

OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

WESTERN AUSTRALIA
INCORPORATED NEWSLETTER

PRESERVING AND PROMOTING GAFF RIG

OGA Picnic Day—7 November 2004

It was a beautiful hot blue day when a small group gathered at noon at RFBYC on their “Try Sail” day. Peter and Diane McDermott, Alan Abbott, Bruce, Fiona and Conall Veitch, Mike and Mary Igglesden with daughter Carol, Kym and young Max, plus Bruce and Fiona’s friends Steph and young Silas had a happy time under a large tree enjoying the magnificent view at Keane’s Point.

Bruce, Fiona and John came in the very patient *Lochen* (yes, she had her day at last) and young Mike came in *Oriel*. From the point of view of sailing off the coast, the river looked frighteningly busy! But then that was the point of it really. Certainly there was lots of interest in the “Try Sail” factor. We enjoyed our home-made picnics with the youngsters rambling from esky to esky, checking out the options, and then there were various sorties onto the water by various parties. Alan and Pauline were put to work by

young Mike on *Oriel*, whilst Peter, Fiona and John scored an enviable sail on the Cousta boat *Merlin*. Did you know that a Cousta boat has an 8 foot draft when the centreboard is down?? Then young Mike took Carol, Kym and a rather reluctant Max out; the reluctance appeared to be linked to Grandma disappearing from his view as the wharf receded!

It was another pleasant day focused on boating, in wonderful easy and entertaining company, where we were all able to enjoy the bond we share.

By late afternoon we watched *Oriel* depart up the river with a favourable wind, whilst *Lochen* called upon Fiona and John to see her home *against* the wind, but that’s part of the fun isn’t it?

Whatever did we do before we joined OGA?

Pauline Dilley



Picnic Boats *Lochen* and *Oriel*

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Special points of interest:

- Rotto Weekend.
- Silvery Wave story - a Mews boat.
- OGA Christmas Dinner details.
- Send in those stories and pictures—to either Mike or Fiona via snail mail or email. If you send photos via snail mail, we’ll post them back to you.
- Email Fiona and let her know if you would like an emailed colour digital copy of the newsletter.
- Next newsletter deadline: 31st January 2004.

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Editorial

SMALL WOODEN BOATS -A 'TURN ON'

The much vaunted adage 'The smaller the boat the greater the fun' is, given some limitations, to a large degree, a truism.

Conversely there is a school of thought which advocates that the length of a skipper's boat, in feet, should equate to his or her age in years. My introduction to the boating scene was a 7foot pram dinghy on the local boating lake, which, at that time, fitted that description to a tee! A problem arises when, as one becomes longer in the tooth, your boat, accordingly, would become less and less manageable, more and more expensive, require more and more crew, which, in turn, makes a quick sail, when an opportunity arises, more difficult to organize.

I know my liking (love?) for small boats is perfectly sensible and rational as all the above problems are reduced to a minimum -

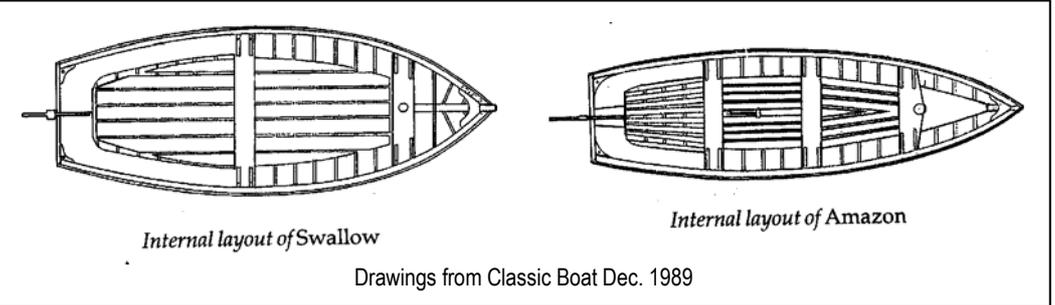
'cute', a term to which I do not subscribe!

Of the literally millions of examples of beautiful small boats in the world, one stands out for me -probably since it takes me back to my childhood days of long ago. She is to be found in the Windermere Steamboat Museum (an absolute 'must see' when visiting U.K.) is the dinghy *Amazon* which featured in Arthur Ransome's children's books - "Swallows and Amazons". As were many children pre World War II and beyond, I was absolutely absorbed by the adventures of the youngsters in this story and their handling of these two 13 foot ex fishing boats. Each totally different in shape but had their own sensuous lines. I was trapped for life.

Ransome owned many small boats, including at least three Hilliard's, the last one of which he had built when he was 69. One of his earlier boats was a 2 1/2 tonner he featured in another of his children's books, 'We didn't mean to go to sea'. Take a look at the photo-



Shoals O' Herrin'
"Wi' our nets and gear we're farin'
On the wild and wistful ocean
It's there on the deep that we harvest and reap
oor nets
As we hunt the bonny shoals o' herrin'"



especially when there is a quick sail in the offing. I must admit, though, having had an uneasy feeling when surrounded by whales cavorting a few metres from the boat, as they were last week on the return trip from Rottnest, that perhaps, in that situation, it may have been more reassuring to be sailing a boat which was at least as long as the whales! They were having a great time but if one had decided to use the boat on which to scratch an itching back??

I could be accused of enjoying my love of small boats due to my senses being aroused by the sight of curvaceous hulls, planking running, especially in a well planked clinker boat, to beautiful fine ends giving the inference of a seaworthy hull. Absolute poetry. And it is not because I believe them to be

graph of *Lochen*, Fiona and Bruce's Hilliard that we portrayed in the November 2002 newsletter. A truly beautiful classic wooden boat.

I realise all the above is preaching to the converted, but I'm certain many of you are as besotted as me. We are so fortunate to enjoy this added beautiful dimension to our lives.



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President's Report

Our lives rush past us like an express train. People come and go, they jump aboard and ride with us for a while, and then they change at the next stop and go on in their own direction. Sometimes you catch up with them again. Most times you don't. And all of them leave some influence, some more than others, that helps shape our lives.

I always wonder what ever happened to Bob Carr. It was over thirty years ago that I met him, but I will never forget him. I was building a boat on the West Indian Island of Bequia at the time, and I remember that I had a piece of metal in the vice on my workbench and was cutting it with a hacksaw.

"One stroke a second," a voice said to me from over my shoulder.

"What?" I asked.

"When you saw metal you want to cut on the stroke, and make that one stroke per second," the stranger answered.

It only took a glance at the fellow for me to realize that he knew what he was talking about. I had met a lot of sailors, many of whom had sailed around the world, but I hadn't met many like Bob Carr.

Bob had sailed into Bequia on his way to the Panama Canal. He a Canadian from the island of Nova Scotia, he would have been in his mid to late sixties, and he was sailing single handed. His vessel was called simply the *Sarah B*, and she was an exact wooden replica of Joshua Slocum's *Spray*. Among other things, Bob Carr was a shipwright, and he had built his boat himself. She lay at anchor far to leeward of all the other yachts, mainly because he had no engine aboard.

One afternoon I sailed out in my dinghy to pay him a visit. He was just finishing some painting. He was using paint that he made himself, from linseed oil, white lead and "driers". The first thing I noticed was the size of everything... from the mast to the anchor chain to the rigging wire... it was all massive! There was no way anything that I cast my roaming eye on that could ever break! Not in a million years. The *Sarah B* might have only been 48ft in length, but she was built like a Grand Banks Schooner!

Bob's accommodation was in a small cabin just forward of the tiller. There was no cockpit. You stood on the after deck to steer. Down below was cramped, but orderly. He cooked on a cast iron, coal fired stove. Everything he needed was within reach. I mentioned that there wasn't a lot of living space for such a big boat, but he just shrugged and said it was all he needed. We went forward, and stepped down into the hold amidships. And it was then I saw why his cabin was so small. The hold was full of every type of nautical equipment imaginable! It was like a floating shipyard. He had tools by the box full. There were kegs of nails and barrels of Stockholm tar. He had a bolt of cotton in case he needed to make any new sails, as well as a couple of tons of coal to keep his cooker going. He even had a blacksmith's forge and all the tools so he could forge whatever he needed.

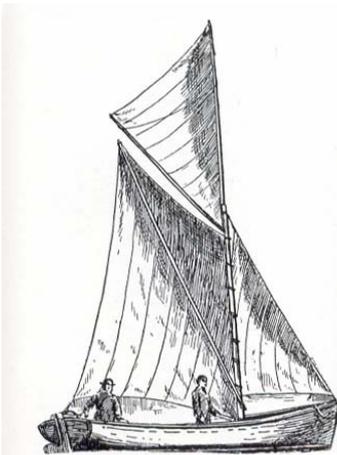
"Yes, Chris, when it comes to sailorizin' I have pretty much done it all," Bob said.

Shipwright. Sailmaker. Rigger. Caulker. Fisherman. He had even hauled gravel on the *Sarah B* for a few years before leaving Nova

Scotia. Bob Carr was a man from a different time, another era.

A few days later I watched him leave. It took him an hour and a half to get his giant fisherman anchor up off the bottom, and then hoist his heavy gaff and sail. But get them up he did. I watched as the sails of the *Sarah B* disappeared over the western horizon. And I knew that it would be a long time before I ever met another like Bob Carr. And I've never heard a word of him since...

Just a reminder that our annual Christmas Dinner has been booked for Thursday night, December 2, at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club at seven pm. This is "Roast and Pasta Night" at the club, and the cost is \$16.00 pre person. Anyone wishing to attend please call me at home on 93395785 after 6pm no later than Friday, 26th November, so that I can make the final reservations.



**"T'was a fine and a pleasant summer's day
Outta Yarmouth harbour I was faring
As a cabin boy on a sailing lugger
We were off to hunt the shoals o' herrin'"**



Jack Gardiner's Memories

Editor's Note: Webster Dictionary describes "tree nail" as long wooden pins used in fastening the planks of a ship to the timbers

Trunnels

Split with a froe and bittle

The blacksmith used to make our froes out of car springs about 18" long. He would taper them back from the edge and all they needed was a wooden handle in the eye. The block was a huge lump of oak sunk into the ground, with the top at the right height to work with. The work piece was sawn to length with a crosscut saw and strip car inner tube tied round the middle. The foe was lined up with the medullary rays on the log and given a whack with the bittle. The rubber would give but hold the pieces in shape for the next cut. They were judged for size. You finished up with flat pieces 1" thick. These were then split down the other way with a tomahawk to make them just over 1" square. Oak will always split down the medullary rays easier than the annular rings hence the first cut along them.

The next operation is with the witchet, like an overgrown pencil sharpener. We had two made of cast iron, one with a straight blade the other with a curve at one end to put a rounded point on the trunnel. They used to be made of wood and the two cast iron ones were the only

ones I have ever seen. Nowadays of course they don't split trunnels but simply saw them square and round them with a machine.

Putting them in on the job

If the foreman was really picky he would have the annular rings of the trunnel in line with the run of the plank. Having driven the trunnel home (with the bittle) it was sawn off both ends and either caulked all round or a split put across the middle (vertically across the grain of the plank) with a chisel and that was caulked with a special iron called a spike.

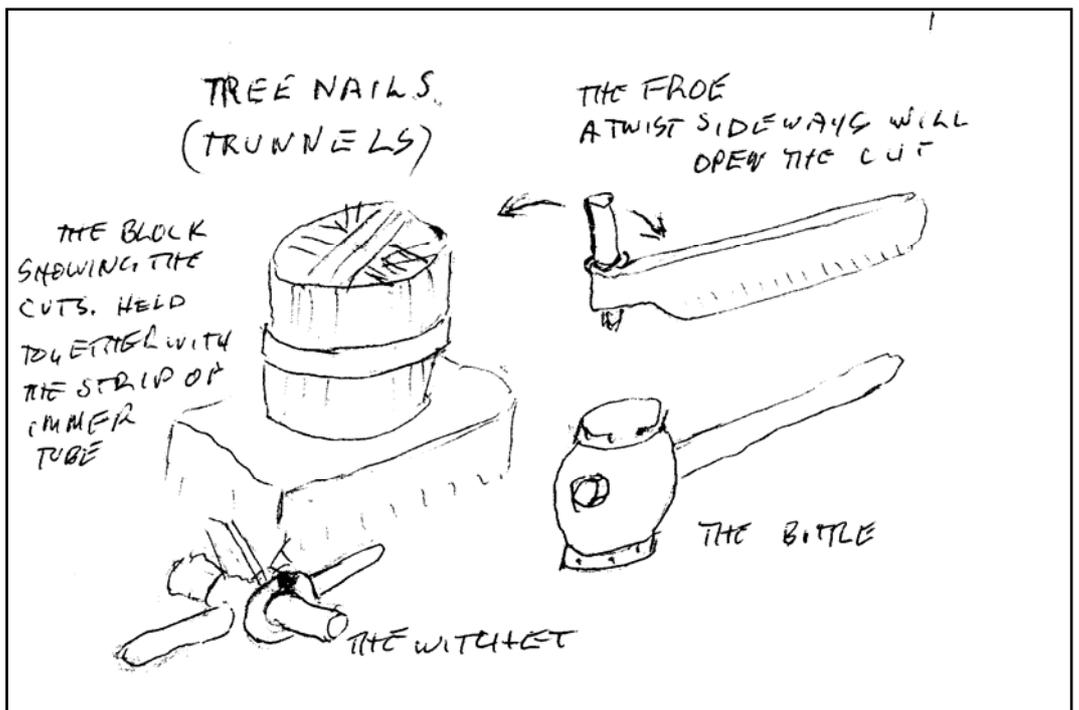
The Harbour Board had two wooden hopper barges which worked with an old bucket dredge and we got the job of renewing a few planks every year. That is the only way I know how it use to be done. The *Endeavour's* trunnels were all machine made. I could not imagine anyone using a witchet these days. It used to take all afternoon to do a wheelbarrow full.

I made a couple of witchets for Bill Leonard. He would doubtless show them to you if you asked him. They don't actually work too well but they show the idea.

Another thing I forgot. Some of the old shipwright had an old saw which was sharp but only set on one side, kept for cutting trunnels



"Now the work was hard and the hours were long And the treatment surely took some bearin' There was little kindness and the kicks were many As we hunted for the shoals o' herrin'"



off flush with out scoring the plank. If you are working by hand the idea is to work easy. The pit saw for example could cut the 9" thick keel at nearly a foot a minute while the sawyers were fresh. Working all day at it was not nearly as fast which of course included moving the whole flitch along over the pit. Not difficult because it was on rollers. Oak sawdust had a commercial value too. I think among other things for tanning leather as well as smoking herrings. There was always plenty of it when cutting flitches for frames and deck beams but this was one of the sawyers' perks. Probably the only one.

Designers & Other Memories

Dave Hilliard was not one of the designers that we built any boats off. Fred Shepherd was one. We built a 70 ft ketch of his and Harrison Butler was another. We built a little 3 or 4 ton boat of his. The difference between those two was amazing. The first always would stop and answer questions or even just talk. He came down every or most Saturdays to watch the construction but never, as far as I know, said anything about it. The foreman, Jack Young, was the most knowledgeable shipwright I ever came across and would not let anything go past him that was not 100% right.

Harrison Butler once when we were laying off his boat came down and asked Jack if he had allowed the plank thickness on the moulds. Jack told him that he had not only allowed the plank thickness but included the paint too, and was told not to be impertinent. I think H.B. was a doctor by trade but in any case Jack had forgotten more about boatbuilding than he ever would know. I never met his daughter but by all accounts she was worse than he was. She designed some boats too. We had what he called the Metacentric Shelf Theory and any boat that did not conform to it could only sail backwards. He had analysed the shape of a lot of ships to see if they were built to suit his theory and he wrote a book about it. I remember the *Victory*, which was an outstanding sailer, passed his test which proved his theory. But don't ask me what a metacentric shelf is. I know what a metacentric height is but don't see what the connection with the inner wale which carries the deck beams is.

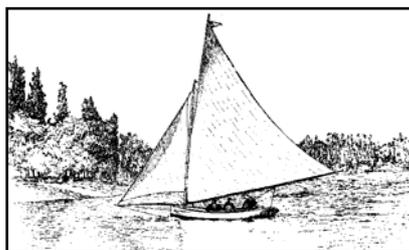
It was old Fred Shepherd who told me "You have never seen a fish with a transom". He died a few years ago at the ripe old age of 90 odd. Jack Young was 75 when I knew him but have never been back to find out how he got on. I do know he was in charge of building M.T.B.s

and other naval craft all through the war. I expect Dave Hilliard was too and was possibly the one who started the scheme of giving every builder and woodworking shop a small part of the said M.T.B.s to make one No. 1 frames, one wheelhouse windows, one stringers, and so forth then the builders had nothing but to assemble ready made parts. I was not there but it sounds boring.

The big wooden shed with the slipway was burnt down sometime during the war. It was fitted out with every convenience for building large (125'?) boats. The big slipway outside the shed could take 250 tons with a hand winch to haul with the hand part had been replaced with a 5 HP electric motor in my time. But the hand parts were still there. Starting with a 3 crank at 60° on each side which was turned by 12 men, 2 to each crank. The last gear was about 8 ft in diameter and half sunk into a pit. The hauling parts were chain with links 1" thick and about 9" long arranged two and one with 1" bolts connecting. In the lowest gear it took somewhere near 100 turns on the crank to fetch one link. Most of the links had been souvenired for ballast by my time. The slip was still in use for big steam and sailing yachts. One yacht *Mermerus* had been built for one of the Russian grand dukes and was 125 ft long and drew 15 ft. She even had brass cannon on board (worked with a shell like a shotgun) for saluting, but had grass growing in her decks while she had been laid up in a mud berth. Was topsail schooner rigged. We apprentices used to borrow her keys to look around down below. All teak and mahogany panelling with wooden baths, I remember, and gold leaf on the pillars. Most of the portable things aboard had already gone by the time we got there but old Jack would have skinned us if anything else had disappeared. She was built of steel and the hull was in remarkably good condition. We never stopped to wonder why some people had that sort of money while we apprentices were getting 10 or 15 shillings a week, £3.0.0 when out of our time, and buy your own tools. The ones you could not make or the blacksmith be persuaded to make for you. Or why Lord Runciman, the shipping magnate, once recommended any one building a yacht should build not less than 600 tons.



**"Now we fished the
Swarth and the
Broken Bank
I was cook and I'd a
quarter's sharin'
And I used to sleep
standin' on my feet
And I'd dream
about the shoals o'
herrin'"**



Rottnest Weekend— 29th October to 1st November

This recent weekend saw the now annual get-together of the Old Gaffers in Geordie Bay. Cabin 903 had been booked, including 2 extra beds, moorings also acquired, all we needed was the right weather.....and of course, on Friday it blew from the West, sometimes with a bit of North in it, just the wrong direction, just the sort of challenge a Gaffer needs.

There was another challenge this year. Our fellow member Bruce Veitch, with wife Fiona and young Conall were determined to be at this year's meet, if not on their own beloved boat *Lochen* then by the most suitable alternative, in defiance of a challenging health problem. The conditions were too rough for *Lochen* but as second best, Bruce and Fiona hitched a ride with the Dilley's and McDermott's on their recently acquired catamaran *Spirit of Esperance*. Ok, so it is not gaff-rigged but it was well suited to meet the needs of certain Gaffers, and was heard being described as an Honorary Gaffer!

Wally Cook and Alan Abbott were first to arrive on Friday on the faithful *Karina*, after a battle with the elements, followed by *Spirit* and then on Saturday, the young Mike Igglesden on lovely *Oriel*, with trusty crew member Craig, Mike's son David, soon followed by Clive Jarman and Linda Jennings on the charming *Merry Rose*.

As we gathered at the chalet to swap tales and share sups of brew, it became apparent what amazing logistical manoeuvres had been undertaken in order for people to make the trip and return home afterwards. Young Conall at 16 months came by ferry with Diana Hewison, Mike's return crew were to arrive by ferry on Sunday (son-in-law Kym) and Monday (friend Louis) because Craig had to leave early. Bruce and Fiona's support team from mothers' group, Steph and Chris with Conall's mate young Silas arrived by ferry on Saturday and stayed till Sunday. This was definitely not a 'point and go' event.

On Saturday morning 7 or 8 members walked to Thompson's Bay and to the cycle hire to obtain pre-arranged sand-accessible wheel chair and electric Gopher for Bruce so that he could enjoy the freedoms of beach and pathways

like the rest of us. We were quite a mob as we took turns on the Gopher and meandered back to Geordie Bay, as we had also met Steph, Chris and Silas at the settlement. Later that day Wally took Fi and Steph for a sail in *Karina*, but the wind, as usual, did not do what the sailors desired.

At cabin 903 there was much coming and going, cooking, hilarity, tales and singing. Wally insisted on a round of "Row, row, row your boat" the food was great, the cooking roster was effortless and seamless. Chairs came and went, there were always enough, the view was superb and the weather lost its grey and turned out blue by Sunday, enabling Bruce, Chris, John, Pauline and Conall to have a swim. The *Spirit* crew saw several whales on the trip to Rotto, including a close-up of a family of two adults plus calf, an albatross accompanied the boat, stingrays met us at the jetty at GB and of course there were quokkas everywhere plus a few dolphins on the return trip. All in all the weekend

was a triumph of the human spirit. Even the leak in Oriel's fuel line didn't dampen the occasion, although young Mike was pleased to locate where the smell of petrol was coming from! Just as well he's a non-smoker! Kym was pleased to hear that the bilge had been cleaned out.

There were additional social contacts – Fi met some of her Mothers' Group members and Pauline met a former nursing colleague, Rotto is like that. We were also able to check out some of the refurbished chalets in Fay's Bay and Longreach Bay.

Many thanks to all who participated (a grand total of 17) for their support and commitment, especially to our secretary Pauline Dilley for her sterling work in her dealings with The Rottnest Island Authority, not always an easy task!

In contrast to last year, all boats made it home on the Monday. *Spirit* had a cracking journey –yes, right into the sea breeze, back to Mangles Bay.

It was great! Let's do it again next year!



Enjoying the evening BBQ



Karina and *Spirit* in Geordie Bay

John Dilley



**"Well we left the home ground in the month of June
And for canny Shiels we were bearin'
Wi' a hundred cran of the silver darlin's
That we'd taken from the shoals o' herrin'"**



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Minutes of Old Gaffers Meeting—28th September 2004

HELD AT EAST FREMANTLE YACHT CLUB

Meeting opened at 19.45 pm

As only 7 members were present, not sufficient for a quorum, members agreed we would still proceed with meeting but that no decisions would be made.

Members warmly welcomed new member, Allan Hoare- Allan does not own a boat but has done some sailing and would appreciate offers of crewing ; Rottnest perhaps ? Mark Foti has also joined.

Present : Chris Bowman (President), Jeremy Stockley (Treasurer) Diana Hewison (for Secretary), Alan Abbott, Geoff Howard, Linda Jennings, Allan Hoare

Apologies : Mary and Mike Igglesden, Fiona Hook, Bruce Veitch, Pauline and John Dillely, Wally and Shirley Cook, Clive Jarman, Karel Abbott

Chris mooted the idea of the Association helping Bruce and Fiona in some way – all present agreed to offer support in any way needed.

Minutes of last meeting: discussion only on some points on the Action list from AGM in July

Jeremy pointed out that the Constitution was not available at the meeting but could be obtained from Fiona; he wished to propose some changes to the constitution; proposals should be included in the next newsletter.

Pennants- members reminded these very smart items were available from Pauline – no money to be paid at meetings.

Duyfken – Chris reported that the skipper had resigned over concern about costs of another trip up river to the Brewery site; Chris doubts Duyfken will sail now to Mandurah- suggested members search web site. Jeremy felt as possible date for Mandurah sail was a working day it was pointless discussing it.

Regatta : Club would prefer a Saturday to Sunday; Chris will check availability with RFBYC

Meeting day ! – some discussion – it was not the best day for a few members but it had been decided so must stand for this year.

Rottnest trip – a reminder on date and moorings.

Christmas dinner : Chris mooted having it at RFBYC and possible dates of Dec. 2nd or 9th were suggested- he will check if suitable and notify Pauline so it can be placed in next newsletter enabling members to notify numbers at November meeting.

Jeremy will check through Regatta papers for details of boat histories and talk to Chris about it

Painting presentation : Jeremy , and others , interested; venue debated – Chris said maybe it could be held in “ C” shed ACTION for Mike.

Maritime Museum talks – Diana enthused about the wonderfully interesting presentations and mentioned the next one to be about

Thames barges and water traffic in days of yore ; it would be wonderful if Jack could come; a suggestion that the list of events could be published in the newsletter – several members already enjoy the talks.

Someone (?) mentioned the election which prompted a fascinating talk by Chris on the very unusual parliamentary system in St Vincent and the Grenadines !

Picnic at RFBYC on Nov. 7th - 4 members agreed they would be there.

Catalpa – Chris doesn't know whom to contact re enactment.

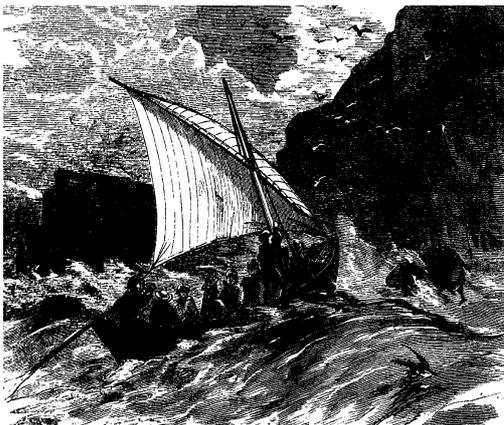
Geoff Howard was congratulated on getting hitched and also on his entertaining article about his Northwest trip.

Meeting closed at 21:10 pm

Next meeting : 4th Tuesday in November the 23rd.



**“Through the stormy seas and the living gale
Just to earn your daily bread you're darin'
From the Dover straits to the Faroe Islands
As you're following the shoals of herrin'”**



**The Albion
Hotel**

Silvery Wave—History of a Fishing Vessel

Steve Boocock sent an interesting story of his "Mews Boat" to our Vice-President Victor. Steve says that there are three Mews gaffers still around. Victor's Chiquita, Silvery Wave and another owned by a Victor Mews (grandson of the boat builder -also named Victor Mews) There must be a message for us in that name of Victor (we of the sailing fraternity).

Steve also sent the history of Silvery Wave to Victor. We thought is so interesting that we've added it to the newsletter.

Silvery Wave

Mews of Fremantle built *Silvery Wave* during 1950 in a back road near Marine Terrace. She was fitted with a forty-foot mast, which carried a huge gaff mainsail, and had a jib headsail hanked to her forestay. This gave her a balanced rig that enabled the boat to fish for the local Western Rock Lobster in the abundant crayfish fishery of the local waters. In the center of *Silvery Wave* was a wet hold, where two watertight bulkheads approximately seven feet apart formed the ends, these were high above the waterline, and were made of two and a half inch thick Jarrah timber planks. At deck level the hold had a large hatch the same length as the hold but only six feet wide. In the bottom of the wet hold were several one and one eighth holes that allowed fresh seawater to circulate through the hold, and keep the crayfish alive, often for several days at a time. The deck was flush (no wheelhouse) and had access to the front accommodation down below through a two-foot square hatch. The forward hatch had a quarter round cover to protect the hatch from the bow spray. Nearly half of the 36 foot vessels space below decks was taken up with her engine room. The engine hatch was down aft and had a flush hatch of the same size as the forward hatch, but the five inch high hatch cover allowed free movement of her tiller. *Silvery Wave's* engine was a 371 series General-Motors diesel, this was her auxiliary power, used to take her to and from the harbor before she set sail for the fishing grounds or to carry out general cray-fishing during light airs. *Silvery Wave* was built at a time when the new cray boats had taken an evolutionary step away from sailboats, and into the new category of motor-sailors. These new boats had large engines (usually diesel) and only a small steadying sail to help subdue the rolling of the

traditional round-bilged hulls. An old traditional Italian fisherman named Lopresti had commissioned *Silvery Wave* to be built to replace his existing small aging fishing boat (also named "*Silvery Wave*"), and he wanted a traditional fishing-sailing boat to safely do the job.

The whole vessel was built in three months, which although seems fast, was a normal time given to complete a boat of this size. After completion the boat had two and a half ton of metal ballast, which was then covered with concrete.

Timbers of *Silvery Wave*

Silvery Wave had her keel made from the strong worm resistant Jarrah-timber (*Eucalyptus marginata*), as was her outer planking and sternpost. All of the boats ribs came from the Karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolour*) forests of South Western Australia. Up forward the ribs were double laminated, and down aft they were made triple laminated. The deck beams were made of inch and one eighth Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) planks, as were the stanchions and the deadeyes for the shrouds. The stem and all of the vessels knees were made of Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*).

Tuart was the choice timber for these areas as it is one of the few hardwood timbers that does not split along the grain after drying. All of these timbers are native to Western Australia, and the only exception to this rule was made when the mast was stepped. The forty-foot mast was made from imported long-grained Oregon timber, originally grown in America as an Oregon Fir, and it was stepped at deck level between the Jarrah tabernacles.

The Engine

The 371 General Motor Diesel engine was a 91 horsepower- two-stroke diesel internal combustion engine. The engine was en-route from the manufacturers in the United States as a part of a consignment of G.M Diesel engines aboard a cargo vessel bound for Fremantle, Western Australia when the vessel sank in the shallow waters off the West Australian Coast. A local engineer and diving enthusiast purchased the salvage rights to the cargo, and brought the engines ashore a few at a time, then stripped and repaired any damage to the engines before selling the new motors at greatly reduced prices. With the new self-priming injectors and efficient two-stroke oil scavenger system they sold as fast as he could supply them. The engine's name



**"Now you're up on deck, you're a fisherman
You can swear and show a manly bearin'
Take you turn on deck wi' the other fellows
As you're following the shoal's o' herrin'"**



Silvery Wave—1957



(a 371 G.M.) refers to the number of cylinders (3) and it is a 71 series G.M. motor. Even at the turn of the millennium (half a century later) the 71 series G.M. diesel motors are relatively common.

“Fishing of “*Silvery Wave*”

Silvery Wave carried a typical amount of pots for her day, consisting of nearly three “beehive” type craypots for every foot of deck length. In 1956 Lopresti’s son Cyril, another short, dark-skinned Italian fisherman, purchased the vessel. Cyril Lopresti considered himself a modern fisherman, who preferred the greater maneuverability of fishing under power of the engine, not the sail. Cyril lowered the mast on the tabernacle and cut the stick down to thirty-two feet in length, removed the jib head-sail and replaced the big gaff working sail with a small steadying sail. The ballast was then removed, and the arduous task of removing the concrete took days. Cyril stated that during the transformation of *Silvery Wave* from a sailing boat to a motor sailor the boat was out of the water at “Marko’s Slipways”, a new boat-builder to the area. Cyril’s father (now retired) happened to come down the shipyard and found what his son was doing to his old boat and became furious. He chased Cyril all over the yard, trying to give him a thick lip for what he was doing.



Silvery Wave—SW Trawler

Cyril removed the big wooden rudder and its tiller, and replaced them with a metal rudder and small bronze wheel, which was mounted in a small wheelhouse built down aft, and as a modern cray-boat, he fished the vessel for several years. At one period in time the boat became a snapper boat in the nor’ west, and utilized the wet-hold to keep the fish fresh and swimming, a cost effective method of saving on ice and product deterioration. When snapper, or indeed most large scaled fish are brought from the deep, they rupture their buoyancy bladder, and it sticks out of their mouth like an inflated tongue, but when a spike is inserted into the fish four or five scales behind the gill, then the buoyancy bladder can be deflated. In this way the snapper could survive the scull-dragging from the depths and stay live for several days in the wet-hold.



Hulk

After a quarter of a century of fishing *Silvery Wave* underwent another transformation. Her strong hull, still in perfect condition had the remnants of her

sail rigging removed. Even the tabernacle was cut off at deck level. The wet hold bulkheads were removed and the seawater holes were plugged. At deck level, the wet-hold hatch was decked over with Wandoo planking, and her small wheelhouse was moved forward to the foredeck. Now the boat had a large afterdeck clear to allow a prawn trawler rigging and sorting table to be constructed. *Silvery Wave*’s professional fishing days were only half way through, and now she had been reborn as a prawn trawler for the new fishery in and around Fremantle.

Silvery Wave trawled the waters near the “Bell-Buoy” (now the Fairway Buoy) for a handful of large Western King Prawns, various small fish and vast amounts of Swimmer Scallops. In 1982 *Silvery Wave* began trawling in the waters of Mandurah, and stayed fishing for the abundant King Prawns in Comet Bay for the rest of her professional fishing days under the license LFBM135

(Licensed Fishing Boat Mandurah).

At the mouth of the Peel Inlet at Mandurah a sandbar has formed most years since history began, but although most years the water has sufficient water above it for even a moderate draught, it often has breakers formed on it from the northwest swell. Professional fishing boats took the challenge every day to surf the breakers, rarely with a mishap, but the smaller amateur boats lacked the buoyancy to carry a breaker on deck. In 1984 after an amateur boat had problems with the sandbar, the Dept’ of Marine and Harbors denied access to all boats, and to fish the local area *Silvery Wave* found herself on a mooring outside the estuary mouth in Blue-Bay. After only two days a blow came from a dangerous quarter- the northwest.

At dawn *Silvery Wave* broke her mooring an drifted into the surf on the beach. Her twenty-one foot booms were out either side, each one carrying a big steel stabilizer attached with a length of chain. The starboard stabilizer became caught between the beach and the hull, piercing the jarrah planking, and sinking the boat in the shallow breakers.

Over three days the boat had all of her equipment and rigging removed, then with the aid of two other boats, the wreck was removed, and towed to

(Continued on page 10)



**“Night and day
we're farin'
Come winter wind
or winter gale
Sweat or cold,
growing up, growing
old and dying
As you hunt the
bonny shoals o'
herrin'”**



Silvery Wave—continued

(Continued from page 9)

Fremantle for rebuilding.

At Marko's Slipways the vessel had a large German MWM diesel engine fitted, and Marko repaired the hull and fitted new floors to the old wet-hold area.

Over the next part of her life *Silvery Wave* had another engine fitted, this was even larger again with a continuous horsepower rating of over 180. An aluminum hatch was built on deck over the engine to accommodate the increased physical engine size. In the year 2000, after exactly half a century of professional fishing, *Silvery Wave* retired. She is classed as a one hundred year boat, so in reality, she is only half way through her life. It was decided that she was strong and worthy enough to step a new mast and revive her as a sailboat.



“Bend - A knot used to join two ropes, lines, cables to one another or to an object, such as an anchor's shackle”

Prepare to sail

Although *Silvery Wave* originally had a forty-foot mast, it was decided that she would be more suited to having a more diverse rig to sail a bigger variety of wind velocity. The new rig was to mimic that of a smack, with a thirty-three foot lower mast, and a twenty-one foot topmast. She would then be able to carry a wardrobe of five sails; these were the Gaff Mainsail, A Yankee Foresail, a Staysail, a Topsail, and a Flying Jib.

During heavy weather or strong sea breezes the Topsail and the Flying Jib can be struck, and the topmast can even be lowered if desired.

The Task Begins

Silvery Wave had been out of the water in Fremantle for three months over summer when I received a phone call from the owner to inform me that the boat was ready for me to take possession of her. I went to the shipyard where a very sad looking hulk sat out of the water. After looking the boat over it was obvious that she was suffering from neglect. At the yard two men from an old pearling lugger came over and told me of how after a month of *Silvery Wave* being out of the water with only two chocks under the keel (one forward and one aft) she started hogging (sagging in the middle), the men had then put another central chock under the keel to stop any further hogging. The boat needed to be put back into the water to correct the hogging and to stop her opening up between the planks, as there was substantial light showing through the hull

when inside the hull.

I started with removing the rest of the trawl rigging; the previous owner had removed anything he considered of value from the boat, including radio, echo sounder, anchor, and parts of the trawl rig.

Once all traces of trawl rig was removed the hull was sanded back mostly to wood and repainted; first with red lead, and finally below the waterline with a self polishing antifouling, or above the waterline with a white topcoat with black trimmings; these were the boat's original colors when built in 1950.



Silvery Wave—Rottneest

The Batteries were flat, and the forward/reverse control cable to the gearbox was corroded solid and the morse cable end was damaged. After a couple of weeks the boat was back in the water, and with overworked bilge pumps the boat was taken under her own power to the end of the slipway's jetty. The gear cable had temporary repairs, but they were not precise in their movements, and the salt-water

cooled exhaust muffler was leaking dirty hot salt water all over the gearbox. With help of a friend, *Silvery Wave* was taken to a mooring in Ravenswood on the Murray River upstream from the Peel Inlet. The trip was not without its moments, as when just out of Fremantle the high temperature caused some concern, and the boat was only able to steam with the engine at normal temperature when the revolutions were kept below 1000 RPM.

At Ravenswood, in the area where the wet-hold hatch had been decked over, an opening was made. It was approx' 5 foot by 6 foot, and a floor was built below this opening at about three feet below the deck level, this would be the new deckhouse floor level. The next job was to horizontally cut the wheelhouse in half, before sliding the top half over the new deckhouse hole. With the new mast, topmast boom and bowsprit soon attached her overall length soon stretched out to 49 feet.

In June 2004 the tan sails were finished and by July she had sailed hundreds of miles but initially she refused to tack or gybe. The big wooden rudder had been changed to a smaller stainless rudder when the mast was struck, and this rudder proved inadequate for sailing to windward in light breezes. I added a foot in depth and four inches on the back of the rudder, although not yet ideal, it allowed the boat to gybe ok and tack reluctantly I still have to replace some sheets and halyards and plenty of other things to do, but now I can sail in between the work.

Steve Boocock



OGA CHRISTMAS DINNER— 2 December 2004

Just a reminder that our annual Christmas Dinner has been booked for Thursday night, December 2, at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club at 7 pm. This is "Roast and Pasta Night" at the club, and the cost is \$16.00 pre person. Anyone

wishing to attend please call Chris Bowman at home on 93395785 after 6pm no later than Friday, 26th November, so that I can make the final reservations.

For Sale—Osprey

20' Gaff Rig

3 Cylinder Lister Diesel Motor

Needs TLC

\$5000.00

Formally SPYC

Phone Terry 9271 0107

OGA Name Change?

Suggestions have been made to delete the 'Old' from our Association name to better reflect the membership.

In addition there is the idea to give our newsletter a name also - Gaff News or whatever. These issues will be discussed at

the next meeting on 23rd November 2004. Think up some good names and bring them along to the meeting or email them to fiona@archae-aus.com.au if you can't attend.



Toredo Worm

The use of copper sheathing is of course well known -HMS ALARM being the first, in 1761 - but prior to this, vessels were sheathed with lead or timber, or painted with various mixtures that were intended to kill the worms or at least slow them down. According to the book: *The Construction And Fitting Of The Sailing Man Of War 1650-1850* (Goodwin, P., Conway Maritime Press Ltd., London 1987) the Royal Navy in earlier times used three mixtures, known officially as White Stuff; Black Stuff and Brown Stuff. The base ingredients of these mixtures were turpentine, rosin, tar and pitch -all obtained from pine trees -to which were added sulphur, fish oil,

tallow, soap and horse hair. The tallow, pitch and tar acted as the binding elements, while turpentine and sulphur were organic poisons. The major Elizabethan warships were effectively protected against the ravages of the toredo worm by having the cavity between the double-planking of their hulls below the water line packed with such a mixture. The horse hair was employed because it was believed to choke the worms as they attempted to devour the timber! (Who ever said that an old horse was only good for the glue factory?) [Thanks to Peter Worsley—excerpt from *Maritime Heritage Associate Journal* 1996 Volume 7(1): 15]

"Brass Monkey Weather - Refers to very cold weather"

Believe It or Not

Land winds are only about two thirds the strengths of sea winds

In clear weather, visibility from sea level is approximately three nautical miles.

Wind speed mentioned in weather forecasts is measured as the average speed over a 10 minute period. Gusts may be 40% stronger than the speed.

10 knots = 18/5 Km/h.



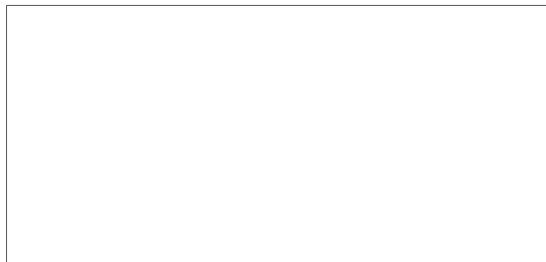


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Were on the Web!
[www.oldgaffersassociation.org/wes
taussie.html](http://www.oldgaffersassociation.org/wes
taussie.html)

Dates to Remember

23 rd November 2004	General Meeting, East Fremantle Yacht Club, 19:30 hrs.
2 nd December 2004	OGA Christmas Dinner (see page 11 for details).
31 st January 2005	Next newsletter deadline.
January 2005	Australia Day Weekend & General Meeting, TCYC Rockingham.
5 th February 2005	HMAS Perth Memorial Regatta.
19 th February 2005	Jack Gardiner talk, venue to be decided.
April 2005	OGA Regatta

Some suggested activities. When would you like them? Ring us and let us know.

Raft up at Cicerello's
Racing (at E.F.Y.C.?)
Fairy lights parade
Picnic Days. Mosman, Applecross and /or Garden Island
Yacht Club Opening Days
Any more?

