

THE SEADOG

Issue 32 2007

The Seadog Owners Association Journal

SOA HONORARY SECRETARY :

To keep in contact with Peter and Olive :

Peter French

'Cresta', 27 Chapel Road,
Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hampshire, SO31 7FB

Telephone : 01489 573436

email : honsec@seadog.org.uk

For those wishing to submit technical articles / cruising stories for the next issue, hand written or typed, directly to me - Gordon Keir (see 'TARRY' - Owners Manual for my address).

Preferably, please write them up as WORD documents, and attach them (together with any photos / drawings etc) to an email and send to :

gordonkeir@aol.com

I look forward to receiving anything / everything in the way of stories, favourite places, mods that worked, fixes that should have worked etc.. from your own (enjoyable - dodgy - NEVER AGAIN) experiences.

For more immediate contact with the other owners, and the opportunity to either ask a question, or join in and "have a say", log onto the Forum Page of the SOA website :

www.seadog.org.uk

The Forum Page has become our main talking shop, with more current and prospective owners joining in each month.

The backlist of subjects covered is now substantial and makes very interesting reading. As of today (18th Jan 2008) the total is up to 100, with 18 of them having been started in this the first part of January.

Front Cover Pictures – clockwise from top-left :

'Twotails' ready for launching after her restoration, Gosport June 2005.

'Eremue' sailing before a (warm) wind in her home waters - Greece.

Seadogs lined up at the Topsham Rally 2005.

A view across the Calais Marina – Rally 2006.

CONTENTS

04	Secretary's Page	(Peter French)
05	Rally Reports	(Gordon Keir)
08	Summer Cruise – Drugs Bust	“Sunday Times / Guardian”
10	Southern Ocean Sailing	(Susanne Huber)
17	Transit to the Med	(John Pearce)
23	Seadogs Changing Hands	(L Brandt / P Scott / N Smith)
25	Seadog at Berthon Marina	(Peter Orford)
26	Lowering the Mast	“Seadog Newsletter 1”
28	Solo Artic Seadog	“Sailing Today”
29	'Ouzo' and After	(John Lansdell)
34	Flag Dressing for Seadogs	(John Lansdell)
35	Seadog Modifications	(Wilf Holloway)
39	Drive Plate Failure	(Peter Bragg)
42	Drive Plate Problems / Solutions	(Eric Richardson)
44	Hot Water Calorifier	(Eric Richardson)
45	Seadog Restoration	(John Lansdell)
50	Steering Problems / Solutions	(John Lansdell)
52	Deck Problem	(John Lansdell)
53	Supplier Recommendations	
57	Departed Friends	

SECRETARY'S PAGE

How quickly the time has passed since the last News Magazine. I am deeply indebted to the members who have done so much to help me keep everything running since I am unable to do it all.

Therefore my thanks go to – John Lansdell 'Twotails' who deals with the emails and generally keeps me abreast of all that is happening. Graham Matthews 'Dougal' and his daughter who look after the Website and Gordon Keir 'Tarry' for his help in producing this magazine.

We've had some good rallies - Bob Kelly 'Anahita' organized the Topsham Rally, Chris Woolley 'Dogboat' the Calais Rally and John Lansdell 'Twotails' the Weymouth Rally. Hopefully in 2008 we are trying to organize one on the east coast.

The winter get-together at the Elstead Hotel, Bournemouth in January this year was its usual great success. No 21 coming up next January – so we hope to see a lot of you there. A special vote of thanks must go to Martyn Waitt (ex 'Tarry') who entertains us every Sunday morning with his stories and beautiful slides. Our winter get-together just wouldn't be the same without him. Also this year, we were given a very interesting talk by Tony Kearney 'Mohican' about his trip to the Arctic.

I must now say a very special thanks to Olive for all she does for the Association. The Accounts are in order, she keeps a "beady eye" on all our Seadogs and assists by passing on problems with Seadogs to other members who can help. Eric Richardson (ex 'Taliesin') is our "engine specialist" and is always ready with the right advice. So my thanks to you all.

A final personal thanks to our daughter Christine who now owns 'Dogmatic' and keeps her in very good order and allows me on board for champagne and cake!!

Both Olive and I send you all our very best wishes for a Happy Sailing Season.

Peter

RALLY REPORTS

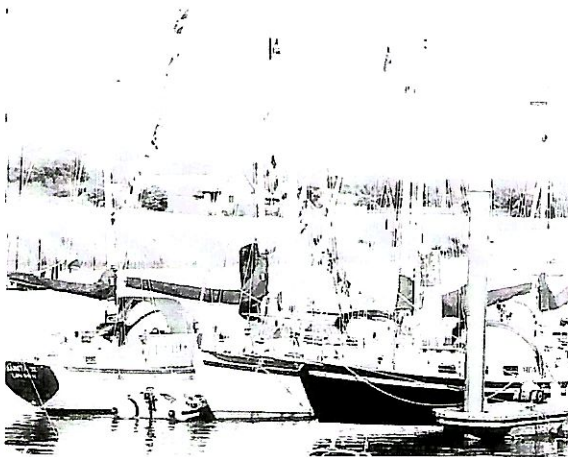
Topsham Rally 24th – 26th June 2005

Organised by Bob Kelly

What a beautiful place Topsham and the upper reaches of the Exe turned out to be. This was my first trip to Devon in 'Tarry' so I was knocked over. We arrived about a week early, but a quick phone call to the boatyard and a swinging mooring was arranged just downriver to await the other boats.

Bob had us booked onto the outside pontoon at the Trout Boatyard in the centre of town. Having four places on the pontoon and rafting the boats three deep meant we fitted OK. The berth prices were reasonable, and the toilet / shower came stayed clean and hot throughout our stay.

Topsham itself had loads of historic buildings / stunning walks, riverside pubs, restaurants and posh shops.



W Trout and Son Ltd
Ferry Road, Topsham, EX3 OJJ,
Tel 01392 873044

www.troutsboatyard.co.uk - for cruising information and prices

Sorry about the (*missing*) list of attending boats, as I got very excited to be attending my first rally and forgot to write anything down.

Calais Rally 16th – 18th June 2006

Organised by Chris Woolley

Chris had us booked into the Marina and from the Friday they kept room for us on the long Visitors pontoon below the clubhouse.

They also let us re-arrange the seating in the bar, and generally take over the place for a (rather noisy) get-together lasting a couple of hours on the Friday night - with nibbles and punch flowing.

In general the marina and the people running it were terrific.



We had a lovely dinner in the Restaurant "Le Detroit" 7, Bld de la Resistance – especially the seafood.

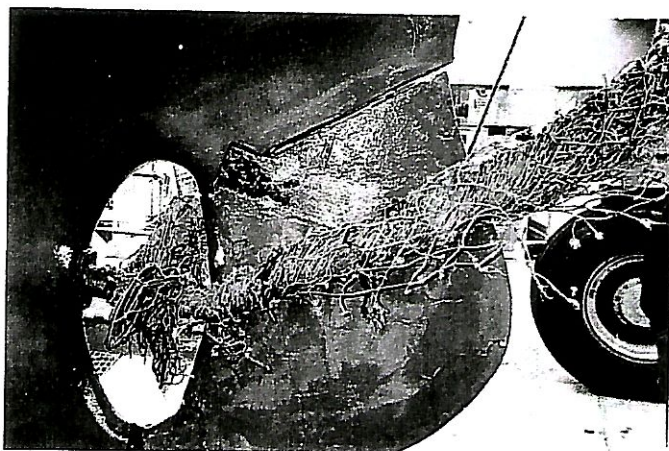
Seadogs (*originally booked*) for Calais. Sorry if it does not quite match the boats in attendance, as I got excited again and didn't write anything down.

Daressa	John Ross
Dog Boat	Chris Woolley
Glory	Steve and Dot Woodland
Kittyjay	Martin and Gillian Waterman
Milton Lass	Richard Courts
Roma	Mike and Monica Farey
Seascape	Les and Vi Carvall
Sirius of Arne	Ian Sincock
Tarry	Gordon Keir and Rod Wale
Twotails	John and Audrey Lansdell
Wagtail	Nigel and Gill Packman
Styria	Martyn Waite

Christine Beasley, Peter and Olive
Cy and Masie Blackwell
Graham and Gaye Matthews
Ad Beaufort and Daughter (plus squeeze box and lovely singing voice –
forming a duet with Martyn Waite.)

Dover Strait must have had some kind of fishing incident while we were all in
Calais, as the water contained large sections of a blue fishing net.
We ('Tarry') saw 2 sections of netting during our return crossing to Ramsgate.

'Daressa' was not so lucky, and picked up a large chunk of netting in the
Dover Strait on her way home :



SUMMER CRUISE – DRUGS BUST

*Elstead Hotel Bournemouth January 2008 - Sunday morning,
Martyn and Hilary Waitt's summer cruise - slides and talk.*

Seadoggers at the winter rally with remember Martyn describing the foul weather on the Ireland leg of their summer cruise, and the weird episode with an upturned dinghy and floating cocaine.

A member of my crew (Lucy) took an interest and found the following articles and pictures on the web :

*Pictures from the Guardian website for Wednesday July 4th 2007
Extracts from the Sunday Times Magazine*

Capsized smugglers lose £70m of cocaine

The sea off the coast of west Cork was unseasonably rough; the July sun was entirely obscured by black clouds, and the heaving waters shaped by force six winds flipped over the rigid inflatable effortlessly. It capsized a mile off-shore, its crew of three dumped into the 15ft swell.

They should have been grateful for the dispatch of an air-sea rescue Sikorsky helicopter within the hour, but they were not; largely because they were sharing the water with £70 million worth of cocaine.

The men in the inflatable were wearing lifejackets but had no emergency flares or radio beacons. One man managed to swim ashore and raise the alarm. As the helicopter battled against blasts of wind to winch the last, unconscious, half-frozen man from the water, below it the Castletownbere lifeboat was being tossed about in the surging sea, surrounded by clusters of white packages.

After getting their man, the lifeboatmen reached out for the packages with grappling hooks as waves crashed on to the rocks only metres away.

Later that morning, in the more sheltered surroundings of Bantry Garda Station above Bantry Bay, the police were unsurprised when they delved into their catch: not for nothing has this area become known as the Costa del Coke.

The 60 or so rubber-wrapped, vacuum-packed 25kg bales of high-grade Columbian cocaine had been off-loaded from a 'mother ship' for the run inshore towards Roaringwater Bay, before the violent storm scuppered the smuggler's plans.

It would soon emerge that the consignment was the biggest the Republic has ever seized – 1.5 tonnes of purest cocaine.



Northern Ireland News – Wednesday July 11th 2007

A fourth man has appeared in court today in connection with one of the biggest drugs hauls ever in Ireland.

All four men are from Kent, Essex and Merseyside in England.

Lucy / Gordon Keir (TARRY)

SOUTHERN OCEAN SAILING

Ed – The previous Issue (31 – 2005) of “The Seadog” contained the reprint of Susanne’s Newsletter from 2001, and then jumped (OOPS sorry) to the 2004 Newsletter which described the long sail from Chile back to Europe.

The reprint below now goes back to the intervening newsletter and fills in the year 2002, spent sailing ‘So Long’ up and down the Chilean coastline.

Extracts from the Newsletter distributed by Susanne Huber (ex GLORY) and her husband Tony – December 2002

What a fascinating year in Chile we had!

Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and Cape Horn, these are not only off lying areas at “the end of the world” but magic words, which mesmerized explorers adventurers and sailors since their discovery.

In Chile, this exceptional country of South America, we found the challenge of ocean, glaciers and icy mountains in the deep south. Further north the total desolation of thousands of islands and fjords of the inland channels and finally even further north the green, pastoral landscapes with rivers, lakes and snow-covered volcanoes. All the time at the base of the Andes mountains on the one side and the Pacific on the other. Our northernmost point was the romantic island of Robinson Crusoe, which exists in reality and not only in the novel.

Now we are back in the area where Atlantic and Pacific are merging and soon we will start a new sailing trip over thousands of miles.

So far briefly this unbelievable, unique year on board ‘So Long’, all without the heat of the tropics and without a real summer at all.

A bit shattered and salt encrusted we had reached Puerto Williams on the Beagle Channel in December 2001. We spent a few quite weeks at this unique meeting point for sailors on 55 degrees South, securely tied up at the old German Rhine steamer of the “Micalvi”, now clubhouse and centre of those tough interesting fellows and their seaworthy yachts.

After our baptizing as “greenhorns” in a plastic boat during the stranding with a dragging anchor in Picton Island and the enormous wind forces when a cold front passes our self confidence of years in the tropics was a bit scratched. But we got away with a few scars on the keel and a good lesson learned and soon a new yearning for adventure developed.

CABO DE HORNOS

Early January 2002 we left Puerto Williams towards the islands in the extreme South of Chile and finally to round Cape Horn. For years we were reading in books of those brave sailors of the Southern Ocean and of all those storms and the tension of rounding the Horn, but we didn't know that down there you will find anchorages and that you can sail in day trips of not more than 30 miles.

Indeed there is a well organised fleet of charter yachts of several nations so even the holiday sailors can visit the Cape or even the Antartica without bringing their own boat down here with great effort.

Everybody agrees that the real rounding of Cabo de Hornos is only done "non-stop from 50 degrees to 50 degrees southern latitude" between Atlantic and Pacific preferably East to West..... but nobody can deny the thrill to round this rock so close and then quickly creep behind the protecting islands and to hope that no real nasty weather will spoil the fun.

Just 20 miles east of Puerto Williams we stopped on Navarino Island in tiny Puerto Toro, the really southernmost settlement on earth. After that across the islands of the Wollaston group where we once again sneaked into a bay with the boat securely tied up with anchor and shore ropes. We happily passed the tragic anchorage where Hal Roth stranded with 'Wisper'.

On January 8th we started early in the morning with the big cape just 15 miles to the south-east. The dominant rocks of the "Cathedrals" were impressive and on a broad reach with second reef in the mainsail in a good force 5 we passed in just one mile distance. The long ocean swell pushed us along and it was cold. 7 Celsius water temperature and 12C in the cabin. But just in time for the celebration the sun peaked out for a few minutes between dark clouds nice for a snap shot.

The evening before I quickly baked a cake to have a little gift in case we could visit the family of the lighthouse keeper on Cabo de Hornos. But the NW wind was still increasing and a stay in nearby Leon Bay wasn't safe any more, so we had to eat the cake ourselves! In case one of us would have needed to stay on board with engine running as we were warned not to anchor. So we rounded the reefs to the east. Saw the Albatross Monument only from a distance and were tacking with quickly falling barometer towards Martial Bay for the night.

We used all of our 73 metres of chain and anchored in tandem together with the 60 lbs. CQR. In Martial Bay it is only possible to anchor free and when strong gusts were howling in the rigging at night our Argentine neighbour yacht started dragging and finally started the journey towards the Antarctica right away!

But we had enough at 56 degrees South and headed back towards the protected waters of the Beagle Channel.

CHANNELS AND FJORDS OF PATAGONIA

For a few days we visited Ushuaia in Argentina, just about 25 miles distance from Pto. Williams to buy fresh provisions and to renew our 3-month-visa for Chile. On January the 20th we finally started and we had only a vague idea how strenuous and frustrating the trip north would be.

I have to admit that first of all we were not too well prepared and second had a lack of equipment. So we didn't really believe that nothing but head winds cold weather and lots of rain waited for us. We neither had thermal underwear or Goretex clothes, no watertight gloves and even leaking oil skins. Wellies and full scale cold weather clothes were in demand every day.

When observing the other yachts, as always we saw furling sails, radar and other electrics or water makers, but now also enclosed sprayhoods, strong engines, solid dinghies or autopilots and inside hot water systems complete with insulation of the hull, wind-proof heaters and much more.

We did buy the obligatory floating ropes but unfortunately couldn't get the Chilean chart kit. So photocopies of the already reduced charts had to do the job which was possible only with magnifying glasses and lots of patience. With thousands of islands and bays it created a bit of confusion at times. Some Admiralty charts dated back to well before the war and were only a marginal help but interesting to observe. The guide book of the RCC describes the many anchorages very well and is generally well spoken of. It was written by cruisers for cruisers and is updated regularly.

It also turned out that 'So Long' is a sailor and no power boat. I think we were the only yacht which even tried to beat the channels in endless short tacks. To be honest we didn't really have much choice, because from a force 5 upwards the speed under engine with our 27 hp Yanmar was less than two knots and we didn't have enough diesel on board in any case.

We had 150 litres in the tank and 100 litres in jerry cans. It is no exception for yachts in Patagonia to carry over 1000 litres so they will motor not only on the calm days as much as possible.

A real nuisance was the lack of insulation in the boat, so we had condensation water running down the bare fibreglass and naturally it found its way into the clothes, books and equipment. The solid bronze window frames with single glass were dripping and soon in lockers mildew grew with a smell like in a cellar of a mid-century castle.

But now for all those positive impressions.

Patagonia is unique in its desolation and beauty of nature!

There is an overwhelming wild and unspoiled scenery and at some of the anchorages you really feel like being at the end of the world.

Up north until Puerto Eden at 49 South (or about 25 days trip from Pio. Williams for us) there is no settlement, no village and not even a fishing hut on the direct route.

The Chilean Armada keeps a few stations to control their waters, but only in an emergency will you ask them for help. Therefore you naturally have to carry all provisions, diesel and spares on board. Only wind and weather and untouched nature seem to exist.

Often bare rock shows or windswept bushes or crippled trees, over and over again waterfalls and new untouched valleys. Fortunately there are protected bays in this maze of numerous fjords and islands to tie the boat safely during the night.

Normally we anchored and tied at least two ropes ashore and on some occasions it's possible to tie up in all directions. The trick is to haul the boat very close towards the shore so gusts will howl in the rigging only but bear no danger. *It's a nightmare if the anchor is dragging at night in complete darkness or if a rope was not at the right location.*

We soon got a nice routine for the daily action – at times we were tied up like a spiders web. Usually we anchored in a bay, quickly launched the already inflated dinghy and Tony rowed quickly ashore to bring out the first rope.

Naturally Honey, our dear boat dog always took part in the action and we would like to tell the story that she quickly runs twice around a tree to secure the boat (we still work on teaching her proper knots). Then she checks out her new territory and often found some kelp geese or steamer ducks ashore, maybe even one of the huge muskrats about one metre in length.

Once the dense growth close to the shore is crossed there is only minor vegetation of moss and heather clinging to the bare rock, feeling like an elastic carpet when walking over it. In the channels we saw many tiny penguins or dolphins and sometimes whales joining us. Hardly any other area on earth is so forlorn, natural, isolated and barren as the Patagonian channels of Chile.

OFFSHORE TO VALDIVIA

At some anchorages we had to wait up to five days until the headwinds eased off a bit and in total we were underway for 21 days during the six weeks.

Daily we were fighting about 30 miles until we finally made the 600 miles up to 50 deg south. No matter whether the course was west or NW and later north, in the channels the wind was always on the nose. We never stayed just for fun in one place but were rather hiding from wind often at storm force. Every day with a bit less rain or a bit of sunshine we moved on instead of hiking in nice weather for a change.

We finally lost patience and ran low on diesel for heating / motoring! As far as we know we were the only yacht leaving through the Trinidad Passage out to sea and to sail offshore to Valdivia on 40 deg south.

It was tough, cold and wet trip. We tried to stay at a distance of more than 100 miles off this dangerous lee shore. Whenever possible we were tacking and if it was too much we hove to not wishing to be blown back.

Once a severe cold front got us and the gust howled in the rigging. On this day several church towers were blown over on Chiloe Island. Tony and I had never before experienced such wind at sea, the waves were whipped along in white spray.

Unfortunately just then our Aries had a little fault so then we had to hand steer! A bit worn out and shattered we reached Valdivia by the end of March after 10 days at sea, but we had caught up with the sunshine.

We found a good place in the Valdivia River and laundering mildewed clothes and drying the boat kept us busy for days.

WINTER AND ROBINSON CRUSOE

Valdivia is known for its rain in winter (May to September) which we expected and also got. We were tied up at a pretty spot in the river at the pier of the Trans-Ocean representative at Alwoplast, and later at the pier of the local yacht club, both only 15 minutes bus ride away from the town.

150 years ago Valdivia was a centre for immigrants and still nowadays there are many reminders like "Feuerwehr" or "Apfelstrudel und Kuchen" in the bakery and the German school still has a good reputation.

'So Long' got some care and some work which was well done here.

We finally built a folding table in the cabin since so far we had only the table for two on the chart area. I found close cell mats in a camping shop and bought the store empty to glue them as a poor replacement for proper insulation against the hull – it still is a hopeless battle against the condensation. Below the mattresses on our berth we built trellises made from wooden slats to prevent moisture and the windows were covered with heavy foil acting like double glazing, as well as a drip rim on the inside.

My new toy was a new laptop computer with the hope to install email capability on-board. Tony kept his distance from this novelty. Unfortunately it hasn't quite worked out with the modem and poor radio conditions so for now we will stick with "snail mail".

Finally we could visit my old sailing friends Gabi and Wolfgang in Villarrica where they had found a very pretty piece of land. They have given up cruising and work with endless patience on their little "campo". Whenever our 3-month visa for Chile was running out we took a bus to Argentina, which is a scenic trip across the Andres Mountains. Unfortunately we could not take Honey with us onto the bus nor the hotel for one night, so we travelled each time separately. It took until September this year until I could spend a night in an hotel with my husband for the first time, because we found loving step parents for Honey on our friends yacht 'Finnrose' – since then Honey has been even more spoilt than before.

At the beginning of August we were ready to go sailing again and laid course towards Robinson Crusoe Island, about 500 miles to the NW. We were quite lucky with the sailing weather but had a hard time there.

It is a dream island for any person who has read the book by Daniel Defoe as a child. Naturally the described island in the book is in the Atlantic so we couldn't find any Robinson descendants. But it is a pretty, mountainous island with the harvest of lobsters as a main source of income.

The lobster season had not started and only one local boat was launched at all. Therefore we were alone to find shelter on the south side of the island while the main settlement in Cumberland Bay was exposed to wind and swell.

Later we spent a few days there but soon got tired of the bad rolling in the swells. We made a few hikes and I found forget-me-not flowers at the side of the path. During the summer it must be even nicer. We were the first boat in the new season and in any case only very few yachts visit the island, mainly en-route to the South Pacific and the Easter Islands.

BACK INTO THE DEEP SOUTH

Various reasons made us change plans and we decided to sail no further away from Europe. So we went back to the cold south of Patagonia since the Panama Canal is no real alternative and they have increased their fees badly anyway.

What a wondrous, marvellous and relaxing journey it was, to sail the Chilean Channels in favourable winds! In Puerto Montt we dried out on the spring tide of over 7 metres to inspect the hull below the waterline. The damage from our grounding fortunately showed only deep scratches and the antifouling from Portugal (1 ¼ years old) had kept very well.

We took time and visited Chiloe Island and the inland route in the Golfo de Corcovado which we missed on our route north offshore. First pastoral landscapes with green grassy slopes and spring flowers, then slowly rougher areas and further south more and more bare rock and harsh habitat.

The night sail across Golfo de Penas, known for its dangerous condition, worked out very well.

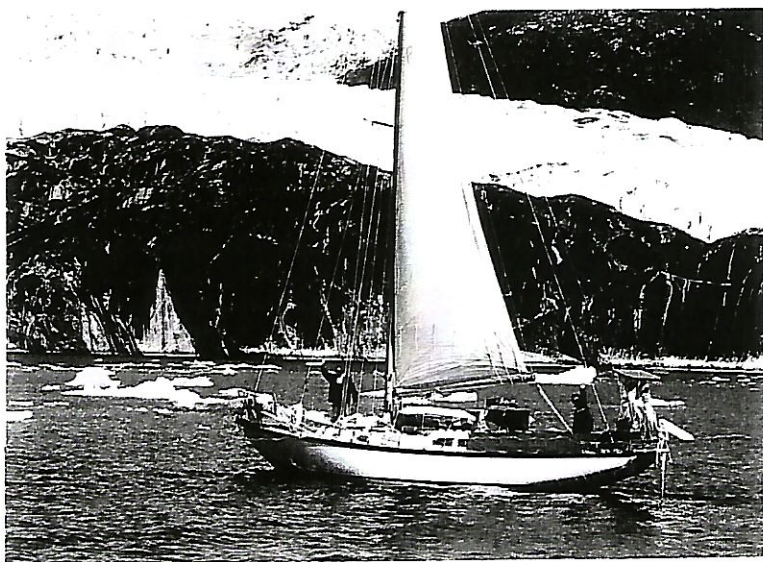
This time we had much more luck with the weather and on many days enjoyed even sunshine! This was especially impressive when the enormous mountains in the Andes chain were visible or when we made some exploring trips to glaciers.

It is a really "icy" feeling to steer in a zig-zag course between the "berg bits" which can well be several metres in size.

They are called growlers and also Honey didn't like it at all when they were too close or even touched the hull. She growled back in style... no wonder the boats down here are massively built in steel and that we felt at times like being in an egg shell.

Without really planning it we sailed on a parallel course for several weeks with the German yacht 'Adio' and we spent a good time with Reinhart and Marlene.

A few times we were close underway as well, and naturally we took pictures of our boats under sail, that's quite difficult to do alone.



This is how the pretty picture was made of the Seno Iceberg with glacier, in the Messier Canal at about 49 deg south.

Also the passage through the Magellan Strait was pure pleasure now. Always on a broad reach or downwind and under jib alone. Naturally, we still got our fair share of rain, hail or even snow showers and with 5-8 deg C water temperature it is chilly (certainly swimming unthinkable).

Our Taylor diesel heater kept us warm on cold evenings but Tony is still working to make it wind-proof – by now we probably have the 25th version....

By the beginning of December we reached Puerto Williams again after 10 weeks in 36 day trips. With little calculation it is clear that for one day underway comes about one day in port. So there was plenty of time to explore the bays or do a little hiking.

The 1400 miles from Pto. Montt to the Beagle Channel were fun and we often asked ourselves how we had managed to make the trip north at all.

We will spend the time until the New Year here between Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, and Pto. Williams with the most southern yacht club, the Micalvi.

We have a few jobs to do on 'So Long' (as always), we will stock the boat with provisions but in-between surely there will be enough time for chatting with the sailors "at the end of the world".

After one year in Chile, unique, impressive and stirring, we look forward to warmer latitudes in the Atlantic, despite being unclear where we will end up.

All the very best

Susanne and Tony.

TRANSIT TO THE MED – Part 1

Letter from John Pearce (WEATHERDOG) – 16th July 2003

I left Pauillac at 1600 hrs. LW being 1521 so as to get out of the marina before the end of the slack water, as recommended by Alain Crouzal and his assistant Bernard Mau, leaving me almost 5 hours to reach Bordeaux.

The passage would normally take just 3 1/2 hrs, so I could take my time and arrive at the dock basin in time for the opening of the bridge and lock gates at 2048.

However, as you well know, the Gironde and Garonne decide on the pace, and despite having the old Perkins ticking over at only minimum revs throughout the trip I still arrived 40 minutes before time.

The weather was fine, no wind, blue sky and temperature around 34 degrees so Weatherdog's skipper was suitably attired in shorts and T-shirt, plus cap. Fortunately I opted for the area directly outside the lock gates to avoid the full spate of the tide, the top of the Springs by the way.

Looking upriver I could see dark clouds had very rapidly appeared, and thinking I could expect a shower I nipped below for my foul weather jacket. It was then, what appeared to me as a bank of fog racing downriver, taking no more than a few minutes to reach the boat. Only when the boat heeled over violently did I suddenly realise the 'fog' was in fact water being lifted from the surface of the river!

Then all hell broke loose, lighting, thunder, torrential rain, but above all the horrific wind. At one point I was holding her just six feet or so away from the piles on the riverbank, the debris from the trees piling onto the deck, and just working hard to keep the bow into the wind.

It probably lasted no more than forty five minutes, but with lighting striking into the river just a hundred yards away and my masts stowed on deck it felt like hours!

By the time the wind had eased it was well past the Lock opening time, and although I made contact with the lock they could not oblige because of damage to the barriers and bridge.

My only option was to moor to a pontoon, which I did with great difficulty.

The storm continued verbally and with spectacular displays of forked lightning until the early hours of the morning.

At 0900 hours, 'Weatherdog' and two other yachts attempted to enter the locks, but repairs had not been completed and it was back to the pontoon.

When in search of the Capitainerie I entered the Bassin a Flots No2 and the scene before me was one of devastation.

The roof having been lifted off one of the dockside buildings, and dropped onto the yachts moored there. One vessel had its pulpit bent like an S-hook, another its main mast buckled in half, yet another it's roller-reefing torn away from its fittings.

A car parked nearby had moved eight feet towards its owners' boat and was balanced on the edge of the quay; a huge section of roof impaled the vehicle from the rear window to the owner's seat.

On the far side of the basin, adjacent to the old submarine pens, two yachts had been smashed from their cradles.

In conversation I discovered that 4 people had died and 70 more wounded during that storm in Bordeaux, many power cuts of course and even a huge passenger ship moored further up the river had problems with being pushed hard against the jetty.

Thank goodness, and Reg Freeman, for the low profile and seaworthiness of the Seadog; I feel a lesser vessel would not have fared so well. No damage to the boat, apart from a few abrasions to the topsides on this berth, despite having eight fenders in place. I have recorded the damage on my video camera.

There are several companies that ship the masts from one end of the canal to the other, I think the price is about £150 but I was unable to locate one. Fortunately I had spent three days making certain mine were well and truly secured, and that was time well spent I can assure you.

The other blip in the trip so far was when a French cruiser smashed my transom rail in Saint-Martin while I was ashore, so new piece of teak required (rail being rubbing strake, at least as far as the French are concerned).

A point not mentioned in any Pilot Book is the opposite bank of this river; there are bridge or road arches where the tidal stream sets into, and only my prompt acceleration to maximum revs got me out of trouble! This might only occur during the top and of the Spring tide, but it's certainly a hazard worth mentioning.

Much needed rest today, but I will be continuing to Castets-en-Dorthe and the canal lock first LW tomorrow, skipping the idea of the dock basin and leaving from this pontoon. Had a meal in the Café Maritime next to the floating restaurant "Dame de Changhai" and I would certainly recommend it.

I am looking forward to the peace and tranquillity of the canal. Have been told there is only 1.4m of water, and a little less at the 'top', but this has been compensated by the news that less Americans and Germans are using the canal this year, meaning less 'bumper' boats to deal with Peter!

P.S. Wind speed was about 170 Km/hour!

John Pearce

TRANSIT TO THE MED – Part 2

Letter from John Pearce – 16th September 2003

I am finally done with the Canal Lateral and Midi, have reached Agde and will winter the boat here, in Henry Allemand's yard.

My previous letter covered the trip as far as Bordeaux on the 15th July when I ran into the hurricane! Fortunately the wonderful Perkins kept throbbing away and no damage was incurred, although I did need to change my underpants when it was all done and dusted. Two days later I continued to Castets en Dorthe and the canal lock.

I joined the company of one Frenchman, Gilles and his eight year old son Clermont, and we 'sailed' along together. At the ecluse before Grissoles, the young student playing Lock-keeper failed to notice that I had only one line attached before she began flooding, and consequently I struck the lock gate and damaged the roller reefing. Lesson learned; make sure there is nothing protruding from the foot of the mast at the bow. Maybe I should have had the mast reversed, but in that case I would have damaged the electrical socket at the masthead, a plastic bucket offers little or no protection.

I suppose the only real solution is not to have the masts with you in the first instance.

Later, the young lad was to fall into the lock, striking his head on the side of his father's boat as he plunged into the water, followed closely by his dad, who had one artificial leg, followed by myself in my dinghy which I had fortunately slung fully-inflated from the stern of 'Weatherdog', intended to be some form of protection from the 'bumper boats'.

24 hours of observation in the hospital at Agen, and when all was reported as being well we continued on our way, he was certainly a tough little fella, but lucky too that he struck the hard part of his skull and that he hit wood and not metal!

Incidentally we had never allowed him to handle any of the mooring ropes, he simply went topside to operate the lever, but boys will be boys and he took a peep to see what was what and then lost his balance.

It was most peculiar to see the French tourist standing nearby, with the lifebelt just a foot away, and yet making no attempt to assist. It was as if he thought it was a form of entertainment laid on for him.

Needless to say I've been adopted by the family, although I was not accustomed to a huge man, the grandfather Jean Pierre, hugging and kissing me in such intimate fashion! They really were a lovely family, but being showered with gifts was also a little embarrassing.

The remainder of the trip to Port Sud, the other side of Toulouse was uneventful, well apart from the huge ecluse 'Bayard' in Toulouse itself, 6.20m. I must admit it did look impressive, but in fact it was a pleasure to have it flooding from beneath the boat rather than the norm. Then I had a blockage to the water inlet due to the numerous plastic bags floating in the canal. It really is a terribly dirty section of the waterway.

In Port Sud I said a sad farewell to my friends as they continued on their way to Sete, and awaited the arrival of my friend from Birmingham.

James enjoyed his weeks sabbatical on board, despite a strained elbow while working the locks, a sprained wrist while clambering to the boat from the canal bank, and a grazed knee and chin, self-inflicted, when falling into a ditch returning from the bar in Gardouch! He eventually returned to his wife in Wythall, battered and bruised, but willing to rejoin me when I was safely on the Med.

I then met Don and Diane Norris, the owner of a Downeaster 32, a lovely American yacht 'Gypsy'. They have become firm friends, and in fact have left me the use of their boat, which has a shower and rather spacious interior, while they return to San Diego CA. Don is 71 years of age, a retired Colonel with the US marines, having had two tours of Vietnam, and a very nice fella. Diane is 60 and just completed a singing tour of Europe with a choir, during which time they sang in the Vatican.

This is a lovely little spot and I think I've made the right decision to winter here, it being far too expensive further down the coast in Spain.

The old town of Agde has narrow winding streets, quaint houses, numerous shops, bars and restaurants, a good Laverie automatic and a lovely church with a grand altar and beautiful stained glass windows.

The yard supplies electricity and water, but nothing else, although it does have a chandlers, so that's something useful. I believe that most places on the coast close here in December and January, but that means peace and quiet and that suits me fine.

I've been here just a few days and have already been offered work, there being a shortage of gas certificated engineers over here, but I have more than enough to keep me busy getting 'Weatherdog' back to something like shipshape! I would like to remove the engine, fill the space as 'Rouselle' had done back in 1985 I believe, and have the shaft coupling replaced, but I'm not sure how readily available that particular coupling is, no doubt I will need to order it from Perkins UK?

There is a little damage to the sails, but I'm sure I can get another season or two from them with a bit of patching. Then apart from paintwork and some varnishing, or application of Sikkens wood treatment which 'Gypsy' has, I should have her back in trim for the start of the season.

I hope to sail to Corsica and Sardinia and then perhaps spend the next winter in Tunisia, but that remains to be seen. Being retired certainly doesn't mean putting your feet up and becoming a cabbage, not when you have an old Seadog to look after!

I think I have covered just about everything, but if I can offer advice to anyone wishing to transit the canal from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean then it is DON'T consider it with masts on board, the advice that YOU gave to me, and although I found the Gironde / Garonne no problem and did manage to do so single-handed, I believe it more prudent to have another person on board. I believe you also suggested that would be a good idea Peter?

Cost of one weeks stay at Pauillac, including free electricity water and showers, plus removing masts was 124.00 Euro. I found Captain Alain Crouzal very helpful indeed. The VNF licence for transit on the canal for a Seadog was 76.00 Euro.

To be lifted out here at Grau D'Agde is 89.67 Euro. For the hardstanding it is 89.67 Euro/month, including free electricity/water, but there are no showers, and toilets are during daylight hours only!

Cap d'Agde has quite a fine marina, with all that one could wish for, and the charges are 117.00 Euro for lift-out, and 182.68 Euro/month for hard standing. There are of course showers and toilets of a good standard available, although I believe much of the resort is closed "out of season".

As for the claim from the VNF Office that the Canal du Midi was much prettier than the Lateral, I beg to differ, and in that section it was almost impossible to get alongside the canal bank, albeit there was a shortage of water this year.

Here, or rather 10 minutes up the road by car at Vias, there is a wonderful restaurant "Le Vieux Logis", 25 Rue de la Republique.

Set in a classified house of the XIIIth century. The setting is very pleasant, the service and the meal excellent, and also very good value.

Letter from John Pearce – 22nd October 2003

The saga of 'Weatherdog' continues. The lift-out went OK but then Henri Allemend, who can apparently place a boat within an inch of where he wants it, failed miserably with a Seadog!

The problem lay in the transporter, a flat bed with tubular frames, the tubes spaced just fine for most bilge keels, but not quite right for a Seadog.

I had explained that the full weight cannot be taken on the bilge keels and that chocking of the main keel was necessary, and then wedges used to balance the boat during the move to the yard where it was to be stored for the winter, a street away from the main yard.

Unfortunately Henri chose to do it his way, and the result was the spreading of the bilge keels as the weight was taken on the inside of the keels, only fractionally, but enough to break the seal at the hull.

Water in the tanks seeped out, and I then explained that if it can come out then it can go in, ie, sea water in the potable water! Although I'm sure he was well aware of this without me going into it in detail.

Fortunately the yard has accepted the responsibility for what has happened, and they will make good the repair.

Chantier Naval Allemand designs and builds fishing boats by the way, so they are well practiced in the art of repairing GRP.

Getting at the keel bolts seems to be rather difficult, some are very poorly placed, or the bits around them are, particularly those situated beneath the chart table and also in the galley area under the cooker, such is the Seadog. But I've cleared everything stowed in these areas and apart from discovering several rusty bolt heads I can see no problem in getting perhaps a half turn on each of them, which I think will suffice.

The tanks are drained and I'm now waiting for everything to dry out, before a chap arrives to make good the seal.

John Pearce.

SEADOGS CHANGING HANDS

TRIASID

Letter from Ludwig Brandt – 18th May 2005

Dear Peter and Olive.

We have come back to Cavalaire in France after a long winter in Germany with sorrows and illness. I told you that I spent 3 months in hospitals, two operations at the vertebral column and just two days out of the rehabilitation clinic, I got a brain stroke with epileptic attacks which meant more weeks back in hospital. Luckily I am quite well now and rested.

But “adventures” or experiences like this changes a lot in life so we have decided to move back to Germany where the medical help is much closer and faster than here in Cavalaire. We sold our nice house here and will move to the address I have listed at the bottom of this letter.

We will sell ‘Triasid’, I made a sign-board on the boat. I am very sad about this, but Jelka is too afraid to let me sail alone after what has happened. She has not been on board since her hip operation and my son, living in Stockholm is not interested in sailing as he has his own motor cruiser.

Love from Ludwig and Jelka.

Our new address in Germany:

Ludwig Brandt,
Rotenbuehlerweg 74, D 66123 SAARBRUECKEN.

TAWNY OWL

Letter from Peter and Margaret Scott - 14th May 2006

We have now completed our purchase of ‘Tawny Owl’ and are having work done on her, including a new engine. Following your and others recommendations we are going for a 37.5 Beta. ‘Tawny Owl’ will remain at Topsham whilst the work is done.

We plan to bring her down to the Helford River and to my mooring in Port Navas Creek in late July / August.

We look forward to meeting up with you and other members of the association in due course.

GALWYN

Note on delivery trip to Skye - Nigel Smith 24th Feb 2007

I work 7 days a week as skipper of a passenger boat in Kyle of Lochalsh, my season starting at Easter time and continuing to 31st October, so from the moment I purchased 'Galwyn', I was dependant on others to survey, launch and deliver her to me.

The yacht brokers were excellent to deal with, and have an exceptionally well thought out web site. Through the PBO magazine I engaged a local surveyor Mr John Merrit, who liaised with the former owner arranged to correct the odd thing here and there, Mr Merrit also directed me towards Bob Sewell, who he recommended as being an excellent skipper to deliver the yacht.

Once the vessel was launched in Plymouth, Bob and his assistant set sail at 2110hrs on the 7th August 2005 and made it around the Lizard to Milford Haven in 31 hours, arriving on the 9th August at approx 0400hrs.

Due to the very strong northerly winds that developed over this period they remained in Milford Haven attached to a mooring buoy and lying low in case anyone came over to ask for money!! They were stuck on the buoy for 5 days, finally leaving on the 14th Aug.

They plotted a course for Howth marina on the Irish coast arriving on the 15th 14.5 hrs later. They refilled the water tanks before setting a course for the Mull of Galloway, arriving on the 16th, the final leg took them straight to Kyle of Lochalsh, passing through the sound of Jura and passing outside the West of Mull at 0846, on the 18th Aug.

By late afternoon on the 18th 'Galwyn' was seen entering Lochalsh under engine, and we instructed Bob and companion to tie up alongside us for the evening. The next morning they caught the train south.

The delivery was conducted in as quick and safe a way as possible, considering they had very strong northerly winds most of the time... and incidentally they didn't charge me for all those days sat on a mooring buoy in Milford Haven.

They said they weren't doing anything but sitting around, (the old copies of the Seadog newsletter onboard kept them occupied)!!!

Absolute genuine Cornish seaman and gentlemen to the core....

'Galwyn' is now based at Kyleakin on the Isle of Skye, and I sail her with my sons and solo as and when I can.

SEADOG AT BERTHON MARINA LYMINGTON

Letter from Peter Orford (WATCHDOG) – 12th July 2006

Dear Peter and Olive.

'Watchdog' was taken out of commission at Abersoch in August 1996 and brought by road to Berthon's Yard in Lymington a year or so later. At that time I stripped out her interior lining and fittings.

Since then she has become quite shabby and apparently attracted a lot of interest from potential purchasers. No doubt they were hoping for a cheap project. However, it was never my intention to sell her in a distressed state.

For the last month 'Watchdog' has been under cover and I am in the course of removing her rubbing strakes, bulwark capping and deck fittings preparatory to a professional repaint of her topsides and probably the deck margins and cabin sides, and the application of a non-slip finish over the existing. The rubbing strakes and bulwark capping will be replaced with new.

The original Perkins 4.107 was lifted out yesterday and I am considering following your example and replacing this with a Beta unit. I have spoken to Andrew Truscott of Beta in this connection and he is clearly familiar with the special requirements of Seadog owners and is happy to accommodate them.

Yours ever.

Peter.

P.S. The Website for Yachtsnet Ltd. Online UK yacht brokers, has archive details which include the Seadog.

It is a very complete pictorial of an immaculate dog:

www.yachtsnet.co.uk

Click on archives

Click on Seadog 30

Ed - Click on both the 'Deep Seadog' and 'Seadog 30' entries, as they show two different interiors in great detail.

LOWERING THE MAST

For those Seadoggers who do not have a copy of Newsletter No 1.

Raising and Lowering SEADOG Masts without outside assistance.

By Roger Davies – Seadog Newsletter No. 1 1975

I do not pretend to claim that the following method is the best but it has worked for me twice a year for seven years.

The following extra equipment is required:-

1. One pair of sheer legs (aluminium scaffolding serves well) each of about 10ft. 6ins. in length.
The bottom of the sheer legs should be slotted (on one side only) to fit over the topmast shroud chain plates on deck, then drilled for a bolt to pass through the leg and chain plate when assembled.
The top of the sheer legs should be joined by a bolt or other suitable connection and which can turn freely in both poles.
2. A pair of wooden stands can be constructed to fit in the tabernacle sockets with the crossbar wide enough to store the mizzen alongside the main. These will receive the masts when lowered for horizontal storage.
3. A stout single block with becket for attachment to the stem-head fitting.

To lower the Mizzen-mast

1. Secure both ends of the mizzen topping lift to the pushpit rail.
2. Attach after end of the main halyard to forward end of mizzen halyard and haul the point of attachment to the mizzen head.
3. Disconnect the triadic stay at the point of attachment on the mizzen mast and remove all six shrouds from their chain plates.
4. Take up the extra fall of the mizzen halyard and make fast to a cleat on the mizzen mast.
5. Haul on the main halyard until the head of the mizzen nuzzles the main mast. When doing this, allow the head of the mizzen to hinge forward gradually by means of the mizzen topping lift – see 1.
6. Remove the hinge bolt in the mizzen tabernacle, haul mast clear, lower and stow.

To lower the Main-mast

1. Shackle single block to the stem-head fitting.
2. Disconnect the topmast shrouds from chain plates and set up the sheer legs. A bolt should be passed through the sides of the sheer leg poles and the loop of the chain plates in order to locate the former to the chain plates. Bolt the top of the 2 legs together leaving space for shackles.
3. Disconnect and shackle the lower end of the fore-stay to the bolt at the top of the sheer legs.
4. Also shackle a strong line (1¾ or 2in. cir.) to the bolt at the top of the sheer legs, and reeve the other end through the block on the stem-head and secure it to the anchor winch drum.
5. Set the wooden stand in the mizzen tabernacle socket to receive the upper part of the main mast when lowered.
6. Disconnect the forward lower shrouds from their chain plates.
7. Lower the mast by surging the lowering line round the drum of the anchor winch after making certain the drum is locked by clutch and pawl.
8. Disconnect the aft lower shrouds from their chain plates.
9. Remove the main mast hinge bolt, lift the mast forward, fit the stand in the tabernacle socket.
10. Move the main mast forward so that the fore and aft overhang is equal.
11. Tidy up shrouds, halliards, topping lifts etc...

Notes

1. The above operation, when done afloat, must only be undertaken when the boat is lying in smooth water, otherwise one can lose lateral control when lowering. If there is a beam wind the mast can be controlled when lowering by means of hauling appropriately on the windward topmast stay.
2. If conditions are at all doubtful it is as well to steady the main mast before removing the forestay from the stem-head - by securing the main halyard temporarily to the pulpit while setting up the sheer legs and lowering line.
3. In order to avoid gelcoat damage it is as well to place pads (hardboard, ferrous or aluminium sheet) over the topmast chain plates on deck to take the thrust of the 'feet' of the sheer legs.
4. To assist in avoiding snarl-ups, remove the burgee and signal halliards and the main topping lift before lowering. As explained the mizzen topping lift is required for controlling the mizzen mast and should not therefore be removed.
5. The design height of the tabernacle stands should be sufficient to give head room in the cockpit and clearance over the windscreen / spray hood when erected.

6. With two people it takes about 4 hrs to lower and 5 hrs to raise the Masts including preparations and tidying up. This latter chore takes longer than one might suppose. The extra time for raising is required so that the rigging may be set up accurately. This includes mast alignment.
7. For raising the masts, reverse the above procedure using the anchor winch for providing the necessary hauling purchase.

[I have a set of Tabernacle Stands for 'Tarry', if anyone wants a loan – Gordon Keir]

SOLO ARTIC SEADOG

Reprinted from "Sailing Today" (with factual corrections by Olive)

Take one Deep Seadog 30ft motorsailer of 1973 vintage called 'Mohican' from Ramsgate, add one singlehanded, 67 year old skipper called Tony Kearney and take a guess what he tried to do. That's right, obvious, isn't it? Sail solo round the Artic via both the Northwest and Northeast Passages. Well, you would, wouldn't you?

Actually Tony returned to Ramsgate without completing the planned voyage. It had nothing to do with either him or his boat: it was simply that the Russians withdrew their permission for his transit of their northern waters.

Just to rub salt into the wounds, this was the second time Tony had tried the voyage and the second time he'd been defeated by problems with the authorities. His first attempt was in 2004 with a 'highlight' of an assault by a polar bear, which he eventually managed to scare off.

'Mohican' is a variant of the Seadog motorsailer designed in 1964 by Reg Freeman.

Seadogs have a moderate draught and bilge keels, while the Deep Seadog has an extra foot of draught (4ft 6in) and no bilge keels.

Both versions are very capable sea boats and two of the bilge keel Seadogs ('Glory' and 'Loon') have been sailed singlehanded round the world, by a young German girl and a 70 year old Irish man.

OUZO and AFTER

Technical Paper by John Lansdell (TWOTAILS)

The loss of the crew of the yacht 'Ouzo' is a tragedy, and, as a friend has already said, the best way we can remember them is to take constructive action to reduce the likelihood of such a thing happening again.

What follows is my opinion, based on hearing some of the trial of Michael Hubble, plus closing statements of Prosecution and Defence, along with most of the Judge's summing up, plus a view that legislation, national and international, has not kept pace with the realities of technical, commercial and practical changes for many years.

It is not intended specifically as a criticism of anyone, but rather as a basis for a considered debate on how best we might introduce practical and realistic changes. What we do not want to see happen, is a knee jerk introduction by anyone of ill-thought through, headline grabbing, costly and impractical rules or equipment, which in reality will not improve the situation at all.

The following topics are not in a specific order.

Three things have happened to commercial shipping, they have in general got larger, faster and now have minimum manning on the bridge.

Not too many years ago the majority of merchant vessels would have moved at 12 to 15 knots, now the 'Pride of Bilbao' has a passage speed of 20.5 knots, and there are even larger container ships being specified with a planned passage speed of 28 knots. This is almost a mile in two minutes. Not much time for them to take avoiding action at night IF they see a small yacht with "one mile lights".

The present level of commercial vessel manning means only one person is actually looking out. The Officer of the Watch has to man the plot, handle the radar, and is only available as an extra pair of eyes on an occasional basis.

Do the existing requirements for yacht's navigation lights meet today's real needs?

What should they be?

A suggestion is to move to the following:-

Increase the range requirements for all navigation lights to a minimum of two miles, plus, on yachts under sail only, to add at the masthead a xenon discharge tube based light (commonly known as a "strobe"), with a minimum range of visibility of five miles, and an IMO agreed rate of flash.

This would alert commercial shipping to the presence of a slow moving vessel with more time for them to consider the action to be taken. Given the disparity in vessel speeds, the need to see the normal navigation lights to know its course is of somewhat lesser importance.

When higher specification LED navigation lights, presently under development, are approved, and become more commonly and economically available, the nett effect should be a reduction of battery consumption

The minimum manning requirement of two people on the bridge of a merchant ship may be adequate when well away from areas of intense small boat use like the Thames Estuary, off Harwich, or the Solent, but in those areas is this good enough? Should the MCA and the IMO require additional manning in certain specified areas known to have large numbers of small boat movements?

It was found in the course of the trial that one vessel in the vicinity of the alleged incident did not even have a lookout on the bridge. Such a situation would seem to have been caused by minimum manning, and a high workload.

When the Captain of this vessel was questioned, along with many others immediately after the tragedy, he made a statement naming the lookout on watch at the material time. He was interviewed again this year after computer modelling suggested the 'Ouzo' could have gone close to his course. He then withdrew his statement, and admitted he had lied, there was no lookout on watch.

He said he recognised this made him liable to prosecution under the Merchant Shipping Act. One has to ask how common such a practice is around the coast of the UK.

We have to remember any additional manning requirement would cost money, and the commercial shipping industry is likely to be bitterly opposed to it.

The tests done by QinetiQ (for the Marine Accident Investigation Board - MAIB - report into the loss of the 'Ouzo') on the presently available radar reflectors, would appear to indicate some manufacturers should be prosecuted for misrepresentation of their products.

But what are the alternatives?

Apart from increasing the size of the present designs of passive reflectors there is little which can be done with this technology.

The alternative is some form of transponder, and you can well imagine this is what commercial shipping would like us all to fit. It seems that at present there is only really one available, it costs nearly £500, and only works on one of the radar bands used by commercial vessels. On this basis a dual channel model would today be likely to cost well over £800.

You can only envisage this device being widely adopted on yachts if one were developed to work on both channels and cost less than £200. There will also be those who will be extremely concerned by the possible effect on battery consumption.

There is however a counter argument to promoting its widespread use. In areas with high concentrations of yachts, if all were fitted with working transponders on a summers afternoon with a thick fog, the radars of the VTS and on commercial shipping would be likely to be swamped, possibly making the area even more hazardous. In such situations the only safe course for yachts would be to stay completely outside likely commercial shipping routes.

The computer based search tool, SARIS, is normally used by the MCGA when trying to locate where a boat or body has drifted to from the believed last position.

On this occasion it was used in reverse, to suggest where the crew of 'Ouzo' went into the water, based on where they were found. It appears to be somewhat simplistic with rigid use of non interactive variables.

The rather more complex interactive aerodynamic and hydrodynamic modelling used and developed by the South Tyneside College (whose information was used by the defence team) certainly appears capable of offering a higher degree of accuracy, and their expertise in marine simulation matters is highly regarded by commercial customers worldwide.

There should be a concerted effort by both parties to liaise and co-ordinate their expertise to develop even better modelling software for international sale to other maritime authorities for the benefit of all who go to sea, and to be financially rewarding to UK plc. In this case the STC model suggested the tracks of the 'Ouzo' and the Pride of Bilbao' never came closer than 5 to 6

cables. It also implied the 'Ouzo' came closer than that to the track of the 'Crescent Beaune', the vessel without a lookout.

If the 'Ouzo' had had an automatically deploying EPIRB, especially if it were fitted with GPS, the MCA would have taken action immediately it activated and it is likely the crew would have been recovered alive. (They had not reported their planned passage to the MCA.)

Why are EPIRBs not more often fitted to recreational craft?

In our own interest, what do we need to do to popularise them?

Is cost the only problem?

The Senior Master of the 'Pride of Bilbao', in his evidence, drew attention to his standing orders to officers of the watch. It is notable that their attention was drawn to the fact that yachts with no lights were commonly found, particularly between April and October, and also that they were not always detected on radar.

The only tool he had in that situation was the radar, and the hope the yachts had good lookouts. It is a wonder therefore there are not more yachts lost in the Channel.

From other sources I have heard this is a common practice in racing fleets, so as not to give away their position to competitors. Should not the RYA be using its authority in the field of racing to highlight and eliminate this stupid and dangerous practice?

The ColRegs override any racing rules and the crew of a yacht not showing a light should be aware they can be disqualified for such a breach.

Two of the crew wore their lifejackets so loose as to allow them to ride up their body, leaving the head only just above the water.

The pathologist estimated they drowned after some 3 hours in the water. The other crew member, however, is likely to have remained alive for up to 12 hours because his was tightly fitted, and he is thus likely to have suffered first from hypothermia, and then subsequently drowned.

The very strong advice is therefore to fit and use a crotch strap and ensure the lifejacket is tightly fitted.

One of the mystifying things about the loss of the 'Ouzo' is why the crew did not use the flares, the high power torch, or the waterproof hand held VHF they are known to have had.

Perhaps their equipment was in the saloon and the crew were overwhelmed before they could get to them.

Is this a lesson to all of us? Should this sort of emergency equipment be in the cockpit within easy reach of whoever is on watch at all times?

At present, on 'Twotails' we have a 25w tricolour, a Firdell Blipper, flares, plus a high power torch to shine on the sails, and a GPS connected DSC VHF.

In addition I have investigated the possibility of fitting a "strobe" for emergency use on the mizzen mast as an attention getter, although this is not a recognised light. Why do I not fit a radar, EPIRB, transponder, PLBs? This is presently under discussion.

This started as a review of the trial of Mr Hubble on counts of manslaughter, and, actions as a seaman likely to cause death or injury to the three crew of the 'Ouzo'. At this distance, and following attendance at the trial it is interesting to re-read the Marine Accident Investigation Board (MAIB) report issued in April this year.

The presumption within it of the collision of the 'Ouzo' with, or passing in such proximity to, the 'Pride of Bibao' as to cause foundering, seems to have permeated the trial to the extent of causing any contrary evidence to be doubted.

It is interesting to speculate what MAIB will do now Mr Hubble has been found not guilty.

The MAIB removed this report from their website early in December.

John

FLAG DRESSING FOR SEADOGS

An Idea - Submitted by John Lansdell (TWOTAILS)

I recently referred to a book regarding the correct order in which signal flags should be flown to "dress ship". What I discovered was there is no absolute order, the only real requirement is to be decorative, but also to ensure you are not profane or misleading.

This set me thinking, and thus I should like to suggest we use the following when our 'dogs' are in a pack, at a rally.

On the forestay from masthead down to the bow, in order:
S E A D O G, plus the hull number, in our case 21. The only problem which may arise, is when two or more of the same number are required, in which case I suggest using the first and second substitute, as appropriate

The remainder of the standard set could be flown as follows, which is close to the order used by the Royal Navy, amending the number positions as appropriate.

Q, p3, M, p8, Z, p4, W, p6, P, (p1) Code, T, Y, B, X, 1st Sub, H, 3rd Sub, F, 2nd Sub, R, (p2) J, p0, N, p9, K, p7, U, p5, C.

What do you think?

John

Replies to John via the Forum Page please - at www.seadog.org.uk

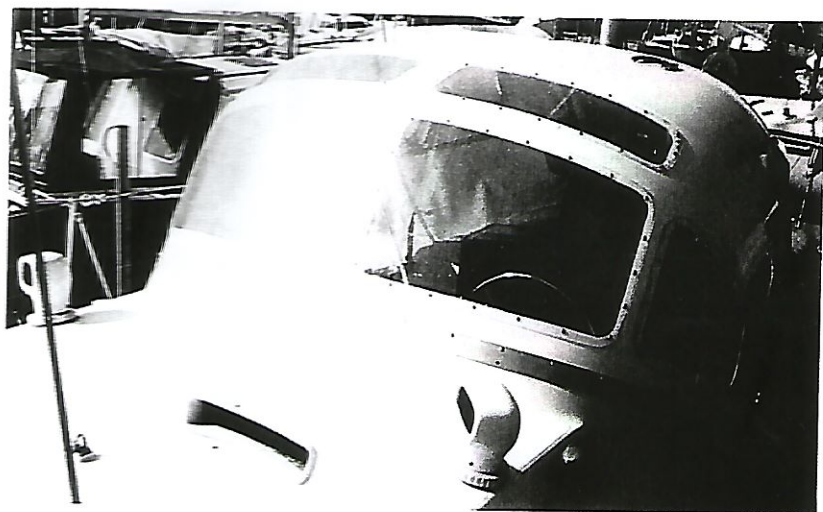
SEADOG MODIFICATIONS

Notes / photos of modifications - Wilf Holloway (HOUND DOG)

1. GRP Sprayhood

This new spray hood was made to replace the opaque windscreen and canvas awning. Made in 2005 using a plug made from hardboard. The shape roughly followed the contours of the windscreen / awning but with deeper windows so that vision is not split by the windscreen top rail.

The rear cover now has a bolt rope to slide into an alloy moulding screwed to the spray hood, as per caravan awnings.

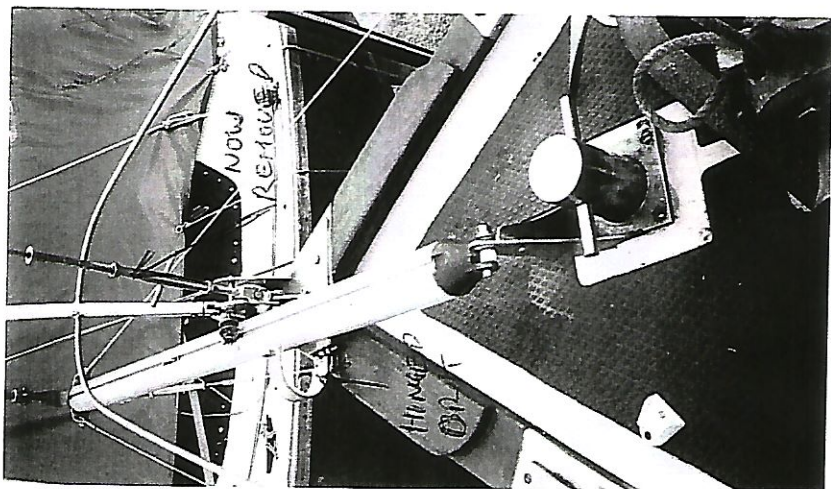
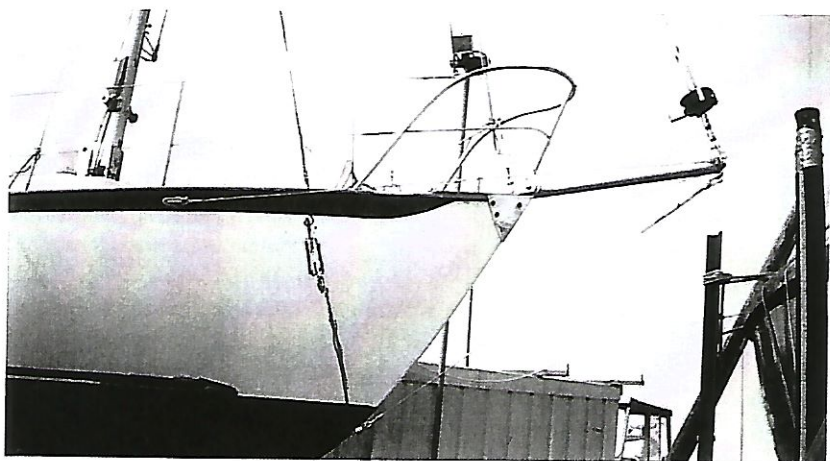


2. The photos also show the new moulded vents on dorade boxes. If any member requires new ones and is good at GRP work then I am willing to loan them the moulds.

3. Removable Bowsprit

The bowsprit is 1 Metre in length (from the old forestay), and is made from an old boom from a folkboat including fittings.

As you will see in photos 1 & 2, the rear end is bolted to a fabricated bracket welded to the Samson post, while the front end is held by a hinged half-moon clamp (in open position in pictures).



I have lowered the original forestay 300mm down the mast and taken the lower end back to a bracket bolted to the rear end of the windlass to give mast support when the bowsprit is removed.

This also gives the foresail more room to pass through (single foresail 220sq ft). To take strain off the deck at this point I have a bracket under the deck with a bottle screw and cable to link up with the bolt which holds the bobstay (photo 3).

P.S. I only remove the bowsprit in expensive marinas.

4. Gas Strut supporting the Boom

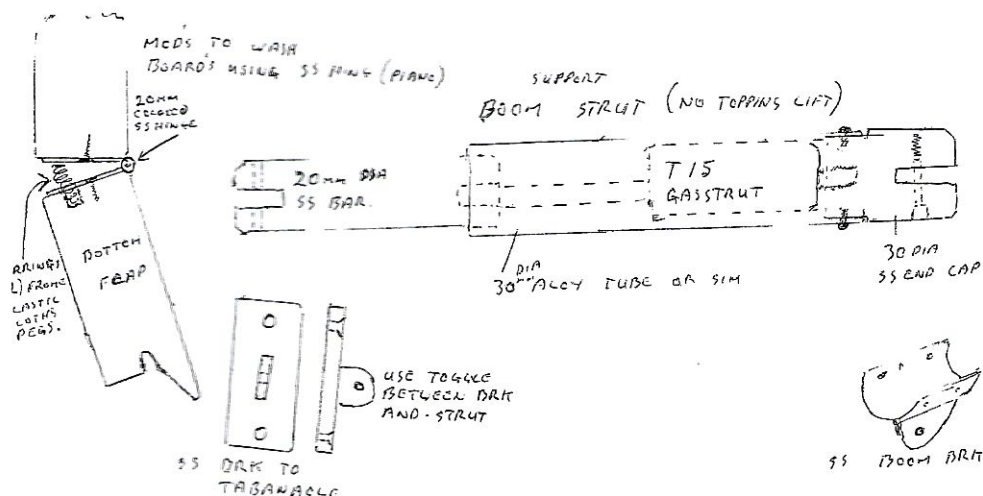
Made using a T15 Gas Strut fitted inside an alloy tube, with bespoke mountings to the Tabernacle and Boom.

The Gas Strut I used came from

Metrol Springs, Northampton, Tel 1604 499332

www.metrol.com

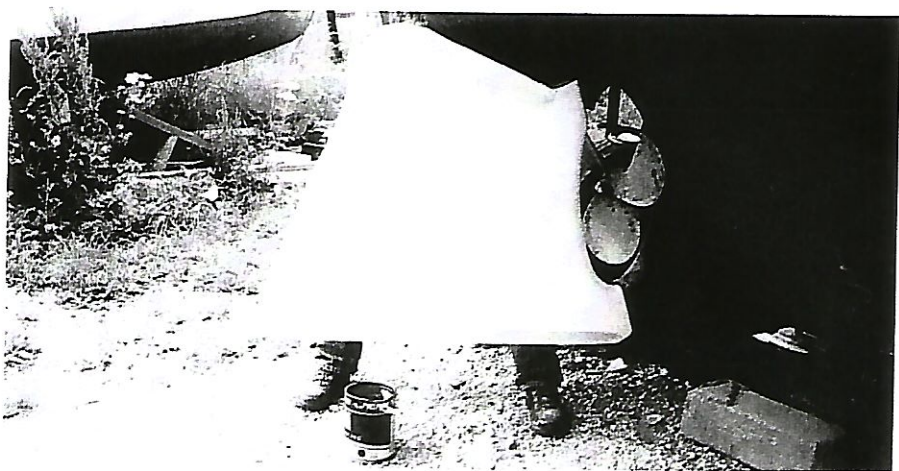
No T 15 BBV



The above drawing also shows mods to the cabin doors, having stainless steel hinges and two springs to operate the bottom flaps. The springs are from plastic cloths pegs.

5. Enlarged Rudder

The new rudder is approx 20% larger than the original and will hopefully assist in reversing.



6. Detachable Shrouds

The mizzen forward lower shrouds can be detached to allow the easy removal of the shroud when in harbour. This involved a stainless steel hook to attach the bottlescrew to the chainplate, and the welding of a permanent bar into the bottlescrew.

7. All main and mizzen halliards routed inside the mast. Carried out with no problems using a mouse and fine twine. The lower exit holes being cut in the mast approx 3 feet up and in line with the winches.

8. 'Hound Dog' has the rubbing strake removed, it only measured 50mm by 30mm so not much use as the tumble home is more than that, and it certainly gives the hull a cleaner look.

Hoping you find all of this interesting.

Wilf

DRIVE PLATE FAILURE

Technical Write-up from Peter Bragg (PALAFOX II)

Preparing to go to the Brixham Rally I went to the Falmouth Oil Services barge to refuel, prices alongside are several pence cheaper there when topping up from near empty to 52 gallons. Serving the fishing and tripper boat community there is a minimum £50 charge for fuel but no water is available.

Single handily flinging the warps overboard all became suddenly complicated when engaging forward gear nothing happened. Glad of a short pluck to a nearby mooring from the run-ashore punt of the local boys training ship 'Hardiess'.

Anyway it was up floor-boards to investigate what was wrong, the coupling was complete so it was either gearbox pump, prop fallen off or the drive plate, damn **** I do not need this!

The punt with outboard came back and towed me clear of the moorings and up sails in a moderate southerly I set out for Pill Creek some 3 miles away to the north. I should have doused all sail and gone into the creek under bare poles and tripped an anchor in front of the mooring as the manoeuvre to pick up under sail was impossible in the narrow creek, and I ended up alongside the wall, so with the help of friends we warped to my mooring using the anchor winch. Exhausted by the events I retired homeward as the boat settled into the mud berth.

So started an anxious 23 day out of service at the height of the season, my normal engine man could not do anything for 3 weeks, the Perkins man had lifted 5 engines out that day and was swamped as well so it was DIY, no other options.

All the tools were put aboard and my son with a Triumph Herald restoration business alerted as back up. There was no illusion - this was going to be a pig of a job, 2 hours were spent with paper and pencil looking at the job and planning the order of work listing materials and procedures.

Frankly I was afraid of ripping out too much or in the wrong order. 'Palafox II' (112) of 1973 has a standard 4108 installation and I was fairly sure that a drive plate failure was the cause of my problem and a split off of the gearbox was necessary. The target was to lighten the engine to make lifting a one man job with mechanical aids as two can't get in the compartment to work anyway.

At last a start was made. The alternator was first removed, labelling the wires, the bracket and bolts all marked with positions of every washer spacer and nut coupled with notes in a log of long and short bolts thick and thin nuts. A packet of 50 labels paid the dividends on reassembly. Off came the starter

motor, frail exposed fuel filter, pipes and wires tied back clear after covering the ends of all apertures. Oil pressure wire labelled, sufficient slack in the temperature pipe enabled this to be undisturbed for the 12 inch lift proposed, drain down all the coolant connections with labels on everything and noting a few renewals where items were past the ½ life.

Off came the heat exchanger header tank at the vertical flange above the water pump, new gaskets sorted from the on board spares replenishments listed. Disconnected the exhaust system, removed the stainless steel bellows, off with manifold, plug holes, disconnect at the exhaust mixing chamber, spanner 2 1/8 across the flats and a chain wrench for this job. Then remove sump oil pump and keep up the routine, plug, label, notes.

Clean away the dirt as surfaces are exposed, remove the automotive oil filter as it is fragile, ('Palafox II' has the Willie de Crom mod), stand it up spout up in a bucket packed round with newspaper covered to prevent contamination it is only 3 months old! Plug the holes in the block with newspaper spills, keep out the grime.

Undo the engine bed lock nuts and nuts then remove the batteries and boxes rigging temporary supply to the domestic via the chart table plug to back feed from the cell on the saloon floor, disconnect the prop shaft and lastly at this stage reinstate the engine lifting lugs.

At this point the day tides had moved to evenings and access to the boat was getting disrupted in the mud berth. So with the outboard on the dinghy lashed alongside 'Palafox II' was moved to the grounding winter berth for 2 weeks on the spring 5.3 metre tide, taking care to maintain level on the rising beach and be hard aground during the lift. The winter moorings had to be recovered from their muddy summer hides, lifting on a boat afloat is dangerous. Two weeks further work would be needed and access to the boat is easier from here, indeed I can slip home in 5mins from there.

Off to the recovered wood emporium on A30. A second hand 7x2 joist timber was purchased and two 6 foot A frames constructed, these were bridged at the top with a 5x4 inch baulk, the frames were cut at the foot to match the side deck inclination and stood on inch thick as large as possible chipboard pads to distribute the load. The board deforms to take up mismatch.

A Weston Differential Hoist was borrowed from my friend a builder and rigging with chains shackles and slings the engine lift was easy, the first few inches must be direct in order not to cause damage. Once clear of the threads the brute moves all over the place.

An old travelling ladder from one of my destroyed telephone exchanges was placed across the aft part of the cockpit and the main sheet blocks were used to take the weight of the gearbox and we were now ready to achieve the separation between engine and gearbox.

With the bottom bolts of the bell housing exposed. Safety spreader stretchers were placed across the bed with support blocks in case anything gave way

and to rest from the suspension mode. In reserve a ratchet and lever hoist was also to hand if matters looked too strained.

All the bolts out (more labels as not all the bolts are the same!). One was missing, separation did not occur, a cold chisel and gentle hammer were required, and the drive plate spline edged off the male gearbox shaft.

A 6 inch plus working gap was possible, and the gearbox swivelled 90 degrees, revealed were the ruined drive plate with all 6 springs broken and mashed with filth and dirt in the bottom of the bell-housing.

Only 5 Allen Key headed 3/16" bolts hold the drive plate to the flywheel, long arm Allen keys are essential to dismantle here. The 36hp is transmitted from the engine to the plate by the pressure the bolts exert on the fly wheel face, so they need to be exceptionally tight. A tubular extension (long box spanner) was required here to get enough purchase.

The local Perkins Agent was given the required Parts List for the reassembly, and the busy engineer there spared a few minutes for practical advice at the end of his full working day.

The engine mounts were removed examined threads run down and a few dabs of paint applied. Three days of cleaning and tidy up gave a welcome rest till parts were to hand.

The new drive plate was marked "Made in Brazil" indicative of how international engineering manufacture has become. No longer a jungle country we have to recognise that our machinery can come from anywhere in the world. Gaskets came from Europe and hoses seemed British with GKN supplying nuts & bolts. No block to bell-housing gasket and an advised decision made to proceed without it.

A point to note is that I believe if the gearbox were removed and the engine rotated 90 degrees it would be possible to get a tank out which would be easier than an engine out to do a fuel tank change. Palafox II's tanks were changed for stainless several years earlier and to effect that a temporary engine bed at 90 degrees athwart the cockpit seats (with the steering wheel removed) was used to park the engine during the winter refit.

On reassembly all the faces have to be wire brushed cleaned with a plentiful stock of jointing compound to hand. The plate itself is just an Allen Key job and easy however a lot of fiddling around was needed to get the spline to marry juggling the two hoists and getting the angle of suspension correct.

All of 2 hours sweat and swear to do this single handed and in the end it is just patience and luck taking a rest now and then. Eventually it slid together and alternate bolts evenly closed the gap with jointing compound. Care is needed here and a torque wrench required, it being easy to strip threads in the soft casting.

The missing bolt needed to be longer than standard with a backup washer and nut as the casting was stripped - the reason why it was missing.

Never did find the bolt in the bilge so it must have been out for over 20 years!

Lining up the coupling was accomplished using a 6 inch steel rule and again lots of patience. Up a bit, right a bit, etc, the engine pulled aft on the mounts because the prop is now a gasket thickness forward and the Ambassador prop rope cutter needed adjustment. A final double check with a 25 thou. feeler gauge seemed to confirm all was OK then the flexible coupling bolts were sweated up using the torque wrench.

Dressing the engine with all the removed components was a steady job, their removal had simplified the handling in the compartment. Pulling the engine right out would have made the split difficult, there being no multiple suspension points. Wiring and pipe work all reconnected and a final visual check was made. The only parts over were those renewed. Bled the engine and it started, spring tides were due and off the beach tomorrow for trials.

Yes I did make it to Brixham.

Peter

DRIVE PLATE PROBLEMS and SOLUTIONS

Technical Article supplied by Eric Richardson (ex TALIESIN) – 22nd Jan 07

The system of transmitting power from the Perkins Engine to the Borg Warner Gearbox is described below.

The flywheel needs to transmit its rotary energy to the splined input shaft on the gearbox, this sounds simple and easy to do. However when the engine is running at low revs and showing say 700 RPM on the tachometer it is actually not doing a constant 700 RPM but in fact is accelerating and decelerating by a small amount each side of this figure due to the forces applied to the pistons on each firing stroke. This is smoothed out somewhat by the use of a heavy flywheel, but if shown as a graph it would be quite spiky.

If these speed fluctuations were applied directly to the gearbox input shaft it would rapidly cause drive failure by fatigue due to the hammering actions created by the changes in acceleration. It would also cause excessive vibration and noise if a direct and solid drive was fitted.

In order to solve this problem the engine gearbox connection is made through a spring loaded drive plate which evens out the fluctuations in speed and torque to the gearbox.

The drive plate is fastened to the flywheel by a number of ¼" Allen Cap Screws, and transmits the drive to the gearbox via a circular plate with slots cut in it and springs engaging between the plate (which is fastened to the flywheel) and the splined driving plate. These springs absorb the shock caused by the speed variations.

A number of problems arise in this area and I will list the main points that I have experienced with type of drive systems.

- a) The spline shaft should be coated with MOLYSLIP or greased with something similar that can maintain both corrosion resistance and lubricity over a long period of time. If this is not done then fretting corrosion will eventually destroy the spline shaft.
- b) The method of attaching the drive plate to the flywheel is flawed for the following reason. In order that the Cap screw remains tight they need to be torqued up to a fairly high value which should load them to about 80% of their ultimate tensile strength.
The problem here is that the drive plate material is much softer than the cap screw head which also has a very small area of material under the head, thus allowing the head to penetrate the drive plate and on occasions lose its clamping force causing fatigues failure of the Cap screws and loss of drive.

Two solutions present themselves, one is to drill and tap the flywheel to 5/16" to gain surface area under the head. I know a number of owners have done this.

The second and probably preferred method is to obtain hardened steel washers to go under the head of the cap screws which again increases the surface area of the contact and allows the proper tightening of the cap screws to be retained.

- c) An alternative Drive Plate is available from a company by the name of R & D Marine Ltd who make a resilient drive plate which a number of Engine and Gearbox manufacturers are now specifying as original fit. Detail is available from their website:
www.randdmarine.com

Drive plate problems usually start to show themselves when the engine is running at slow idle and produces quite a loud clattering noise which is often mistaken for a gearbox problem. If the speed is increased slightly the noise subsides and goes away completely when the drive is working at speed. If the noise goes away with only a small increase in revs then I suggest that you do not worry about it too much.

The Borg Warner gearbox is almost bomb proof in the Seadog as it is designed to run with much higher power engines. I stripped the gearbox down out of curiosity on Taliesin in 1994 after 22 years of use and it was in near new condition. I had however changed the drive plate in 1987 and it was fairly worn again although not making much noise at that stage.

I hope this brief explanation is helpful.

Eric Richardson

HOT WATER CALORIFIER

Technical Article supplied by Eric Richardson (ex TALIESIN) – 22nd Jan 07

One of the modifications I made to 'Taliesin' was to fit a hot water system, and this is described below.

Knowing how fast the water supply runs out when a pressurised supply is available I made a firm decision to avoid fitting an electric pump.

The system had to be simple and almost entirely home made.

I decided that the best place to site a Calorifier was on the starboard side immediately aft of the fuel tank.

After carefully measuring up this space I made a stainless steel tank to the wedge shape as the fuel tank such that it could be slid into place and secured in the same way that the diesel tank was secured.

The tank was made from 1/16" 326 Stainless Steel plate with a cold water supply going in at the lowest point to feed a diffuser so that the water was fed gently in to the bottom of the tank with minimum disturbance to the hot water in the tank. The hot outlet came from the highest pint on the tank.

A number of baffles were also placed in the tank as strengtheners.

The engine cooling water tapping was taken from what would be the heater outlet if the engine was in automotive use and fed to the Calorifier top feed point of the closed circuit coil, the return from the bottom of the coil was taken to the return point on the engine hose from the heat exchanger.

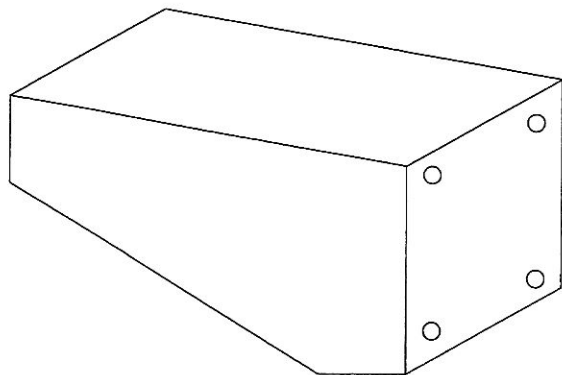
I cheated on the coil in terms of time and effort by building it as a square shape using straight lengths of pipe and elbows all soldered together thus getting maximum spread of area in the tank.

The water supply was made by installing a second foot pump at the side of the existing cold supply to the galley sink: they share the same suction pipe from the keels.

This meant that the cold water was pumped into the bottom of the Calorifier thus once it was full of hot water it would be forced out of the top connection and fed to a second outlet on the galley sink. Both outlets being identical but at opposite sides of the sink.

When the Calorifier was installed it was well wrapped up with lagging material and securely fastened in place.

The system worked very well keeping the water hot for a good period of time such that breakfast pots could be washed in warm water 16 hours after the engine had stopped.



Eric Richardson

SEADOG RESTORATION

Engine swap and associated doings - John Lansdell (TWOTAILS) - 2006

When we bought 'Sardan', now 'Twotails', she had not been used for over 3 years and had been flooded to a depth of six inches in the saloon. She had been put ashore due to the owners ill health slightly bow down, such that some rainwater falling on the deck went down the hawse hole, not the deck drains. Thus, the engine was in quite state and had something like a litre and a half of water in the sump. My view was you could spend a great deal of money on it and still have a thirty year old engine, why not spend not too much more and have a new one instead.

So out it came, leaving a most unsavoury, oily hole. Of the eight bolts intended to hold the engine to the bearers only three were doing their job, all

the others were in varying degrees wasted away, some to less than half their original diameter. In addition some parts of the wood into which they were screwed had gone soft, presumably as a result of the inundation by fresh water.

After that out came the fuel tanks. I was amazed to find each one was only held in by only two brass screws. A more robust method is now in place. They were drained and cleaned. The drain cocks were removed cleaned up and replaced. The original fuel system had the changeover cocks on the floor of the starboard cockpit locker, which meant you had to remove gear to get at them. They have been resited to the forward bulkhead, and operated from within the saloon. In similar fashion the drain cock outlets have been connected to extension pipes so that the tanks can be checked for water in the saloon, rather than having a fight in an area of difficult access with the likelihood of spilling fuel into the bilge.

The bilge was drained, cleaned, scrubbed and painted. The forward and after bulkheads were cleaned and covered with noise reducing material, as was the underside of the engine access hatch.

While this was in hand the problem was what engine to use. At the time I was working as a volunteer in the rebuild of a wooden fishing vessel, my job was caulking the hull. One day a man came from a major supplier of marine engines to size up and quote for the engine likely to be required for this vessel. I took the opportunity to ask his advice on what he would suggest in place of the Perkins. He represented a Perkins dealership. After a short discussion, and out of earshot of others in the area, he told me he was also a yachtsman and had recently re-engined his yacht with a Beta engine, and he would recommend that as the most suitable replacement. After some further enquiries I chose a Beta 1505, but kept the original Borg Warner gearbox, rather than the more modern standard fit.

The engine bearers were wood, enclosed in grp. My view is that bearers should be rigid, it is for the rubber components of the engine mounting blocks to absorb vibration and noise. Thus I made galvanised steel L section bearers running virtually the full length of the existing wooden bearers, bolted to them by three coach bolts, and two through bolts on each side, after alignment as described below.

The propeller shaft was removed and found to be heavily pitted, requiring its replacement, and the cutless bearing was replaced. At this stage the opportunity was taken to set up the engine alignment. After much thought it appeared the simplest method was possibly the best. Thus a Mark 1 eyeball was used to determine the point on the forward bulkhead directly in line with the stern gland/cutless bearing. A screw was put in such that a cord could be tightly stretched between it and the centre of the stern gland.

Separately a mock engine was made in wood replicating the engine plus its mounting feet, with pointed screws protruding from it with the points at exactly the same position as the engine crankshaft centreline. This was used to position the steel bearers by adjusting them until the "engine" centre line coincided with the cord. They were packed up to be at the correct height, both fore and aft, and heavily loaded epoxy resin used to fill the space.

With the mock engine in place it was also possible to mark the places to drill and tap the steel bearers to take the engine mounting bolts. It should be noted the engine mounting feet have height, plus fore/aft and sideways adjustment capability.

Time had come to think of the batteries. We have two traction batteries for Services, so that I can lift them individually, electrically connected in parallel, mounted over the gearbox, and two starter batteries alongside the engine on a shelf on the starboard side. The supports for these were made and trial installed. There are three separate battery isolation switches alongside the companion way.

Big day, trial installation of the engine, fortunately no great problems. Opportunity taken to adapt and extend the dry riser for the engine exhaust to ensure it rose above seawater level, and connect it with the mixing box, portside, outboard of the bearers. This took a couple of attempts before it could be finally welded. The Parsons box in the port cockpit locker was removed and replaced by the anti siphon bend. The exhaust from the mixing/silencer box goes into the space alongside the anti siphon bend and into a gooseneck bend above water level and then piped back to the transom. The lengths for all the pipes and wires connected to the engine was noted. Beta supply an instrument package and harness with a plug in line, making engine installation and removal much simpler.

Three adaptations made to the engine. The original oil filter is low down on the port side, and is horizontal, meaning it is absolutely inevitable you will spill oil into the bilge when changing the filter. Beta can supply a kit enabling you to move it up to half a metre away. Ours is now vertical and aft over the gearbox. The raw water pump is on the front of the engine and low down. We fitted a Speedseal kit to make it easier to replace the impeller. We also fitted an Adverc unit to the alternator to improve the charging characteristics, such that the batteries get to a higher level of charge without their exceeding their gassing voltage.

Out came the engine, and with the measurements taken two further items were made to fit in the void below the engine, a drip tray and a holding tank. At the same time the profile of the bilge was altered so that it was about two inches higher at the forward end, gradually getting lower as it went aft, leaving a small square sump right aft for the manual and electric bilge pumps.

Then it was put the engine back in for real and connect up. For final alignment a plate was attached to the coupling on the gearbox with a very small hole in it co-incident with the engine centre line. The propeller shaft was pulled back and a pointer attached to it with needle sharp end. This was used to establish co-incident centre lines between engine and propeller shaft. It was also used to ensure there was no swash between the two surfaces. Any remaining misalignment, and movements of the engine, should be absorbed by the rubber couplings of the stub shaft between engine and propeller shaft. Incidentally, these rubber inserts were replaced.

I chose to have single lever control rather than the original two lever method. There is also an engine compartment fan exhausting up the mizzen mast tabernacle. The raw water filter is fitted just above water level in a corner of the engine access hatch.

So far there have been three in-service problems. From the start there was a most unwelcome knocking sound at certain engine speeds. A lot of time was put in to locate the problem, with no success. However, on our way back from Calais, going into Eastbourne the gearbox failed to go into astern.

The clutch had failed, even though I had had the gearbox overhauled before Beta connected it to the engine. The gearbox we have is very early model and so a higher spec clutch used in later models is now installed.

With the engine and gearbox out for this work it was possible to trace the cause of the engine knocking sound. One of the four vertical engine mounting screws had been installed by me screwed too far down so that it was knocking hard on the steel engine bearer below it. Stupidly simple.

The last concerns the propeller. The Beta runs at a higher speed than the Perkins. Initially we used the original propeller, 17" diam. x 12" pitch. With this the engine was not able to reach full speed, thus it was likely to be "overpropped". We have now done some trials with 17" x 10" prop and this seems to be far better.

When engaging ahead or astern there is less thrust, good for manoeuvring, but full engine speed is available, at something like hull speed.

To change the subject entirely there are three items, which may be of interest to other owners.

- 1 Bilge Keel Bolts. When I had a look at the underside of the hull in the area of the bilge keels there were a number of slight bulges above the rest of the hull surface. So, each bulge was cut away to show the rusty head of the bolt. In all there were six. As a check one of the non bulged bolt heads was uncovered, this was in perfect condition. All seven bolts were replaced after cleaning out where they had been, liberally coated with underwater sealant and finally capped with epoxy.
- 2 Mainmast Wedges. A number of owners have commented on the way the frame of the door to the forepeak seems to distort over time, making

it difficult to close it. A shipwright friend showed me one possible reason. At the end of the saloon bulkhead where the door hinges are hung there is a substantial post. In our case the wedge, which should have been between it and the underside of the deckhead, was missing. This wedge transfers the downloads from the mast to the keel. If it is not there the doorframe can distort. In addition there should also be a wedge under the heel of the mast to take its weight and the sailing downloads squarely onto the tabernacle, through the cabin deckhead and onto the post mentioned above. If this wedge is not in place and these loads are taken by the hinge bolt on the after side of the tabernacle, then the tabernacle will tend to rock aft, pushing into the deckhead, distorting the moulding.

- 3 This comment may only be relevant to hull numbers up to 50. Our capping strip was damaged in several places and needed replacement. When it was taken off it was surprising to find that the capping strip was screwed into pieces of softwood, most of which had rotted. The capping covers the vertical extensions of the hull and deck mouldings, which have a gap of varying width between them. The softwood was held in place by horizontal screws, head outboard, and dome nuts inboard. In our case we epoxied in pieces of iroko as replacement, with large pieces being used in the areas of the fairleads. We took the opportunity to add a set amidships.

Other work was done, as listed below, and, if anyone is interested to discuss them, please contact me.

Stemhead, provision for hinged bowsprit

Sampson Posts replaced

Standing and running rigging replaced

Gate

Guard rails

Nav Lights

Rubbing strake

Mains sockets in saloon and after cabin

12v sockets in forepeak, nav table, after cabin

Lights in all 3 forepeak cupboards

Removeable hardpoint for vice in nav table area

Cockpit Lockers locked from after cabin

Autopilot

Rewire mast, new items installed, tricolour light, VHF aerial, steaming light, deck light

Replace Baby Blake toilet with Lavac

Shower tray grating in forepeak, tray drained by Lavac pump through changeover cock

Additional lighting under galley cupboard and over cooker

Rerun sink drain to go aft into cockpit drain, leaving more access to cupboard
Install heater in saloon
Replace cooker
Replace gas system with a leak indicator in gas locker and additional cock alongside cooker
Install greaser for stern gland
Install shaft contact for sacrificial anode wiring
Install Calorifier under galley drawers with hot or cold water supply through existing foot pump and spout
Install activated carbon in line filter in sink water supply
Partition galley cupboard to fit dry goods jars
Replace wooden forehatch with a modern Lewmar one
(anyone want an old wooden hatch? Less glass lens gifted to 'Salia')
Install radio and cassette player and speakers in "ceiling" of bulkhead lockers in saloon
Teak curtain rails for curtains in saloon and after cabin
A 'Wagtail' type cockpit table
Install opening hatch in after cabin
Cut out rotted section of after cabin bulkhead and replace, as a result replace vinyl on all internal panels

P.S. to discourage water entering the box section below the mizzen mast (which caused the rot to the bulkhead), keep the mizzen halyard outside the mast, don't store sheets where water can run off them into the aft facing air gap, and fit a splash capping over the air gap itself.

John Lansdell

STEERING PROBLEMS and SOLUTIONS

Technical article supplied by John Lansdell (TWOTAILS) - 2007

The existing steering on most Seadogs is based on a car steering box adapted for the purpose. It has worked well, but certainly on some is beginning to show its age. There are a number of places to look when you start to get excessive backlash, or lost motion, in the system.

- 1 In the steering box itself there is a "worm" on the same shaft as the steering wheel. A rotating pin on an arm engages with this and causes the vertical shaft to rotate. Over the years the section of the worm engaging with the pin gets worn and though you can adjust the engagement of the pin a little, if you take it in too far you will be unable to turn the wheel over its full range. The only fix is

presumably to replace the worm, and ideally the pin. I have never heard of this being done.

- 2 At the output of the steering box is coupling to the vertical shaft. The actual link is either a "Cherrylock" or a bolt passing horizontally through both shaft and coupling. In many cases one of the holes, or the pin, get worn. A method of fixing this, which I have used, is to drill out the hole slightly larger to take a machined bolt which fits tightly into the holes, and then tighten the bolt to its maximum torque, using the correct setting on a torque spanner.
- 3 At the bottom of the shaft there is a bearing housing bolted to the bulkhead. On occasion the bolts holding it to the bulkhead get loose. The fix is either to tighten up the bolts, if that is possible, or to get replacement bolts, making sure they have a good sized "penny" washer on the saloon side of the bulkhead to help spread the load.
- 4 I have never heard of the actual bearing itself becoming worn, but that might be a considerable problem if it had, it would need replacing. While investigating it it is certainly worth filling the grease point on it, squeezing some grease into the bearing and refilling the cap.
- 5 At both ends of the push-pull rod there are automotive steering "ball joints" from 1960/70 era cars. If they are worn the only realistic fix is to replace them and while doing so make sure they are full of grease. Always check the castellated nut holding the bearing to the arm for tightness and rectify if loose. Also always use a split pin to lock the nut in place.
- 6 The tiller arm on the rudder shaft is stopped from rotating on it by a key. If there is movement investigate, and the usual fix is a new key. The arm is held from sliding up or down the rudder shaft by having a split on the far side from the arm clenched together by a bolt. Always check this for tightness.
- 7 Some of the mechanical load on the rudder shaft is taken by the packing in the casting protruding from the hull. This is usually just about at the waterline. If you come back from Cherbourg with too much of the liquid vitamins on board you may get a leak from here. Either way it is a good thing to repack this every so often making sure it is assembled with plenty of grease in it.

All of that having been said, and hopefully done, I am beginning to wonder if, for some boats, there may come a time where a different steering system may be the only fix. This will be the subject of an investigation over the next few months. If anyone has input or opinions on this please let me know, especially if they know of a 'dog with a non-standard steering set-up.

John Landsdell

DECK PROBLEM

Technical query from John Landsdell (TWOTAILS) - 2007

On 'Twotails' we have a problem with the areas of the deck which have a moulded in non-slip surface. In some areas small cracks appear, which have a tendency to grow and connect, then a section of the non-slip may come away from the GRP below.

I have asked around some people in the business, and their consensus is relatively simple to understand, but also somewhat worrying, if you are affected. The non-slip consists of thick layer of unre-inforced gel coat. This material is not mechanically strong, and, being on the deck is also subject to ultra violet solar radiation.

In the nature of things the deck surface heats and cools every day.

The problem is, the unre-inforced gel coat of the non-slip, expands and contracts at a different rate from the GRP deck on which it is laid, leading to the cracking.

In addition the relatively low strength of the gel coat means its adhesion to the deck material on which it sits breaks down.

The end result is the flaking off of small sections. I am still researching the matter and would be grateful for any information other people may have regarding this problem, plus any suggested palliative action.

I am still in the position of wondering quite what to do. But it seems to me the following may be the way forward, for us at least.

We need a non-slip surface on the deck, and moreover one which is a complement to the rest of the boat. The only recovery action which seems to be practical is both tedious, and likely to be somewhat expensive.

The first thing is to remove the entire non-slip gel coat. Easier said than done. Some form of industrial grinder with dust extraction attachments is required, along with the operator being properly protected with overalls and breathing apparatus. Just how to remove the gel coat from some of the more oddly shaped areas is still not entirely clear. The end result should be a smooth GRP surface. I would aim to take this action only as far as the outer limit of the non-slip, no further.

In view of the next step a worrying question arises, what is the likely height difference between the newly exposed GRP and the smooth gel coat over the rest of the deck?

My idea is to use one of the teak effect plastic planking systems to cover the newly exposed areas. When I visit the Boat Show I hope to get some idea of the costs involved.

One company offers material for you to make patterns of the area of deck you wish to cover. They will then send you pre-cut strips to fit, plus adhesive etc. One argument against this approach is that the edges of the strips are not watertight and, as a result, water can get below the strips onto the unprotected GRP deck below.

Again, anyone's experience of the materials and techniques involved would be greatly appreciated.

John Landsdell

Replies to John via the Forum Page please - at www.seadog.org.uk

SUPPLIER RECOMMENDATIONS

TS MARINE - Graham Mathews

Building 4a Universal Marine
Sarisbury Green
Southampton, SO31 7ZN
Tel 01489 581030 www.tsmarine.co.uk

In May 2007 we purchased a Betamarine BV1505 from Scott at TS Marine and so far we are very happy with it. A number of other SeaDogs also now have Betamarine engines, either the same as ours or the slightly smaller one. 'Dogmatic' had hers fitted by TS Marine, 'TwoTails' was done by the owner (John Landsdell). I am sure there are others.

To keep cost down I decided to do as much of the work as I could myself but I was pleased to have Scott on hand to advise and do the jobs I was not confident or competent to do. He was also able to sign off the paperwork for the warranty with Betamarine. From the beginning he was happy to do as much or as little as needed.

We decided to keep the Borg Warner gearbox for 'Dougal' and this actually simplified the engine alignment challenge by leaving the aft mountings almost exactly where they were.

Scotty manufactured special 'feet' for the engine from measurements taken when the engine was first 'test fitted' and we used the heavier duty engine mounts (the standard ones looked undersized and not up to the job particularly with the heavier BW gearbox. The intermediate prop shaft was reused after checking.

The engine was ordered with almost all of the 'options', including the 100ah alternator, the extra power takeoff on the front of the engine, the high-rise exhaust and the 'smart charge system'(but not the split charge relay system, we used an electronic version instead).

We also ordered the 'de-luxe' instrument panel and have fitted it to port of the steering position, near the port cockpit locker. Not sure if I would recommend this, if you talk to Betamarine they are able to make up a special whereby the same instruments could be supplied without the panel so that you could fit in the standard steering binnacle. We have located some sailing instruments there instead.

I replaced all the engine-room wiring and plumbing while I was down there and re-located the fuel taps, water separator and other bits to a more accessible position. The cockpit drain sea-cocks were also replaced with much larger ones to suit the new drains installed with the new cockpit floor a few years ago.

Dougal now has a full 'wet' exhaust system with the goose-neck, anti-siphon break (with drain hose) and intake water filter now located in the locker where the 'parsons box' used to be. The exhaust runs from there to the transom along the original route (had to be fiddled with a little because the new exhaust hose is 50mm instead of the 45 mm used in the Perkins).

I cannot recommend TS Marine highly enough for the work done but if you are sure you want to do it all yourself then Betamarine will still be very helpful. We had a guided tour of the factory before the work started.

Whatever you decide I recommend you make sure that you get a 'Boatshow Price' for the engine, you may need to wait until after the start of the Southampton Boatshow to get this but it will save you about 20 to 25%.

If you decide to keep the BW gearbox you will get the engine at the 'Bobtail' price plus the cost of the modified plate. Get the gearbox to Betamarine and they will attach it and spray it red! If you do keep the BW you will also be able to keep the LH prop, but you may find it a little over-pitched. I recommend you get the gearbox tested first though, we did and it was declared as 'excellent'.

Happy to pass on any help that I can to anyone considering a similar change.

Graham (Dougal)

ASAP SUPPLIES LTD - Gordon Keirwww.asap-supplies.com Tel 01502 716993

The Catalogue is magic. I have listed a few entries relevant to Seadoggers:
 Borg Warner spares;
 Perkins 4108 / 4108 spares;
 Silentbloc shaft couplings as used on Seadogs;

Bowman Heat Exchangers - main dealer - as Bowman give advice over the phone but will not supply directly (www.ejbowman.co.uk Tel 01213 595401);

Rand D Marine engine drive plates and engine mounts - again the main dealer - R and D have their own very good website (also see Eric's article on drive plates) and happily answer all queries over the phone, you order from the likes of ASAP;

Vetus wet exhaust components - main dealer - and cheaper than ordering direct from the Vetus website.

K.J. HOWELLS - John Lansdell and Gordon Keir.

Cobbs Quay Marina
 Hamworthy, Poole, BH15 4EL
 Tel 01202 665724 www.kjhowells.com

They have an excellent range of ready made teak cabinets and accessories, and a room full of teak / mahogany / oak mouldings and big chunks of wood, which they invite you to wander through and select the bits you want without being rushed.

The teak ply is supplied in either full or half sheets (4' X 4') and is the only product with cannot mail ordered and delivered. Having previously bought a sheet and wanting more, take a sample with you and they will try hard to match it - as the sheet colouring does vary quite a lot between batches. They also stock Coelan coatings (for those with deep pockets).

SEALS + DIRECT – Gordon Keir

www.sealsplusdirect.co.uk Tel 01425 280415

60 Silverdale, New Milton, Hants, BH25 7DE

Gordon Keir - They are a very helpful mail order company who supply Rubber and Neoprene seals for hatches and windows etc.

They have 3 catalogues which they will post on request:

White - shows each seal in cross section at actual size.

Blue - describes each seal and explains its use and recommended glues etc to be used.

Price List - which unfortunately keeps going up, so I continue to use the 2002 edition - as it makes me feel better.

I asked about sealing the cockpit flooring for noise. They sent me samples of two interlocking pieces (P shape and inverted U shape) which formed the required seal.

I would like to hear from other Seadoggers who have had successful dealings with suppliers for the next issue.

In particular has anybody had dealings with :

Golden Arrow Marine on the south coast.

www.goldenarrow.co.uk Tel 02380 710371

Lancing Marine at Brighton.

www.lancingmarine.com Tel 01273 410025

French Marine on the east coast.

www.frenchmarine.co.uk Tel 01206 302133

A Beta Marine distributor on the east coast

P.S. I admired the teak windscreen top rail on 'Dogboat' at Calais, and think Chris Woolley had it made and fitted by :

Greg Dalton from Faversham. Tel. 07905 106236

daltonyachtrepairs@yahoo.co.uk

DEPARTED FRIENDS

In Memory of Byran Herve

Thankyou note from Barbara Herve - 2nd April 2006

Dear Olive, Peter and Seadog friends.

Thank you so much for your card and kind thoughts.

Dear Byran just had too much to put up with. Not to be in command and having to rely on others for so much was not his style. Although he did converse, and that was a blessing, he could not do any of the practical things that he did so well before. He hated being a taker and not a giver.

So many operations, procedures and appointments, and his last operation did not finish his problems. Now he is at rest, I am very fortunate I have a very close loving and supportive family, many friends and such treasured memories.

He had a wonderful send off. A friend, a lay preacher took the service. One grand daughter sang for Granddad 'Panis Angelicus' another read Victor Hugo's passage about the ship going over the horizon.

The crematorium was packed and between 80-100 people came back to the house and we demolished 46 bottles of wine and I didn't count the beer cans. A truly wonderful appreciation and thanks for his life. Just sad he couldn't be at the party in person.

My love and thanks to you both.

Barbara

In Memory of Peter Hepsworth

You will all be saddened to hear of the death of one of earliest Seadog Members (being No. 58 on our register) who died in January 2007.

Peter was well known in the Association – not only for his wonderful sense of humour and kindness but also for owning a Seadog with two toilets (one in the aft cabin). 'April Dawn' was affectionately known as 'Twoools'!

Olive and I and John Lansdell 'Two Tails' represented the Seadogs at his funeral, which proved how very popular Peter was, as the undertakers estimated that around 1,000 people attended. A donation from the Seadog Association was given to the RNLI in his memory.

We understand that his son Douglas is keeping 'April Dawn' and will be sailing her around the Solent, so we welcome him to the Association and wish him happy sailing.

Our thoughts and best wishes go to his dear wife Rita and all their family.

Peter French

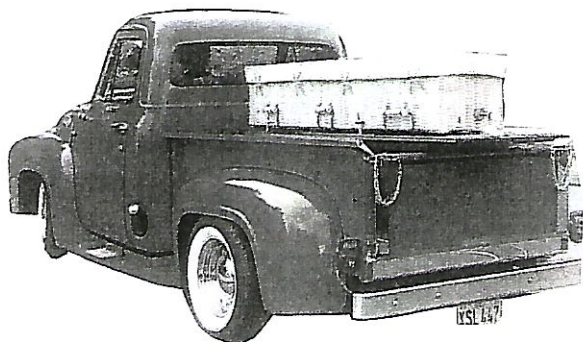
In Memory of Frank Hillman

Article from the "Southampton Echo" recording the funeral for Frank Hillman.

Frank was foreman at Reg Freeman Yachts when the Seadogs were built.

As far as last requests go, being driven down the road in a flamboyant Red American flatbed in a wicker coffin to the sound of Pink Floyd's *Wish you were here* is about as stylish as you can get.

Fun loving Frank Hillman, who died aged 79 on August 2 [2006], also banned people from wearing black at his funeral and asked people to dress in casual bright clothes.



Frank, originally from Littlehampton in Sussex, built luxury racing boats for Cougar and lived in Woolston for most of his life.



Peter and Olive aboard 'Dogmatic' - 1998
End-of-season Rally - Folly Inn, Medina River, Isle of Wight.