



31 1/2

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

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WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB, HOO, ROCHESTER, KENT

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The magazine of the
Wilsonian Sailing Club
is called "31 1/2" because
the clubhouse, the barge
WILSONIAN, is moored
approximately halfway
between navigation
buoys 31 and 32.



The crew of the Police Launch "Alexandra" inspecting one of the paper barges on the Medway. Pictured are (from left to right) P.C. Streeter, P.C. Weeden and P.C. Puttifer. See "Policing the River Medway", page 3. (Kent County Constabulary photograph)

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Copy for next issue
to reach editor by:
July 15th, 1980

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

BITS AND PIECES

The Treasurer would like to make up a list of members who have access to cheap resources: eg, paint, wood - anything, in fact, that is needed for the maintenance and running of the Club. She is also interested in any schemes that would help to boost Club funds!

The Committee considers that it is time to redesign the Club sweaters. Suggestions with regard to the motif, style, fabric or manufacturer would be welcomed.

The W.S.C. stand at Picketts Lock seems once again to have been a success. We have already benefitted from several new members who first heard of the Club at the exhibition. Does anyone have any other membership-recruiting ideas?

For our feature article on the Medway beat, the editor is indebted to the Kent Police for their friendly cooperation. (She also enjoyed her private viewing of the Operations Room at the Kent County Constabulary headquarters!)

The Call of the Sea

The second in an occasional series of passages of poetry and prose which describe the irresistible lure of ships and the sea.

The Old English poets were very fond of melancholy musings - ruins, for example, were a favourite topic. In the poem known as "The Seafarer" the poet suggests that a man can become wise through adversity. The poet describes the harsh conditions he has endured at sea; but however hard the seafarer's life, he feels restless while on dry land.

I can tell a true story about myself and describe voyages when I often suffered wretchedly during days of hardship. I have experienced bitter sorrow and have known many cares and the terrible rolling of the waves. Anxious night-watch often occupied me at the prow of my boat as she dashed along the cliffs. My feet were oppressed with cold, bound with the cold grip of frost.....

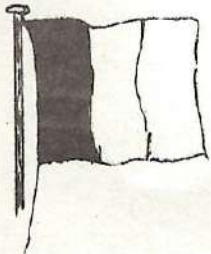
Nevertheless, my heart now urges me to explore the tumult of the waves on the high seas.

from "The Seafarer"
Anonymous, 10th century
(translated from the Anglo-Saxon)

In a lighter vein, the following passage is probably more akin to what most of us feel on the Medway! Here is the sheer exuberance of sailing for its own sake. The Water Rat speaks:-

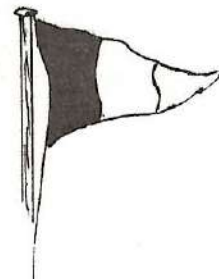
There is nothing - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats..... In or out of 'em, it doesn't matter. Nothing seems really to matter, that's the charm of it. Whether you get away, or whether you don't; whether you arrive at your destination or whether you reach somewhere else, or whether you never get anywhere at all, you're always busy, and you never do anything in particular.

from "The Wind in the Willows"
Kenneth Grahame, 1908



WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB

HOO - KENT



August 1980

Dear Member

31 $\frac{1}{2}$

Please find enclosed with this circular your copy of the June edition of the Club newsletter "31 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". We are sorry that it has been delayed and we are looking at ways of reducing production time. Hedda Johnston who edits the magazine at present has indicated that she would like to give it up next season. Aspiring editors should contact me please or Hedda, whose address is now 26A, Warren Road, Orpington. Meanwhile please keep sending your contributions to Hedda.

Advanced Sailing Course

There are still some vacancies for the advanced RYA dayboat course scheduled to be held at the Club over the weekends of 20 and 27 September. The course will be of particular interest to budding instructors because an advanced certificate is required before taking the instructor's certificate, but it is also an excellent way of putting that 'edge' on your sailing technique and knowledge. Applications, please, to the Training Secretary, - Harry Clarke, 63 Seal Hollow Road, Sevenoaks, Kent; telephone number Sevenoaks 55140.

Rescue boat handling

Some recent examples of inept safety boat handling prompt me to remind you that if you have volunteered for rescue boat duty, you must ensure that you are capable of handling the boat before you turn up for duty. And please keep your eyes peeled. We recently watched a rescue boat within sight of a capsized dinghy for ten minutes without any of the three people in the rescue boat seeing the dinghy.

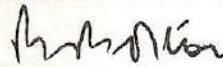
Locks

The recent unexplained loss of the portable generator has caused the General Committee to consider changing locks and keys this winter. It has been suggested that we should try to obtain locks with keys which cannot be duplicated by the usual High Street locksmith, that the keys should be stamped with a number so that we can tell which key belongs to whom, and finally that the new keys should be subject to a much larger deposit (say £5) to encourage the return of keys from members who leave the Club. It would be helpful to have some feed-back from the membership before we go ahead with these proposals. Please give your views to any Officer or member of the General Committee.

Vacancy on the General Committee and on the House Committee

One vacancy has arisen on each of these Committees and we would like to co-opt two volunteers. The General Committee post has no special responsibilities; the House Committee post is concerned with barge maintenance. If you are interested, please speak to me or one of the other Officers.

Yours sincerely


Peter Bolton
Hon Secretary

20 Cheshunt Close
Meopham, Kent.
Meopham 813029

Announcing the

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB'S

GRAND 1980 BUFFET DANCE

and
Prize-giving

to be held by popular acclaim (following the success of last year's festivities at the same place) at

THE PAVILION, HEVER CASTLE

near Edenbridge, Kent, on

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1980

from 7.30 pm to 1 am

Admission by ticket only - Tickets £7.25 per person
available from Pat Scott (coupon below) or Class Captains

Dress: informal (lounge suits or similar)

An early application will avoid disappointment

To Pat Scott, 'Hawthorn', Battlefields Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent
(Tel. Sevenoaks 884781)

Please let me have tickets for the buffet dance and prize giving at £7.25 each. I enclose my cheque for £ made payable to the Wilsonian Sailing Club.

Name Address

Telephone number

Policing the River Medway

Inspector B. Cull
(Kent County Constabulary)

From 1840 until 1943 the responsibility for policing the River Medway was under the control of the City of Rochester Police. The River Section consisted of three officers who patrolled in rowing boats. Eventually they were equipped with a twenty-foot long motor vessel and two rowing boats.

Since 1943, with the amalgamation of the City Force with the County Constabulary, the policing of the river has lain with the County Constabulary. In 1949 the Police purchased two ex-Royal Naval vessels and converted them for Police use. Between them they patrolled the Rivers Thames and Medway, the Swale and all the creeks down to Whitstable. One vessel was based on the Thames at Gravesend and the other at Strood.

These vessels were eventually replaced and the present launch which patrols the Medway, Swale and the Thames around Sheppey is the Police Launch "Alexandra". She was built in 1961 by Anderson Rigden & Perkins of Whitstable. She is of hard chine construction, 42 feet in length and is powered by twin Perkins engines.

The "Alexandra" has a crew of one Sergeant and four Constables. Sergeant Leo KEMP has served on the River Section as a P.C. On promotion to Sergeant he served for a short while in the Medway Towns before returning to the River in charge of the launch. P.C. Harry PUTTIFER has served nearly all his service on the River Section. He has had a long connection with the River Medway having worked as a boat builder prior to joining the Police. In this capacity he worked on the conversion of the ex-Royal Navy vessels for Police use. P.C. Brian WEEDEN has served for 13 years on the Police Launch "Alexandra". P.C. Michael STREETER and P.C. David WISDOM are comparative newcomers to the River.

All members of the crew have developed a great knowledge of the River and the people who work and play in the River. The launch patrols the River for at least eight hours each day of the year, except for the short periods when it is necessary to remove it from the water for maintenance to the hull.

The duties of the crew are the same as any other Policemen: the protection of life and property and the prevention and detection of crime. To this end they patrol the River and shore-line, visiting moorings and marinas to detect offences and to give crime prevention advice, advising and assisting the users of the river, both recreational and commercial.

The boat is equipped with radar and marine and V.H.F. Police radios. There is a powered dory for work in areas where it is too shallow for the launch to patrol. The crew members are in constant communication with Police Headquarters during the tour that they are on patrol. They also make themselves available for calls during the time that they are off duty, so that in the event of an emergency we can have a boat out on the River in a very short time.

Barton Regatta 1979

Colin Vane

Dinghy sailing is fun, but it's also fun to race in something a little longer; and every October the Barton Regatta, an event for Norfolk Broads hire yachts, provides just such an opportunity. It also provided Dave Vettergreen and Colin Vane with an opportunity to reverse their usual helmsman/crew roles. And so it was that they arrived with two friends at a Norfolk boatyard late on a windless Saturday afternoon.

They just had time to load their belongings on board "Bootlegger", a splendid old gaffer, and then motor to the nearest riverside alehouse for the evening's sustenance. The following day was used to sail up the River Ant to Barton Broad, and the evening was spent engaged in serious tactical discussion - over several pints of Adnams' bitter.

The racing began on Monday with a gentle force 1-2 breeze and, after a short practice race, Bootlegger managed a third and second place in the first two real races of the Regatta. This was evidently not good enough for helmsman Vane, so that evening the crew was once again subjected to a protracted "tactical discussion".

Tuesday dawned with a healthy force 3 breeze and it seemed that the previous night's efforts were bearing fruit. Three good starts and splendid team work by the crew ("just like highly trained gorillas" was one comment) ensured that Bootlegger was unbeaten for the day.

With three more races to sail the following day, and the best five out of eight races to count, it was realised after much counting of fingers and toes that one more win would put Bootlegger in an unassailable lead. The previous night's festivities in Norwich, however, seemed to have taken their toll - on the helmsman at least. A bad start compounded by a gross tactical error saw Bootlegger at the back of the fleet at the first mark. A partial recovery was staged but there were still three boats in front at the finish of the race. A brief lunch, however, quickly restored the crew's form sufficiently to take the winner's gun in race seven and second place in race eight, thus comfortably finishing the week as winners of the Barton Bowl.

Just to prove that this result was not simply a flash in the pan, Bootlegger also took line honours in two of Thursday's novelty races. The week was rounded off with a dinner and prizegiving - and, would you believe, a little more tactical discussion.

Revise the Racing Rules

WITH BOB FITZPATRICK

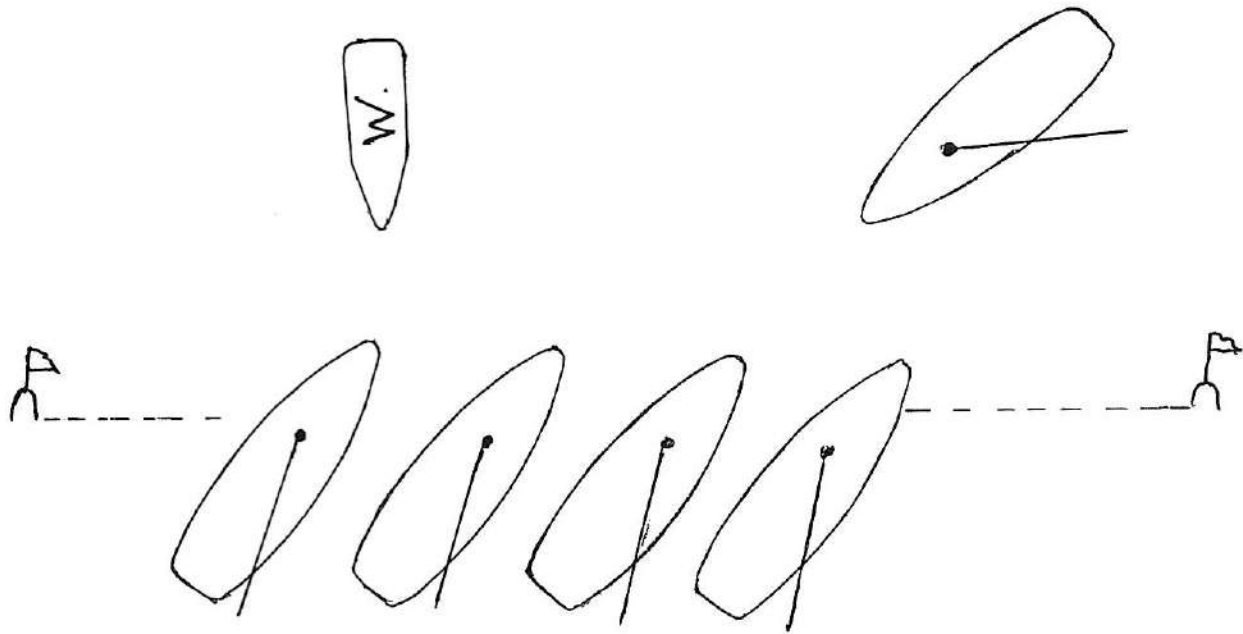
I am putting pen to paper in order to write three articles for "31½" because I'd like to pass on some knowledge. Not that I know it all by any means - I am learning all the time, as I'm sure you are too.

Everyone knows that Starboard gives way to Port - but how many of you know when this doesn't apply? On the next two pages are diagrams of four rules. So get your rule book out and if you spot a deliberate mistake I am sure you will let me know. The editor will publish anything I write wrong, right!

REVISE THE RACING RULES (cont.)

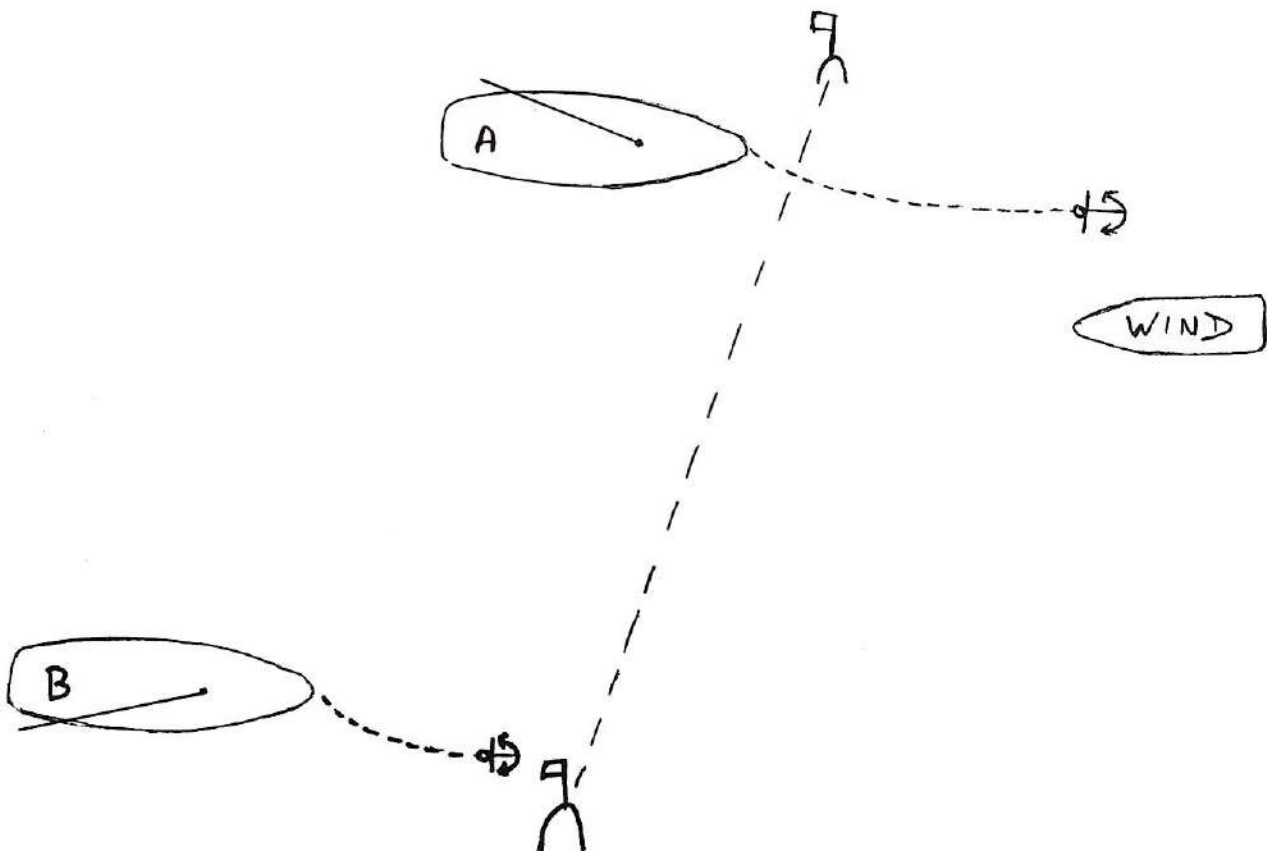
RULE 44.1 - STARTING

Even though a boat which has started too early is on STARBOARD tack, she has to keep clear of all others - even PORT tack boats.



RULE 63 - ANCHORING

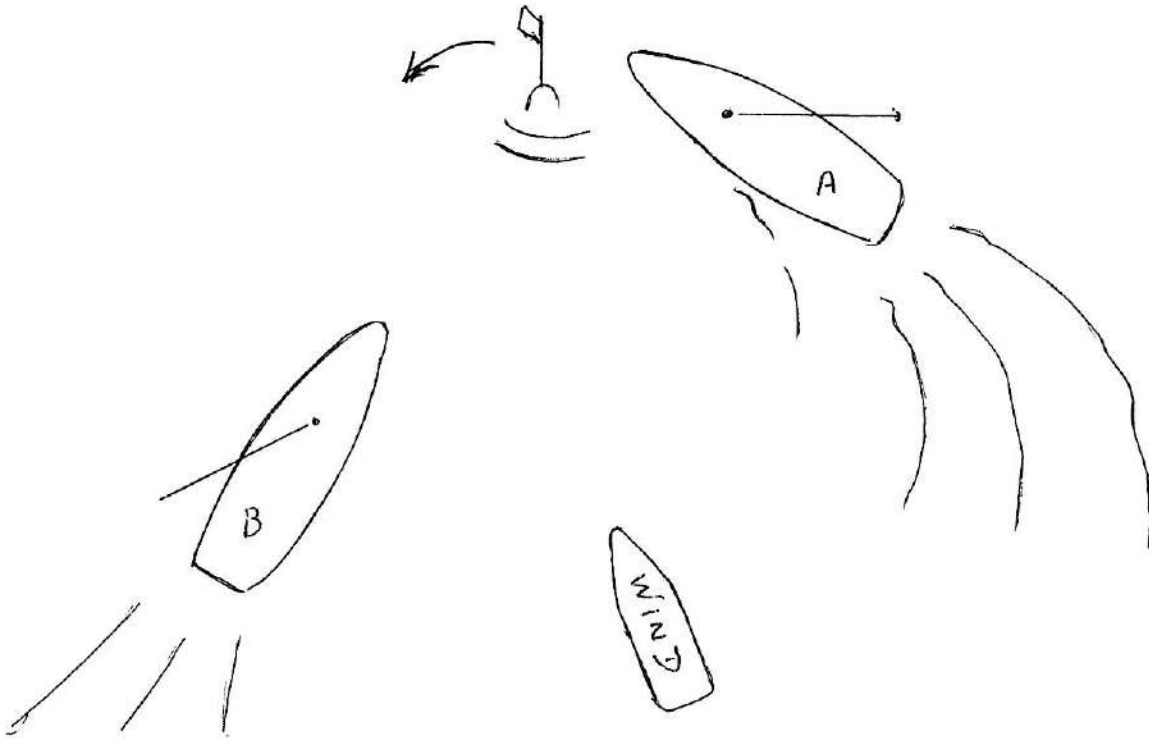
"A" can anchor up to the start line provided that she starts on STARBOARD tack.



REVISE THE RACING RULES (cont)

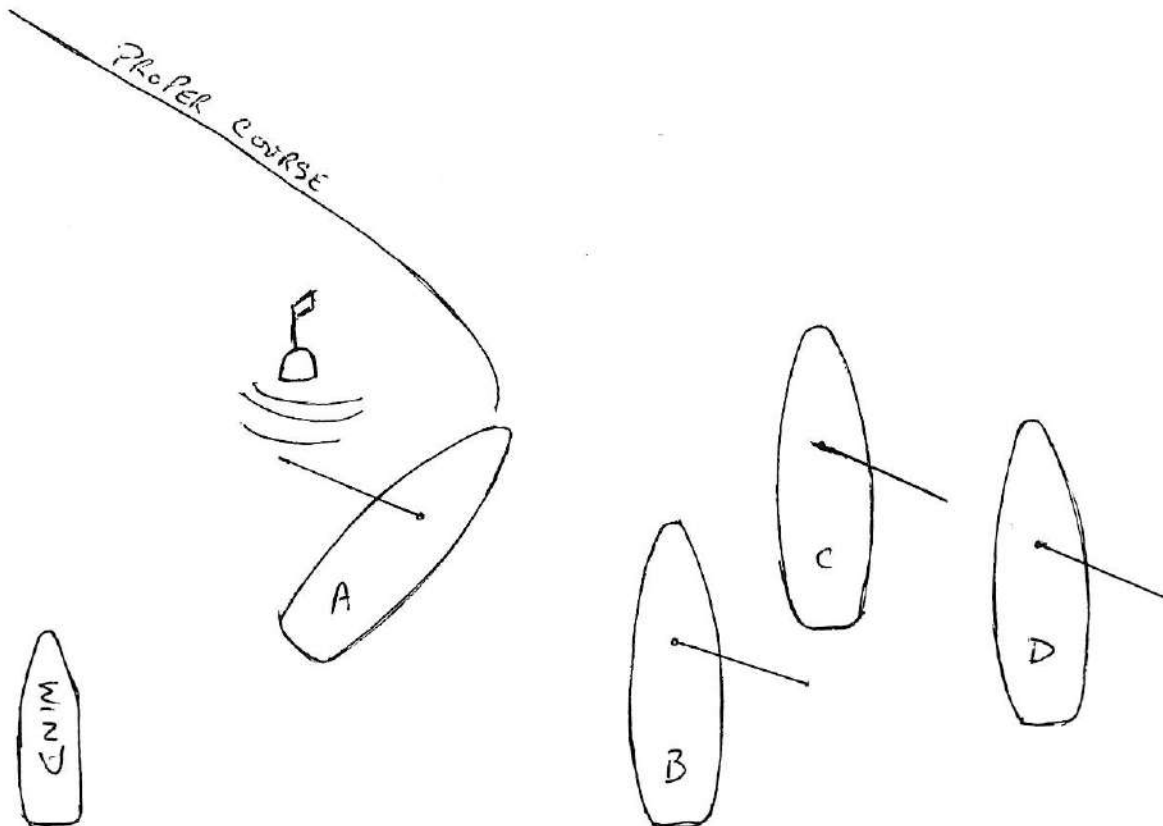
RULE 42.1 (b) - KEEPING CLEAR DURING ROUNDING

"B" must keep clear even though she now has an overlap because this was not made in time. Neither can "B" claim her STARBOARD tack rights.



RULE 42.1 (a) - ROUNDING AND GYBING

"A" must gybe onto the new proper course at the earliest opportunity. She is not allowed to continue and force the others to keep clear. This rule overrides Rule 36.



The Tale of a Lifejacket

Malc and Hilary Stewart
Enterprise 8215, "PIGLET"

We're so pleased with our son's lifejacket that we want everyone who may be considering the purchase of a lifejacket to know. Yes - we know that life-jackets are not always the most convenient buoyancy aid to be worn in a dinghy, although we are glad for our lad to wear one at his tender age. We've seen the jacket in action, but more than that, we have found that Crewsaver are just as efficient as their product.

We wanted to buy a new safety buckle, so Malc wrote to Crewsaver and received a reply by return of post. We were invited to return the jacket so that they could fit the new safety buckle and give a free overhaul. A week after the jacket was posted it came back with its new buckle, a new air intake tube and cover, re-textured material and no bill. I doubt whether free servicing is a regular feature, but we will be more than willing to pay for a service that is not only speedy but provides us with confidence in Ian's safety equipment on which we place such reliance when he goes overboard.

We thought that the best way to thank Crewsaver for such efficient and generous service was to tell as many people as possible about it - and it's a British firm!

Anagram Crossword

by Karen Fitzpatrick

Each word fits in the Crossword, but first you have to unjumble the letters.
WILSONIAN will help you!



Down:
ITSEU WT
SAYCHT
INW
SEROCUS
GALSF
RASO
CETEIJLAFK

Across:
EITKS
SLETAKC
OHCE
ECRA
YOBU
PESTS

(Solution on back page)

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