

South West Gaffers

Promoting Gaff Rig Sailing in
Devon and Cornwall

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OGA Web Site: www.oga.org.uk

The Dog Watch

For the Sea Dogs of Devon and Cornwall

Issue 38

December 2019

Welcome

With Christmas almost upon us Paul Jolley, our President has sent a seasonal message to you all as well as thanks for your support through the year. We have tried to design a busy sailing calendar and the events do attract good support. We hope these work out for you but we always welcome your comments to help us improve aspects which you may find wanting.

The draft programme for next year is shown in this Dogwatch on the last page and we hope to firm up the few outstanding details fairly soon. But it gives you the chance to start planning for next season as a distraction between gulping those indigestion pills so needed at Christmas.

Our next meeting is the OGA -AGM at Bristol which Paul has been very much involved in organising. So we are hoping with the busy social aspects built into the weekend it will appeal to many.

David, our secretary has summarised some local aspects in sorting events in "From the Poop deck" which I'm sure you will find interesting.

Paul, ever alert for opportunities has found a place for gaffer involvement in the 2020 Mayflower 400 celebrations which could be fun.

So after the OGA AGM meeting at Bristol our next local event will be another Cornish gathering this time on Pellew, the newly built Falmouth Pilot Cutter.

Other than reports on all of these, this is a very lean issue. So I have padded it out with the unexpurgated version of my article on Paimpol as there was no space for all images in the original printed in Beverley's valedictory Gaffers Log.

And from all of us to all of you we wish you a happy Christmas and excellent sailing next year.

Ed.

Next Meeting

The National OGA Annual General Meeting

Bristol

10th—12th January

Taking stock

David Bewick

The Royal Western Yacht Club at Plymouth has a deserved reputation as one of the premier clubs in the country and it has been our home for landside events for a few years, now. The bust of Francis Chichester in the entrance hall was always a reminder, if it were ever needed, that the place took itself rather seriously. However, in an attempt to control their costs, RWYC have decided to stop running their kitchen and dining room, so they are no longer able to host groups like ours. Whether this will help or hinder their cause remains to be seen but the decision meant that we went across the water to The Bridge at Plymouth Yacht Haven for our recent Laying-up Lunch and AGM. The general consensus seemed to be that the food at The Bridge was better than at RWYC and over thirty members enjoyed a good chat over a leisurely lunch in pleasant surroundings. This meant that the formal business of the day was conducted fairly promptly. Suffice it to say that the Area is financially solvent and that President, Paul Jolley and the rest of the Committee and Officers were all re-elected. I know we say this every year, but some of the committee really do intend to stand down in the near future, so we are in need of some “new blood” to help run things.

At the end of the meeting, I was very pleased to be able to present the George’s Cannon. This award is made according to the new Commodore’s choice after the annual race. This year, the committee decided it would be awarded at the AGM following the race. As the new Commodore, despite not actually having won the race (it’s a long story!), I decided to award the trophy to two people who have done so much to promote gaff-rigged sailing in Cornwall and to give our Area serious credibility in those parts. I was very pleased, therefore, to award the trophy to Don and Pauline Garman. I am sure that those of you who have been to Falmouth Classics, to the Helford Rally or to one of the landside events in Cornwall will understand and be fully supportive of this.

Since the Area AGM, the committee has met once and it was agreed that, with a couple of minor changes, we

would all keep our existing roles. The programme for 2020 will be familiar to many of you with all the usual events on land and sea but with some added interest from Mayflower 400 activities. Rob Brown has agreed to take the lead role in organising the annual race and rally at Plymouth, this year, so please put the dates of this (6-8th July) in your new diary. The dates for the rest of the events are all in the events programme. Full details of these events will be published on the Area website as soon as they are available with formal invitations sent out about a month in advance. I hope to be able to send you electronically fillable forms for events next year, if I can master the necessary technology!

At this time of the year, I think it is reasonable to look back with some satisfaction on the things we did during the past season. You might be interested to see the picture gallery that I recently set up on our website (<https://oga.org.uk/content/brixham-heritage-regatta-2019>) that contains some photos from the prizegiving at the Brixham Heritage Regatta where our members took away perhaps more than their fair share of the prizes.

Best Wishes

David B

The National OGA Annual General

Meeting 10th—12th January

Quite a number of people have already signed up to go so it should be a sociable affair giving an opportunity to meet up with folk from distant regions. All the details to register have been mailed to you but if you have any problems don’t hesitate to contact anyone from the committee.

Details of the event are on the main OGA site. If you are trying from our site you will find it will automatically divert you across.

Ed.

Forthcoming Events

Visit to Pellew followed by Lunch

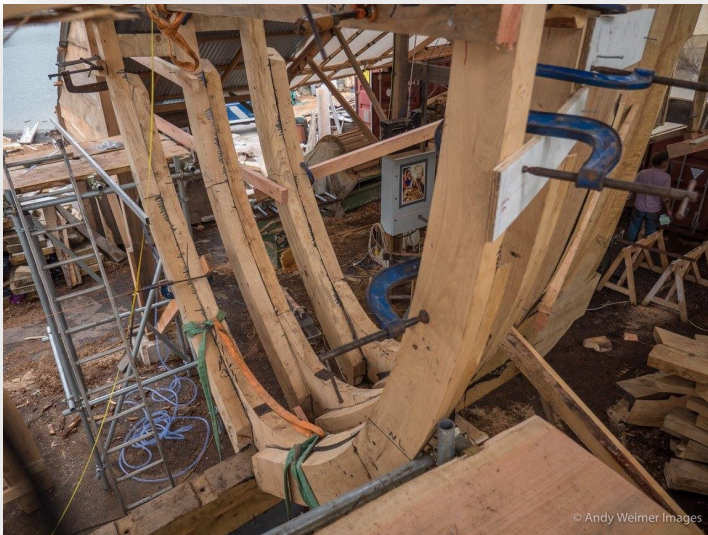
8th February

Pellew is a faithful reproduction based on the 68 feet Falmouth Pilot Cutter *Vincent* built in St Mawes in 1852. Luke Powell drew up plans for her using the original builder's model and she was completed this year.

She has been built on commission for the Falmouth Pilot Cutter CIC with the intention to nurture the art of traditional shipbuilding by training young people and give opportunities for youngsters in sail training.

We will learn more of these endeavours and see the boat close up on Feb 8th. So, definitely one for the diary. Don will fill in details regarding lunch etc. in due course.

We see few new traditional replica boats of this size so this is a special opportunity.



Pellew under construction

photos by Andy Welmer Images

The creators



Forthcoming Events

A special event !

Paul Jolley as ever has been busy behind the scenes looking at opportunities and has come up with this one off event which should interest quite a few. So read on.

Dartmouth Mayflower 400 Celebrations August 28—29th

To celebrate 400 years since the *Mayflower* departed from England to set sail for the New World a weekend of celebrations is being arranged in Dartmouth from which she sailed before heading for Plymouth.

On the weekend of 28—29th August 2020, OGA members are invited to Brixham on the Saturday where South West Gaffers will meet and assist with boats coming into the harbour and entertain members at Brixham Yacht Club.

On the Sunday we sail in company to Dartmouth with other boats with the *Mathew* playing the part of the *Mayflower* and *Pilgrim* acting as *Speedwell*.

At Dartmouth there will be a river pageant and procession followed by a reception for crews (hopefully at Britannia Royal Naval College) followed by a more informal party probably in the Guildhall. There will be a modest fee for entrants which will include a Dartmouth Mayflower 400 "Battle Flag", Pageant Brochure, Commemoration Mug, Certificate of Participation and one ticket to the reception and party. Additional tickets will be available to purchase for crew members.

From Dartmouth it is hoped that the Gaffer fleet will, amongst others accompany the *Mathew* on its start on its passage to Plymouth.

The Mathew

photo: Viv Head



Periwinkle's going !



Brixham Heritage Rally September 14th

Penny Jolley

Secretary to Brixham Heritage Regatta

The last of the summer sun shone down on Brixham as twenty classic boats came together in Torbay to celebrate our 4th Heritage Rally. Those arriving on Friday were forced to motor much of the way from the west, with unfavourable winds from the north-east, as have been in evidence for much of the summer; of course, this favoured the boats coming over from Exmouth and the Axe. Successful (and free) mooring was achieved with the assistance of the Harbour authority undertaking magnificent work shifting boats. Apologies to those of you rafted up against one of the 'seized' boats on the pontoon, currently being processed. Brixham Yacht Club provided an excellent fish and chip supper and the opportunity to begin the 'lamp swinging'.



Mary Flora, a Hilliard 35 edging past Ros Alither, an Irish sailing trawler.

However, all the unfriendly wind and swell magically disappeared amidst the blue skies of Saturday morning. It was lovely to welcome back many boats who had been with us earlier in the year at the Regatta; and it was delightful to welcome three visitors from Germany. One couple who had recently purchased a Holman design boat, built at Upham's Yard, were keen to visit Brixham to find out more about her origins and although the boat stayed in Bremerhaven Thomas and Dagmar Webber flew over to Brixham to join in the rally on *Vigilance*. Thanks to Toni Knights and Peter Gregson for all the information they were able to provide about the history of their boat and show where it was built. The Webbers thoroughly enjoyed their trip. A young man called Wolfgang sailed out on *Guide Me*, and has pretty much



Fly making a grand sight with all up

become a permanent member of their crew during his six month visit at a language school. Finally the Rally Officer's sister-in-law arrived from Austria to sail out on *Theta*; now many promises of return trips to sail on their classic boat on the Austrian lakes. Thank you to the skippers for making all our visitors feel so much part of this friendly, and international, event.

Whilst the sun shone the wind didn't get up to the promised F4-5 promised, instead a gentle breeze allowed us one lap round the excellent figure of eight course set with gaffers in mind by Peter Lytton, our Rally Officer. But the advantage of the lighter wind meant that every boat had every sail up, a photographer's dream – red sails, cream sails and some in between! Well done to all those who came out and gave us all such a dreamy afternoon, conditions allowing the opportunity for tea and sailing cake.



The crew on Ros Alither getting to the forefront !



Theta quietly gliding along

Thanks go to Torbay Harbour Authority for their continued support of Heritage events, to Brixham Yacht Club for providing such a hospitable atmosphere, delicious food and a bottomless barrel. The event couldn't have taken place without the help of Peter Lytton and Peter Boulton, who drove the RIB as committee/rally boat, as well as photographer's platform.

Boats that took part were: *Almonde, Breeze, Caupona, Chopsticks, Diana, Escape, Fly, Guide Me, Hocus Pocus, Jessie, Joker, Mary Flora, Minx, Provident, Ros Ailither, Seafish, Stardust, Theta and Vigilance.*



Vigilance as ever taking the spotlight



Escape with the sun in her sails

Looking forward to seeing you all again in 2020 – the Heritage Regatta is 23/24th May.

Best wishes for the remainder of 2019 and a Happy New

*** All photos by Paignton Photographic Club**

To Paimpol for the Festival du Chant de Marin

John Gallagher

I had only been there once before on the majestic Brixham Trawler *Vigilance* and I was totally wowed. This time I went on a Falmouth Working Boat *Maggie B* with my good friend Mike Forwood and had a far more vigorous trip than before.



After a good blow that took us well across the Channel the wind faltered and we missed the tide round Guernsey. So we went south of the Island and hove to getting some sleep before heading off early for Paimpol.

The welcome there on entering the harbour was quite overwhelming with the quaysides crowded with literally thousands of happy people waving, shouting, singing and clicking cameras. Inside the harbour organised chaos saw a huge array of boats impressively juggled into their spaces. After wriggling through a chicane of bowsprits to reach our berth we realised just how many boats had been squeezed in.

You could almost walk from side to side across them. Mike has been here several times and he thought there were more

boats than he had ever seen in the harbour.



We were locked into the original fishing harbour. All the “white plastic boats” had been moved to an adjacent pool and as the tide ebbed the fact that Paimpol was well above chart datum became very apparent. In fact by some eight metres!

There were gaffers and luggers of all sizes, schooners and brigs, making an amazing spectacle of maritime heritage. Amongst them all went the Music Man in his brilliantly decorated punt to applause everywhere. The French are masters at proudly presenting their heritage boats and the French people seem hugely supportive. Tens of thousands of them came daily to the festival each parting with c. 30 euros on entry. We have so much to learn from them considering how poorly we, of an island nation, care for our own maritime heritage.

Along the harbour sides there were numerous stalls showing all manner of artwork and crafts and of course numerous food and drink stalls and eateries, whilst in the buildings around there were bars, bistros and restaurants as well as chandlers and shops. As the wandering crowds drifted around numbers of queueing groups gathered to visit the boats. Merriment was everywhere much of it from the strolling bands which weaved through the crowds. Musicians made stages on selected boats and played all manner of music including Breton bagpipes, celtic music and shanties galore. Breton dancers also made timely appearances looking more elegant than many around them. One group of merry musicians was scantily clad as traditionally dressed Breton fishermen. Their apparel involved a loin wrap rather like a big nappy. But they sang with vigour, probably keen to get back and put their trousers on.



Pegasus –rising up in a cloud of smoke



..... and there she was when the smoke cleared!

Renowned for their artistic flare, the French seem to have a passion for artwork mobiles. Whilst at the previous Paimpol festival I saw an elephant and a couple of oxen on the move, this time it was a towering white Pegasus. But far from an ordinary standard one this was clearly a special maritime version of Pegasus with sails and a propeller as well as paddles and many other extras. It was venerated by its crew of helpers and a pirouetting dancer was repeatedly bowing and reaching out to the creature. Then it reared up amidst a cloud of smoke as the music came to a crescendo. Wow !

There were many boats to visit and explore and we met up with other South West and Solent Gaffers and had a really sociable time. To our surprise we found one of the groups performing was the Cardigan Rugby Club Male Voice Choir who sang every number in Welsh. It sounded good but we couldn't understand a word. However, evidently the Bretons did as welsh has similar roots to Breton.

And then after three whirlwind days the Festival was done. So next were the logistics of getting all the boats out on one tide. But it happened and a continuous single file discharged through the narrow channel out and away.



Drinks on Maggie B with crew from East Breeze, Carlotta, Theta, Roxanne, Annabelle, Cariat and the hosts.

We returned via Treguier and what an attractive medieval town it is. But there was no idling as with a favourable forecast for the next day of 4 to 5 south westerlies with occasional gusts of 6 and falling slowly towards the end of the day we set off. But the forecasters didn't tell the Weather Gods. In fact it was 5 to 6 with gusts rising to 7 but it reduced a little through the night. So, we flew back making Plymouth breakwater in 18 hours although we were really absolutely knackered at the end.

Despite the return trip we had an excellent time at Paimpol and would recommend it to all. And there were some colourful characters to be seen.



Photos : John Gallagher

Right: Le Francais formerly Kaskalot

Below: The magnificent Etoile du Roy



Above: Breton bagpipers

Left top: Breton Fishermans Choir

Left mid: Dance on sashes from a rope between the lugger's masts



Even something for the very young and all marinated !



The ever present Music Man

***draft* South West Programme of Events 2020**

January 10 th – 12 th	OGA - AGM Bristol	Contact: Colin Stroud secretary@oga.org.uk
February 8 th	Cornwall Winter meeting to <i>Pellew</i> Falmouth Pilot Cutter followed by lunch	Rhoda Mary Heritage Yard, Truro Contact: Don Garman cornwall@southwestgaffers.org.uk
February 26 th	Informal gathering and meal	Duke of Cornwall Hotel Contact: John Gallagher editor@southwestgaffers.org.uk
April 18 th	Fitting Out Lunch and talk on <i>Lynher</i> , Tamar barge, by Barbara Bridgeman	Duke of Cornwall Hotel Contact: David Bewick secretary@southwestgaffers.org.uk
May 22 nd –24 th	Brixham Heritage Sailing Regatta *	Contact: brixhamheritageregatta.uk
June 12 th -14 th	Falmouth Classics *	Contact: falmouthclassics.org.uk
June 15 th -18 ^h	SW Gaffers Helford River Rally	Helford River S.C. / Port Navas Y.C. Contact: Don Garman cornwall@southwestgaffers.org.uk
June 29 th - 1 st July	SW Gaffers Festival of Sail (Annual Rally and Race)	Queen Anne's Battery, Plymouth Contact: Rob Brown robbrown@southwestgaffers.org.uk
July 3 rd -5 th	Sea, Salts and Sail *	Mousehole www.seasalts.co.uk
July 28 th -31 st	Fowey Classics *	Contact: foweyclassics.com
August 14 th -16 th	Dittisham Rally *	Contact: Gil Hayward gilbert.hayward@btinternet.com
August ? tbc	Dartmouth Regatta—Gaffer Races *	Contact: dartmouthregatta.co.uk
August 28 th -29 th	Mayflower 400 Events *	Dartmouth Contact: Paul Jolley president@southwestgaffers.org.uk
September 18-19 th	Brixham Heritage Rally *	Contact: brixhamheritageregatta.uk
November tbc	Laying Up Lunch and AGM	Plymouth Contact: David Bewick secretary@southwestgaffers.org.uk

* these events are not organised by South West Gaffers but we publicise and fully support them