



UK BALLAD ASSOCIATION

Stop Press – a
date for your diary.
25th March 2012
Winter Dinner in
Plymouth



NEWSLETTER: WINTER 2011/12



UK BALLAD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER WINTER 2011/12

Your Committee

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Welcome to the Winter 2011/12 Newsletter.

What sort of winter have you had so far? I have to admit that the front cover was not taken this winter but what an atmospheric scene. Although her name is obscured by snow this is Schönbrunn, one of our member's Ballad ice bound in the Caledonian Canal last winter. Brrrrr! The owner of Schönbrunn, Chris Strong will be giving a talk at our Winter Dinner. More details on page 4.

Do you want to have your boat in one of our Newsletters? If so the editor would love to oblige. So please send some good photographs with details to the Newsletter editor. Please give this some thought and dig out your favourite to complement all those photos of boats from Devon and Cornwall who always get a mention because of the National Championships.

Whilst talking about the UK Ballad National Championships it is provisionally booked to take place in the Plymouth area in 2012. More details further in this Newsletter. Anything to keep you turning these pages!

Now an apology for those members shocked by the editor getting out another Newsletter so soon after the last one! With some good articles we can have even more. That is up to all of you.

Last November the AGM was held in Plymouth (where else!!) and the minutes are within these pages, meanwhile below Schönbrunn "flies the flags" in Scotland .(if you have them flaunt them as my mother used to say – Ed)



UK Ballad Association Newsletter – Chairman’s Address.

Greetings once again all you nice Ballad people.

I hope that everyone had a pleasant time over the Christmas and New Year period. The weather was quite reasonable (*where does this guy live? - Ed*) and it was a good time to get on with rubbing down boat bottoms for those of you who have their boats out of the water. We didn’t actually do anything to Matui except give her the occasional pat to say “hello we haven’t forgotten you”. Let’s hope the weather in March will be suitable for the necessary tasks.

There isn’t very much to say at this time of year except to thank Cathy Noakes and Saltash Sailing Club for putting together a plan for the 2012 National Championships. Cathy’s preliminary notice is contained in this newsletter.

Many thanks again to Barry for putting together this newsletter. (*modesty almost made me edit this kind remark out – Ed*)

I look forward to seeing a lot of you on the water after Easter.

Best Regards Mike Luker Chairman UKBA

And now for an extract from a cruising log – a long time ago.

Shower Surprise. (A true story).

Have just been clearing out and looking through Afrodite’s old log book.

During Afrodite’s journey to her new home in SW England from Denmark we called in at one of the German Friesian Isles – Borkum. One particular incident in Borkum is worthy of mention. The skipper and one of my crew were refreshing ourselves in the men’s shower room when suddenly in walked a 30’ish old women speaking German which was obviously not understood by us mono-linguistic Brits. Another man was also showering and did acknowledge her. His reply (what ever was said) resulted in this woman promptly taking all her clothes off and then joined this man in his shower cubicle. By the way dear reader, the cubicles had no curtains so absolutely no privacy. They washed themselves and then he finished leaving her to complete her shower. She then eventually finished, dried and dressed giving us lots of smiles and left as briskly as she entered saying “*thank you, until we meet again*” (that being the extent of my German).

The fellow who had shared his shower with her then look at me and shrugged his shoulders, said something not understandable but the facial expression and body language said it all - “*What the hell was all that about!*”

Up until that moment I assumed they were known to each other. A really peculiar situation. I’ve never showered as often since but she never made a 2nd appearance.

Skipper of Afrodite
Ballad 285

STOP PRESS - WINTER DINNER

Sunday 25th March 2012 - Venue, The Plymouth Royal Corinthian Yacht Club.

For this dinner we will be joined and entertained by a Ballad owner, Chris Strong who has already provided an interesting account contained in this Newsletter and whose photograph of his boat laid up in the Caledonian Canal, Scotland is the featured cover photograph.

Chris is visiting the South West of England from his Scottish home to attend a wedding and whilst in that part of the world has kindly agreed to join us and give a talk that I understand will be a mixture of maintenance of his Ballad cruising up and down the west coast of Scotland. That is a glorious part of the country to cruise so hopefully he will come armed with lots of beautiful scenic photographs in warmer weather than the cover of this Newsletter.

Chris and his Ballad "Schönbrunn" have been based for 20 years at Lochaber Yacht Club (LYC) on Loch Linnhe, north-west Scotland, and for a similar period I have been the "Hon.Sec." of LYC.

Our Hon Secretary will be sending out details of the available menus soon. Unfortunately the original menu file would not open as I hoped to be able to include it in this Newsletter. However the choices, will as always, be good and we hope that many will be able to attend. Please note that this is not just for Ballad owners/skippers – everyone and anyone who sails on Ballads are welcome. This even extends to loved ones who hate sailing but like an evening away from the TV. This also presents you with the ideal opportunity of entertaining your crew before the hard racing starts! For those who haven't had the pleasure of joining us before please try and join us for what is going to be a very enjoyable evening.

For those who wish to come but unsure where this delightful sailing club is, put PL1 2NY into your Satnav or <http://www.streetmap.co.uk/>

UK NATIONAL BALLAD ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 19th AGM held at The Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club on November 25th, 2011

Present: representatives of the following boats: Matui, Windwhistle, Duchess, Shara of York, Kotuku, Poppin, Shebeen, Sool-ai-Mon, Flute, Khadine

1. **Apologies:** Shanty, Schonbrunn, Svalen, Sixpence, Summertime, Toby Dee, Afrodite, Arabesque, Variety, Balu, Mogil Maid, Harlequin, Vivacious, Khadine, Happy Hour.
2. **Minutes** of the 18th AGM were circulated and amended to say that Mylar is the same price as Kevlar and that Shebeen does not yet have Kevlar sails.
3. Under **Matters Arising**, the attempt to convene a Committee Meeting to discuss changing the Ballad One Design Association rules on sail material had not been successful. However, we will try and hold a meeting this year, where any decisions can be ratified at the next AGM, ie status quo for the next Championships.

4. **Report by Secretary and Treasurer:** The accounts for the year were presented. The final balance of £1,559.46 with an overall profit of £1.00. Membership was up from 17 to 21 paid up members.

It was agreed to hold the Winter Dinner in March, since the prospective speaker, Chris Strong, owner of Schönbrunn and living in Scotland, would only be in Plymouth in March.

Clothing for the next Championships should be gilets/bodywarmers.

5. **Publicity:** Barry Quest was planning to be present, but apologised on the day, having hurt his back. He would always like more material for his newsletters. Mick Pindar has set up a UK Ballad website, www.ukballadassociation.org. That will be added to as more information is passed to him.
6. **Chairman's report:** Mike Luker thanked St Mawes Sailing Club and Neil Andrew, the Race Officer for running a very successful Championships. Normal Ballad weather saw some excellent racing in Falmouth Bay, some superb social activities, an interesting Pursuit Race to Helford River, and was only marred by the collision of two masts with resulting dismasting and damage. He mentioned how entertaining Neil Andrew's radio conversation with Mylar Yacht Club had been for all of us.

He thanked Mick Pindar for all his hard work on the website and Barry Quest for his excellent newsletter.

7. **Election of Officers for 2012:** Paul Dixon is planning to put Kotuku on the market so we will be looking for another Committee Member to replace him. He will ask Alan Harris or Brian Runnals whether they would be willing, to keep the Fowey contingent represented. Paul was thanked for all his hard work over the years and will be much missed.

Mike Luker, Janie Smallridge, Cathy Noakes and Chris Tyrrell were all happy to continue on the Committee.

8. It was agreed to alter **Subscription Rates** so that they were all £6 per boat, regardless of how many owners there were.
9. Arrangements are in place to hold the **2012 Championships** at Saltash Sailing Club in the Tamar River over the weekend 26th - 28th May. Although this is not the Bank Holiday weekend, which is shifted to the first weekend in June for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, it was the 2:1 choice of members replying to the question. It will follow the normal format with racing in Plymouth Sound and the Pursuit Race to Cawsand Sailing Club. Neil Dunkley from Saltash Sailing Club has agreed to be the Race Officer. Cathy Noakes will progress the arrangements with Neil Trathen, the Sailing Secretary at Saltash Sailing Club.

Chinafleet Club offers reasonable rates for crew wishing to stay in Saltash and Saltash Tourist Information can provide details of Bed and Breakfasts. Some moorings are available at Saltash Sailing Club. (*see article on the preliminary notice of these races elsewhere in this Newsletter - Ed*)

10. **2013 Championships:** These are due to be hosted in Fowey and Janie will write a formal letter to Royal Fowey Yacht Club.
11. **AOB:** Alan Harris has taken over Balladier from his father, Bob, and has also taken over the sail loft, Sail Shape Ltd, make new sails specifically for Ballads and stepping new Selden rigs.
12. Date of future AGM. To be notified.

Janie Smallridge Hon Sec/Treasurer

IMPORTANT NOTICE

2012 UK National Ballad Championships

The 2012 National Ballad Championships are to be hosted by Saltash Sailing Club (SSC) and will take place over the weekend Friday May 25th through until Monday 28th when the pursuit race will be held. As you should all by now be aware this is not the Bank Holiday weekend but Ballad Association members wished to continue the long established routine of holding the championship over the last weekend in May.

Friday evening will see the helms briefing taking place at SSC followed by a sailing supper. Racing on Saturday and Sunday will consist of two back to back races with a reasonable interval between the two for crews to be refreshed (eat their packed lunch!) – Cornish pasties? *Ed.* The racing is planned to take place in Plymouth Sound with a variety of courses mainly using navigational buoys. However, there will be the fall back position of racing in the Tamar River if weather conditions are not favourable. On the water arrangements are well underway with the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions being written as this goes out. The race officer has been chosen and is looking forward to working with the members to conduct an enjoyable weekend's racing. SSC is also looking at berthing/mooring arrangements for the weekend and are positive that they can accommodate all the Ballads that enter the Championship. (Any mooring fees will be very reasonable). For those of you who haven't ventured as far as Saltash up the Tamar River, then the trip can be enjoyable and informative passing the dockyard, Torpoint and the Lynher River. For those of you who may not want to race the upper reaches of the Tamar and Lynher rivers are well worth exploring whilst the rest of us tire ourselves out and break gear! *The editor doesn't like breaking gear so offers his pilotage knowledge for anyone wanting to venture way up stream for a stop off at, for example, the National Trust property of Cothele.*

On Saturday evening we are planning to visit Tamar River Sailing Club- literally across the water from Saltash and in Devon rather than Cornwall! We will look at having tenders available to ferry crews across the river (*into England according to the Cornish – Ed*) if this appears a popular option.

After Sunday's racing the Prize Giving and Dinner will be held at SSC and further information about this will be included in the Notice of Race.

Several options are being discussed for the Pursuit Race on Monday- luckily the tide is high late morning and neaps so the bulk of the race in the river will be in slack tide. Cawsand, the Yealm River or the Barbican in Plymouth are all being considered.

So,

- date in diary
- don't forget to take the Friday (for delivery) off
- don't forget to take the Monday (for the Pursuit Race) off as well
- look out for the Notice of Race in the post
- enter!
- come along and enjoy the hospitality of SSC.

A bit of non Sailing Information for those interested in a bit of History and Engineering.

If you attend the UK Ballad National Championships in May please note the non-sailing importance of this area. Immediately upstream of the Saltash sailing club is the famous railway bridge known as the Royal Albert Bridge named in honour of Queen Victoria's husband Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha but locally known as The Saltash bridge even though there is a suspension bridge immediately upstream. This photograph having been taken from that road bridge. It will be a fine sight looking up at it from your SSC mooring before rushing off to do a spot of racing. I do ask you however to have a good look at it, although it is possible in May that parts may be sheathed in plastic covering as the owners, Network Rail, are in the process of a multi million pound project to refurbish and paint it in a bid to extend its life far into the future.



It was designed by [Isambard Kingdom Brunel](#). Surveying started in 1848 and construction commenced in 1854. The first main span was positioned in 1857 and the completed bridge was opened by **Prince Albert** on 2 May 1859. Brunel died later that year and his name was then placed above the portals at either end of the bridge as a memorial. Work was carried out during the twentieth century to replace the approach spans and strengthen the main spans. It has attracted sightseers since its construction and has appeared in many paintings, photographs and guidebooks. Anniversary celebrations took place in 1959 and 2009.

Editor

RACING RULES?

Whilst talking about racing the committee was approached early in 2011 by a member enquiring about the Ballad International Rules administered by the Ballad One Design Association (BODA). The question was (as I understood it) that sail materials have improved over the years but these modern materials are not acceptable to Ballads that wish to race. The UK Ballad Association tried to call a meeting to discuss this and this has been mentioned in item 3 of the 2011 AGM minutes.

However events have almost overtaken us as in January 2012, our Chairman received an email from the German Ballad Club whose (edited) contents were :

This is my attempt to give You the information and proposal for modernizing the Ballad One Design Rule.
I found your personal addresses in Your Newsletter Autumn 2011.
We have positive answers from the Danish and the Dutch Ballad Clubs. We are in contact as well with the Swedish and Norwegian Club. We think it is necessary to modernize the Ballad One Design Rule in a consensual way with all national Ballad Clubs.

The email then went on to include their earlier email to European Ballad Clubs that it appears we didn't see.

Dear BODA-friends,
The German Ballad Club has made a first step to modernize the Ballad One Design Rule - please have a look at our attachment.
We hope you will discuss these alterations in your next club-meeting and you will decide as we did. On a general assembly of the BODA our delegates could decide on this alteration officially.
Or (if we are in consensus altogether) should we create a "virtual BODA assembly" as an alternative?
Please inform us about your proceeding, your decisions and your thoughts about a "virtual BODA assembly".
Let us modernise our Ballad One Design Rule!

Greetings from
Klaus Lange
Michael Langhans

Attached was their formal proposal that has been reproduced on the next page. So by the time you read this the committee will no doubt be considering these proposal and the latest I have for you is that it may be discussed at the Winter Dinner later in March



A sleeping non-racing Ballad with no concerns about racing rules!

Decisions of the German Ballad Club shall modernize the regulations concerning sailcloth and furling jib/genua in the Ballad One Design Rule (BODR)

The present situation:

1. The latest modification of the BODR took place in 2000. On initiative of the Scandinavian Ballad-friends the BODA amended the rules regarding **the use of furling jibs/genuas:**

When using a furling genua, only this genua is allowed all over the race.

(Notice: Till now this rule did not become part of the English-language-version of the BODR on the Scandinavian and German websites!)

2. Concerning the sailcloth, the following rule applies:

Only sails made of Dacron, woven polyester sailcloth or laminated material containing polyester film (Mylar) and polyester are allowed. Sailcloth material containing any high modulus fibres like Kevlar (Aramid), Spectra, Vectra or carbon is not allowed. Ply weight is optional.

Development, trends and arguments:

1. In fact, most of our Ballads have **furling genuas**. We would like to have these Ballads in our races, too, and see no reason to handicap them by allowing one genua during the races only. Most likely they will have smaller genuas because of shorter luffs.

2. Furthermore a lot of progress has been made in developing **new sailcloth and sails:**

- New materials allow much more effective and durable sails;
- they are no longer as expensive as they have been in the beginning of this development.
- When sailing in handicap-races, we can see a lot of boats with these effective sails. The yardstick rule for example does not make any difference, whether there are old-fashioned sails on a boat, or high-tech sailcloth. A Ballad (when racing) definitely is forced by our BODR to sail without these effective materials and consequently is handicapped.
- Other One Design Classes (J / 24 and Express for example) respected the development in the sailcloth material and changed their rules accordingly.

Decisions of the German Ballad Club:

These facts lead to the following decisions made on a General Meeting of the German Ballad Club on March 26th 2011 in Hamburg:

1. In One Design Ballad Races in Germany it is allowed to sail with different Genuas, when using a furling jib/genua.
2. In One Design Ballad Races in Germany restrictions concerning the sailcloth material are no longer valid.
3. The Executive Committee of the German Ballad Club and its` Technical and BODA-Commissioner have to inform the Ballad One Design Association members about these decisions. They shall campaign for appropriate alterations of the Ballad One Design Rule.

Ballad Klub e. V. – Deutsche Klassenvereinigung Hamburg November 2011

THAT SINKING FEELING

One Sunday afternoon in June 2004, Janie and I were off Start Point, beating westwards on the first leg of the Triangle Race, from Torquay to Cork. We were feeling pleased with ourselves. Duchess was one of the smallest boats in the fleet of 40, but having a good start we rounded the windward mark off Paignton in 8th place and moved up to 5th at Berry Head due to better than average 2 handed spinnaker work. However, size does matter and we had been slowly overhauled by a number of larger boats, but still seemed to be in the front half of the fleet as we bashed our way under No.2 genoa through the oversized wind against tide seas – conditions the Ballad thrives in. I went below to check our position on the chart as it seemed like a good position to tack from.

All seemed well with the world as I stepped through the companionway. It is difficult to describe the emotional impact of finding the floorboards floating in a few inches of water, but it certainly spoiled my day. At this stage we had no idea how fast the water was coming in or where from (obviously it was from the sea, but what was its route into the cabin?). A few minutes work on the bilge pump reduced the level of water back to normal, but it was replenished rapidly. The stupid thought that there was 'plenty more where that came from' passed through my mind. I checked all the through hulls and engine compartment, no signs of leaks or failures, the water seemed to be coming from forward, somewhere around the mast area.

We had a quick conference between pump-outs and decided to tack anyway because the nearest harbours were all to the West of us. We also decided not to make a Mayday call or inform the Coastguard. I was sure that they would insist we go to Salcombe – only about 3 miles distant at the time, but a place I loathe. We decided to tack anyway and because the ingress of water seemed manageable (as long as I could pump it out at least as fast as it was coming in). It was clear that we couldn't continue the race, besides all other safety considerations, I couldn't image myself pumping 2 minutes out of 5 for the next 200 miles. We still had some lifelines left and decided to phone a friend; you won't find this advice in any sailing manual, but it proved a very valuable option. Miraculously Chris Compton was at home and answered almost immediately. He suggested that perhaps our hull had opened in the highly stressed area under the mast step and water was coming in through the split. Duchess had suffered such a failure 5 years before and been repaired professionally and had survived a force 9-10 off Fecamp the following year without damage, so I was sceptical about this as likely cause. Chris suggested that Chris Cload, former Ballad owner (The General) and GRP hull guru might know more. A few minutes later the phone rang (thankfully Orange reception off the South Devon coast is better than many places inland) and it was Chris Cload. After a few minutes discussion with the Oracle, we decided that a split under the mast step was most probable, especially as I had tightened the rigging that morning (a turn too far it seems).

To shorten a long story, we sailed on to Plymouth, Chris and Heather Compton came out in Marcus J to chaperone us in. We arrived just in the nick of time to put the boat alongside Oreston Quay as the tide dropped. This meant we wouldn't have to pump all night to stay afloat. In addition to Chris and Heather, Kelvin Crago (another former Balladeer) had arrived to offer help and satisfy curiosity. We slackened the rigging, and the influx of water reduced dramatically.

At low water, we were able to see that a crack about 8 inches long had opened up along the centreline where the leading edge of the keel joined the hull. A breakfast time phone call with Chris Cload resulted in a plan to get the boat ashore and problem solved. We floated off on the tide and by 9am had been lifted out at Rocky Pinder's yard at Pomphlett Creek, a few hundred yards from Oreston (Mike Pinder is yet another Balladeer – Khadine). By 10am, Chris was attacking the keel root with chisel, mallet and angle grinder and mumbling about the poor workmanship of the Australian self-styled 'boat doctor' in Sussex who repaired a similar crack in 1999. By lunchtime, the hole had been enlarged to an alarming size and all suspect GRP had been removed.

Chris managed to dry the hull out and re-construct it with 14 layers of new glass fibre and epoxy on the outside. He advised that we really needed to replace the steel mast-support structure inside the hull (which had been replaced with a hardwood block during the botched repair in Sussex) and we arranged to do that next winter. We were able to re-launch before the next weekend and sailed across to Treguier in time to join the festivities there and participate in the last leg of the Triangle Race (back to Torquay) without distinguishing ourselves. Graham Smallridge. Duchess.

What a story. This made me think about rusty streaks I noticed under the mast step when first buying my Ballad so I went to talk to Chris Cload who has been very helpful and provided the rusty sample shown in the next article. Editor.

BALLAD'S KEEL STEPPED MAST – An observation.

Following on from Graham and Janie experience of this problem I thought I'd give you a small insight to this problem. I'm no expert but have discussed this with Chris Cload of Plymouth who gave me access to a rusty bit of metal that was the mast reinforcing structure from an unknown Ballad (see photograph below). A basic diagram also accompanies this article to assist you.

I write this not to alarm anyone but to pass on information to those who may be ignorant of this part of the Ballad's design. I've been assured that this problem **doesn't suddenly occur**. It is a slow build up of rust on the reinforcing steel work that eventually will cause a weakness of the hull on its centre line. So with careful winter examination of the interior area of the forward part of the bilge under the mast step and scraping back anti-foul to expose the area at the forefoot of the keel will alert the owner to whether a problem is building up.

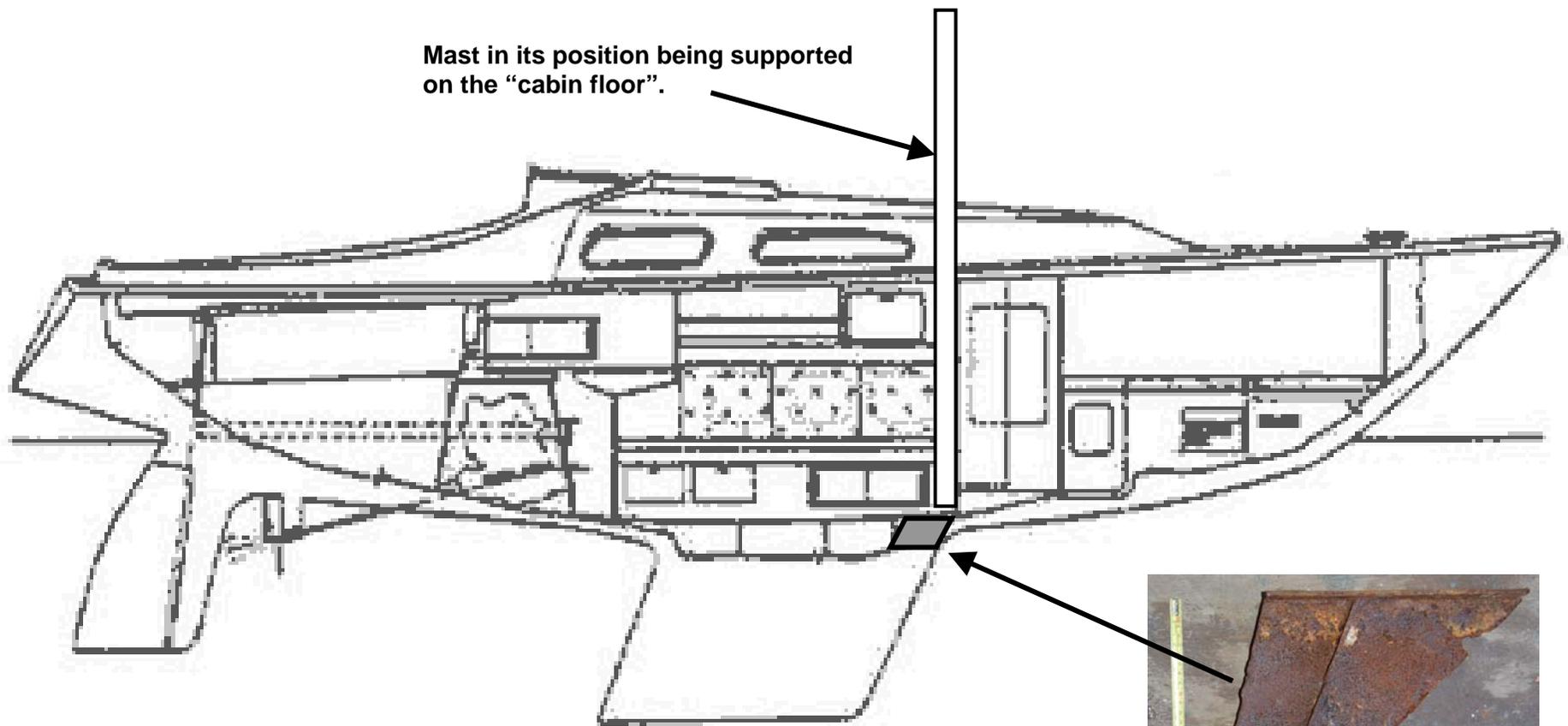
However I digress – lets get on and describe this construction. Reference to the accompanying drawing will/may help. Also sorry about the fairly basic drawing, the best I can do at present.

In the forward part of the main cabin floor is the mast step. The top of the mast step seen in the cabin is the "T" section that the base of the mast slots over. Its purpose is to take the vertical load of the mast - mostly rigging tension along with the mast weight.

However the forces don't stop there. They have to be transmitted down into the hull. To achieve this, just forward of the keel is a metal strengthening member supporting the mast step in the cabin. This can be seen in the accompanying diagram over leaf.

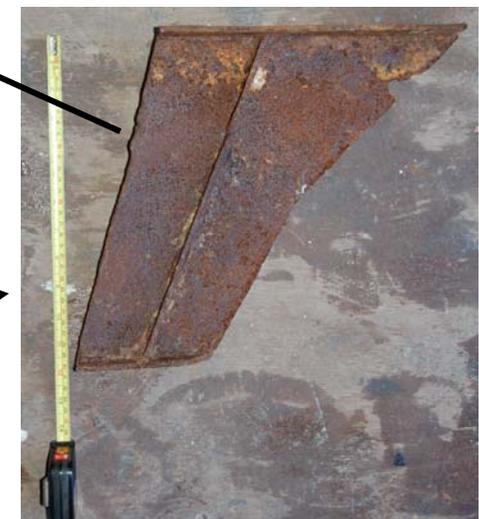
A metal structure is encased in epoxy. However over the years water running down the mast inevitably finds its way to the base of the mast and eventually finds its way beneath the mast step. As this strengthening member is made of mild steel, corrosion is a consequence.





Mast in its position being supported on the "cabin floor".

A steel strengthening member encased in epoxy at the front end of the keel. This spreads the forces from the mast and its rigging into the keel and hull structure. An important (but little known ?) component of the structure that is approx 300mm deep



As steel corrodes it expands. This eventually forces cracks in the mass of epoxy surrounding this steel section. In turn this allows more water to penetrate further down allowing water to create more corrosion. As this process continues eventually the corrosion carries on down until the forces can finally split the hull on the centre line! The integrity of the hull is then breached and hey presto water leaks into the boat.

Subject to where you are and the wave conditions I think this could be very worrying! Although Graham and Janie in their article didn't seem too concerned. I would have been. The idea of immediately slackening off the rigging sound very good advice but don't over do it – it is there to keep the mast in position!

Early signs of corrosion could be rust stains below the mast steps when looking into the rear part of the bilge under the cabin floor. As this process gets worse maybe you may be able to see a small crack on the centre line at the forward end of the keel.

The solution is pretty drastic but not necessarily beyond the very keen and experienced amateur but requires some considerable spare time and some pretty hefty muscle power. It involves ripping out the seat/bunks either side of the main cabin then a lot of heavy work breaking up the epoxy surrounding this steel structure. And a great deal of work follows putting back a new steel support – preferably stainless according to Chris Cload. Then re-installing all the wood work! A Winter project?

I however I have other ideas – in the absence of air stainless steel **can corrode!** I do wonder whether a replacement would better be made in mild steel and galvanised. Discuss! Constructive comments from others more knowledgeable than me would be welcome to pass onto other members. This doesn't take away any of Chris Cload's experience in the replacement of this item.

For anyone concerned my suggestion would be to seek out a knowledgeable surveyor or contact Chris Cload at:-
<http://www.clouds.co.uk/> or Tel: 01752 605807.

Barry Quest – Editor



A Ballad at rest in the higher reaches of the Tamar. An area to be discovered by anyone attending the 2012 National Championships but not racing.

Laying up DIY style for north west Scotland based Ballad "Schönbrunn"

Without handy marinas with boat lifting and storage facilities any nearer than 50 miles and having enough space at our house this is how Schönbrunn gets to spend the winter at "home".

We bought her 20+ years ago, originally in partnership with another family, and as Walter was an Engineer in the paper trade he was able to have a custom made cradle manufactured by one of his contacts. It's rather in the style of Meccano, actually quite adjustable and able to be dismantled to be tidily stacked away for the summer.

One key feature are the four chains from the base of the cradle to the toe-rails, this allows the cradle to be lifted along with the boat with the lifting slings remaining around the hull. (no risk of the hull getting squashed).

So... to plan for lift-out day I need to organise a crane, a lorry, a slot at the nearby commercial wharf and the help of two or three of my crew. This can be a bit tricky leading to the occasional postponement if one of the "components" has to cancel!

A few days earlier I will have assembled the cradle, which consists 6 steel channels and 4 "acrow props" and stays, on a flat trailer (ex-caravan chassis).

The usual dis-assembly on board is done the day before, sails and boom off, electrics disconnected and some of the shrouds. Then on lift out day 2 of us motor over the wharf, and the trailer is towed over there too (all of a 1/2 mile away). The remaining shrouds are undone, a rope around the mast is prepared and two mast crutches tied in place.

On shore the crane and lorry have hopefully arrived and with hook only the mast lifting rope is attached, tensioned, and then the heel pin and deckhead gasket are removed. Up she goes and laid down on the crutches. While the mast is being secured the crane's 4 lifting chains are used to lift the cradle off the trailer and it is put down on the ground. That's the trailer finished with. There was an issue once with the mast but that's another story!

Next it's the slings around the hull – in line with the bulkheads, hooked up, lifted and lowered onto the cradle. Acrow props are adjusted up to the hull and chains hooked over the toe-rails and tensioned. Lift again onto the truck and the cradle strapped down.

Then the convoy heads up to the house where the crane driver has to do some packing under the outriggers due to the gradient of our estate road. The crew are busy laying a few timbers next the to opposite kerb – this enables any passing locals to bounce up onto the verge and get past the crane – this is the only way out for the residents above us, and they have always been very tolerant, although some of course have a little difficulty if not driving on a perfectly flat road!

Also some prepared "wedges" are laid in position so that the cradle sits horizontally on the slightly sloping driveway. Up and down she goes usually now with a few spectators who are keen to see if the nearby lamp post remains vertical.

Then that's that – all that remains is hosing off the slime, winterising the engine, putting on the cover (over 22mm water pipe hoops set in the stanchion sockets)..... and a multitude of other chores which seem to go on all winter.....

In the Spring it's basically all the above in reverse. As a matter of interest when the chains are under tension any or all of the props can be lowered away from the hull for antifouling etc – she's perfectly stable.

So is it worth it? It's a bit of a hassle organising the operation compared to leaving it all to a boatyard but having her parked within feet of my garage/workshop is really very handy. Cost, currently about £320 each way. (i.e. £640 annually).

For the first time last winter she stayed afloat berthed on a pontoon in the Caledonian Canal a couple of miles away (see cover 'photo). That cost about £750. This is roughly the same as outdoor winter storage ashore at the nearest boatyard down towards Oban. I wonder how this compares with costs down south?

Chris Strong
November 2011



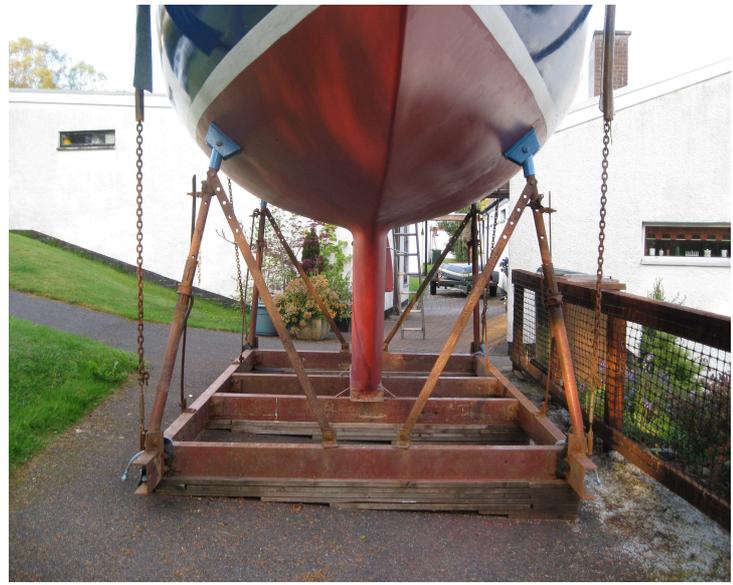
Cradle assembly



Airborne



Landed



Home and dry



Kotaku at the 2011 National Championships and now sadly for sale by Paul Dixon, a long serving committee member. Thank you Paul for all you have done for the association.

FOR SALE

Ballad 1478 - Kotuku



The ALBIN BALLAD is a successful racing and cruising boat and Kotuku is an excellent example. Built in 1980 to the latest Mark 2 design with 5 berths she is at present on-shore at St Winnow on the River Fowey.

She had a new Yanmar 2GM20 diesel engine in 1999 and a new Z Spar mast in the same year. In 2010 the hull below the waterline was sandblasted and epoxy coated. Extensive sail wardrobe including a new mainsail in 2011. Instrumentation for depth, wind speed/direction and log displayed above hatch. Cradle available. Surveyed 2006.

Price: £17,500 ono

For further details or to view the boat please contact:

Paul Dixon tel: 01208 872310 email: pjadixon@tiscali.co.uk

And for the Cruising types?

Many Ballads are now well over 30 years old. Many Ballads have had a face lift or extensive modifications to its interior.



Another Appeal.

Your editor is always looking for information, suggestions and experiences of fellow Ballad owners. Anything no matter how small, please send to the editor (*Address below*). You must all be fed up reading about the National Championships as interesting as these may be to the die hard racer. Suggestions as to how the Newsletter can be improved also welcome

Barry Quest, Brackenhaze, Old Station Road, Horrbridge, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 7RA. e-mail: bquest@btinternet.com or Tel: 01822 855 362.

Hope you all had a Happy Sailing season for 2012.

With your boat probably laid up for the winter are you planning or have actually done any modifications that could be of interest to us?

Please share them with us.

I'm going to fit a Lewmar vent in the cabin. (I said that in the last Newsletter and still haven't done anything yet! Ed). Who else has done that?

Advice welcome.

And not forgetting the subscription form over leaf.

UK Ballad Association
2012 Subscription request

If you have already paid your 2012 subscription, thank you.

If not it would be greatly appreciated if it could be paid soon. As agreed at the AGM last November the rates have been amended to £6 per boat irrespective of how many owners per boat there may be. So for multi ownerships this means no change or even a reduction for 3 or more owners.

For us single owners (and we are not talking marital status here!), let's just bite the bullet, the extra pound is worth it just for the newsletter! *(This last bit obviously added by the Editor).*

There is also the category for past owners of Ballads who wish to remain in touch with the group, at £5.

If you no longer own a Ballad or do not wish to continue to receive these mailings could you please advise Janie either by email (janiesmallridge@tiscali.co.uk) or by posting this form. If you have the details of the new owners of your Ballad, it would be appreciated if these could be made known.

Please make cheques out to the UK Ballad Association and send (with this form) to Janie Smallridge at the address below:

The Willows
Ludwell Lane
Exeter
Devon
EX2 5AQ

Name.....

Address.....

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Tel. No.....

E mail.....

Ballad Name.....

Ballad No.....

Sail No.....

Home Port.....

Please note the following change in my Ballad ownership details.....

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