



DOGWATCH

The newsletter of the South West Gaffers



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Welcome!

In this issue, Penny Jolley reports on the Brixham Regatta and Tim Price writes about the restoration of Picottee II. As usual, there are reports from the Poop Deck and details of our sailing events.

The Falmouth Classics has been and gone, including the sinking of the working boat Victory (photographer unknown but they deserve a prize). Falmouth Harbour Commissioner had the wreck promptly buoyed and a Notice to Mariners issued with the boat recovered within 24 hours. Your Editor would like to report that he was on the water at the time but he and his crew were waylaid by pirates in the party at the Greenbank Hotel.

"You haven't lived until you have sailed" (DS)

Oliver Peterken - Editor

"Kirsebær"

From The Poop Deck

Presidential Ponderings

Martin Elliott “Roxanne”

I thought some musings on practical matters concerning the beast and associated ancillaries that lurk below the cockpit sole may be of interest, and possibly stir some precautionary checking. A tale of mechanical faults, only two of which are related, but all present in a relentless sequence to test the resolve and patience of the sailor who would rather be sailing.

The bilge seems to be flooding and a frantic inspection reveals a bronze bolt holding the end cap to the tube stack on my Beta heat exchanger has sheered and the loose end cap is causing the problem. So, order a new bolt and O rings as best to remove the tube stack and clean.

This reveals a badly corroded seating ring for the cap on the other end of the tube stack, no longer available as a spare part. Find an engineer who will quickly turn a new ring in brass to my sketch. Consult with Beta who explain that the failed ring was bonded in with Araldite.

Do the same with the new part and rebuild everything and test run. Result: No leaks, but alternator is now not working having had a close quarter soaking in hot seawater.

Remove and source new alternator, rebuild and test. Result: Charging and still no leaks, but the exhaust manifold flange gasket is now blowing through a localised hole.

Repair with Araldite and test the next day. Result: No blowing, still charging and still no leaks. But on pumping the bilge with the manual pump to clear the remaining water the bellows split. Drive to the chandlers for a new bellows, return and refit and test. Result: Bilge pump working, exhaust not leaking, alternator

charging and no leaks. But on the drive home in heavy rain, a wiper blade on the car flies off into the hedge !!!!!

I think a mention for the Beta works in Gloucestershire should be noted, the phone is answered within three rings and you get put through to the best technical help immediately – how's that for service in this country in 2024.

Moving on to more relevant gaffer news, The season opened for many of us with the Brixham Heritage Regatta, not an OGA event but well attended by South West Gaffers and brilliantly organised by Penny Jolley. South West Gaffer fleet included: Cnythia, Letty, Minx, Mischief, Muriel, Roxanne and Susan J. The seafood pie crew supper on the Saturday and the curry supper on Sunday, both at Brixham Yacht Club, were first class; the club are blessed as always with the most excellent catering team. The parade of sail and classes in the regatta both enjoyed sporting sailing in the fresh westerly winds and somehow results calculated for the evening prize giving. The prize giving included the Concours d'Elegance, which was judged by yours truly and at huge risk of perceived nepotism was awarded to Susan J. Overall a very successful weekend and to be recommended especially to our fleet in the west.

Fair winds and quite seas.

Secretarial Scantlings

David Patuck “Susan J”

I know many SW Gaffers have had a long, wet and windy winter and fit out; in our case, somewhat delayed by unforeseen, unfortunate events in the yards!

By now (early June), most of us are back on the water and looking forward to a good sailing season. I am completing this aboard “Susan J” moored in Salcombe Harbour, with the telephone hoisted on a signal halyard to connect to the internet. This following a visit to the Channel Islands, after the very enjoyable, if rather windy Brixham Heritage Regatta.

SW Gaffers Officers

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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

By the time you actually read this edition of Dogwatch, the Helford Rally will have taken place and you will be receiving registration and menu choice forms for the Plymouth Rally at the end of July.

I have to confirm that we currently do not have a Social Media Editor, after Mark retired from the SW Committee. I hope that members are still finding the extensive pages created by Mark on the OGA website useful, and I will continue to endeavour to keep them up to date. There will soon be an updated version of Mark's useful Almanac but probably in a form that is easier to update. In the meantime, it is likely that this edition of Dogwatch contains the most up to date list of events and Committee members.

While Membership Secretary and SW Social Media Editor roles are already vacant, by the AGM in November our SW Committee will be further depleted. Paul Jolley (SW Merchandise Officer) and Mike Garlick (SW Trophies Officer) will have both stepped down after many years of service. It is good to already have some new blood on the Committee, with fresh ideas and enthusiasm, but if any member feels they would like to consider joining the Committee, and / or take on some of these roles, it would be much appreciated. Please do get in touch with myself swsec@oga.org.uk or other Committee members for more information.

The **2024 OGA Yearbook** has been distributed, with the Spring edition of Gaffers Log, during May, so it was a little late this year. If you haven't already, please complete the simple survey on the first page. The more useful and up to date online information continues to be available to all members, by logging into the Members Area of the OGA website <https://www.oga.org.uk/>. The Gaffer's Log also has the minutes of the OGA AGM last January.

For those OGA members with boats, we continue to be encouraged to confirm the accuracy of the

Register.

The **Plymouth Rally** *has just been held in glorious weather* and the next event is at Fowey. A big thank you to David Bewick for organising the **Dittisham Rally** on the **August 17th weekend**.

Let's hope for some fine sailing weather.

If you haven't please add your boat name and details to the OGA online gallery and database.

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:

Neil Coxon *Windy*, Dittsham

Jane Cumberlidge *Stormalong*

John Dilworth *Lucinda*

Steve Morris *Tarka* Guernsey

Roger and Rosemary Teague *Lizzy Dripping*

Jon Tuilly *Jenny Wren*, Tamar

Dominic Ziegler *Marian*

Andrew Sugden *Lena*, Jersey

New Dog Watch Features

In this and future editions, we shall be including short features on Members' boats and their favourite rivers. These are intended to capture what we love about our gaffers and the rivers we keep them in or sail on. Entitled "In My Boat" and "Up Your River", articles should be between 500 and 1500 words with one to three photos.

Please contact the editor if you would like to volunteer. He can also provide editorial advice on how to get started through to editing your piece.

My Boat - Picotee II

Tim Price

I found Picotee II up in Rochester in 2020 convinced that I needed a sturdy boat with an inboard that I could sail single handed. Maurice Griffiths designed Lone Gull so that she took a fairly hard ground on every ebb up in the swathways of Essex and therefore that she must be strong. He also required a shallow draft with a centreboard.

her shipped down to Cornwall and placed in my field over a 7 foot trench. At some point the centreboard had been taken out and the casement filled with concrete. I had an aspiration to replace it but as I became more familiar with the boat the less practical that became. Originally the engine was an offset Morris 4 cylinder petrol with belt drives. This had been replaced with a BMC 1500 diesel engine on the centre line which also encroached into the cabin; enough to preclude a lifting centreboard and watertight casement.



The Trench (TP)

Picotee needed a bit of work after lockdown but the engine only just needed a new battery. She had good spars and a recent suite of sails so what could go wrong. I had

Needless to say the engine didn't start; one of the cylinders was seized and the Bowman heat exchanger was rusted through. The boatyard obviously wanted the boat off

their yard and the owner, in spite of being helpful, was also somewhat economical with reality. I know that you will be thinking that I should have had a full survey but you and I know that surveyors are killjoys who only want to dampen your enthusiasm and charge you a lot for it – get a survey done, you are going to have to in the end.

The engine came out and a replacement procured which was completely stripped and anything slightly worn replaced. Someone had partially reground the crankshaft which meant that the bearings were of a different radius resulting in a complete regrind. A hard propshaft coupling rather than a soft rubber coupling meant that when the engine went back in the gearbox and propshaft wouldn't line up. I had to cut the engine beds down to align them and the engine went in first time.

Because I wanted to sail single handed, I wanted furling headsails and therefore put a Wickam Martin on a new bowsprit which was required because the hollow bowsprit was rotting. I also put a Plastimo roller reefing system on a new forestay.

I had sanded down the pitch pine deck but had to replace 4 lengths on the foredeck. My wife was sent to a chapel demolition in Wales to bring back the wood so that I could cut them to shape. Once the deck was complete I had to rake out and recaulk a fair amount before sycorflex and then finally applying a polyester coating. Sadly the deck still swells and cracks and is not wholly dry. I have been told to pin old charts to the coachroof to keep the drips off at night.

When I did get the boat surveyed, the keel bolts were identified as needing replacement. Fortunately the boat was off the ground and, in spite of the physical effort in knocking them out, it meant that new bolts could be drawn up from underneath.

Absolutely none of this could have happened if I didn't live next door to a civil / diesel engineer / boat builder with equipment and facilities who was prepared to spend time and effort getting the boat saved and put back in the water. He completely rebuilt the engine, made the keel bolts and gave me the encouragement when I felt all was lost. By all means have a go at a boating project but be realistic about your capabilities.



Ready for launch (TP)

Brixham Report

Penny Jolley

Regatta Organiser

weekend, allowing the Regatta entry fee to be kept as low as possible; so a big thanks to them.



Gaffers moored up (JP)

Brixham blossomed with beautiful boats over the late May bank holiday! Many crews coming not only to sail in company with a wide variety of heritage boats, but also to celebrate the 100th birthday of the famous Brixham sailing trawler, Provident.

It is now 27 years since the revival of the Heritage Regatta in its present form; the original event took place over 100 years ago under the auspices of King George V, whose Perpetual Challenge Cup (1912) is awarded annually to the fastest trawler.

A total of 42 boats entered in the Regatta this year, some increase over the past 10 years when entries originally amounted to fewer than a dozen. The popularity and success are a tribute to the hard work of the Heritage Regatta Committee, its crew of stalwart volunteers, Brixham Yacht Club and Torbay Harbour Authority; the latter kindly extending free berthing facilities to our visiting Heritage vessels over the entire

Boats and crews were met by the Regatta Bosun in the 'Follow Me' boat to assist mooring in the sunshine on Friday and Saturday, following passages from as far afield as Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, Cornwall and the Isle of Wight. On Saturday and Sunday the MDL Event pontoon was hired into service as the remaining boats continued to arrive (and thanks to MDL for working so closely with the Regatta committee.) A full list of all 38 boats at the regatta appears at the end of this article.

This year offered a Pint and Pasty Regatta Reception on board Provident on the Friday evening, these were kindly sponsored by the Prince William pub and Fuller's pasties and accompanied by the singing duo of Black Gold on the quayside in the late sunshine. The Town Heritage pontoon looked particularly spectacular with the TS Royalist, cadets aloft, lying alongside amongst the regatta boats dressed overall.

With the lugger *Le Grand Lejon*, Provident from Scotland and junk crews from Australia and the USA the Regatta this year had a decidedly international flavour.

Following the reception, Brixham Yacht Club invited the crews to their Friday evening 'Happy Hour' and the club continued to extend the warmest hospitality over the entire weekend, staff coping enthusiastically with the record numbers.

The scuddy skies gave Saturday arrivals an interesting sail to Brixham; an informal start to



Provident (JP)

the proceedings was on offer to boats sailing up from the west who were able to join in the passage race from Dartmouth. This is a self-timed competition for boats both over and under 30'.

Everyone soon embraced the reality that actually regattas are all about: Moving boats around and socialising, interspersed with occasional bouts of sailing, amiable seamanship and entertainment. The afternoon started with Missin' Tackle and All Hands On Deck singing sea shanties, the latter performing a specially composed song on board the deck of Provident.

Registration included distribution of excellent goodies bags, supported by Bays Brewery and Seawood Chandlery of Torquay, Regatta mugs courtesy of Dolphin boatyard and Regatta flags from Rockfish; this was followed by the crews' traditional fish pie supper, courtesy of Waterdance Fishing. This year numbers necessitated two sittings which all the crews worked around with good humour and much ale!

A special mention must be given to the crew of *Leader* who had a thwarted passage from Gloucester Docks, with a delayed departure by a broken bridge; off Padstow the RNLI were called to assist her round to Newlyn where she remained awaiting repairs. Nothing daunted the skipper, bosun, first mate and chair of trustees made their own way up to Brixham, arriving for a late supper on Saturday evening. We managed to fix them all up with a sail in Sunday's Regatta before they returned to *Leader*; happily repairs have been successful and she has now returned to Ireland – with promises for a visit here next year along with Bryan Boru.

Our thanks to the Concours d'Elegance judge, Martin Elliott, who assessed the assembled boats over the course of the weekend; Martin is the South West Gaffers President. An unenviable task amongst such a variety of yachts, trawlers, working boats, replicas and dinghies; thanks to him for the careful time and consideration he gave to the Regatta.

Sunday morning was brilliant! A brisk northerly wind gave us dry conditions in bright sunshine – "the best Heritage Regatta conditions I have sailed in" was the remark made by many of the skippers.

The Parade of Sail was led out by *Royalist* giving spectators on the Breakwater excellent views of the fleet. The Corinthian Sail in Company was started with the trawlers leading off the 7 classes of boats. The regatta officer's careful course planning offered the Heritage fleet magnificent sailing in the conditions with a reach due east from Battery Point to Breakwater Bay, then a fetch out into the middle of Torbay and a beat down towards the Paignton mark. The junk rigged boats sail much the same as gaff rigged, being shy of anything near windward. The majority of the boats had a superb sail, with the fastest lap timed at 21 minutes (by *Lulotte*, a Swan owned by Ben Morris); the two little Drascombe luggers wisely hugged the harbour in the choppy conditions.

Nearly all boats finished the 4 lap course; hard work but exhilarating sailing, and very commendable for the small working boats and ideal for the large boats. Not too windy for them to have all their sails up which has afforded some great pix.

Have a look at the Brixham Heritage Regatta Facebook page and website for the photographs, taken by members of Paignton Photographic club, Wendy Searle and Christian Topf, as well as those taken by individuals out on the Bay. Our thanks to Roger and Jackie Gater who took the seaborne photographers out in their lovely launch.

The excellent Sunday curry buffet at Brixham Yacht Club was followed by distribution of the impressive and historic silverware at prize-giving; Peter Milligan, chair of the Vigilance Trustees, presented the trophies and was proud to represent Vigilance during her continued absence at Will Sterling's yard for 'major surgery'. For full results please visit the Regatta website. Two additional awards were made: first Provident was presented with the National Historic Ships Flagship of the Year and second the Regatta Organiser, Penny Jolley, was presented with the OGA President's Commendation for outstanding contributions to traditional sail in the South West.

Thanks go too to all the volunteers and the hard work by the berthing party was an enormous help; the behind the scenes staff at the Harbour Authority, Brixham Yacht Club, the 'front of house' and Regatta volunteers crew in their vivid fuchsia polo shirts.

"We couldn't believe the number of beautiful boats assembled – what organisation!"

"The friendliest Regatta – and gets better every year"

"We had to miss last year and feel as if we're coming home!"

"The highlight of my sailing year!"

Our thanks to all the boats and boats' crews who came and made it all work. We look forward to seeing you at the **Heritage Rally on 7th September 2024**, a rather more low key affair.

2025 dates:

Brixham Heritage Regatta 24th - 25th May

LIST OF BOATS AT BRIXHAM HERITAGE REGATTA 2024

ARABELLA OF TORQUAY

BLUEBELL

BRYONY

CARIAD

CAUPONA

CHARLIE BRAVO

CYNTHIA

ESCAPE

FALANDA

FLY

HANNAH

ISLAND BOUND

ISOBEL

KIE MAR

KRKA

LE GRAND LEJON

LETTY

LEXIA

LOWENNA

LULOTTE

MAID OF SHANNON

MATAWA

MINNOW

MINX

MISCHIEF

MORNING VICAR

NORA

PENELOPE PUGWASH

PILGRIM

PROVIDENT

RADIANCE

ROXANNE

SUSAN J

TAMARIND

TREBAH

WHITE CLOUD

WHITE ROSE

WHIRLAWAY

South West Maritime History Society

The South West Maritime History Society aims to encourage interest in all aspects of our maritime heritage and promotes research in these fields. It publishes a newsletter four times a year and arranges visits, talk etc. They have kindly supplied a taster version of their newsletter for our members [[click here](#)].

Events

see also [OGA Events Page](#)

SWG Fitting Out Lunch

13 April Brixham Yacht Club

Contact: David Patuck and Paul Jolley swsec@oga.org.uk

Brixham Heritage Regatta

25-26 May Brixham

Contact: www.brixhamheritageregatta.uk Penny Jolley

Falmouth Classic (West Country Classics series (1 of 3))

14-16 June Falmouth

Contact: www.falmouthclassics.org.uk Chris Williams

Made In Looe Regatta

14-16 June Looe

Contact: Paul Pengelly office4luggers@btinternet.com

SWG Helford Rally

17-18 June Helford River

Contact: Tim Price timpriceabroad@hotmail.com

Dartmouth Classics (Channel Classics Regatta) (West Country Classics (2 of 3))

18-19 July Dartmouth Royal Dart SC

Contact: www.classic-channel-regatta.eu Tel 01803 752496

SWG Plymouth Rally

26-28 July Plymouth Mayflower

Contact: swevents@oga.org.uk

Fowey Classics (West Country Classics series 3 of 3)

30 July-2 August Fowey

Contact: www.foweyclassics.com

Netherlands OGA20

3-17 August Netherlands

Contact: Rik Jannesen inst@a4all.nl

SWG River Dart Rally and Dittisham Regatta

16-18 August Dittisham

Contact: smallboats@oga.org.uk

Royal Dartmouth Regatta

24 August - 1 September Dartmouth

Contact: www.dartmouthregatta.co.uk

Gaffers Event (Dartmouth sailing week)

30-31 August Dartmouth

The organisers of Dartmouth Sailing Week (part of Dartmouth Royal Regatta), have let us know that, after many years, they are now able to make it easier for gaffers to berth for the Gaffer & White Sail races on the 30th and 31st August. There will be a dedicated mid-river pontoon.

Contact: For more details and to book email: info@dartharbour.org and for more information www.dartmouthsailingweek.com/competitors-information/
www.datmouthsailingweek.com

Brixham Heritage Rally

7 September Brixham

An informal sail in company event.

Contact: Penny Jolley www.brixhamheritageregatta.uk

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

SWG Lunch Time Meeting

1 February 2025 Plymouth Area

A talk by an Atlantic rower. Further details to follow.

Contact: David Patuck swsec@oga.org.uk

Photo Credits / References

DP David Patuck

JP Julie Patuck

OP Oliver Peterken

TP Tim Price

DS David Sedaris