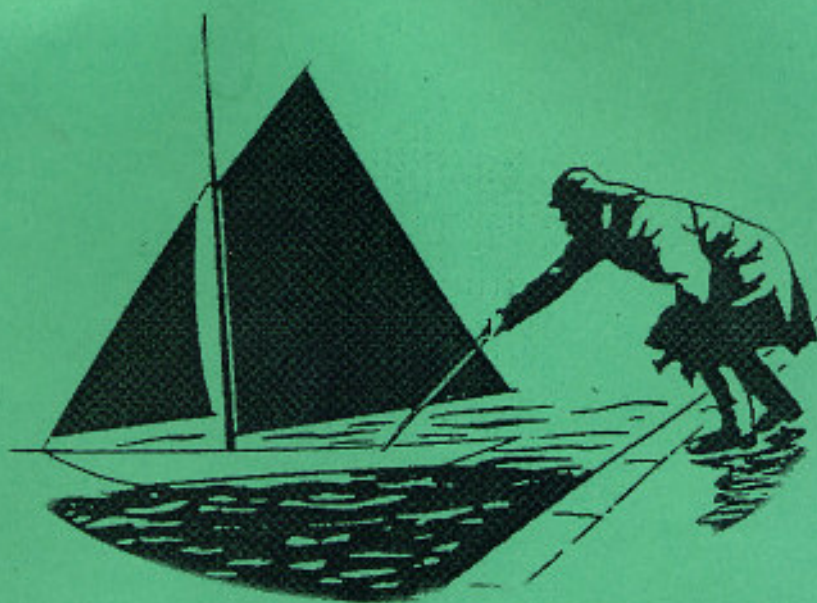


The Turning Pole

Sample Copy



The Journal of the Vintage Model Yacht Group

New series No.16

Summer 2005



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The Journal of the Vintage Model Yacht Group

No. 16 [New Series]

Summer 2005

EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS

The antique trade has long vied with us enthusiasts for good model yachts when they are offered for sale. Traditionally, to qualify as an antique, an article had to be over a hundred years old. My Webster's Dictionary, however, defines an antique with more fluidity as 'dating from an earlier historical period and sought after by collectors.' That covers a great many of the models owned and cherished by Vintage Group Members.

A wise old sage once observed that we do not really own an antique; we are merely custodians of it during our lifetime. If our stewardship of it is good, it passes preserved for the next generation to enjoy and wonder at, a tangible reminder of a former style or relic of craftsmanship long extinct. With the passage of time, as it passes from hand to hand and from generation to successive generation, it acquires a patina of age;

wear, small blemishes and carefully executed repairs are witness to loving care that former owners have bestowed on it. Like the greying hair and the wrinkled complexion of an elderly friend, they are not detrimental to it, as they serve to remind the observer of its antiquity. Stories and anecdotes may grow up around it and become attached to it. Its status becomes enhanced far beyond the intentions of its long-dead maker, to the skill of whose hands, however, it is a memorial.

Great-Grandmothers kettle, once the humble receptacle for boiling water for tea, was purchased for a few shillings from the coppersmith that made it. It stood on the hob with its back to the fire for her lifetime. Her house-proud hands once cleaned and polished it. Now it stands in the place of honour on the dresser, the soft warm glow of its copper exterior a reminder of a perhaps mythical more comfortable age when the pace of daily life and the rate of change was slower. It has become an antique, a thing of beauty to be treasured.

I suspect that relatively few Vintage Group Members possess model yachts that are antique in the traditional sense of the word; a model would need to have been built before 1905 by the '100 year' definition. A far greater number of us, however, own boats that have survived for

many more years than their original builders would have envisaged. John French's 36" Restricted 'Titbits', the misadventures of which he so amusingly described in the Spring Edition of this journal, is one such. This little boat's long and eventful history has invested her with a life of her own; almost a personality, she is now a family heirloom.



*Eighty years old, and still going strong, and that's just the boat!
John Husbands with 'Mistral'. (see article in this edition.)
Photo: Trevor Smith*

(continued overleaf...)

EDITORS OBSERVATIONS

(continued from previous page)

The 'A' Class Yacht "Queen Bee" is another such. She was purchased second-hand in 1931 by V.G. member Les Bird's Grandfather. Exquisitely built in the mid 1920's to a design by T.G. Feltwell, she is currently undergoing sympathetic restoration in the capable hands of Martin Bandey, who intends her 'second debut' to be the annual 'Vintage Vane' match for 'A' Class boats at Gosport in June. The years have taken their toll of her ultra-light build and the fastidious construction of her deck, which is planked with narrow bands of alternate light and dark wood. Each of these had to be carefully prised off to gain access to damage in the well of the hull, rectification of which has meant the introduction of floors to strengthen her and create additional support for the keel.

Martin is an advocate of the ethical restoration of his models, 'Queen Bee' will look very much like her 1931 form when E.P. Bird had her professionally refitted in Bill Daniels' workshop, even down to the colour scheme which has been matched from traces of her original paint. It is tempting to wonder what her builder of 80 years ago would have to say about her preservation today, or Bill Daniels' or her late owner Les's Grandfather for that matter, but as a result of Martin's careful attention they will all live on in no small way in her.

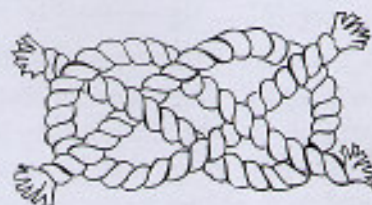
A prospective new member recently visited me. He had bought the elegant hull of a Victorian 'straight-liner' in the hope that I could recommend someone who would re-rig it in an authentic manner for him to display on his sideboard. He was taken aback when I suggested that he should insist the restorer undertook the work in such a way that the boat could be sailed again. 'But it's an antique' he protested 'I couldn't possibly put it in the water.' His mind was quickly changed, however, by a photo of a model of similar vintage to his under sail. 'They come alive in the water, don't they' was his delighted comment.



*David Sawerteig with a fine collection of Vintage Yachts.
Clapham 27/3/05
Photo: T.R. Smith*

Even if your own restoration is at an early stage and the task ahead seems formidable, come along to one of our Sailing Days this season and watch 'Queen Bee' and her ilk 'come alive' again. Their beauty stems from a seamless blend of science, craftsmanship and art. I promise it will inspire you.

GARETH



V.M.Y.G SAILING DAYS 2005

We generally gather from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Just because a day has been specified for a particular class of yacht e.g. 'Vintage Marbleheads' etcetera please don't be put off coming, as there is usually plenty of spare water for you to sail on.

SATURDAY 16th JULY - SUNDAY 17th JULY
 'Vintage Weekend' at the Round Pond, Kensington, in conjunction with the M.Y.S.A. On the Saturday, Vintage 10 Raters will compete for the 'Pout Cup', a lighthearted free sailing match. For further details contact Gareth Morgan Tel. 01248670629, who would appreciate your phoning anyway if you intend to bring a 10 Rater, in order to gauge some idea of numbers. On Sunday our traditional pond side gathering with additionally the judging for the biennial Howlett Trophy. This is our major event of the season. *For directions to the venue see note overleaf.*

SUNDAY 7th AUGUST

Rick Pond, Hampton Court Park, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. A relaxed meeting in a delightful setting as guests of Hampton Court M.Y.C. The historic Club House, with many interesting old model yachting artefacts and photos, will be open to V.M.Y.G. members throughout the day. *For directions see note overleaf.*

SUNDAY 18th SEPTEMBER

Broomfield Park, Alderman's Hill, Palmers Green, London N 13.

SUNDAY 9th OCTOBER

Clapham Common, Long Pond, London SW 4.

SATURDAY 22nd - SUNDAY 23rd OCTOBER
 A 'Vintage' weekend at the Round Pond, Kensington, to round off the season. On Saturday a free sailing match for vintage Marbleheads, on Sunday our usual pond-side gathering.

KENSINGTON ROUND POND MEETING - DIRECTIONS.

The best approach by car or on foot is from Bayswater Road (A40) that runs along the northern boundary of Kensington Gardens. The Broad Walk, opposite Queensway Underground Station, will take you directly down to the pond, but we usually gather from 9 a.m. onwards at the MYSA Club House. This is in a private part of the Park, entered through the black double gates (open from early morning), to be found between the end of Kensington Palace Gardens and the N.C.P. Coach and Car Park, almost immediately after it.

Drive in and park as directed, the Round Pond is about five minutes walk away, 'communal' boat trolley will be available.

HAMPTON COURT 'RICK POND' - DIRECTIONS.

From the front of Hampton Court Palace Court by Hampton Court Bridge over the Thames, take Hampton Court Road (A308) in the direction of Kingston-upon-Thames. Turn right opposite the end of Church Grove, just before the roundabout, into the Park past the keepers booth, and follow the lane bearing right at the first fork and left at the second one, and you will see the Rick Pond and Hampton Court MYC on your left after nearly 1 mile. Park in the Estate Yard beyond the Club House. Waders are a good idea at this venue if you have them.



Vane racing with Marbleheads, Rick Pond, Hampton Court, August 2004. Photo: Trevor Smith

CHEAPER THAN CHIPS AND JUST AS SIMPLE

After many hours of construction work on my 'Pocahontas' from the M.M.I. plan I was stuck on what to build next; I remembered that somewhere I had a plan of Vic Smeed's 'Dab Chick', a little 24" wooden boat designed for free sailing. After turning my workshop upside down I located it. I decided to build one for radio control with just one servo on the rudder and no sail winch. I also set myself the task that this 'Dab Chick' would not cost me one penny in hard cash; every fitting would be made of brass from my scrap box, the wood for the hull and also the sail material would be from leftovers from previous projects. The alloy mast came from an old model yacht that I refurbished several years ago.

I had some half full tins of Humbrol enamel paint and decided to go for marine blue after breaking the skin of the top! I also found some sanding sealer, which was like treacle, that I revived with cellulose thinners. The main booms and Jib booms were 1/4" dowel off cuts, the rigging cord came from my odds and ends bag and the bowsies I made from some old one eighth paxolin sheet. 'S' hooks I bent up from paper clips, lead for ballast was left over flashing from 'Pocahontas'.

The snake for the pushrod, from servo to rudder also came from my scrap box, as did the two metal quicklinks for each end.

Work was started and after about a week I had a boat that resembled 'Dab Chick'.

The plan calls for the hull to be made out of 1/8" balsa sheet, with 1/4" balsa for the deck, which is what I used. However, a friend used 1/32" plywood for both, which is the better way to go, as balsa shows up every ding and dent.

I found an old Futaba 148 Servo in one of my drawers and after connecting it up to a receiver, found that it worked okay, and still does.

Came the day for its maiden voyage, I was more excited to see how this 'Cheap as Chips' Model Yacht sailed than I was on the launch day of my 'Pocahontas' that had taken several hundred hours of build time.

My 'Dab Chick' tore off across the pond on a

reach. First mistake, rudder too small! It just would not turn, so back to the drawing board, a new bigger rudder was made, length 4 5/8" by width 1 3/4", back to the pool, and now all was well. When I said jump she jumped. I then experimented by altering the mast position and found that best performance was achieved by having the mast 9 3/4" from the bow. Apart from a bigger rudder she was built to the plan. My 'Little Dab Chick' sails brilliantly, no sail control just rudder and the harder the wind blows the better she goes.



"Dab Chick"

Now I take 'Dab Chick' along to our club sailing days and when I am sailing one of my other model yachts 'Dab Chick' is on the water too being sailed either by an interested member of the public or by another member.

'Dab Chick' is vintage, perhaps members will know just how old the design is, as I've no idea, Nexus still sells the plan.

If you would like a little 24" R/C model sailing yacht that really sails well, as simple and as cheap as model yachts can get then go for a 'Dab Chick', she will repay you time and time again and you can throw her in the car fully rigged. Happy 'Dab Chick' sailing.

PETER MORTIMER

IN THE WIND VINTAGE GROUP MATTERS

THE JUPP COLLECTION OF MODEL YACHT DRAWINGS

Earlier this year a significant collection of Model Yacht Drawings was offered for sale by Bonhams in London. At short notice they were viewed on the Sunday prior to the auction by Russell Potts and Martin Bandey. An immediate decision was taken that these drawings, although now in faded and in some cases poor condition, never the less represented a very important historical record. In consequence if at all possible, it was felt they should be acquired by the Vintage Group for the future interest of members.

Bidding was successful and the collection, formerly owned by the late Bill Jupp and last sold by Bonhams about twelve years ago is now in the care of Martin. Some members have already been able to see some of the drawings. It is intended to make them available for inspection at the Rick Pond meeting this year and of course they may be viewed by arrangement with Martin. It will be possible to provide copies of some of the drawings and a full list will be published as soon as they have been catalogued. The majority of the drawings are not signed but many appear to be the work of Bill Daniels, a few of Littlejohn, Harris and also Tucker, they include designs of 'A' Class, 10 Raters, Marbleheads and a few 36" restricted designs.

Prior to the auction, one of our members contacted Russell and commented on his research into the history of Bill Daniels, which had included tracking down his will. He was going to contact Russell again but didn't and Russell, being an old man now, has forgotten who he was! Would this member please be kind enough to contact Martin Bandey 01489 781061 or E-mail martinbandey@aol.com

TREVOR RETIRES

After five years of service as Secretary, during which he evolved systems for the simple and

smooth running of the Group, Trevor retired from the position earlier this year. At a small pond-side ceremony at our Clapham Meeting in March, Trevor was presented with a rare collector's boxed toy submarine and a bottle of Champagne on behalf of the V.M.Y.G. by Chairman Russell Potts as a token of our appreciation. The photo shows Trevor waxing lyrical over the submarine. It was hoped that Trevor could share the champagne if not the submarine with Heather, whose expertise and efforts on the computer were invaluable.



*Retiring secretary Trevor being presented with goodies by chairman Russell Potts at Clapham 27/3/05
Photo: Anthony Warren*

FLYING THE FLAG

It has been felt for sometime that the V.G. needed a flag for members to fly on their yachts. Not content to sit back and enjoy his retirement, Trevor Smith tackled the problem. The design, which consists of the Group's familiar black on white oval logo on a plain rectangular ground, is currently with a specialist firm of model flag producers. The new flag will be available in different sizes to suit individual models, and should be available to members later this season.

(continued overleaf...)

IN THE WIND—VINTAGE GROUP MATTERS

(continued from previous page)

LAKE REVIVAL

Members in the South and East Midlands can now take advantage of the excellent facilities for the sport available at Wicksteed Park Boating Lake, Kettering, reports Northamptonshire based V.G. member Mike Williams.

The lake is easily accessible from the A14. It is of medium size, about 80 metres long by 25 metres at its widest point, roughly an elongated kidney shape. Depending on the general level of water in the lake, there is a minimum depth of 12" - 15" but most of the lake is 18" - 20" deep. There is a concrete path with vertical sides into the water around the lake so no need for wellingtons. Car parking is about 100 meters from the water with facilities for disabled parking and unloading considerably closer. Public toilets are always available, and there are full refreshment facilities including a restaurant from Easter.

There is a charge for entry to Wicksteed Park, but probably the best way to enjoy the facilities there is to join the newly formed Wicksteed Park Model Boat Club for a very reasonable £5 for annual adult membership (Juniors £3). Members receive a voucher entitling them to purchase a parking season ticket for £10 from the Park Management enabling them to park whenever the park is open all the year round, including 'special events days'. For further details of Wicksteed Park Model Boat Club contact Club Secretary Martin Dale, tel. 01536 516113.

SILK AND STARS

In the quest for originality when restoring a model yacht, some materials that were once commonplace may prove elusive, others impossible to find. Union silk, once the chosen sailcloth of top designers, is one such. V.G. member Nigel Hancock has been investigating the material without success. What exactly was it and who made it? Are there any old supplies tucked away in a dusty warehouse? Enquiries on the Internet have proved fruitless, so Nigel has appealed for

any member(s) with specialist knowledge to share it.

Nigel has recently unearthed an old stock of 'Star' deck transfers; these are genuine original factory items that would put the finishing touch to your 'Star' restoration. Before taking the plunge and committing himself to the not insubstantial sum the dealer that has them wants, he would like to ascertain the level of interest amongst members. You can contact him at 106 Spur Road, Orpington, Kent. BR6 0QN.

Tel. 01689 897063.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED!

Thanks to all of you who have sent in articles, photos and items of interest for inclusion in 'Turning Pole'. Contributions are welcome at any time, but in order to achieve a balance of topics they do not necessarily go into the next issue, as I'm sure you've realised. It is very helpful to have a 'bank' from which I can select appropriate material.

We can accept your item for publication in almost any form with the exception, due to technical problems, of e-mail. However, if you are computer literate it would be really helpful if your contribution is on floppy disc.



YACHT 'ORION'

Other than a few trophies the VMYG has very few assets to its name so it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of all the members and as one of my first duties as Secretary, to publicly thank Dennis Saxcoburg for his generosity by donating his yacht 'Orion' to the Group.

Dennis, a long standing member, designed and built 'Orion' in the early 1990s. He wanted her to become the property of the Group, to be looked after by a competent custodian on an annual basis and to move around the country in order to promote the VMYG and give pleasure to all.

Over the past months 'Orion' has been ably looked after by David Sauerteig and the custodianship is to be passed to Grahame Davis during the summer of 2005. Although I have seen another of Dennis's designs, 'Moonbeam II', sail at the Long Pond, Clapham in 1991 I have not seen 'Orion' being put through her paces. I gather from David that even though any breeze may be imperceptible 'Orion' 'goes like a whiff' as they say in the West Country.

Dennis taught himself the principles of classic model yacht design as defined by Daniels and Tucker in the thirties and Priest and Lewis in the sixties. He wrote:

'I started with Priest and Lewis as their design view was more readily accessible to me because I was sailing their type of yachts in the sixties. After designing and building three 30inch prototypes based on their design principles I felt ready to try the next step which was to combine modern gaff rig with a hull of their type to see what the outcome would be. 'Orion' was the result and proved that it can be done but some of the features may not be to our tastes, particularly there are technical problems to mate the rig and hull in such a way that a happy balance is achieved. This resulted in the fin keel being swept forward, which achieved the desired technical and practical result but at the cost of aesthetic appeal. I now understand in much greater detail

why earlier hull forms are the way they are and see Daniels and Tucker as the key innovators of the transition from the gaff to the Bermudan rig and its effects on hull design, which was further developed to a fine art by Priest and Lewis. If I was to proceed with the project now I would be researching the much earlier work of Linton Hope, Alfred Westmacott and Dan Hatcher who between them produced some of the most beautiful hull forms ever in full size form. I suspect their design concepts could be adapted to create modern classic model yachts that would combine up to date features with great aesthetic appeal'.

A plate is to be engraved and affixed to 'Orion'. It will read:

'Orion'

*Designed and built by Dennis Saxcoburg in 1992,
In the style of the model yachts of the 1930s
Presented to the Vintage Model Yacht Group in
2004*

*to be circulated among the membership and sailed
at Vintage Group meetings.*

ALISTAIR ROACH



'Orion' with current custodian Trevor Smith.
Photo: David Sauerteig

LETTERS TO 'THE TURNING POLE'

Dear Gareth,

Following on from our telephone conversation recently I hope you will find space to mention somewhere in a future Turning Pole the existence of the 'Vintage' related items in our range:

Mar 2489 Pocohontas

Reconstructed lines plan for the 1936 Marblehead design by W.J.Daniels, published with feature article in August/September 1995 issues of MMI, based on a replica built by Rod Carr in Seattle.

MAR 2735 Skylark

Reconstructed lines of 1938 vintage Braine steered 36 R designed by F.C Tansley.
Published as a 'free insert' in the July 1999 issue of MMI, also available as a back issue whilst stocks last or a stand alone plan to order.

MAR 2863 Braine and Vane Steering

Two sheets showing working drawings for a variety of Braine and Vane gear assemblies to suit vintage, restored or replica free sailing yachts. Published as a 'free insert' in the July 2001 issue of MMI, also available as a back issue whilst stocks last or a stand alone plan to order.

Chris Jackson,
Editor Marine Modelling Magazine,
Tel/Fax 01275 866332
Email chrisjackson01@btconnect.com

Dear Gareth,

I have just returned from a trip to Turkey where I read a history of the O.C.C. (Ocean Cruising Club) by Humphrey Barton, writing in 1953.

Frances Chichester developed his self-steering arrangement, christened 'Miranda', around 1959 for his transatlantic wager with 'Blondie' Hasler (Cockleshell Hero, owner of Falkboat 'Jester') in 1960.

Hum Barton was a partner with Laurent Giles, and a young surveyor/ designer there was Colin Mundie. Colin decided that it would be more comfortable to cross the Atlantic by balloon, and was encouraged by Bushy Eiloart. In case the balloon failed he developed a sailing gondola - in his bath. A 1/4 scale model was tested on the Round Pond, and full size version thrown off Putney Bridge! A wise precaution since they had to ditch after 1200 miles, and had to sail (with their wives) the remaining 1300 miles to Barba-

dos.

Mundie was a prolific designer of small boats ('Sompranimo' was 21 feet) following Hum Barton's 'Vertue' (25 feet).

Heroic stuff! Following the traditions of using the Royal Ponds for modelling full size developments.

David Keay,
8 Chelsea Court,
London SW3 4LS.

Dear Sir's,

I say Sir's as I'm addressing the two of you. Firstly Gareth, to whom I originally enquired by phone, he dispatched my application forms post haste. Secondly to Trevor who received the same and turned them around (*without the aid of a pole*) in double quick time, I say thank you for dealing so efficiently *with* a newcomer.

I was pleasantly surprised by the contents of the large envelope and congratulate Gareth on a first class job in respect of: 'The Turning Pole', your newsletter publication is fascinating with clear quality printing and excellent reproduction of photographs.

May you long continue to receive articles and photos from your readers making your job well worthwhile, I'm quite taken with the VMYG cap badge very useful, a nice touch and gratis!

It really is amazing to find so many people interested in these older craft, I see in (series No 14) which you kindly enclosed, another Vic Smeed designed "Genie" Marblehead is mentioned, a five plank job, I have never seen another guess there must be a few around, should be interesting to compare one day. For my sins I also have two more Marbleheads, one a vane sailed the other radio controlled, however both in need of much refurbishment.

Look forward to meeting you both one of these fine days at the Round Pond, or, more likely, locally at Setley in the New Forest.

John Trimmer
139 Warburton Road
Poole, Dorset
BH17 - 8SE
Poole Radio Yacht Club

(letters continued overleaf...)

LETTERS TO THE TURNING POLE

(continued...)

Our retiring secretary received the following letter enclosed with Val's subscription:

Dear Trevor,

I never told you about my boats: -

- 1) GRP Highlander – still racing with radio and still a fast design if slow in tacking. She won the Endeavour Trophy for us in '99' and was runner up in 2000. Sometime I'll write her up for 'Turning Pole'. Name – 'Sunflower'.
- 2) 'Khishtie' – a boat probably designed by my grandfather and certainly built by him. A gaff cutter with little free board and a cloud of sail. She is bread and butter construction and appears to have been stuck together with paint. I would guess he built her as a schoolboy. She is about a meter long and really heavy but sits on a very nice mahogany stand.
- 3) Nameless GRP clipper bowed ketch that a friend and I built hulls for on a semi-commercial basis. Nice steady boat about 850mm long.

Bob has a few interesting boats but shows no sign of wanting to become a member.

May be this year we'll make it to an event or two on our trips!

All the best,

Mrs. Val Provoost,
Zuiderbruggeweg 3, 4524 KH,
SLVUS, Netherlands.

Dear Gareth,

Please find enclosed an extract from chapter 5 of the book 'An Artists Life' by Sir Alfred Munnings, K.C.V.O. who was president of the Royal Academy 1944-49 (*See article in this edition of 'Turning Pole'.*) As he was born in 1878, I should imagine that the two model yachts described are from the 1890's.

At his home which is now a museum at Dedham is or was a few years ago a painting with his yacht in the background.

Regards,

Mr Peter E Hill
Honorary Secretary
The Retro Racing Club, Ivy House,
Main Road, Great Carlton, Louth,
Lincs, LN11 8JU

COUSIN STANLEYS YACHT
- EXTRACT FROM 'AN ARTISTS LIFE'

I am writing this on a hot day in August 1944. The Americans are now as far as Rennes and Dinan, while I sit here, in Withypool, at the bottom end of a small lawn in the shade of a chestnut tree. The shadow is moving round as I write, spots of light tremble on the paper. The Americans, with their heavy guns and tanks, were about here on Exmoor for months. The sound of their gunfire had become familiar. Suddenly they were gone, and now the harsh sound of their travelling tanks is transferred to Brittany. All is quiet here, and the sound I hear now is the twittering of young sparrows and the faintest possible stir of leaves or the hum of bees.

Groping yet to the youthful days, such an afternoon as this comes to my mind – the heat, the sluggish river, the flat water-lily leaves which are pushed aside as we launch my green painted yacht.

My cousin Stanley from Cambridge had made this yacht to show what could be done. He and I had gone to Mr. Fairhead's carpenter's shop, and there he had chosen a large block of deal and placed it in the wooden clamp. In wonder I watched him draw the plan of the boat on the topside of the blocks, saw how, with a mallet and gouge, he hollowed out the shape, and then turning it over and again fixing it, and using spokeshave, chisel and sandpaper, he gradually and surely made a most beautiful hollowed-out hull, two feet long. This took time to finish and deck over. At the blacksmith's he cast a lead keel – for he was a workman – which was fixed. Then this hull was placed in a stand, and it time fitted with mast and sails, hemmed and stitched by my mother. The yacht was called 'Minnehaha', Hiawatha's heroine.

And now, although in Exmoor, with the rounded, mauve-grey outline of the great hill opposite me, I find ourselves again as we were, pushing aside the water-lily leaves with the bows of the yacht; sending her on her way. I can smell the river now and see the boat heeling to the slight breeze, gathering way, with sails and tiller set by my clever cousin, so that she sped on across to my brother on the far side. He, with a light pole, had only to turn her round as she arrived and let her sail back to us. This 'Minnehaha' has long disappeared, but then it was all I thought of for weeks.

The making of it revolutionised all my attempts at making boats. Till then, mine were heavy, solid, lifeless things copied from bought ships that came home with us from trips to Southwold and Lowestoft. Now the secret was mine, and I made other models from scales out of a book.

(continues on next page...)

COUSIN STANLEYS YACHT- EXTRACT FROM 'AN ARTISTS LIFE'

(continued...)

My last, stripped and dismantled, still remains with me to bring back those days of white sails gliding across a sunlit river – myself standing there or following in the boat, watching how the model sailed and stood up to the breeze or sailed into the wind, as I wanted it to. This yacht, about twenty-eight inches overall, and made from scaled designs of a once famous Corsair, was a good sailing boat. I painted her pale blue, and now she rests at home in a cupboard. Her name is carefully written on the bows, for I finished her in my Norwich lodgings when I was beginning to learn all about lettering in the lithograph trade.

This name dated my last boyish effort and brings, too, many queer memories of dreams long dead, of songs and choruses, of a boy growing up into youth, already beginning to work in a grownup world for his living. The name of my blue yacht was 'One Little Girl in Blue'—taken from a song of yore which was all the rage in the halls and which everyone sang, 'Two Little Girls in Blue'. Part of a verse in this popular ditty went thus:

*One little girl in blue, lad,
Won your father's heart,
Became your mother,
I married the other,
But now we have drifted apart!*

Since then, when at Harwich Regatta early in the season, out in the wide harbour mouth in a launch, a stiff breeze going and fast-moving clouds overhead, I, as a grown-up, have seen yachts of the large racing class—the 'Endeavour', the 'Shamrock', the 'Velsheda' and the rest of them: I have watched them drawing nearer, at a great pace under a cloud of canvas, and passing so close that the booms would be almost above one's head, leaving a great wash which almost upset the launch. It gave me a thrill each time I saw it happening on the wide stretches of dun-coloured, breezy waters of the North Sea under cloud-shadow and sunlight—those tall, sloping triangles of sails shining white against heavy skies, or towering dark grey against a lighter sky as they raced through shadowed spaces of sea.

THE STORY OF 'MISTRAL' A PRE-WAR 10 RATER BUILT TO THE DESIGN OF AN 18 FOOTER

'Mistral' is 54½ inches long, water line of 43½ inches carrying sail area of approximately 1250 square inches. A total weight of 17 pounds having a lead base to the full keel of 11 pounds.

'Mistral' was built by my Father and sailed under the banner of the South Manchester Model Yacht Club, which was formed in 1923 at Platt Fields, South Manchester.

The photographs were taken in the mid 1930's – 40's when I helped my Father. I eventually took over the sailing as my Father's health prevented him from carrying on.

Enthusiasm was good with members, we even broke the ice on winter weekends in order to sail.

The Club programme for 1940 has a small picture of most of the committee members in 1938 when I was 17 years old.

Behind the assembled members is seen the front balcony entrance to the yacht clubs, South Manchester to the left and Platt M.Y.C. to the right. A good distance view of the excellent clubhouse was taken from the narrow end of the boating lake.

The sport was so popular then it was able to run two clubs with up to 200 boats including 6 metres, 36 inches, the odd 'A' Class but mainly 10 Raters. The boats were hung in racks around the walls.

Unfortunately, 1940 saw my last season of sailing as I was called to the war effort and I lost contact with club and members. With the advent of the war the club folded and the clubhouse and boating lake disappeared. After 6 years in the army I moved to the South of England and brought 'Mistral' with me. Alas there was no water to sail on and my energies got diverted elsewhere.

However, the story of 'Mistral' was not ended. I was persuaded to attend a local Model Yacht regatta at Black Park. After speaking with members of the Black Park Group I was encouraged to get 'Mistral' together again and back on the water.

'Mistral' still looks as graceful as she did 80 years ago and I have some wonderful memories of her.

JOHN HUSBANDS

(see pictures overleaf...)



SOUTH MANCHESTER MODEL YACHT CLUB FOUNDED 1923

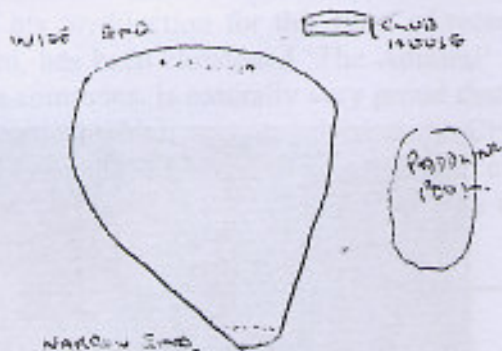
PLATT FIELDS MODEL YACHT LAKE MANCHESTER



MISTRAL ON BEAT TO WIDE END



YACHTS ABOUT TO START AT NARROW END



PHOTOS.
VOL. 1928
2.3 1937-40!

1940



SAILING FROM NARROW END
PADDLING POOL ON RIGHT
CLUB HOUSE AT WIDE END

PROGRAMME.

March 2	—Measuring Day	.....
" 9	—Club Race	.....
" 16	—Measuring Day	.....
" 23	—Club Race	.....
April 6	—Trophy Race with Platt M.Y.C.	.....
" 13	—At Bolton	.....
" 20	—Club Race	.....
" 27	—Trophy Race at Bury	.....
May 4	—Cale Cup	.....
" 11	—Club Race	.....
" 18	—	.....
June 1	—McFarlane Cup	.....
" 15	—R. K. Jones Cup and Mr. Haywood's Prize	.....
" 29	—Bolton at Platt	.....
July 13	—Trophy Race with Bury	.....
" 27	—Club race	.....
August 3	—Platt M.Y.C. Trophy Race	.....
" 10	—Club Race	.....
" 24	—	.....
	Cup Entries Close	
Sept. 7	—Wiles Cup	.....
" 21	—	.....
Oct. 5	—Club Race	.....
" 19	—	.....

(continues overleaf...)

SOUTH MANCHESTER MODEL YACHT CLUB

(continued...)



'Bluebell' trailing 'Mistral'



The S.M.M.Y.C. committee, 1938. John Husbands is standing second from right in the back row.



Tom Lloyd with 6 metre



'Mistral'

A PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN VICTORIAN SKIPPER

The Black and White Budget,
21 October, 1901

The contests that take place on the Serpentine on a good many Sunday mornings during the summer months, in connection with the Serpentine Model Yacht Club, always attract great interest, and one cannot but admire the ingenuity and perseverance which competitors must display to bring their tiny vessels to such admirable perfection.

One of the most ardent and active members of the club is Mr T Winter, an officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, who makes all his own vessels and wins a good many prizes with them. Mr Winter, who because of his predilection for this form of recreation, has been christened 'The Admiral' by his comrades, is naturally very proud that at a contest which was organised at the Crystal Palace recently for model yachts, he carried off the Silver Challenge Cup with the aid of his splendid vessel *Ladysmith*.



Mr T. Winter of the Serpentine M.Y.C., circa 1901

I bought this image on Ebay for a modest sum. *The Black and White Budget* was a general weekly founded in London 1899 and appears to have had only a short life. I don't know what other material it might have carried, except that the British Library included its issues for February 1901 in a collection of representative magazine coverage of the death of Queen Victoria in January of that year. Nor do I know why they chose to include this image and text. Possibly the initiative came from Winter himself, proud of his success in the Crystal Palace competition.

It is interesting that a fire officer should in 1901 have been a leading light in the Serpentine club, which twenty years before had been a distinctly upper class group, with Baronets and Guards Colonels among its officers and

Patrons. Though an eminently respectable member of the lower middle classes, Winter would have been out of his league in such company. This suggests that the club had moved down the social scale by the end of the century. Possibly its upper class members had moved to the London, founded in 1884 on the Round Pond and a consciously superior group of model yachtsmen.

RUSSELL POTTS



MODEL YACHT CLUBS IN THE LONDON ROYAL PARKS

During the 1820's a group of enthusiasts – including Cooper the Gunsmith, shoemakers & other mechanics – met on Sundays to sail small boats, up to 2'6", on the Green Park Pond; finishing in time for a glass of ale at the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly before public houses closed for Church Time at 11 a.m. (they could stay inside until reopening at 1 p.m.)

When the Green Park Pond was altered & surrounded by railings in 1834, sailing moved to the Serpentine where they had to stop for bathing time at 10a.m. A monthly sweepstake was introduced on Monday afternoons, organised by the 'Serpentine Sailing Society'.

The Serpentine was used for other events, such as blowing up of a fleet of model warships in 1814, to rival a similar French spectacle at Versailles. There was a defined area for bathing with a pavilion for changing. Rowing boats were available for hire which were a considerable hazard for free sailing yachts. Wealthy yachtsmen occasionally sailed models of their yachts out of season, during the winter.

Rules were necessary for the sweepstake & to avoid conflict between other activities.

These were drawn up by Tom Davis in 1838 & accepted at a Meeting of the Serpentine Sailing Society, later adapted by the YRA after its formation in 1881..



A View of the Serpentine Fleet in Hyde Park, August, 1814.

Engraver, Pinner, Long Alley, Crown Street.

MODEL YACHT CLUBS IN THE LONDON ROYAL PARKS *(continued...)*

It must be appreciated that at this time class distinction was paramount

Sailors were considered 'artisans'. Further the Royal Parks had carefully regulated access (one had to be respectably dressed) & Kensington Gardens was closed until around 1840.

In 1845 W. Gilbert promoted a formal club, with one class (length x breadth to be between 800 & 1000). These would be big boats, 6feet long, weighing over 50lb., requiring at least 2 boys to carry them!

This first London Model Yacht Club was founded in 1846, with Flag Officers, trophies & ambitions for a Clubhouse. Membership soon rose to nearly 80, with new members who were definitely not 'artisans'. These were the full sized yachtsmen who introduced new classes – 1/12 scale models or prototypes, also a 12 foot experimental class.

The actual sailing was undertaken by professionals, of whom W.J.Daniels was to later become the most successful, who had to accept getting wet.

These newcomers effectively hijacked the club with elaborate rules designed to exclude any element of trade, & specified uniforms, both for dress & for sailing. They also rigged elections & invited Commodores from clubs with a Royal Warrant.

Unsurprisingly dissensions arose. Model sailing declined, newcomers returned to their River Clubs, & the London faded away in spite of a 'reconstruction' in 1871.

The Serpentine Model Yacht Club was founded in 1872 with Dixon Kemp as Commodore (he was Editor of *The Field*). The Committee included a couple of baronets & some senior army officers, plus Rob Roy McGregor.

The Serpentine was a big boat club, sailing 20 & 40 Tonners, weighing 60 lb. or more, to the 1720 Rule. *(see photo.)*

Applications to erect a clubhouse had been refused but permission to store boats under the bandstand, where there was room for about 20 boats (limiting membership), had been obtained. However, in 1884 the bandstand was demolished so a direct appeal to the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) resulted (1886) in a site being granted by the

Serpentine for a peppercorn rent of one shilling per annum.

The club raised £100 to erect a boathouse (putting the boys out of work!). Membership was limited to 30 (boathouse capacity) & racing commenced in difficult conditions due to the rowing boats. Sailing became impossible when the Office of Works closed the path at the eastern end.

The boathouse was pulled down in 1930 & the Club removed to the Rick Pond, adopting the A & 6M classes, to enjoy the excellent clubhouse (about 40 x 30 ft) provided by T. B. Davis (owner of the J-Class Westward) & designed by W.J.Daniels.

Incidentally, the secretary of the 6M class was J.G.Feltwell whose daughter in 1928 designed the charming logo for Model Yachtsman, later adopted by the Vintage Group. Feltwell died in 1949.

DAVID KEAY



A very large straight stemmed Gaff Cutter similar to those sailed on the Serpentine. Some idea to the size may be gained by comparison to the 2m high garage door in the background.

Photo: Gareth Morgan courtesy of Chas Howe

References: Russell Potts 'Sporting Hobbies and Social Class', 'Model Yachtsman' Ed. Tom Bruce and successive publications.

To Be Continued...

FOR SALE AND WANTED

FOR SALE AND WANTED

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Tel: 01749 347212.**



VINTAGE TAIL PIECE



*'A' class inter-club match on the Rick Pond against Eastbourne M.Y.C, May 1956.
Photo courtesy of Hampton Court M.Y.C and Dave Bell.*

Thanks to the following for contributing to this newsletter:

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