

As you know there are four Swifts out here; three belong to Brits - Bill Atkinson (SO 60) Vic Monkhouse (SO 55) both of whom I have contacted re. membership - myself and the fourth Swift belongs to a Qatari called Issa Khalifi. He is in oil offshore so we don't see much of him these days.

Sailing here is an all-year-round pursuit (see photo), the water temperature varying from about 15°C minimum in the winter to about 35°C in the summer. I keep my Swift moored in a marina and even with good anti-fouling the weed growth is incredible although for most of the year it is no great hardship to slip into the water with a scuba mask and give her bottom a scrub.

We have the usual range of weather from dead calm to howling gale but most times the weather is fine with a prevailing North easterly giving a moderate sea that the Swift copes with reasonably well if somewhat wetly.

The best weather is when we get a 15-20 knot south westerly coming over land. This gives a flat sea and steady blow that the Swift revels in. Broad-reaching under spinnaker in these conditions is exhilarating to say the least!

The main drawback out here is that the cruising ground is pretty uninteresting. The scenery is non-existent and there is no where within reasonable sailing distance of Doha worth sailing to so our sailing usually consists of setting off in the morning and weaving a tortuous route to one of the sandy islands nearby where we can find a quiet bay to anchor for lunch and a swim. Sometimes we tow a windsurfer for off-boat recreation. We then aim to get back to the marina for an illicit sundowner before dark at around 6.30 (the sun sets in 2½ minutes exactly)

Overnight stays on the boat are usually limited to the cooler months since high time heat and humidity during the summer is very uncomfortable without air-conditioning and no-one has yet invented an A/C suitable for the Swift!

We haven't organised any racing yet although I entered for an open handicap event at the local sailing club. I didn't do too well since I was sailing under the same handicap number as an Enterprise dinghy! I'll get it right next time. Mind you I put the fear of God up the Lasers, 470's and Hobies at the start!

I won't ramble on any longer since I want to keep this down to a reasonable size for air-mail. Speaking of which, please send things out air-mail only. Surface mail takes up to 6 months. I got December's newsletter on 7th April (January's came in 1 week).

All the best from Doha.

John S. Paton  
Doha, Qatar

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#### INSERTS

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ASSOCIATION

## 1. EDITORS EXTEMPORATIONS

1.1 SWIFT NATIONALS

On behalf of the Secretary can I put in a plea for maximum support for the Swift Nationals to be held very shortly (May 27, 28) on Rutland Water - see item 3.2 of Secretary's Scuttlebut. You can just turn up but a call to Paddy (045-824-303(H) 01-632 3606(W)) or Graham (057-287-878) will help the organisers.

1.2 NEWSLETTER

Many thanks for the helpful and supportive responses to the new format of the last newsletter. It emerged even longer than originally anticipated and thus the savings in production costs from the small print were really quite substantial.

1.3 REGISTER OF OWNERS AND MEMBERS

Errors and omissions have been made to the Register of Owners and Members distributed with Newsletter No. 8. The final page of the Register has been re-issued to include new owners and a list of amendments to previous pages also set out. Both are included as inserts to this Newsletter. Please keep any errors and omissions coming in.

Bruce Seligmann

## 2. SECRETARY'S SCUTTLEBUT

2.1 REGIONAL ORGANISATION

As your Secretary I admit some laxness in not progressing this matter very vigorously. The call for volunteers has not been fruitful so standby for some intense lobbying on my part. I am cruising for a week in May and will use the discipline of quiet anchorages with no pressure of work, to analyse the disposition of SWIFTS by sailing area and owners' residence.

I still think we need area people who will loosely bring together SWIFTS, one doesn't have to live in each others cockpit but when afloat two or three in company is great fun since performance is very even and it is of considerable value to the lesser experienced to see what other owners do. Again this doesn't need to be on every occasion but the odd pre-planned weekend.

2.2 SUBSCRIPTIONS 83 AND 84

Those whose 84 subscription is shown as outstanding will have received a reminder slip with this Newsletter. Please forward payment to Ron Puce, 60 Winchester Road, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2GN.

Those who have not paid for 83 will not be receiving Newsletters, and will be written to individually!

2.3 RACE SECRETARY

I am sorry to announce that David Peachey has found it impracticable to continue to act as Race Secretary. The work he has put in for the SWIFT ASSOCIATION is very much appreciated.

This office has not yet been filled, so please in the meanwhile write to me on this subject.

Paddy Carr

the last Newsletter have been received, including one unsigned response interested in going in company May to September. On this showing we probably don't have the numbers to negotiate special arrangements with a ferry operator. In any event from my own experience, flexibility to optimise on individual needs is probably paramount - for instance whilst we took advantage of Brittany Ferries 'Caravanners Special' to locate AQUAVITE in France (see Break in Brittany) we subsequently used Townsend Thoreson Portsmouth/Le Havre for a long weekend visit (a car and two passengers for £52) which worked out at about a third of the equivalent on BF, albeit for about 2 to 3 hours extra driving.

However all of the responses indicate a preference for going overseas in company, with Brittany featuring prominently. So the message seems to be to try to plan towards a common location and timing overseas but to make individual ferry arrangements.

Lack of notice means we have obviously missed the boat (sorry!) for some people for this year. It also seems to me to be extremely difficult to co-ordinate a group of people with differing interests and priorities (see Break in Brittany) without some-one giving a lead with a firm proposal. So for starters AQUAVITE (SO 12) is based at Foleux on the River Vilaine in Brittany until mid June this year and the owners will be going over most weekends until then; we are also looking at 10 days in Denmark late July!

If anyone is interested in arranging something around either of those two propositions or in going foreign at all this year I suggest they contact the undersigned. In the meantime I will try to think up a suitable questionnaire for eliciting the information needed to plan these exercises properly for next year.

5.4 LAUNCHING RAMPS

We now have 10 completed Swift Association Launching Ramp Proforma - (SALRPs) covering Falmouth, Mylor, Gosport, Stalham, Folkestone and Faversham in England and Foleux, Guipry-Messac and Le Rochelle in France. Thanks for your contributions.

Ivor Peck (SO 96) has also suggested that the proforma highlight availability of hosing-down facilities, drinking water, gas bottle refills, time restrictions on use of ramps, adjacent sailing/yacht clubs and chandlery; all good ideas (particularly drinking water) and I suggest if relevant they be identified under Facilities - other comment, or Launching Ramp - other restrictions, as appropriate.

I would like to assemble a few more SALRPs before distributing to members but in the meantime if anyone is interested in ramps at any of the locations for which we have a completed SALRF please let me know and I will send off a copy, and put you in touch with the originator. I may be able to help with other locations as I am building up a file of other data which copyright provisions inhibit me from publishing.

Bruce Seligmann

## 6. MISCELLANEOUS MUSINGS

6.1 DHOWS IN DOHA

Dear Bruce,

At last I have found a moment to write to you just to prove that the Doha fleet really exists!

where we then stopped for a delightful pavement type meal at a nearby restaurant.

Sunday's cruise up the L'Aff off the canal Nantes à Brest was superb. The conditions were perfect and the scenery delightful. So much so in fact, that the waterside fishing village Glenac was the only place we reached! The rest of the day being devoted to lunching at the local restaurant, sunbathing and returning to Redon. So much for the spirit of adventure!

As the problems of returning with only one car now began to be seriously considered we felt that on Monday we should head back to Foleux in preparation for our earlier than planned return to England that night. It was another glorious trip, this time down the Vilaine, passing several restaurants which we marked for exploration on later visits, (the captain's stomach comes 2nd only to his boat) and on to La Roche Bernard, returning back to Foleux by mid afternoon.

All too quickly our holiday was over. We snugly moored Aquavite in such a sheltered marina and in good care, ready for further sorties. Five of us packed up the car, leaving the Australians to return the cruiser and then head for Paris by train.

What a holiday! I recommend it to everyone - just don't overcrowd superb Foleux and don't have complicated itineraries!

Pam Seligmann SO12

(Skippers' notes for technically minded.

1. Foleux is 90 miles from St. Malo, 180 miles from Cherbourg and 240 miles from Le Havre. The trail from Cherbourg took us 5 hours net of breakfast stop or 36m.p.h.
2. The launching ramp at Foleux is excellent and we had it to ourselves for about 2 hours whilst we adjusted the rollers on the new trailer so that we could roll rather than float Aquavite on and off the trailer.
3. The River Vilaine is non-tidal at this point there being a barrage lower down at Arzal, which provides some 30 miles of good sailing water (and even better restaurants).
4. The boat "chart" is the "Carte Guide Les voies navigables de Bretagne" which describes this section: to the south of Redon, the Vilaine broadens out to become large enough for the very occasional small coaster to come up the river; apart from the huge suspension bridge at La Roche-Bernard, the only bridge between there and Redon is the Pont de Cran, which is a swing bridge which can be opened upon request to telephone (99)90-21-93. La Roche-Bernard itself is a picturesque town which was famous for its shipbuilding tradition in the 17th Century, it has become very much a 'boating town' and all the visiting yachtsman's needs are catered for. This is a good section of the river for sailing.
5. The facility at Foleux is excellent - relatively undeveloped with security for both trailer and boat. We have struggled to find anyone to take any money from us.)

### 5.3 GOING FOREIGN

Five responses to the "Going Foreign" questionnaire sent out with

## 3. ASSOCIATION EVENTS AND SAILING OPPORTUNITIES

### 3.1 CALENDAR

- |                       |   |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| May 27-28             | - | SWIFT Nationals at Rutland Water - for detail see below.   |
| May 26-28             | - | UKMA Spring Meeting - at NSC Cowes.  |
| June 8-10             | - | SOLENT SPECULATION - Coordinator Paddy Carr (Tel. 045-824-303) intends launching from Calshot, the tides suit for Bembridge or whatever.           |
| August 11-12          | - | UKMA Nationals - Hayling Island.   |
| August 26-31          | - | ARUN YC Open Cruiser Regatta Week. South coast chance for some racing and family meet. Contact Paddy or ARUN YC direct (E.Hobden 061-339-4946(W)). |
| August 31- 2/3 Sept   | - | EAST COAST JAUNT - Organiser Dick Landon (0234-771615), to launch from Levington Marina and sail for River Deben and others.                       |
| Mid to late September | - | LAKES LAUGH IN - probably using the indian summer on Ullswater.  |
| To be advised         | - | SCOTS SALLYFORTH - we must hold a meet North of the Border. Unfortunately the plans for April did not receive sufficient support.                  |

### 3.2 SWIFT NATIONALS

To be sailed within the Newmark-Avia Regatta on Rutland Water. May 27 and 28. At this late stage apply direct to Secretary Rutland SC Ltd., Gibbet Lane, Edith Weston, Oakham, Rutland for an entry form.

#### Points

- a. SWIFTS will be afloat throughout and you may live aboard.
- b. Tender a good idea but not essential; water taxi available but not late at night!
- c. No outboard motors allowed.
- d. Spinnakers, declare beforehand and handicap accordingly.
- e. Warm up race available on Saturday 26th with the RSC.
- f. On spot coordinator is Graham Biggs tel. 057-287-878.
- g. Potential to hold SWIFT ASSOCIATION supper on Saturday; let Paddy or Graham know soonest if keen.
- h. Catering during event available, but will be very crowded.

ABOVE ALL - MORE ENTRIES ARE NEEDED.

### 3.3 PLYMOUTH EASTER RALLY - Report

Four SWIFTS trailed West for the Plymouth Rally and with CHANTILLY,

as lead boat and local host, enjoyed three plus days of sailing. As we now know the weather was a record, plenty of sunshine rather too little wind to start with and a trifle fresh at the end.

The facilities at Queen Anne Battery were good, plenty of space with two slipways; the only snag being at low water when the slip ends were too shallow for a comfortable launch.

Friday evening saw four of us anchored in Barnpool to the West of Drakes Is. and under the lovely Mount Edgecombe Country Park. A cornish pint for those who ventured ashore.

Saturday a gently beat towards the River Yealin. CHANTILLY sportingly towing a dinghy left SWIFT JUNO the lead and some instant pilotage was needed - that being the prize for getting so far ahead. STRYKA was sailing in the river but was unable to join the company for the night. We moored to pontoons below Noss Mayo Creek and TEACUIS conducted a load test to see how many Swifties could be accommodated without flooding up to the gas locker drain: result twelve and a half is no problem provided the distribution is kept even. After some vino all ashore to the Old Ship Inn.

Sunday set sail at 10.00 for Cawsand, again a gentle breeze giving a run. A cruising chute demo by TEACUIS was short lived and with the wind dying away it proved that Swifts drift at the same speed regardless of sail set. Rafted up to a buoy off Cawsand, rather lumpy motion so a quick lunch and then departed to rendezvous inside the breakwater for sail up the river Tamar. At this stage the wind freshened markedly and reefs for some were the order. An interesting sail past the Naval Base and on up river to pick up moorings off Cargreen. SAMPHIRE followed us up and after a quick hail departed being unable to stay overnight. Sun and wind blown crews were ashore to the Spaniards for a bar supper and talk was of handling Swifts in gusty and fresh wind.

Monday dawned clear and light with the promise of strong easterlies. The 'trailers' made their return to QAB independently and I personally had a tough beat from Cremyll to Sutton harbour utilising my third (and deep) reefed mainsail.

In conclusion a most enjoyable weekend, giving the opportunity to explore new waters with the comfort of local knowledge and in the company of like minded sailors. Many thanks to Gareth and Jane; next time more West Country Swifts please.

Participating were:

SWIFT JUNO	-	Ed and Mabel Griffiths
MOONSHADOW	-	Peter and Jean Latham
TEACUIS	-	Paddy, Sue and Jenny Carr
SALU	-	Lawrence, Janet, Sara and Louise Peacock
CHANTILLY	-	Gareth and Jane Huxtable

Paddy Carr

#### 4. TECHNICAL TITBITS.

##### 4.1 BIBS AND BOBS

I have little to report on in this issue. There have been no returns concerning defective gudgeon plates. Newsletter 8 gave detail

The reality was somewhat different and now the mate has the dubious honour of writing up the log!

In fact of course Brittany is a glorious place and the river and canal cruising opportunities are numerous. In truth also, the ferrying of Aquavite would have been a quite simple task had not Brittany Ferries chosen that Wednesday night before Easter to go on strike.

To make any sense of this log one must realise that our exercise was complicated by several factors:

1. Three separate family groups, one having come from Australia especially for this trip.
2. The hiring of and therefore liaison with a 6 berth cruiser on the Canalised upper reaches of the Vilaine.
3. The reduction in transport availability from two cars to one car due to an untimely but fortunately not serious accident.
4. A two day interlude by one of the family groups to Bordeaux in the middle of the 5 days.

So you can see, a logistical nightmare!

Thus when we boarded our relocated ferry leaving from Weymouth to discover we had no berths for our overnight crossing to Cherbourg, the faces of the 7 adults and 2 children did not register the usual sparkle expected at the beginning of a holiday. However, after Champagne and a picnic dinner, our spirits rose and we even managed a reasonable night's sleep bedded down on the floor of the lounge/bar.

Thursday morning saw us on our way through France - car, boat, car, and in bright warm sunshine we arrived at Foleux in time for lunch. The charms of Foleux on the lower reaches of the River Vilaine, are numerous. Quiet, very pretty, tiny bar/restaurant with an extra friendly owner (André), ideal boat marina and of course a launching ramp. Having fortified ourselves, the men got busy with what they love best, boat pottering. As the ladies felt we could not spoil their fun we slipped away.... By mid afternoon our slumbers in the sun were disturbed by the shouts of a successful launching and our real holiday had begun.

Now I know the astute reader will already be wondering how 9 fit into a Swift 18!? The answer is they don't, and it was only two men who spent the first night aboard while the rest of us returned to a hotel at Besle just north of Redon.

Friday was the day to pick up the hired cruiser from Guipry-Messac, which we did, and with a cruise down the Vilaine, and the men motoring up the Vilaine, we eventually met just south of Guipry-Messac just before nightfall. Not quite together, as one lock separated us, both boats being too late to go through.

The weather was glorious. Jeans had to have their legs cut off to make shorts with the sun so warm.

Saturday we wished to head for the Canal de Nantes à Brest N.W. of Redon to give us a lock free area to cruise on Easter Sunday, this being one of the very few days the locker keepers have as a holiday. Thus by Saturday evening we had passed through the last crucial lock at Redon

Confidence restored, we made a rollacking reach home in a nice F4, tying up in Levington just after midday (14m in  $3\frac{3}{4}$ hr) for lunch. If it was not to be South then, we must go into the Stour in the afternoon, to anchor off Ewarton Ness overnight. This quiet spot is a delight for beachcombing, birdwatching or as tonight, barbecueing. The night was very dark and we needed the last glowing embers to guide our passage in the dinghy back to 'Cucumber'.

We wanted to check the E. Coast Pilots' recommendation for the Queens Head in the nearby village. Next morning we rowed ashore again and crossed the fields, soon spotting it ahead. Indeed, it was good, the sun beautiful and all summery: we were very late returning, the day mostly done and all we could manage was a refreshingly stiff sail home in F5 with a reef. 6m to our berth in a bit more than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hr., against the tide, was nearly our fastest passage yet.

I don't know what was responsible, but all we achieved next morning was a sail to Woolveratone to meet some friends and to enter Saturdays' race from the Royal Harwich.

We then found a mooring off Preston Reach for a swim to check the state of the bottom and a lunch that lasted the rest of the day. It was that sort of summer, wasn't it?

Saturdays' 16m race, started in fickle winds, was a flop, with us the only starter below the Sonatas. We retired, disgusted, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ hr later with not another competitor in sight.

What a contrast Sunday proved to be. The 06.25 forecast of NE 3/4-5 was a nice under-estimate, enough to tempt us out, not enough to drive us inland. Out we went, practising heavy weather sailing: we wanted to try one reef beating in up to F6, because we felt we must drive the boat through the mounting waves to tack more surely. We tended, before, to reduce sail too much, giving us poor performance and faulting tacks. The ride became a bit brisk and the sheets must be played con brío, so it was with some relief that we tied up after a couple of hours.

Later, in October, we were to go out to sea in a F6+ to try my storm trisail of 40 square feet. We found the boat balanced and very manageable, considering, also reasonably fast, making an average of 4Kts over an hour or so on all points of sailing.

Tired but reassured that we could cope necessary, we returned the remaining stores and boat gear to the car and made our way home. Our 10 days of every sort of weather totalled 173m in 50hr of sailing (less 5min), enough to satisfy me - for the time being.

What next? The time we got 'Cucumber' to clamber up and plane? Stone Banks or Bust? Ah - another tale, another time.

Dick Landon

## 5.2 BREAK IN BRITTANY

(The following represents the mate's interpretation of the log of Aquavite in Brittany and should in no way be construed as a true or accurate statement of the events - signed Skipper).

Ferry the boat to Brittany and motor/sail on the rivers and canals in that lovely area. It sounded so simple and the results so rewarding.

of the 84 standard rudder stock incorporating three gudgeons and thus positively holding stock to transom in vertical plane. For those of us with early models an alternative, and sensible modification, would be to lift a third plate to the transom to 'capture' the lower stock fitting. SWIFTCRAFT will supply the plate to order.

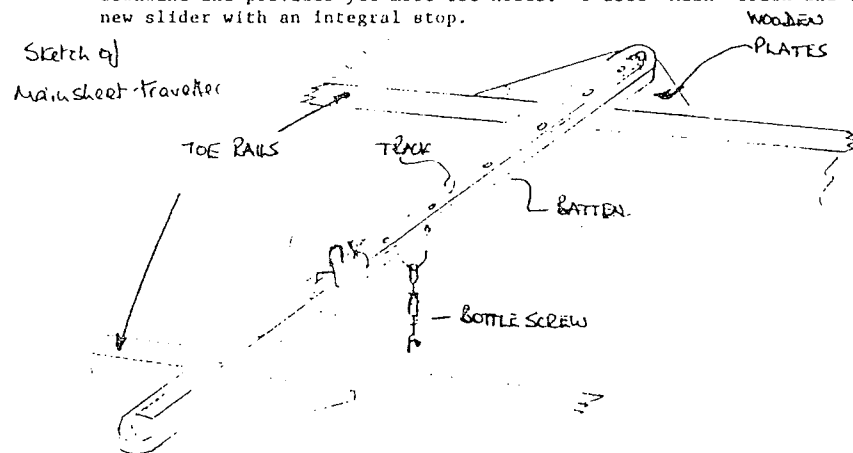
Having searched many chandlers for suitable sailaivers for the crosstrees I eventually had to order a pair. The Plastimo part No. 55-51-20-0 'crosstree bumpers' suit the flat blade of the SWIFT.

The silicone sealant used by Swiftcraft is Dow Corning 781.

Do keep forwarding your ideas and modifications and remember there is an Association trophy for mod. of the year.

## 4.2 ONE MAN AND HIS BOAT

My fitting-out was a little hurried to make the Easter weekend so achievement of my long list of ideas has been low. I completed the mainsheet traveller system, this ended up simpler than described in the last issue since it mounts the track on a wooden batten which straddles the cockpit with triangular wooden plates outboard of and abutting the toe rails: the whole is bowed (gently) down to the cockpit deck. Early conclusion is that the system is nice to have but I am not totally convinced of the need, it does keep the cockpit tidy and clear when downwind and provides yet more toe holds. I used 'Main' track and their new slider with an integral stop.



A definite success has been a saloon table comprising a leaf which extends from under the galley prep. surface, adjustable for length with a support leg like Dick Landon's (NL 8). The table also bridges the cockpit and has holes one end to accept drink and soup mugs. The leaf width is matched to keel box height to stow alongside, and the length to suit cockpit span.

I have fitted a proprietary brand winch handle stow in the cockpit and more the pity I bought this before fitting a length of PVC square section gutter downpipe to the forward end of the keel box cover to accept the keel (and spare sheet) winch handle; a similar fix would have served for the cockpit.

Paddy Carr

5. CRUISING CHATTER

5.1 DEAD SET FOR THE DEBEN: 10 DAYS IN AUGUST 1983  
FROM THE LOG OF 'CUCUMBER SUNBEAM', 18-28/8/83

We pulled 'Cucumber Sunbeam' out 3 weeks before to scrub the bottom and to lower the mast to fit a topping lift, which we became convinced was essential, also to reeve a new genny halyard.

We relaunched at teatime and motored round to our berth to fit out. We wanted to see if we could stow the whole 10 days tinned, dry and packetted food for the two of us - 'Cucumber' swallowed the lot plus an extra 2 gals. of water. Now we would be free of shopping trips.

South Easterly F3 - F4, locally Easterly 6, with the possibility of sea fog and thundery showers were forecast at 1750. Next morning we sailed out through the Harwich Approaches to check visibility and our resolve in the gusty conditions. We beat to the Landguard Cardinal Mark, 4m from home and our usual starting point, in under an hour but returned just as swiftly to anchor off Trimley Marshes for a more comfortable lunch. Out again for 1½hr in the afternoon, worsening somewhat as expected, since the barometer dropped 7mb while we were sailing. We opted for a quieter night in the marina than we would get riding to an anchor. Coming home, we saw a seal in the river - our fisherman friend said they were quite common, and, to him, not welcome.

Next morning's 0625 forecast sounded better - E. F4/5 - and we cast off hopefully at 10.00 to go to Walton Pier, about 11m distant.

On the passage out to Landguard, we needed the first reef and no more than 3/4 genny, but after lunch, taken between tacks, the steadier winds offshore and the reaching course allowed us to shake it out and we galloped along, reaching the Pier in 2 hr 40mins.

We removed the engine on the way home to see how much difference this made - noticeable but the reduced turbulence on the rudder was much appreciated.

Passing through the rough water in Harwich Harbour curled the toes, especially with container ships and ferries passing every 5 mins., but we were loathe to take in sail for this short bit. We tied up without incident at 17.00hr, 22m mostly against the tide in 7 hr - good enough to warrant a noggin in the Lightship clubhouse before dinner aboard and turning in.

Our determined intention this holiday was to cruise in the Deben river which we hadn't seen, but the bar can be very forbidding with any east in a F4 or more; not only that, but the tide, Springs, now run at 6kts through the entrance and the shifty sands require the metes to be resited after storms.

Sunday dawned bright and sparkling after overnight showers but only a lazy wind - to catch the end of the flood into the Deben - requires sailing up the Coast against the tide. With today's wind, there was not a moment to lose, and we cast off at 07.30. Even so, we motored a bit and so entered just before the turn. All was peaceful inside, fetching and beating up-river before finding a free mooring at 11.30, off the Ramsholt Arms in nice time for a celebratory pint in that favoured nautical hostelry.

To save deflating the dinghy, we towed it on a very short painter - we hoped to use it frequently over the next few days.

Now ebbing fast, we continued upstream grounding ever more frequently as the river narrowed and shallowed. It was obvious we would not reach Woodbridge that tide and we turned back to a peaceful anchorage off the No. 12 Pool buoy by Methersgate, above Waldringfield, in time for a swim and tea. Including motoring, we sailed 17m in 5½hr today.

Monday dawned fair; patchy fog and variable winds forecast, ideal to spend the morning looking round the old town of Woodbridge at the head of the navigable river and famous for Fitzgerald of Omar Khayyam fame.

We picked up one of Whistocks' Yard buoys, to explore the restored tide-mill before restoring ourselves in the Bull, up Church Street.

To avoid being stranded in the mud we must go down soon after HW, and we fetched up off Prettymans' Reach in the afternoon for another swim. This bend in the river is a delightful spot with a small wooded cliff overlooking sandy beaches: everything to hand for the evenings' barbecue. Popular, too, with a dozen boats anchored overnight: we all had the same idea, that balmy evening.

We keep a grid from an old 'fridge for our cooking, scrubbed clean in the sand afterwards and stowed with the wine in the stern locker.

One by one, embered fires died, riding lights climbed the rigging and peace descended. 13m in a lazy 4hr.

The dawn sun next morning roused us enough for a pre-breakfast swim - just in and out to add sparkle to life. We haven't exhausted this anchorage yet, spending a lazy morning watching the water, other people's boats and stifling a growing feeling that we ought to go sailing.

After lunch, we gennied off the anchor to beat down to Felixstowe Ferry, popping out to sea 10mins. after HW.

Clearing the Haven Buoy, we set the spinnaker for the 7m reach down to Harwich, gybing round the Beach End buoy to enter the harbour. This we found enshrouded in fog and out of it came a Sealink ferry barely a cable off, dead down our course. She sped past us, collapsing the spinney, and was gone, a dark smudge 20 sec later. Fog is frightening.

Somebody hailed us in the river to say we wouldn't believe it was sunny at Levington. We didn't but it was indeed, when we tied up an hour later. (13m in 5½hr).

Fog was again forecast next day, with good winds. We hoped to round off the week by sailing to the Blackwater estuary (25m) but this might be unwise in the conditions. We resolved to try for the Pye End marker first and continue to Stone Banks if we managed this, still able to see the coastline, then the Medusa and so on.

However, by the time we located Stone Banks 7m out, we lost sight of our familiar marks, and we turned the trip into a navigational exercise - find Pye End in poor visibility. Pye End is always a difficult mark to spot - we were lucky - we nearly ran it down, thinking we must have missed it miles to port.