

President: BOB FREEMAN
71 Longleaze, Wootton Bassett
Wiltshire, SN4 8AS
e-mail: BOBatLongleaze@aol.com

Bobcat & Catalac

Founder: MARY LACK



Cruising Association



Treasurer: RICK HARVEY
44 Southway Carshalton Beeches.
Surrey. SM5 4HW.
e-mail: june.rick@btopenworld.com

196 Harewood Avenue,
Queens Park, Bournemouth,
Dorset. BH7 7BQ
e-mail: P.Gimson@Bmthonline.net

Secretary
PETER GIMSON
Tel: 01202 773749

www.bobcatandcatalac.btinternet.co.uk



May 2003



Hello fellow Bobcat and Catalac sailors every where.

The Meet & Eat.

We are pleased to report the Lunch meeting at The Haven Bistro, Lymington Yacht Marina, Lymington, proved to be a successful and enjoyable occasion. Encouraged by the sunny weather, sails could be seen in the Solent as 15 members sat down to a tasty two course meal of their choice at 1pm. *Encouraged by the size of the glasses provided by the management, the meeting eventually broke up about 4pm.*

The presence of members who had not previously attended any Association functions were welcomed. Those present in order of arrival included-

Jeremy Bretherton (8.184 Allez Cat)... Peter and Sue Gimson (8.52 Maricat)... Rick and June Harvey (9.211 Aqua-Gemini)... Nigel and Ann Ladd (9.220 Ard-na-Greine)... Roger and Jean Smith (8.204 White Satin 11)... Roger and Maggie Smith (Haptic Duo 8.63)... John and Madeleine Green (900.906 Madeleine of Netley)... Denis Hudson (Past President of the B.C.C.A.) and Elizabeth Ross, and John Arnold (Arnie) who used to make Catalacs, looked in.

<<<<<WE INVITE ALL MULTIHULLS TO JOIN US IN THE B.C.C.A. FUTURE EVENTS>>>>>

BEMBRIDGE RALLY 3 -4 May and Bank holiday 5 May

TIDES	Sat 3 May	Sun 4 May	Mon 5 May
HW	01.06 & 13.26	01.36 & 13.59	02.07 & 14.32
LW	06.40 & 18.53	07.06 & 19.20	07.32 & 19.48

moorings @ £6. a night.

The berthing master is Chris Turvey tel:01983872828 VHF Ch80 call sign "Bembridge Hbr" Brading Haven Yacht Club are expecting us for an evening meal there (time to be advised). The Commodore of the Club is Steve Lymn a former Catalac owner and Round the Island Race winner who says he will look after us.

Rally Organiser Jeremy Bretherton tel: 01462 768240 e-mail jeremy.bretherton@ic24.net

Rally Coordinator Peter Gimson tel: 01202773749 e-mail p.gimson@Bmthonline.net

Remedial work to our 900 No.906

By John Green

CHAPTER 5

Gilding the Lily.

Our 900 was manufactured during 1995. Perhaps not so much manufactured as bludgeoned into existence. The reader might think that I am too critical. Not so. I am critical but, only with regard to the 'Bodgit and Scarper' lack of build quality used during construction. My admiration for the design skill and expertise incorporated not only into Catalac 9 but also the 8, resulting in multihulls of unquestionable safety and stability, remains undiminished.

Since their inception, more than thirty years ago, these vessels have crossed every ocean in the world, in all kinds of weather entirely without any accident due to the forces of nature. The one exception I believe, was a 9 which had been fitted with low aspect ratio keels-contrary to all good advice. The design of the 8 & 9 offers genuine practicality expressed in terms of accessibility, convenience and plenty of opportunity to tweak or stretch the basic design – the latter always a sure indicator of a fundamentally sound and well engineered machine. How many times have I said a silent 'thank you' when I lift the engine locker lids to check for the sight of water bubbling in the see thru water filter? Or when checking oil levels in engine or gearbox? There it is, all laid out in front of me and ready to hand. I have a friend who owns a rather beautiful Solaris Sunrise, 36 feet of sleek beauty. His engines are buried underneath the berths in the stern cabins, his cockpit, unlike the one level, open area on the 8 & 9, is an ergonomic nightmare, so easy for the unwary to have an accident. When comparing multihulls, there is much to be admired about the advantageous layout of the 8 & 9 meter Catalacs. My reservations are almost entirely connected to the poor build quality, especially in the case of our 900. I approached the remedial work on our boat, not with any particular sequence in mind, but simply, that if it offended my eye or was obviously impractical, then I would change it. Whatever changes I made, had to be both practical and elegant. That, was and still is, my yardstick. Our 900 came fitted with quite a lot of timber. The grab rails on top of the wheelhouse, grab rails on the next level and the cockpit hand rail were all timber, therefore impractical to maintain. These were removed, taken to stainless fabricators, Hilsea Engineering of Southsea, and using them as templates, remade into 'wipe clean and polish' stainless rails. The cockpit rail was modified by the addition of another tier roughly eighteen inches (half a meter) high on the back of the rail; To this was bolted the mainsheet track. This, resulted in some slight increase in mainsheet clearance above the lockers. If I had at the time, thought the job thru properly this additional tier would have been raised to a level which carried the mainsheet clear of head height, enabling a bimini framework to be raised. I didn't have that much foresight. Replacing all the outside timber with stainless has much improved the appearance of the boat and removed a source of maintenance. Oiling or varnishing timber is not for me.

I now contradict myself. You have to be careful when you write.

I make a distinction between timber inside and outside. The cubby holes and storage compartments in both hulls, and everywhere for that matter, had been 'trimmed' on the raw GRP edges with some fairly ugly plastic material which I remembered being fitted to motor cars as door trim during the 1960's and 70's I couldn't wait to get rid of it, though, what to replace it with, was difficult to imagine. I searched the racks at B&Q and my handy, next door DIY shop. I looked at 'L' shaped plastic and aluminium extrusions, and finally settled on a 'hockey stick' shaped timber section. This timber was a neutral pine colour so lending itself to match existing finishes. Stripping the old plastic trim was easy. The cubby holes and storage compartments all had radiused corners, so had to be cut and squared thru 90 degrees to accept mitred timber trim. With some 150 to 200 mitres to cut, I should have invested in one rather better engineered and therefore more precise mitre blocks that are readily available. Instead I relied on my own, well worn, timber mitre block that would not cut an accurate mitre even if you prayed for a miracle. The consequence, was much time spent on filing and sand ing to obtain a hairline mitre. The next problem was how to fix?. Stainless steel self tappers with matching cups, was one option. I rather thought this method would be used in the fore cabins where the GRP bulkheads had in places a slight curvature. I thought I would try glue first.

Using a fast drying mastic sealant together with small clamps to encourage adhesion around the curvatures was successful. The results were pleasing, not a screw head in sight. With a soft cloth, I wiped in one coat of English light oak stain followed by a light sanding. I then applied two coats of furniture wax as a polished finish. Apart from some of the internal bulkheads, it is the only timber on the boat, and being inside does not require too much maintenance.

‘A fair weather sailor am I, am I, ‘A fair weather sailor am I.’ The final line from a dimly remembered sea shanty. I recall one weekend, when some friends arrived at our berth in Southsea Marina to enjoy a days sailing. The weather went temperamental, so we chose to sail in Langstone Harbour, then anchor, at a suitable spot, have a good lunch and generally take it easy. It was early in the year, about April time and a bit crisp – to say the least. It was high water, so we were able to visit the top end of Langstone _ to which, I had never before been. It was blowing quite hard, but we found some shelter and dropped our 30lb. Plough over the nose, checked for drift and settled down. A good and tasty lunch accompanied by some plonk followed and we got ready to leave. Could I get the anchor free? No, I could not. Engine power would not break it out. I was certain that we had not fouled. The absence of a powered or manually operated anchor winch and suitable bow roller did not help. Luckily, three of our guests were hefty young lads who now had an opportunity to ‘pay’ for their lunch. Between the four of us we felt the beast break out. Up it came, covered in blue clay, just about the best holding nature ever devised. The following day, saw me hurling down the M27 to Aladins Cave at Bursledon. They had the cheapest price for a Lofrans manual anchor winch and heavy duty bow roller, which when fitted alongside the miniscule factory fitted effort, proved to be the cats whisker, lifting the anchor would no more be a trial. Lifting our 30lb. Plough anchor attached to 200 feet of five sixteen galvanised chain was never again a problem. Sod’s law says that the object you want is at the bottom of the locker, usually when it’s dark. We think we’ve found a solution that does not require yards of cable and an energy source – usually the ships batteries. Our engine compartments are fitted with double 13A sockets for both battery chargers and lead lamps, neither of much use at sea or at anchor or anywhere without access to shore power. Wishing to avoid plundering the 12v electrical supply, I thought of trying those neat looking, battery operated, push to light, push to extinguish, lights obtainable from B&Q and other outlets. They look like a toy flying saucer, about six or seven inches in diameter and from just two batteries give a satisfactory light. Although they can be screwed to a locker bulkhead, this would not be as convenient as the method of fixing I used, namely, Velcro strips. I bought some sticky backed strips of Velcro cut them into three, three inch pieces and stuck them to the back of the light fitting. I then cut three more strips of similar size and applied them to a suitable spot fairly high up on the locker bulkhead. These gadgets are not in any sense even slightly waterproof, so they should be in a position as protected as possible. I put one in each of the two forward lockers in the bows, and one each in the engine compartments. Because these lights are rarely used, the batteries tend to last a long time and help my personal relationship with my wife who tends not to appreciate the rich inventiveness of my language when ferreting around in a deep and dark locker on an inclement night.

“We Are All Going On A Summer Holiday”

With Peter Denning, On Redouble (CL9.144)

Part 2

We arrived at Plymouth at 0930 hours and carried on up to Saltash. The bible (West Country Cruising Companion) said the shops were all within walking distance which they were, but the area did not feel inviting and we were only too happy to be away from the public pontoon which was just to the north of the Taymar Bridge (practically underneath). We decided to motor up the Taymar and once clear of Saltash and Devonport the country side came back with fields, trees, meadows etc. right down to the river. It was completely different from the Isles of Scilly. We motored up to Calstock and under the viaduct where a pub looked very inviting. The river gets very narrow but the depth was more than adequate for a Catalac. The trip back down was done at more speed and we headed for Cawsand Bay at the entrance to Plymouth for our overnight stop. The holding is meant to be good but it took 2 attempts to get the anchor to hold. The evening entertainment was provided by the local sail training club which carried on until dusk. Cawsand provided a quiet anchorage but it was bit like Studland as it was open to any wash from the passing ships entering and leaving Plymouth. The town it self was a picture postcard, from the sea at least.

Tuesday – woke up, no sun and plenty of wind from the west/southwest. At least it was not raining yet. As the morning progressed a fine drizzle set in reducing visibility to under one mile. We waited for the coastguard forecast but they were sorting out a boat that was on fire near Salcombe. Luckily no one hurt but the boat was badly damaged. As the lifeboat was out and about near Salcombe we decided to make it our destination. The wind was around 20 knots with prolonged gusts of 25 knots. After a while our required course meant that the main would be sheltering the genoa so the main was taken down. Our speed was a respectable 5 to 6 knots but now in the right direction. Near Salcombe the seas became quite large with a height of over 2 metres. Salcombe entrance gave shelter from the seas but allowed the wind to go from calm to 30 knots in seconds. Redouble did not like this with full genoa and expressed her displeasure by going sideways as quickly as forwards! We made our way to a The Bag and tied up to a pontoon that was exposed to gusts of wind and a 2 knot plus flood tide. The water taxi was summoned to take us into town where all the talk was about the boat that had been on fire.

Wednesday – left Salcombe after every one else and headed on to Dartmouth. Winds so much gentler than yesterday and the sea had died back down. After an uneventful sail we entered Dartmouth and thought that we would be able to sail up to Stoke Gabriel but the valley just seemed to funnel the winds straight on to the nose which ever way we turned so we motored all the way up and picked up a visitors buoy for £8.80 per night. To anchor would of cost £4.40.

Stoke Gabriels claim to fame is the oldest Church Yard Yew tree in England, reputedly between 1200 and 1500 years. I believe though, that it is due to the 3 pubs in the village!

Thursday started dull and got worse as the morning went on. I decided to air my sleeping bag and shook it out over the side and watched my sleeping attire fall out into the fast flowing ebb. Rapid deployment of the dinghy failed to save this important garment. Moral of the story is to check items before shaking them over the side.

Late morning saw us casting off in drizzle and motoring down to the harbour entrance. The closer that we got to it the worse the drizzle became until it was fog with 100 yards visibility. We ended up with navigation lights on as we headed to sea but once clear of land the sun broke through, but we had no wind. During this period of motoring the skipper expressed a desire to try on the crews bikini top. Much to his surprise it was handed to him before the sentence had been finished. The skipper felt that it fitted him better than her but managed to remove it before any photographic evidence was taken!

The wind eventually appeared allowing us to sail for the final hour towards ...

Brixham – a busy working fishing port in use 24 hours a day and full of kiss me quick shops on the port front and more sensible shops in the high street. As the marina was full we ended up on the events pontoon. This had no fresh water that was needed but the showers were most welcome and we got our money's worth from them.

Friday – Had breakfast ashore but found nothing opened until 0930 hours. As we left we went via another jetty to fill up the water tanks, one of which was empty and to try and wash some of the grime from the cockpit. It's amazing how dirty it becomes without noticing for a while. The wind was causing ripples only so we had resigned ourselves for another motor from Brixham to Studland. Once clear of land the wind turned out to be a SW 3 to 4 allowing genoa and main with a sailing speed of 5 to 6 knots. After a while the genoa was changed for the cruising chute and our speed increased by another knot.

By 1900 hours we were at the Bill of Portland as planned with the start of the flood tide to carry us on up to Studland. The wind was also starting to die down so our speed across the land was around 8 knots. As fast as dusk was arriving the wind was dying so our form of propulsion changed from wind to wind and engine to engine only. It would have been nice to of sailed all the way but the tides can be fierce and we would of ended up going backwards. We arrived at Studland just before midnight with the place seeming full of boats, the majority with riding lights. This made it easier to see the boats and has certainly encouraged me to use ours more since. I still feel though, that boats at anchor in a recognised anchorage should not have to display anchor balls or riding lights, though I will try to use our light to assist others in the dark.

Saturday-This was just about the end of our holiday, Saturday was a lazy day and we sailed from Studland to Christchurch on Sunday.

During the holiday the longest voyage was 120 miles in 26 hours, 20 hours night sailing, the engine ran for 50 hours and the log gave a distance of 370 nautical miles most of which was with the tides.

The winds, well they varied from 0 to force 7.

The Ahart Odyssey

By Dan & Jan aboard "Sojourner CL.12.10"

Chapter Twenty Nine



While waiting for good weather to cross the Gulf Stream, we worked our way South along the Intracoastal Waterway. Our thinking was that since we had to wait, we might as well explore what we could and since the Gulf Stream was going to carry us North anyway, we might as well explore South. Sailing through Biscayne Bay and the Miami waterfront was a wonderful experience. We lived in Miami Shores in 1974 and had seen the bay from the highways and bridges only, so seeing the area from the water was a unique vantage point for us. The city looks smaller from the water and much more pleasing to the eye. We saw a lot of familiar sights, like the "Rusty Pelican," which was one of our favorite restaurants and the palm tree lined causeways. But much had changed in the 25 intervening years. The Miamarina, which was a cozy marina years ago, is now filled with mega yachts and sight seeing boats. And of course the port of Miami is now huge with many freighters, tankers and of course the ostentatious cruise ships, which tower over everything and everybody. It is a marvel to look up at such huge ships from the deck of Sojourner.

We eventually made our way to Crandon Park Marina on the Northern tip of Key Biscayne and topped the fuel tanks. We then sailed to the Southern tip of the key, where we anchored for the night at the state park there, which provides a very nice protected anchorage for cruisers called "No Name Harbor." For \$10 a night cruisers can anchor and have access to the park and fresh water. Very nice. The next morning, December 16th, we departed at 0700 and headed out to sea. Conditions weren't perfect, but according to all weather sources we could review, it was the best we were going to get for at least a week. The wind was out of the East at 10 to 15 knots, which combined with the Northerly flowing Gulf Stream, created very choppy waves of about three to five feet. If the wind had been from the North, in direct opposition to the stream, the waves would have been eight to ten feet and very steep, which was the forecast for later in the week. If the seas had been calm, we could have crossed the 50 odd miles to Gun Cay in about eight to ten hours, but because of the waves, we had to motor slower or we would have had a rougher ride. Powering back combined with the wave and wind action resulted in a 14-hour trip. While in the fastest moving area of the stream, we were steering 135 degrees in order to move 90 degrees or directly East. It was not a real comfortable ride and we stayed inside most of the way to stay dry and away from the spray that inundated us every time we encountered a particularly large wave. We finally reached Gun Cay at 2100. It was quite dark, with no moon, but thanks to our GPS (global Positioning Satellite) navigation system, accurate charts, our radar and depth finders, we were able to find a safe anchorage on the West side of the cay in 15 feet of water. The next morning, with good visibility, but higher winds that had clocked around to the South, we motored into the safety and comfort of the small harbor on the East side of Gun Cay. We spent the day relaxing and washing the salt off Sojourner. It is amazing that under conditions where she is constantly sprayed with salt water, she will accumulate deposits of salt all over the deck, cabin top and sides. It is not really unsightly, but those areas stay wet and slippery. We have a salt-water deck wash pump that provides a nice volume of water via a garden hose that is primarily for washing the anchor and anchor line, when we pull it up, but it also enables us to rinse off the surface of the boat. Surprisingly, the excess salt rinses off and the decks will then dry and look cleaner even though the rinse was with salt water.

The following day, December 18th we headed East across the Great Bahamas Bank and its 15 foot depths for Chubb Cay, some 75 miles away. Unless we have ideal conditions, it is not possible for us to sail that far in daylight, especially in the winter, with such short days. So, we need winds less than 15 knots in order to anchor overnight on the bank without bouncing too much. We ruled out sailing overnight in this area because of the shallow water and we sure didn't want to negotiate the Northwest Channel at night. The channel provides the only safe way to exit the East side of the bank into deeper water. Conditions were again not the best, but worse weather was coming, so off we went. As expected, the night at anchor on the bank was rather bouncy, but it was tolerable. We were anxious to get on to Chubb Cay; the first island in the Berry Islands chain, where we could find protected coves in which to anchor and wait out the expected

worsening weather. All went well until we crossed the Northwest Channel and headed out into the Tongue of the Ocean, with its 6,000-foot depths. We had Chubb Cay in sight at noon when the clouds we had been watching all morning really began to build in a hurry. It is incredible how fast thunderstorms can grow under ideal conditions. It is not uncommon for them to rise at over 5,000 feet per minute. Apparently, these clouds had ideal conditions because right before our eyes, what had looked like an average rain cloud suddenly became a super cell and developed that sickly green sky look and boiling turbulent activity. It was moving from South to North about five miles East of us and we were trying to sail East. We decided to turn around and stay as far away from it as we could. But, another storm was directly behind us. We had been watching it also, and it had not appeared to be a threat, because it was moving Northeast. We could see the trailing edge of the storm and clear skies to the West, just behind it. But to our amazement, three funnel clouds appeared simultaneously on the Southwest edge of the storm just where one would expect them to form according to the meteorology course we took. As we watched, they developed into full-blown waterspouts in seconds. We could see huge volumes of water being lifted into the air about five miles West of us. The VHF radio suddenly came alive with other boaters reporting the waterspouts and warning each other that they were taking evasive action. What to do? After some rapid head scratching, we decided the best course of action was to steer Southwest to Andros Island and look for shelter at Morgan's Bluff as expeditiously as possible. It was ten miles to Morgan's Bluff, which is a small town that owes its existence to a natural small round harbor. As we turned we were able to observe the water spouts very clearly. Each one lasted about 20 minutes and incredibly a fourth and then a fifth waterspout developed. We did not hear of any damage sustained by any boats, but we could hear the concern and stress in boaters' voices. Our course paralleled the West side of the super cell and we had some anxious moments, when it looked like it might grow large enough to spread West and over take us even though it was moving North and we were moving Southwest, but we were fortunate and received only a light shower.

Andros Island is the only island in the Bahamas that has ample fresh water thanks to large inland lakes that stay fresh due to sufficient rainfall. Daily water tankers ply the 40 miles between Morgan's Bluff and Nassau to ferry fresh water to the Nassau inhabitants. We were told over a million gallons a day is transported. Because of the importance of this resource, the channel into the harbor is well marked and easy to follow. A pipeline to transport the water is probably not practical because of the 6,000-foot depths between the islands. The commercial waterfront is very small with one bar/restaurant that looks like it could have been a cantina in a spaghetti western. The restaurant may or may not be open depending on what happens to be happening that day. But the people are super friendly. When we asked if we could tie up at the pier while the storm passed, the answer was, "Stay as long as you like and can I help you with the ropes?" Our kind of place. As it turned out we did stay two nights and enjoyed every relaxing moment of it. The town is named for Sir Henry Morgan, a Welshman, who was a buccaneer (pirate) in the seventeenth century. Buccaneer by the way, is derived from the Caribbean Indian word "buccaning," which is a technique of sun-drying meat. Morgan spent most of his buccaneering career plundering Spanish settlements in the Caribbean, namely Cuba and Panama. However, in 1672 England and Spain signed a peace treaty and as a result, under Spanish pressure, Morgan was arrested and taken to England for trial. But, after listening to his story, King Charles II, Knighted him and made him Lt. Governor of Jamaica, much to the consternation of the Spanish. What Morgan ever had to do with the Bahamas is unclear, but a man that persuasive is certainly due a town namesake, however small.

The weekly mail boat came in while we were in Morgan's Bluff, which caused considerable excitement. The boat carries everything from mail to automobiles. Most everyone in town had something to collect off the ship, so it was quite a gathering at the wharf at 2100 hours that evening. The next day, the monthly fuel tanker arrived and off-loaded diesel and gasoline for about two hours. The islands use diesel fuel to generate electricity and of course gasoline to drive their cars and trucks. We're not sure what most people do for a living on the island, but fresh water delivery to Nassau is the largest employer. There is also some sport fishing and scuba diving, plus the occasional cruiser like us, who stops now and then to buy some fuel and groceries. That night a ferryboat came in with more supplies and a couple more cars. No doubt, a lot of extra merchandise was being delivered because of Christmas. It was fascinating to watch ships maneuver in and out of the commercial area of the harbor. Most of them have bow thrusters that enable them to turn in a very small area, but even so, watching a 200-foot vessel come into a turning basin that is only about 400 feet across, turn around and then back into a loading area so cars can be driven on and off is really fun to watch, especially at night. Until we saw all of this activity, we really didn't appreciate how much the Bahamian economy is dependent on boats.