



Race Ready?

31 1/2 SUMMER 2017

Welcome to the summer edition of 31½

Overall it has been a good season of winds and weather and as always there has been plenty happening at the club as we continue to offer a range of experiences on Saturdays, some cruising options and a full Sunday racing programme. If you have any tuning or boat care tips for the winter months why not send in an article for the next edition of 31½.

David Wraight

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Contents

2. From the Commodore
3. Slow Fleet Report
4. Cruising News
5. 2000 Fleet
6. Drascombes
7. Tera Team on Tour
8. 2000 Inland Championships 2017
9. HMS Princess Irene
10. Minorca Sailing Holiday
11. Jack Holt

Commodores Report

We have had a great start to the main sailing season. We have been blessed with good weather on most weekends and lots of sailing.

Saturday Junior and Adult skimmers are very popular, with increasing numbers taking part each week. Many Juniors are showing good improvement and enjoying regular sailing, supported by many volunteers helping on the water and the galley. The adult skimmers are progressing very well with the help of experienced members to enable beginners to develop their skills. It is great to see new faces also joining the Sunday sailing. Families are welcome to go out sailing, it isn't necessarily Juniors/Adults only morning/afternoon.

If you are thinking about sailing on Sunday, but don't want to race, you don't have to race on Sunday, you can follow the fleets down river, so you are around the area of the Safety boats.

Training courses have been run for Sailing and Powerboating, with everyone learning new skills and receiving their qualifications. Well done for passing the courses and thank you to the instructors that helped on all the courses. We are looking for new dates to run Powerboat courses, so if you are interested, please contact me.

This year's Medway Regatta was very popular this year, with 71 entries. A great weekend, with 4 races held. Well done to Martin Smith our Race Officer for running 4 races in very difficult wind conditions. Challenging at times in the fickle winds! Sunday was the better day, with good winds for the racing, held later than expected whilst we waited for some wind. Many thanks to everyone that participated in the racing. We welcome any comments or suggestions so we can continue to improve the Regatta. Also, a great thank you to all the members that made the weekend a great success both with duties on the day and the preparations. Just a few of the many tasks carried out to prepare for the Regatta (apologies for the ones missed): Regatta planning, MP arranged for prize-giving, phone line working, car park cleared, car bays marked, roadway and verges cleared, dinghy park tidied, rubbish cleared, club powerboats checked, race flags checked, cess pit emptied, race box forms ready, race notices sent, publicity sent out, class associations contacted, trophies ordered, fuel for safety boats, briefings prepared, duty crews arranged, tee-shirts sponsored, bow numbers sponsored, cakes baked, food ordered, beer delivered, safety boats arranged, course sheets printed and laminated.

Prospects for the fast fleet looks good, with many Musto Skiffs potentially joining the club, which will make the racing more fun.

Still plenty of the summer left, with Junior week also coming up.

I hope to see you at the club sailing this summer. **We have a great club, so let us all get out onto the water more this year and enjoy our sailing!**

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Slow Fleet Report

The season has started well with a lot of interest. We had a good training session for the Streakers led by Doug Horner. Despite the strong wind it was great to see eight Streakers out on the water working hard. Thank you to all of those who attended and made the event so successful. The Streakers now have been tuned, so watch out for all these fast sailors out on the water!!

Unfortunately, the "Try a Streaker day" had to be postponed to a later date due to bad weather conditions.

The recent Creeks Race was quite dramatic. With very strong winds 17 boats started, but most retired. Andrew Clarke and Jem Causer were the only boat to finish in the Miracle, congratulations guys!

The Miracle Nationals will be held at Netley Sailing Club, for those who are interested have a look at <http://www.miracledinghy.org/events2017.html> While browsing through the Miracle association website I came across some very useful guides on tuning the boat.

More skimmers have joined the Slow Fleet racing with us on Sundays, welcome aboard! If you enjoy sailing with Saturday skimmers and you want to unleash those skills to take your sailing to the next level, then the Slow Fleet is a great, easy and fun way to do this. We are open to all boats of all handicaps. We race every Sunday and welcome everyone. There is a race in the morning and in the afternoon, so you can fit it to your lifestyle. We set the race courses based on what sailors like to do on the day. Come along, start a race and even if you don't finish the race, you have practiced your start line and standing starts! There is always something to gain.

Happy Sailing!
George

Cruising News

This year we have looked at a few different cruising options and have offered both shorter and longer cruises with some linked to other events. While the Thames Barge race cruise had an early start, we had some good sailing and were in a good position to watch the race start and to follow the fleet down to Sheerness. The Dutch in the Medway cruise saw light winds but we managed to make it down to the Rochester bridges and back for the parade of historic ships and much hooting of steam whistles. The weekend cruise to Leigh-on-Sea saw a good wind making easy sailing both out and back and giving us time to enjoy Queenborough while waiting for the various tides to change. There is one last cruise this year, a picnic on Darnet Island on Saturday 7th October so why not bring something nice to eat and drink and join us.

David Wraight and Derek Zobel

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2000 Fleet

The weather is brightening up and the longer evenings are finally here!

Here is a quick round up so far of the 2000 sailing at Wilsonian SC

The 2000 Fleet have enjoyed a busy start to the season with early success in March 2017 in the Warm Up Series with winners Andy and Lucy Hockey (21914). There were a few visitors to the 2000 stand at Alexander Palace Dinghy Show on 4th & 5th March. The Ice Breaker on 26 March 2017 had 14 entries from all fleets in windy conditions, with John Hewat and myself in the club boat (22111) finishing 4th and Phil & Gavin Cope (21314) in 12th with DNF.

Starting in April 2017 the Spring Points series with results in 2000 fleet 1st (2643) David & Janice, 2nd (21792) Roy & Geoff, 3rd (21405) Nina & Bernard, 4th Brian & Charlotte in the club boat, 5th Tim Turin & Gergio in a club boat; Phil & Gavin (21314) were the only entry in Junior Fleet. The Commodores Series also started on Sunday 30 April 2017 and was morning of mixed races followed by the Race 1 with first warning signal at 13.25. There was a delicious supper choice of curry or cottage pie afterwards which was enjoyed by many members. The 2000 fleet have split between the Commodores and Bosun's lapping course, and results so far are 1st (2643) David & Janice, 4th (21405) Nina & Bernard, who are also leading the Ladies Fleet, with Phil & Gavin (21314) in 3rd place in the Novice Fleet. My son Rich and I had one race on a very windy day and joined the Commodores Fleet but had to retire – or should I say I was too tired to carry on!

May 2017 – On Saturday 13 May 2017, The Club Open Day for Push the Boat Out was well attended with 70+ visitors and The John Yeo Trophy was held for the evening race and in first place was David & Janice (2643) and second was Nina & Bernard (21405).

On Sunday 21 May 2017 South Kent Race had 20 entries. Having sailed this once before, I said I would never sail it again but it turned out to be a very pleasant forecast and with a choice of start times allowing entries from all fleets. Nina & I (21405) came overall 14th place and it was lovely to have some words of encouragement from Chris who waited patiently in the yacht at South Kent buoy but unfortunately, we couldn't stop for a cuppa and biscuit! Roy and Geoff (21792) finished overall 15th place.

June 2017 so far - Early Summer Points Series continued and in first place David & Janice (2643), 2nd place Roy & Geoff (21792) and in joint 3rd place is Zoe & Peter in club boat and Tim & Bethany also in the club boat.

Sunday 11 June 2017 was the Creeks Race, with first warning signal at 12.15, then 2 other start times of 12.45 and 13.15. Last year I remember that this was one of those epic races, or maybe I was just a bit slower. This was followed by the Three Race Regatta on 25 June 2017 with first warning signal down river at 12.15

July 2017 - Our Premier Sailing Event Medway Regatta was on 8th and 9th July 2017, with visitors from the 2000 Class Association. The (Late) Summer Points

started on 23 July 2017, with Medway Marathon on 30 July 2017.

August 2017 – Late Summer Points continues into August and on 13 August 2017 it's Commodores 3 race.

Following the purchase of 2000's for training boats, the Adult Skimmers has got off to a great start, with 20+ people attending most Saturday afternoons. Additionally, this year the courses for RYA Level 1 and Level 2 have been popular and the 2000 are proving to be good training boats. I am hoping to convert some of the Adult Skimmers into 2000 sailors.

As 2000 Fleet Captain, I am aware that our numbers as a fleet are decreasing and there has been a suggestion that, on some occasions, we may wish to join in with the Medium Fleet – what do you think? Please let me have your feedback.

The 2000 Class Association www.2000class.org Millennium Series with MS1 at Chichester YC on 13 & 14 May 2017. The winds were gusty on Saturday and even more so on Sunday. Andy and Lucy completed all 6 races, I had a couple of capsizes on Saturday so retired part way through race 3, and with very strong conditions on Sunday, I retired after 1 ½ laps on race 4; I'm still getting used to sailing Lazy Grey and it's great to get the coaching advice, although I think I should change my name to 'More Kicker Rachel'. The Saturday night 80's disco was great fun. The results and photos are on Chichester YC website and here's the link www.cyc.co.uk

The 2000 Class Association here's the link <https://www.2000class.org/> have a busy time ahead. I had a great weekend in Ullswater YC for the Inland Champs, despite the long drive, it was a beautiful setting and sailing Lazy Grey with my son Rich at the helm we came overall 2nd place.

2000 WSC Fleet Captain,

Happy sailing

Rachel

2000 22321

Lazy Grey

Drascombes

Some of you may have noticed the tan sails of Annachristo and Broadway the two Drascombe Luggers sailed by 38th&40th Strood Sea Scout Group at the club. While not the best boat for sailing close to the wind the jib, main and mizzen layout is based on a traditional working rig and provides a good balance of sailing and stability, particularly for club cruises. With spray hoods, engines and two banks of oars they can cope with most challenges.

This year sees the 50th Anniversary of the Drascombe Lugger and <http://optimist.co.za/50-years-of-business-for-drascombe/> tells you more.

A few members have enjoyed the Drascombe experience on the cruises but if anyone else would like to try something different feel free to ask the Scouts.

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Tera Team on Tour



Following the successful KSSA training session held at WSC in April, a team of 6 Intermediate Junior Skimmers travelled to the KSSA New Racers event, held at Redoubt Sailing Club, on 10th June 2017. This was a perfect first outing for the club's latest addition - the RYA hired trailer of RS Teras. These dinghies have really caught the imagination of our young sailors, who have made great progress over the last few months and are now keen to start racing. Some only on their first or second season! There was much excitement on the morning of the trip, with an early start for all. Once the weather forecast was checked and picnics packed, we hitched up the trailer of boats and set off in convoy. Redoubt Sailing Club is located on the banks of a lake formed in an old quarry pit, just outside Hythe, in a beautiful location with lots of wildlife. All were charmed by the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch steam railway that passed close by. It was good for our racers to experience different water and club facilities and it made them appreciate ours all the more! The format of the day was a short briefing, 2 races in the morning, a break for a picnic lunch, then a land based training briefing and 2 further races in the afternoon. Once the

boats were rigged, it was time to get on the water. With the wind freshening, Charlotte, Sophie, Joséphine, Silas and Elliot made good starts in the first race. Unfortunately, Seb was caught out by a gust on the first reach and managed to capsize, turn turtle and had to be rescued! Gusts caught many of the competitors out in race 2, however, Joséphine performed an impressive dry capsize recovery and went on to finish her race unaided. Just after the start of race 3 a wind shift and increasing gusty conditions decimated the fleet, with five boats capsizing simultaneously at one point, and many competitors retiring due to the conditions. The last race saw a much reduced fleet compete in challenging conditions, with many taking a dunk including Elliot who was brave enough to compete in all four races, when many other competitors had decided not to chance it. For those not taking part in the afternoon races, a land based sail-setting talk was given by one of the experienced parents from another club. We finished off by cheering the trophy winners and thanking the coaches. Despite some of the other competitors being more experienced, our Tera Team did Wilsonians proud with 8th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th & 15th places earned overall. More importantly, they learnt lots, bonded further as a team and showed great sportsmanship. It was a fun day out for us all and we are looking forward to the next one. We are hugely grateful to all who made the day possible and to our wonderful Saturday Skimmers Instructors who are fostering the children's love of sailing.

In our sailors' own words: Elliot, aged 9yrs "I loved it and the help I got from the parents and others was really good and I really felt part of the team even for such a

newbie, also I am no longer concerned about capsizing as I turned turtles a couple of times when the wind gusted. I love sailing... best sport ever"



Joséphine, aged 7yrs "I enjoyed the Redoubt event because I got to do some actual racing. I like sailing an RS Tera because they are lightweight and easy to sail. It was a bit overpowering at the end when it was very windy but in the morning, it was fun. Redoubt is a very good place for sailing, there are no tide and currents, there is only wind. I didn't have to worry about getting stuck in the straits and getting out of the way of the yachts. But I have to say I prefer the Medway. Overall, I thought it was a very good day. It was a very nice experience and I met a lot of other people who have the same interest as me." Seb, aged 8yrs "It was a great opportunity and I think everyone should have a chance to do it. The most important thing is to never give up and to give it a try. Even if you get scared you should have a go" Silas, aged 8yrs "The best part was learning things from experienced racers and other people learn it from us, and the person that learns it can teach it to the other person, and on and on." Sophie, aged 8yrs "I really enjoyed training at Redoubt with my friends. It was good to sail on a lake with no tide to worry about and learning to race was fun. The most important thing I learned was to watch the

time signals to get a good position for the start. It was very difficult in the strong winds but I managed to keep my Tera upright."



2000 Inland Championships 27 & 28 May 2017 at Ullswater YC

Sponsored by Rooster Sailing and North Lakes Food and prizes from The Lakes Distillery

After a 10-hour drive, we arrived to a warm welcome from our organisers Andrew Bailey and his family, and Ian Thompson in beautiful Ullswater YC in the Lake District for the 2000 Inland Championships. After pitching our tent, we met up with other 2000 sailors for a drink at the club house, where we saw amazing photos from last year's flooding where the water reached to the clubhouse steps.

Saturday morning, we woke to brilliant sunshine; more 2000's were arriving and we were all busy assembling our boats and catching up with friends, old and new. Our Race Officers, Matty and James Lyons, called the Race Briefing with first warning signal planned for 12.55, with 3 or 4 races today, weather depending as tomorrow was a much lighter wind forecast and hoping to get 6 races over the weekend.



2000 Inland Championship, Lazy Grey 22321 lead boat with pink spinnaker

The race area was around the corner from the UYC clubhouse in front of the club's neighbour the Sharrow Bay Hotel where the guests had a perfect view of the racing all weekend. The sailors experienced a full range of Lakeland weather conditions from bright sunshine and no wind to torrential rain and hail in a thunderstorm with gusts of 30+ knots. The challenging conditions certainly created plenty of course-setting headaches for race officers Matty and James Lyons and their mark-laying team.

With a yellow weather warning of severe thunderstorms on Saturday afternoon, race one was completed successfully as the black clouds gathered. The winners were Richard and Rachel Sheridan, with Kev O'Brien and John McVey of the RAF Sailing Association in second place. It was during race two that the storm hit the fleet, Rob and Sarah Burridge showing their mastery of the challenging conditions to take first place, whilst Richard and Rachel Sheridan battled the hailstones for another lap to finish second place. There was a third race scheduled that afternoon but it was decided to call it a day and go for four races and an early start on Sunday.



Lazy Grey 22321 Rich and Rachel Sheridan at Ullswater YC for 2000 Inland Championships

Sunday brought pleasant sunshine but even more course-setting difficulties with 180-degree wind shifts and there was only time for three back-to-back races. Rob and Sarah Burrige won all three races but racing was close with the top five boats all having their moments with many place changes.

The 2000 Class Association 2017 Inland Championship winners were Rob and Sarah Burrige of Weir Wood SC, with a clean sweep of four first places from five races, with Richard and Rachel Sheridan of Wilsonian SC second place and Iain and Sarah Yardley of Silver Wing SC third place.

HMS Princess Irene

Many members will be familiar with the story of the explosion of HMS Bulwark. Ironically six months later an even larger explosion ripped through another naval vessel moored in Saltpan Reach.

In May 1915, *Princess Irene* was moored in Saltpan Reach, between [Port Victoria](#) and [Sheerness](#), being loaded with [mines](#) in preparation for deployment on a minelaying mission. At 11:14 [GMT](#) on 27 May, *Princess Irene* exploded and disintegrated.

A column of flame 300 feet (91 m) high was followed a few seconds later by another of similar height and a pall of smoke hung over the spot where *Princess Irene* had been, reaching to 1,200 feet (370 m). Two barges laying alongside her were also destroyed.

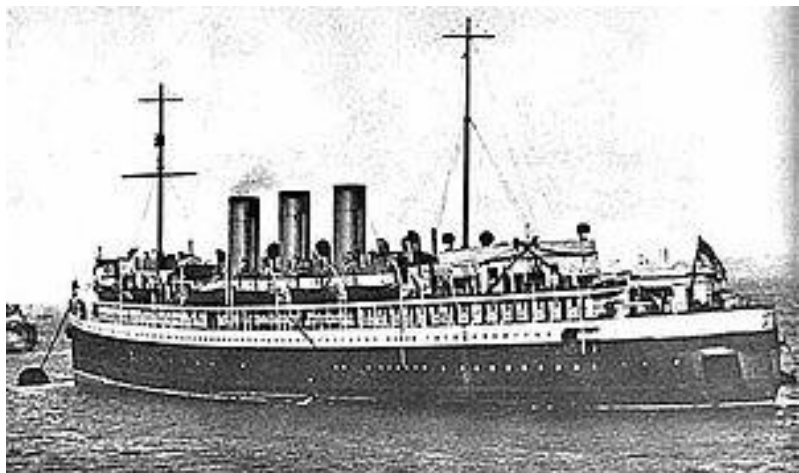
The explosion was larger than that which had destroyed [HMS Bulwark](#) six months earlier, although the loss of life was less. A total of 352 people were killed, including 273 officers and men, and 76

dockyard workers who were on board *Princess Irene*.

On the [Isle of Grain](#) a girl of nine was killed by flying debris, and a farmhand died of [shock](#). A [collier](#) half a mile (800 m) away had its crane blown off its mountings. A part of one of *Princess Irene's* boilers landed on the ship; a man working on the ship died from injuries sustained when he was struck by a piece of metal weighing 70 pounds (32 kg)

Wreckage was flung up to 20 miles (32 km) away, with people near [Sittingbourne](#) being injured by flying debris, some of which landed in [Bredhurst](#). Severed heads were found at [Hartlip](#) and on the Isle of Grain. A case of [butter](#) landed at [Rainham](#), 6 miles (9.7 km) away.

A 10-ton (10,160 kg) section of the ship landed on the Isle of Grain. The [Admiralty's](#) oil storage tanks there were damaged. The sole survivor from *Princess Irene* was a stoker, who suffered severe burns. Three of her crew had a lucky escape as they were ashore at the time.



The victims whose bodies were recovered were buried at Woodlands Road Cemetery, [Gillingham](#). A memorial service for the victims was held at the Dockyard Church, Sheerness on 1 June 1915. It was led by [Randall Davidson](#), the

[Archbishop of Canterbury](#). Inquests were held on two victims of the disaster. The [coroner](#) stated that he did not intend to hold an inquest for any other victim unless there were exceptional circumstances that warranted it

A Court of Inquiry was held into the loss of *Princess Irene*. Evidence was given that priming of the mines was being carried out hurriedly and by untrained personnel. A faulty primer was blamed for the explosion.

Minorca Sailing Holiday June 2017

Its June again, so it must be time for my annual Minorca Sailing Holiday! This year I went with a group of friends from London, Chichester YC, Bough Beech SC and Lee-on-the-Solent, and we were a mix of a few first timers and a few, well dare I say, old timers?

The Minorca sun shone all week and the breezes were kind to us, with a gentle F2/F3 each morning, building to F3/F4 most afternoons, although Tuesday I am sure there were gusts up to F5.

We were a mixed group in terms of our sailing experience, and the morning was tuition in groups and afternoon was racing, some of us settled for the safer option of 200, 2000, 100, Vareo, Aero 5 and Aero 7 as well traditional Laser with Full or Radial rig, with a few very keen sailors taking out the 29er, RS800, D-Zero the new WASZP.

Minorca Sailing had a couple of social evenings planned starting with Welcome drinks at Marga's on Friday evening, then drinks on the beach on Monday evening; Meryl and I held our annual drinks party in Mistral 7, which was very popular and

ran late into the evening – I do love those Pomardo, after all, it's only polite to drink the traditional local Minorca Gin! Most evenings we all gathered together for a walk up to Fornells for dinner at Peschadors or 'Greasy's' – I don't know the name of the restaurant but that's what everyone calls it and the food is not greasy!

Tuesday morning was my favourite sail of the week with a trip out of the Bay in a 2000. We had some great spinnaker runs and the sea was relatively calm, so not too many rolling waves. Mind you, equally enjoyable was the fleet racing in the afternoon in 200 as Meryl and I were leading and went on to win. John and Sally, from Lee-on-the-Solent, took the winning honours for Thursday afternoon Regatta in a 2000 for Asymmetric fleet, and as a result John has agreed to buy a red and purple spinnaker for '2 Scallywags'.



(l to r) John, Meryl, Me, Mike, Sally

Thursday evening prize giving was enjoyable as always, please note our smart new hats!

I can't wait to go again next year.

Rachel
2000 22321
Lazy Grey



WILSONIAN MIRACLE FLEET

INFORMATION SHEET



Fleet Captain....Paul Nudds

JACK HOLT OBE DESIGNER OF THE MIRACLE



Jack Holt was one of the greatest small-boat designers that Britain has ever had. In a career spanning over 60 years, a quarter of a million examples of Holt's 40-odd designs, including the Cadet, Merlin, Mirror and Miracle dinghies, were built. Holt is the only British designer to have had three boats recognized with a classification from the International Yacht Racing Union. Latterly, the company he built up, Jack Holt Ltd, has switched the emphasis in its business from making boats to manufacturing and selling one of the biggest selection of boat fittings in the world.

He had sailed with the Sea Scouts as a boy, helping them with their boats, and bought his first boat, a 14ft dinghy in 1929, when he was 17, he set up business in a hut under Hammersmith Bridge where his late great-uncle John Holt had repaired boats. When building his first boat, Candlelight, he did not have enough money to

buy a brass tack, let alone the metal shanks which every other builder used on their masts to hoist the sail. Jack Holt solved the problem by making a groove in the wooden mast through which the thick side of the sail was pulled up. This "boltrope" groove was laughed at the time but is now used by all small boats.



On his first visit to Cowes in the 1930s - Holt competed in the championship for 14ft boats, one of which he had built. His entry was looked upon with sneers by the sailing establishment. Though Holt did not win he made a good placing. He was busy in the Thirties building other boats, designed for eager sailors. His boat in the 18ft class was an outstanding success as was his 12ft National.

During the Second World War Holt built lifeboats and wooden copies of enemy planes for the Government, moving with his staff down the river, taking to a former oar-making works near Putney Bridge; it is still a Jack Holt shop, selling everything you could need for a boat.

After the war, a small group from Ranelagh Sailing Club, based on the same stretch of the Thames, commissioned Holt to design a small boat. It was called a Merlin and was accepted as a fine racing boat more simply made and more economic than other 14ft boats. The first Merlin is now on show at the Maritime Museum, in Greenwich.





In 1947 Yachting World magazine asked Holt to design a children's boat. His design could be sailed by boys and girls aged 8 to 16. They were soon sailing them very proficiently and word of this small boat went all over the world. It was called the Cadet. In those early post-war years there was still a divide in the sailing world: with the yacht club for the gentry and the sailing club for the workers. But youngsters, in Holt's cheap and simple Cadet, did not know this and when Cadets from yacht club and sailing club were out on the same bit of water the class privilege was ignored. It was the first breakthrough in solving the class problem on the water.



The Cadet was followed by a simple boat called Enterprise, commissioned for promotional purposes by the News Chronicle newspaper in 1955, with blue sails. This too became very popular and has world-wide fleets. Both the Cadet and the Enterprise were accepted by the International Yacht Racing Union and were recognized as International Classes. Then came an even simpler boat that people could make from kits themselves. It was called the Mirror, promoted by the Mirror newspaper titles, and it too was accepted as a World International Class. Manufactured as a kit by Bell Woodworking, it has been built in greater numbers than any other of Holt's designs.

Other innovatory craft from Holt's design board included a single-handed boat, the Solo, and a longer one called the Hornet (1952), which was the first boat to have an aid to the crew in having a seat that extended over the water, the forerunner of what is now known as a trapeze. One of his very successful designs was the General Purpose 14 (GP14, 1950), a very wholesome boat, well adapted to sailing, going fishing, with room for a picnic, and a good boat to row.

Holt also made time too to race, both in Britain and in countries abroad. He was a first-class racing helmsman and won many championships, including three Merlin championships in that boat's early days. His boats were the first RYA Class boats to sail abroad: in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Poland.

The list of Jack Holts designs is extensive, Cadet, Diamond Keelboat, Enterprise, GP14, Heron, Hornet, International 10sqm canoe, International 14, Jacksnipe, Lazy E, Merlin Rocket, Miracle, Mirror, Mirror 16, National 12, National E, North Norfolk 16, Pacer, Rambler, Solo, Streaker, Vagabond. A look around the Willies boat park today will reveal many examples.



The Miracle was one of the last designs to come from Jack's drawing board and was the culmination of the lessons learned from his other designs. Along with Barry Read he developed the slot and glue method of construction for the Miracle, which enabled good results to be obtained from kits by inexperienced amateur builders. (*Little known fact - The first Miracle was built at the National Scout Boating Centre on the Thames at Marlowe*)

The first Miracles were launched in 1975, since then the Miracle has gone from strength to strength and sail numbers today exceed 4000.

Jack Holt was born in 1912 and was awarded an OBE in 1979 for his services to sailing and died in Chichester in Nov 1995.