

# OGA

## EAST COAST GAFFERS

# EASTCOASTER

Newsletter of the East Coast OGA



2024 was certainly a busy year on the East Coast and 2025 promises to be the same, with increasing Member numbers and many events to look forward to. In this issue we bring reports from the Association AGM and our first winter event.

Skippers of our featured boats for the past three months provided plenty of material, including some excellent photos.

Your East Coast Committee has prepared the draft Calendar for 2025 which is available to download from the website. Please be sure to look out for updates, don't rely on details in this first draft for the whole year!

Don't forget to measure your boat if you intend to take part in any racing this year.

For those who have Internet access, back issues of the Eastcoaster Newsletter are now available online as 'flipbooks'.

Finally, a plea from your Editor for more lively tales to share with photos or sketches . . . and thankyou to those who are regular contributors. Without content, the Newsletter can't go to press or be published online.

*Cover photo: 'Philomena' by Gerard Brown, 2024*

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## Dates for the diary: 2025

Your Committee has been working hard on the 2025 Programme, available in it's third version. Keep updated by visiting the Events page on the website:  
[www.oga.org.uk/areas/east\\_coast/east\\_coast\\_events.html](http://www.oga.org.uk/areas/east_coast/east_coast_events.html)

### 23 February, 2025: Grand Day Out, London

Still time to book on this trip to London . . .  
 Visit Trinity Buoy Wharf & Cutty Sark with guided tours.

### 15 March: EC Annual Dinner, West Mersea

Save the date for a less formal event.

### 18 - 19 April: Easter Egg Rally

Trail your boat to join us at Royal Harwich Yacht Club (larger boats are also welcome).

### 24 May: sail in company to St Malo

Share plans via WhatsApp with others travelling south.

### 6 - 8 June, 2025: OGA Rally, St Malo

We're invited to join the French OGA for a three-day Rally. A small fleet will hopefully be sailing to St Malo in company.

### 27 - 29 June, 2025: Swallows & Amazons

Three days again in 2025 to allow a leisurely cruise on Friday for the rigours (!) of the race on Saturday. Walton & Frinton Yacht Club will be welcoming us to their excellent facilities.

### 5 - 6 July: EC Annual Race

We will be running a Small Boat Race alongside the larger boats on Saturday. If there is sufficient interest there may be a short open boat cruise on Sunday.

### 26 July - 4 August, 2025: East Coast Summer Cruise

We'll travel a little farther afield this year, visiting the Rivers Ore and Alde. The week will be the usual mix of socialising, sailing, racing and fun activities. **NB: date may change!**

### August: NW Ullswater Rally & Gaffing Championship

NW Area is planning this event for August Bank Holiday.



*'Leisurely lunch' by Gerard Brown.  
 OGA Photo Competition prizewinner*



## East Coast Area AGM: 2 November 2024

The East Coast OGA held their Area AGM at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club on Saturday 2, November 2024. After gathering in the bar for a drink and chat, 37 members sat down for the meeting at 5.30pm, chaired by Paul Masters, Area President. 14 members sent their apologies and the minutes from last year were duly read and approved. The East Coast OGA has 30 new members since last year's AGM and several were welcomed to the meeting, putting names to faces: Elizabeth Reynolds, Koren & Robert Williams, Joyce & Trevor Brown and Nicholas Hall. Hopefully, many more new members will join us during the Winter Social Events Programme.

There were no matters arising from the 2023 Minutes so the meeting continued with reports from the President, Paul and Secretary, Pete Elliston. Treasurer, Yvonne Graham presented the annual accounts, thanking Clare Thomas, previous Treasurer for her help in handing over this role. These were also approved by the members present.

There was some positive discussion about the EC Gaffers communications strategies, presented by Beverley Yates, Sarah Adie and Nick Phillips with some suggestions for improvement from the floor but generally a sense of satisfaction with the team's work. Similarly there was support for the work being undertaken by the Handicap and Racing Committee. Ed Roberts presented their report, encouraging members to check out their handicaps and measure their boats over the winter if necessary.

Only one member of the Committee stood down, Trevor Rawlinson, after over 30 years' service. Grateful thanks are extended to Trevor. The remaining Committee members were re-elected en bloc. An exciting and full programme for 2025 was presented with plenty to look forward to. Mike Beckett, Association President and an East Coast Member brought news of the St Malo event planned by the French OGA in June, 2025. Paul also noted the need for forward planning as the East Coast is organising the Association AGM in 2026 and OGA65 in 2028. The final item on the agenda was the Gaffling project which resulted in a lively discussion about how to take this forward on the East Coast, with the possible purchase of a third boat. The meeting closed as supper was served with prizegiving and further discussion about the Gafflings taking place afterwards. Grateful thanks are extended to all the staff at Royal Harwich Yacht Club, once again, for providing us with an excellent venue for the AGM as well as superb catering in the bar and dining room.



*Sailing on the River Orwell Photo: Beverley Yates*

## Featured boats

*The past three months has seen 'Lindy', Winkkle Brigs' and 'Cachalette' featured on Eastcoaster and our Social Media channels. For the next few months, we'll be featuring 'smaller gaffers', starting with the Deben Lugger and Gaffling. Please contact the Editor with ideas for more boats to feature!*

### 'Lindy'

Our featured boat for November celebrated her 100th anniversary in 2024. In the same family for 52 years, Victoria looks back on some happy memories. Her skipper 50 years ago, John Beale brings us a report of the 1974 OGA Heineken Rally.

On 1 June 2024 'Lindy' was in the Walton Basin, surrounded by her friends including 'Bella Ropha' and 'Cobweb' to celebrate her 100 birthday. A lovely evening was enjoyed remembering voyages, meeting friends and looking back over the 52 years she has been in our family. To mark her centenary, a book has been written outlining her history. 'Lindy' was built by David Hillyard in Littlehampton. David Hillyard was actually born in Rowhedge and did his apprenticeship in Wivenhoe. She was one of his first yachts to be built. We understand she was a show boat at Olympia, and an Irish man bought her and called her 'Graineog'. In 1927 she won the Estuary Cruiser design competition and in 1930 her name was changed to 'Lindy' and she was registered in London.

Andrew and I are the 9th owners. There have been a number of interesting owners in between. In 1944 'Lindy' was purchased by the future Vice Admiral, Sir Lancelot Bell Davies, who collected her from Littlehampton. He rigged her as a fishing vessel so he could take her out to sea, he had also been able to access charts so he knew where the mined channels were and managed to sail her to Gosport. He did get spotted by a Royal Naval ship on the way, but he stood his ground. In the 1960s she was owned by an accountant in Cambridge who regularly wrote for the yachting press, sadly we have not been able to find these articles. Finally of course there was my father, John Beale. Under his ownership he cruised extensively around The Netherlands, Friesian Islands both Dutch and German. During John Beale's ownership was when 'Lindy' first became introduced to the Walton Backwaters and a certain John Fleming. John was a huge 'Lindy' fan. He was probably responsible for all sorts of voyages, mishaps and was hugely generous in making sure that 'Lindy' was looked after and loved. As children we enjoyed a number of cruising holidays with the Flemings on 'Widgeon'. Just imagine, six girls, two non-sailing wives and two boats!

I first ventured on board 'Lindy' when I was a child in 1971. I could walk into the fore cabin standing up. Every holiday was on board and 'Lindy' was gradually adapted for a family of four. I spent nearly every weekend sailing on 'Lindy', there were trips with 'Widgeon' (built 1901) and 'Cobweb' (another Hillyard). It was an idyllic childhood for my sister and me. Looking back it is hard to believe that we both shared the fore cabin.

By the time of our last holiday on 'Lindy' both my sister and I were adults. We had suitcases on the coach roof and spent alternate nights on the main cabin floor, the other one of in the fore cabin.



*'Lindy' a family boat*



As well as her extensive cruises, she has a bit of a racing history. She won the Stone Plate once at the East Coast OGA Annual Race as well as a number of other prizes. She was also a regular at the Snowball Trophy, Walton & Frinton Yacht Club, when there was sufficient water to sail around the club. In 1974, she sailed to the Netherlands to join the OGA Heineken Rally.

Having been in the family 52 years she has provided much pleasure, but has always made us felt safe and secure. She has looked after us and been a huge source of comfort. When you sit on board with the oil lamps glowing, you can just marvel at the craftsmen who built her.

*Words and family photos: Victoria Burgoyne*

## 'Lindy' joins the OGA Heineken Rally, July 1974

*Long-standing OGA member, John Beale brings a report of the 1974 OGA Heineken Rally which he joined in 'Lindy', a 5 ton sloop built by David Hillyard in 1924.*

The invitation to join the Heineken Rally came as a surprise but an opportunity not to be missed. A crew had to be found. I knew of a retired Master from P&O, Peter Hufflet, a near neighbour of ours who seemed to have the right qualifications. I had only been a First Mate in the Bankline and General Steam. Neither of us had crossed the North Sea in a small boat before. Lewis Ridgeway was the third member of the crew. He lived in Maylandsea where we kept 'Lindy' and had purchased his own boat at the same time we bought 'Lindy'. Our families were similar and a friendship had developed. At that time there were many boatyards scattered around the coast. The one at Maylandsea was Cardnell's, run by two brothers who were very helpful to us newcomers. As long as you had a wooden boat it was no problem, glass fibre was a definite 'no no' back then. Lewis was an Accountant and also a keen musician and he played his violin in several amateur orchestras.

I guess I had joined the Old Gaffers Association for the help they would provide in overcoming some of the problems of owning an old Gaffer. If you could afford the cost of converting your old gaffer to Bermudian then you did back in the 1970's, it did not come cheaply and some conversions were not successful. The OGA also ran a Boat Insurance scheme, it was difficult if not impossible to get insurance on old boats until the OGA came up with their scheme which solved the insurance problem for many an old boat owner.

The Rally started after the OGA Annual East Coast Race where 'Lindy' had come third in her class. Our wives were frantically removing the cases of lager which Heineken were so generous in giving us! The wives wanted their husbands home safely and sober after the trip was over. After the race we managed to pick up a further crew member, a stranger name Alex McMullen. We had been asked if we would take Alex, who was the Editor of 'Motor Boat and Yachting Magazine'. This we were delighted to do as to have an experienced small boat sailor was definitely a bonus for us three first timers. Once the crew were on board we spent the night at anchor off Stone.

The morning of Sunday 28 July 1974 dawned fine and clear with a westerly wind blowing force four to five. At 0945 hrs. we weighed anchor and proceeded to the start line where we crossed at 1002 hrs. having set the middle jib. By 1500 hrs. the



*'Lindy' joins the Heineken Rally, 1974  
Photos: Alex McMullen*





wind had increased, the log showed 17 miles and we were at the NE Gunfleet Buoy, a little while later we reefed the mainsail. By midnight we had completed 60 miles but the sea was rough and we struck the mainsail. I remember after all these years that we did it because although the main was reefed the boom kept catching on waves and pushed it inboard and then it crashed out snatching on the mainsheet. I think we tried various things but we were very low in the water. By 0830 hrs. the following morning the sea had moderated and we hoisted the main once again with three and half rolls on the reefing.

By 1200 hrs. on the Monday we had removed the reefs and the log was showing 98 miles. Bill our P&O Master got his sextant out for a meridian altitude which gave us a latitude and the confidence that we were heading in the right direction. By 1445 we sighted land, but it was not until 1950 hrs. that evening that we entered the breakwater at IJmuiden. At 2121 hrs. we were secured on the pontoon at IJmuiden Yacht Club having completed 157 miles in 33 hours and 48 minutes at an average speed of 4.65 knots. We were looking forward to a good sleep. There was not a lot of space with four people and their luggage including Lewis's violin in its case and Bill's sextant in its mahogany box.

We spent four days enjoying the delights of Amsterdam. Once again Heineken provided us with more stores. This time no wives were present to remove them! A Heineken reception was put on for us at the KNSM Building, followed by a film show. On the Friday Heineken arranged a Brewery Tour followed by a canal trip in the afternoon. In the evening Heineken hosted a dinner once again at the KNSM building.

The Saturday was spent racing on the IJsselmeer. This involved all the boats getting to IJsselmeer as well as the race. 25 yachts took part with 'Lindy' coming 7th in her class. The Dutch Royal Yacht was present to view the racing so we were informed and we were asked to extend the necessary courtesies as necessary. In the evening there was a traditional Dutch dinner and prizegiving by Mr. Freddie Heineken, followed by dancing which was the official end to the rally. We also got the good news that the yacht which had finished its trip over on the beach to the south of Amsterdam was back in the water with the help of Heineken and members of the OGA.

The following day Sunday 4 August 'Lindy' slipped her moorings at 0740 hrs. and headed west towards the North Sea. At 1415 hrs. 'Lindy' cleared the outer breakwater and streamed the log. The weather was showery with an easterly force 4 wind blowing. The main was hoisted with two reefs. By 2020 the wind had increased and the main was struck. By 2100 hrs. the wind was gale force in a northerly direction, the jib was struck and 'Lindy' was running under bare poles. There was little sleep for our crew of three, Alex McMullen had returned by ferry to write up about the rally. It was not until 0730 hrs. the next morning that the weather had improved to enable us to hoist the storm jib. By 0920 hrs. we were able to hoist the mainsail again. At 1200 hrs. the wind was in a northerly direction force 3. It had stopped raining and it was fine and clear.



On Tuesday 6 August at 0047 hrs. 'Lindy' passed the Sunk Light Vessel. By 0800 hrs. the anchor was dropped at Brightlingsea to clear customs. At 0915 hrs. we were granted 'free pratique', the anchor was raised and we headed towards Maylandsea. At 1355 hrs. we picked up our mooring, having completed an estimated total distance of 143 miles in 40 hours and 13 mins at an average speed of 3.4 knots. The following weekend the local paper had an article about our trip which puzzled me at first, then I discovered it had come from Heineken. There is no such thing as a free lunch!

*Report by John Beale, OGA member for over 50 years, skipper of 'Lindy' at the Heineken Rally, 1974.  
Photos of the Rally, Alex McMullen.*

## Winkle Brigs

*Our featured boats for December were Winkle Brigs, East Coast Gaffers Francis, 'Tab Nab' and Yvonne 'Philomena' provided material including photos for several articles and there's also one about 'Sea Jade' by Gerard Brown.*

The original Winkle Brig was developed on the East coast of England to fish for winkles and oysters. This type of vessel evolved to be immensely capable in her home waters around Mersea Island although many were built and fished over a wider area. A typical vessel would have been 15ft by 5ft by 10 inches/3 feet. She would have been an open boat, clinker built with an iron centreplate and was propelled by both sail and oar. In many cases she was rigged as a gaff sloop although in other cases as a lugger.

From this East Coast beginning we now move to Lancashire where the late Eric Bergqvist designed and built the GRP Winkle Brig. They were built between 1986 and 2002 and approximately 122 were produced. They have a displacement of 650 KG (of which 150 KG is ballast). Although minor alterations were made over time they were all 16 feet LOH (with a four foot bowsprit), 15 feet LWL with a beam of 6ft 4inches and a draft of 1 ft 2 ins with the twin bilge boards raised and 2 ft 6 ins with them lowered.

These bilge boards are one of the greatest benefits of this design for they allow for an uncluttered cabin sole (the bilge boards slide up into the sides of the bunks which makes the cabin huge given the dimensions of the hull). Further, when up, the bilge boards still protrude below the hull making small but effective bilge keels which allow her with her long keel to dry out level. The bilge plates on the early boats are GRP encapsulated steel, weighing 25 kg each, and are raised and lowered by a simple lanyard led to the top of the bridge deck within easy reach of the cockpit. All these Winkle Brigs were rigged as gaff sloops with topsails apart from the last ones which were rigged with a high peaked main and no topsail (which brought the centre of effort forward). On the standard gaff sloop the mainsail was 104 square feet, jib 42 square feet and topsail 26 square feet. The high peaked main was 135 square feet and all spars on both versions were of Colombian pine/Douglas fir.

## Winkle Brig 'Tab Nab'

My own Winkle Brig 'Tab Nab' (she was named 'Tab Nab 3' but I shortened it) was discovered by my brother Mark and myself in a boatyard in Wisbech sitting on her trailer in a very sorry state. Her mainsail and topsail together with their associated yards were missing. Almost all the external woodwork was rotten. Subsequently we discovered that she had been donated to the Sea Cadets and that she was in fact Winkle Brig number 21 built in 1988.

Having purchased her, she was towed by my brother Mark to his home near Peterborough and the process of restoration began. Interestingly, he discovered that the hull was formed of two GRP mouldings of which the starboard side was inferior with a lot of voids indicating poor layup whilst the port side was near perfect. All was made good and a new boom, gaff and topsail yard were made together with almost all the wooden parts, including the bulwarks. Three new sails were ordered from Jeckells, the trailer was overhauled and 'Tab Nab' was duly launched at the Walton and Frinton Yacht Club in May, 2022. My first trial sail was to Landermere in the Walton Back Waters and I then set out on a six week cruise coastal hopping to Lowestoft and back with two weeks on the Norfolk Broads in between. Sailing upright in a light breeze (F2) I found her well balanced and fast.

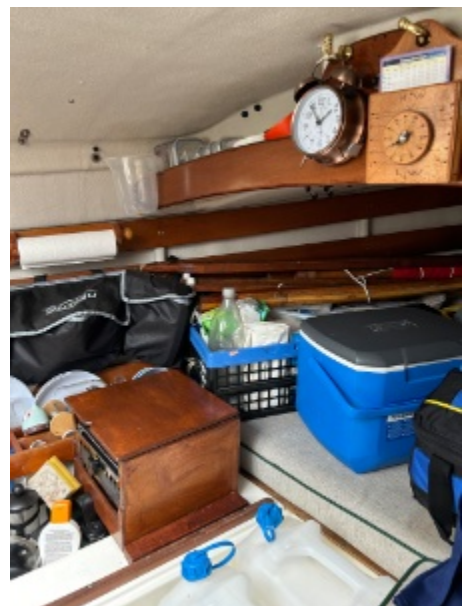
However, when hit by a squall of F3/F4 she was thrown over on her beam ends and rounded up into the wind totally out of control. Equally, I have to say, I never felt the slightest concern about her absolute stability. Nevertheless, I was concerned about ramming a moored yacht when passing to leeward of it whilst on the wind. I soon learnt to avoid those conditions. I also learned that in a F3/F4 it was wise to put the first reef in the mainsail and two reefs in a F4/F5. In both cases this brought the centre of effort forward and made her less likely to gripe.

At the end of September 2022 'Tab Nab' was taken out of the water and towed by my brother Mark back to Peterborough. The main work undertaken during the winter was the manufacture of a new mast from the aluminium extrusion used in making a spinnaker pole for a large yacht. This new mast weighed 8 KG whilst the old one weighed 16 KG. This did make a contribution to stability but not as much as I had hoped.

During the season 2023 I undertook a six week cruise to Battlebridge on the River Crouch, visited the Roach and explored the Blackwater. On the way out from Tollesbury heading for the Wallet and home I was hit by a F6 squall whilst reaching under single reefed main and jib and totally lost control as 'Tab Nab' completed almost a half circle as she rounded up into the wind.

It was obviously time for a rethink!

*'Tab Nab' by Francis Douglas*





## Winkle Brig 'Philomena'

Yvonne found 'Philomena' as the result of an advert and towed her back to Walton-on-the-Naze from the Midlands. She has owned her for a longer time than I have owned 'Tab Nab' and thus has considerably more experience than I have in handling Winkle Brigs. 'Philomena' is rigged as a cutter which means that a quick reduction in sail area can be made by furling one of the headsails. Her mainsail is also peaked up more than the original but less than the high peaked version thus bringing its centre of effort forwards (but not as much as my Dutch mainsail).

Yvonne feels that one of 'Philomena's greatest strengths is that, 'She always makes me feel safe'. In addition, she has comfortable wide berths and doesn't take much water aboard in heavy weather. Her one big weakness, she feels, is that she doesn't like sailing close to the wind. Yvonne has made a number of alterations to the original design. Amongst these are: Changing to cutter rig with a higher peaked main. Cutting down the original cockpit tent and putting a flexible pole in the aft end to make it hoop shaped (See picture of 'accommodation').

Making steps, that also serve as lockers, to make it much easier to step up from the cockpit seats to the cabin roof (I have copied these on 'Tab Nab' and would thoroughly recommend them). Lining the inside of the aft bulkhead and adding shelves. Putting wooden slats on the cockpit seats to stop everything sliding off when the vessel heels.

Yvonne says: 'Philomena' sails well but doesn't have the weight to cut through rough water. However, she is only small after all and she has always got to the intended destination eventually. She also motors well but needs a bit of speed to proceed astern which can be risky in confined spaces but can usually be sorted out with the judicious use of a paddle.'

*'Philomena' by Francis Douglas.*

*Photos: Gerard Brown*



## Winkle Brig 'Sea Jade'

*Gerard Brown tells the story of how he and his family bought and got to know 'Sea Jade' which they trail to sail from Scotland to Cornwall.*

We bought 'Sea Jade', our Winkle Brig, during the lockdown in 2020, and initially, we worried that she was just an extravagant holiday romance. But almost five years later, the relationship has proved much more durable than that and 'Tinky Winky's' place in our lives has been assured. As a family of four with differing ambitions and ideas about what sailing was for, we'd bought a Wayfarer from which we could fish, picnic and even line up for some club racing when the occasion demanded it. We'd enjoyed sedate trips to the Lake District with it and an eye-opening holiday on the West Coast of Scotland.

But, it was when we were on holiday in Cornwall with the boat sat on a mooring that we decided we wanted something bigger, with a cabin to get us out of the weather and to sleep in.

But, living in Milton Keynes, whatever we chose also had to be able to sit on a trailer and be small enough to overwinter in a barn. 'Sea Jade' had been for sale for some time before we spotted her online and made the short trip over the Carrick Roads to Falmouth, where she was waiting for her next custodian. We were impressed by her. She crammed a lot into her 16-foot hull; she had the traditional looks we so much admired, plenty of woodwork and bronze to look after, and a cabin that we were confident would take the four of us in relative camping comfort. After a few days of deliberation, we sealed the deal and dragged her to the excellent Pasco's Boatyard in St Just in Roseland, where we'd arranged to keep her until we could next get down to Cornwall to sort her out.

Two weeks later, we were back and set to unpacking the spars, the sails and the rigging. We really had no idea what we were doing, though; there was far too much string to deal with and a couple of extra sticks to tie it to. Thankfully, help was available, and Craig, the yard manager, gave us some valuable help and assistance sorting us out and getting her ready for the water. A tractor-assisted launch followed, and with our puny Honda 2.3hp doing double duty in the outboard well, we puttered out towards the 'vast expanse' of the Carrick Roads before we hauled up the canvas and began to work it all out. The first few days aboard were amazing, and at times, we must have even looked like we knew what we were doing. Sadly, we only had a week with her before we had to head home in late August. 'Sea Jade' was left on her mooring, and thanks to another wave of COVID-19, we weren't to sail her again until the spring, when we enjoyed a week in Coniston launching and recovering from an excellent custom-built Extreme Marine trailer.

The summer holidays saw another month of messing around Falmouth Bay and the Carrick Roads before we ventured East to Titchmarsh for a few end-of-season trips around the Stour and the Orwell with an E-Propulsion electric motor. We felt that we'd found our feet with a gaffer and, as newly qualified Day Skippers the following year, we took her to the West Coast of Scotland for some much more ambitious passages around the Sound of Mull and the Lynn of Morvern where even two batteries don't get you quite enough range for multi-day multi-day off-grid adventures, but do allow you to get very close to the wildlife.





Although rated as only having three berths, for one night of this trip, we managed to sleep five, thanks to two broken elbows and a section of slippery rocks between our anchorage and the beachside campsite we'd identified for our two children and their friend. We thought this must be some WB record, but a little online research told us that Sea Jade's first owner had even managed to sleep seven (including five small children) on board with the help of a cockpit tent.

Since we'd bought her, we'd spent a lot of time and effort ironing out whatever issues needed sorting, including sanding, painting and varnishing. However, we needed professional help to replace the leeboard pins, which, after 30 years of service, must have required some years of attention. So, Harry King took on the job of drilling out the old ones out and fitting new ones, as well as reconfiguring the transom to accept a much more punchy Tohatsu 6hp motor. We also had a new mainsail made where the sharp-eyed will notice that the WB18 has been accidentally flipped to BW18 on the port side. An Aeroluff Spar furling Genoa brought the rest of the rig into the modern world, and its lightweight efficiency made a massive difference to real-world sail handling. Some sea trials from Titchmarsh and an OGA East Coast summer cruise in 2022 left us delighted with the extra power and range we'd acquired, and over the next two years, we've enjoyed more of the East Coast and longer trips to the West Coast of Scotland.

The children have left home now, and they do their own things during their holidays. As a result, we've gained much more space on board, and 'Sea Jade' is a pretty good multi-day cruising boat for two tidy adults. Whilst she's no racing boat, we have seen 7kts SOG with two reefs, in gusts of 32kts, and the Winkle Brig has proved to be the perfect introduction to proper sailing for us. She's stable and forgiving, easy to handle on and off the water and has allowed us to explore some beautiful coastline that a bigger boat would struggle to get into. A 12-litre fuel tank easily gives us a week's worth of cruising, and a solar-powered lithium battery keeps the Garmin, the VHF, and the iPhones charged almost indefinitely, as well as providing some basic cabin lighting.

She has left us wanting more, though, and much like the situation we found ourselves in with the Wayfarer, we sometimes think bigger might be better as our ambitions grow. Still, we'd most definitely miss her looks, charm and portability. She's been a real memory maker.

*Words and photos: Gerard Brown*

## 'Cachalette'

Our January 2025 boat was 'Cachalette', built by East Coast Gaffer Steve Yates in his garden high above the River Derwent in Derbyshire and launched in 2010 on a local reservoir. She's named after 'Cachalot' the 'big boat' Steve was restoring at the time, a 'featured boat' in 2023.

'Cachalette' is designed by Iain Oughtred and the instruction manual for the 'Guillemot', design no. 54 states she is:

*"A strong, stable and very capable boat along the lines of a 19th century ship's boat or large yacht tender. She floats on her designed waterline with three adults aboard and can take a great load of gear as well; she'll carry five people for a moderate distance in suitable conditions. Two plus two children might be a comfortable maximum for pottering about. The Guillemot has been designed for owners who need a more burdensome hull with flatter floors, firmer bilges and higher freeboard. She will not be as light and fast, but is a lot more steady in the water and less 'flighty' than the Acorn Skiff. She is finely modelled and performs very well indeed for a boat of this type, whether rowed or under sail. She can happily take a light outboard as well. Two optional sailing rigs are shown; the basic standing lug is the simplest to set up and handle. The gunter sloop gives a more interesting sailing performance; it is set up with traditional simplicity, and the short spars are easily stowed out of the way. There are no battens to complicate the handling of the mainsail."*

Hidden away amongst the trees in his back garden, 'Cachalette' began to take shape, above the workshop where he was also making a new rudder for 'Cachalot' amongst other projects.

Launch was planned for 2010 and a suit of sloop sails was ordered from James Lawrence.

After musing for a few years about alternative sails, Steve drew up plans for a lugsail. He made a new mast and spars, taking delivery of a new lugsail from Jeckells in July 2023.

Words & photos: Beverley Yates



## Association AGM Gloucester, 2025

*The Association AGM was held on 11 January, 2025 in Gloucester, East Coast Secretary, Pete Elliston, brings us this report.*

OGA President, Mike Beckett opened the proceedings with a thankyou to the Scotland Area team who organised the weekend's activities, enjoyed by many of the Members attending the meeting at the historic Llanthony Secunda Priory. Activities included guided tours of the city and a visit to T. Nelson & Co. Boatyard.

The formal part of the AGM was kept brief. The Treasurer, Tony Kiddle presented a healthy set of accounts with a vote to approve continuing the small subscription increase in future years. Mary Gibbs stood down as Membership Secretary and East Coast Elder Gaffer, Clare Thomas was elected to a round of applause to take her place. Secretary, Colin Stroud and Tony Kiddle both stood for a further term in office. In his report, Mike noted that 2024 was a great year highlighted by the trip to the Netherlands by many UK Gaffers to join their 20th anniversary celebrations. He was pleased to report that membership numbers remain stable. He noted that there are plenty of plans in 2025 and beyond for Members to join in with, particularly the visit to St Malo in June.

**The next AGM will be organised by the East Coast Area to be held in Chatham, late February, 2026.**

Ben Collins and Maddie Masters translated for the President and Vice President of the Vieux Gréements de France (French OGA) as they presented their invitation. They hope to have 300 boats at the gathering, based at their base in St Malo with racing, sailing, waterborne games, skulling and day trips for those not sailing. More information and registration details will be available online.

Jo Tall did a presentation on 'Building a paddleboard from cedar' which was fascinating. It goes to prove that people will still build wooden things, as this project clearly shows, and may even lead into building a Gaffling.

*Report: Pete Elliston*

*Gloucester Cathedral, Photo: Paul Masters*



*AGM held in Llanthony Secunda Priory Photo: Pete Elliston*



*Guided tour of Gloucester Photo: Charles Erb*



## Racing & handicaps: 2025

If you race, please help the EC Area Handicap & Racing sub-committee. They have been working hard to update information for EC boats and make this available. There are many boats for which information is incomplete or very out of date.

Please visit the updated page to check your boat's class and handicap.

[www.oqa.org.uk/areas/east\\_coast/east\\_coast\\_racing.html](http://www.oqa.org.uk/areas/east_coast/east_coast_racing.html)

Boats that are missing or with a status of 'UPDATE' need to send new measurements using the instructions on the Racing page . . . maybe a job for the winter while you're laying up?!

*Photo (right): EC Race, 2023 by Sue Lewis*



## Sketchbook Sailors

A great day was had by a small but select group of East Coast Gaffers at the wonderful Sprat Shed, Robertsons Boatyard, Woodbridge on Sunday 8 December, 2024.

We now have eight more confident artists, following two excellent workshop sessions with Claudia Myatt. Rather than write, let's allow the photos to tell the story and illustrate our growing confidence in making marks, sketching the sea and drawing boats on a variety of papers with pencil, ink and watercolour.

Thanks go to everyone who came to the workshops during the tail end of Storm Darragh, to Claudia for her patient, helpful and most informative personal guidance and Carey for organising the event.

*Report: Carey Stephenson*

*Photos: Beverley Yates*



## OGA Photography Competition

Winners and runners up were announced at the Association AGM. Photo galleries are published online, here's a few with local East Coast interest . . .

*First prize, Sailing Gaffers:  
'Sweat the Halyards' by Charles Erb*



*First prize, Life at Sea:  
'Summer Sailing Fun' by Paul Masters*



*Second prize, Life at Sea:  
'Ah haaaa' by Jo Masters*



## Website, Social Media, Print & email

### The choice is yours!

Every registered EC OGA Member who has provided us with an email address receives a regular mailing with updates and links to new content online. Please note that both Family members may submit their email address. News is published on the Eastcoaster website: [www.eastcoastgaffers.org.uk](http://www.eastcoastgaffers.org.uk)

The EC Gaffers Facebook page is updated regularly and there are WhatsApp groups for social 'chat' and events. Events information and booking forms are on the main OGA website:

[www.oga.org.uk/areas/east\\_coast/east\\_coast\\_events.html](http://www.oga.org.uk/areas/east_coast/east_coast_events.html)

The Association website provides easy access to 'East Coast Gaffers Online': Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and EASTCOASTER (online with archived PDF copies to download and print). This quarterly full colour PDF digest of posts is available for download to print at home.

[www.oga.org.uk/areas/east\\_coast/east\\_coast\\_online.html](http://www.oga.org.uk/areas/east_coast/east_coast_online.html)

For £6 per annum, East Coast Members may also opt in to having a printed copy of EASTCOASTER mailed to them on a quarterly basis. Send your cheque and request for this service to: Sarah Adie, Arpajon, 25a Harwich Road, Mistley, CO11 1ND

If you and/or another family Member in your household has an email address and would like to receive the monthly mailings, or you have changed your email address, please contact Colin Stroud, Association Secretary to confirm your details.

Contact Colin by email: [secretary@oga.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oga.org.uk)



*Above: 'Laerling' nominated for CB Awards, 2025*

*Below: 'Yet' restored engineless smack, nominated for CB Awards, 2025*

