

1951 - 1972

***HELENSBURGH
SAILING CLUB
The First
21 Years***

FRONT COVER
Len Taylor in "Vivo" (6612) and Donald McLaren in "Figsy Wee" (4525) leading in the National Enterprise Scottish Championship, 1962.

ABOUT THIS BOOK—

Perhaps some explanation should be given of how this book came to be written. Towards the end of the 1971 season I was discussing the past and the future with Stewart Douglas, and we realised that the Club was approaching its 21st birthday. Some brief research confirmed the dates, and very soon plans were drawn up with Bill Carlaw and his Committee to have a celebration regatta on the weekend after the Enterprise National & World Championships, utilising the marquee and other additional facilities which would still be available. Having gone this far, I began to gather information for a brief review of the Club's history, and the material has accumulated till this book is now far bigger than was ever intended. I have tried to cover most of the interesting aspects of the Club's history as objectively as possible, but some personal bias has no doubt crept in, and since I was not around during the first decade I have had to rely on second-hand information. Memories are not perfect, particularly concerning events 20 years ago, and it is therefore quite possible that a few errors have crept into the narrative. I am very grateful to those who have supplied me with facts, figures and photographs, and who have corrected my draft notes. I have tried to mention all the prominent members and their achievements afloat, but if I have omitted somebody important I apologise and hope some future historian will be able to record their successes.

Many of the Club's interesting personalities have been mentioned in the later text. There are, however, some stories which do not appear elsewhere but which are worth recording, and there are others which for various reasons must remain untold!

Dick Roscoe was the first outstanding helmsman in the Club, and was one of the driving forces in the development of dinghy racing at Helensburgh. Being an apprentice, he wasn't particularly well off when he came to Helensburgh, but what he lacked financially he made up in determination. When he brought his Firefly "Flaming Onion" to Scotland he got as far as Glasgow by train. He then pushed it by road from Glasgow to Dumbarton where he launched it and sailed it

down river to Helensburgh! Some years later when he and John Hunt went to the Firefly National Championships at Torbay they went by rail and took the boat complete with launching trolley and motor bike as "excess baggage". They changed at Crewe and had to manhandle boat, mast, trolley, motor bike and luggage over the footbridge to another train. Eventually the boat arrived at Torquay station and from there they towed the boat to the sailing club, with John sitting on the motor bike pillion seat facing astern holding on to the launching trolley and boat. After all that, it was only just that they should win the National Championship!

Dick was also an outstanding helmsman on home waters, and every Saturday he used to sail from the Gareloch to the Holy Loch Sailing Club at Sandbank to participate in their racing. Very often he sailed single-handed, and on some occasions in hard weather when the keel boats reckoned they had had enough he still sailed on under reduced canvas. It is a great pity he was unable to participate in the selection trials for the Melbourne Olympics in 1956, because it is very probable that he would have been one of our most successful helmsmen. In 1957 he was sailing a National 12ft. dinghy which he built himself, and when he left the Club to return to England he designed and built the successful series of 'Squid' National 12's. The latest news is that he is sailing a Contender on the South Coast.

Sailing was quite rudimentary in some ways in the early fifties, and there were some strange craft in the Club at that time. Iain Allan reckoned that his Hornet "Lass O' Luss" would be improved by adding a fin keel, but it developed submarine tendencies on certain points of sailing which led to some alarming incidents. Allan McKillop at one time sailed another odd boat called Rainbow (modified and renamed Quetzal) which was a self-righting converted lifeboat designed (by Uffa Fox) to be dropped from aircraft to airmen ditched in the sea. John Hunt, who has owned many boats, built his first "tarry tub" from bits of wood and angle iron and used two empty oil drums as buoyancy tanks. He sailed this 'floating sentry box' from the Gareloch over Rhu Spit, ploughing a furrow in the process, and delivered it to a customer (whose mother didn't approve, incidentally). This

was his first marine transaction, but not his last by any means!

Catamarans, which have never really caught on at Helensburgh as they have done at Largs, are capable of spectacular bursts of speed. One Club catamaran literally sailed in circles in a strong breeze round a Clyde paddle steamer going at full speed. On the subject of performance craft, Bruce Benson's extrovert Osprey "Nit" was always prominent — not least because of its red white and blue striped sails. He used to sail it far afield in all weathers, and arrived at Lamlash one Sunday morning when the locals were swithering about putting on club racing in the sheltered bay! Travelling considerable distances in dinghies used to be quite common, and John Christie and one or two others have sailed to Largs and the Kyles of Bute. Nowadays most dinghy owners have road trailers and cars, and they can travel longer distances in greater comfort and at the same time be independent of the weather. This can give rise to a different form of excitement, as when Bill Carlaw was overtaken to starboard by his own boat and trailer which, with mast lashed down like a lance, proceeded to charge a column of oncoming traffic which was led by a police van!

The Club's keelboats have usually been a pretty heterogeneous bunch, and perhaps because of their lower performance potential coupled with the canny nature of their helmsmen they have given rise to less hair-raising exploits. Many members have built dinghies, but comparatively few have built keelboats. John Gorrie cruised extensively in his 16ft. converted lifeboat "Ceo" and in his Lysander "Ceo II", and John McNiven (who later became a partner in Arden Yachts) built a small Spitfire class cruiser "Mistral". Lawrie Neish built several boats at Hermitage Academy including one to his own design (rather like a Flying Fifteen) which was prone to sinking at moorings during gales. His most ambitious project was when he built his Yachting World Keelboat "Owaissa" and then built a Fireball from the surplus plywood offcuts! He was never very successful in the Fireball, but he won the 1966 Colintrave Race handsomely in "Owaissa" assisted by the fact that his was the only keelboat which would plane in the strong breeze.

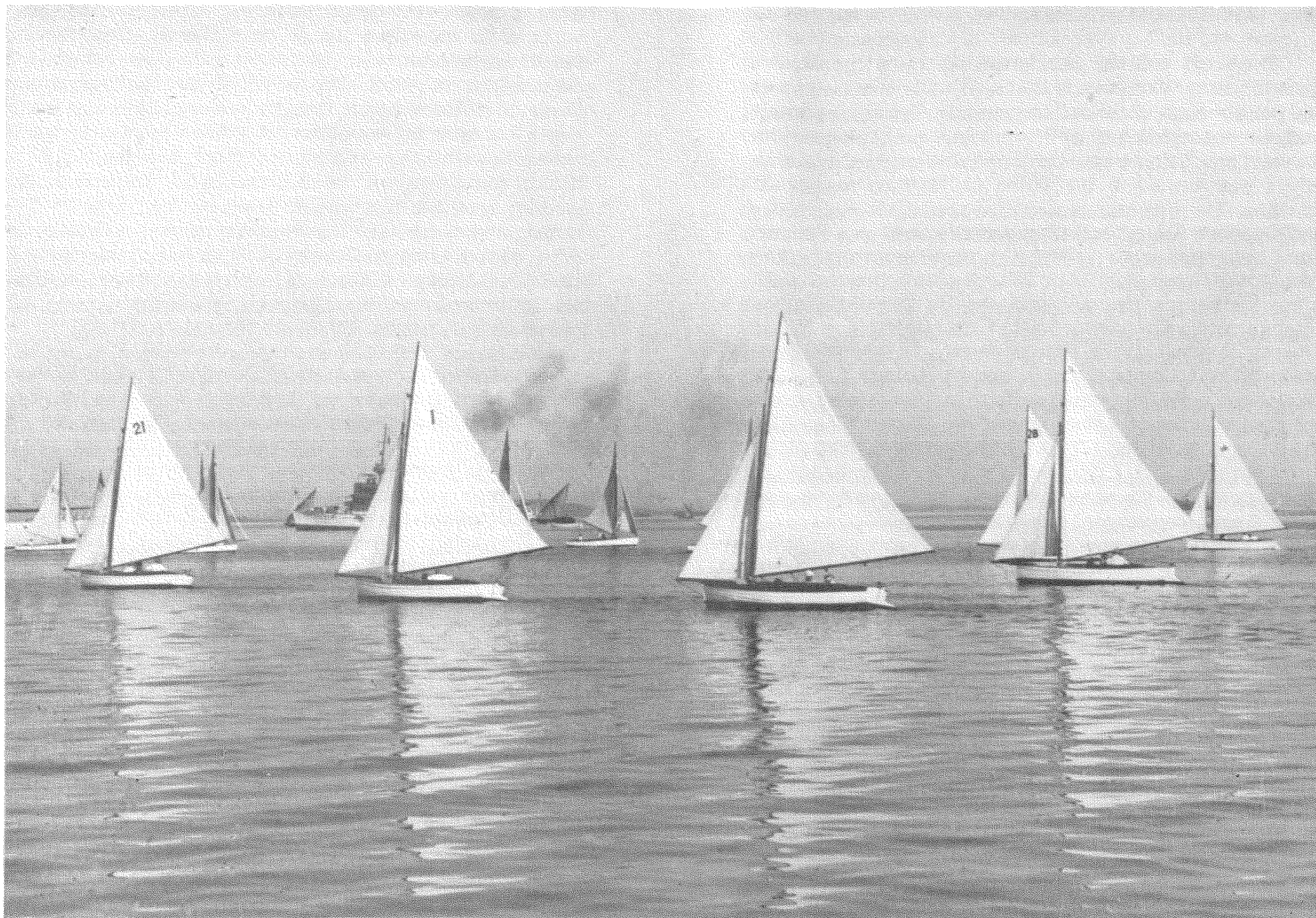
There are many more tales which could be told, about the

Enterprise crew which went to the "Nationals" with an 11-gallon barrel of beer as "fuel", about the new GP14 which did too well until one of its buoyancy bags was filled with water, and so on, but there has to be a limit. It is evident that the Club members have the right spirit and when you read the following account of the Club's 21 years it will be obvious why the Club is now Scotland's leading Club in smallboat sailing

W. R. Morrison,
July 1972.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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"Tomtit" dinghies racing at Bombay. These clyde 18 ft. centreboard dinghies were designed and built for Helensburgh yachtsmen (see page 4) and raced at Helensburgh as the Seamew class. When the class died out locally the dinghies were sent to Bombay where they were known as the Tomtit class.

PREHISTORY

Helensburgh was the only major resort on the Clyde at the end of the 19th century that did not have its own annual regatta, although yachting was very popular in the area. A Committee consisting of ex-Provost Breingan, Commissioners Malcolm and Tait, Messrs. Campbell, Taylor, McCulloch and others was formed in the spring of 1891 to remedy this situation. The first regatta was advertised in the Helensburgh and Gareloch Times, and what was described as a "mongrel fleet" of local boats joined the regular Gareloch racing yachts off Helensburgh Pier on Saturday 5th September, 1891. The officials for the day included Sir James Colquhoun (Commodore), Col. Colquhoun, Capt. Deverall, R.N., and Provost Mitchell (Vice Commodores). The North British Steam Packet Company's new paddle steamer Lady Clare was loaned to the Committee as flagship. There were five races for smaller types of yachts - race I for 10 raters, race II for 2½ raters, race III for 17ft. LWL boats, race IV for handicap boats not over 21ft. LWL, and race V for Clyde Canoe Club (then based at Clynder) handicap yachts without fixed metal keels (centreboard dinghies).

The weather was poor, but the event was a great success and was held again in the following year on Friday 5th August when the Town had a half holiday. The regatta was a bigger event with more yachting races (Classes up to 30 tons), as well as rowing and swimming events. The Helensburgh Regatta thus became an established annual event in August.

In 1893 the yachting was organised jointly with the Royal Western Yacht Club (of Scotland). The R.W.Y.C. was unusual among Clyde Yacht Clubs in having no base, and in holding several annual regattas at different locations on the Clyde. Their presence attracted larger yachts to the Helensburgh Regatta. There were 9 races for yachts in the 1893 regatta, but the rowing and swimming events were probably more popular with most of the townsfolk, and these events formed a major part of the day's programme.

During this period the Clyde was in the forefront of yachting developments and there were several revisions of the rating and measurement rules. Scratch racing in one-

design classes was strongly favoured and many of the major yacht clubs sponsored one or more classes. Local (dinghy) classes were also built, and one such class appeared at Helensburgh in 1895. The boats, known as Seamews or Clyde 18ft. Centreboard Dinghies, were designed by Linton Hope and built by McAllister of Dumbarton for £33 each, excluding sails. They carried no ballast, and the crew (live ballast) was restricted to 3. Innovations such as hollow wooden spars and tapered iron masts had been tried in other classes and discarded. The Seamews carried solid wooden spars with a choice of cruising rig or racing rig, and had sealed buoyancy compartments fore and aft. They represented the latest in design development and in some respects were remarkably similar to modern dinghies (see pp.22-23).

The Annual Helensburgh Regatta continued as a jointly organised event for a number of years, but support from the bigger yachts fell away, no doubt due in part to the fluky winds which prevailed off Helensburgh! The 1902 Regatta was a failure on the yachting side because of other attractions in the form of Coronation Celebrations, and the final Helensburgh Regatta was held on 8th August, 1903. The R.W.Y.C. returned to Hunter's Quay for their August regattas, and it was left to the Helensburgh Amateur Rowing Club and the Helensburgh Swimming Club to continue the annual gala. The Rowing Club disappeared shortly after the First World War, and only the Swimming Club has survived to this day. It is perhaps strange, in view of all the sailing activity, that there was never a Sailing Club at Helensburgh in the 1890's but as far as we know the present Club, which was formed in 1951, was the first Sailing Club based at Helensburgh.

The Seamews appear to have lost popularity locally after an accident in which two people were drowned, and many of them were sent to Bombay where they raced for many years as the Tomtit class. The late Mr. McGregor (donor of the McGregor Trophy) raced in the class there, and after his death his son presented the Club with two photographs of the class racing at Bombay, and with the model of a Seamew/Tomtit dinghy which is now displayed in the Clubhouse.

THE FORMATION OF THE CLUB, SEPTEMBER 1951

History has a curious way of repeating itself, and sixty years almost to the day after the first Helensburgh Regatta a mongrel fleet of small sailing craft assembled off Helensburgh to race together, and to eventually form our present Club.

It all began this time on the initiative of Duncan Crawford who owned a butcher's shop in the Town. The idea of forming a Club arose from casual discussion over the counter with some of his customers who had small keelboats moored off the Pier, and this led Duncan to insert a notice in the Helensburgh and Gareloch Times inviting all those interested in racing centreboard dinghies and small sailing yachts to meet in the Court Hall, Sinclair Street. Among those who attended was R. K. (Dick) Roscoe, an apprentice naval architect working with Denny's of Dumbarton, who had recently arrived in the district bringing with him a great enthusiasm for dinghy racing and a Firefly dinghy (Flaming Onion) which had been used in the 1948 Olympics. They formed a committee with W. C. Whyte, J. Hume Brown, J. W. M. Mitchell and G. Kipling, and arranged a general handicap race for 2.30 p.m. on 1st September, 1951.

Dick Roscoe handled the entries, and Duncan Crawford acted as race officer aboard the M.V. Silmar. The start line was off Rhu Pier, and the course turned out to be a reach in a fresh southwesterly breeze to a mark off Helensburgh Pier, a beat to the Rosneath Point buoy, and a reach back to the line - twice round with all marks left to starboard.

The fleet, which ranged from a Yachting World Cadet to a Vertue sloop, soon spread out with C. T. Lamb's Swordfish "Chloe" and Dick Roscoe's "Flaming Onion" well in the lead. The race was won by Hume Brown in Alastair Macneill's cat-rigged dinghy "Moira" (2hr. 48min. 35sec. corrected to 1hr. 26min. 14sec.), with "Chloe" (1hr. 29min. 15sec., scratch) 2nd, "Flaming Onion" 3rd, "Ceo" (John Gorrie) 4th, "Dolphin" (owned by Dr. J. D. Jack, Sailed by G. Kipling) 5th, "Kerrera" (J. M. Kerr) 6th, "Rainbow" (J. G. Allan) 7th, and "Capella" (Philip Tanner) 8th. Five boats retired.

Since the race had been a great success another meeting was held on 12th September with G. Kipling in the chair, and it

was decided to form a sailing club. The Meeting voted to call it The Helensburgh and District Sailing Club (11 votes) in preference to The Helensburgh and Gareloch Sailing Club (5 votes) or The Helensburgh and Rhu Sailing Club (3 votes). Duncan Crawford declined nomination and G. Kipling was then elected Commodore, with W. B. Winsor as Vice Commodore, J. Hume Brown as Secretary, and John G. Gorrie as Treasurer.

The Committee prepared a draft Constitution which was approved at a General Meeting of the Club in the Court Hall on Tuesday, 30th October, 1951. Mr. Adam K. Bergius was elected Commodore in lieu of Mr. Kipling who had recently been appointed to a post in Antarctica. At this meeting it was decided to change the name of the Club to The Helensburgh Sailing Club, and one of Gregor Iain Smith's designs for a Club burgee was subsequently adopted.

Two designs had been prepared, but the one showing a monogram of the letters H.S.C. was rejected. The accepted design is a representation of the flywheel of Henry Bell's steamship "Comet" in black on a white pennant. The design is appropriate in several ways apart from the maritime connection, not least being that Henry Bell was the first Provost of Helensburgh. The spokes of the flywheel are shown vertical and horizontal as in a St. George's cross, but the subcommittee choosing the design thought they should form a St. Andrew's cross. The flywheel, which is in Hermitage Park, shows the former orientation. Duncan Crawford threatened to have the flywheel rotated 45° to obtain the desired orientation, but the letterheadings showing the burgee had already been printed and it was too late to make any changes.

The Club has remained basically unchanged in character since it was formed, although it has expanded enormously in size, and there has been a change from almost exclusively small keelboat racing to predominantly centreboard dinghy sailing. The object of the Club, as stated in the Constitution, is still "the encouragement of amateur boat sailing and racing in the waters adjacent to Helensburgh". It has been the Club's policy not to sponsor any particular class of boat, and the development of classes over the years has always been on the initiative of individual members.

21 YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

1951

After the general meeting in October at which the Club was formally created the Committee and members were fully occupied in preparing for the coming sailing season. A series of lectures was held during the winter which served to educate and entertain the novice yachtsmen, and at the same time attracted many new members to the Club. The Town Council gave permission for the waiting room at the end of the Pier to be used as a clubroom, and this was to be an invaluable "home" for the members for several years. The junior members in particular used to meet there regularly on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

One of the purposes in mind when forming the Club was to fill the gap left by the older established yacht clubs which did not cater for the owners of small cruising-type keelboats or dinghies, and there was consequently a deliberate emphasis on boats which were cheaper to buy or build. The Committee did not wish to sponsor any particular class of dinghy for the younger members, but on their recommendation three members built the new Yachting World Hornet dinghy during the winter in Johnnie Wright's joiners shop in West King Street—Iain Allan (Lass O' Luss, 14), Bill Carlaw (Calypso, 15) and Willie Winsor (Blue Comet, 25). The first 8-metre Cruiser-Racer (8-CR) "Sonda" had been built during 1951 at what seemed an enormous cost, and about the same time the Club was offered four old lifeboats from the paddle steamer "Duchess of Fife" at £25 each for conversion into H.S.C. cruiser-racers, but the scheme never came off.

1952

Races were held every Wednesday evening and Saturday afternoon, starting and finishing at a transit line from the end of the Pier. The courses were worked out by Hume Brown and Alan McKillop to avoid as far as possible inconveniencing the steamers using Helensburgh and Craigendoran Piers. The entry fees were 10/0d. for the season or 1/0d. per race. The first race was held on 3rd May and everybody adjourned to the Commodore's house afterwards for free

beer—it is strange that this never developed into a tradition! Some of the younger members used to frequent the Radio Café after racing and this became their howff.

All racing was on handicap. Class I consisted of conventional keelboats (over 20 ft. LOA) such as Elk (David Esslemont), Rainbow (Alan McKillop), Elma (Cyril Thompson), Iona (John Christie), Jura (Adam Bergius) and Dolphin (Dr. Dugie Jack). Class II consisted of all the smaller keelboats and dinghies and was extremely heterogeneous. Apart from the Hornets and the Firefly "Flaming Onion" there were the Cadets "Camyak" (Ian Hood) and "Spiv" (John Hunt), an 11 ft. open clinker-built dinghy "Tern" (Hume Brown), a 14 ft. open dinghy "Myzie Mac" (Duncan Crawford), a 16 ft. converted lifeboat "Ceo" (John Gorrie), a Bardowie One-Design dinghy "Gowk" (George Gray and Jim Twigg), a National 12 "Cormorant" (Stewart Douglas and Sandy Peters), a 14 ft. "Thames barge" called "Mij" (John Stirling) and an International 14 "Molly" (Norman Gibson).

A passage race to Port Bannatyne was organised for the Class I boats, but there wasn't much enthusiasm and a race round the floating dock at Garelochhead was put on instead for all classes. This was the forerunner of the present races to Clynder. There were also a series of 'tanker' races round any suitable tanker at the Tail of the Bank. On at least one occasion the course had to be amended hastily when the mark sailed off to the Middle East!

1953

A complicated system was introduced to make handicap racing fairer. The average corrected time of all finishing boats in a race was to correspond to their average handicap number, and individual handicaps were corrected by one quarter of the difference between the old and calculated new values (!) Duncan Crawford took over the job of handicapper from Dick Roscoe, and these two were among the few persons who really understood this system and its subtle variations. The system could be beaten by sailing badly in a race or by allowing weed to grow on the hull so that the handicap changed gradually as the boat got slower — the boat was then cleaned before a special race and performed remarkably well!



"Capercaillie" the first of the G.P.14's.

Duncan was equal to this, however, and handicaps were only adjusted after a series of poor results.

Shore facilities after racing were improved when a tea bar was installed in the Pier clubroom. This was manned by the lady members of the Club under the direction of Miss K. Wilson.

Alastair Macneill ordered a new plywood G.P.14, and when Duncan Crawford heard of this he dismissed it as a "damned corn kist". However, when he saw it he had to admit that it wasn't as bad as he had feared. Centreboard dinghies were very much on trial in these days, and when Beecher Moore visited the Club with two Hornets which succeeded in capsizing at the same time it supported the pessimistic view that "the Clyde is no place for dinghies".

Most of the dinghies were kept at moorings beside the keelboats, and each gale used to capsize some and occasionally caused damage. On these occasions the harassed boat-owners used to keep vigil from the shelter of the clubroom, and in later years the army landing craft even provided a searchlight at night so that they could see their boats sinking! For this reason the owners began to keep their boats ashore at various points all along the front as far as Vine's Cove (which was at the old seaplane slipway just north of Rhu Pier) and Spy's yard at Rhu. Vine's Cove became in effect the first dinghy park, and it was Norman Vine who first made tiller extensions for the G.P.14's. The Committee began looking for a proper dinghy park at this time, but for one reason or another they turned down sites at Barr's boatyard (now the infilled site east of Craigendoran Pier), ground at the old pill factory at the foot of Campbell Street, and space at the side of the Queens Hotel.

Apart from the usual points series races, there was a full programme of special races. A race round the Gantocks, which had been scheduled in 1952 and then cancelled because of a gale, was held for Class I keelboats, and the remainder of the keelboats and dinghies raced to Clynder and back. Other innovations included a Ladies' Race, a Cadets' Race and a pursuit race. The principal event was the Coronation Regatta on Tuesday, 2nd June, which attracted 37 starters and was the best turnout of the season on the Clyde up till

then. The Town Council presented three trophies for annual competition to mark the occasion.

At the A.G.M. Adam Bergius' term of office as Commodore expired. When invited to become Commodore he had insisted that the principal Flag Officers should not hold office for more than two years. In this way the Club would be subject to a regular change in its Officers, and, while it might lose the services of good men prematurely, this was much better than the possible alternative of Flag Officers holding permanent office.

1954

It was becoming increasingly difficult to manage without Club workboats other than Miss Kathleen Wilson's 10 ft. dinghy "Ladybird" which the juniors used for ferrying members out to the moorings. A 16 ft. rescue launch powered by an inefficient Austin 7 engine was bought for £85 and named the "African Queen". Commodore Jim Robertson gave the Club a 14 ft. workboat which was named the "Maggie", and he had a replacement engine put in the "African Queen".

The Clyde Corinthian Yacht Club transferred its traditional Friday Evening Regatta from Hunter's Quay to Helensburgh and provided starts for the Club's boats. The move proved so successful that the Regatta has been held annually at Helensburgh on the last Friday in May since then.

The Club, which had joined the R.Y.A. in 1953, felt it was now time to accept the invitation to become a member of the Clyde Yacht Club's Conference (now the Clyde Yacht Club's Association) and joined in December.

1955

The G.P.14's were firmly established as a scratch racing dinghy class, and the Club were therefore very pleased to accept the loan of a new G.P.14 (Acanthus) from the Clyde Corinthian Y. C. for the use of Club members. Most of the dinghies were now kept at Rhu hangars, by courtesy of the Army, and the move proved very popular with the members concerned. No particular type of keelboat seemed to be favour-

ed in the Club, and at the A.G.M. Hume Brown made the point that there was a great need for a cheap keelboat so that scratch keelboat racing could be started.

The local Sea Rangers had been associated with the Club since its formation, but approaches from other Clubs and organisations had always been rejected. An exception was now made and Glasgow University Sailing Club was given affiliated membership.

1956

During the winter the Club ran its first seamanship class in collaboration with the County Education authority, and 20 Club members and non-members attended regularly. Dick Roscoe built a National 12 "Schoosh" (1393) and won the Scottish Dinghy Sailing Championship at Loch Earn (a three day event) with four first places in the first four races, beating Peter Collyer (Holy Loch S. C.) and John Wyllie (Selby, Yorks) who were Olympic dinghy trialists.

The G.P.14 class grew to 14 by the end of the season, and had regular turnouts of over 6 in Club races throughout the summer. Jim Fulton brought the first Enterprise (Blue Charm, 93) to the Club and it was viewed with great curiosity by the younger members. Harold West became a regular timekeeper, and did this job almost continuously till he became timekeeper to the C.Y.C.A. in 1968.

1957

The lady members of the Club, who had been providing tea in the clubroom after racing since 1953, formed a Ladies' Committee with Miss Kathleen Wilson as Convener. Peter and George Mundie, who ran a boat hiring business from the Pier, were asked whether they would provide a rescue service for Club racing, but they declined. This did not mean that the Club was without their services, because over the years they made many fine rescues of capsized dinghy crews which gave added interest to their passengers who had expected only a "trip round the bay".

The annual regatta in June was held under the C.Y.C.C., and for the first time it included races for all the major Clyde keelboat classes. It was one of the largest regattas held

on the Clyde, and was so well run that it created some surprise in yachting circles and the Club was publicly acclaimed by some of the competitors.

The first G.P.14 Scottish Championship was held shortly afterwards, and this was doubly successful since Club boats took 5 of the first 8 places (see p.20).

1958

Dinghy parking at the hangars was only a temporary measure, and provisional permission for parking at a site beside Clyde Street School was therefore obtained, but an alternative site at Kidston Park seemed better and no final decision was made.

An arrangement was made with the Mundies to provide rescue cover during Club racing, and the African Queen was sold. The first Smallboat Weekend was held on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th August despite strong objections to racing on a Sunday. The Colintrave race had 10 starters but most of them never got as far as the Cloch because of a force 6-7 southerly blow. John McNiven in "Mistral" sought shelter up Loch Long and eventually made Swine's Hole in Loch Goil. He had no means of getting ashore in the gale and was "missing" until Sunday.

The minutes record that an application for membership was received from "Mr. John S. Mackay, owner of an Enterprise dinghy". Although he was not the first to sail an Enterprise in the Club, he was undoubtedly the most enthusiastic promoter of the class's interests over the next decade and he must take much credit for the development of Enterprise racing at Helensburgh and in Scotland.

1959

Dinghies were kept in a new area at Kidston Park beside the Cyclists' Shelter, and dinghies were manhandled down the small sea wall with the help of two planks of wood. Eventually a steep temporary ramp was built at right angles to the wall (this was later rebuilt into an L-shaped ramp with a concrete platform at the top).

The scratch dinghy classes consisted of 40 G.P.14's and 26 Enterprises (in their first full season!). Terylene sails were



"Bambi", the most successful G.P. in the mid 50's, helmed by Harold Hood and crewed by Gordon Hyslop.

prohibited for G.P.14's until 1960, but were permitted for Enterprises except in open events. Smallboat Weekend included the first Scottish Singlehand Sailing Championship which was won by Dr. P.E. Chamberlain in "Samba" (Solo, 18), one of the many Solo and Finn helmsmen who came for the event.

1960

With the dinghies now established at Kidston Park plans were made to improve the facilities. The Army agreed to build a jetty at the Shelter, but the proposals were rejected by members who thought that it would interfere with dinghies sailing off from the beach.

The Albacores, which had first appeared during 1959, were already sufficiently numerous to be granted class racing from July. Smallboat Weekend continued to be one of the largest regattas on the Clyde with 114 starters this year.

1961

The dinghy park was fenced in and concrete slabs laid inside the park and down on to the beach. The Shelter was converted to provide a store room and a kitchen with Calor gas cooking so that the ladies could provide tea and other hot drinks after racing.

The Club had a stand at the first Scottish Boat Show in the Kelvin Hall, and displayed an Enterprise and the G.P.14 Acanthus (which had just been gifted to the Club by the Clyde Corinthian Yacht Club). The Enterprises became Fleet no. 61 and were required to measure properly in order to participate in class racing (but see p. 21!). Race officers were now drawn from the ordinary members as well as from the Committee, and classes were started in order of their Portsmouth Yardstick ratings.

A severe gale with winds gusting to 80 m.p.h. struck during the night of Monday 7th July. Hermes sank at her moorings off McGruer's and slipped into very deep water where she could not be found; Peter and George Mundie were kept busy all night salvaging boats at the moorings off Helensburgh Pier. Another gale, reputed to be the tail of hurricane Debbie from America, struck on 16th September

with winds gusting to 90 m.p.h., and it was said to be the worst gale since 1911. The combined effects of low barometric pressure and the wind blowing up the Firth caused the high tide to be 5 to 8 feet above normal at various points up the river, and dinghies were floating in 2 feet of water in the dinghy park. Many boats at moorings were lost or blown ashore and damaged. John Gorries "Ceo" sank at the Pier, and most of the handicap dinghy fleet were washed up and smashed at the swimming pool.

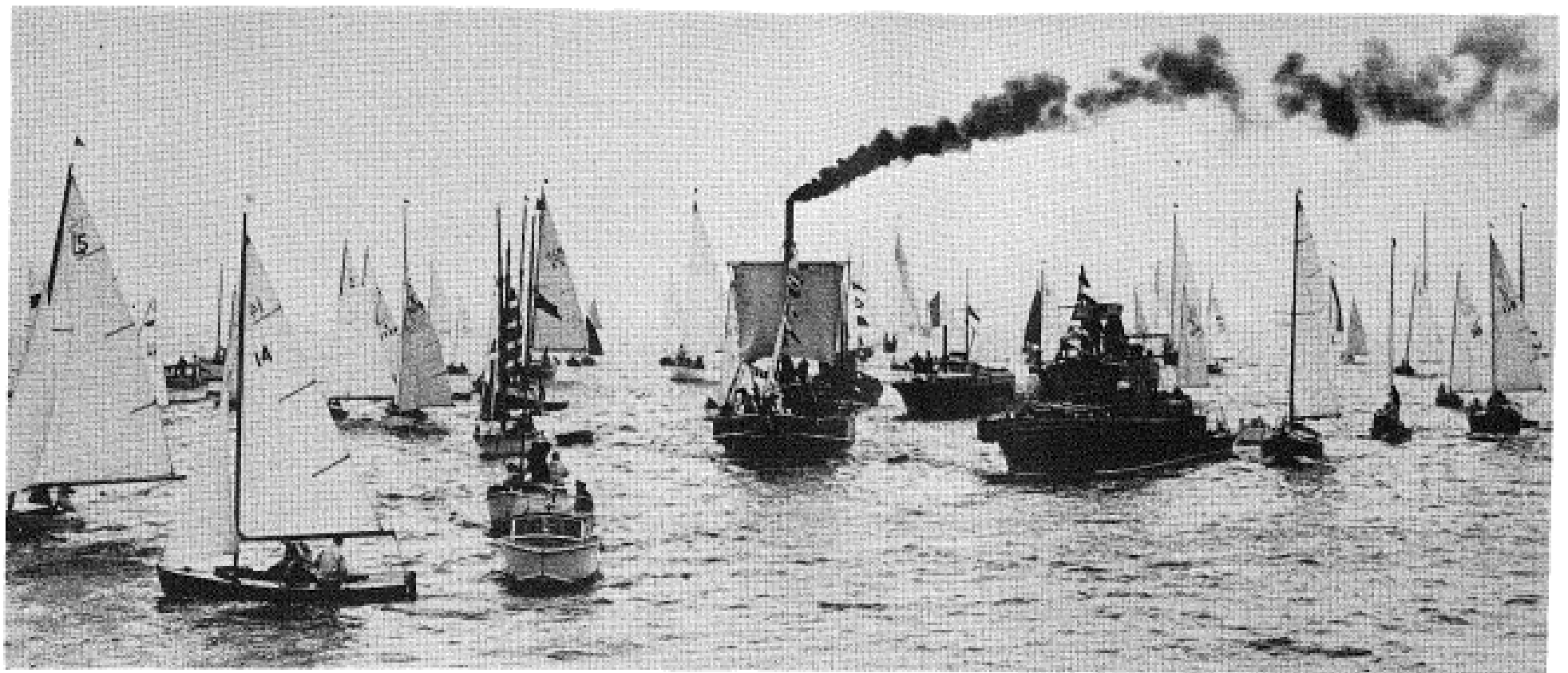
1962

The subject of a clubhouse at Kidston Park was raised at the 1961 A.G.M., and the problem of obtaining a site and getting permission to build began to occupy a large proportion of the Flag Officers' time. Proposals to ease the burden of running the Club were made at the 1962 A.G.M., and at an Extraordinary General Meeting the offices of Rear Commodore (2), Hon. Asst. Secretary, Hon. Asst. Treasurer and Hon. Regatta Secretary were created. Class representatives automatically became members of the Committee.

The Pier Clubhouse, which had been damaged by fire, was repaired and a new upstairs room with a balcony was installed for the race officers and timekeepers. The flagpole was the jackstaff from the battleship King George V which had been taken from the Gareloch and broken up at Dalmuir in 1958.

Ken Gibson and Bruce Benson started sailing Ospreys, but only a few members joined them and the boats had to race in the handicap class except at Smallboat Weekend when other Ospreys came from the Royal Tay Yacht Club. Smallboat Weekend set an all-time record with 193 entries consisting of dinghies and small keelboats such as Flying Fifteens, Loch Longs and Dragons. The Enterprise Scottish Championship attracted 52 entries, and local helmsmen Len Taylor and Donald McLaren took the first two places.

Clyde Week was held at Helensburgh with mid-week evening races for dinghies from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th July. This was particularly arduous for the keen sailors who raced in keelboats during the day, in dinghies during the evening and then went on to dance at the Royal Northern Yacht Club afterwards!



The replica of Henry Bell's "Comet" approaching Helensburgh Pier accompanied by yachts which had competed in the special regatta.

A special regatta was held on 1st September to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the building of Henry Bell's steamship Comet. There was a general handicap race for all Club boats, and the silver rosebowl first prize presented by Helensburgh Town Council was won by Bruce Benson in his Osprey "Nit".

1963

After much effort, three possibilities for a clubhouse were arrived at— (a) take a 10 year lease on a cottage with car parking behind the Ardencaple Hotel (b) try to get permission to build at Kidston Park, or (c) look for an alternative site. There were serious disadvantages in (a) and the members

voted for option (b) in preference to (c). Permission for a building beside the Cyclists' Shelter was refused, but the Club was allowed to extend the dinghy park north-west of the burn and spent £250 on infilling this area. A 20 year lease at a nominal rate was obtained on the whole dinghy park area which was now fully fenced.

Peter and George Mundie agreed to lay the racing marks and provide the rescue service. There were discussions with the Police about using Club boats for emergency rescue work since there was no R.N.L.I. station in the area.

The Club had a busy year with regattas including the first Scottish Albacore Championship which was won by Alistair McNicol in Ceol-na-Mara. The Ladies and Cadets Race was

changed to a Ladies Race starting from the Pier and run concurrently with the Clynder Race. A separate Novices and Cadets series was run on Friday evenings by Eric and Marion Fairley.

1964

Since a Clubhouse site at Kidston Park had been refused, the next best location seemed to be the Empress field on the east side of the Ardencaple Hotel. A plot in the south-east corner was offered, then withdrawn, and another plot in the north-west corner offered. Neither was considered suitable, especially with a main road running between the site and the dinghy park. The dinghy park was meanwhile improved by building another ramp and gate, and by installing tie-down blocks at a cost of 5/0d. per boat. Plans for another jetty to be built by Army engineers along the line of the sewer never came to fruition.

The highlight of the season was the Enterprise National Championship which was held in Scotland for the first time, and it was the first major event of its kind to be run by the Club. Entries were restricted to 140, but in practice there were never more than 122 starters in any race. Planning and preparations were very thorough and have remained the basis of the organisation of all subsequent Championships at Helensburgh. Kidston Car Park was used for the boats and a temporary ramp was built from the pavement to the beach at the side of the Shelter. Cars and road trailers were kept in the Empress Field, and the Ardencaple Hotel became the temporary headquarters on this occasion. The Championship was a great success both as a sailing and as a social event. Tommy Mann (Mannikin, 8535) won the Championship, and Bill Carlaw won the City of Glasgow Trophy which is the principal one-day trophy in the Championship.

1965

An application for permission to build a clubhouse at the Shelter was rejected by the Town Council, but they did indicate that they might approve plans for a building farther along opposite Dalmore. A proposal to this effect was put forward in April, and final permission was granted in Sept-

ember. The necessary feu and leases were obtained from Luss Estates and the way was at last clear to build a permanent clubhouse. The Flag Officers made a survey of clubhouses built recently at Oban, St. Mary's Loch and Monklands, and came to the conclusion that any building planned on reasonably generous terms was likely to prove too small a few years after completion!

Paddie Mundie, who had taken over the rescue service, gave it up and the Hosie brothers took over temporarily towards the end of the season. The Club bought a 14 ft. Y.W. Bass Boat and a 10 h.p. Mercury outboard which was to be the beginning of the present self-service rescue and mark laying system. Towards the end of the year R.N.L.I. opened an Inshore Rescue Boat station at the hangars. The crew were almost all active sailing



Helensburgh Inshore Rescue Boat.

members of the Club, and have remained so to the present day.

The first G.P.14 National Championship in Scotland was held from 15th - 21st August, and drew 112 entries. The week began with light airs but by the Friday the wind was so strong that only 43 boats managed to finish. The Irish contingent, led by A.B. Allen of Ballyholme Y.C. (Jusmaidi, 6007), dominated the results.

The Enterprises were very keen on team racing and organised a tournament in which teams from Helensburgh Enterprises (A and B), Albacores, G.P.14's, R.N.Y.C. Garelochs, St. Mary's Loch and Royal Tay Y.C. competed. The Helensburgh A team won, and the other Club teams acquitted themselves well.

1966

During the winter a rescue boat organisation was set up by Bill Morrison drawing on ideas used by the R.N.L.I. station. The Sailing Committee bought an 18 ft. Fairey Faun with an 18 h.p. outboard, and the Faun and Bass Boat were fitted out with a comprehensive selection of equipment. The rescue boats were manned during the season by Jim Richardson, Norman Renfrew and Peter Burley, assisted by members drawn in rotation from the racing personnel.

There was a decline in dinghy racing and keelboat racing during the season, and only one lady started in the Ladies Race. The Novices and Cadets series received no support. On the other hand Alistair McNicol's first sail training week for novices was a major success and has been run annually since then, gaining many new active sailing members for the Club.

A G.P.14 built in GRP with tubular metal stiffening was seen in the dinghy park for the first time, but it did not excite much enthusiasm. Ken Gibson tried to start interest in the singlehanded OK class, and the numbers gradually built up to about half a dozen. There was talk of 505's coming to the Club, but as usual the status quo prevailed.

There was a full season of regattas, including two Clyde Week Dinghy Weekends to give a total of eight races with six to count; four were held at Gourrock on 2nd and 3rd July and four at Helensburgh on 9th and 10th July. Navy launches

towed Club dinghies to Gourrock, but at one point a tow line parted and a submarine cut through the drifting boats. Everybody sailed home afterwards!

An E.G.M. was held on 28th June at which the members finally voted to build a Clubhouse. The site at Kidston Park is undoubtedly the best which could be obtained, and with hindsight it is clear that it turned out to be in the best interests of the Club that all previous possibilities had come to nought. It was fortunate that John Gorrie and the Club's other Flag Officers who had been involved in the prolonged negotiations had the patience and persistence to see this stage reached. The Constitution was altered at the A.G.M. to permit the financing of the Clubhouse project and the running of the altered Club structure. Fund-raising projects were discussed and loans were to be raised with repayment over 10 years.

1967

An intensive programme of fund-raising activities took place during the spring and summer, including a prize draw (first prize a Mirror dinghy) which raised £300, an evening cruise on Loch Lomond (£151), a treasure fair (£163), and sailing tuition (£30). The principal effort was a Grand Fête in Hermitage Park on 20th May which raised £668. Almost half of this sum (£305) came from insurance against a downpour of rain which in fact did little to diminish the success of the Fête.

A 50% grant towards the building costs was given by the Scottish Education Department, and Dunbarton County Council gave a 12½% grant. Loans and donations were raised from members, and those loaning £100 or more enjoyed free membership until such time as the Club repayed their loan.

The final analysis of the money raised is:—

Donations	£1,324
Loans	£2,640
Fund Raising	£1,311
S.E.D. Grant	£6,200
D.C.C. Grant	£1,550
Total	<u>£13,025</u>

The area north-west of the burn was completely filled in to make an extension dinghy park and car park. The number of dinghy park spaces was increased to about 250 but was later reduced to about 210 when space was required for the Clubhouse. A booklet titled "Safety Afloat", with text by Bill Morrison and cartoons by Bob Barbour, was published and issued free to members. Some G.P.14's started to use a genoa instead of a small jib and this led to discussion of correcting their times in the points series results. A yardstick number of 101 or 102 was considered realistic (the official number is now 99), but nothing was done and within a year all boats in the class were using genoas.

The Sailing Committee issued a questionnaire to determine whether racing should be on Saturday or Sunday afternoons, and whether Wednesday evening races should be off the Pier or the Dinghy Park. There was a good response (60%), with the replies in favour of Saturday racing but indecisive about where to race on Wednesdays.



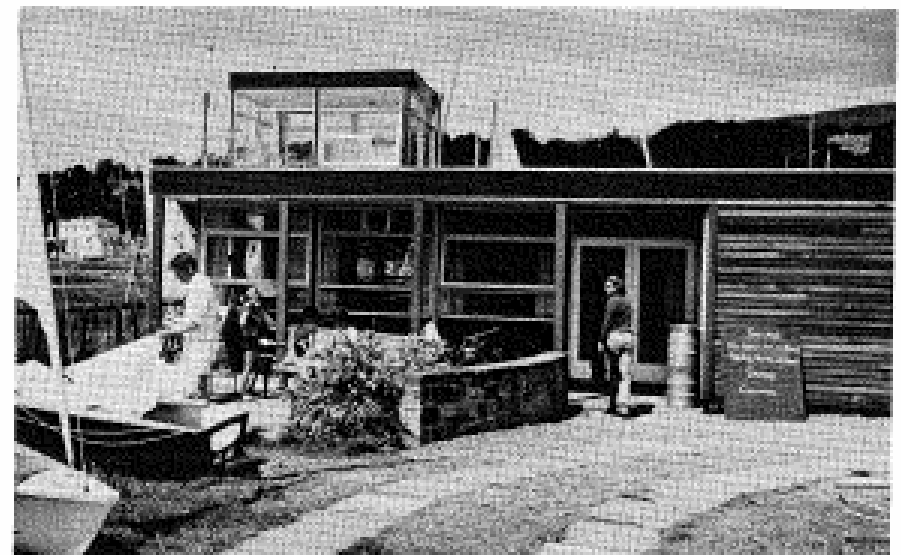
Albacores starting at the Pier.

1968

The year began with the worst gale of the century. It started on the night of Sunday 18th January, and by the early hours of Monday morning had reached hurricane force. A wind speed of 118 m.p.h. was recorded at Faslane and high tides were 6 ft. or more above predicted levels. The Bell Buoy dragged half a mile towards Craighendran, but there was little damage to yachts since they were laid-up for the winter.

The Clubhouse was built and opened in time for the main sailing season. Rumours began to circulate (and have continued to date) that widening the Helensburgh to Garelochhead road would affect the building, but assurances have been given that this will not happen. Plans for a small boathouse at the Shelter were rejected by the Town Council.

The Navy erected a new flagpole at the Pier to hoist signals denoting closure of the restricted channel (see p. 30) for nuclear submarine movements, and the Club were allowed to use six hoists on it for racing flags. To begin with the naval police launches were hypersensitive about dinghies approaching submarines in the channel, and on one occasion they tried to



The new Clubhouse.

turn back dinghies starting from the Pier when a submarine was rounding the Bell Buoy one mile away! This compared unfavourably with the attitude of the Americans at the Holy Loch where a dinghy was allowed to sail between a submarine and an object some distance astern and promptly ran aground on the submerged hull in between! A more reasonable attitude soon developed on both sides and the submarine captains have often gone out of their way to avoid interfering with dinghy racing.

The Dayboat National Championship was held in Scotland for the first time and attracted 36 entries. Moorings had to be laid for the boats, and the competitors were ferried to and from using the sewer as a unique and unsafe jetty. The competitors had a marvellous time, and some thought the beer rather weak, but couldn't understand why they weren't fully fit in the mornings! The course for the long-distance race on the Thursday turned at the Baron's Point buoy, and from there a race developed between the leading dinghies and the boat trying to lay a finishing line off Kilcreggan. The catamaran mark used to mark one end of the line capsized as it was laid, but the correct finishing order was recorded despite the chaos.

1969

The Club settled down to a new routine based on the comparatively luxurious Clubhouse facilities which now included a bar. It was necessary to lighten the load on a few key office bearers, and J. Hume Brown (Commodore from 1957 to 1959) was appointed Secretary on a part-time basis.

As a result of voting at the 1968 A.G.M. on a motion proposed by Donald Scott all Wednesday evening races were held off the dinghy park, and only the main Saturday series was held off the Pier. An 18 ft. Cheverton Champ with a 2-cylinder air-cooled diesel engine and an inflatable Avon dinghy were bought to replace the Faun, and an S.E.D. grant was obtained towards the cost. For normal racing two rescue craft were used and one kept in reserve for major events. Peter Burley and Norman Renfrew continued as the regular members of the rescue boat crews.

The oddest wind of the year struck during the Holy Loch

Sailing Club's Polaris Regatta. The Sunday morning race was a drifter with a fine drizzle. During the afternoon race a blast of hot air seemed to hit the loch and the wind reached full gale strength in a matter of minutes. There was utter chaos and some members had to leave their capsized boats and return to Helensburgh without them. Jim Essen and Iain Hamilton returned by sea in Jim's Loch Long "Hilda" using a suit of Enterprise cruising sails, and even with this reduced sail area they had a wild and terrifying sail back in the dusk.

There had been a slow change in the racing classes over the last few years and very few keelboats now turned out for any races. The Helensburgh Regatta, which was the only Club regatta with races for C.Y.C.A. keelboat classes, was discontinued and the date in the C.Y.C.A. calendar was taken over by the R.N.Y.C. for keelboat racing. This completed the change initiated when Smallboat Weekend was limited to dinghies and catamarans in 1968. There had been a record of 113 starters in the dinghy classes then, but there was less support this year and numbers were well below 100.

1970

A determined effort was made to develop interest in racing classes other than the Albacore, Enterprise, and G.P.14 which are not very different in performance, although very different in their handling characteristics. Separate starts were given for Mirrors and OKs, but the numerically larger Mirror class showed no interest in racing. Seven 505s raced in the fast handicap class and were effectively enjoying scratch racing by the end of the season since the Hornets had gone and Mike White no longer raced his Javelin regularly. There was a marked revival of interest in the G.P.14 class but the Albacores and Enterprises had a poor season. There were signs of a renewed interest in racing small keelboats, and two short passage races to the Holy Loch and back were run on Sundays during August and September.

The International Fireball National Championship was limited to an entry of 150 boats, and 128 boats actually competed. The weather was excellent, the tides strong and the winds consistently light and variable. Most competitors enjoyed

themselves, but there were a few troublesome protests and some objections about gate starts from a vociferous minority. Other special events which were plagued by light winds included the Saturday of Clyde Week Dinghy Weekend (75 entries), Smallboat Weekend (90 entries), the first Scottish 505 Championship (15 entries) and a series to select for the first time a Scottish 505 to compete in the World Championship.

Informal racing was held on Sunday afternoons, but the classes which had lobbied for the racing gave it no support! The rescue service experienced the now usual manning difficulties and was largely held together by Peter Burley and Norman Renfrew. The Pier clubroom had a large lifting door fitted and during the winter all the rescue boats were kept inside the clubroom where work could be done with electric power and heating to hand.

The Club had a stand with a Mirror dinghy on display at the Helensburgh 70 Exhibition. A Cadet section was started within the Club, but the younger members seemed to be adequately catered for as it was and the section lapsed.



Mirrors off Helensburgh.

Alistair McNicol's annual sail training week in June continued to attract young and old new members.

The R.Y.A. Scottish Council was formed, but had little perceptible effect on Club activities (cf. the Scottish Dinghy Association!). Club adult membership increased steadily, and, since the pressure on clubroom and dinghy park space was not too severe, the limit of adult members was raised to 470. The pressure on the members running the bar and cleaning the Clubhouse after each race was excessive, however, and Mr. Alan McLean was employed as steward to serve in the bar and do routine cleaning.

1971

This year had more than its fair share of misfortune, beginning with a burglary in the Clubhouse on 4th January when over £100 worth of goods was taken. Plans to expand the clubroom, bar and changing facilities at a cost of £6,500 had to be abandoned because no grant towards the cost was available as a result of the prevailing national economic situation. Some minor improvements to the office and men's



O.K. dinghies at Craigendoran

changing room were made.

Communications were effectively cut by the national postal strike, but the combined entry forms and other important notices were issued by hand and through the good offices of several shops.

The major disaster of the year was when the Pier clubhouse was gutted by fire on 3rd June with the total loss of its contents which fortunately did not include the rescue boats at that time of year. The smouldering timbers caught fire again a few days later and levelled the remains of the walls of the building. When asked who did it, Iain Yearley (Hon. Sailing Secretary, Pondmaster and Piermaster) replied "some little darlings, I suppose". In fact it was caused by a fire lit in the lee of the building by fishermen, and was the culminating act of vandalism which had been getting worse over the years. The dinghy park shelter had also been damaged frequently and the windows are now bricked-up, but so far the Clubhouse has escaped damage. It was a considerable blow to lose all the Pier facilities, but the majority of the members hardly seemed to notice the loss of the building which had been so intimately associated with the development of the Club.

There was a record of 104 applications for the first ballot for dinghy park spaces, and the dinghy park was virtually full up by the end of the year. Despite this, racing was poorly supported except in the G.P.14, OK and 505 classes. Four 505s came from Largs S.C. and the Clyde Canoe Club for the whole of the autumn frostbite series, and in the last race in November there were ten 505s to be seen planing under spinnaker in a blizzard. The OKs class were equally keen and now seems to be an established class. A small thriving keelboat section was started up and four passage races were run on Sundays. Lorna Scott was given a special presentation at the Annual Prizegiving in recognition of her ten years of service as chief timekeeper

1972

It is not possible at this time to record most of the year's events except in anticipation. The Club has already withdrawn from the Scottish Dinghy Association since it feels that it serves no useful purpose. Several winter functions

organised by the Clubhouse Committee have been sell-outs, and the Clubhouse is packed full every day after sailing. The wooden east ramp to the beach was weakened by picnic fires, and has now been replaced by a substantial concrete structure.

A second Bass Boat has been bought for the rescue service because the Champ is now used as committee boat for starting races at both the Pier and Dinghy Park. The autumn frostbite series will be run on Sundays on an experimental basis since members seem equally in favour of Saturday or Sunday racing (cf. 1967).

There is a healthy air of change in the racing dinghy classes. Several top helmsmen have transferred to 505s since this is the most challenging dinghy in the Club. Many of the 505 helmsmen have been champions in other classes and five have won major championships, so it should be interesting to see how this affects the standard of racing. Vacancies have been created in the leadership of some of the other classes and there has been an infusion of new members, so the situation is just right for keen competition leading to the emergence of new leaders in several classes.

The principal event will be the Enterprise National Championship with entries now closed at 200 and 10 more on the waiting list. Since the class obtained International status in 1971 this event will also rank for three years as the World Championship. The row over boat measurement (see p. 21) threatened to ruin the Week, but this is now settled and everything seems set for a successful Championship. The Club has firmly established itself as the leading Scottish club in running major dinghy championships, and it will also be running the G.P.14 National Championship in 1973.

The other major event this year will be the Club's 21st Birthday celebrations, when it is hoped that most of those who have made the 21 years of history recorded here will be together again. A special regatta for dinghies and the keelboats which have traditionally raced in the Club will be the focal point of the weekend.

COMMODORES**VICE-COMMODORES**

1951-53	A. K. Bergius	W. B. Winsor
1953-55	J. C. Robertson	Dr. J. D. Jack
1955-57	Dr. J. D. Jack	J. H. Brown
1957-59	J. H. Brown	R. M. Dundas
1959-61	R. M. Dundas	J. C. Christie
1961-63	J. C. Christie	J. G. Gorrie
1963-65	J. G. Gorrie	A. E. Thurgood
1965-66	A. E. Thurgood	W. Melville
1966-67	A. E. Thurgood	J. S. Mackay
1967-68	J. S. Mackay	H. L. Massey
1968-69	J. S. Mackay	J. D. E. Patterson
1969-70	W. R. Morrison	D. S. Scott
1970-71	W. R. Morrison	W. Carlaw
1971-72	W. Carlaw	A. S. Douglas

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

James Napier (1951-53), Commodore of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, gave invaluable assistance to the Club in its formative years.

J. M. Jack (1956-64), Provost of Helensburgh, helped the Club in the development and expansion of its facilities, and made several gifts to the Club.

Andrew M. Macgeorge (1956-59), Commodore of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, helped the Club in the successful running of its early regattas, and provided his 60 ton ketch "Roska" as Committee boat on several occasions.

D. S. J. Dunn, C.A. (1968), has been financial adviser to the Club and honorary auditor since 1954.

Duncan Crawford (1963-65) was a central figure in the formation and development of the Club, and was an active Committee member for many years. He had a keen interest in the promotion of keelboat and dinghy classes, and was Chief Handicapper from 1954 to 1962. He held strong

opinions which he always expressed forcibly, and often enlivened the proceedings at Annual General Meetings.

J. Renfrew Gibson (1962-69) was a staunch supporter of all Club activities since its formation and did a great deal for the Club although he never served on any of the Committees.

J. Macleod Williamson (1965), Provost of Helensburgh till 1970 and now Convener of Dunbarton County Council, has been an indefatigable supporter of the Club in its many dealings with the Town Council and has thereby helped in the expansion of the dinghy park, the building of the clubhouse, and in the provision of numerous facilities for special events. He has made several gifts to the Club, and is a popular speaker at Club functions.

John G. Gorrie (1972) was one of the founder members, and has served the Club in all of its principal Offices over the past 21 years. He was foremost in the difficult and prolonged negotiations which resulted in the building of the Clubhouse at Kidston Park, and has probably done more for the Club than any other individual member.

J. Hume Brown (1972) was a founder member and the first Secretary of the Club. He played a leading role in the development of the Club during its first decade and is now active in reviving interest in racing small keelboat classes.

BENEFACTORS

Helensburgh Sailing Club is particularly fortunate in having numerous benefactors. The Royal Northern Yacht Club and the Clyde Corinthian Yacht Club have always been very helpful, and a special relationship with these Clubs has developed. Many members have contributed much time and effort, on the Club's behalf and it would be invidious to select a few for special mention. The Club has also received many gifts, often anonymous, and the large collection of trophies for Club racing is one example of the generosity of many friends and members.

MEMBERSHIP

The Club was founded in September, 1951 by a small nucleus of about 20 adults and juniors. The entry fees were fixed at 2/6d. and 10/0d. respectively, and by the end of 1951 there were 8 juniors and 35 adults on the membership roll. There was a steady trickle of membership applications following successful winter meetings, and during the 1952 season membership increased rapidly to 26 juniors and 106 adults. In the following years there was a steady growth in junior and adult numbers, and a junior adult category (age 16-21) was introduced in 1955 (there are no separate statistics for this class of membership till 1959).

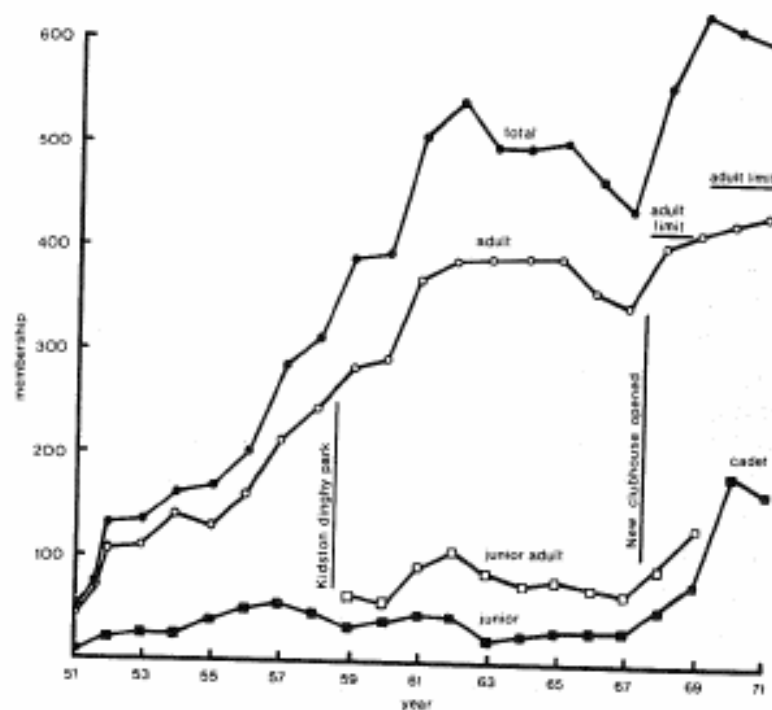
The Club participated in the nation-wide boom in dinghy sailing in the early 60's, assisted no doubt by having all the dinghies and yachts' tenders together in Kidston Dinghy Park. A decline in numbers set in after 1965, in common with other clubs, and in our own case it is probable that some members had become discontented by the continuing lack of Clubhouse and changing room facilities. This trend was checked when the new Clubhouse was opened, and since then there has been a steady flow of new members which is partially offset by an annual wastage of about 50. A ceiling of 420 was placed on adult membership in 1969 because of limited clubhouse and dinghy park accommodation, but this was erring on the cautious side and the ceiling has now been raised to 470. There has not been a waiting list for new members, except for a brief period in 1970, but it looks as if the day is not far away unless there is a further expansion of clubhouse facilities and dinghy park spaces.

Annual subscriptions are closely tied to the running expenses of the Club which have risen steadily over the years from £50 in 1952, to £1650 in 1961, and £3800 in 1971. Junior membership remained at 5/0d. from 1954-61, at 10/0d. from 1962-69, and has been £1 since 1970. Junior adult membership was 10/0d. till 1961 when it was raised to £1. Adult membership fees have absorbed most of the increased costs, being 15/0d. from 1955-58, £1.1.0d. from 1959-61, £1.10.0d. from 1962-66, £3 from 1967-69, and £4 from 1970. An incentive to family membership was introduced in 1967

with a combined husband and wife subscription of £5 which was raised to £6 in 1970, and a concession was made to members living abroad or at a distance from Helensburgh by creating an Out-of-Port category of adult membership at a reduced annual fee of £1.

In the early years of the Club the members were drawn almost entirely from the Helensburgh area, but there have been many members from as far afield as the south side of Glasgow since the mid 50's, and there are a few who have travelled considerable distances to participate regularly in Club racing. The distribution of membership in 1971 was approximately:

Helensburgh	41%	Dumbarton	8%
Glasgow	26%	Clydebank	4%
Bearsden	9%	Other areas	12%



SCRATCH RACING CLASSES

1954 to date

The Yachting World General Purpose 14 foot Dinghy (G.P.14), designed by Jack Holt has a hard chine construction and was originally built in 5 mm plywood. GRP or composite hull construction, built-in buoyancy compartments and metal spars are now permitted, and the rules are framed to give no advantage to boats with such innovations. Class policy has been to keep close control over the one-design nature of the class, and there are restrictions on the cost of sails and on some of the fittings which may be used. The G.P.14 rapidly developed into a popular racing class, and its performance was improved by adding a spinnaker (1960) and a genoa (1966) to the sail plan.

The first G.P.14 (Capercaillie) was brought to the Club by Alasdair Macneill in 1953, and in the following year Vega (372, Ken and Brian Gibson) and Tadpole (392, Mr. and Mrs. Adam Bergius) appeared.

Plywood construction was relatively new for dinghies in these days and traditionalists did not believe that the boats would last. These three G.P.'s are still racing in the Club after 16 years and their sound condition shows how wrong the pessimists were! The G.P.14 class thrived at Helensburgh, and included such boats as Capercaillie, Vega, Tadpole, Lyla (447, George Greenlees), Bambi (235, Robin and Gordon Hyslop), Trio (438, P. Turner) and Acanthus (549, H.S.C.).

Helensburgh G.P.14's were very successful in the first Scottish Championship which was held at Helensburgh in 1957. Harold Hood was 1st (Bambi), John Hunt, 2nd (Tadpole), J. Brownlee, 4th (Wee 2), Alasdair Macneill, 5th (Capercaillie) and Ken Gibson, 8th (Vega). Harold Hood, who was the leading helmsman at that time, also won the Scottish Championship and the National Championship in 1958, but he was disqualified in the latter event because his boat did not measure on a minor point. More recently the prominent helmsmen have been John Hunt (Tadpole), Eric Fairley (Tadpole), Ronald Fairley (Tadpole), Donald Scott (Vega), Peter and Ewan Campbell (Jacaranda 1780) and Stewart Douglas (Margy, 2161 and Amarusa, 7059). John

Hunt had a long string of successes, including 1st place in the Scottish Championships in 1964 and 1965, and 2nd in 1966, sailing in Capercaillie which he borrowed for these events. Stewart Douglas (Amarusa) came 2nd in the 1968 Scottish Championship, and Donald Scott finished 4th in the 1964 and 21st in the 1965 National Championships.

1954-57, 72

The National Flying Fifteen is one of a family of boats 10, 15, 20 and 25 ft. LWL designed by Uffa Fox. In the mid fifties most of the boats were sailed by members of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, many of whom were also members of Helensburgh Sailing Club. Racing was provided on Saturdays at the request of the Clyde Fleet, and was well supported until 1957. There are now many Fifteens being sailed from Rosneath Castle Boat Club as well as from the R.N.Y.C. and Helensburgh Sailing Club has again been asked by the Clyde Fleet to provide class racing for Fifteens on Saturdays during 1972.

Club members have won the National Championship four times - Dick Roscoe in 1954 (Starletta, 44), Arnold Roberts in 1964 (Vamoose, 627), Alan McKillop in 1965 (Fian, 468) and Douglas Arthur in 1968 (Hobgoblin, 255). Arnold Roberts was also runner-up in the National Championship in 1959, 60, 61 and 62 in Hobgoblin, and won the Southern Championship in 1961, the Northern Championship in 1958, 59, 62 (Hobgoblin) and 64 (Vamoose), and the Skelly Trophy (the Scottish Championship) in 1958, 59, 60 (Hobgoblin), 63, 64 and 65 (Vamoose).

1956-65

The Gareloch One-Design was commissioned by the Gareloch Yacht Club in 1923. The Yacht was designed by Ewing McGruer and in the following year ten were built by McGruers of Clynder at a cost of £160 each, ready to sail. Another five were built in only six weeks for the Royal Forth Yacht Club, and for a time were called Royal Forth One-Designs (sail nos. F1 to F5), and one boat was sent to Trinidad. With the advent of the International Dragons the Garelochs lost popularity and dispersed, until only Hermes (8) owned by

McGruers was left on the Clyde. After the 1939-45 war Zephyrus (2, Dr. R. W. Carslaw) and Zoe (10, Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Dundas) were brought back to the Clyde. Zoe raced in the Club in 1953 (R. M. Dundas), and in 1954 Zoe (J. M. Twigg) was joined by Hermes (Willie McGruer) and Zephyrus.

The late John Henderson traced the whereabouts of the other boats and it was largely due to his initiative that five boats were brought back from Aldeburgh Y. C., one from Wales, and others from the Forth. A 140 sq. ft. spinnaker was added to the sail plan which had been slowly modified over the years. The Garelochs began racing as a class again under the burgees of the Royal Northern Y. C. and Helensburgh S. C. in 1956, and have proved extremely popular. Hermes sank in 19 fathoms during the gale of 7th July, 1961, and was recovered in the following year with only her mast broken. She was repaired and has been raced regularly since then. The Garelochs still give keen racing in the R.N.Y.C. evening races in the Gareloch, although they are no longer raced at Helensburgh.

1958

The Yachting World Heron was designed by Jack Holt as a light dinghy which could be transported on top of a car. It was too small to be left at moorings but light enough to be brought ashore, and was suitable for junior crews or for single-handed sailing. Interest in the class waned after a brief period of popularity, although a few boats have been sailed in the Club every year since then.

1958

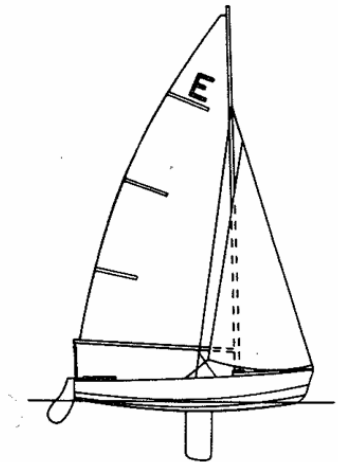
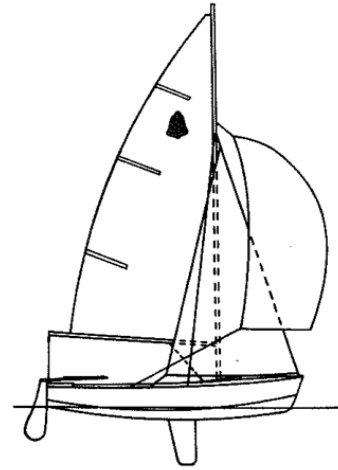
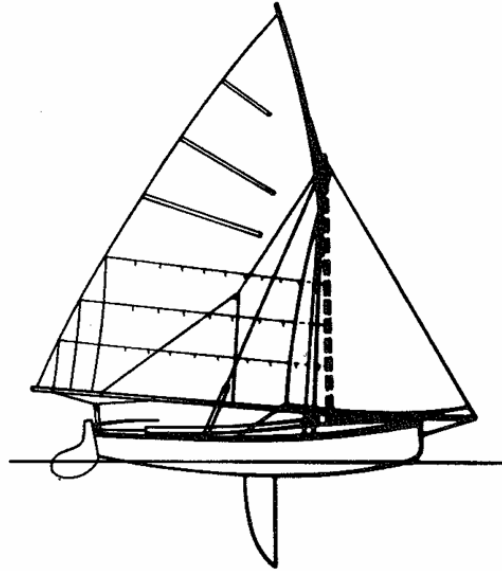
Royal Naval Sailing Association (RNSA) 14 foot Dinghies were open (undecked) boats which were clinker built in pine on oak in Naval Dockyards as test pieces for 4th year ship-right apprentices. They had a heavy metal centreboard and carried a gaff-rigged loose-footed mainsail. The boats were issued to Naval units for recreational purposes, and with the advent of a naval unit in the Gareloch some RNSA dinghies came to the area and soon joined in the handicap racing on Saturdays. Class racing was provided in 1958, but when a local RNSA branch was formed at Faslane they organised their

own racing and disappeared from the Club, except for special regattas. RNSA dinghies have now been replaced by Bosun dinghies.

1959, to date

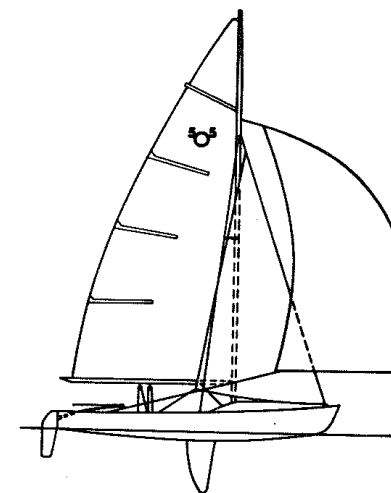
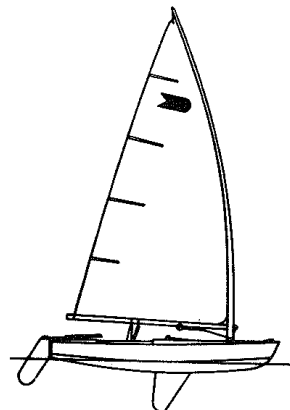
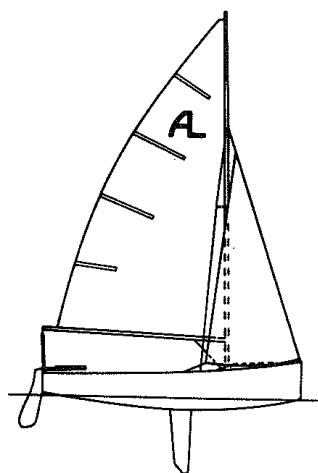
The International Enterprise was the Jack Holt design which won the News Chronicle competition (1955) to find a cheap racing dinghy suitable for amateur construction. The hull is of double chine construction in wood or GRP and the mast is deck-stepped (this has saved many broken masts when rigging has failed). The class is strictly one-design. When the class gained International status in 1971 a row developed over the measurement of the hull at stations 2 and 4. Boats which were too narrow to measure at these points were declared out of class, but when it was found that only about 60% of the British Enterprises measured (even less in the Club), a special dispensation was given by the I.Y.R.U. to allow the 'Slenderprises' to compete in National and International events until 1978.

The first Enterprise in Scotland was brought to the Club in 1956 by Jim Fulton (Blue Charm, 93). John Mackay (Blue Charm, renamed Scorpio, 705) joined the Club in 1958 and it was in large measure due to his enthusiasm that the Enterprises became the largest class in the Club. In the early and mid 60's when the class was at its height there were often about 30 starters for Wednesday evening points races, and "leagues" were operated within the class to give added interest to the results. The leading helmsmen at that time were Bill Carlaw (M'Shimba, 3339), Chris Steuart-Corry (Elf, 1890 and Fle 13196), Gus Ferguson (Kelpi, 2640), Jim Fulton (Yvonne Lindeque, 6617), John Hunt (Sambo, 2745), Norrie Macdonald (Bali Hi, 2058), Donald McLaren (Figsy Wee, 4525), Alistair McNicol (Scorpio, 705), John Mackay (Blue Charm, 1326 and Antares 13195), Ernie Marsland (Sea Soldier, 7519), Len Taylor (Vivo, 6612), Noel Taylor (Topper, 3612 and Zoe V, 12468), and Ronnie Sharp (Essem, 9351). Many of these helmsmen have long since changed to other classes but Donald McLaren and Chris Steuart-Corry remain and have recently been getting good competition from Alistair McNicol and Pete McIntyre (Mac Two, 14525), Mike Cubitt



	Seamew	Yachting World G.P.14	International Enterprise
L O A	18 ft.	14 ft.	13 ft. 3 ins.
Beam	7 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft. 3 ins.
Hull weight		285 - 293 lb. †	199 - 221 lb. †
Sailing weight	1818 lb.		
Sail area Jib/genoa	60 sq. ft.	50 sq. ft.	33 sq. ft.
Main ††	215 sq. ft.	72 sq. ft.	80 sq. ft.
Spinnaker	?	86 sq. ft.	not used in U.K.
Crew	3	2	2
Yardstick number		99	98
Price (complete) †††	£33 (1895)	£430	£380 - £430

† *Varies with method of construction (wood, composite, GRP).*
 †† *Excluding the roach which would add about 15-20% to the sail area.*
 ††† *Average price for a fully-equipped professionally built boat.*



National Albacore

LOA	15 ft.
Beam	5 ft. 8 ins.
Hull weight	240 lb.
Sailing weight	280 lb.
Sail area	35 sq. ft.
Jib/genoa	90 sq. ft.
Main ††	—
Spinnaker	—
Crew	2 (3)
Yardstick number	94
Price (complete) †††	£425 - £525

O.K.

LOA	13 ft. 1½ ins.
Beam	4 ft. 8 ins.
Hull weight	158 lb.
Sailing weight	—
Sail area	90 sq. ft.
Jib/genoa	—
Main ††	—
Spinnaker	—
Crew	1
Yardstick number	98
Price (complete) †††	£300 - £350

International 505

LOA	16 ft. 6 ins.
Beam	6 ft. 2 ins.
Hull weight	220 lb.
Sailing weight	280 lb.
Sail area	48 sq. ft.
Jib/genoa	100 sq. ft.
Main ††	215 sq. ft.
Spinnaker	2
Crew	81
Yardstick number	—
Price (complete) †††	£650 - £700

†† Excluding the roach which would add about 15-20% to the sail area.
 ††† Average price for a fully-equipped professionally built boat.

(Nuboah, 14422), and Murray Wilson (Pelorus Jack, 14526).

The Helensburgh Team won the National Enterprise Association Scottish Team Racing Trophy in 1966, 67 and 71 and were runners-up in 1965, 69 and 70. They have also been very successful in inter-club team racing competitions.

Bill Carlaw distinguished himself in the 1964 National Championship at Helensburgh by winning the Thursday race for the New City of Glasgow Trophy, and in the overall results Donald McLaren came 7th, Ernie Marsland 17th and Bill Carlaw 21st out of a total of 122 starters. Without doubt Donald McLaren has been the most successful helmsman in the class, with 10th place in the National Championship in 1962 and 15th place in 1968. He won the Scottish Championship in 1962, 64 and 72, and came 2nd or 3rd in 1963, 65, 66, 67, 68 and 69. He also won the Bluebell Traveller's Trophy in 1966, 67 and 68, and has finished in one of the first three places in literally dozens of open regattas all over Scotland. Len Taylor also had an excellent record, including 1st place in the Scottish Championship in 1965, but most of his major successes were in Graduates or O.K.'s. In recent years Murray Wilson has won several regattas and the Bluebell Traveller's Trophy (1971), interspersed with other firsts in classes ranging from the Firefly (Scottish Champion, 1970) to his father's 8-metre Cruiser Racer 'Nan of Gare'.

1960, to date

The National Albacore was evolved from specifications drawn up by a committee formed from members of clubs in the Portsmouth area who wanted a dinghy suitable for local conditions. The boat was to be used for racing and general family sailing, and was to be capable of being left at moorings. Prototypes based on the hull of the National Swordfish were developed by Fairey Marine Ltd., and were built in three diagonally-laid cold-moulded wood veneers. Later boats were made with the outer veneer horizontally-laid to improve the appearance of varnished hulls. GRP construction is now permitted, and built-in buoyancy is usually installed in wooden and GRP hulls. Most boats are bought fully finished but several successful boats have been built from wooden shells by Club members.

The early boats had wooden masts with a wood top section which could be removed so that the mast could be placed in crates with the hull for shipping overseas. Since the effective demise of the National Swordfish, which is not unlike the Albacore, there have been several attempts to introduce a spinnaker and even trapezes to improve the racing performance of the boat, but these changes have been firmly resisted in certain quarters.

Early Albacores had 80 lb. metal centreboards, and when wooden centreboards were introduced it was thought that they gave no improvement in boat speed and probably reduced stability. Ideas have changed since then! The first Albacores sailed in the Club (1959) were Schwarze Lena (247) owned by Major Coleman from the army unit at Rhu hangars and Cucolo (147, Willie McFee). The Albacore fleet grew to 24 by early 1963, and included Gildee (535, Willie McFee), Auld Nick (692, Gavin Boyd), Merrythought (846, Harry Bannatyne), Coriander (881, Jim McLean), Ziel (1487, Gordon Hyslop), and Rhulette (1080, David Aird).

Competition in the class was particularly keen from 1962-



Team racing in ghosting conditions.



Alistair and Neil McNicol in "Ceol-na-Mara".

67 between Eric Fairley (Gildee, 535), John and Charles Curran (Mekon, 1096), Ronald Fairley (Storm, 1340), Alistair McNicol (Ceol-na-mara, 1350 and Reflection, 1747) and Bill Morrison (Freebooter, 1847), and more recently racing has been dominated in turn by Gordon Hyslop (Xenon, 1748) and Ronnie Trail (Jadrea, 1124 and Camsail, 1855). Eric Fairley has the distinction of having won 13 frostbite series over the years 1961-67, sailing at first in his G.P.14 "Tadpole" but mostly in his Albacore "Gildee". Bill Carlaw successfully invaded the class and won the Scottish Championship in 1967 and 68 in borrowed boats. The Club members who have won the Scottish Championship are Alistair McNicol (1963, 64 and 66), John Curran (1965) and Bill Carlaw (1967 and 68), while Ronald Fairley (1966), Alistair McNicol (1967) and Jim Paton (1971) have been runners-up. Bill Morrison won the North of England Championship in 1967 and finished 3rd in 1968. The Club's Albacores have had a particularly good record at the Holy Loch Sailing Club's Polaris Regatta which has been won by Alistair McNicol (1964), Bill Morrison (1968) and Gordon Hyslop (1970).

1962-63

Veteran Dragons were older International Dragons which were no longer competitive with newer boats, and which did not wish to race in the Firth. There were enough around in 1962 and 63 to provide class racing off the Pier on Saturdays but there was not enough enthusiasm to sustain interest.

1970, to date

The OK Dinghy was designed in 1963 by Knud Olsen, at the suggestion of Axel Damgaard, as a cheap, light single-handed planing dinghy which could be used as a training boat for young potential Finn helmsmen. The class expanded rapidly all over western Europe. The first OK in the club was Oktav (K 8) owned by Ken Stewart. Ken was lightly built and renowned for capsizing, but he used to tie himself to the end of the mainsheet and never came to any harm. He sold his boat to Albert Mayor who soon became the Club's champion

"swimmer". Ken Gibson revived interest in OK's in 1966, and a few crewless helmsmen (John Hunt, Norrie Macdonald Bill Carlaw and a helmsless crew (Pete Tattersall) from 2-man dinghies joined the single-handed brigade (Ken Gibson, Reg Gallimore). After a period of turnover (boats and boat-ownership!) a more stable class developed which included Stewart Sanderson (Anonymous, K 243), Mike McIntyre (Noggin, K 883), Ian McDonald (Berengaria, K 1181) and Neil Spurway (Hania, K 1182). The most successful helmsmen in the class have been John Hunt (Nomad, K 99) with several 2nd and 3rd places in open events including the Scottish OK Championships and the Single-Handed Championships in 1967 and Mike McIntyre who won the Scottish Junior (under 16) and Scottish Single-Handed Championships in 1971.

1970

The Mirror dinghy was sponsored by the Daily Mirror and designed by Jack Holt and Barry Bucknell to be built by amateurs from kits (plans are not available and measurement tolerances are suitably generous!). The boat costs about £80 in kit form, and is the largest single class in the world with sail numbers now over 30,000. It has a unique method of hull construction which consists of "sewing" sheets of plywood together with copper wire and sealing the seam with glassfibre tape and resin. The mainsail is gunter rigged and loose-footed. The hull has a minimum weight of 80 lbs. (most boats weigh 95-105 lbs.) and the boat may be sailed with the mast stepped forward (mainsail only) or aft (mainsail + jib). there is also a small spinnaker. The Mirror is the slowest class in the Club (Yardstick number 122), but is stable and ideally suited for children or single-handed sailing. In 1970 an unsuccessful attempt was made to start class racing, but there was little support and only three or four out of about 30 Mirrors in the Club participate in handicap racing now.

1971

The International 505 began life in 1953 as the Coronet, an 18 ft. dinghy carrying 175 sq. ft. of sail, designed by John Westall for the IYRU trials at La Baule to select a 2-man

boat for use on the open sea. The Flying Dutchman had been chosen in 1952 for inland waters, and competed against the Coronet at La Baule. Although the Coronet won, the Flying Dutchman was again selected and eventually became the Olympic class. The French Caneton Association then asked Westall to modify the boat by reducing the overall length (to 5.05 metres) and the sail area. The first 505's were built in 1954 and the class was given International status in 1955.

The hull is round bilge with considerable built-in buoyancy and an open transom. Early boats were cold-moulded, but GRP construction is most popular and carbon fibre reinforcement has been used in several boats. Top helmsmen who demand very stiff hulls still choose wooden boats or GRP shells with wooden side-tanks but they are too expensive for most owners. The class rules permit considerable variation in fittings and layout without rendering older boats uncompetitive. Spinnaker launching chutes, which were originally introduced in the FD class, were rapidly adopted by 505's and are now fitted in all Club boats. The 505 is the only class in the Club fitted with a trapeze for the crew.

The first boat was brought to the Club at the end of 1968 by Ronald Fairley (Geronimo, K 1872), followed shortly after by Bill Morrison's boat Fanny (K 1728). Previous attempts to interest members in performance dinghy classes such as the Hornet, Osprey and Fireball had failed, but this was the opportune moment and the 505 class is growing steadily.

In the short history of the class at Helensburgh the leading helmsmen have been Bill Carlaw and Norrie Macdonald (Nosey Parker, K 2637), Ronald Fairley (Tumblewash, K 4070) and Bill Morrison (Vixen, K 3648). Bill Carlaw was 2nd in the 1971 Scottish Championship, and Bill Morrison won Largs Sailing Club's Round Cumbrae race (1971) in the fastest time recorded for a dinghy, as well as the 1971 Polaris Regatta (fast dinghy class) at the Holy Loch. Although the boat is basically intended to be sailed by an all male crew, it is worth noting that the helmsmen's wives have crewed very successfully in Vixen (Anne Morrison), Tumblewash (Elda Fairley) and Moominpapa (Elsbeth Hyslop).

McGREGOR TROPHY WINNERS

The McGregor Trophy has been awarded as the Club Championship Trophy since 1967, and is decided by competition at the end of each season between the new Class Champions.

1967	D. A. McLaren
1968	D. A. McLaren
1969	J. Hunt & W. R. Morrison (tied).
1970	W. Carlaw
1971	R. E. Fairley

HELMSMEN OF THE YEAR

The Helmsman of the Year Trophy is awarded to the helmsman who has had the most outstanding record of successes during the season in Club points races *and* at home and away regattas.

1963	A. McNicol	1968	D. A. McLaren
1964	D. A. McLaren	1969	J. S. Mackay
1965	D. A. McLaren	1970	not awarded
1966	D. A. McLaren	1971	R. M. Wilson
1967	D. A. McLaren		

SCOTTISH FIELD TROPHY

The Scottish Field Trophy is awarded to the winner of a series of races between the Scottish Class Champions of the principal dinghy and catamaran classes. The Helensburgh Sailing Club members who have participated are listed below.

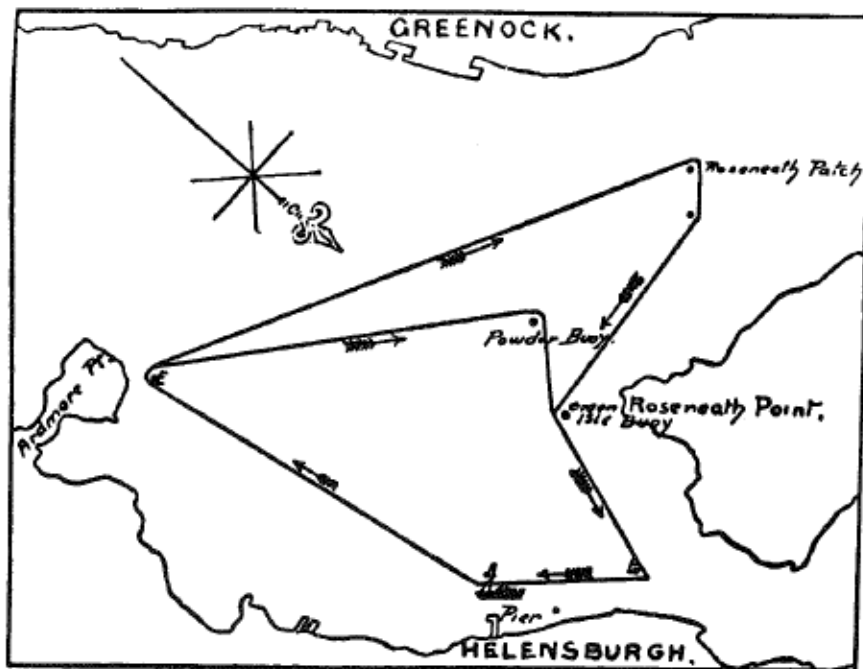
1962	D. A. McLaren (Enterprise), competed A. McNicol (Albacore), competed
1963	M. Reid (Zenith), 2nd L. T. B. Taylor (O.K.), 6th A. McNicol (Albacore), competed
1964	A. McNicol (Albacore), 1st L. T. B. Taylor (O.K.), 2nd D. A. McLaren (Enterprise), 3rd J. Hunt (GP14), 5th
1965	L. T. B. Taylor (Enterprise), 1st M. Reid (Zenith) *, 2nd A. McNicol (1964 winner), 4th
1966	A. McNicol (Albacore), 4th
1967	W. Carlaw (Albacore), 1st
1968	abandoned
1969	M. Wilson (Firefly), 1st W. Carlaw (1967 winner), 2nd
1970	M. Wilson (1969 winner), 3rd
1971	no Club representatives

* Also winner of the National Championship in 1965.

COURSES

The courses used for racing off Helensburgh have evolved from simple triangles using half a dozen marks to the 1971 course card which has 63 courses and 19 marks. This remarkable diversity has been developed to give true windward legs at the start for most wind directions, and lengths suitable for boats with a great range of speeds (Portsmouth Yardstick numbers 81 to 122) sailing in very light, medium or very strong winds.

The courses for the 1891 to 1904 Regattas used the maximum area of water which was available without going out of sight of the Town. A starting line was laid from a launch near the Pier. The first leg was round a flagboat off Ardmore Point and the larger yachts then went round the Rosneath Patch mark while the smaller yachts went round the Powder Buoy. All classes then passed outside the Green Isle Buoy, rounded a flagboat off Cairndhu Point and came

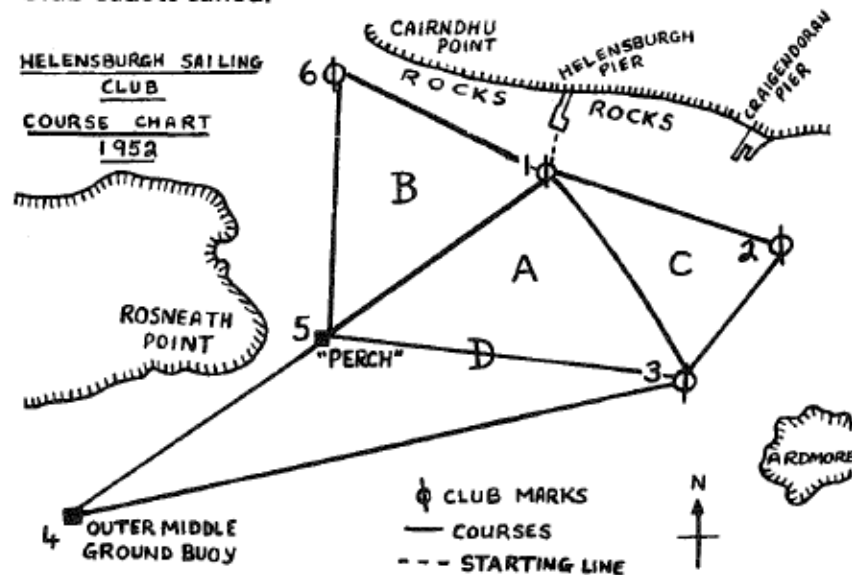


1891-1903

Courses were 2 or 3 rounds of the outer or inner circuits as shown, or in reverse direction.

back to the finishing line. Two or three rounds were sailed depending on the class of yacht and the wind strength. The courses gave long legs with little opportunity for the Race Officer to choose a course to suit the wind direction. Since the windward performance of yachts in these days was poor compared to modern yachts there was perhaps less need for true windward legs.

The first Club courses in 1952 were simple triangles, as recommended by the YRA, with a starting and finishing line from a transit on the Pier to an outer limit mark. Course D was remarkably similar to the larger 19th century course. The courses were too long for some of the slower boats, particularly in light winds, and it was not uncommon for boats to be becalmed without completing a single round. The logical development for the 1953 courses was to keep mark 4 (renumbered 3) for larger keelboats and marks 2, 4 and 5 at 1 mile radius from the start (1), and to introduce marks 6, 7, 8 and 9 at ½ mile radius from the start. The courses using the inner marks were nicknamed "Bardowie courses" after the small courses used on Bardowie Loch where the Clyde Cruising Club cadets sailed.



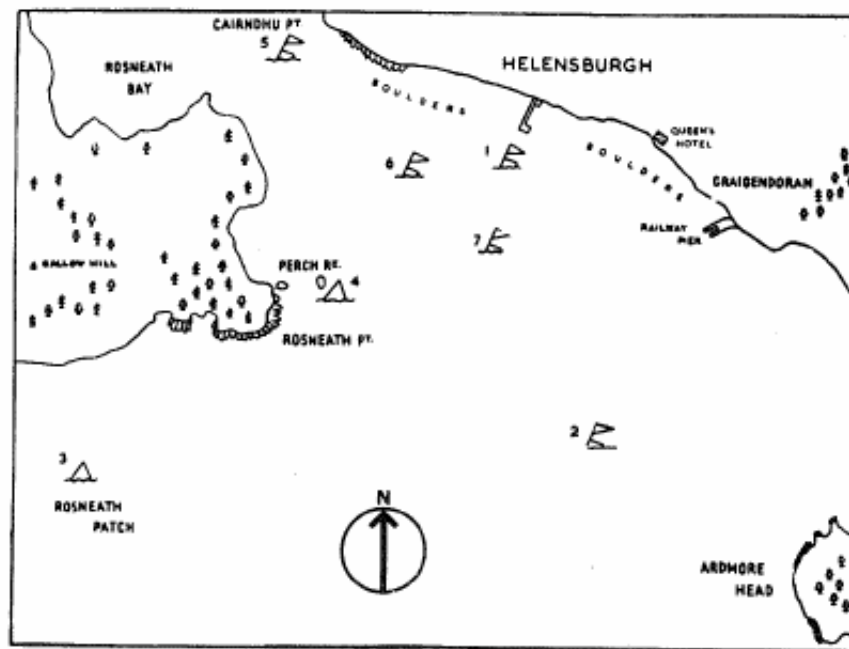
1952

Course C (red) was 1321 (1 to 3 rounds), course D (green) was 1341 (1 or 2 rounds).

These courses were used with little change for ten years. A common starting and finishing line could not give a line at right angles to the first and last legs of the courses, and from 1961 two transits and limit marks (E and W) were used, starting from one and finishing all rounds with the other. Marks T and V were added in 1963 and marks D and O in 1964 to improve the selection of courses. Flag Q, meaning 'omit the second round', was introduced in 1965 to enable the Race Officer to shorten courses (consisting of 2 large rounds followed by 2 small rounds) if the wind fell light after the start. The handicap keelboats and catamarans used marks 3 and D in addition to the other marks, and had relatively long courses - too long in fact for the catamarans who reverted to fast handicap courses during 1967. Separate course cards were printed for keelboats and catamarans from

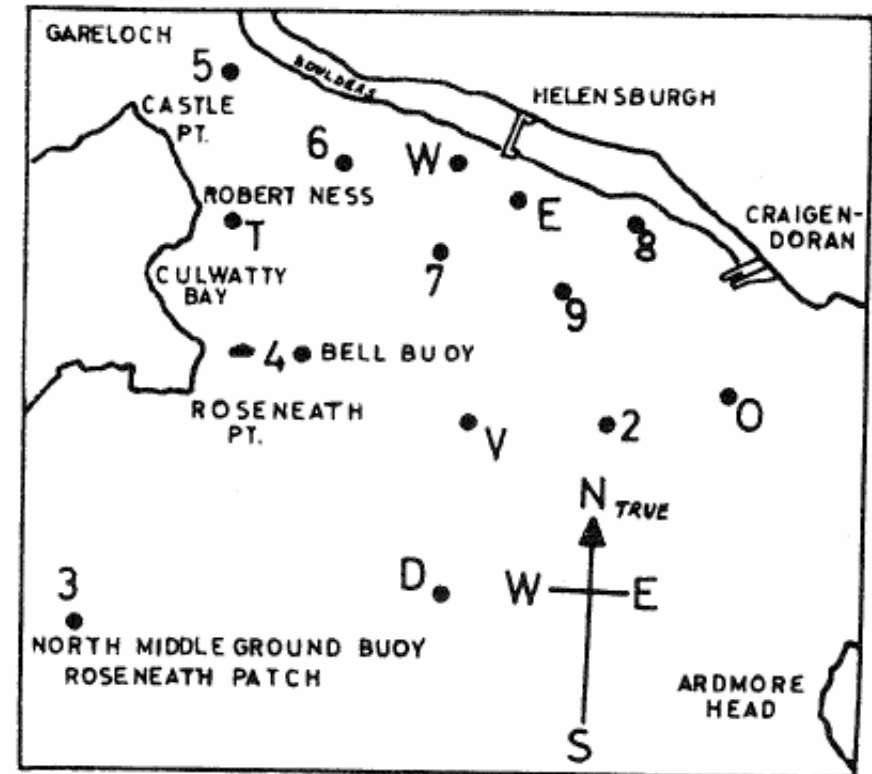
1962-67 but with the decline in keelboat racing and the return of catamarans to the dinghy courses all the courses were combined on the one card from 1968.

Informal frostbite racing began in the autumn of 1960. Courses in Rhu Bay were chalked up on a blackboard and racing started and finished from a transit line at the Cyclists' Shelter with a limit mark out in the moorings. There was no shelter for the race officer and timekeeper! Spring and autumn frostbite races were formally organised from 1962 using simple triangular courses and additional marks variously numbered E (start), 6, 7 or 8, 3 and 2 or W. These were re-named X, R, Z and Y respectively to avoid confusion with the marks on the main courses, and mark C was added in 1967 to give a better course for a westerly wind.



1953-62

Course K (1953) was 1231, 451 (all classes), course A (1957) was 1761-4 rounds (GP14, Flying Fifteen), course K (1961) was W245W, 45W (Garelochs).

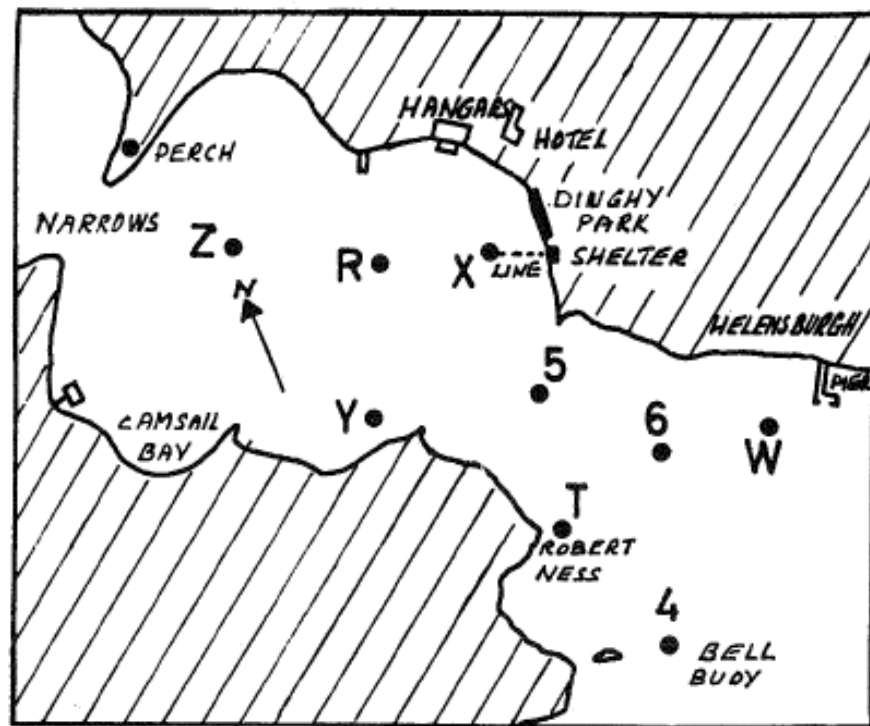


1963-67

Course E (1963) was E8VTW, 824W, 97W (fast dinghies), courses CP, CR (1964) were E4D3VW, 42W (keelboats).

It was quite common for Wednesday evening races off the Pier to end in near darkness, and the timekeepers sometimes had to use car headlights to see the sail numbers of finishing boats. The Wednesday evening races were therefore transferred to the dinghy park frostbite courses at the beginning and end of seasons 1966-68. There were several strong objections to holding part of a major points series of races in Rhu Bay (e.g. strong tides, racing through moorings), but the proximity of the Clubhouse (and bar) and the comfortable accommodation for the race officer and timekeepers were the deciding factors and from 1969 all the Wednesday evening races were held in Rhu Bay on the Dinghy Park courses.

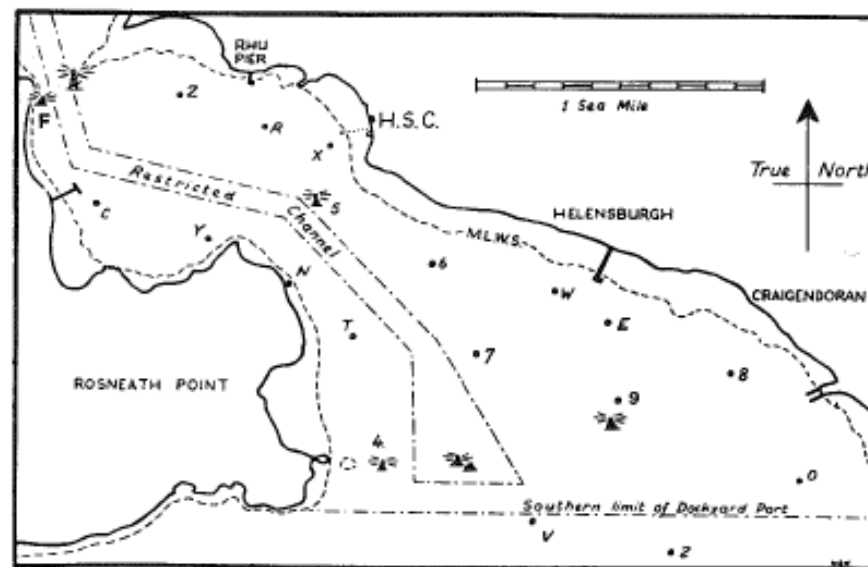
Several changes in the pattern of racing took place about the end of 1967. Separate keelboat and catamaran courses ceased to be used, improvements to eliminate "hook" finishes were introduced, and better dinghy park courses were required now that 60% of all Club racing was to be in Rhu Bay.



1966-67

Course L (1966) was XW4X (4 rounds), and course L (1967) was XCZ X (3 rounds).

At the same time the new Queen's Harbour Regulations came into force and it was necessary to show the restricted channel on the course card, and to devise courses which could be used when the channel was closed due to movements of nuclear submarines and other large naval craft. A new comprehensive course card was therefore brought out in 1968, and has remained substantially unchanged since then. There were courses for three basic groups - catamarans and fast handicap dinghies, medium speed dinghies (Albacore, Enterprise, GP14, OK) and keelboats, and Mirrors and slow handicap dinghies. Mark F was introduced for the fast dinghies to give a windward mark in W to NW winds with the added interest of the tide race at Rhu Narrows coupled with erratic squalls off the hills. Most of the courses were still basically triangles giving a beat and two reaches, but some of the Pier courses had dead runs (cf. Olympic courses) to cater for the demands of the increasing proportion of dinghies using spinnakers. Enterprises and OK helmsmen found the Pier courses rather long in heavy weather, and shorter courses were added for them in 1970.

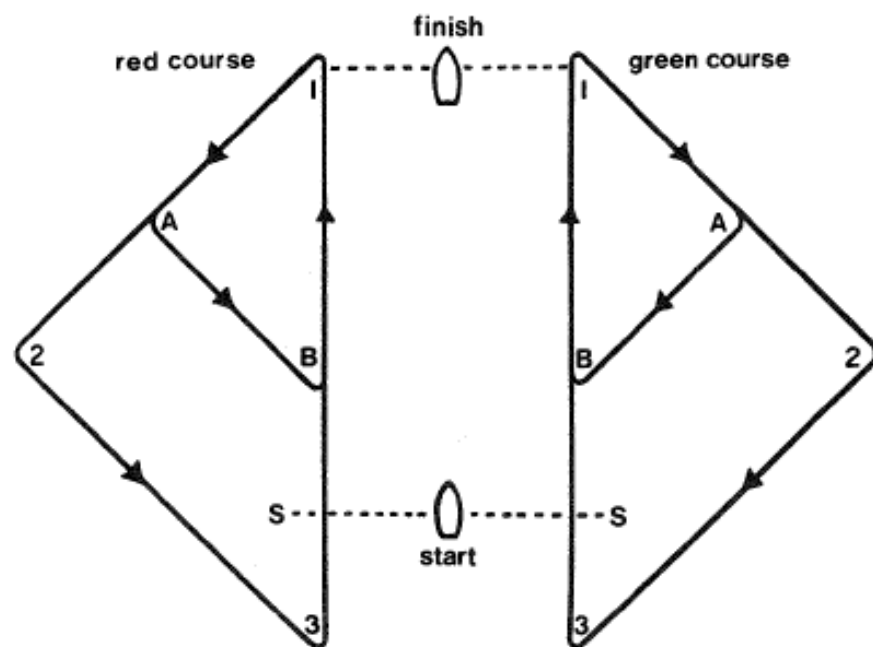


1968-71

Course F (1970) was SF5X, F5X, ZY5X (505's), and SN6X, RNX, R5X (Mirror, slow handicap dinghies).

In 1970 and 71 concentric Olympic courses were developed for regattas with classes of widely varying performance. These have been very successful, and 4 Olympic type courses are being included in the 1972 Saturday points races on an experimental basis.

It has been the practice to lay starting and finishing lines from a committee boat for major regattas and championships, and to have triangular courses. The Club had three catamaran marks with lattice topmarks for such occasions, but they were lost in the last Pier Clubhouse fire and have now been replaced with large inflatable buoys. All the National Championships (except the Dayboats) attracted over 100 entries, and the Club's race officers are convinced that



1970-71

Courses were of the Olympic type: Fast dinghies- Start 1231, 131, 1231, 131, Medium dinghies- Start 1231, 131, 1AB1, 1B1, Slow dinghies- Start AB1, 1B1, 1AB1, 1B1.

the only fair and easy way to start such large fleets is to use gate starts. The Club's Officers are now quite expert at operating gate starts, and it is remarkable how quickly the competitors learn when there is a formidable guard launch preceding the pathfinder dinghy!

While the sailing waters have remained superficially constant, there have been changes beneath the surface which cannot be ignored. Some choose to blame the Navy's dredging of Rhu Narrows to provide more depth for the nuclear submarines, but whatever the cause the tides seem to be changing, and with them the pattern of silting. The water is now deeper in the restricted channel, and if marks are laid on the sloping edges they are liable to drag their moorings and be lifted on the next high tide and float away. Conversely, the water has become very shallow to the east of marks 6, 7 and 2, and many dinghy crews have been surprised to find their mast stuck in the mud after a capsize when they were well offshore. One 8-metre yacht which trusted our laying of mark 6 ended up hard aground at half tide! In addition to the silting, there seem to be more large boulders along the shore from marks 6 to 8, and this adds spice to tide-cheating beats up the shore from the Pier in a northwesterly. The tides in Rhu Bay have also changed perceptibly in the last year, and it is possible to 'sail' some courses on a windless day by going part way on the tidal ebb (or flow) and part way on the strong back eddies.

Many of the Club's courses cross the restricted channel or the approaches to Craigendoran Pier. The Masters of the vessels using these channels have generally been most courteous, especially those of the Caledonian Steam Packet Company, and on several occasions a steamer has stopped to allow a fleet of dinghies to pass. If the timing is right, however, a dinghy may plane close across the stern of a paddle steamer to find that the turbulence is distinctly alarming! Despite all these vicissitudes, there is no doubt that the Club enjoys some of the finest racing waters in the country, with the Pier courses providing one-mile windward legs for almost all wind directions. The tides may be considered a disadvantage, but over the years they add interest and even the local experts are surprised from time to time by their variations.

PRINCIPAL REGATTAS AT HELENSBURGH

(including events run by other Clubs which included special races for H.S.C. dinghies)

			25th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			8th, 9th August	Smallboat Weekend and <i>first</i> Scottish Singlehanded Sailing 505 World Championship —
1952	16th August	<i>first</i> Club Regatta		
1953	2nd June	Coronation Regatta		
1954	4th June	<i>first</i> C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta at Helensburgh (formerly at Hunter's Quay)		
	12th June	Club Regatta for Coronation Trophies		
	24th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta		
1955	3rd June	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta		
	11th June	Club Regatta for Coronation Trophies		
	23rd July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta		
1956	1st June	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta		
	2nd June	Club Regatta for Coronation Trophies		
	21st July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta		
1957	31st May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta		
	15th June	<i>first</i> H.S.C. Regatta under C.C.Y.C. (incl. races for Coronation Trophies)		
	22nd, 23rd June	<i>first</i> G.P.14 Scottish Championship		
	20th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta		
1958	30th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta		
	26th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta		
	9th, 10th August	<i>first</i> Smallboat Weekend		
1959	29th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta		
	13th June	H.S.C. Regatta		
			27th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
			23rd July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			6th, 7th August	Smallboat Weekend
			26th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
			8th July	H.S.C. Regatta
			22nd July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			12th, 13th August	Smallboat Weekend
			1st June	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
			9th June	H.S.C. Regatta
			30th June - 7th July	Clyde Week, including evening dinghy races at Helensburgh (2nd - 6th)
			21st July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			28th, 29th July	National Enterprise Scottish Championship
			11th, 12th August	Smallboat Weekend
			25th, 26th May	G.P.14 Scottish Championship
			31st May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
			15th, 16th June	H.S.C. Regatta and <i>first</i> National Albacore Scottish Championship
			29th June - 6th July	Clyde Week, including evening dinghy races at Helensburgh (1st - 5th)
			20th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			10th, 11th August	Smallboat Weekend
			29th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
			13th June	H.S.C. Regatta
			25th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
			8th, 9th August	Smallboat Weekend
			16th, 21st August	Enterprise National Championship

	12th September	R.N.S.A. Regatta
1965	29th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	12th June	H.S.C. Regatta
	24th July	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
	7th, 8th August	Smallboat Weekend
	15th-21st August	G.P.14 National Championship
	11th September	R.N.S.A. Regatta
1966	27th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	4th, 5th June	National Albacore Scottish Championship
	11th June	H.S.C. Regatta
	25th, 26th June	G.P.14 Scottish Championship
	9th, 10th July	Clyde Week Dinghy Weekend
	6th, 7th August	Smallboat Weekend
	3rd September	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
	10th September	R.N.S.A. Regatta
1967	26th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	10th June	H.S.C. Regatta
	1st, 2nd July	National Albacore Scottish Championship
	12th, 13th August	Smallboat Weekend
	19th, 20th August	Sea Cadet Championship
	26th August	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
	9th September	R.N.S.A. Regatta
1968	31st May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	15th June	H.S.C. Regatta
	22nd, 23rd June	National Albacore Scottish Championship
	14th-19th July	Y.W. 14ft. Dayboat National Championship
	3rd, 4th August	Smallboat Weekend
	7th September	R.N.Y.C. Regatta
	14th September	R.N.S.A. Regatta
1969	30th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	7th, 8th June	National Enterprise Scottish Championship

	5th, 6th July	National Hornet Scottish Championship
	2nd, 3rd August	Smallboat Weekend
1970	29th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	13th, 14th June	505 World Championship – Scottish selection races
	27th, 28th June	Clyde Week Dinghy Weekend, <i>first</i> International 505 Scottish Championship
	1st, 2nd August	Smallboat Weekend
	23rd-28th August	International Fireball National Championship
1971	28th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	20th June	Mirror Class Regatta
	10th, 11th July	O.K. Dinghy Scottish Championship
	31st July, 1st August	Smallboat Weekend
1972	26th May	C.C.Y.C. Evening Regatta
	24th, 25th June	G.P.14 Scottish Championship
	1st, 2nd July	Clyde Week Dinghy Weekend
	6th-11th August	International Enterprise National and World Championships
	19th, 20th August	H.S.C. 21st Birthday Regatta

BACK COVER

505's racing off Rhu Pier with "Vixen" (Bill and Anne Morrison) in the foreground.



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