial grief & shortened the August Cruise by a day, it also gifted us with a week of good weather & mercifully we missed the usual selection of gales served up the following week. Again this year we owe Teamac Paints a very special thanks for their most generous sponsorship of the event & hope that this relationship will be sustained into future years. On a similar note I would like to thank all our other sponsors

such as Dong Energy, James Lawrence sailmakers, French Marine, Cormorant Sails, Classic Marine, Claudia Myatt & Adnams to name a few for their valued support during the season. Thanks are also due to all the clubs & marinas who have hosted us, usually at discounted rates, over the year. Please try to support them when you can.

Over the last few seasons we have been seeing changes in our fleet & activities. In particular, the older gaffers are representing a reducing proportion of the fleet with the emergence of more & more “new” gaffers, many of which are smaller, lighter displacement & often trailerable. We need to encourage & include these modern designs & the question the committee currently hope to resolve is how to best achieve this. Handicapping such a diverse fleet fairly is almost impossible & has led to the question “Do we need another class at our events?” Inevitably the time will probably come when it could actually represent the biggest class numerically.

Another area of concern is a reduction in attendance numbers at events, most noticeably in recent years, the East Coast Race. We are trying to determine reasons for this & address the issue as far as possible. In reality, the problem seems to be fairly general at sailing events & is by no means unique to the OGA. Perhaps we need to look at changing the format of some events. To this end many of you will be aware of the feedback survey recently conducted on the August Cruise.

These matters are included as agenda items for this meeting as the committee needs as much feedback as possible from members in order to act in everyone’s best interests, so we’ll return to them later.

Sadly I have to report the passing of our member Kit Platten at the start of November. Kit was a regular at OGA events, particularly the August Cruise & Crouch Rally, sailing his beloved *Deirdrie*. I know we will miss him & our thoughts are with his family at this difficult time.

Finally, I would like to finish by thanking our hard working committee for all their efforts & support in the last year. It really is much appreciated. They are already busy looking at 2016, so please show your appreciation in the best possible way- support as many events as possible. Thank you.

Secretaries report

By Lorna Hill

Some of you may remember that last year I made a plea to request earlier entries for our events. I am pleased to report that earlier entries are being received contributing to improved planning of our various activities. Thank you, please continue!

As we reflect on our past year's events, I realise just how much we rely on the generosity of other sailing clubs and local facilities. As you know, we do not have our own clubhouse, so we are a bit cuckoo-like in our selection of venues, but with one noticeable difference. Unlike the cuckoo, we are greatly welcomed where ever we go. This year the August Cruise fleet were invited back to Shotley for example. Most marinas and yacht clubs offer the Old Gaffers discounts on berthing fees and several clubs offered a 'deal price' on their meal prices.

As the President just mentioned we have been very fortunate in securing a good level of sponsorship this year. This has assisted no end in enabling the committee to provide subsidised mooring fees, prizes for events and entertainment on various occasions.

It can be difficult at times to plan an interesting and varied program of events. We all enjoy the old favourites, but it can be good to introduce new ideas and formats. The committee strive to maintain interesting and entertaining events and are always open to suggestions from EC OGA members for new events.

In previous years we ventured to Enkhuisen during November, when everyone's boats were laid up, to attend the Dutch Traditional Boat Festival, (oh - and some shopping!). Alas, that event has now merged with the Amsterdam Boat Festival and we are not certain that it has the same appeal in a large city compared with the quiet location of Enkhuizen. For next year, we are investigating the possibility of a winter trip to Dordrecht Christmas Market for a short break by ferry and train for some socialising and fun. Please convey to the committee if this idea has any appeal to you.

Any other Business

By Alison Cable

Clare Thomas the treasurer presented the accounts, saying that due to a drop in the number of people attending events some losses were made. However the bank balance is still healthy, with no need for concern.

The President announced the results of the various 'Annual Awards'.

Bermudan Cup

1st *Scorpion of Wyke*

2nd *Quintet*

3rd *Dauber*

Tom Felgate Gaff Points Series

1st *Charm*

2nd *Crow*

3rd *Victoria*

Roger Needham Award (1st Gaffer over 100 years old)

Victoria



Victoria racing

Best Log / Blog Award



photo by Alison Cable

Joint winners: Roy Hart and Brian Hammett. Roy Hart's log was published in the November Issue of *Eastcoaster* (and will be in the next *Gaffer's Log*), while Brian Hammett's log of *Avola's* Birthday expedition to the Netherlands appeared in the December issue of *Gaffer's Log*. Both make great reading!

Batemans Trophy (For services to East Coast OGA)

Peter Maynard was presented with the Bateman's tower due to having provided sterling service to the East Coast, presiding as race officer at Brightlingsea for a number of years, as well as checking the accounts on an annual basis. Unfortunately he was not there to take his award with him.

Following the awards the President chaired a lively discussion about reforming the racing classes and handicaps. Three volunteers came forward to join the handicap committee chaired by Pete Thomas, thanks to Andy Abrahams, Julian Cable, and Rik Graham. The proposal to add an under 2 tonne class to the racing classes proved unpopular, so it was back to the drawing board for the Class committee, who are currently looking at totally revamping the East Coast's class definitions instead. Please watch the website and the next edition of *Eastcoaster* for details.

Christmas Party

By Julian and Alison Cable



photo by Alastair Randall

The Harwich and Dovercourt Sailing Club Barge makes a great venue for a party, and nearly sixty people turned up at lunchtime on 29th December for roast pork rolls, followed by biscuits and cheese. As a 'landing kitchen barge' in 1944 LKB6 served 1000 meals a day anchored off Sword and Gold beaches so this was easy work for the old converted lighter.

Entertainment was by the dou Sillbury Hill, who played an eclectic mix of tunes. The intimate surroundings nicely complemented their acoustic rendition of great songs and we were again privileged to hear the lovely voice of Dutch OGA stalwart Else Wagemakers providing backing vocals on some of the numbers, while an inpromptu 'Christmas Jumper Choir' joined in to perform a rousing version of the 'Drunken Sailor'.

The new policy of pre-booking and pre-paying for food worked a treat, allowing hosts Sue Lewis and Howard Wheelton to judge the amount of food

perfectly, with plenty for all but little left over. Sue also performed sterling service behind the bar! The clear-up team consisted of Howard's sisters, Jacky and Kathryn, and Marion Shirley, the Solent Area Sec who was visiting for the occasion. Big thanks to them for helping us to leave the Barge possibly even cleaner than we found it.

Christmas jumpers were much in evidence with Yvonne Mitchell's 'wearable tech' flashing sweater particularly visible.

The HDSC bar kept us all well watered and all in all it was a splendid afternoon of gafferish craic full of sailor's tales and the hatching of plans for the coming season.

News from the Central Association

By Alison Cable

The AGM for the main committee of the OGA was held on the 16th January at Fox's EXCEL. The official minutes will be published in the March edition of the Gaffer's Log, but I think it worthwhile to mention a couple of issues relevant to the East Coast here.

We put forward a proposal from our AGM that would allow the East Coast Race to use the same handicaps as the rest of the races on the East Coast. This proposal was passed without opposition at the National level, which means we can go full steam ahead with the revision of our East Coast handicaps and know they will apply to the premier race of our area, which is great news.

The OGA archive of traditionally rigged boats contains a mass of material dating from before its foundation to the present day, and is recognised as being of national importance. Much of this data is available through the boat register, which has long been a feature of the web site, but it has not always been easy to access since it required visitors to log in to the website as members. From now on it will be visible to all visitors to the website, whether OGA members or not. However, don't worry about privacy, since while the boat details will be visible the owners details will not!

If your boat is on the register, and you would rather the general public do not

see it you will need to contact Pat Dawson, the Boat register Editor, through the OGA, and she will remove it from public view. Rather than doing this I would urge you to add your boat to the register instead, however new your boat! Pat is thinking of retiring from her post soon, so if you have an interest in taking over the Boat register she would love to hear from you too.

Earlier I reported that Roy Hart had won an East Coast trophy for his log, and his exploits attracted attention nationally, not just locally, as he was awarded the Cape Horn Trophy for his passage from the East Coast to St Malo and back in the memory 19 *Greensleeves*. This was the very last award of the evening, as he left home to drive to ExCel as the meeting began! The Gaffers Globe also went to East Coast members for their trip to St Malo, Sally & Tony Kiddle in another small boat, the Golant gaffer *Step Back in Time*.

The St Malo trip also let to an International award for Martin Goodrich and *Gwenili*, from the Yacht Club de France. Rather than heading straight back home from St Malo *Gwenili* took part in the Branlebas Regatta 2015, and won the Groupe Giboire trophy for 2nd place. *Gwenili* also received a special award, the Trophée Raymond Labbé, in recognition of her overall performance, classic lines and restoration. This was celebrated at an evening of cocktails and dinner in Paris on 2 December, 2015, hosted by the Yacht Club de France President, Admiral Yves Lagane in honour of the YCF winners, 2015.

Last year's St Malo event has led to a lot of French interest in the OGA, including an invitation to attend the Brest Festival of the Sea in July. I am told that getting a place in the harbour can be a tortuous process, with a complicated application process through a French website, but if you want to go get in touch with Ben Collins, the OGA French liason, and he will explain how to go about it. There is going to be a cruise in company to get there, with both *Random* and *Transcur* already intending to join in.

East Coast connections are also strong with the Dutch OGA, and Rik Janssen and Fred Schotman inviting us to join them ashore on 27th-28th Feb for "Soft shackles and bread". There will be a chance to learn about splicing of modern rope and making soft shackles on Saturday, followed by a nice friendly evening with a nautical touch. On Sunday we will be hosted by a professional Dutch baker in Amsterdam to practise ideas for breadmaking on

board our boats. More details on the website as they become available.

The usual Low Countries events are also on offer, starting with Oostende Voor Anker on the late May bank holiday. Sue Lewis has written an account of *Victoria's* trip on the continent in 2015, in the magazine *Classic Sailor*, which gives a wonderful view of what is on offer in the area, while she has given this enthusiastic account of the fun to be had in October for *Eastcoaster*.

Reeuwijk Raid

by Sue Lewis



photo by Rik Homan

7 lakes near Gouda, a few bridges, lots of little sailing boats, some musicians and songsters, and a healthy dose of autumnal sunshine. Perfect ingredients for a weekend of jollity in the company of Dutch sailors and some other East Coast gaffers.

For a few years now Rik and Edith have been inviting us to join their Raid and

we thought was about time we took up the offer. Most people attending this weekend event in early October bring their own boat on a trailer and in recent years this has included a few East Coast smacks boats familiar to EC OGA members. Again this time there were 2 smacks boats: *Papa Stour* (Pete the Knife and Sarah Adie) and *Happy Days* (Pete and Clare Thomas). But Howard and I don't have a suitable boat for this Raid so Rik very kindly gave us the use of his newest trailer-sailer *Jan Blank*. She's a lovely boat, perfect for this event and even for sleeping on board although since this was October we opted to make use of accommodation offered ashore instead.

On arrival we were able to help with the launching of boats, some of whom had come from far and wide in the Netherlands. Howard got to know quite a few new people by helping to crane and manhandle their boats into the water whilst I was able to give Edith a hand with the catering. Whilst people arrive and launch from the Friday, the Raid itself takes place over the 2 days of the weekend with a Captain's Dinner on the Saturday night for all concerned. Edith enjoys the sailing herself so of course dinner has to be ready to roll before the start of the race on Saturday.

It's a different kind of racing! Firstly it is the only race I have ever heard of where the start is not a line between 2 buoys but a single buoy and all the contestants start in a circle moored bows-in to that buoy! Le Mans has nothing on the kerfuffle that ensued at the gun.



The Starting Circle

photo Sue Lewis

Then the rules were new to us too: in order to keep the fleet together for the various bridges we needed to open and pass through and close again, Rik makes use of a sort of “front to back” racing that you may not have come across. The boat in front can only stay in front for a specific number of minutes (it was 2 or 3) before returning to the rear of the fleet to score a point with the “rear guard” boat and work their way forward again. The new leader then has to turn back in the same way after a short time and so it goes on. The winner is the boat who has returned to the rear the greatest number of times and thus scored the most points. It’s not exactly a guarantee that everyone will get a turn at the front and get at least one point, but in the light airs we had on the first day where even the fastest boat was not going very fast this was the net effect, and we were all home together. Something for us to try on the East Coast perhaps.

Edgar from *Windbreker* sailed with us on *Jan Blank* whilst his wife Else and cloggie doggie Koosje joined Claudia Myatt and Rik’s sister in a “ladies boat”. Whilst Howard took one look at the mill pond that was the lake and sat back with his hat over his eyes, Edgar threw himself into the race with enthusiasm, sculling when the wind died completely (allowed in the rules) and hoisting and tweaking every



Ladies in Elizabeth

photo Sue Lewis

bit of canvas to maximum effect - though we still didn’t win many points. *Jan Blank* was a delight to sail: as well as having a spacious cosy cabin, Rik has built her to be really easy to handle. He has put into practice some clever ideas including electric furling at the press of a button from the cockpit (using car windscreen motors) and his attention to detail is impressive: for example the electric supply for the furling is hidden inside a braided rope.

The two East Coast smacks boat crews did some boat hopping, and kept

themselves amused with some interesting performance comparisons which then lead to some rig-swapping on day 2, so the EC smacks boat fleet will have to look out for changes next season.

We didn't get round all 7 of the lakes or "Plassen" before the course was shortened as in the light airs there was a danger we wouldn't be back at the yard in time for Edith to organise supper - but we made a fine parade in any case and there was much laughter and jollity.



Rowing allowed

photo Sue Lewis

The Captain's Dinner was excellent and so was all the musical entertainment that followed. The booze flowed too so there were a few fuzzy heads in the morning at Sunday breakfast. I'd been asked to entertain participants with a short Quiz which was challenging – how to find question that UK and Dutch sailors might have an equal chance of answering correctly. Put it this way: if you had been there you would now know more than you did before about the bridges of the world. Fortunately for me they were very tolerant of a bossy quiz mistress disturbing their coffee and buns and took it all in good part. (Note to self: quizzes work best with a drink in hand, both for question master and 'quizzies'. And I don't mean coffee).

More of a breeze on the Sunday so we covered more ground (water). Highlight of this day was an ice cream stop by one of the bridges. Antonio was ready for us and he just managed to keep up with demand before we continued on our way. A shorter sailing day to allow for recovering boats at the end of it and then for some a long journey home, but all worth it for the craic, the sailing and the great company. Very big thank you to Rik and Edith for their hospitality.

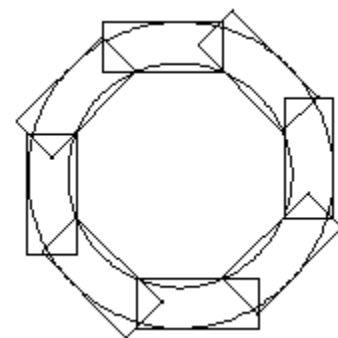
Rik and Edith have sold their Crabber *Otter* which they used to keep at Heybridge Basin but they plan to bring *Jan Blank* over on her swanky new trailer to cruise here so look out for them.

Making a Gaff

Words and photos By Julian Cable

When *Robinetta* needed a longer gaff to go with her new sails I knew I could build one myself but had no idea how to make it strong enough but not unnecessarily heavy. I got advice from a number of people, notably including Barry Edwards and Geoff Platten. Barry can make absolutely anything from wood or metal and changed the rig on his boat *Random* from Bermudan to Gaff, building all the spars, including the mast and making all the blocks. Geoff used to be the chief engineer responsible for crash test dummies and is also a cabinet maker.

Geoff was very keen on the bird's mouth technique for making hollow spars. The principle of the bird's mouth is that you make the spar from a number of rectangular section pieces with a groove cut along one side. Each piece fits at an angle in the groove of the adjacent piece and everything is then glued together. The groove can be cut using an electric router with a 45° bit. The technique can be used with almost any number of sides to the spar but with 8 sides the groove is cut straight into the end of the wood. For any other number of sides the cut needs to be made precisely at an odd angle. So I had an idea about making it light.



Regarding strength, Skene's Elements of Yacht Design, first published in 1904, indicates that a solid gaff should have a maximum diameter of 2% of its length, tapering to 75% of that at the peak and 93% at the throat.

In his book on small boat building, Iain Oughtred says the taper should have peak to middle and throat to middle ratios of 62% and 82%, so more tapered than Skene. *Robinetta's* new gaff would be 4.5m long so the experts suggested it should be 90 mm in the middle, between 56 and 68 mm at the peak and between 74 and 84 mm at the throat.

I was prepared to look no further but I wanted to know how an 8 sided bird's mouth spar would compare with a solid one.

I found a formulae for beam deflection. The deflection increases with the

force and the length and decreases with the stiffness of the material and the 'second moment of inertia' which relates to the shape:

$$D = W \times \frac{L^3}{3 \times E \times I}$$

For a round tube the second moment of inertia depends on the inside and outside diameters:

$$I = \pi \times \frac{D_o^4 - D_i^4}{64}$$

For a solid beam, the inside diameter is just set to zero. If the outside diameter is 100 mm the inside diameter needs to be 76.5 mm to be equivalent to a 90 mm solid spar. Working out the cross sectional areas shows that the hollow spar saves almost 50% of the weight. So a 1 extra cm diameter and thin walls really does make for a stiff, light gaff.

Duckworks magazine have a great online calculator showing the dimensions of the strips needed to get a given inside and outside diameter, or the inside



and outside dimensions you would get with given sized strips. Strips of 40 mm x 15 mm give inside and outside dimensions of 76.8 and 101 mm.

Close enough. After the theory research I made my first test birds mouth joint. It was a bit rough and uneven but I was pretty happy with it.

I didn't feel confident enough to make a complete spar using expensive wood such as Douglas fir

without more practice. The easiest wood to get hold of is 1/2" x 1 1/4" (13 mm x 32 mm) sawn "European redwood" (i.e. scots pine). It is a bit knotty but if you are selective at the builder's merchant it comes out OK. Of course 13x32 is nothing like 15x40 so my prototype would not be as stiff as it should be.

The modulus of elasticity for Douglas fir is 12500 N/mm² while pine is between 12000 and 10200 N/mm². I expect builder's merchant European redwood is at the bottom end of the pine ratings so my wood might only be 82% as stiff too. In fact the calculations said that it would only be 38% to 46% as stiff as a correctly sized spar of Douglas fir.

Even so, I decided to make a full scale model. I needed to plane two adjacent edges of each strip to give it a good corner for gluing in to the groove, The outside long edge could be left as sawn since it would all come off in the rounding. The edge opposite the groove would have the taper on it and I decided to do the taper first so the groove wouldn't get damaged before gluing.

I started by using my power planer on groups of three staves to put a taper on one narrow edge. Neither Oughtred nor Skene say where to start the taper. I more or less arbitrarily divided the 4.5 m length in three with the middle kept at 100% and went with about 85% at the throat and 70% at the peak.

Then I put the grooves in. This didn't go too badly but it was really hard to get it smooth at the tapers. It would be easier to put the taper in after, but that would risk damaging the edges of the grooves.

I did a trial dry fit of the complete spar. With Alison's help I was able to put it together and clamp the whole thing with cable ties. The grooves were not really good enough for a good fit. Getting them more even with the router was difficult but I managed; I'm sure I couldn't have done it without.

The trial fit also proved that narrow cable ties are not enough on their own as clamps, which is what everyone says. I bought a length of hose clip material which came with a pack of clips so I could make custom sized hose clips.

For glue I used Resintite/Cascamite; a urea formaldehyde glue which comes as a white powder you mix with water. It is strong, very cheap, easy to mix and apply and more waterproof than epoxy but it is brittle.

The glued gaff was not quite as straight as I had hoped, but as I finished smoothing it to round that improved.

After a lot of planing the octagonal edges then sanding smooth, the pine spar began to look like a gaff. It needed more glue along some of the edges. Once it was done it looked quite good, and felt nice and stiff.

Even though in theory it was only about 40% as strong as it needed to be we decided to use it for a season, so Alison gave it a coating of Varnol and we tried it against the new main sail when it arrived. That was when we realised that the taper should be asymmetric to give one straight edge at the bottom to

lie smoothly against the sail. This is something to remember when I make the proper one, and more impetus to not put up indefinitely with the prototype.

A galvanised gaff end from Classic Marine completed the build, and it was time to try it out. I found that I needed to reshape the end of the spar once it was in place, so it did not foul the halyard and then set the gaff span fixing points. Once those were secure we used it all 2012 season.

Next year, at the OGA's 50th anniversary race in Cowes the gaff seemed to be bending rather a lot, and we retired from the race. I should really have made the proper one the following winter but instead I just added a stiffening piece to the top. This seems to have done the trick, as we have now had four seasons out of it and will use it again this summer when we hope to circumnavigate Ireland.

Elements of Yacht Design

Seafarer Books version on Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/>

Searchable version on Google Books:

<https://books.google.co.uk/>

Bird's mouth spar calculator: <http://www.duckworksmagazine.>

Beam Deflection Calculator for solid and hollow beams: <http://www.botlanta.org/>

Elastic Modulus of Douglas Fir: <http://jp.europeanwood.org/en/>

Elastic Modulus of pine: <http://jp.europeanwood.org/en/>



Up coming events

There are a number of shore based events to enjoy this winter, starting with a

Film and Food Night on **13th Feb** at Pin Mill Sailing Club. Aim to get to the club around 18:30hrs for Supper at 19:00hrs. Supper will be £8.00 per head. As soon as the food is finished we will get the tables out of the way and set the film show up. Brian Hammett has provided an excellent selection of East Anglian Film Archive DVDs. (Historic Sailing boats etc.) We may even wait until the night to decide which one(s) to watch. There are only 60 tickets available, so book before 8th Feb with payment in advance.

Last year Richard Woodman gave an excellent **Talk at the Nottage Institute**, so we have invited him back again. He will be talking about Life at Sea on the **27th Feb**. Full details will be on the website once they are available, but make a note in your diary now. If you want to be more adventurous and have a weekend away, then the same weekend sees the **“Soft Shackles and Bread”** event in North Holland, which may be closer to home for the Dutch East Coast OGA members!

Our **Annual East Coast Dinner** will take place at the Royal Burnham Yacht Club, hosted by Trevor and Elaine Rawlinson on **12th March**. The menu and booking form are included with this Issue's mail out, so choose your dinner and come along to hear how many different and amusing toasts we can get through in an evening.

Easter is incredibly early this year, so there is no Easter Egg Rally. Instead a **Fitting Out Supper** will be held at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club on **16th April**. We may have a speaker for this one, but keep an eye on the website for menu and other details. This is a good opportunity to see their new club house, on our first visit since its completion.

The **first sailing event** of the year will be the Tollesbury Rally, now in its third year. This features a race between open (dinghy type) OGA boats and the Tollesbury Sailing Club, and will be held on **7-8th May**. Bigger boats can come along and take a mooring to watch the fun, then move into Tollesbury Marina for the evening entertainment. More details will be in the next Eastcoaster.

Backstay

In a cold dank January it can be difficult to look forward to the summer, and sailing but getting together with sailing friends makes the long winter feel much shorter, and I am really enjoying the social events and seeing as many people as possible. This summer Julian and I hope to take *Robinetta* round Ireland, so once again our chances to sail on the East Coast will be limited.

I am therefore appealing once again for more contributors to Eastcoaster, and will welcome any comments, suggestions, and articles. I need to have your words and pictures by **Monday April 18th** for inclusion in the next issue, but the earlier the better!

Please send them to me at alison.margaret.cable@gmail.com, or to 146 Stortford Hall Park, Bishop's Stortford, Herts, CM23 5AP.

I would also like to hear from you if you have anything to put up on the website.

The new galleries feature allows us to have many more pictures available to view. If you have any pictures that you want to share, then upload them to dropbox, or googledrive, or any other on-line storage you have available. If you then send me a link to those pictures I can upload them to the OGA website where they will be credited to you. You will retain copyright, but putting them on the website implies you have allowed use of the image by the OGA. Not all will be on display at once, but we hope to build up an archive of our boats and events. At the moment we do not have a way of converting prints and negatives to digital format, but if you have old negatives there are many photographic retailers who would be happy to do it for you (for a price)!

Alternately bring your memory cards/USB sticks with pictures on to one of this winter's events. I will always have a computer with me that they can be copied onto, so I can upload them. DO NOT e-mail me pictures as the reproduction quality will be too low.

Any pictures with children in must have the permission of their parents to be shared, and if this is not explicitly given the pictures will not be put on the website.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Alison Cable, editor.