

31½/2

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

NUMBER 9

July 1979

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB
HOO, nr. ROCHESTER, KENT

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The magazine of the
Wilsonian Sailing Club
is called "31½" because
the clubhouse, the barge
WILSONIAN, is moored
approximately halfway
between navigation
buoys 31 and 32.
"31½" is published
four times a year.

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Copy for next issue
to reach editor by:
31st August, 1979



The WILSONIAN as seen from the shore, showing
the new central companionway.
Views of the saloon and the new changing rooms
appear on the centre pages.
(Photos by Ken Hewett.)

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The opinions expressed in this magazine
are not necessarily those of the Editor or
the Club Committee.

STOP PRESS

The Commodore would like to thank all those who helped run
the barge and the club boats during the Regatta, and the
House Committee for a very pleasant "At Home" party on the
Saturday night. Congratulations to David and Pat Scott on
winning the Fireball class, to Gordon and Peter Belcher
winners in the Enterprises and Chris Stevens on coming
second in the Lasers. The RNLI Race run by our Race Officers
from the M.Y.C. line on the Sunday afternoon raised a
record £92. Well done Bob Jones and his team.

BITS AND PIECES

THE WILSONIAN

The main event in the Club during the last couple of months has been the recommissioning of the barge at the end of May. A report of the celebratory party and photographs of the new facilities follow on pages 4 and 5.

TELEPHONE

A portable pay-phone has recently been installed in the blockhouse, with a phone-booth outside. The Club telephone number is Medway (0634) 250318.

BOSUNS

To help keep the Club boats running smoothly throughout the season, there is a vacancy for another bosun. Anyone interested in joining this team should contact one of the existing Bosuns.

LOVING CARE

Owing to its being used for working on the barge during the winter, the white rowing dinghy did not have its usual winter maintenance. Would anyone prepared to take it home and bring it up to standard please contact one of the Bosuns.

STUART TURNER PETROL ENGINE

The old Stuart Turner generator engine is no longer needed as we have installed a new Petter diesel. It has been derusted and painted, but needs titivating so we can sell it. Any mechanically-minded member interested, or any member who has a use for it, should contact the Commodore.

HELMSMEN AND CREWS

You will have seen in the notes on the sailing programme in your handbook supplement that the Sailing Committee has relaxed requirements with regard to changes of helmsman and crew in ordinary Club racing: points will now be awarded in respect of the boat. The Sailing Secretary would like it stressed that this arrangement is intended to give as many people as possible an opportunity to sail and that the Sailing Committee trusts it will not be abused with blatant changes of crew to suit the weather!

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBSCRIPTION

The response to the request for a supplementary subscription has been very encouraging but there are still some outstanding; it would be a great help if they were paid as quickly as possible.

SAILS WANTED

Mr. G. Lord of 353, Singlewell Road, Gravesend, Kent wishes to buy a used suit of sails, preferably Enterprise, possibly GP14. If you have an unwanted suit please contact Mr. Lord at the above address.

The Call of the Sea

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn breaking.

from "Sea Fever"
John Masefield (1878-1967)

LATE EXTRA

JUNIOR RACING - TOPPER WEEK. (13-17 JULY 1979)

We had an enjoyable week with 10 Toppers borrowed for 10 boys aged between 11 and 15. Many thanks to all those who lent us their boats, we tried to look after them as if they were our own property.

The aim of the week was to instill good racing principles, with lots of practice starts, buoy rounding and short races, backed by some theoretical work. They were an intelligent, helpful group, happy as long as they were waterborne - sailing, motoring, rowing, paddling or swimming. By the end of the week there was a definite improvement in boat handling and the boys had enjoyed themselves.

Wednesday night we all set off up river in the scow arriving at Rochester Bridge just after dark. We went under the bridge, turned round opposite the castle, which was impressive in the dark and returned home. It was a magical night, calm and warm, with lots of phosphorous in the disturbed water around the boat and all the lights on shore making reflected patterns.

Keith Lennox, who took the day off work to help us, kept all the boys occupied on 2 sailboards during the glassy calm of Friday morning, even though a gremlin put a live crab down his beautiful new wet suit.

Alan Steed (an RYA Senior Instructor) visiting for the day with his wife Carol, set the boys to team racing in the afternoon. In the evening he kindly took 2 Toppers back to West Malling for us.

The boys and I would like to thank Barbara Bew who organised the food and came down each day to cook and keep the domestic side running smoothly. Audrey Powell, Vera de'Ath, Iris Ball and Hillary Gambleton each came down for the day, helping with the mid-morning break, lunches, teas and suppers. Sheila Lennox scrubbed and polished the barge from roof to bilges before the week began and Ray Poewll helped with the sailing instruction for a day.

Barry and Mark Bew saw to the barge, the pumps, engines, rescue boats, and gas installations. In his Laser with the M rig, Barry moved at the same speed as the Toppers, teaching while sailing alongside the individual boats. Mark reliably ran the rescue boat and scow all week apart from an expedition in the R.E's fast rescue boat with Rocky, shepherding canoes on a marathon from Gillingham to Sheppey Y.C. Slow going down but home from Sheppey in 40 mins. was the highlight of his week.

We were lucky to have a visitor from Tonbridge Town Sailing Club, Mrs. Mary Steadman, staying with us on the barge, helping in the evenings, with breakfasts and morning chores as well as sailing all day. She is an experienced Guider and RYA Instructor. Thank you Mary.

This Junior Racing Week was such a success I would like to repeat it next year. Youngsters wishing to do their RYA Elementary certificates can join in the spring courses.

Geraldine.

CLASS NEWS

GP 14

Simon Shaw
Class Captain

Once again we've been a bit slow off the mark this year and the number of boats in the water is only just starting to build up. Nevertheless, there has been some close and exciting racing though it would be nice to see the average number of starters rise from the four or five level which has been usual so far this year.

The Spring Points Series is recently over and the average number of starters was $3\frac{1}{2}$ boats! The series was won by Bob Dutton sailing 11020 "Bobcat".

As a word of encouragement to those who stand in fear and trepidation when they hear the words "racing rules" - don't. We would welcome anyone who wishes to try their hand at racing; an intimate knowledge of the rules is not essential, and I can arrange for a novice to sail with an experienced helmsman who will demonstrate the basic rules. Points series racing in the GP is fairly relaxed, and is a good way to explore the river in the company of experienced helmsmen, and with rescue boat cover.

Robert Skene
Class Measurer

MAY DAY SERIES

The May Day Series was won comfortably by Bob Dutton and Gill Cummings sailing "Bobcat", who won all four races. The first race was a drifter over a very short course in which "Bobcat" was the only finisher due to the imposition of a time limit on all boats. The wind picked up a little in the second race and Mike Doherty in "Bin" had a very large lead, but the wind filled in from behind on the run and "Bobcat" caught up and overtook "Bin" before the finish.

The third race was delayed by an extraordinary incident when Bob, while leading, retrieved the rudder of a capsized Fireball. The rest of the fleet waited while he returned the rudder and then filed into their places. The race was won by "Bobcat" after a close tussle with Robert Skene in "Bin".

There were only three starters in the last race. "Bin" took the lead at once, over a course which consisted of several short laps. "Bobcat" and John Smith in "Blue Breeze" had an exciting duel for second place which ended when "Blue Breeze" capsized while attempting to pass "Bobcat" to windward. "Bin" had a seemingly unassailable lead but was unfortunately handicapped by her helmsman's inability to count the laps, and finished prematurely to hand the winning gun to Bob and Gill.

MIRACLE

Two weekends of instruction in sailing and racing were organized for the Miracle class in May. On the last afternoon a pursuit race was held and Bryan Matthews was to be seen in the Race Box with a pair of binoculars, drawing diagrams of the progress. The whole event appears to have been a great success and more Miracles have been out on the water as a result. The following message has been received from Margaret and Colin Crawford, Miracle 2097 "Shalom":

We would like to thank Bryan Matthews, Bob Fitzpatrick and Sam Brookes for two very enjoyable weekends when they spent time trying to teach us the finer points of sailing a Miracle. Together with another dozen Miracles, we had a great time being let into the secrets of racing.

On the final Sunday we were asked by a passing cruiser if there was a Miracle Open, as so many were out on the river.

Thank you Bryan, Bob, Sam and your families for giving up two weekends. We thoroughly enjoyed it, and are sure we speak on behalf of all who took part.

FIREBALL

Roger Johnston
Fireball 11673, "Waeg-Bora"

The first season of class racing for Fireballs is now well under way, with a reasonable, if not outstanding, turnout of boats so far. The total number of boats in the park is about the same as last year with some new faces much in evidence but some old ones absent. Where are you Terry Sullivan, and where's your Fireball Robin Musters?!

David and Pat Scott in their new fibreglass boat, "Ball Lightning", have found real form this year and appear unbeatable in Club races. They won the Whitsun Cup but their regular absences on the Open Meeting circuit have left the other series open to others. Mark Goodchild and Ron Jordan in "Goldie Fender" convincingly won the Spring Points Series; and Tony Mason and Alan Wilkinson in "That's Life" won the May Day Series from Rolly Spurgeon and Peter Goodchild in "Soulmate". An increasingly good performance has been put in by Geoff Maskall in "Jutland", demonstrating the competitiveness of a well-sailed old boat, admittedly with new sails. Also noteworthy have been the enthusiastic performances by "Elmir" and "Mighty Ant", both putting the rest to shame in the atrocious conditions over the Whit weekend, by being the only entrants in the final race.

So there's plenty of interest in the racing, but the more the merrier and a few more boats wouldn't go amiss; so if you're tempted, come and join us.

ENTERPRISE

Mike Blake
Class Captain

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SEASON SO FAR

At the time of writing we have sailed three short and one long series of races and, although the weather has never reached that happy medium of warm sunny days and 2-3 breezes, for those people who have ventured forth to tame the everchanging combination of wind and tide, there have been rewards of very competitive and enjoyable racing.

I think the most significant aspect of the class this year has been the general raising of the level of ability, which has also had a very desirable "levelling" effect on the results so far. If you analyse these results, you won't need a computer to discover that the best "go fast goody" (but alas not the cheapest) is a wife. It is amazing how often the results are dominated by harmonious husband and wife teams. (Sons are next best!) ie:-

Easter Cup

1. John and Margaret Mitchell
2. Peter and Gordon Belcher
3. Mike Blake and Peter Henderson/
Jayne Kelsey

Spring Points Series

1. Ray and Mollie Fryatt
2. Gordon and Peter Belcher
3. John and Margaret Mitchell

May Day Cup

1. John Bradley and Christine
2. Gordon and Peter Belcher
3. Steve Bradley

Whitsun Cup

1. Derek and Valerie Laverick
2. Mike Blake and Peter Henderson
3. Martin Smith and Martin Cummings

You can draw your own conclusion from my conclusion, but don't do anything rash in your quest for a pot. The real answer of course is that longer standing partnerships are conducive to efficient teamwork.

The improvement in our fleet can probably be attributed to two main factors:-

1. We have a regular enthusiastic turnout, and each individual has improved with practice and friendly competition.
2. As a result of this enthusiasm, many people have improved their equipment by purchasing more up-to-date hulls, new sails, spars, etc.

In conclusion I would just like to mention a few people who I consider have shown the greatest margin of improvement since the beginning of the season:- a. Ray and Mollie Fryatt who have improved considerably in the stronger blow (they were already difficult to beat in the lighter conditions!). b. Richard and Valerie Griffiths who are beginning to get the measure of their new boat, which has shown in improved results. c. John Bradley and Chris changed to a Walker hull during the winter; this has proved a good decision, enabling them to realise their potential.

Stop Press: Phil Hawkins and Christine have just purchased a very nice looking boat called "Retaliator" which I have seen around the Open Meetings. With a name like that he should be getting his own back on one or two of you in the near future.

The "New" WILSONIAN

The "WILSONIAN" was originally a Dutch barge called "TUNA". She was placed on her present moorings to be used as a clubhouse in 1961. She has now been converted again to cater in greater comfort for sailing and non-sailing members alike. The House Secretary reports on the Barge Recommissioning Party which, like the Snowflake Party, earned a good profit for the Club - ie. good attendance at social functions benefits everyone:-

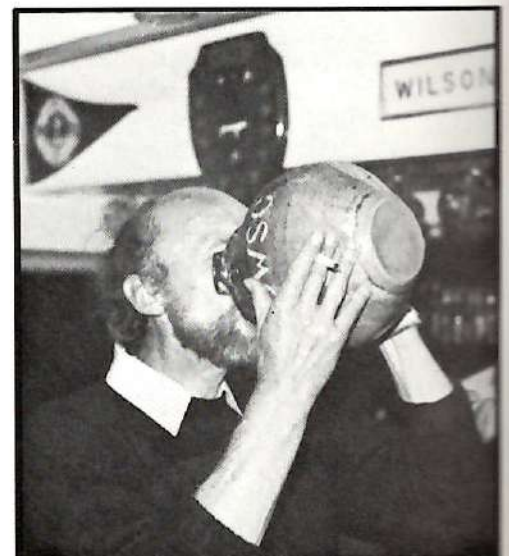
Sixty people attended the Barge Recommissioning Party held on Sunday, 27th May. Everybody hungrily tucked into shepherds pie followed by apple pie and washed down with mulled wine.

Later in the evening Robin Musters presented Dick Jordan with a magnum of Champagne as a small thankyou from the Club for the herculean work he had done on the barge.

After the presentation Geraldine Musters officially christened the new rescue boat "Leanda".

Club members began to drift home at about 10pm. Another treat awaited those leaving the barge as the scow had broken down; but Ron Mountford demonstrated his rowing prowess.

Many thanks to all the ladies who helped with the cooking, to Tim Lyne for his posters and to Ron Mountford for his ferrying.



Dick Jordan celebrating the completion of his mammoth task

THE SALOON



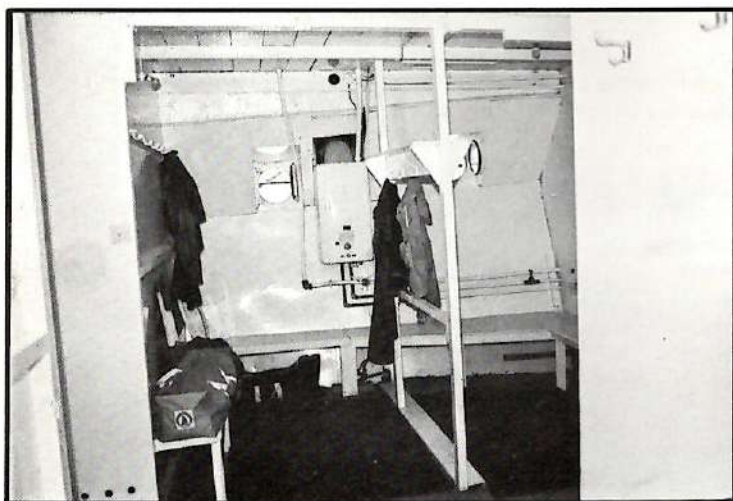
A pensive Pat Hewett poses in the newly painted saloon. An assistant duty officer waits for custom behind the bar, which has been considerably extended. The kitchen has also been smartened up.

THE MEN'S CHANGING ROOM



The men's changing room now occupies a large part of the aft (upstream) half of the barge. It has been extended from its original position to take in the former bar store and ladies' changing room and also the former companionway entrance. Washbasins, showers and toilets are all now a part of the changing room. A new gas system has been installed which provides hot water both here and in the ladies'.

THE LADIES' CHANGING ROOM



The ladies' changing room is situated at the forward (downstream) end of the barge. Like the men's room it is a great improvement in space and facilities. It was formed from the boiler room, shower room and adjacent cabin. The rooms which previously contained the men's and ladies' toilets have been merged and now form an extension to the changing room.

NOTE: The sleeping accommodation is all normally for members' use, and may be booked in advance. On the weekends of Open Meetings, however, half the bunks will be allocated for the use of visitors.

SAILING SECRETARY'S *Notes*

KEEP OUT OF THE WAY OF SHIPS!

Christopher Stevens

Of course it's sense to keep out of the way of ships and commercial traffic using the river but in practice it's all too easy to find yourself in a crisis position without realising it until it's too late; or you may be tempted to take a chance rather than risk losing a hard-won position in a race.

So far the Club has been lucky and we've had no really serious accidents. But each season there's usually an incident or two to make someone's heart beat a bit faster, and to provide a story to be told once back onboard the barge.

In future these lesser incidents may be recognised as being as potentially serious as they are, if offenders are prosecuted under the new Medway Ports River Byelaws which came into force this year. This is no idle threat: on the Solent yachtsmen are now being prosecuted quite frequently for impeding the passage of ships, and Clubs are being pressed by the Authorities to discipline any of their members found guilty. Attention to the following points will help to avoid this happening to us:-

1. Always keep a GOOD LOOK-OUT, and not only of the water in your immediate vicinity. A ship moving at six knots is on you much sooner than you'd think and the earlier the warning you have the better chance you have of taking avoiding action without spoiling your race. Most ships are much quieter than you'd expect, especially when they are coming towards you, and you're most unlikely to hear them unless you're looking too.

Remember that from the bridge of a ship it's impossible to see a small vessel under the bow even quite some distance ahead; and in any case it's no good expecting the ship to slow down for you.

2. ANTICIPATE what she will do and plan your course accordingly. She should be keeping to the starboard side of the channel, seen from the direction in which she is proceeding, but at bends in the river may well swing close to the inside fairway buoy if there is no vessel approaching.

Think where she may be going: a naval vessel probably into the Dockyard at Gillingham; a loaded collier almost certainly to Kingsnorth jetty.

3. Listen for any SOUND SIGNALS she may make; these are given in the Byelaws and are:-

Four short blasts followed by one short blast - turning to starboard.

Four short blasts followed by two short blasts - turning to port.

One long blast - entering the fairway or leaving a wharf or jetty.

Notice that these signals are somewhat different from those given in the Collision Regulations.

4. Plan your AVOIDING ACTION in good time and be sure you can carry it out: don't forget the tide; if it's light weather the wind may drop; if it's blowing hard you could capsize.

Make sure that any changes of course you do make are as definite and unambiguous as possible; if you are going to cross ahead of her do so as nearly at right angles to her course as possible; don't stand on towards her and then tack away at the last minute. Make sure your INTENTIONS ARE OBVIOUS at all times.

5. READ the Medway Ports River Byelaws so you know what they are about - compliance with them is after all a requirement of the Sailing Instructions if you're racing. There are copies on the barge and in the Race Box and each Class Captain has one too.

The most important one is Byelaw 4: The Collision Regulations are to be observed. If you don't know them read them up in R.Y.A. booklet G2/76: Rule 9 states that a vessel of less than 20 metres in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway (that's anywhere where there are port and starboard hand buoys); "impede" means causing her to alter course or speed to avoid you. The message is quite clear:-

KEEP OUT OF THE WAY!

TRAINING

Simon Shaw
Training Secretary

Details of the remaining courses this year are:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Qualification Needed</u>
23-27 July	Introduction to Racing*	RYA Elementary
15, 16, 22, 23 Sept	RYA Elementary Course	None but enthusiasm
15, 16, 22, 23 Sept	RYA Advanced Course	RYA Intermediate

*Also open to adults this year

The RYA Intermediate Course will not be held as there were only two people interested. If anyone would like to take their Intermediate Certificate, please contact me as there is a possibility of arranging a course in September.

COXSWAINS COURSES

In addition to the sailing courses we will run coxswains courses if there is enough support. The courses will last one day (probably a Saturday) and will be aimed primarily at teaching rescue boat handling. An assessment for the RYA coxswains certificate can be arranged for those with the required experience. Anyone who would like to do a coxswains course should contact me and I will arrange a date if there is sufficient demand.

INSTRUCTORS

Finally, to anyone who would like to instruct on any of the courses: please contact me as we would like additional people to train as instructors. You don't need to be the fastest helmsman in the class; more important is a thorough understanding of the basic principles of sailing together with an interest in teaching.

THE CABIN YACHT STORES

• Lower Upnor •

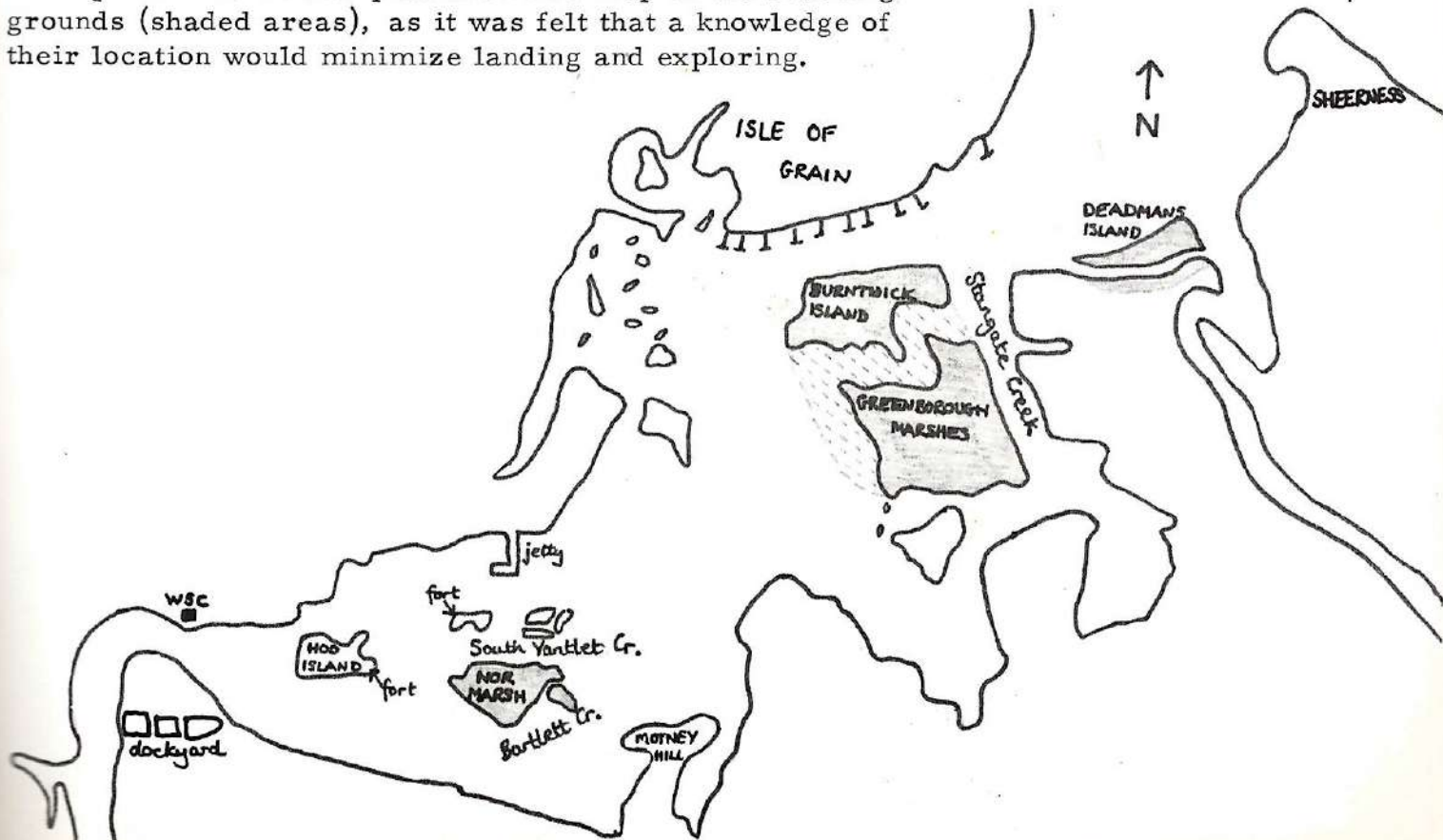


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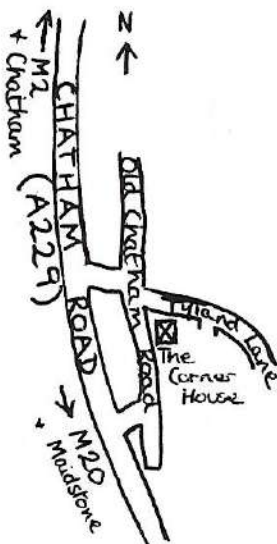
NOTICE TO YACHTSMEN

The saltings of the Medway and Swale are one of the few breeding grounds of our wild birds; at certain seasons of the year breeding is taking place on these foreshores. The Sports Council has published this map of the breeding grounds (shaded areas), as it was felt that a knowledge of their location would minimize landing and exploring.





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