

# Baggywrinkles

Newsletter of the Old Gaffers Association of Western Australia Inc.

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November 2005

## Our New Constitution

Yes, it is finished at last! Almost six years after the idea was mooted, the Special General Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September completed reviewing the new constitution and voted to replace the old version, which has existed since the Association was founded.

Although this is an important event, it should make no difference to the character of the Association. Like any good contract, the constitution is there to provide direction and to arbitrate in times of need. But our success depends entirely on the cooperation and enthusiasm of our members.

So, you may ask, why all the effort to update it? Well, mainly to ensure that each new member receives a current copy which reflects the way we operate. The old constitution did not lend itself to this; the original of the old version had been lost - it would have to be retrieved from the Consumer Protection Agency and re-typed; and it was a long and cumbersome document. So a motion was passed in November 1999 to revise it.

Patrick Reid and his colleagues did most of the hard work in 2000. We have taken their work and further refined it to reflect where we are today, in a document which is less than half the length of the old version.

All members received a draft in April 2005, and I thank all of you who sent comments, in particular Rory Argyle, whose legal eye picked up quite a few opportunities to simplify and clarify the wording. Thanks also to Pauline Dilley and Mary and Mike Igglesden for their research and editorial work. All your comments were collated and most were reviewed at the SGM in September. If you wish to receive a record of the proceedings, please contact Pauline or me. No document is perfect and we may wish to make further revisions as times change. Suggested changes can be considered at an

SGM, as described in the Constitution, and this is easy to arrange.

As Patrick wrote in his cover letter to members in March 2000: "I hope we have a user friendly, readable and authentic document which is unique to the needs of the all the members of the Old Gaffers Association of WA". I believe we have achieved this - I hope you will agree.



*This is what you call a cool gaffer—Galway Hooker 'St Patrick' (from postcard sent by M & M Bentham Dublin Bay OGA*

## Committee Contact Details

President	Jeremy Stockley	28 Saunders St Swanbourne 6010	9385 3910
Vice President	Geoff Howard	82 Lymburmer Dve Hillarys 6025	9401 2870
Secretary	Pauline Dilley	Unit 7, 12 Seaforth Rd Shoalwater 6169	9527 5363
Treasurer	TBA		
Boat Rego	Geoff Howard	82 Lymburmer Dve Hillarys 6025	9401 2870
Newsletter	Mike Igglesden	4 Crawley Ave Crawley 6009 migglesden@hotmail.com	9386 4128
	Fiona Hook	13 Bennewith St Hilton WA 6163 fiona@archae-us.com.au	9337 4671

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### Special points of interest:

- New newsletter name and format
- President's log
- JAM racing details
- Christmas and Rottneest weekend dinner details
- Jack Gardiner on Diving
- NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 26th January 2006



PRESERVING  
AND PROMOTING  
THE GAFF  
RIG

## PRESIDENT'S LOG

Well, dear gaffers, the new season begins, the OGA puts to sea again and a new committee start its watch. We have a busy programme ahead of us, and there are some changes but, to paraphrase the French, much stays the same. Let me start with a few acknowledgements.

First I would like to thank our retiring committee members who have put so much in to the association over the years. Chris Bowman has kept us on course through some difficult times during his presidency, steering the ship with a sure hand. His humour, leadership and extensive boat-craft have been invaluable and will, I hope, continue to be so. In his new role as President of the Couta Boat Fleet, he will not be far away – particularly in *Roulette* on Regatta Day!

Wally Cook retires from the committee after countless years of service in almost every position. Wally and Shirley have gradually handed down their knowledge and experience, recently passing over the archive of photographs along with the boat register – a real treasure trove of gaffer history. We will certainly miss Wally's fund of knowledge but, like Chris, he is still an active member and you never know when he and Shirley will suddenly appear in their beautiful *Karina*.

Victor Peters has been our Vice President for the last two years and has represented our Hillary's fleet. His guidance and support has been invaluable and we look forward to more of his anecdotes at our future meetings.

I would also like to welcome our new committee member, Geoff Howard, who has accepted the position of Vice President and Boat Registrar. Geoff has already been busy taking over the boat register from Wally – he has a hard act to follow!

Finally, my thanks go to Pauline, Mike and Fiona, who have accepted



the challenge of keeping us afloat for another year. Their enthusiasm and expertise is priceless. Keep it up, team!

We are still in need of another member willing

to join the committee, particularly someone with reasonable computer skills, who could take over as Membership Secretary. Please let me know if you are interested.

As Chris mentioned in the last newsletter, the association is in excellent shape – financially strong and with a gradually increasing membership. Almost thirty gaffers are

owned by our members, even though we seldom see more than a handful at our events (except at our Regatta), so there is plenty

***"It was a joy to walk to work through the relatively quiet streets, or take the tram, and to wander along the waterfront on my way to work, even with a creaky knee"***

of scope for an increase in our activities. As a start, you will have received notification of the racing series which Mike Beck has arranged at East Fremantle YC. This is a great opportunity to sail and socialise together, so please come along!

Our regular annual get-together at Rottne is coming up in mid November; and we will be planning the programme for the Australia Day

Weekend in Mangles Bay at our next general meeting. Why not come along?

While I am on the subject of our meetings, the new committee is aiming to be more efficient in dealing with the administrative issues and to increase the time we spend on the real business of sharing our enthusiasm for sailing in general and gaff rigged boats in particular. We would like to develop a series of themes for the forthcoming meetings and provide an opportunity to share the wealth of knowledge of our mem-

bers. If you have any ideas please let us know – or just bring your ideas along.

On a personal note, I am sitting writing this while recuperating from a knee reconstruction which will keep

*Hakuna Matata* in harbour for at least another month – no Rottne for her this year. This is doubly frustrating since she is actually ready to go this year, in contrast to the usual rush complete fitting out in time. My consolation is that I was able to spend three weeks during August in Oslo before my operation. It was a joy to walk to work through the relatively quiet streets, or take the tram, and to wander along the waterfront on my way to work, even with a creaky knee. The Norwegians clearly value the quality of their environment and the peace and solitude of their countryside. This is reflected in their summerhouses and their boats, including classic and wooden boats

of all sizes, shown in the accompanying photos. The Viking Ship Museum was also fascinating – but that will have to wait for another page of the log.

Good sailing!



## EDITORIAL

It is great that members Mike Beck *Rana* and Barry Glazier *Bicton Belle* have revised a programme of Main and Jib (JAM) racing for us at East Fremantle Yacht Club. I believe the mix of 4 races per season and not long courses will be attractive to some of our members. Years ago the OGA was stronger than today and one reason, I believe was a get together every few weeks to enjoy a short race with a social drink to follow at the club. Prior to joining the OGA Mary and I raced dinghies for many years 'around the cans'. It was fun, but, as we aged, the commitment of sailing every week on long courses began to lose its attraction. So we stopped. The laid back approach taken in JAM racing is probably more suited to most of our members. The JAM racing became extinct when about 5 years ago 4 or 5 boats were sold and so the racing fleet died. Now is a good time to start again with new members and boats. It will prove to be a boost for the Association.

Most love affairs are irrational. Love of gaff rig is no exception. The author John Scot Hughes wrote of his sailing days which stretched over many years from J Class to his own yacht *Puffin*. He describes *Puffin* as a gaff rigged yawl explaining that "this meant having about four times the quantity of gear you need with the new rig, bermudan, but then I like lots of gear". He continued in that

vein "Purchases, tackles and so forth give one the heady sensation of possessing gigantic physical strength. Nor may the time be distant when there will be a chorus of praise extolling the excellencies of gaff rig. We might even hear Shakespeare quoted - 'See the wind sits in the shoulder of thy sail' - making the point the wind cannot sit against a sail that



'Ti Tu' at a MBSC OGA Regatta

has no shoulder, can it now?"

How I agree with him! John Scot Hughes was writing of the times probably eighty years ago and quotations were from his book entitled 'Come and Sail', discovered by UK OGA newsletter editor David Cade in 1992. David died in 2002.

Although the 'chorus of praise' has not yet eventuated I believe his thoughts worth repeating.

I am an incurable historical romantic and often muse on those boating conditions which must have been prevalent prior to WW1. Perhaps the single most noticeable dissimilarity to our era would have been lack of auxiliary power in most small boats. 'Yachting' was a rich mans sport,

a boat under thirty feet was regarded as 'small', and I wonder if these small boat sailors were, by force of circumstances, better seamen due to this non existence of standby assistance, now available at the touch of a button in our enlightened era? I can personally attest to the fact that sailing a little engineless cruiser, as I have in the past, and even sometimes endeavoring to coax the erratic, unpredictable Stuart Turner on *Oriel* into life, can engender interesting situations. I would like to think these experiences have made me a better boat handler. I don't believe I'm any more competent but have just been provided with some unpleasant memories!

The mother of all tummy wogs successfully prevented *Oriel's* participation in the 'spreading of Bruce's ashes ceremony' held on the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> October at Blackwall Reach. The weather held fair for the occasion with

four boats rafting up and a 'shore party' on the little beach a few metres from the boats. Fiona, as you would know, we all wish you and Conall a much smoother voyage through life than you have experienced in recent times.



'Corinthia' and 'Delta' at the Applecross Jetty Feb'95

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## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 27 September 2005, 1930 hrs  
East Fremantle Yacht Club

**1. Meeting opened** at 1900 hrs by President Jeremy Stockley.

**Apologies** from Mary Igglesden and Karel Abbott.

**Prospective members** Colin and Muriel Aburrows were introduced and welcomed. Colin gave details about his "work in progress", a 30 foot Crockett Schooner. Colin was asked to bring some photos to the next meeting.

**2. Present** – 13 members; see attendance book.

**3. Minutes of last general meeting**, held on 24 May 2005 were read. Accepted by Alan Abbott, seconded by Clive Jarman.

#### 4. Correspondence

In – Letter from Geoff Vardy re Lake Dumbleyung Regatta.

This event occurs at short notice, determined by local rainfall, and had not been held for about twenty years. Unfortunately, information of the event was not circulated to members in good time and the event has now taken place.

Out – Letter to EFYC with list of meeting dates plus request for room bookings.

**5. Treasurer's report** – Jeremy reported that we are \$50 richer than the last report, plus another new member John Baxter.

#### 6. Business arising

##### Constitution

The purpose of this meeting was to agree final changes to the existing document.



Jeremy reported the circulation of the document and the feedback he had received.

Comments from lawyer Rory Argyle were most helpful – simplification of wording and lay-out, minor changes to wording while retaining the original intent.

Following discussion it was agreed by all present that:

Paragraph 3 – amend process for termination of existing memberships and for introduction of new members;

Para 4 – clarify Executive Management Process, to allow Executive Committee to administrate outside of meetings;

5/1/1/ - Roles and official positions to include Boat Registrar, Membership Registrar and Newsletter Editor;

5/2/3 - Secretarial duties to be reduced.

Jeremy will finalise the document and distribute to the membership.

Members thanked Jeremy for his leadership through this process. A full report of this part of the meeting has been prepared and is available from the President or the Secretary on request.

#### Matters arising from discussion:

Geoff Howard, Boat Registrar, reported that he had visited Wally Cook, who had given him his collection of records and photographs.

It was agreed that a task force be created by Geoff Howard, Fiona Hook, Doug Firth and Alan Abbott, detailed to:

- confirm with Wally his position re eventual holding of the photographs
- confirm with Wally the process for boat registration
- develop process for digital storing of photographs
- bring a proposal for the next steps in the process to the next meeting.

#### Treasurer position

The President is continuing to carry out the duties of the Treasurer and Membership Secretary until new officers can be found.

#### 7. Newsletter

- Members voted to select a name. New Name is **BAGGYWRINKLES**.

- Next edition will be distributed in early of November, but not in time to remind members of the JAM racing at EFYC.

- Fiona reported that the President of the Australian Classic Boat Association, based in Victoria, who read our most recent Newsletter, was impressed with

our activities plan.

Fiona will send some of our articles to Classic Boat (UK) for wider publication (e.g. the forthcoming Rottneest Island trip). Chris Bowman had also distributed copies of the Australian Classic Boat magazine at the AGM and the option to contribute articles to this was raised. Fiona will look into this.

#### 8. New Business

##### Rottneest Island Trip

6 berth Cabin (No 349) booked in Thompson's Bay for Friday 11 November, depart Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. 1 berth still unbooked, and we can hire extra beds if required.

Diana Hewison's offer to book next year's cabin ASAP was gratefully accepted.

**Christmas Dinner** - 1 December 2005 – Linda agreed to make arrangements with Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club. Details will be in next newsletter.

##### Australia Day Weekend - Mangles Bay, Rockingham.

It was agreed by all that the weekend will commence on Australia Day, Thursday 26 January 2006 and finish on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>. Pauline will obtain permission from TCYC. Clive agreed to be Events Coordinator, to include a Trophy Event; details to be presented at November meeting.

**Karma** - Alan was asked, and explained, how his jib sheets came adrift – see article in last Newsletter – "Taking Karma into Calmer Waters." He made a practical demonstration of the problem which can arise with the traditional method he used to bend the sheets to sail.

**9. Meeting closed** at 2040 hrs.

**10. Next meeting** Tuesday 22 November 2005, 1930 hrs at East Fremantle Yacht Club.

Main topics:

- How the Endeavour's replica logbook was made – Doug Firth (if he is available)
- Programme for Australia Day
- Review of the OGA Boat register and archive
- Feedback on the Rottneest Weekend

## CHRISTMAS DINNER – 1st December 2005



Where mariner's, shore-rakers, landlubbers, boatmen, admirals and cabin boys enjoy an evening of each other's good company in elegant and comfortable surroundings

Date: **Thursday 1st December 2005**

Venue: **Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club** (Keane's Point, Pepermint Grove WA 6011)

Time: **6 pm** (in the bar for a 6:30 pm dinner)

Price: **\$16.50 ea** (includes a menu of soup & rolls, roast meat, two pasta dishes, roast root vegetables,

green vegetables and salad.

Drinks and sweets are not included but may be purchased from the bar.

RSVP: **93443829** to Linda Jennings by **Tuesday 22nd November**. Please leave a message giving your name, how many for dinner and your phone number if no answer.

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL.



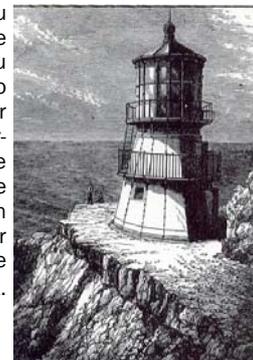
## CHRIS BOWMAN

Chris Bowman became our new President in November 2001 when the Association was at a low ebb and when no one else was willing to take on the task. The ensuing four years has seen us slowly rise to become a recognizable force again, more members joining than disappearing. Chris' enthusiasm and optimism has proved to be a large

***"The ensuing four years has seen us slowly rise to become a recognizable force again, more members joining than disappearing"***

factor in this turn around, the biggest single evidence of this being the annual OGA Regatta. Taking the regatta to RFBYC removed the load, which had been carried by the usual few members during the previous years and placed it into the competent hands of the RFBYC race committee. Well done Chris.

We thank you for all your efforts and we are sure you are happy to pass the tiller over to Jeremy. We are so fortunate to have a man of his caliber to continue the good work.



## ROTTNEST WEEKEND—11TH to 13TH November

Just a reminder that the OGA weekend away at Rottnest is coming up—from Friday 11th, departing Monday 14th November.

A Chalet has been booked at Thompsons Bay, Number 349. Currently 5 of the 6 beds are spoken for, however an additional two camp beds can be ordered. The Chalet will be available from 2 pm onwards and will need to be vacated by 10 am on Monday. Each bed will cost round \$35.00 for the weekend.

If you need any more details or want to book a bed or even a place on a boat (you might be lucky) then please call Pauline on 9527 5363.

If you haven't attended this great weekend please come along. Even if you catch the ferry over for the day! See you there.



Mike Igglesden and Diana Hewison aboard Oriol

## JAM RACING IS ON

OGA member Mike Beck (*Rana*) has organized a series of four handicap races hosted by East Fremantle Yacht Club with an open invitation to all gaff rigged boats to participate. Trophies will be presented to individual race winners and to the overall series winner (courtesy of OGA member Barry Glazier—*Bicton Belle*).

Boats will start and race within the EFYC 'Jib and Main' (JAM) fleet. Start Time would normally be 5 mins after the Division 5 fleet.

Heat 1 6th November 05 14:30hrs

Heat 2 11th December 05 14:30hrs

Heat 3 12th February 06 14:30hrs

Heat 4 26th March 06 14:30hrs

Skippers will need to nominate prior to the start and nomination sheets will be available in the 'wet' bar adjacent to the clubhouse main entry.

EFYC ensures you of a warm welcome and invites you to enjoy our hospitality in the club hose before and after the event.

Further enquiries may be directed to Mike Beck on 0412 888 926.



## What to you mean by JAUNTY?!

**Jaunty .... (sprightly manner)**

The adjective *jaunty* is said to be an anglicized, phonetic representation of the French word *gentil*, meaning a sprightly, easy manner. Used as a noun, *jaunty*, or *jonty* as it was sometimes spelled, means master-at-arms aboard a British warship—the officer responsible for enforcing all rules and regulations, as well as for meting out punishment. The nautical *jaunty* is said to be a cor-

ruption of *gendarme*, the French work for "police officer".

***"jaunty, or jonty as it was sometimes spelled, means master-at-arms aboard a British warship"***



*Oslo classic gaffer*

## BELIEVE IT OR NOT

"Be to her faults a little blind  
And to her virtues ever kind."

According to Major H.W.Tilman this advice is equally applicable when proposing to throw in one's lot with either a woman, a horse or a boat.

Major Tilman wrote numerous sailing/mountaineering books on his adventures in his, usually, old wooden boats, Bristol Pilot Cutter or similar design. He disappeared whilst on a cruise to the South Shetland group of Islands 350 miles due south of Cape Horn. The Arctic and the Antarctic were his favourite sailing grounds. Very good

reading.

"One hand for the ship and one for yourself."

That is why a seaman is a 'hand' - in the singular.

"Handsome men are slightly sun-burnt. A white skin on a sailor is a disgrace: owing to the sea water and the rays of the sun he should be dark-skinned." Anon.



## NEW LOOK NEWSLETTER—BAGGYWRINKLE

Well here we are with a new name and a new look newsletter to go with it. After many a long list it was finally whittled down to Baggywrinkles during the Special General Meeting last month.

I found this lovely description of what they are and how to make them.

“To the landsman the language of the sailor must sound like double talk. He knows its English but it does not make sense. Even the student of etymology would have a tough time trying to trace the origin of such a picturesque term as baggywrinkle. Some authorities claim the correct name is railroad sennit, basing their premise on the similarity between railroad tracks and the two strands of marline on which it is woven. Pish, tosh and fiddle-faddle! To the sailor it is baggywrinkle, always has been, always will be, and who would argue with a sailor?”

Baggywrinkle is a form of chafing gear applied to spars or rigging to protect sails where constant friction occurs. The most common application is to lazy jacks and topping lifts, where the rubbing of the rope can in time seriously weaken the stitching in the seams and shorten the life of the sails. But to my mind the most important point of application is at the ends of spreaders. When running free, with the boom broad off, the sail presses hard against the unyielding spreader and saws up and down constantly in all but the lightest winds. Here is the place where the most chafe occurs, and here is where most sails are torn or injured. Now the tear is not always due to chafe. Often it is due to the head of the sail

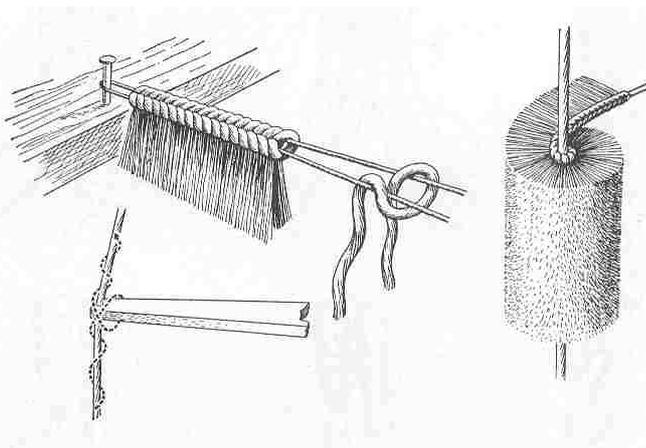
sagging off beyond the spreader and catching on it when gybing in heavy weather. Baggywrinkle applied here would certainly eliminate chafe and minimize the danger of the sail fouling the spreader.

All you need is a ball of marline and some old rope. Middle a twelve foot piece of marline, hook it

over a nail on your bellch or any convenient place that is waist high, and secure the other ends about a foot apart. Now chop up a lot of one-quarter, three-eighths, or half inch rope into pieces about six inches long, and you don't have to be too accurate about the length as they will be trimmed off later. Carefully separate the pieces into

strands. Stand facing the nail with the marline leading under your right arm. Place a strand crosswise underneath the two strands of marline, bring each end up, over and down through the center, as shown in the illustration. Now grasp both ends of the rope strand with your right hand and pull them strongly away from you towards the nail. Continue by adding strands in like manner. Each strand is jammed close against the preceding one, forming a braid or sennit, with rope strands hanging in a fringe underneath.

When you think you have made enough (a hard thing to estimate) the strands should be unlaied and combed out. Now trim them off with scissors to a



uniform length, about one and one-half inches being the customary average. It is applied to the rope or wire by seizing the end in position and winding it spirally the desired distance, where it is again seized.

There are many who object to baggywrinkle on the ground that it is unsightly or that it presents too much wind resistance. If you feel that way there is an excellent substitute. Deep pile sheepskin, cut in one inch strips and wound spirally with the wool side out, works perfectly. On a racing boat I used it for years to cover the spreader tips, and it made a neat job. I have shown a diagram of this application. As to where you can promote a piece of sheepskin, you will have to work that out in your own way. I remember I obtained mine by nonchalantly ripping apart my daughter's sheepskin lined jacket before her horrified eyes. As I said before, you can't argue with a sailor.”

Extract from Smith, Hervey Garrett. 1993. *The Marlinspike Sailor*. International Marine, Maine. ISBN: 0-07-059218-7.

**“Pish, tosh and fiddle-faddle! To the sailor it is baggywrinkle, always has been, always will be, and who would argue with a sailor?”**

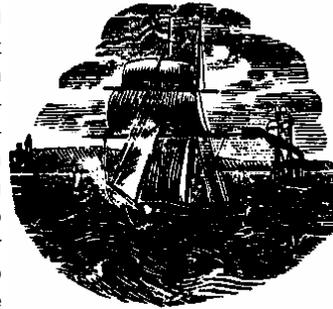
## JACK GARDINER ON DIVING

I came across a drawing in a book from the local library and was very interested because I had a lot to do with one exactly like it. It had been left at Simonstown Dockyard (near Capetown) sometime in 1890. They stopped building them in 1800 I was told. Anyway when the Siebe-Gorman diving dress became a practical thing it was fitted out as the diving boat for the construction department of the dockyard.

The windlass was removed and the four middle thwarts. The hand powered diving pump was placed amidships and lashed down to four ring bolts. A step and a platform built port and starboard so a dressed diver (everything but the helmet) could step up to and over the gunnel onto a steel ladder. The boat was so stable she barely took a list with not only the diver wearing nearly 100 pounds of lead but the two attendants, one of whom was holding his lifeline while he stepped round the hand grips of the ladder. And then went down the ladder to have the helmet put on and secured with a quarter turn. The shot rope had meanwhile been put over and secured to the top of the handrail of the ladder. The last thing was the front glass screwed in, the bag of tools or whatever put in his right hand, the shot rope in his left and he stepped backwards and half floated. Now he adjusted the escape valve on the side of the helmet and slid down the shot rope to the bottom. The pump was speeded up while he was doing this to build up the pressure in the suit to counter the increasing pressure of the water (roughly half a pound per foot of depth). The stand by diver who was in charge of the boat would tell the pump hands how slow the pump was to be turned. If it was not enough the diver signalled up for more air.

Now he found the job, not always easy, and settled down to work. The four pump hands working two at a time on the pump and the other two over their fishing lines. They were always told to touch the bottom and pull up 10 feet so they did not catch the bloke down below. If they did not he would cut their lines and leaves the hooks and weights on the bottom.

Coming up was a bit more difficult. The air outlet valve had a screw adjustment but the valve stem protruded so it could be closed at once with the thumb, so the procedure for coming up was to open the valve wide then close it with the thumb. Now the air could not escape and it started to fill the suit. It soon got to neutral buoyancy and a jump would get you floating up. Now the lessening pressure let the air in the suit expand and you started going up faster so now you blew off some air by releasing your thumb and had to work it up like that till you were at the top. The attendant had to take up the slack of the Lifeline as you came. He had to be alert as if you let too much air out and started falling again it could be fatal. A fall of 30 feet would double the normal air pressure all over your body and the result of this is all the liquid (i.e. blood) in your body would finish up inside the helmet, the only rigid part of the gear. The 'stand by' diver always carefully monitored all this.



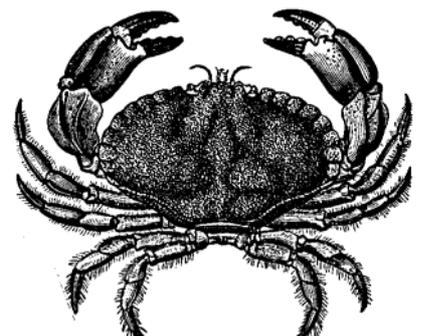
***"The last thing was the front glass screwed in, the bag of tools or whatever put in his right hand, the shot rope in his left and he stepped backwards and half floated."***

get one then two feet on the bottom rung. This brought your head and chest out of the water. Now two steps up you were standing where the attendants could take off your face glass (after having put a clove hitch round the top of the grab rail of the ladder with the breast rope), then the two front and back lead weights, and you could then swing in and over the gunnel. The boat meanwhile just lay in the water like a log unless the water was very choppy. Then she moved but very lazily. The diver got undressed and the gear coiled up and stowed. The four pump hands took an oar each at the two forward thwarts and rowed back to the mooring, unless we were lucky to get a tow from a passing workboat. If it was a long haul we all

took a turn at rowing, two divers, two attendants and four pump hands.

The drawings showed a big fat stern on the boat, a transom like a barn door. This was designed for handling ships anchors on the stern davit which was long gone of course but it left a lot of room in the stern for getting dressed and working on gear. The whole boat was built of teak double diagonal planking and we did our best to keep her as a going concern until one time we had

her craned out of the water and the shipwright inspector condemned her for being worm eaten. She didn't leak at all but that was it. So we got a 32' cutter in exchange. I don't suppose you would know those boats made in three models, the rowing, rowing and sailing and motor. We did not get a motor one because we would have to have carried an engineer. Did not need a sailing model so got a brand new rowing one. They were rapidly going out of fashion in the navy. Anyway they adapted it, cut out two thwarts, made the step and platform for the diver. Even made us a new ladder which could work over either side. So we put the pump aboard and lashed it down. All the air pipes, breast ropes, weights, boots, corselet and helmets (two) and put her afloat. I did not go on the first job outside of the yard but heard all about it from the two blokes who did. She bounced around like a flea on a hot stove. I found out for myself. To get aboard you had to come up beside the ladder, then as she rolled towards you get one or two feet on the bottom rung and hang on tight and go up with the opposite roll. If you missed



it the bottom of the ladder came up and hit you in the guts. We complained of course so they gave us some ballast pig iron. It helped but not much. The only good thing about it she was very much easier to row.

Going back to the old boat, they lifted her out of the way and left her to dry out so she would burn. So I took a saw out and cut out the two forward thwarts. They were 9" x 3" teak worn down at the edges of course. Anyhow I got them cut and dressed into 3/4"

boards and made myself a nice sea chest with brass corners which I still have. With some of the rest I made a toolbox which was not solid teak but it dropped out of a crane sling in Liverpool and one end got smashed out. I acquired some rope and lashed the pieces together to hold the tools in and got it on the train to get home, which I did without losing any tools. I had the sea chest there too but it was painted black like the toolbox and the tool chest. I have since scraped and varnished it and polished the corner plates and the engraved name plate. Wonderful what you can get done in the dockyards if you know the right tradesmen.

They did eventually burn the old boat but she had seen a lot of history and I have a good souvenir of our time in South Africa. That was 60 years ago.

Diving has altered too. We had a depth limit of 300 feet, and that with special gear, oxy-helium. I had done the 300 feet in the compression chamber but the deepest dip in the ocean was 125 feet and that was only go down screw on a shackle and come up. I did not even decompress because the weather was blowing up and they did not want to stop longer than they had to. (I did not get the bends)

I saw a film on T.V. the other day about the white pointer sharks of Seal Island in False Bay. Funny I did not see one in

5 years diving there. The biggest one I did see was a mako. I was standing on the bottom in 60 feet of water working on an anchor a ship had lost. He swam round in a circle halfway up. It was so

clear I could see the boat. Anyway he circled round three times. So did I watching him. Then he left, so I just did three turns back again to take the twist out of the breast rope and air hose. There is one note in the Admiralty Diving Manual "there is no record of any Admiralty diver ever having been attacked by a shark in

any part of the world". So much for the films and T.V.

I was doing a job at the Albany Whaling Station and there were two or three whales on the holding buoy. You could see them jerking as the sharks, white pointers at that, were taking bites out of them. I was remembering that as I went down. The buoy was about 100 metres or less away and visibility about half of

that and the biggest shark I saw in the half hour or so it took to do the job was about 1 metre long. And that is the nearest I have ever knowingly been to a shark - a big one that is. Although at Carnarvon Whaling Station

a similar thing happened. It was at night and I walked down the jetty to get a dinghy and as I pulled the nearest one up I told the bloke I was with to watch out for these dinghies as they were cranky things at best. I stepped down into the nearest of them, with an oar in one hand, and fell out of the other side. That is the fastest I have ever got out of the water. The bloke who was with me was complaining that I had lost the oar. The sharks feeding on the whales which were only about

50 feet away never even noticed. That was only the second time in my life I fell out of a boat.

Double diagonal planking had only just come into use in the early 1800s. It was revived in the early years of the war to build the Fairmile gun boats, torpedo boats and other small craft. The system was that various parts of the boat were made in various workshops. For example a builder - cabinetmaker, or other - would be given a No. 1 frame and told to make a dozen like it. Someone else would be making the other frames, cabin doors and all the other individual parts of the ship so that when one of the boatyards had a slip vacant a complete set of parts for the ship was channelled into that yard for assembly and all the shipyard had to do was the double diagonal planking. Once the system was organized it resulted in a lot of boats being built in a very short time as most of the parts of the boat got to the yard ready made.

The double diagonal planking was a cow of a job to repair but they allowed the inner skin to run fore and aft to patch a hole. It made it very much quicker and the life expectancy was only 5 years anyway. Some of them are still around and working. The original *Islander* that used to run to Rottneest was one of the 112 foot M.L.S. which were about the biggest of the Fairmiles. The motor torpedo boats were a lot beamier and hard chine but still built as Fairmiles. I don't know how the Yanks built theirs but the framing was a lot different. One of the most unusual things I ever saw on a ship was on one of the Yankee gunboats, a huge box like thing. She had four huge petrol engines and all

the engine controls etc. were brought to one place. In front of this was a sort of trestle and on the trestle was a big Texas saddle with a pair of stirrups fastened to the deck. The engineer could sit in



**"They did eventually burn the old boat "**



(Continued on page 10)



## LOSS OF VALKYRIE

The following is from the Yachting World magazine of 13 July 1894 and reports on the sinking of the large racing yacht *Valkyrie*. This extract is from the Maritime Heritage Association Journal Volume 15, No 5, December 2004.

### Narrative By An Eye Witness

All eyes were centred on *Britannia* breaking the line first. She was followed a minute later by *Vigilant*. *Britannia* immediately broke tack, and took a small board in shore to get on the weather of *Vigilant*. Both then bore away on the starboard tack for the Cloch. Meantime *Valkyrie*, which had been reaching for the starting line and had attained a capital position, had her progress arrested by the extraordinary movement of *Satanita*.

This boat was bearing down on the port tack but as *Valkyrie* had the right of the road she was kept straight, but it was evident *Satanita* was being closely hauled to luff round. However, one of the cruisers seemed to be in the way, and *Satanita*'s helm was put about strongly to clear her.

This she managed, but there was no room left for her to get round the stem of *Valkyrie*, and loud shouts came from the surrounding boats as a collision was inevitable. The helmsman shouted to *Valkyrie* to abandon all rules and

save a smash. This cry, however, came too late, as in a moment *Satanita* crashed into *Valkyrie* amidships, striking her with tremendous force slightly abaft the main mast.

*Satanita*, which was closely hauled, appeared to be running at a speed of 12 knots. This was evinced by the fact that she was sailing deep into the rail.

Both vessels locked together, their riggings getting completely mixed up. They hugged each other for a couple of minutes and matters were made worse by *Valkyrie*'s main boom gibing. This almost tore the topmast out of Lord Dunraven's cutter, and all was now a scene of disorder, and the rigging of

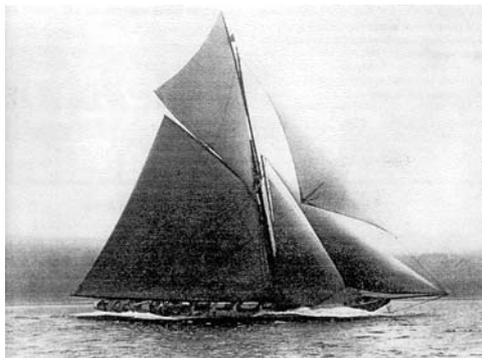
*Valkyrie* seemed to be falling down upon the decks. Ultimately *Valkyrie* got clear of *Satanita*, but, being a helpless wreck, she bore right down on the starboard quarter of the s.s. *Vanduara*. Besides carrying away several yards of that steam yacht's rails, and completely smashing her small steam launch, she cut up her plank deck with as much apparent ease as a knife goes through new cheese.

*Valkyrie* appeared now to be settling down, as much water continued to rush into her main cabin. Some of the men scrambled on board *Vanduara* and the s.s. *Hebe*, while others took to the water, but were speedily picked up by boats put off from the surrounding yachts. Lord Dunraven, who had been

at the tiller of *Valkyrie*, was picked up and taken aboard the s.s. *Hebe*. Lord and Lady Lennox were also saved but I don't think they were ever in the water. Her ladyship in the panic on board, of course,

had to stand some knocking about, but, so far as I could learn, she had behaved calmly, and was saved by a *Vanduara* boat, which came alongside.

As *Valkyrie* went down there was a loud "Oh" from all on shore, ladies, gentlemen and staid old sailors becoming momentarily as pale as death. The cry of all was "Oh", have any gone down with the yacht?" but, soon the intelligence spread that every soul was saved. *Valkyrie*, on which Britain had pinned her faith, had now sunk, and was lying in 20 fathoms of water.



*Satanita reaching at full speed*

### Editor's Note:

The above report is not correct in stating that every soul was saved because when *Valkyrie* fouled the s.s. *Vanduara*,

one of the *Valkyrie*'s crew, William Brown of Row hedge, was crushed between the two vessels and later died.

Some particulars of the two vessels that collided are shown below.

*Valkyrie* was actually the second yacht of that name. A third was built in 1895.

### *Satanita*:

Designer Joseph Soper, Southampton  
Builder J & G Fay & Co, Southampton  
Rig Cutter (the fastest cutter on a reach ever built - 16 knots)

LOA 131' 6"

LWL 93' 6"

Beam 24' 6"

Draft 14' 6"

Displacement 126 tons.

Sail area 10,094 sq ft

### *Valkyrie II*:

Designer George Watson, Glasgow  
Builder D & W Henderson & Co, Glasgow  
Rig Cutter

LOA 121' 6"

LWL 86' 10"

Beam 23' 8"

Draft 15' 1½"

Displacement 154 tons

Sail area 10,327 sq ft

As I have not been able to find the specifications for *Valkyrie II* the figures given above are for her sister ship, the very famous *Britannia*.

***Satanita, which was closely hauled, appeared to be running at a speed of 12 knots"***



**Old Gaffers Association of  
Western Australia Inc**

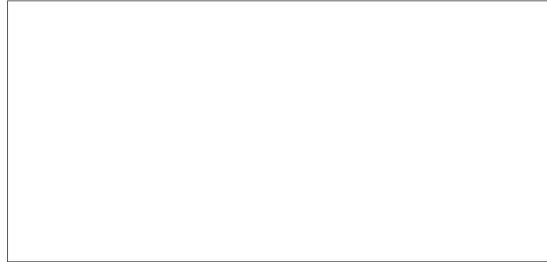
Newsletter Editor

Mike Igglesden  
4 Crawley Ave CRAWLEY WA 6009

Assistant Editor

Fiona Hook  
PO Box 177  
SOUTH FREMANTLE WA 6162

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



## Dates to Remember

6 <sup>th</sup> November 2005	EFYC JAM Race, start 14:30 hrs (see page 6 for details).
11 <sup>th</sup> —13 <sup>th</sup> November 2005	OGA Rottneest Weekend (see page 5 for details).
22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2005	General Meeting, East Fremantle Yacht Club, 19:30 hrs.
11 <sup>th</sup> December 2005	EFYC JAM Race (see page 6 for details).
1 <sup>st</sup> December 2005	OGA Christmas dinner (see page 5 for details).
26 <sup>st</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup> January 2006	Australia Day Weekend.
14 <sup>th</sup> January 2006	SPYC Wooden Boat Invitational Race.
12 <sup>th</sup> February 2006	EFYC JAM Race, start 14:30 hrs (see page 6 for details).
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2006	EFYC JAM Race, start 14:30 hrs (see page 6 for details).
29 <sup>th</sup> April 2006	OGA Regatta, RFBYC.

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

Raft up at Cicerello's; Fairy lights parade; Picnic Days; Mosman, Applecross and /or Garden Island; Yacht Club Opening Days, *Any more?*



**Mangles Bay—January 2004**