

SEADOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION

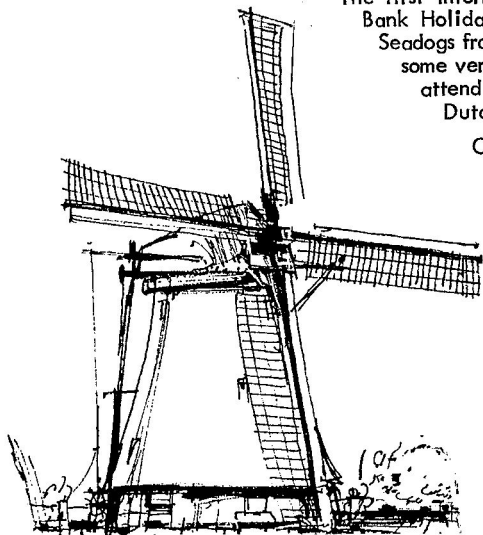
President:- Mrs Hylda Freeman

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THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL SEADOG RALLY

The first International Seadog Rally, held over the 1988 August Bank Holiday more than lived up to all its expectations when Seadogs from England, Belgium and Holland pressed on through some very rough weather to be at Middelburg in Holland to attend a splendid event that won considerable coverage in Dutch newspapers.



MIDDELBURG - HOLLAND

Our Seadog DOGMATIC was hors-de-combat and ashore for an inescapable 20 year M.O.T for the insurance company, so Olive and I, with friends John and Audrey Lansdell travelled by car and ferry to Middelburg. We set off on the Tuesday, crossed the Channel via the Ramsgate to Dunkirk ferry, and stayed the night at a small hotel near Damme in Belgium.

Next morning, on the way to Holland, we paid our first visit to Bruges, sometimes described as the "Venice of the North". I shall always remember Bruges, and for a reason quite unconnected with its beauty. John and I were returning from the money changers when I felt a hand on my shoulder. Turning around, I saw a pretty young lady - her arm outstretched towards me ... "I think you dropped this" she said ... handing me my wallet. Then she was gone....

From Bruges we drove to Knokke Heiste on the coast for a late picnic lunch, thence to Breskens and the ferry to Flushing. Having time to spare

we carried on to Veere; there, in a rural marina, we spotted SEEHOND, but Ken and Jess were not aboard. Travelling on towards the causeway linking Walcheren with Noord Beveland we approached a high sea wall, the top dotted with people engaged in flying kites. Seeing this, John said, to our astonishment, he had a kite in the boot of the car. So we stopped. Out it came, and for threequarters of an hour we joined in and had a lot of fun.

It was evening before we arrived at Piet Castenmiller's house in Middelburg where we had been invited for dinner. We had a most pleasurable time getting to know each other, and over good food and wine caught up on the local news. It was close to midnight when Piet drove us the short distance to a quiet little marina on the main canal; there he introduced us to his Seadog NAUSIKAA which was to be our home while we were in Middelburg.

As we went to bed, the weather was fine and all looked set for a successful Rally, but violent thunderstorms and rising wind awoke us in the early hours and put something of a damper on our hopes. Then when we listened to Thursday morning's forecast and heard winds of Force 7, gale Force 8 were expected, we feared that few, if any, of the boats from England would set out and face a North Sea crossing in such weather. Certainly not for pleasure.

But we had underestimated the determination and tenacity of Seadog Owners, who have great faith in their strong and seaworthy boats - boats which are now becoming collector's items, - a tribute to their designer, Reg Freeman, and the builders of the Seadog.

In spite of the rough weather, on Friday and Saturday, as the bridge at Middelburg lifted, we could see the distinctive Seadog masts coming up the canal from Flushing - 6 boats - 10 boats - 15 boats, till the final tally of 17 boats was reached. Ken Herve in JACARAH recorded the fastest time for the crossing - 121 miles from Thorpe Bay to Flushing in under 18 hours - and Bill Richards in NEWANDERER (Gravesend), was going like a train until his mainsail split across!

BOATS PRESENT AT MIDDELBURG

NAMASTE II		BORN FREE II		
BRANDANE	AFARON	BONA *	CANUTE*	SARA OF WYRE
JACARAH	PALAFIX *	NAUSIKAA *	SEASCAPE	SEEHOND
*MORNING MIST	GLASS LADY	NEWANDERER	SULISKER	SORAYA

* Dressed Overall

1. AFARON	- Hal Ironside & Crew	from - LOWESTOFT
2. BONA	- Willy & Marie-Louise de Crom	from - ANTWERP
3. BORN FREE II	- Barry & Tony Yaldren	from - POOLE
4. BRANDANE	- Olaf Mulder & Crew	from - AMSTERDAM
5. CANUTE	- John Watson & Family	from - POOLE
6. GLASS LADY	- John & Lisa de Candole & Eileen Tracey	from - KEYHAVEN
7. JACARAH	- Ken Herve & Crew	from - THORPE BAY
8. MORNING MIST	- Bryan & Babs Herve	from - THORPE BAY
9. NAMASTE II	- Jan & Lidy Carre	from - EDAM
10. NAUSIKAA	- Piet Castenmillers boat with Hon. Sec. & crew aboard	from - MIDDELBURG
11. NEWANDERER	- Bill Richards & Family	from - GRAVESEND
12. PALAFIX	- Jack & Bobby Phillips	from - SOUTH BENFLEET
13. SARA OF WYRE	- Ad Beaufort & Family	from - GOES
14. SEASCAPE	- Harry Manners & Crew	from - GOSPORT
15. SEEHOND	- Ken & Jess Willey	from - GOSPORT
16. SORAYA	- J. Mientjes & Family	from - KAMPEN
17. SULISKER	- Peter & Sonya Binkhorst	from - YMUIDEN

SEADOGS REPRESENTED BY THEIR CREWS

18. ATLANTIS	- Rob & Nel Roell	from - AMSTERDAM
19. ATON III	- Jan Piet Kloos	from - ENKHUIZEN
20. CANICULAR	- Hans Vieluf & Wife	from - OCHTUM
21. DOGMATIC	- Peter & Olive French John & Audrey Lansdell	from - HAMBLE RIVER
22. SEACANIS	- Fred & Joan Ellingham	from - POOLE

Before you start ringing me to say we do not have a Seadog called MORNING MIST in the Seadog Owners Association this is Brian Herve's other boat, a Westerly 36, which he and Babs came in - his son Ken sailed JACARAH over with a crew.

Highlight of the arrivals was John and Lisa de Candole's GLASS LADY, the pre-production Seadog, having the honour of being the oldest Seadog with the oldest crew member - Eileen Tracey, founder member of the St. Mawes Yacht Club, a plucky and remarkable lady of eighty-four and a half years, who came ashore sporting a black eye, having been struck in the face overnight by the mainsheet block while standing watch in rough seas. Next in age was a Dutch member, Piet Kloos of ATON III who is eighty-three - and the youngest - a young lady of five and a half, little Corine Beaufort of SARA OF WYRE.

Some members, who like us could not bring their boats, arrived by car or motorised caravan, making the final tally 22 Seadogs (either present or represented by their crews) - 65 folks in all - English, Welsh, Dutch, German and Belgian who got on together like old friends. As Piet Castenmiller observed in his welcome "it is wonderful that love for a boat can bring so many people together in peace and happiness".

During the course of the Rally we recruited several new Dutch members, one of whom, Olaf Mulder, had, only a few days earlier, sailed his Seadog BRANDANE from Amsterdam to Bradwell on the River Blackwater. There he met Cy Blackwell (DOGBOAT) and learned of the Rally at Middelburg. Despite believing (incorrectly), that the Seadog Association is for British members only, Olaf nevertheless turned about and returned to Holland in order to witness the gathering. Great was his surprise, as he was motoring along the Walcheren canal heading for Middelburg, on being hailed by an English lady who was busily pedalling her cycle along the tow-path. This was Babs Hervé of MORNING MIST. She called across to welcome him to the Rally; when he answered that he was not a member, and had only come to watch, Babs promptly extended a warm invitation to the whole crew of BRANDANE to come and join us, members or not. And so they did, and were overjoyed with the reception they received and amazed to find so many ladies in what is predominantly a man's world. They joined the association on the spot!

Middelburg is an attractive, clean and historic town with friendly inhabitants. A town with some unexpected facets, ranging from the slow-moving top of the futuristic monument in the market square, to a 'floating' greenhouse in the middle of one of the canals. There is also the Harbour Master's office, where walls are lined from floor to ceiling with shelves containing hundreds of different unopened cans and bottles of beer and lager brought to him from all over the world, for it has become something of a tradition for visiting yachtsmen to present this friendly Harbour Master with unusual items of liquid refreshment for display on his shelves.

As the first Seadogs arrived, they slotted themselves into any available space, but during the afternoon the Harbourmaster moved some large power boats occupying a pontoon along one side of the harbour, and put all the Seadogs together in their place. A family feeling soon established itself as Seadogs rafted up 3 and 4 deep. Piet motored NAUSIKAA up from her mooring, and along with other owners, dressed her overall. So many Seadogs together made a spectacular sight, and we soon became a tourist attraction. Newspaper reporters and photographers arrived to interview our oldest crew member, Eileen Tracey, and the public gathered along the harbour wall to take in the scene. Olive and I were kept busy booking in, collecting dinner and coach tour money, and generally getting to know everyone; by courtesy of Piet Castenmiller, all members were supplied with a folder containing the Rally Programme and timetable, an illustrated coloured street plan of Middelburg and details of the Exhibition at the Storm Surge Barrier.

That evening we were guests of the Dutch Seadog Owners at the Arne Yacht Club where Piet welcomed us most warmly and the Commodore presented the Seadog Owners Association with a Club burgee. The atmosphere was happy and informal, and most of our Dutch and Belgian Seadoggers spoke such good English that it was

easy for us to relax and enjoy their company; the children too, played together happily, despite any language barrier that may have existed. Indeed, I heard the other day that a correspondence has now developed between Mark Watson (CANUTE) and the pretty Bianca Binkhorst (SULISKER).

Bright and early next morning, Jan Mientjes (SORAYA) appeared with a trumpet and blew a resounding Reveille that echoed round the waterfront to the wonderment of passing cyclists. Even this failed to penetrate the slumbers of some who had been late to bed the night before!

At 10 a.m. we all, well, mostly all, strolled beside the canal to the picturesque Town Hall where we met Hans Vieluf (CANICULAR) and his wife, who, with their dog, had driven from Germany to be with us at the Reception. We gathered in an impressive mediaeval hall for coffee and biscuits, and were honoured by an official reception and address, most ably presented in English by the Deputy Mayor. Piet Castenmiller followed, speaking in Dutch; when he finished, Lidy Carree (NAMASTE II) translated for our benefit: she said -

"Unfortunately, Jan Carree, whose English is quite good, is not here yet, because he is attending to some engine trouble, so I'll have to do the difficult job of translating Piet's speech, although my English is none too good.

Piet would like to welcome heartily all Members of the Seadog Owners Association. Especially the English Members who have made a considerable trip before arriving in Middelburg. They even had to cope with stormy weather last night, so seeing you here is wonderful. This afternoon, looking at one arrival after another, and seeing all our Seadogs together, Piet felt that reality was even more fascinating than his expectations about the weekend had been.

A personal welcome Piet would like to address to Peter and Olive French who have organised the weekend on their side of the North Sea. He considers it a great pleasure to meet Peter and Olive after 10 months of correspondence.

Piet hopes that everyone will enjoy his weekend at the utmost and also that all of us will get to know each other; it's important to see that the love of a ship can unite people of different countries.

Piet would like to end his welcome to you all by saying that although he only can hope that you all will enjoy yourselves this weekend, he is at least sure of one thing. Considering the quality and strength of the Seadog, this will not be the last weekend of our Association".

Then followed an interesting and informative tour of the Town Hall, now rebuilt as near as possible to its original design, having been largely destroyed during the last war. Old craftsmen from all over Holland, by an extraordinary feat of restoration, have transformed a ruin into the beautiful building it is today.

Next, Kathy Louise shepherded us on a guided walk round the old town of Middelburg, pointing out and explaining many things of interest. Kathy is English and married to Theo, a local Dutch business man and sailing companion of Piet Castenmiller. Kathy and Theo are both good friends of the Dutch Seadog Owners Association.

During a free period that afternoon, the crew of NEWANDERER caught a bus to Veere. They returned hours later, staggering under the weight of a huge cast-iron lamp post that Sandra, Bill Richard's daughter-in-law, had bought on impulse. They couldn't talk their way on to the bus with it, so a kind taxi driver somehow got it and them back to Middelburg. Then came the question - where to put a lamp-post in a Seadog?. To make room, Bill, with considerable sorrow, had to part with some of his internal ballast, in the form of several years copies of the Practical Boat Owner Magazine. Lucky recipient of these was Willy de Crom (BONA) from Antwerp, who was delighted with his windfall.

That evening we were blessed with warm sunny weather when we congregated for pre-dinner drinks in the gardens of the "Societeit de Vergenoigning". This is a business men's club in an attractive old house dating back to the 18th century. Located in the centre of the town, it made a pleasant venue for our gathering.

Dinner which followed was most enjoyable - a party spirit soon got under way, with all nationalities mixing and chattering. Amidst laughter and revelry, many new friendships formed. At the end of the meal, Piet Castenmiller, on behalf of Dutch Seadog Owners, presented visiting skippers with an attractive wall-plaque to commemorate the occasion. Our Dutch and Belgian friends received reciprocal gifts - a small commemorative triangular plaque and a Seadog Brooch which were much appreciated. Lastly Piet was presented with a beautifully engraved tankard, a gift from all the Seadog Owners present to mark their appreciation of his hard work in organizing the Dutch side of the Rally.

Happily this function was recorded by enterprising members who snapped us at unguarded moments, and a group photograph was taken by a member of Ken Herve's crew - a professional photographer. (He had deliberately left his cameras behind as he intended to have a weekend off - but nevertheless, borrowed Ken's camera and organized us all most efficiently). Copies of these and many other photographs were presented to the Association by Bryan and Ken Hervé. This generous gesture prompted the idea of having a winter get-together to provide an opportunity for other Members to view them, (and culminated in the successful Philipps House Rally at Dinton, near Salisbury, last February).

Sunday morning our programme continued full steam as we travelled by coach and boat to view that stupendous feat of engineering known as the "Storm Surge Barrier" which spans the nine kilometer wide estuary of the Eastern Scheldte. There is also an interesting museum. Well worth a visit.

We returned to Middelburg later that afternoon and gathered at the Arne Yacht Club for the last official function of the Rally; after thanking our hosts for the generous hospitality and all their efforts, a Seadog Burgee was presented to their Club as a permanent memento of a very happy visit.

Shortly afterwards, the bridge lifted and the Seadogs started their long journeys home. Jan Mientjes, skipper of SORAYA, wedding himself by the mainmast shrouds, blew a farewell lament on his trumpet before serenading us with an accordion as he sailed off and out of sight - this caused a sensation in the harbour - the walls were lined with spectators, cars hooted, boats blew their fog horns, final photos were taken, much blowing of kisses, waving of hands, then the little harbour at Middelburg became a quiet and somewhat lonely place for the few of us who remained behind.

Everyone voted the Rally a most resounding success and your Secretary was pressed to try to arrange a second International Rally, somewhere in England in 1990. The degree of enthusiasm generated by this first international Seadog Rally, the interchange of ideas, modifications, the many photographs taken and friendships formed will, we hope, continue in the years to come.

We have often heard it said that "the Dutch like the English" - and how well they proved it - by generous hospitality, the hard work that undoubtedly went into planning and organizing the entertainment and the wonderful warmth of their welcome. One example of the kindness we were shown was when Audrey Lansdell, who travelled to Holland with us, over several days gradually developed the most raging and terrible tooth-ache - eventually she lay prostrate, white as a sheet, in the stern cabin. The moment Piet Castenmiller heard, Audrey was whisked away, to be returned one and a half hours later, happy and smiling. Piet de Boer, a local dentist, performed this miracle; and when asked for his bill, replied - there is no charge - I've done this for your Seadog Association".

AFTER THE RALLY

On Bank Holiday Monday we accompanied John and Audrey in their car for a combined picnic and visit to the island of Noord Beveland. There, we crossed the six kilometer long bridge over the Oosterschelde and visited Zierikzee before returning via Goes to Middelburg in time for tea at Kathy's house.

The word 'house' is misleading. Previous owners were the Royal Bank of Holland who used it as an up-market venue for directors meetings. With white marble entrance hall, twenty-two feet high decorated ceilings and huge chandeliers, it is quite a place. In acquiring the property, Kathy and Theo found that the bank next door came with the house. This part has now been converted into a museum of holography.

We wandered through the house from atomic air raid shelter in the cellars to an enormously high loft. So high we had to climb yet another floor before arriving at a ladder which gave access to a flat roof and panoramic views of the Island. In the distance on the coastline near Flushing, we could see a windmill farm where modern two-bladed windmills whirl away day and night generating electricity.

When evening came, (the evening meal is eaten relatively early in this part of Holland), Kathy walked with us to the "Athene", a Greek Restaurant close by and had a few words with the Maitre d' before introducing us. What she said to him I don't know, but we had the most splendid meal and excellent service. The evening got off to a good start when we sat down to find glasses of Ouzo on the table ready for us to sample while we studied the menu; from then on we never looked back; and the carafe of Rhetsina wine, provided gratis by the management, was a rare treat for me and was thoroughly appreciated.

Next morning, our last but one in Middelburg, Kathy arrived in her Land Rover to take the four of us on an historical and sightseeing tour of Walcheren Island and the Invasion Beaches at West Kapelle.

Walcheren Island may best be described as being rather like a squat diamond-shaped saucer about nine miles square, with the town of Middelburg located appropriately toward the centre. The greater part of the Island is below sea-level, protected from the North Sea by a rim of dunes which are over 300 feet thick at the base and rise 30 above low-water. These dunes were built long before the war.

During the war, Walcheren Island was heavily fortified by the occupying forces - fortifications later described in a Combined Operations report as "some of the strongest defences in the world".

In an attempt to flood these defences, (as a preliminary to the invasion of Walcheren by British and Canadian troops and Royal Marine Commandos), in October 1944 the Royal Air Force dropped 22,000lb bombs on the dunes, creating three immense breaches, each nearly a quarter of a mile wide, at Flushing, West Kapelle and Veere.

The seawater flooded in and most of Walcheren became a vast lake. Only the unsubmerged rim of the Island remained above water, plus a few bits of high ground near Flushing, Middelburg, and some elevated woodland to the north-west.

My interest in Walcheren Island dates back to a time, shortly after the end of the war, when I flew a Lancaster aircraft on trials of the prototype Decca-Navigator, (yes, it's been around that long - more than 40 years). These trials were carried out at low altitude, largely in the locality of Walcheren and the Scheldte Estuary.

So having seen from the air the huge lake with a church spire in the middle that was once the Island of Walcheren, I was intrigued to see how the Dutch had managed to recover from a disaster of such magnitude. To say I was amazed at the transformation would be an understatement. So skilfully have they rebuilt the dunes, shops, houses, churches and schools that it looked as though the flooding had never been. The only visible indication of the catastrophe was the size of the trees. Because of the flooding, all but a few trees died, and those planted to replace them are not yet fully grown.

There was a surprise in store that evening when we arrived for dinner with Kathy and Theo. At short notice, Kathy had somehow obtained a video copy of a rare film, "The Flooding of Walcheren", made at the end of the war. We watched this with great interest and saw that the effects of the flooding had clearly been much worse than I had remembered. I was rescued from gloom by Theo who brought in a glass of neat Dutch gin, straight from the deep-freeze. Dinner which followed was superb, the evening delightfully entertaining, a perfect ending to our stay in Holland. It has not been possible to catalogue the many kindnesses shown to us by Dutch Seadog Owners and their friends - I can only record that we have all been left with very happy memories of a wonderful visit.

THE RETURN TO ENGLAND

Next morning it was goodbye to Middelburg. Jess Willey (SEEHOND), a Head-mistress, had to be back for the start of the new term, so we swapped places and she joined Olive, John and Audrey when they left at 05.30. bound for Dunkirk. (Along the way it became known it was Jess's birthday, later celebrated by a champagne lunch aboard the ferry!) After saying goodbye to Piet, I joined Ken Willey aboard SEEHOND. Neither he nor I was in a hurry to get back to England, so we planned to journey westwards as far as possible along the Dutch, Belgian and French coastlines before striking off across the Channel. We finally got away late in the morning and motored gently down the canal to Flushing. As we left the shelter of the canal we met wind and sea and our boisterous sail to Breskens across the Scheldte Estuary set the pattern for things to come.

Sure enough, next day, the weather forecast was bad, the outlook worse. After some deliberation, we decided to have a go, intending to pack up when we'd had enough. Soon after breakfast we cast off, and with the cockpit hood up, motor-sailed into a stiff headwind and short steep seas, a fierce west-going tide helping us on our way. Steadily we passed Zeebrugge, Blankenberg and Ostende, but in the middle of the afternoon when it started to pour with rain, we abandoned the idea of pressing on to Calais, and went instead into nearby Nieupoort with its friendly yacht club.

Waking next morning to the sound of wind shrieking through the rigging and a forecast of winds Force 9, gusting to 10, discretion being the better part of valour, we had a day ashore and caught the tram, (which connects all the towns on the coast of Belgium), to the seaside town of De Panne - renowned for restaurants specialising in sea food, especially Moules Marinieres. It was interesting to observe as we speeded along, the individual and imaginative character of many houses and bungalows, a sharp contrast to England where so many are compelled by planners and architects to live in identical red boxes..

Nieupoort, Saturday, September 3rd. Weather forecast again discouraging - more gales in Dover, Wight, Portland and Plymouth. However, after mulling things over, we set off for the harbour entrance to see just how bad conditions were. Outside we found a blustery SW4/5 wind and the sea decidedly lumpy; once more, with reefed foresail and mizzen, and cockpit hood right up, we headed into it, taking the occasional green sea over the bows. The Decca Navigator clocked up rapid progress with the strong tide speeding us on our way. Soon we passed De Panne, scene of our activities the previous day, then on, past the two Dunkerques and a fright when what appeared to be a half-submerged torpedo suddenly launched itself straight towards us. Ken spun the wheel to port, and

a lethal-looking object flashed past our starboard side, just missing us. A close shave. Looking back, we could make out the rounded top of a metal buoy with a heavy steel hawser disappearing off to a distant dredger. The scouring tide put such pressure on the dredger that the hawser had pulled the buoy nine-tenths beneath the surface. Good job it wasn't night time - we'd never have seen it.

We arrived at Calais Port in the late afternoon sunshine of what had been an exhilarating day; our entrance was delayed for a while by the departure of what seemed to be a never-ending stream of cross channel ferries, but eventually we found a comfortable berth in the inner harbour.

Next morning, refreshed by a quiet night, we motored from Calais in warm sunshine and a light fluky wind. A delightful day followed, sailing, sometimes drifting on the tide, past Cap Griz-Nez towards Boulogne-sur-Mer, which we reached during the afternoon. Here we were fortunate to drop on a vacant finger pontoon at the Port de Plaisance in the centre of town.

It was in Boulogne, in the Spring of 1938 (while waiting to join the Royal Air Force), I lived some months with a French family, owners of the Cafe de l'Univers in the Rue Amiral Bruix. They had recently won first prize in the Loterie Nationale, and as a result lived in a very lovely house a little way out of town; in the grounds was an old barn stacked with fruit-machines. (Papa had one or more of these gambling machines in cafes from Calais to Dieppe - great fun for me to accompany him on his regular visits). War intervening, I had lost touch, so was keen to see if I could find the Cafe, the one-time haunt of Customs officers, Joe Valence, a Thomas Cook courier, and all the other denizens of the water-front. Sadly, my enquiries led nowhere, the road having been bombed flat during the war.

Sunday, 5th September - we rose early for the longish sail to Dieppe. Wind F4 occasionally F6, visibility poor, with mist patches obscuring for much of the time the pink-stained chalk cliffs which are a feature of the coastline between these two ports. This is a region where tides are difficult to predict, being a tidal-split area, but we had no problems and reached Dieppe late in the afternoon. Two large fishing boats preceded us to the lock, one towing the other, the towed craft sheering about, increasingly out of control. Finally it came to a grinding stop when it swung broadside on, bows firmly wedged into the machinery of the lock, temporarily blocking it. When that hazard was cleared, we entered the inner harbour and tied up to another yacht alongside the floating pontoon, once again in the centre of town. Very convenient for shops and restaurants.

The minus-side is an all pervading stench of fish, much rubbish floating on the water, the all-night activity of the Fish Market opposite, and constant zooming up and down of powerful fishing boats. Try to avoid dropping warps in the water here, they won't come up smelling of violets. But a good dinner and plenty of wine helps to make one less sensitive to such things.

Next day an improvement in the weather made the start of the second leg of our voyage to England a sheer delight; from Dieppe to Fecamp it was calm seas, moderate winds and sunshine all the way, a pleasant contrast to earlier days.

At Fecamp, (which may be entered at any state of the tide), we enjoyed a meal ashore and spent a relaxed night in the marina. Next morning I turned out before dawn and after breakfast, walked round the harbour and up a steep narrow lane leading to the "Fishermen's Church" built on the cliff top. Whilst absorbed in taking photographs I was startled at being attacked by a large Alsatian dog which, with bared teeth, flew like a rocket from its kennel straight at me, snapping its chain with a bang. An anxious moment.

I stood rooted at the thought of rabies. We have two whippets, and I hoped that somewhere their scent still lingered. Carefully avoiding eye contact, I walked slowly, hands and camera held high, the dog snapping and snarling round my legs. A pity I didn't have the wit to take its picture. After some minutes, seemingly hours, it must have decided that frightening me to death was punishment enough for one day, for it finally allowed me to pass, and hackles still up, watched my retreat down the hill. Whew! a lucky escape.

From Fecamp, we had intended to visit Courseulles-sur-Mer, but realising this would mean having to anchor off for several hours before we could lock in, decided to continue sailing along the Invasion Beaches, past Arromanches and the remains of the Mulberry Harbour, to tiny Port-en-Bessin. We motored into the outer harbour at 20.00 and were spotted by an observant lock keeper who smartly opened the bridge on our approach and we were able to go straight into the inner harbour where we brought up alongside another yacht.

Next day, Thursday 8th of September, we potted northwards along the coastline before heading out to visit the Iles St. Marcouf about eight miles offshore. We dropped the hook in the little anchorage between the two islands, with just one other yacht for company. One of the islands is a bird sanctuary; later we inflated the dinghy and rowed ashore to explore the other, and Ken had his annual swim. Too soon it was evening, time to head for our destination, the pleasant marina at St. Vaast la Hogue, (twinning with Bridport). We weighed anchor and set sail, followed for a time by a developing black cloud which drifted towards us from the south and blotted out the sun. It had all the makings of an incipient thunderstorm, but eventually passed harmlessly and the sun appeared once more.

Next morning we left St Vaast and set off for Cherbourg; on the leg up to Barfleur we passed through three distinct tidal races, each clearly marked, from horizon to horizon, by a line of white water. Once more the cockpit hood was pressed into use and we held on tightly as we plunged into a violent roller-coaster ride through the severely disturbed water. (Ken has a special arrangement of straps each side of the hood which allows him to raise or lower it in seconds). The Pilot Book states that with wind against tidal stream, which we experienced, Barfleur Race is rivalled only by the Alderney Race. It certainly was turbulent and wouldn't be lot of fun to be in at night; in bad weather and wrong state of tide, it would be downright dangerous, with heavy breaking seas matching those of the Portland Race.

The marina at Cherbourg, reopened after the great storm of October 1987, has been equipped with finger pontoons; they, like everything else, are brand new. One hazard I observed was that strips of wood fixed to their sides are secured by metal screws or rivets, the heads of which stand well proud. If you are not very careful when arriving at, or leaving a berth, you stand a good chance of suffering a monumental scratch along the side of the hull.

On arrival in Cherbourg we shopped for wine, beer and cheeses to take home, and early next morning, Saturday 10th of September, we set sail for the Isle of Wight and had a pleasant and relaxed crossing. Our peace and quiet was disturbed only once - by the unheralded and startling double bang of Concorde as she passed, out of sight, miles overhead. It always catches me unawares. For a moment I thought something had exploded just beside me.

It was late in the evening when we approached Yarmouth; "Harbour Full" signs were prominent, and many yachts were anchored outside the entrance. Three Harbour-master's boats darted about to prevent craft from entering, and inside was the usual Saturday night scrum. After a short wait and some negotiation with other skippers, we were led far down the harbour, through a tightly packed maze of boats, to the very last space. We had a celebration drink, a good meal, and after visitors from the adjoining boat left us, slept the sleep of the just.

Next morning we were enjoying a leisurely sail towards Portsmouth and the end of our sometimes strenuous but wholly rewarding cruise, when my attention was drawn to a large yacht, a bone in her teeth, spinnaker billowing, closing fast astern. Minutes later a great roar split the air - "Peter - I say Peter" Skewing round in utter surprise I saw, waving in greeting, John and Audrey Lansdell who, two weeks earlier, had been our companions aboard NAUSIKAA at the Rally in Middelburg. They were as amazed as I - the odds against such a chance meeting must be millions to one against; for the one and only time of my life I was rendered temporarily speechless.

Looking back on the Rally weekend, the satisfaction of seeing all the Seadogs arrive in Middelburg and the happy faces of our Members, more than made up for the hard work that went into its planning and execution. It is at times like this that the Seadog Owners Association proves its worth, and I hope we will have many more opportunities in the future to meet and enjoy the comradeship generated by the love of that superb craft, the Seadog. As one long-time Seadog owner said recently, "It's an incredible boat....you can't trump it!"...

FORTHCOMING RALLIES

A Seadog Rally is planned to be held at HOLYHEAD over the AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND for members on both sides of the Irish sea, and others who may be in the area. Olive and I hope to be able to attend and meet Members. Of course we won't be able to bring DOGMATIC, but will probably come by train.

A south-coast Seadog Rally has been arranged for the weekend of the 9/10th of SEPTEMBER at the FOLLY INN, River Medina, ISLE OF WIGHT - all Seadogs will be made very welcome.

By popular request a second land-based get together has been booked at PHILIPPS HOUSE, DINTON, near SALISBURY, for the weekend of 17/18 FEBRUARY 1990. Members living in the south of England will be circulated later, but any members who may be interested in enjoying a winter holiday break in a lovely old National Trust House are invited to notify secretary Peter French as soon as possible.

2ND INTERNATIONAL SEADOG RALLY

No decision has yet been taken regarding a venue. I have wondered whether Portsmouth might be suitable - there is much for our visitors to see and do, plus the fact it's near enough for me to make visits re arrangements. Ipswich has also been proposed, as has St. Catherine's at Tower Bridge on the Thames. Wherever it may be held, it's highly desirable that a Seadog member living locally be willing to oversee arrangements, as Piet did in Middelburg.

Piet has just written to say he hopes to bring NAUSIKAA over to England for a cruise of the Solent ports, and expects to arrive at Portsmouth sometime during the last week in July. I am hoping that between us we can arrive at a decision, but between then and now, I would welcome comments from our European as well as British Seadoggers regarding suitability of date and place.

SEADOG ASSOCIATION WINTER MEET AT PHILIPPS HOUSE11/12 FEBRUARY 1989

The Seadog Owners Association held its first winter get-together at Philipps House in February, but I must confess that when the idea was originally suggested, I had some doubts that such a function would prove popular. So when the first letters went out to members living within reasonable travelling distance of Salisbury, I awaited the reaction with great interest, bearing in mind that Philipps House, a National Trust property, has the capacity to accommodate as many as 52 people for an overnight stay. But the worry was unnecessary; the response was very encouraging, and when final details were collated, all 52 beds were filled, and there was a waiting list. Philipps House, with its art treasures and beautiful staircase is located on the outskirts of the village of Dinton, which lies some 8 miles due west of Salisbury in Wiltshire. It has associations with the Petworth Estate and the Wyndham family estates in Australia, where an identical house has been built.

Philipps House is now very ably managed and administered by our two newest Seadog Members - Ray and Jannine Mullin, who purchased SEACANIS from Fred Ellingham. Over our weekend we were to find them, and their staff, so competent and friendly, and they pulled out all the stops to ensure it was a success.

Olive and I arrived on the Friday to make sure we would be ready for action bright and early next day. When we walked in, the whole house shone with lovingly polished furniture, and a big log-fire welcomed us in the Drawing Room. Soon after lunch we went round the house and made ourselves familiar with the layout so we could direct members to their rooms as they arrived. In each bedroom we left a "Welcome Letter" and programme of events, together with a list of all members attending.

Next morning after breakfast, Olive set up her 'Booking in Desk' in the big entrance hall and awaited arrivals. First, as expected were Fred, (past secretary), and Clare Murley, closely followed by Bryan and Babs Hervé (JACARAH) and Reggie Lodge, (SOLWAY DOG); gradually, the car park filled until all 52 people were present.

Long distances had been travelled by many. To mention but a few, Reggie Lodge (SOLWAY DOG) high-tailed it down from Hadrians Wall on the Scottish Border, Sidney & Margaret Ellison (LEONORA) trekked eastwards from Milford Haven in far south west Wales, Cy & Louise Blackwell (DOGBOAT) made it from Ipswich, and Roy & June Croft, (who live 6 months of the year on TIMORLEY in Larnaca in Cyprus), came up from Dawlish in Devon. This was a rare opportunity for members who live too far away to come to southern Rallies, to take a winter holiday break in a lovely old National Trust house, and at the same time meet southern Members in a warm, comfortable and welcoming environment.

The official start of the programme was at 4.30 in the afternoon when tea and biscuits were served in the Drawing Room; this was a good time for members to get to know each other and discover who owned which Seadog. The weekend was further helped along by a generous donation by John Watson (CANUTE), of a four and a half gallon pin of beer!

Dinner in the evening was most enjoyable as well as being great fun. We all packed into the Great Dining Room, its walls hung with oil paintings, portraits of distinguished members of the family who built the house. Large dining tables were attractively set with flowers, bowls of fresh fruit, dishes of

mints and exquisite little marzipan eggs by Anton Berg (a favourite of mine). Fred Murley said Grace and we sat ourselves down to enjoy - Leek & Potato Soup or Florida Cocktail - Sorbet - Roast Leg of Lamb à l'Orange - Black Forest Gateau or Fresh Fruit Salad and cream - Cheese and Biscuits - Fresh Fruit - Coffee and Mints - all in all superb food - (cooked by Ray Mullin and his staff) - and for those who had the forethought to bring it, a glass of Port.

As the premises are not licenced, it was a case of bring your own wine and pre-dinner drinks and judging by the hilarity and amount of laughing and talking that went on, it was obvious that everyone had done just that!

Dinner was followed by a film show in the Stone Hall, transformed into a cinema by the addition of a large screen and seating for all. Star of the first two films was a Seadog - DOGBOAT. She is used for sail and power boat training at Cy Blackwell's Deer Park Lodge Sailing School on the River Orwell near Ipswich.

Next, Ken Hervé screened a video film of his stormy passage to Middelburg in JACARAH last August. In dirty weather, with winds of Force 7 and 8, they made remarkably fast time, just under 18 hours for the 121 miles from Thorpe Bay to Flushing, an average speed of nearly 7 knots. What an experience that must have been!

This film brought back memories to other Seadoggers who had also made that trip - in fact, apart from Hal Ironside, (AFARON), who was on holiday in New Zealand, and Fred & Joan Ellingham, (ex SEACANIS) who were in Spain, all the British members who came to Middelburg were present at Philipps House.

It was past midnight before most of us made our way up that magnificent marble staircase to head for our beds - tired but happy. Incidentally, for those of you who watched the TV series "To the Manor Born", this is the very staircase used in the Wedding Scene during the final programme.

Breakfast next morning - a full English breakfast - so much, that you could have had two cooked breakfasts had you wished - (I did!). Around the middle of the morning Fred Murley gave a talk and showed slides illustrating his last long-distance voyage - to Tresco in the Scilly Islands, aboard his beloved TRESCO MAID, shortly before he, very reluctantly, had to part with her. Lunch, for those who could stay, was informal but excellent. The conversation never lagged - many ideas were swapped - photographs of the Middelburg Rally looked at and exchanged and the Rally itself re-lived in conversation and picture.

So much good comes out of these 'get-togethers' and it was particularly nice to see all the Ladies chatting together - usually they have to listen to the men talking about this and that problem with the engine, electrics, etc. On this occasion they could sit around the log fire, natter to newly made and old friends and be waited on, without having to worry about the washing up

There was a superb atmosphere over the whole weekend - in fact several people said that the feeling was like being part of a big family, living in a beautiful house.

During the weekend, Bryan Hervé, (JACARAH & MORNING MIST), took a lot of photos which he has generously donated to the Association; these will be available for viewing and purchase (50p each), at our next get-together,

Requests for a similar rally in the future have been received - so it looks as though a winter get-together might be a good idea after all.

SEADOGS REPRESENTED AT THE PHILIPPS HOUSE GET-TOGETHER

BORN FREE II	Barry & Laura Yaldren	LEONORA	Sidney & Margaret Ellison
CANUTE	John & Hilary & Mark Watson	MELISSE	Jon & Gill Smurthwaite
DOG BOAT	Cy & Louise Blackwell	NEWANDERER	Bill & Thora Richards
DOGMATIC	Peter & Olive French		Brian & Sandra Richards
	John & Audrey Lansdell	PALAFX	Jack & Bobby Phillips
GALWYN	Stephen & Christine Axon	SEACANIS	Ray & Jannine Mullin
GLASS LADY	John & Lisa de Candole	SEAFLEUR	Tim & June Bartlett
GUNDOG	Sam & Jean Page	SEASCAPE	Harry & Caroline Manners
JACANA	Stewart & Dinah McLennan	SEEHOND	Ken & Jess Willey
JACARAH	Bryan & Babs Herve	SOLWAY DOG	Reggie Lodge
	Ken & Chris Herve	SOYAKAZE	David & Margaret Mould
	Richard & Sue Burnell	STAR DOG	Bill & Dee Chamberlain
KYROS	Tony & Annette Spinks	TIMORLEY	Roy & June Croft
		EX TRESKO MAID	Fred & Clare Murley

NEWS OF BOATS AND OWNERS

ANAHITA II - Gordon Pinkard writes - "I thought I'd let you have news of our experiences this year on our trip from Malta to Majorca: ten weeks and thirty-three ports of call.

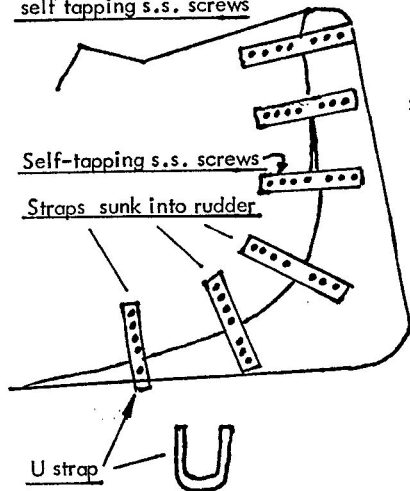
Anahita II wintered at Manoel Island Yard, Malta; I went out on a cheap flight in January to do engine servicing and make templates of the rudder profile and sections at half-a-dozen places. Back home I prefabricated a rudder extension piece to the general shape of other Seadog modifications, using three pieces of 3/4" marine ply shaped to profile and recessed to fit the aft edge of the existing rudder. Six stainless strips each side were made to secure the extension-piece, these being recessed into the wood.

I returned to Malta in March to do the final shaping, then ground recesses in the GRP rudder and fitted the securing strips, finally offering up the wooden extension, now glued and screwed together, onto the rudder on a bedding of Plastic Padding. The whole assembly was then faired off and finally glassed over and anti-fouled.

I found there was quite an improvement in Anahita's handling, especially with large stern seas, as I will relate later. Other jobs on this visit were fitting new wood capping plugs round the rubbing strake, sanding off all the exterior woodwork and treating with "Ceetol", and the construction and fitting of a portable bow gangplank.* Anahita II has a stern anchor, so we always go in bows on when berthing Mediterranean style.
*(NOTE: Gordon has sent a drawing; for a copy please send 50p plus SAE).

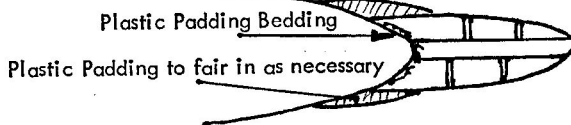
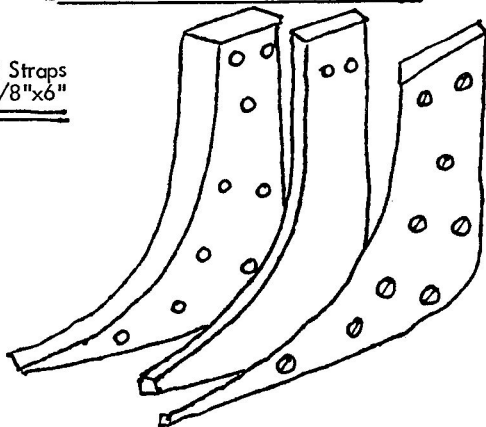
In early May we returned and cleaned, antifouled and put Anahita back in the water. On the 17th we left Malta en route for Majorca via Sicily, the west coast of Italy, up to Salerno and Amalfi, then the islands of Capri, Ischia, Ventotene, back to the mainland at Anzio for a trip to Rome, then on to Giglio and Elba, across to Corsica and down to Sardinia. Most of this trip was motor-sailing as the wind was either the prevailing North-westerly or none at all, but it was very enjoyable with plenty of warm sunshine, although the weather deteriorated in the Corsica/Sardinia area.

3/16"x1/2" c/s.
self tapping s.s. screws



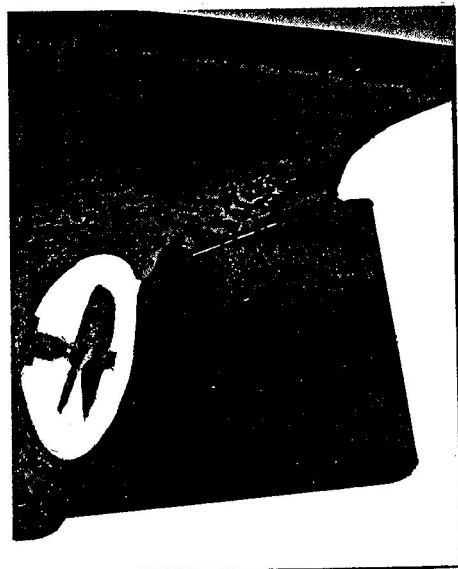
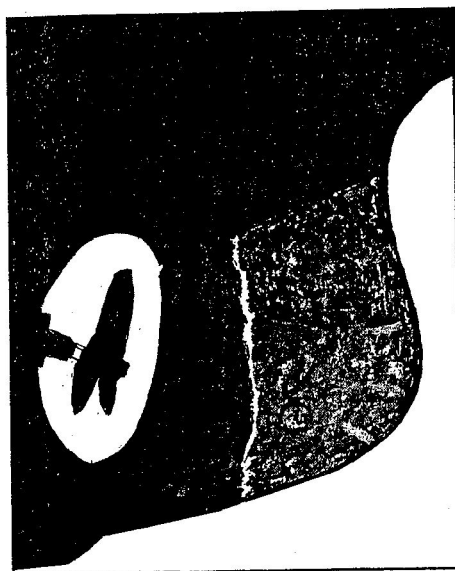
3 pieces 3/4" Marine Ply
(glued & screwed together when shaped)

S/Steel Straps
3/4"x1/8"x6"



Two final sheathings of fine glass mat on completion.

ANAHITA II



We reached Alghero in NW Sardinia on 6 July, (our jumping off point for Minorca) and berthed next to a Halberg Rassey 352 whose German owner had his right arm in a sling. Crossing from Minorca a few days earlier, they had been caught in bad weather and suffered a severe gybe in which he caught his arm in the main-sheet block and dislocated it. His wife was very capable and managed to get the boat to Alghero where the husband was well cared for in the local hospital. This story did nothing to help my wife Anne's anxiety about the long leg to Minorca, especially as she had never had a night at sea on a small boat.

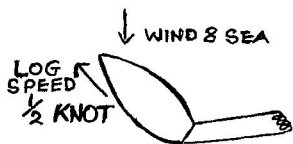
However, after a few days in Alghero with settled weather we decided to have a go and planned the 190 odd mile trip so as to make a forenoon arrival at Mahon. Working back and allowing an average 5 knots, we would leave Alghero early evening, spend a night, the following day and second night at sea. We had a problem with weather forecasting; all we could get was Italian Radio Due. Wednesday afternoon's forecast for the next 24 hours gave winds Force 3 increasing locally to 4, sea moderate, so we decided to go and left at 17.30.

Our first night went quite well, wind W3 as forecast, our course 258, so we hoisted the main and motorsailed, averaging five and a quarter knots. The only anxious moments were when, about midnight, we passed miles of tunny nets with their confusing twinkling lights. Next morning the wind steadily increased in strength, Force 4 at 0900, up to 5 at 1100, the sea rising rapidly with it, so I rolled in the main a bit and altered course into the seas on 280. At 1300 hours reduced to 1100 rpm, wind now veered to the north-west Force 6. Evening saw us labouring into increasingly large and steep seas with wind-speed up to 30 knots. In the early hours of next morning I struggled and rolled the main almost right down leaving just a small triangle with two battens.

We were now holding a course of 310 into the seas, speed down to about 2 knots, but still with the autopilot controlling things quite well. However, I then noticed the alternator had stopped charging, and at first light I reviewed our state of affairs. The seas were now alarming, in excess of 25 feet, and wind up to a full 36 knots. We were on a course that was now taking us past the NE corner of Minorca, away from our destination - definitely a "no go" situation, so I said to Anne, who was bearing up very bravely, that I would try to run off before wind and sea. Conscious of our German friend's gybe and accident, I decided on a drogue and luckily Anahita has the stern anchor with 20 metres of chain and a long warp. With safety harness on, I managed to wedge myself on the after deck, unshackle the anchor, and join another long warp to the chain.

Along the chain I lashed our six large sausage-shaped fenders with one extra-large one we have at the centre. I then fed this lot over the transom letting out about 40 metres of warp from each quarter. With this streamed out astern, I brought Anahita round to run down the wind and sea on about 200, then stopped the engine expecting to run on under the scrap of mainsail and bare poles.

It was at this stage that Anahita took over the decision making. Like all dogs I suppose, Seadogs like to put up their nose and sniff the wind, which is what she decided to do. Despite me putting the wheel hard down to port, she slowly worked her way round to starboard to take the wind and sea on her starboard shoulder. Our warps meanwhile streamed out over the starboard quarter. Perhaps this sketch shows the situation better, brought about no doubt by the windage on the mizzen and the slow speed.



In this condition I was surprised how much easier the boat felt, and with no engine noise, the atmosphere down inside the boat was relatively peaceful. We were being lifted, dropped and rolled by the sea, but apart from the occasional thump and crash on the coachroof which alarmed us, we felt more relaxed, and I managed a couple of hours of fitful sleep during the day.

Anahita continued to ride over the big seas like a little duck, but I was anxious about our ship's service battery being very low, so in the afternoon I managed to get our small Honda generator out and wedge it in a corner of the cockpit where it ran despite the amount of spray flying about. I pumped the bilge about every two hours, but we made very little water, what there was being mostly through leakage at the cockpit floor. We lay like this through the Friday night and I tried to keep some idea of our position by guesswork D.R. and regular RDF fixes on Mahon radio beacon. The latter showed us making some westing, but clearly we were also being pushed south by wind and sea, although I was sure we had adequate sea-room.

At first light Saturday I looked around at the wild scene and was thankful to see the wind had dropped slightly to 30 knots so I thought we might try again to run down-wind, but this time with the help of the engine to give better control. At 0700 after some tea and toast to revive us, the engine was started and at 1100 rpm brought Anahita round to take wind and sea on the starboard quarter on a course of 215, generally in the direction of NE Minorca. With the huge seas coming up astern, our drogue came into its own, and each time the overtaking sea went to throw the stern round, the warps really tightened and took the strain, easing again as the sea passed, and Anahita settled into the trough.

We felt well under control now, so increased to 1400 rpm, making 4 knots with the drogue taking the pull, and the course holding steady enough for me to try the Pinta autopilot. It coped well, so I then ran the little generator again and thus started our hairy sleigh-ride towards land which we sighted about 1100 hours. As we closed, I was thankful to identify Cabo Fabaritz lighthouse and have an exact position.

We continued our roller-coaster act with wind now reduced to Force 6 until we rounded Punta del Espero and entered Mahon's beautiful sheltered harbour at 1300 hours. Here we hove to and retrieved our drogue arrangement, then proceeded, tying up at a commercial quay some half hour later, with the cleanest fenders in Minorca - 69 hours and 240 miles logged since leaving Alghero.

We loved Mahon and stayed a few days during which I checked the alternator, finding the slip-ring brushes worn and sticking, and the 6R relay that controls the field circuit defective. I found some brushes in a local electrical repair shop which I could modify and fix, whilst the relay has been temporarily replaced by a manual switch to get us fully operational again. Also I had to restitch the main at the second batten pocket and make a new batten to replace one which had blown away.

In nice calm sunny weather we continued our trip around Minorca, then across to Cala Ratjada and down to our present base at Porto Colom, Majorca. Thus ended our ten week trip of some 1,200 miles.

What of our reactions to it all? Firstly, respect and thankfulness for the strength and sea-keeping quality of Anahita II on which our lives depended for many hours, secondly a resolution to fit a top quality headsail-furling system, as during the severe weather there was no possibility of my going up into the bows to see to the headsail, and thirdly, we have invested in an all-waveband radio that will pick up Marseilles Radio - we were told in Mahon that the French gave clear warning on the Wednesday of the forthcoming gale Force 8 for Lions and Nord Balears. One last resolve, I suppose, is not to sail in future on the 13th. It was Wednesday 13th July we left Alghero.

We visited interesting places, met interesting boats and people, tho' missed Mike Groves with FUHARA at Alghero. A note pinned to our gangway said they were stopping at Porto Conte on their way to Malta, but we didn't manage to see them. In Porto Colom we were pleased to meet Ray and Judy Dash with THELPHINI, also Ludwig and Jelka Brandt with TRIASID. People thought we were having a Seadog Rally. It was Ludwig Brandt who suggested other Seadog owners might be as interested as he in learning how a Seadog behaved in full gale conditions".

ATON III - Jan Kloos, who was at the Rally at Middelburg with us, sent a drawing of a portable gimballed mug holder which he made for the first time in 1963. It is made of aluminium and copper, thus non-magnetic. Jan also sent photos of his main-sheet traveller which permits Aton III to sail closer to the wind than is possible with the present arrangement on Seadogs. He concluded "I have enjoyed very much our Rally and the atmosphere among the participants. It will be marvellous when Aton III can be present at the next meeting".

GEORGE BLUNT - "It is now 5 years since I sold CANUTE after 10 very satisfactory years. She was built for me in 1972 to Lloyds 100A1. I kept her 'in class' the whole time, and I learned a very great deal from the Lloyd's surveyor at the periodic surveys and inspections of any work he specified. She was even better than new in all important respects when I sold her! It is sad to read now of faults developing in some of her sister-ships, that can only be the results of neglect and/or ill-conceived DIY activities in the past."

DARESSA - Christine Smith wrote in September - "We are looking forward to hearing about the 'great expedition to Holland' and were only sorry that due to family illness we were unable to join you."

In June/July we had a very enjoyable two week cruise around Lyme Bay. One of the highlights for me was Lyme Regis which we visited outward and homeward bound. Other Seadog owners may like to know that although 9 metres is the maximum for inside the harbour wall, we were made very welcome, and there were larger yachts there. It is well worth contacting the harbour master as soon as you are within VHF range, as he works on a booking basis. There are buoys outside the wall, and we spent one very calm night on one, but they are very unprotected and we were pleased to have reserved our place against the harbour wall on our second stay - very rough.

We spent 5 nights at Torquay Marina which is right in the town and has first class facilities including a laundry room and private shower rooms for the girls - the men were all together, but Paul said they were some of the best he had seen - the showers, that is. If anyone is fed up with cooking on board, a visit to Martin's Restaurant proved to be one of the culinary highlights of the trip. We waited in Torquay for reported gales to pass, and although we didn't actually see them, we saw where they had been.

Topsham on the River Exe was our next port of call which was very beautiful but needed a sharp eye on the chart. The river is very wide at high tide, and very narrow at low and the channel winds from bank to bank with the water outside the main channel being very shallow. At Topsham we moored with 2 resident Seadogs but unfortunately no sign of the owners. Topsham was very quaint and well worth the row ashore.

We had hoped to visit Bridport, but the gales we missed still put power in the wind and we arrived an hour before it was possible to enter the harbour. We were quite optimistic as we approached because a fishing boat with deeper draft was making its way there. However, when they found entry was impossible they came back to tell us - nice people. Paul was all for 'stooging' around for an hour, but I said I would have to 'get off' if he did that. The entrance to Bridport looked frightening at the best of times, but with a strong south-westerly hurling giant waves at it we felt it was not a tempting haven. Luckily Lyme Regis made us very welcome even if we did have to sit on a buoy like a bucking bronco for an hour before entering the harbour.

Next port of call was Weymouth and we decided to take the inner channel round the Bill sailing all the way. We had huge following seas and spent a wonderful evening discussing the trip with a fellow skipper who left Lyme Regis at the same time. He said he felt quite confident until he saw us dip behind the waves and realised the size of the sea. We had to admit feeling the same as

his boat looked quite out of control, swinging 90 degrees with each wave. The sail to Poole and then home to the Hamble was much smoother and a fitting end to a lovely two weeks.

Paul has renewed the windscreen on Daressa very successfully. He took the old perspex out of the metal frame, and as you can imagine, this took quite a lot of brute force after 20 years in situ. This did distort the frame a little but, because the metal is quite soft it was possible to reshape it later. We took the old windscreen to Osmonds (glass & plastics merchants) in Southampton and they cut new screens from 4mm perspex and together with rubber for the channels, glue and a glue-gun, the total was about £50.00 including VAT.

The 4mm perspex was very pliable and easy to refit into the old channels in the frame. It was necessary to drill small holes through the top edge for the fixing of the cockpit cover; this was done after the top was in place.

In retrospect, Paul feels the job was quite easy but care must be taken not to distort the frame when dismantling. We are looking forward to enjoyably clear sailing from now on!"

FAYE OF AUBIN - Tina Poyner sends news of their return from the Mediterranean to England via the canals of France - "Well, at last we are home! We had an uneventful journey up through France in beautiful sunshine most of the way. This is the first time we have come through the Canal du Midi in April, and I must admit I think it was my favourite, the orchards were all in blossom, an unbelievable riot of colour, and we even saw banks of cowslips along the canal, something I haven't seen for ages here in England.

We were privileged to see loads of red squirrels, on one occasion even young ones about six inches long, baby otters and the usual bird life, and had the cuckoo with us all the way from April 9th.

We had a grand three day trip across the Bay of Biscay, stopping overnight at Les Sables D'Olonne, one of our favourite marinas, so clean and friendly, and at a new marina for us, L'Herboudiere on Noirmoitier which we found very good.

We stopped with our friend Alain Rando at the Blue Line Base in Messac and were told by him he had given aid to another Seadog in 1987, but he couldn't remember the name; I wonder who that was?!

At Dinan we had the masts stepped - the crane has been extended by 1 metre, which made it a lot easier, tho' the main-mast is still a little too tall, but with the aid of David Spencer from the chandlers there, we managed it OK and set off for St. Sevan and the Channel.

We stopped for the weekend in St. Peter Port, Guernsey, the first time we have visited here since the new marina and facilities have been completed. What a lovely place that is. The weather forecast for the Monday night was a Force 3 for the Channel, so we set off at 11 pm, but I think the weather-man must have turned two pages over together, for we hit a Force 5-6 just after leaving the Little Russel and had an unbelievably bumpy seventeen and a half hour journey home to Exmouth, culminating in a Force 8 just as we had Berry Head in our sights. As usual, Faye behaved fantastically - we really are going to miss her, what a pity one has to grow old!!"

GLASS LADY - John de Candole - "We did enjoy our visit to Middelburg - the arrangements could not have been better and GLASS LADY is very appreciative of all your efforts to make the weekend such a success. We had a testing trip home, strong wind and sea on the nose the whole way, and we had to flee into Rye harbour in Force 6 SW - quite dodgy getting over the bar, and there we stayed for three days until the weather sorted itself out. We eventually reached Keyhaven PM Sunday 3rd September, most of my crew having jumped ship to return to work."

JACARAH & MORNING MIST - in his letter enclosing the photographs of the Middelburg Rally, Bryan Hervé wrote - "Belatedly but just as sincerely - congrats on an extremely happy and interesting Seadog Rally. It was a huge success, (and I speak for JACARAH!) We eventually returned to Bradwell in MORNING MIST after a series of delays, via Breskens, Dunkerque and Ramsgate. It's a long, painful story but suffice to say the weather was not exactly on our side!Finally although we only got back to Bradwell last Saturday, I have to report that JACARAH came out with us from Vlissingen on the Sunday pm, bounced up and down to Zeebrugge that evening, and then left at 0500 hours Monday to arrive straight back at Bradwell at 10.30 that night (Monday). What value is youth and muscle power!"

His son, Ken Herve, who sailed JACARAH to the Rally also generously donated photos and negatives of the Dutch Rally - "Many thanks again for all your hard work in organising the very enjoyable weekend in Middelburg and area over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Our hosts were all wonderful and great fun and lived up to all that one could wish for. I look forward to seeing all participants on any organised or unofficial Seadog meet in the future.... just a small request tho' ...if the organisers sail there, will they organise the wind as well!! Force 7/8 from behind on the way over was ...well, just OK, but Force 7/8 on the nose on the way home was not appreciated!"

KOHURAU - Rowland Morgan, whose retirement started last August sent photographs plus a long list of work done - "Engine removed, cleaned painted & fitted with new hoses. Engine compartment cleaned (a 4 day job), rewired, new alternator plus extra-heavy wiring from battery to auxiliary control panel. New diaphragm for water boiler & new piping from seacock to pump. Rudder tube drilled and fitted with greasing point; "Spurs" rope cutter fitted to Prop. shaft; Engine controls modified so one lever takes the place of the previous two. Also fitted:-
Fuel tanks (of stainless steel), and a stainless folding stern boarding ladder.
Hull- stripped (using grit) and epoxy-coated with 'Gelshield' under supervision of a marine surveyor. 6 keel bolts drawn and replaced; topsides painted.
Bowsprit - a stainless steel and teak bowsprit measuring four feet seven inches overall and mast steps on main-mast were also fitted; the original genoa is used for the outer forestay and this seems very good. Lazy-jacks fitted to main and mizzen.
Windscreen - original Perspex windshield replaced with 'Lexan' polycarbonate and this is excellent."

MICHETTE - Brian Jackson has had problems with fuel and lubricating oil leaks on his engine - "...about Holland I fear at the moment we must stay doubtful: the enclosed photos will explain. Our cruise had a good start down to Devon, then we crossed to Guernsey from Dartmouth in easy conditions: just as well, because on arrival at St. Peter Port, I dipped the sump to find we had lost four pints of oil in 12 hours. Engine had to come out.

As it was being lifted out, it swung back and knocked the hose off the spigot of the aft cockpit seacock. I have never seen water come in so fast. Luckily I have always turned both seacock valves each month and painted the handles red so it was an instant to stop the rush.

Cause of the oil leak was the gasket at the rear crankshaft end. Engineer pronounced the engine very good indeed but thought after 10 years we might think about having it overhauled. However we could not get more than 2200 rpm out of gear, and 1500 rpm in gear. I suspected something to do with the throttle control, but anyway we started off for Cherbourg, and on arrival lifted the sole board to find diesel spurting out from the CAV pump. French mechanic found gasket gone on pump and replaced it.

The day before we left, I worried about the low rpm, so back came the mechanic.

He thought it could be the first filter, although I'd cleaned that before the trip. However, he removed it, pronounced it clean, bolted it back too hard and broke the glass bowl. Now 5 pm on Friday in France and everything closed. However, he put on a CAV 296 renewable filter and said it would be OK; it was, but I still have to ask Lucas about it to confirm that it will exclude water from fuel. After all that, nerves are a bit jangled so are pausing in our plans until after Scilly by air, until the end of July. Very fresh trip back, including Lymington to Chichester in four hours under half foresail only."

MAGGIE MAY II - After nearly a decade, we have news of the whereabouts of this Seadog; she is in Bluewater Bay in South Africa, and is owned by David Stobie who has joined the Seadog Owners Association. MAGGIE MAY II is reputed to have made one and two-thirds circumnavigations of the globe when she was in the ownership of Simon Holmes a'Court. I should be very pleased to receive more information on this boat.

NEWANDERER - Bill Richards wrote of his experiences after leaving the Rally at Middelburg: "When we left Flushing on the Sunday evening we were in company with GLASS LADY and one other and in the prevailing conditions we ran for Breskens where we stayed the night. At 0630 the following morning we left Breskens to motorsail down the coast as far as we could to cut out the open-water distance to cross to get home.

As we passed Oostende, the webbing strap at the head of the Genoa parted and down it came. I could have put another headsail up the slot as I have a spare halyard, but I wouldn't be able to roll it, so we went into Oostende where I went up the mast and reclaimed the halliard. We had a meal and left again after 4 hours.

A few hours later, we were back again - much to the amusement of the harbour master who told me a Force 9 SW wind was imminent. We stayed the night and left the following day with one additional crew who wanted to get back home.

Nineteen hours later we made Ramsgate where we were joined by another Seadog whose name I forget. She was crewed by two men from Southampton who live aboard. Anyway, she had rudder shoe horn problems which lifted the rudder, causing it to jamb when crossing the centre-line.

Leaving the boat in Ramsgate I went home for a couple of days and when I returned I took him a piece of thick copper rod to make a shoe rivet when he does the repair. As you may know, when replacing the shoe, the rivets have to be moved down one, leaving the longest to be replaced. Unfortunately this quality of copper rod just can't be found. I brought some back from the Falklands!

I heard later that when he refloated and went on to the pontoon, he was visited by Customs men who gave him a rough time".

PALAFIX II - Peter and Dierdre Bragg, with windsurfer and bicycles aboard, sailed PALAFIX II from Falmouth up to the Solent during the summer, and stayed a few days on DOGMATIC's mooring in the Hamble River, DOGMATIC being ashore for her extended overhaul. "After we left you and after touring around the Isle of Wight, which we thoroughly enjoyed, we sailed to Lulworth, and unimpressed, sailed on next day to Weymouth where we spent the next three days in excellent weather, anchored outside the harbour.

Fog was a problem on the way to Torquay and its expensive marina; next night we sailed across the bay to a lovely little cove right next to Brixham. Marvellous walks. That evening we went to Paignton by boat and viewed the most fantastic firework display. Without doubt, there is superb good cruising to be had in this country, but it's bad weather which lets us down, isn't it?"

PALAFox - Jack and Bobby Phillips (Jack is a keen radio amateur) were with us in Holland in August - "I must write to say how much Bobby and I enjoyed the Middelburg Rally, and to express our appreciation for all the work and planning that was put in by the Dutch "Branch". It will be quite a task to follow the event in two years time!

Before the Rally we cruised the French coast down to Guernsey and back; during this cruise we had starter-motor failure due to the insulation on the field windings gradually breaking down; this finally resulted in a complete short-circuit of the starter, caused by diesel fuel and salt water which had, over the years, seeped into it. The starter motor is located under the fuel pump, diesel filter and cylinder block water drain, all of which had occasionally leaked.

The fault first showed up as loss of starter performance, put down to a tired battery. The increase in starter current eventually burnt out the solenoid.

Cost of a new starter in France was quoted at £350.00; in Guernsey an exchange motor was £315.00. However the Harbour Master at Carentan, a M. Fleury, has my everlasting gratitude. He was able to get the motor re-insulated for £17.50!

I can thoroughly recommend Carentan as a place to visit - it has a quiet marina with excellent facilities and an interesting small town 7 miles inland up a canal. Entry 1-2 hours before H.W. since the entrance (at the S.E corner of the Cherbourg peninsular) dries at low water.

After having returned home from our down Channel trip, our cruise to Middelburg (via Nieupoort) was fairly uneventful; we motored to mid Channel (no wind) but had a good sail from there to Nieupoort. For the next leg the heavens opened, but at least we arrived in Flushing with a clean boat.

One result of the Rally was that Bobby had a relaxed throat through talking too much, but I must say how we enjoyed meeting owners who, up to now have only been a name in the magazine. On the way home, which was by way of Calais, we heard that SEEHOND had also visited there, so you see we know where boats are in "our" bailiwick!"

NOTE: Jack has kindly sent photographs and a drawing of his winter boat cover; this protects a Seadog from stem to stern against seagull and starling excreta and the like. For a copy of the detail drawing, please send 50p and SAE.

ROUSELLE - Brian Jones writes to say that "on the home front, the only news I have is that we entered a 30 mile yacht race last Autumn on a handicap rating of 132 in the Bristol Channel when it was blowing a NW Force 5. Glad to say we came in first, after a period of 4 hours and 4 minutes, which is not bad for an old Seadog. We still hold the record in this area for a mono-hull, sailing from Dale in Pembrokeshire to Watermouth Cove, a distance of 53 nautical miles, in a time of 7 hours, 20 minutes.

On the electrical side we are replacing our memory storage battery in our Decca 3 at a cost of some £18.00. Apparently when the sets become about 4 years old, the batteries tend to leak, and can cause hundreds of pounds worth of damage to the electrical components within the set, so we have decided to replace ours before that happens.

At Watermouth at the moment is DAGOTIA, Seadog No 1 which was built 'inside out' and now undergoing a re-fit. Among improvements are the addition of a larger rudder and a new Iroko Rubbing Strake. Her top-sides are original and in the process of being cleaned and polished, and she is having V.C. Tar Epoxy paint applied beneath the waterline."

SEASCAPE - The second love (or is it the third?) of Harry Manner's life is the brig ASTRID, for many years a mastless, engineless hulk rusting away on a mudbank in the Hamble River near our house. One day, she'd gone - to the breakers yard so we thought. But no; we heard later she'd been purchased by a charitable trust for use, after restoration, as a sail training ship.

More or less by chance, Harry told us of his involvement in this project in which he has undertaken the mechanical restoration of the vessel. Over the course of several years he has located, obtained at bargain prices, and installed two powerful diesel propulsion engines, together with all wiring, tanks, generators and associated equipment. When Olive and I toured the ship with him some months ago, work on the superstructure and internal accommodation was still in progress; it is hoped this will be finished in time for her first cruise with trainees to take place this summer. If you arrive in Ocean Village with time to spare, she is well worth a visit.

Of the Dutch Rally, Harry writes "...such a successful and enjoyable gathering at Middelburg. We had a marvellous time.... All in all, it was a boisterous week, covering about 450 miles and visiting 8 ports." And the Seadog weekend in February: "...an enjoyable SDA get-together at Philipps house - such fun to meet many miles inland and share our common interests well away from the shipping forecast areas!"

SOLWAY DOG - Reggie Lodge was all set to sail to the Isle of Man to attend a Seadog Rally to be held over the August Bank Holiday weekend, when it all went sour. His crew, Gordon Potts "was stricken with a vile intestinal infection which laid him low, and my other crew was both weak and pessimistically nervous; so we didn't go, which was just as well, because there have been continuous SW or W gales or near gales up here ever since."

He continues - "My proper sailing adventure from Skye up to Cape Wrath (well, almost) and then across to Stornoway and down Lewis and Harris and back across to Skye in a Rustler 31 with 3 dedicated mountain-climbing ex-dinghy sailors (show them anything with a gradient of more than 1 in 1 and they will wish to climb it) was a huge success. It was the last half of May and too early for any midgets, but early enough for a splendid spell of fine weather with enough wind - always between 6 and 2 but, of course, always on the nose too. But this didn't matter too much because the Rustler goes fast and high to windward.

With all of this going on, I've not seen nearly enough of my Seadog this season yet, but I have bought her a new foresail - 30' luff, 29' leach and 20' foot. It is sheeted back to the after lower chain plate and is a huge success (in all senses!).

I have just received an invitation for another bout of sailing in the Minches, and also another offer of the loan of a narrow boat - to be taken from Stoke Bruerne to Little Venice. Both these I'll grab, but this year I will be doing more ambitious things with SOLWAY DOG. I even now have formulated plans to get down to Holyhead for the Irish Sea Seadog Meet in August this year. I have the chance of a good strong crew who has just retired."

SEACANIS - Fred and Joan Ellingham have just parted with their wonderful Seadog "Seacanís", affectionately known as "Mod-Dog", on account of the many modifications Fred has carried out on her since new. Fred & Joan still retain a keen interest in the affairs of the Association and have joined the ranks of the non-Seadog Owners. They have also generously donated a cheque towards SDA funds for the introduction to SEACANIS' new owners, Ray and Jannine Mullin, whom I had met whilst I was scraping antifouling from under DOGMATIC at Hamble Point. They had come to look at Westerlys!

TALIESIN - Eric Richardson sent the following notes which he hopes will be of interest to owners with problems with the rudder and propeller shaft:

Rudder "This was removed to locate the cause of some backlash or looseness of the stock within the rudder. Norman drilled and chopped away down into the rudder and we eventually managed to remove the stock and the bronze drive quadrant from the rudder. The stock was found to be loose in the taper, the nut having loosened and the drive-key almost worn away. It would have sheared at some time in the not too far distant future. A new key was made and the bronze quadrant heated with a blowlamp before the rudder stock, which had been chilled in the freezer, was driven smartly home. The nut was tightened after having been coated with Loctite; the nut is not hexagonal, but made from round bar stock, therefore a Stillson wrench was used; the roughness created can only help to lock it in the glass fibre. This was then re-glassed into the rudder and reinforced by two copper rivets.

The rudder area was also increased by adding a piece of oak to the bottom tapering from zero at the pivot to about 3" at the stern; the trailing edge of the rudder extended about 2" at the bottom tapering away to the top. All being carefully filled to produce a smooth finish, then coated with epoxy tar to avoid osmosis.

The rudder-shoe pivot pin was found loose on dismantling. This was coated with Loctite and drilled and pinned to prevent further problems developing.

Propeller shaft. This was withdrawn to fit a new Cutless bearing as about 1/16" lift could be felt at the propeller.

Examination of the shaft showed it to have suffered from severe electrolytic action, being unfit for further use (now I know why the stern gland leaked). The cause of this problem was traced to the use of graphited packing in the stern gland. Graphite, being more noble than stainless steel, this is bound to occur. The packing I have now used is a James Walker type, and seems to be performing very well so far. Other owners should be wary of this problem as almost every chandler I rang only offered graphite packing. They must have an arrangement with the suppliers of prop shafts on a commission basis.

Flexing of the deck at the base of the mast - My boat is a MK II and when R.F.Freeman carried out their survey for her purchase, they drew my attention to a slight anomaly in her construction; that is, the mainmast tabernacle needs additional support under its rear end, not being directly above the forward bulkhead. Norman has made a lovely job of fitting a piece of five and a half inch by one and a half inch Iroko to the rear of this bulkhead, giving the extra support advised. I am delighted with its appearance, looking completely original, and it has taken the leaning backward look out of the tabernacle.

Additional work includes replacing the mainmast cap shrouds with the new dyeform type from British Ropes, (these look quite good), a complete new two part hood plus sailcovers (all being made by a local body trimmer, after estimates from sailmakers left me gasping); new bowl from Blakes for the Lavac; and an access hole to the engine water pump.

I am now considering making a hot-water calorifier as I find that the engine is frequently used, so we may as well have some hot water in the galley at least.

We had a late start to the season, being craned in at Hull early June. Norman and I then sailed down to Wells-next-the-Sea, then on to Lowestoft. Avril and I have become members of Lowestoft Cruising Club where we have been made very welcome. We did intend to join you at Middelburg, but a choppy sea and sickness put an end to that, so we spent the week sailing on the "East Coast" rivers".

TRIASID - Ludwig Brandt sends news from the Mediterranean - " We regret that it will be impossible for us to attend the Rally in Holland in late August 'cause my wife Jelka and I will just finish our holidays, and we will be occupied in our profession (we are violinists in a Radio Sinfony Orchestra). Last autumn we met FUHARA with Mike and Odile in Sabina Harbour, Formentera, and in April, David Woodbridge (owner of TUGRADOG), at Club Nautico, Palma; David was a member of a crew delivering a yacht from England to Mahon, Majorca.

We have had a great deal of work done to the boat (again):

Electrical system - completely rewired, including engine electrics; new switchboard with single fuses (cheaper than automatic breakers); volt & ammeters for easy control. Each wire and fuse has a number which makes fault-finding very simple. Second small switchboard on the aft bulkhead for shore power. Shorepower breaker and fuses for fridge, boiler and battery-charger (all on 220V) as well as simple battery key-switches.

Keyswitch No. 1 for engine battery; Keyswitch No. 3 for service batteries; Keyswitch No. 2 in the middle (the key not permanently in the switch!) for emergency, coupling together both battery systems. You simply can't make a mistake with this method and suck all the batteries empty, as you can with the normal battery-switch positions of Off, 1st, 2nd and Both together. All this was professionally and beautifully made by a Dutch friend of ours, who lives on his boat in Palma and works normally on the big Luxurious Jongert Yachts. Everybody who comes aboard admires this beautiful work.

Another tricky system. He has installed a switch with a red control light in the wheel panel to switch off the regulator of the engine alternator for quick battery-charge if the batteries are very flat. Together with the ammeter installed outside, we will have good control not to damage the batteries using this system, and he promised us that in about 20 minutes running the engine we will fill the batteries much faster than with a Honda generator we have aboard.

Second forestay and new Furlex roller reefing - plus new 245 sq.ft. genoa from Beilken. Roller-reefers are practical, and together with the new shape and with different weights of cloth in the loaded areas of the sail, they are usable until Force 6. But in heavier conditions one needs a quick possibility to set a really heavy jib or storm jib, which is impossible without a second forestay. Normally people take twin forestays, but I hate the permanent chafe of these systems. So we decided to give TRIASID an inner fore-stay which naturally has to be quick to set and to loose and bend away in normal conditions. We installed a chain-plate on deck tight into the angle of the bow with a through-going tang emerging externally below the bottom of the bow fitting. The stay terminates in a giant pelican hook for making setting very easy. This stay is normally bent away to the stanchion near the mainmast.

Sailing experience with the new genoa:- generally less weather-helm now.

Close hauled (F4) - Full Main, Full Genoa, balanced. With mizzen as well, a little weather helm.

Close hauled until abeam (F6) - Genoa 1/3 reefed, without Main, Mizzen full, or with reef, ideal!

Rudder fixed (without autopilot): she goes for hours exactly on course, if necessary little play with the mizzen sheet and she goes where you expect.

Reaching is not satisfying (as in most boats), especially in light conditions we would need a cruising chute. With Genoa and Main, the Main covers the Genoa. Without Main and with Mizzen it is a little bit better, but the boat doesn't steer very well, even with reefed mizzen. With stronger winds, best is only the Genoa, then she steers well. In rough sea we use the Spinnaker pole to stabilize the sail.

Running: two genoas set in the twin grooves of the new Furlex Roller, the bigger one stabilized with Spinnaker pole, without Main and Mizzen, sailing goosewinged. TRIASID sailed last summer this way in F5-6 about 7 knots from Formentera to Mallorca, 77 miles, the last 20 miles in weak winds, in 14 hours. We were astonished about this ability of speed.

Opening in pulpit, integrated fitting for gangplank and 2nd Bow-Roller

Last summer we found someone (after a new expensive experience with a Spanish worker) to weld stainless - good, quick, and not so expensive. He opened the pulpit for better entrance from the gangboard (we generally go "bow-to" in harbours). Our gangboard is a simple alloy ladder with a piece of plywood fitted in, easy to demount, and the ladder is useful in shipyards on the hard. The ladder has rollers on one end and on the other end a turning fitting with a pin which goes in the welded-on-hole in the very end of the pulpit now.

The original bow-roller to starboard was cut away and fitted to port, and a new, much bigger and wider nylon roller has been fitted in its place to carry our 45 lb. CQR anchor. This roller is strengthened to the bowfitting below with a piece of stainless material. Both bow-rollers now have screws in pins above them so that a rope or the chain can't jump off in case of bumpy conditions or hurrying away from a dangerous anchorage.

This starboard anchor arrangement is now so good measured, also with the distance to the roller-reefing drum, that we don't have to touch the anchor, giving it out or winching it in. This was the main idea of all this. My wife and I have both awful intervertebrae disc problems that we should not lift heavy things.

This system now works so perfect that we don't have to be afraid for lumbago for days after pulling out the anchor.

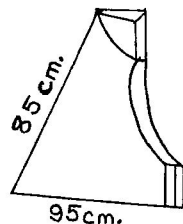
Exhaust system modified plus new gearbox oil cooler - After we have read of corrosion problems on many Seadogs with the exhaust system, we consulted our mechanic Jean Paul (Newsletter No. 21 Page 7. New Tel. No: Palma 46 26 60) He recommended another exhaust system with a waterlock below engine level. We installed the system in April and made a new oil cooler for the gearbox, better situated. (Ludwig has sent a drawing of an arrangement using a Vetus waterlock which enables cooling water to be injected into the exhaust pipe very close to the exhaust manifold, giving less heat in the boat, an important consideration in a hot climate).

Rudder - When we this Spring took TRIASID out of the water to antifoul her, we found there was no gelcoat on the rudder. The naked glassfibre, partly often repaired (badly) with stainless screws with damaged heads screwed in the inner metal construction, that it was impossible to take them out without disturbing the inner construction. From some tiny holes water was coming out. A new unexpected repair followed. First we drilled holes in the two parts of the covering glassfibre and discovered that the foam which fills the two glassfibre parts of the rudder was totally wet - the water coming out had the typical sour smell of "resin in water" that means osmosis. Next step was to demount the rudder.

Unfortunately I left the advice-sheet you sent me, how to demount the rudder, at home in Germany. Naturally we first tried to take it out without removing the prop. and prop. shaft. But finally we found out that this was necessary. Next surprise was, when the propshaft was out: totally corroded in the region of the sternland. Holes of more than 1 mm deep there. Also the whole shaft was, in the region of the bearing, about 3 or 4 mm thinner than normal. Either it was normal wear or (what seems to be possible after our experience with bad repairs on TRIASID) someone had tried to grind the corrosion holes out. A new propshaft was the result. Now I know why the sternland had dropped unusual much water in the bilge if I forgot to grease her after sailing.

Continuing with the rudder, after knocking the rivets out of the shoe and taking out the rudder, the bearing seems to be OK. But the pin at the bottom of the rudder must have been renewed once, 'cause it's a stainless one. This should not make electrolytic problems because a friend of mine, who is a metal specialist, told me that this type of bronze they have used in the shoe is nearly similar to stainless steel in electrolytic action.

After the rudder was out, and asking specialists what to do, we had to decide - a complete new rudder, or repair as good as possible. The first possibility we found in the moment too expensive, so it was repair, and also enlarge the rudder. They drilled many holes in both sides of the rudder surface and dried out with lots of acetone and compressed air. Then filled with polyester resin the whole unit because it was not possible to take completely the rotten foam out. The rudder has now about 8 kg. more weight, but I hope it will be also more strong. The size now is 85 X 95 cm. The profile unfortunately not really the same. Portside is a little bit more flat than starboard, but I hope it will not make serious steering problems. The worker who made the rudder is very familiar with GRP (he is called in the whole harbour "Pedro-Polyester"), but I think he likes to measure more with the eye than with the foot rule.



Vigil Radar - As I have written two years ago, our Vigil Radar went off. Because we don't do long distance cruises in TRIASID'S conditions now, we did not let repair the radar. This Spring I asked the best recommended technician for electronics in Palma to repair our Radar. "Vigil Radars", he said, "I never repair again. I have repaired two of them, and after that I threw away the manual and handbook I specially bought, and will never touch a Vigil Radar again, except you make the floating test". I asked, astonished, "what is the floating test?" ... "Throw the whole unit in the harbour, if it floats, I will repair it, if not, let it sink ..." I am thinking in the moment to follow his advice, some parts less which can fail; I sailed since my youth without Radar, and in the Med. it's very seldom necessary.

Even I think to throw out our Wallas Heater in the aft cabin which had only once worked for 20 minutes and never more. If this is away, our rudder can be also heavier and we will stay on the same waterline".

LATE NEWS

MELISSE - Jon Smurthwaite has found a cheaper way to easier sail-handling than conversion to Junk Rig. He is fitting in-mast reefing to the main and mizzen as well as a furling jib. To prepare for this, he took down the masts to have them re-anodised before the special reefing gear was fitted, but -

"you may be interested to know I have abandoned the attempt to get masts, booms spreaders and poles re-anodised. Tests on the aged tubes, which of course, had scratch, abrasion and corrosion marks, proved that the process was fine on the smooth surfaces, but left any damaged areas, however slight, untouched and therefore the more unsightly and unprotected.

Quotes to spray-paint and bake ranged from £800 to £600 to £150. The first was from Proctor. The second from an outfit at Hurn who used Allgrip, and the third from a local Poole firm using a 2-part paint (white, in this case) baked. This weekend I go down to see the finished paint-job on to which the reefing extrusions will now be fitted. A test panel resisted hard knocks from metal objects, and if deeply scored, did not flake.

I have drilled the main heel and removed the wiring tube: wiring will now go in the space between mast and extrusion. Next comes all the refitting.

Amidst all this, Gill and I are off to Palma in May to join her cousin for two weeks on his Nicholson. So we desert Seadogs temporarily, but still hope to be in the water for this season.

Many thanks for the Philipps House weekend. We did enjoy it."

AMERUS - I had a phone call from Steve Gibbons to say he had arrived in Corsica from the U.K.; then a letter from Gordon Pinkard (ANAHITA II) mentioned that AMERUS is now in Palma, Majorca.

Finally - DOGMATIC - Peter French, (your secretary), writes:- "we did not get much sailing in last season because DOGMATIC spent all summer out of the water. The insurance company had warned that as she was now 20 years old, they required to see, at least one month before the renewal date, an up-to-date hull and condition report by a qualified Surveyor. DOGMATIC came ashore on the 8th of June, but because of a steady stream of visitors staying with us, the Middelburg Rally commitment, and the very poor weather, doing all the jobs I'd been saving up for the past few years took far longer than I had bargained for. 19 weeks in fact, and it was October the 17th before she finally went back in the water,

Mast Lowering - John Lansdell and I followed instructions in the Data Sheet and used a home-made "A" frame and 4 part tackle. We soon found the mizzen mast fouled the backstays of the mainmast, and the mainmast far heavier than we had anticipated. Lowering the masts was much easier than getting them up again, which was a hairy operation, but we did it. Next time it might be safer to use a crane to put the mainmast up. Later in the year I gave Harry Manners a hand lowering SEASCAPE'S masts and was impressed with the method and lack of hassle. I will be writing it up, and after Harry has vetted it, will have it copied to provide members with the opportunity of a second method of lowering the masts. Both are similar in principle, but differ in procedure.

Mast electrics; For years we had put up with something making clanking noises whenever the boat rolled, be the roll ever so slight. The sound was traced to the mainmast; further investigation showed that a length of piping inside the mast had broken away from its fixings. This had to be removed. But the thick metal base of the mast was solidly fixed, making it necessary to drill a 2" diameter hole through the heel. The pipe was longer than I thought - 26' long! Determined to have no more truck with wires inside a mast, I visited Fred Ellingham at Poole, looked at SEA CANIS' external mast wiring, and decided to copy the method. At the same time I fitted a masthead tricolour light, and a new steaming light, fixing it much lower than the original one. Future electrical problems should be easier to fix - and - no more clanking in the middle of the night!

Rubbing strake and bulwark capping - Nearly 40 plugs in the rubbing strake were replaced. When they were planed smooth, we treated the woodwork Cetol Filter F.

Painting - The transom had been (badly) painted white by a previous owner and looked a mess; I rubbed down with lots of wet and dry, and applied 5 coats of International's "Perfection" 709 Oxford-Blue two-part paint. It was like painting with treacle and went off within seconds of leaving the brush. By the time I had finished doing the transom and the blue areas above the rubbing strakes, I wished I'd bought something easier to apply. Unless able to apply it quickly under ideal conditions, (no wind, no sun, not when it's hot, and no glare, or you won't see what you've missed), you are going to have problems. This type of paint is best sprayed.

Removal of propeller and prop shaft - interesting, challenging and time-consuming. I went through all the stages of being kind to it and pussy-footing around. In the end, after listening to good advice from Eric Richardson, TALIESIN, I propped up a 6"x3"x2" piece of very hard hardwood on top of a carpenter's stool and put one end against the already loosened nut on the end of the propeller shaft, at the same angle as the shaft. Next, using an industrial blowlamp I heated the propeller boss until "when you spit on it, it spits back". Thereupon I gave the lump of wood a hearty whack with a 14 lb hammer, and hey presto, the prop. was loose. Thanks, Eric!

A method I did not try - (heard about it too late) uses a hammer and heavy block of lead (or a second heavy hammer). Hold the block of lead firmly under the prop boss and strike the top of the boss between the blades. Repeat twice, rotating the prop by 120 degrees. In theory, hammering expands the boss.

We had such a job getting the prop shaft out that at one stage we seriously considered lifting the rear of the engine and gearbox so as to be able to slide it out forwards under the engine. Getting the fitting off the forward end of the shaft was the difficulty. It just wouldn't budge - our mechanical pullers wouldn't look at it. Jim Hill (LILLIBET II) very kindly came to the rescue and loaned us a heavy duty industrial hydraulic puller which John and Audrey Lansdell kindly collected from Basingstoke.

When fitted, we gradually increased the pressure until until we we dare crank no more for fear of breaking the tool. There was not a sign of movement. Leaving the tension on we went for a cup of tea. Minutes later came an almighty bang that shook the boat. Worried at what we might find we shot below to look. The puller had moved a fraction and the fitting was now loose; glory be! soon we had it off and were ready to slide out the shaft.

But the rudder got in the way, and it wasn't until we turned it hard to starboard were we able to squeeze the shaft past. The shaft itself was unfit for further use because of deep crevice corrosion and excessive wear where it passed through the stern gland. No wonder the stern gland had leaked..... A new shaft was made for me by marine engineers Edward French at Netley Abbey near here: I can recommend them to you.

Repacking the stern gland - materials: Walkers 5/16" square section packing plus some Lithium-based grease. The old packing was carefully rooked out, (6 pieces in all), and the interior liberally coated with lithium grease. The packing, having been accurately cut to size, was coated with the grease before each piece was poked home with the blunt end of a pencil, each of the cut ends being spaced apart at 120 degrees. When the aperture was full, I pushed the top-hat section home and tightened the bolts, just pinching the packing firmly. Then I undid the bolts, slid back the metal section, and was able to get more grease and another piece of packing in. Do not overtighten the bolts in the early stages. It is recommended that stern glands be repacked every 2-5 years depending on the condition of the shaft and the amount of use.

Boat name - Painted or adhesive lettering? After discussing pros & cons with a local signwriter, I bought (from him) reasonably priced adhesive lettering which he showed me how to fix. Now, in addition to having the name and port of registry on the transom, we sport Dogmatic's name either side of the bow as well. (The drawback of paint is that as the hull is cleaned, it wears off. But it's splendid for fashion jobs not requiring a long life, like racing boats).

Aft bulkhead. - Ingress of water via the hatch and 'rogue' holes drilled through the glassfibre and bulkhead had caused some localized rot. The holes appeared to have been drilled on a trial and error basis when the mizzen tabernacle was first fitted. When sound-proofing material fixed to the after-bulkhead in the engine compartment was removed, I found an aperture about 2" X 3" in the glass fibre; this allowed water running down the inside of the tabernacle to seep straight through to the aft cabin and on to the bulkhead. This has now been sealed with glass fibre, as have the "spare" bolt holes. To channel water away, I have glassed in a deflector lip under the base of the mizzen tabernacle. The damaged area of bulkhead was cut away using an electric jig-saw - with a block of wood fixed to the bottom to make sure the blade did not protrude to damage the fibreglass.

Tabernacle - Obtaining fresh bolts was a problem. Many days were spent in fruitless search of new ones. Ultimately I had 4 stainless bolts made to size locally. As a matter of interest, I noticed that in Holland, Dutch Seadog owners had substituted horizontal stainless straps for the more usual washers.

Other work on DOGMATIC included fitting a new anode; new running rigging; sealing leaks in the forepeak (water leaked in under the anchor-pads).

Our Survey was very efficiently carried out by Captain Barry Goldsmith of Cowes. He made a number of interesting comments, such as:

Life of rigging ... "it doesn't owe you much after 10 years, and your life might depend on it"
Life of a yacht ... "when a boat is out of the water for 6 months each year, its life is doubled".

From the Secretary - This last year has been an eventful one, with two Rallies, visits from various Seadog Owners and lots of letters and phone calls.. My job as Secretary has certainly given me a good "retirement interest", so thank you all for your continued support. On the subject of thanks, I would like to place on record the gratitude of the Association to the following members:-

Fred Ellingham - EX SEACANIS who very kindly sent £50 as a thank-you to the Association for the introduction which enabled him to sell his boat without going through Brokers.

Geoff Beabey - ANTANA - for a donation of £10 to be used for the benefit of the Association.

Stuart Glassbrook - PERRO - for a donation of £25 towards the cost of producing literature.

Their generosity has made it possible for me to produce this bumper Newsletter as well as a new List of Boats and Owners. Sincere thanks to all three of you.

We gained several new members this year including some Non-Seadog Owners (some of whom are waiting to buy a Seadog) and I would like to extend a warm welcome to them. Remember your Club is here for your benefit - there is a wealth of information available for the asking.

The very useful Index at the back of the Newsletter was compiled by Reggie Lodge (SOLWAY DOG) and updated to include the current Newsletter. Thanks, Reggie - this is going to be invaluable in the future.

And Fred Murley has once again provided and printed all the address labels - a big help for me and much appreciated.

In the last Newsletter I asked for comments re the idea of converting a Seadog to Junk Rig - from your comments - or lack of them! - it would appear that no-one, as yet, feels up to taking the plunge

When we were in Holland, there was much admiration for the labour saving anchoring device on Jan Carree's NAMASTE II.. I took lots of photographs and when I got home, made some drawings and sent them to Jan for confirmation. I hope to give you details of this in the next Newsletter.

FINANCES:- The cost of producing this Newsletter & the Owners List, plus envelopes & postage is £325. This leaves a balance of £150 in the account. As you know, the only income is from new members and the sale of Burgees, Brooches and Sail Plans, so a S.A.E. is always welcome when you need a reply.

I look forward to receiving your letters telling me all about your activities - then you can look forward to receiving another interesting Newsletter next Year! If you have a good photograph of your Seadog, let me have a copy, the best will be used on the covers of subsequent Newsletters and Owners Lists. And should you sail (or drive) to the Solent, we are only a few minutes walk from Moody's Marina on the Hamble River; a phone call will ensure coffee is ready by the time you arrive. Olive and I look forward to your visit ...

Safe and Happy Sailing, and a Sailors Greeting to you all

Pete

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