



Forestay

***A Happy New Year to all readers
and welcome to 2008!***

and remember

Book now for the first event of the year:

Dinner at the RBYC on 8th March

Complete the booking form in this Newsletter to reserve your places and send it off with the money to our new Treasurer, Clare Thomas, before February 24th.

Done that? Right, now let's have a nostalgic look back at 2007. It is said that memory is selective and nothing is as bad as it seemed at the time. The same goes for 2007; we had our tragedies, but we had triumphs also - remember the riotous coach trip to Ramsholt and the glorious weather at the end of Classics week?

But we certainly had some character-building weather. Those early birds who were ready for the Easter Egg rally enjoyed superb weather, but it flattered only to deceive and turned on gales and monsoon-like rains at Fambridge, Brightlingsea, Southwold and for most of the Classics Cruise, interspersed with the occasional flat calm just to keep crews on their toes. Summer didn't reappear until the end of August, but not once did I hear any mutterings from the Gaffers; tipping down with rain, no problem, let's go to the pub; blowing a hooley, no problem, let's go to another pub. But the season wasn't entirely given over to eating, singing and drinking, our hard-working event managers organised 16 races, during which a total of over 60 different boats took part.

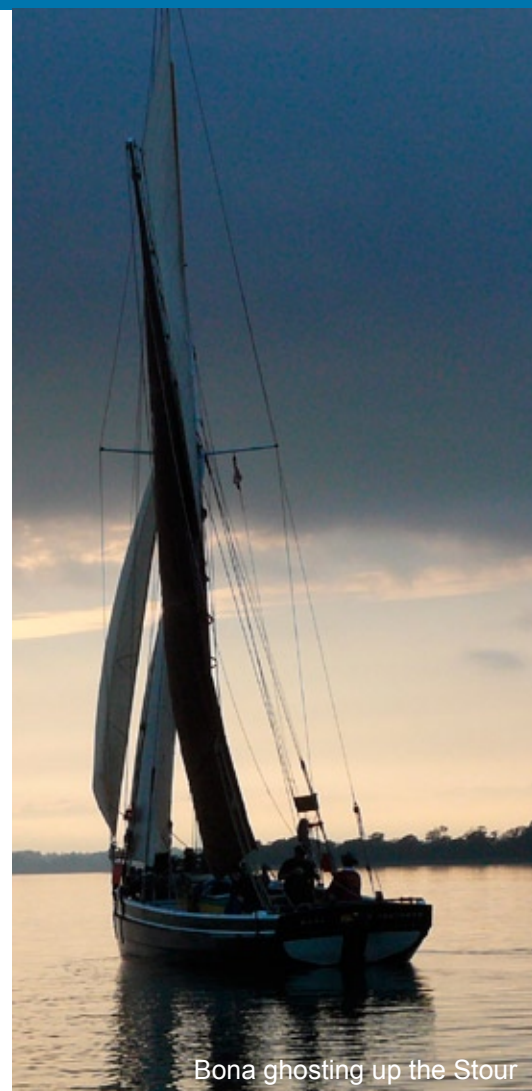
The season was rounded off as usual with the Area AGM and the appointing of a new committee to see us into 2008 - and they have already put together a programme of a dozen events for your enjoyment through the year, see the list in this issue.

Sec's report

AGM EC Area 07/08

Well, what a year! Those of you that came to the AGM in the Orwell Yacht Club will have had a "report" of the year's events in précis at least, if anyone who did not make it have a look at the last Gaffers Log as there is a good account from our Eastcoaster Editor Bernard (IAHAFC) Patrick!!

The venue was excellent and our thanks go to the Club for providing such great facilities free of charge. The meal was a culinary masterpiece from our own catering team so thanks again to them and the whole event team. This year enquiries



Bona ghosting up the Stour

In this Issue

Forestay
Sec's Spot
The Area AGM
Your new Committee and responsibilities
Francis B Cooke Trophy
The Bateman's Tower Trophy
The Felgate Trophy
The Needham Trophy
Maritime Woodbridge
Maldon Town Regatta and OGA Anniversary Rally
Shoal Waters at Forty Four
2008 Programme
January Sails
Backstay
For Sale

have already been made as the possibility of holding the event at the MLSC, which as some of you may remember was the centre piece venue at the founding of the OGA in 1963. The Maldon Town Regatta and OGA Anniversary rally is the event which we remember the occasion by. During last year some members in the Maldon area asked whether the AGM could be moved to the Blackwater area and so we got to thinking, planning and the costs are being viewed. So watch this space, but it is early days yet as the season of rubbing down and antifouling has not yet begun and there is a whole season out there just itching to be arranged, so with that Radio two link....to the programme.

Burnham Dinner and programme (ish)

The Annual dinner is being arranged by Trevor Rawlinson and Roy (recently returned to the fold member) Hart. Details of which are elsewhere in this issue but can I please urge you all to try to come, make your choices, and send payment to Clare Thomas by the date in the flyer. It will help no end with our accounts if she is the only person to receive monies. As you can see from the menu we will be having STP as a pud, "so, if you're watching (Jon) its all ok!!"

On the 29th of Feb we have a quiz planned at the Stour Sailing Club and an evening of Irish, folk, shanties planned "for afters" courtesy of the NIOGA Gaffers Boat Band!!!

The rest of the programme is as per the details in this edition and on the website but some dates are yet to be set and some venues may change just to keep you on your taff rails!

Membership

It was decided to take a look at some of our area membership information, and in particular the change in numbers up/down over the last couple of years. Some interesting points have come about from this and I thought it might be a good idea to share some of them with you so as to help dispel some misinformation that may have been clouding some areas.

These figures are current and for 2008. Individual membership costs £20 and entitles you to one vote. Family membership costs £23 (partner and children under 18 yrs) and entitles you to two votes. Junior membership £5.00 (under 18 and no vote). There is nothing set up for "life members" other than the "Elder Gaffer" status which is bestowed upon a member at certain times (no not like "cash for honours !). Payment by DD earns a discount of £2 but not in the case of the junior membership. A bank *STO is not the same as a DD and is no longer a valid method of payment as far as the OGA is concerned.* This is because of the administration time taken when activating it and making changes to the amount.

So, if you think you are paying by STO an easy check is to look at the figure, if it does not match those discounted above the chances are it IS an STO it would be much appreciated if you could cancel it and change to DD at of the correct amount please. Please check the address on the DD downloaded from the web and send it to Pete Lyons in N Ireland not me.

During these investigations, it transpired that it is possible as an oversight, particularly when paying by cheque, to miss a year's payment which results in being removed from the list of addresses from which the mail merge for Gaffers Log and Eastcoaster is produced. This then results in no Log, but as the Eastcoaster is on the web, it is easy to get all the information needed to carry on to all the events. So, if anyone is not getting Logs etc it is just possible that the payment has gone astray. Obviously if anyone knows of a mate who is not getting Eastcoaster, then please let them know what you now know!!! We, the individuals, are the membership's best information stream. Also, if you know of anyone who has changed address within the last 2, 3 or 4 years, ask them to get in touch with me so we can sort out any problems. (membership !!)

I have heard over the beach stones and barbeques; the question, "so what do we get for our membership subs?" so, an attempt to answer:

1. Four Gaffers Log publications.
2. One Yearbook with membership details, name of boat etc.
3. Four "hard copy" Eastcoaster magazines.
4. Event organisers' (those running and helping to stage and those taking part) insurance.
5. Extensive global, national and local area network for information.

6. Some 25 days plus of organised events either racing or social (we did 300 plus boat days of events in 07 season)
7. Plenty of photos of your boat(s) sailing in company taken and supplied free!
8. Fantastic website to be proud of.(non members would not be so)
9. For sale "yellow advertiser" of our own.
10. Camaraderie par excellence!

And finally....the National OGA AGM is on 19th at the CA so be there!!
Fair winds and fair tides PTK

2007 AGM

Fifty members of the East Coast Area attended the AGM, held on 10th November at the Orwell Yacht Club. This was a new venue for the OGA, but it proved to be an excellent choice, centrally located with adequate parking, a well stocked bar and a very good meal provided by Committee member Julia Raper and her team.

The real business began with Pete Elliston, as new Secretary, giving his report. In this, he spoke of the debt we owe to 'Fred' Rawlinson and Jon Wainwright and of the plans to take forward the area into the future, in the manner they would have wished. Their contribution was so significant it was now necessary to devolve a lot of work to new sub-Committees, and he thanked the remarkable number of members who had volunteered their services. The new Committee structure was then outlined, responsibilities defined and the new Committee re-elected en bloc.

Acting Treasurer, Richard Giles reported that the Area finances were in reasonable health and still in the black, but noted that the significant capital purchases in the year ie the laptop computer and 'marquee', were funded from one-off donations, not income. Also, that individual event organisers will need to budget carefully in the future, only the RHS rally and August Cruise were profitable in 2007. Richard also reminded members that the whole of the subscription goes into central funds and Areas receive back only minimal financial help in the running of our events, plus a small contribution to the cost of Eastcoaster.

Clare Thomas was introduced as the new Treasurer and Richard was thanked for his sterling work in temporarily filling the gap at a very difficult time.

Committee Structure and Tasks

Rob Williamson	Area President	01206 211 318
Pete Thomas	Vice President, Handicap and race analysis, Boat archive	01473 327 115
Pete Elliston	Area Secretary	01206 391 870
Lorna Hill	Area Administrator	01473 730 661
Clare Thomas	Area Treasurer	01473 327 115
Wendy Wetherill	Bosun (flags, Reeds nos. etc.)	01206 385 169
Julia Raper	Catering and social secretary	01284 706 034
Mike Robertson	Area membership	01473 327 115
Bernard Patrick	Publicity, Eastcoaster, Gaffers Log contact	01376 516 420
Richard Giles	Website	01206 308 420
Steve Daley-Yates	IT support, Boat archive	01629 760 981
Trevor Rawlinson	Crouch events	01621 783 969
Graham Wadeson	Minute Secretary	01394 383 082
Brian Hammett	OGA World President	01473 231 066

Following the successful practice of recent years, individual area events will be run by small sub-Committees of co-opted members, headed up by a Committee member.

And if you want to know what your Committee members look like, they're all on the website.

Awards

The formal side of the evening was concluded with the award of trophies, including:

Francis B Cooke Trophy

This award, for the best log submitted, was won by Mike Woodhouse for his cruise in his Vertue, 'Owenda'. The Avola trophy was not awarded due to the paucity of entries.

The Batemans Trophy

This is a new trophy, a magnificent scale model of the recently restored Bateman's tower at Brightlingsea, now used as a start line for the East Coast Race. It is awarded to the member who has contributed most to the advancement of the Area in the year and it was no surprise to hear that it had been given jointly and posthumously to 'Fred' Rawlinson and Jon Wainwright. It was presented to Trevor Rawlinson and David 'Shippers' Shipley on their behalf.

The Felgate and Needham Trophies

One of the problems in administering as large an Area as the East Coast is that some skippers naturally prefer to confine their involvement to their home waters and it was in an effort to persuade members to participate in several locations through the year that the Felgate Trophy was instigated. Five or six events are chosen, from Fambridge to Southwold, taking in the East Coast Race at Brightlingsea and a couple of races in the August Classics and the trophy awarded on aggregate points, (less each boat's worst result). This means the effect of variations in weather conditions and individual handicaps tend to be evened out, giving some quite close results. 2007 was no exception, with the first four boats, out of a total of forty competing through the year, finishing within one point and the first and third places had to be decided on a count-back of their best results. These first four craft could hardly have been more different, being Bona, a 103 year old ex-working bawley; Crow, a nearly new American designed 35ft barge-yacht, Molly Cobbler, a modern 19ft plywood 'interpretation' of a west country tosher and Gwenili, a 1910 French built 'gentleman's yacht'. The closeness of the competition not only speaks well for the robustness of the OGA handicap system, but shows that any boat, if competently sailed and campaigned through the season in the various venues, can win awards.

There are also separate awards for the classic Bermudan points series, won by Clive Church's Rhumba out of eight entries, with Random and Elfreda second and third.

Bona's skipper, Ian Smith, not only won the Felgate Trophy but also the new Needham Trophy, awarded to the boat over 100 years old gaining the most points through the year.



L to R; 'Shippers' and Trevor receive the Bateman Trophy from President Rob Williamson



Ian Smith receives the Felgate Trophy from official handicapper Peter Thomas



Molly Cobbler on the Colne

Mervyn Maggs



Gwenili with everything flying

Maritime Woodbridge 8th/9th Sept

What a marvellous weekend this turned out to be. Building on the success of last year, the organisers attracted more boats, more stands, more people and good weather. The ECOGA was well represented with Bonify, My Quest, Quiz, Good Intent, together with a stunning raft of Albert Strange designs; Charm (the 'other' one), Nirvana, Firefly and Sheila while Arthur Ransome's legacy of the area was represented by Peter Duck, Nancy Blackett and Ragged Robin – all local boats. There were also a number of local Deben Cherubs there and other classic craft ranging from the obligatory Thames barge, via a 44ft half-size replica of the Sutton Hoo longship, to Claudia Myatt and her coracles. What a feast for the eyes!

The ECOGA had a stand in the shed, once again using the new marquee to the full and had a lot of interest and signed up several new members. Lots of ideas were tossed around to improve the Association's presence in 2008.



Maldon Regatta 29th June

The East Coast Old Gaffers sailing season drew to a close with the Maldon Regatta, which also celebrates the anniversary of the birth of the OGA in 1963. After the dismal weather for most of the Classics Cruise in August, summer returned for the Bank Holiday and there was a collective holding of breath, hoping it would stay for the Regatta at the end of September. Alas, the high pressure collapsed and the forecast for Friday the eve of the event was 'NE'ly 5-7, occasionally gale 8', which gave a boost to those coming from points north such as Reverie, Bonify and Fanny, but put a stopper on the Crouch Mafia and the Swale Gang. However, in the event the wind wasn't too bad and the rain actually stopped late Friday afternoon to reveal a steady stream of gaffers and bermudies entering Mersea. Among the three-cornered sails was a distinctive German entry called appropriately, 'Scharfe Planke', whose skipper not only showed the way home to a lot of locals, but spoke eloquently and in excellent English at the prize-giving.

The Party

Friday evening's highlight for the Old Gaffers was a party thrown by David and Persephone Lewin ('Moonstone') at their West Mersea home. Because of the weather and the absence of a late launch service, only about half of the expected guests made it, but this meant that there was that much more for the 20 or so arrivals. The hospitality commenced with a glass or two of David's special brew of cointreau, brandy and champagne, which left the assembly totally 'Moonstoned'. The evening passed in a blur, but several eye-witnesses reported seeing a trumpet-playing penguin and a lady Committee member dancing the can-can in full Moulin Rouge rig. Quite a party, and if David and Persephone are unwise enough to do it again next year, be sure you're there!

The Race

The weather for Saturday, race day, was quite benign with a N'ly 3-4, which was fortunate for the party-goers, and soon a sizeable fleet of smacks, bawlies, gaffers and classics, plus a few moderns, was milling around the start off the Nass beacon. Committee boat Advent started the fleet with real gunfire and with the course to the first mark being down river on a close reach, there was much shouting and jockeying for clear wind at the start. After that it was a question of follow-my-leader as the fleet zig-zagged up to the finish at Osea, with much gybing and poling-out of stays'ls, but no un-gentlemanly windward work.

The Parade of Sail

The weather improved further as the fleet had lunch at anchor off Osea; there was some hazy sun and the wind backed a little, promising a beat up to Heybridge.

This Parade is actually a race, with prizes but no handicapping, so first home gets the trophy as well as the best berth and first chance at the free beer.

The breeze was now down to F3 so the fleet was still well bunched at the final turn at Herring point, before the finish at the end of the town prom. The channel buoys were not marks of the course, so there was much corner cutting, which resulted in the beautifully restored Saltair running firmly aground right on the point, close to high water on the highest tide of the year. Bona was unable to pull her off, but she was finally re-floated by Janet Frost's motor launch, before she could become a permanent fixture of the landscape. (Saltair, not Janet). In fact Saltair was already in the running for the prize for self-inflicted injury, as she ruined a very creditable position in the morning's race by going the wrong side of the Thirslet mark and having to beat back against the flood to re-round.

Apres Sail

After the free beer and cider at Taylor's yard, there was supper at the Queen's Head available to all competitors. This departure from the usual OGA upper room riot in the Little Ship Club wasn't a 100% success as most diners had to eat outside which inhibited the usual socialising and celebration of the OGA's founding. The organisers had made a big effort to attract side shows and stalls to the Hythe which made a colourful scene and attracted a good crowd of locals. After the prize-giving, there was a drum band and shanty singing and, in the evening, a live rock band for the energetic.

The berthing arrangements were an improvement on last year when boats, as well as skippers, were seen falling over after closing time. This year, there were pontoons at the Hythe and late arrivals were accommodated in adjacent yards, so all crews spent a comfortable, if freezing cold night.

True to form, Sunday, departure day, was beautiful with sun and a nice breeze from the east to give an energetic beat down river and probably the best sailing of the weekend.

In all, a very good weekend, organised by Gerry Courtney and her band of helpers.



Maldon Regatta: finish of the Parade of Sail (Mervyn Maggs)



Maldon Regatta: start off Nass beacon (Mervyn Maggs)



Crow on the Orwell



Bona ghosting up the Stour

Shoal Waters at Forty Four

There can't be many owners of old gaffers still sailing the same boat with barely diminished enthusiasm after 44 seasons, still without an engine and still working the winds and tides along the East Coast, visiting every river from the North Foreland to Orford Ness. Yes, you guessed, Charles Stock is still putting the majority of us to shame, even in his eighty-first year.

The summary of his log for 2007 shows what you can do and how far you can go in a 16ft boat, without the need to make extended passages, just by watching the weather and working the tides.



Shoal Waters with Charles and Joy Stocks

March 26th – 30th: 5days / 50 miles

Launched at Heybridge, anchored overnight off Northey Island. Then to Rowhedge via Ray Island, Nanny Goat beach and Rat Island and return to Heybridge.

April 14th – 16th: 5days / 60 miles

To the Crouch via the Rays'n, around Bridgemarsh island and back to Heybridge.

April 20th – 24th: 5days / 110miles

To the Walton Backwaters and up to Beaumont Quay; up the Stour to Manningtree, up the Orwell to Ipswich and then back to Heybridge.

May 16th – 21st: 5days / 110 miles

To the Walton Backwaters again, around Horsey island, up the Stour to Manningtree and Holbrook, down to St. Osyth for the launch of the smack Maria and back to Heybridge.

June 1st – 4th: 5days / 45 miles

Up the Blackwater to Fullbridge, then up the Colne to Colchester and home via Pyefleet creek in the fog.

June 7th – 10th: 4 days / 90 miles

Across the Thames via the Havengore and around the Isle of Sheppey; back through the Havengore, around Potton island in the Roach and back to Heybridge.

June 20th – 27th: 8 days / 135 miles

Up the coast to the Ore and up to Aldeburgh. Up the Butley river to the Mill and then back to the Walton and Frinton club, before going to Pin Mill, back to Walton and home.

July 9th and 19th

Just around Osea and up to Maldon.

Sept 5th – 9th: 5days / 100 miles

Into the Thames through the Havengore to Leigh-on-sea and Benfleet, then back to anchor off Shoebury beach and through the Havengore in the dark. Back home via Mersea to arrive on the mooring at 23:00.

Sept 13th – 14th: 2 days / 40 miles

To Colne beach and Rat island and home.

Sept 19th-20th: 2 days

Force 5/6 winds constrained cruising to the upper Blackwater and a visit to Mayland SC.

Oct 3rd-5th: 3 days / 20 miles

Down to Mersea and up to Maldon.

Oct 18th-22nd: 5 days / 90 miles

Up the coast again, into the Deben to Woodbridge and back home.

Total mileage at the time of writing, 850 NM in 56 days.

Charles Stock Shoal Waters

2008 Event Calendar

These are the dates you should be putting in your new diary.

The first, and a new departure, is a quiz night organised by Sue 'Bonify' Lewis, on Fri 29th Feb at the very welcoming Stour Sailing Club in Manningtree. Meet at 7pm for 7:30 quiz, with a fish supper to follow; cost, £5 on the night. More details if you need them from Sue on 01473 214 683. So clue up on your cranse-irons and cat-harpins and come along for a jolly evening.

Next, and for some, the most important event of the year is the *Annual Dinner at the Royal Burnham YC on 8th March.*

followed by the usual programme of races and rallies as outlined below, plus a return trip to Jimmy Lawrence's loft at Brightlingsea for a sail-making demo on the 28th March.

More details of individual sailing events and entry forms will be in the next Eastcoaster. The contacts shown can provide additional information, but remember that entry forms and fees should always go to the Treasurer, Clare Thomas and not to the Event organisers.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location/Venue</i>	<i>Contact</i>
21st-24th March	Easter Rally	R Orwell - RHYC	Brian Hammett
3rd-5th May	Foulness Rally	Foulness - River Roach	Trevor Rawlinson
24th-26th May	Crouch Rally	Fambridge - River Crouch	Trevor Rawlinson
14th June	RHS Rally	Holbrook - River Stour	Mike Robertson
TBA	Pin Mill Rally*	Pin Mill SC	Peter Thomas
TBA	Southwold Rally	Southwold	Andrew Osbourne
20th-23rd June	East Coast Race	Brightlingsea - River Colne	Richard Giles
5th-6th July	Swallows and Amazons Open boat Rally	Walton Backwaters	Tessa Hodgkinson
16th-24th August	Classics Cruise	Rivers Orwell, Stour & Deben	Peter Thomas
TBA	Maritime Woodbridge*	River Deben	Graham Wadson
13th September	Maldon Town Regatta*	River Blackwater	Peter Maynard
15th November	Area AGM	TBA	

*These Events are supported, but not organised by the OGA

January Sails

I called friend and fellow gaffer Colin Stroud on 1st January to wish him a Happy New Year; and where was he? Moored at Harwich's Ha'penny pier, after a gentle motor up from the Blackwater the previous day and a grandstand view of the fireworks in the harbour at midnight. He planned to go up to Ipswich that day, return to Bradwell on 2nd January and why didn't I join him? My life has been a succession of eminently regrettable decisions, so I immediately said yes, I would come up by train that afternoon. The coastal forecast said SE'ly backing E'ly, 5 to 7, occasionally 8, which I ignored, as you do, and caught the train. So it was that I tipped out of the station just as Ipswich Town FC scored their second goal against Bolton - you could hear the roar from the platform - and fell into a taxi, clutching two sea-bags containing almost every stitch of clothing I possess, and was soon enjoying the comfort of Plum's warm saloon and admiring the fairy lights strung out on Sue and Howard's Bonify.



Plum on the River Stour

A large curry at the local Indian and Plum's lovely diesel heater guaranteed a good night's sleep, but we awoke to the sound of rattling halyards and moaning rigging; the forecast looked as if it might be correct for once. But, nothing daunted, Colin prepared his answer to storms and gales - a large helping of porridge. Seeing the look on my face as I eyed my plateful, he said I was not to worry, he had used the slow hardener.

My life has been a succession of eminently regrettable decisions

We locked out of the wet dock at 09:30 with the lock-keeper wishing us good luck and a Happy New Year from his centrally heated cabin and motored off down the Orwell on the last of the ebb under an overcast sky and against a freshening and very cold NE'ly wind. However, by Levington a bit of blue sky appeared and we were able to hoist sail - double reefed main and half rolled staysail - and life looked a little less bleak. It got even better once past Walton pier: the sun came out and we were able to ease sheets and really make progress. Aided by the now flooding tide we roared along, nearly 7 kts at times, each taking short

he said I was not to worry, he had used the slow hardener

stints on the helm to ease freezing fingers and toes. But the Wallet is a lonely place in January and we saw no other boats once out of Harwich; our only company was three seals, seemingly indifferent to the never ending procession of steely-grey breakers marching onshore, their crests whipped away by the freshening wind. But we were making good progress and in no time we were running up the Blackwater into the setting sun and, thankfully, dowsing the sails in the lee of the power station breakwater. We motored into the marina just seven hours after leaving Ipswich, not a record time but fast enough for me, and were soon heading for home in motoring's answer to gaff rig - Colin's 2CV Citroen, slightly quicker than Plum, but much warmer.

. . . the Wallet is a lonely place in January. . .

Bernard Patrick

Backstay

Finally, while you're making your list of New Year resolutions, spare a thought for the compiler of the Association's annual Yearbook with its list of members and boats and PLEASE check your entry in the 2007 edition. If you've changed boat, address or personal details, if you've spotted an error, or even if you've been missed off the list altogether (it has happened) please call or e-mail the long-suffering Association membership secretary Peter Lyons on 02891 453 099 or at membership@oldgaffersassociation.org.

A degree of confusion did arise following the dropping of payment by bankers order, but all members who do not pay by direct debit should have had a DD form and cheque payment slip, in the December Gaffers Log as a reminder. If you're not on the membership list and would like to pay by DD, cheque or used fivers, contact Peter Lyons as above; and welcome back!

That's all for this time; if you have any comments, stories, photos or just want to get something off your chest, get in touch with your editor

Bernard Patrick

80 Rickstones Road
Witham
CM8 2ND
Tel 01376 516 420
e-mail bernard.patrick@waitrose.com

For Sale

Wayfarer sailing dinghy, GRP; including all equipment and launching trolley, all in excellent condition.
£1000 o.n.o.

Heavy duty 4 wheeled road trailer, fully braked and sprung, 4 ton plus capacity. Never been in water and always kept under cover. Excellent condition.
£1500 o.n.o.

Scheppach planer and thicknesser, 6"x10" capacity, 240 volt, with spare blades. In excellent condition.
£250

Call Eddie Williams on 01206 393 420