



AYLESBURY SAILING CLUB



OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

ONE SHILLING

THE EARLY YEARS IN THE FIFTIES

A RECOLLECTION BY KEITH LAMDIN

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THE FIRST IDEAS
AND
A NEWSPAPER APPEAL

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A PROPER CLUB
(1957-1959)

A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION
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KEITH LAMDIN

THE FIRST IDEAS
AND
A NEWSPAPER APPEAL

I am sure that someone else, somehow, would have started a sailing club in the Aylesbury area but, in the event, it was my father, Bob Lamdin, who did so.

For me, it is tempting to consider where the idea came from and I think it originated on the bank of the river Bure on the Norfolk Broads when we had our first sailing holiday in 1949. Dad had a basic sum of sailing knowledge gleaned from the 'Teach Yourself' books and, on arrival at Horning to take over a small un-rigged yacht, 'Elf', his ability was aided by the clear instruction to 'point it over to the other bank and, when you get there, push that (the tiller) away'!

From that inauspicious beginning, we had two weeks sailing around the northern rivers of the Broads and, whilst I was young, I do remember being pulled off the mud of Barton Broad by the cruiser, 'Toreador', and a kindly watcher from the bank coming aboard to help Dad sail her through a flat spot, against the tide, on a tree sheltered bend in the river.

From that point, we were hooked and our annual holiday on the Broads was the highlight of the year although, to keep my mother, Dixie, happy, we alternated in cruisers! I am sure our ability to sail the yachts must have improved as I do not remember too many other real problems other than Dad's great reluctance to give a cruiser an inch of room.

The enthusiasm was there and Dad clearly thought that waiting a year for his next sailing opportunity was not good enough and his thoughts turned to the idea of some form of local dinghy sailing easily accessible from our home in Aylesbury.

Obviously, he needed to establish whether any other local people shared his enthusiasm and this required some publicity. Here, he had his first piece of luck as he had a contact, Roy Palmer, who was a well-known photographer and reporter for the local newspapers.

He contacted Roy early in 1955 and was rewarded with an article which appeared on Friday 25th March although he could not have expected it to be under the banner of a page headline in the Bucks Advertiser.

"Here's A Yachtsman Who Dreams Of Red Sails On Halton Reservoir" may have gilded the lily but it would certainly catch the attention. The article gave Dad's name and address and explained that he had read about the formation of a club at Bletchley sailing on a local

quarry pit and he wondered about the local reservoirs.

He had looked at the Wiltstone Reservoirs only to find they were designated as nature reserves. He had then looked at the smaller Halton Reservoir and contacted the Inland Waterways section of the Ministry of Transport to receive a more promising reply.

'If the Regional Office could be satisfied the fishing and access problems could be smoothed out, they thought it would be possible to accommodate sailing'.

The article said that 'many a local person who has done some yachting longs to return to the sport and the reservoir could fill a great need'.

Now it was a matter of what response might occur from local people and, here, Dad need not have wondered for very long.

On the very same day, Sydney Blum, who owned South's Bakery in the High Street with his brother Stan, wrote to say that 'after he was told the RAF had been unsuccessful in obtaining permission to use Wiltstone, he had joined Cookham Reach SC on the Thames. He would prefer facilities closer to Aylesbury and thought it would be an added amenity for the town'.

Ivan Anderson wrote, from Cuddington on the 29th March, to say that 'he had read the article and would like details of any organisation that was started as he, and some friends, were interested in any chance to do some sailing'.

Norman Rogers, a woodwork master at Wing School, wrote on the same day to say that 'he had sailed at Bletchley but they were full up and the water could not take any more craft. He would be happy to help in the formation of a club at Halton and thought the choice of Heron dinghy a good one as his profession presented no great difficulty in building one'.

Syd Blum wrote again on the 1st April to say that 'he had another look at the local reservoirs and his impression is that Halton is going to present difficulties of accessibility and ground for storage of boats. He wondered if the Tring Reservoirs could be re-considered and offered to assist on Committee and visit the various options for another look'.

Clearly, Dad was encouraged by the apparent level of support and the first meeting of proposed Aylesbury and District Sailing Club took place at our house on the 20th April 1955.

The attendees were the three people who had corresponded plus the following:-

Eric Manchee, 1st Lieutenant Aylesbury Sea Cadets,
Cdr. WRS Smith, Area Officer Sea Cadets,

Herbert Nicolle of Chearsley,
Ron Haynes and Les Haslam, both of Aylesbury.

The minutes are brief and, no doubt, most of the discussion was of a general nature as to the way forward. On a proposal from Cdr. Smith, seconded by Herbert Nicolle, a steering committee was formed to make further progress.

Dad was agreed as Chairman, Syd Blum as Secretary and Eric Manchee and Norman Rogers were included as general committee members.

Digressing for a moment, it was at the same time as this first meeting, that Ron Eden and I both joined the local Aylesbury Sea Cadet unit as boy cadets. I didn't know Eric Manchee before but he soon achieved some local publicity when he lowered an International Cadet from the upper bedroom window of his house in Stoke Mandeville. He had home-built the boat for his step-son, Mick Rose, and it was to become the first boat launched on the Reservoir.

Encouraged by the meeting, Dad contacted the Inland Waterways to enquire about the terms and conditions for using the water and the cost per boat sailing or berthed. There were queries concerning the notice period of one month which 'hardly gave sufficient security of tenure' and an initial fee for boats of £31-15s which caused the plea 'our finances are such that we cannot raise this amount at the moment'. However, these were surmountable and he asked to be put in touch with the local agent in order to agree boundaries for a boathouse and berthing site.

Dad met with an Inland Waterways representative on 3rd June at the Reservoir and, after viewing the whole area, it was agreed as suitable for sailing, subject to any snags arising and signing an agreement.

A further Committee meeting at home on the 8th June was clearly encouraged and it was agreed to go ahead and form the club as the Aylesbury and District Sailing Club. The Officers were confirmed although Syd Blum said he would only act as Secretary until a General Meeting. Membership fees of £1-10s for an Adult and £2-2s for a Family were agreed and that the Club would pay an initial licence of £20 to the Inland Waterways for four boats on the water with a planned start date for sailing of 25th June.

Roy Palmer continued to assist with publicity with another banner headline, on the front page this time, and announcing AYLESBURY STARTS A SAILING CLUB. The article confirmed the intention to sail on the 25th, that there had been a good response to the idea, Aylesbury Sea Cadets would take part and it was hoped RAF Halton would participate at a later stage.

The article also mentioned the existing use of the water for swimming and fishing and, presciently, Dad 'hoped the two clubs would be able to co-operate and work in harmony'.

Dad wrote again to the Inland Waterways, this time to return the signed agreement for the Club to operate and to pay an initial fee of £22 which allowed four boats on the water during 1955. He also asked for confirmation from the Engineer that there were no obstructions in the water and for access across the adjoining land to the proposed Clubhouse site. He confirmed the intention to sail on the 25th but asked 'for something in writing by that date in case we should meet any local opposition'.

Incidentally, the initial fee was paid courtesy of a cheque from Herbert Nicolle, who took the opportunity to thank Mum and Dad for their hospitality and work done in forming the club, which was kind of him and much appreciated.

On 17th June, The Bucks Advertiser said "Full Sail Next Week?" and 'it looks like a case of hoisting sail and full speed ahead' with a reported eight boats and twenty members. However, there was a proviso of 'providing no last minute snags arise' and arise they did.

On 24th June, the Bucks Advertiser said "Sailing Tomorrow? There's Just One More 'If'" and this was do with the interests of fishing. Dad had received a letter from the Secretary of the Prestwood Anglers' Club and arranged to meet Mr. Craven at the Reservoir on the previous Sunday. It was reported that problems had been 'discussed amicably' but Mr. Craven said 'It is rather controversial at this stage'.

Some of his angling members were less reticent and Mr. A said 'The interests conflict and it is a poor show to do us out of our sport on a Sunday' while Mr. B said 'sailing would disturb the fish' and condemned the yachtsmen saying 'I thought sportsmen did not cut the feet from under other sportsmen'!

Disappointing as this attitude was, the momentum was there and, having paid monies to the owners of the Reservoir, it was time to sail.

THE FIRST SAIL

On Saturday, 25th June 1955, willing hands carried C1616 "Amazon" up and over the High Bank at the current Worlds End Lane entrance to the water. The path was narrow and obstructed by bushes but nothing was going to impede progress and, shortly after when rigged, Mick Rose took the Cadet on the water for the first recorded sail on the Reservoir.

The wind was light and north-easterly (nothing new there!) and Mick enjoyed a gentle sail, with another young Sea Cadet, Philip Wrench, as crew, up and down the south side of the water.

It was reported that 'the sailing club party gave a cheer, a few fishermen watched rather glumly and a fine pair of swans ignored the scene and went on preening themselves'!

After a while, Mick brought "Amazon" ashore and the drama of the day began. Dad took the boat out with Herbert Nicolle as crew and, around the current High Bank buoy position, they got a gust. Herbert sat out to windward with Dad, the wind promptly died and, inevitably, the boat capsized to windward in full and close view of the watching crowd.

Herbert Nicolle swam the 40 yards or so back to the High Bank leaving Dad perched on top of the up-turned hull. Norman Rogers then swam back out with a line by which the boat could be pulled back to the bank as there was no other rescue facility. A kindly thought from a fisherman who offered his line was much appreciated and Dad said later 'he hoped the two clubs would be able to cooperate in that spirit all the time'.

The boat was beached, drained and her cotton sails laid out to dry whilst we took stock and had lunch.

Soon, we manhandled over the High bank another YW Cadet, "Kiwi", belonging to Buddy and Margaret Allwright who lived down the road in Weston Turville. Then, with much more effort, we brought in an old 14' gaff rigged, clinker built dinghy on a heavy road trailer and belonging to Frank Hewitt of Dinton.

Now it was reported that 'visitors to the reservoir were treated to the sight of three boats under full sail in the middle of the Vale of Aylesbury' which was just reward for the efforts already made.

At the end of the days' sailing, Frank Hewitt's dinghy was rowed down to the reeds at the other end of the reservoir, near the current Channel mark. The intention was to try and find a channel through the reeds and to bridge over the stream running alongside Halton Lane. This was hoped to allow easier access and avoid the disturbance to fishing at the High Bank. A potential

channel was found and a working party commenced clearing reeds the next day.

This activity was too much for the local press to ignore and the Bucks Advertiser gave us another front page spread under the headline A RESCUE ACT LAUNCHES SAILING CLUB while Dad could probably have done without three photos of his embarrassment. However, they say there is no such thing as bad publicity and the Bucks Herald concentrated on the poetic with a lovely picture of "Amazon" sailing near the High bank under the headline 'White wings, they never grow weary'.

Enthused by a successful weekend, Dad wrote to Mr. Harper at the Inland Waterways to accept amended terms of tenure for our use and to outline the proposed site of a boathouse and dinghy park. This was adjacent to the fishermen's boat house, with a frontage of 100', and some 200' from the pump house which supplied water to the nearby Wendover canal arm. (Of course, the site was subsequently extended right up to the pump house which has now been demolished).

On Wednesday 6th July, a public Open Meeting was held at the Hazell's Club in Aylesbury. Dad outlined the problems of getting started, the current position and the work required in the future to properly establish the Club. Unfortunately, the reporter present scented a headline and the initial opposition from fishing and bird-watching interests was presented as "Attempts to 'Keep Sails off Halton'".

However, apart from that note of discord, which Dad 'hoped was now resolved', the meeting was full of optimism and the Club recruited 17 new members to bring the strength up to 30.

Working parties were planned for Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings with general sailing and more work at weekends. A metal bridge would be installed over the Halton Lane ditch at the weekend and it was hoped to float the first boat down the channel cut through the reeds to the water.

Warning that a lot of work remained to be done, Dad said 'If we are going to make anything of the club at all, sailing will have to be subordinated to work' and so it proved.

The meeting elected a General Committee of Messrs Lamdin, Manchee, Rawlings, Nicolle, Rogers, Haynes, Blum, Norris, Wood, Hewitt, Haslam and Cdr. Smith.

They got to work with starting the clearance of scrub on the North bank of the Reservoir as a site for a future boat-house and dinghy park with even this mundane act warranting a report in the local paper.

THE DEMONSTRATION DAY

As well as the valuable publicity given in the local newspapers, the club was lucky to have the services of Ron Haynes, who was a professional photographer, and he left us with a large volume of contemporary images which record much of the activity of the time.

Ron offered any member copies of his photographs at 2s 6d for a large and 9d for a small photo with all proceeds to the club, which was a useful boost to reserves.

Some show the first boats floating down the channel with the young Geoff and Chris Packman sitting calmly in their Cadet "Poochie" whilst navigating the cut. Some others show the impenetrable nature of the scrub on the North bank and resulting bonfires to remove the debris created by our efforts.

The publicity was still effective in generating new membership enquiries and Nick Inman wrote from Wendover on the 7th July to say that 'he had followed progress in the press with interest having recently moved into the area. He had not sailed for a while but had considerable sailing experience racing Snipes and was keen to join the club and help in anyway possible'.

I think this is typical of the interest shown and the one problem the club did not have was in obtaining new members and boats, although the type of boat might become an issue.

At the next Committee meeting, held on the 22nd July, it was confirmed that club funds from membership had exceeded £50 with 38 member receipts and a further 11 applications.

Dad was formally confirmed as Chairman with Syd Blum switching to Treasurer and Norman Rogers taking on the role of Secretary. It was agreed that cheque signatories be any two of the Officers and that third party insurance be obtained to cover the Officers in the event of mishap.

Two sub-committee working parties were set up with the requirement for a club Rules book being handled by Ron Haynes together with the Officers and Mr Wood. Dad took on the issue of the club site, planning and access for a boathouse and he was joined by Frank Hewitt and Les Rawlings with Paddy Hutton co-opted shortly afterwards.

Luckily, Frank Hewitt could assist in the transport of materials through a contractor and his own van while Les Rawlings was familiar with the planning process, and its' pitfalls, and Paddy Hutton became the source of solutions to the inevitable building problems.

It was confirmed that 12 boats were on the club register

and also agreed to acknowledge and respond to a letter from the fishing club which promised a cessation of hostilities!

It was clear that the issue of classes of boat was in need of early resolution with the suggestion of an Open Demonstration Day being the next major step forward. The idea was simply to get as many boats of different classes on the water at the same time in order that they could be sailed by a range of members and compared for suitability at Halton.

The date for the demonstration was set as Sunday, 18th September, and through various contacts people agreed to bring their boats, including Leslie Dyball from Aldenham SC with his lovely varnished Merlin Rocket. Ten boats were floated down the Channel cut from Halton Lane and across to the cleared area of about 100' square which had been created on the future club site.

The boats included Cadets, Herons, a Graduate, a beautiful Firefly, a GP 14 and the Merlin and all were well used on a pleasant day with wind all over the water.

Our publicist turned up trumps again with the banner headline IT WAS FULL SAIL SUNDAY DOWN AT HALTON RESERVOIR and, over a photo taken by Ron Haynes from the bank, 'The Enthusiasts'!

Over a hundred people turned up and queued for a turn in the boats and this must have helped members make up their mind as to which boats the club should now officially adopt.

Whilst many eyes were on the Merlin Rocket it soon became clear that the water was a little restricted to get the most out of her performance. The general view seemed to favour the twelve foot boats as more likely candidates and the smaller Heron seemed to lose some support, particularly from Dad and Norman Rogers who had favoured it previously. The Cadet was the only obvious choice as a Junior boat and the day was reported a success.

Norman Rogers, as Secretary, was reported as saying 'a news-sheet has been issued but much work remains to be done. The clearance area needed levelling and there is still work to do on the channel. One of the hardest tasks will be erecting a boathouse when a suitable building is obtained and then fencing off the area whilst leaving access to the water for the fishermen. He hoped more new members would join and swell the working parties with the objective of being able to start the first season proper by the next Easter'.

The next committee meeting, on 28th September, took the boat class policy as its main topic and, despite some views, decided to adopt the 14' Merlin Rocket, the 12' classes of National 12, Firefly and Graduate with the

Heron as a small family boat and Cadet as Junior boat.

Eric Manchee suggested approaching Mr Thorne, Managing Director of Air Trainers, as President and it was also agreed that anyone joining within three months of the year end would pay membership for the following year only.

New members included Dr. Lloyd Hart, who later became the first President of the club after Mr Thorne declined, and Vic Trump who, with his wife Peggy, became keen family members in their National 12.

At a further committee meeting on 22nd November, Gordon Bates and Paddy Hutton were formally co-opted onto Committee and a further sub-committee of Messrs. Rogers, Norris, Nicholle and Hutton formed to finalise the formal agreement with the, now, British Waterways Board and granting permanent access to water through a long-term lease.

Clearly, Dad was now convinced of the future success of the venture as he now commenced the purchase of a Graduate from Wyche and Coppock, the designers and builders located in Nottingham. His view concerning a Heron had been altered by the trial sails in September and now it was a matter of finance, building and delivery. In today's terms, the cost of just over £100 seems remarkable and included boat, sails, cover, trolley and three buoyancy aids.

This seemed a fitting way to complete, apart from working parties, the progress made in establishing the Aylesbury Sailing Club within its first year of 1955.

It may now be an appropriate point to pause and say a few words about the water itself, as it was the most important element of all. Known to the locals as Halton Reservoir, or even just 'the Resy', the water is now referred to formally by reference to the name of the local village as Weston Turville Reservoir.

Built as a feeder reservoir for supplying water to the arm of the canal serving Wendover, its origins were described in an 'historical and ecological survey', by a local resident, Tessa Taylor, to whom I am indebted.

The Grand Junction Canal, now the Grand Union Canal, was constructed by 'navvies' from Birmingham to London during 1793 to 1800 with two local arms to Wendover (1793-1797) and Aylesbury (1811-1815).

Climbing to its' high point of cutting the Chiltern Hills at Tring, the canal suffered from a lack of water supply and the local reservoir system was constructed between 1797 and 1839 in the order of Weston Turville, Wilstone, Marsworth, Tring Ford and Startops End.

The concept of the Wendover Arm was initially just as

a feeder to supply water to the summit although the local landowners were easily persuaded that it should be made navigable so that produce could be more easily transported to and from London and the Midlands.

The reservoir was constructed as part of the local mill owners consent for the canal so that a steady flow of water was provided for mills in Weston Turville and Aylesbury since the main flow of the River Wendover was diverted into the canal. It was described as being 70 acres in area which only shows the extent of reed encroachment over the years.

Whilst the water systems involved originate along the Chiltern scarp in Wendover, the land area is partly in the Halton parish at the south-east corner and, mainly, in the Weston Turville parish.

The River Wendover, a Celtic name meaning clear waters, took its course through where the reservoir is now, passed through Weston Turville village and joined the River Thame through Aylesbury and onto the Thames at Dorchester. The outflow of this river can still be seen from the sluice halfway along the High Bank and other, smaller, side streams feed the reservoir from the channel end and run past the entrance in Worlds End Lane.

Construction of the Reservoir entailed the flooding of a mill situated on an enclosure called Millpiece at the south-east corner and the diversion of Halton Lane some distance towards Wendover. Interestingly, the parish boundary still follows the line of the old drowned lane!

Soon the Canal Company purchased the milling rights, water mills lost their significance in the industrial revolution and the function of the reservoir soon became solely that of topping up the canal. By 1814, a well and heading, with underground pipes were built to pump water into the branch canal through use of a steam pump and, much later, an electric pump which remained in sporadic use until recently.

The problems caused by constant leakage from the Wendover Arm, between Aston Clinton and Tringford, meant this navigable feeder was largely abandoned as a workable concern after 1840, although there were attempts made to rectify the situation until the end of the century and, even now, thoughts of re-opening for leisure use. This has long been so with the Reservoir used for fishing by permit, swimming with a diving board erected in the High bank corner, and skating during a succession of cold winters in the 1930's.

The current use by the Angling Club (1947), Sailing Club (1955) and BBONT (1966), with formal designation as a SSSI, serve to prolong the local traditions.

THE FIRST FULL YEAR

The new year of 1956 started full of hope for Dad as Norman Rogers took him to Radford Mill in Nottingham to collect our new Graduate. For the journey home, the boat was tied upside down onto the sloping roof of Norman's Standard Vanguard with the 20' mast protruding like a lance along the side. The boat was number 241 and, after prolonged family discussion, named "Teal" and Dad stored her at a large house, The Firs, at the end of Worlds End Lane opposite the Marquis of Granby PH in Wendover Road.

The hopes must have taken a blow when he received a letter from Cdr Smith which, even read today, seems barely comprehensible. It starts with 'are you aware of being coerced into uneconomical and unconstitutional matters affecting the club', continues 'how can you be blind to damaging conduct', and concludes 'it is worth most serious thought for redemption as you are found wanting'!

I am not sure if anyone really understood the reasons for this outburst, and I do not recall anything quite so vitriolic afterwards in the Club, but Dad soon obtained a vote of confidence from the Committee and progress could continue.

Progress was mainly of the working variety as the club site area was finally cleared and work started on foundations for the boathouse. This was initially intended as both a shelter for members when sailing and also as a storage facility for boats, particularly in the off-season months. Through Norman Rogers, we were lucky to obtain the wooden structure of an old hut used by Scouts in Aylesbury that was becoming redundant as they were able to afford a new building.

The wood of roof beams, trusses and side planking cost the sum of £20 to take away and Dad had used his contacts to be able to remove a large quantity of bricks from the demolition of the old Co-op Bakery at the bottom of Aylesbury High Street. These bricks and wood form the basis of the clubhouse as it still stands today and the biggest work load was moving it all onto the club site.

With agreement from BWB, the biggest loads were taken by lorry along the track from the Perch Cottage end whilst smaller items were paddled across in an old River Thames punt which was purchased for £5 from the Thames Conservancy. The punt was very long, narrow and flat-bottomed, and a surprisingly stable load carrier even if freeboard was limited. We soon learnt the art of kneeling on the front deck to paddle across the water without too many mishaps.

As always, the workload was falling on a few willing souls and the Committee prepared for the first Annual

Meeting with a discussion of the issues on 19th March in preparation for the main meeting on 26th March, a year and a day since the first news headline.

Dad welcomed the members to the meeting which he hoped would be the 'first of many' and reviewed the 'satisfactory progress of the last year'. He covered the digging of the Channel, the clearance of the club site and the work on foundations and transporting bricks and hut to the site with thanks particularly to Norman Rogers.

He said there were 'too few workers' and made both an appeal for more helping hands and also a Boat House Fund to provide the money to complete the building work and secure the site with a fence.

He expected to see general sailing from Easter and announced the Clubs' intention to enable more boats to be licensed onto the water through the BWB.

The Club now moved on to elect its' Officers in a formal sense and the minutes left some confusion as they record John Paterson as President although, in fact, it was Dr. Lloyd Hart who had that privilege with John as a Vice-President. Of course, John later became our long-serving President and a good friend to the Club.

Dad was now elevated to the correct position, in nautical terms, of Commodore, with Ron Haynes as Vice-Commodore and Don Packman, who had some experience of club dinghy racing, as Rear Commodore.

Norman Rogers and Syd Blum remained as Secretary and Treasurer respectively and the Committee was enhanced by its' first lady, Audrey Nicolle, who was Herbert's sister, and Dave Goble, a young friend of Ron Haynes.

The meeting set them to work on our first full season.

Whilst work on the boathouse was the main priority, some sailing took place although from a slightly unexpected quarter as news came of an un-licensed boat on the water. Incidentally, the report came from the fishing bailiff, Mr Brooks who, together with his wife, were the unofficial keepers of the water and quick to pounce on any misdemeanour, real or imagined.

In this case, it turned out to be a Firefly being sailed by an RAF Halton lad, 'Kiwi' Cochrane, and Dad spoke to a Ft. Lt. Ecklestone who said 'putting a boat on the water was a mistake' and he was 'having a conference with the CO and Cochrane today'!

Dad suggested that the RAF consider joining as members with some form of sub-license for boats. It was agreed that the RAF would contact the Club with a proposal, although jointly paying for sailing rights at £75

might have seemed steep for just two boats.

Sailing remained in the background as work continued on completing the footings and building the supporting brick walls and piers for the roof. The leaders in the work were Paddy Hutton and Herbert Nicolle with much needed assistance from two new members in Tom Park and Arthur Scarisbrick who quickly became key to the efforts.

The next committee meeting, on 28th May, considered the issue of RAF sailing, the idea of which was generally welcomed. In the absence of a response, it was agreed to send a deputation of Norman Rogers and Dad to reach agreement rather than risk any further violations of our agreement with BWB for exclusive sailing use of the water.

A sailing meeting was held on 10th June, in preparation for a committee meeting the next day, and affiliation to the RYA was to be recommended, together with acceptance of draft Club rules put together under Ron Haynes' advice.

The main committee agreed with the various actions being taken although it was suggested that, with affiliation to the RYA, we ask for their advice on the issue of a formal arrangement with the RAF and also agreed that racing be attempted from the 24th June. One issue was the use of the punt being made without permission by local youths although no obvious solution was to hand without erecting a boundary fence for the site.

The Rules, typed and reproduced in a small booklet, were a model of brevity being just 4 pages and 14 rules. Whilst the name varied from Aylesbury to Aylesbury and District, the objectives were clearly 'to encourage the racing and sailing of small yachts and boats' and the burgee to be 'a white duck on a black and red ground' which acknowledged the local delicacy!

One key rule from the beginning was the resignation of the Commodore after two years which was intended to avoid the experience of established clubs on the Thames where the same person sometimes remained at the helm for years which, it was felt, led to stagnation.

Whilst we all enjoyed the chance of some sailing with a range of boats from the adopted classes supplemented by a solitary Snipe to assist Ron Haynes, who had a disability with one leg which rendered him rather immobile, it was work which still dominated the days.

The roof on the clubhouse was the key objective as shelter at the time was limited to old pieces of corrugated iron being supported somewhat vaguely on piles of bricks. This was felt not in keeping with our new status of RYA affiliation let alone rather crowded for the increasing numbers of members when it rained.

Perversely, although it was not the driest summer, BWB now decided to pump water from the Reservoir into the Wendover canal arm in an attempt to create a reasonable level of water there to the detriment of our own water level. As we looked forward to trying some racing, we were now faced with a decreasing amount of water in the Reservoir with an increasing rim of muddy shore and a reducing rectangle of water of less than half normal size for sailing use.

Besides frustrating our racing plans, the reduced water level had a devastating effect on much of the fish stock with dead fish littering the shore line all round the lake and I saw a dead pike in Cowes Corner which was around the length of my leg and weighed at 25 lbs.

The loss of water did, however, have one beneficial aspect as it enabled us to build a landing stage, effectively from dry, if muddy, land. Also, an extension pontoon based on oil drums and decking in order to moor boats rather than coming ashore. Under Tom Park's direction, a race hut was built on staging and known, inevitably, as "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

These structures all stood, with a deceptive air of safety, for a lengthy period of time as a monument to founder members and a reminder of the original function of the Reservoir.

Luckily, the summer was fairly wet and, with BWB's efforts to fill the Wendover Arm proving unsuccessful, our water levels slowly recovered and, although the idea of racing was abandoned for the season, many members took the opportunity to improve their sailing skills.

We enjoyed sailing the Graduate at weekends and I also got some Cadet sailing with Ron and Peter Holden as both the Aylesbury and Berkhamsted units were well represented.

Unfortunately, damage to some members' boats by local youths meant that it was unwise to leave the boats on the club site which made going for a sail a less than easy task and almost an act of faith.

For us, it meant cycling some 5 miles from our home in Southcourt, Aylesbury to The Firs and taking the boat by trolley down the main Wendover Road, along Halton Lane, rigging and floating down the channel in order to get onto the water for a sail. Given the potential for damage, at the end of the day we did it all again in reverse and got home somewhat tired!

This led us, and a number of other boats, to lie on swinging moorings close into the reeds at the eastern end of the water and then to paddle out in the punt in order to bring them to the club bank. It was a bit of mixed blessing because the boats, being lightweight,

had a tendency to capsize during a blow. It became my summer holiday task to cycle up to Halton, retrieve the hidden paddle, and go out in the punt to right them and, sometimes, untangle the moorings of half a dozen boats.

In retrospect, I'm not sure it was safe to do so on my own but it certainly improved my seamanship and I don't remember coming to grief.

In September, agreement was finally reached with the RAF for a block membership with two boats, F1839 and F1840, berthed and unlimited use by personnel. This mirrored the arrangements with the two local Sea Cadet Units with Aylesbury SCC having two Cadets, C624 "Hamilton" and C1616 "Amazon" being fully used by the local cadets under supervision.

Supervision became an issue with the RAF lads as they had a tendency to borrow items of equipment from other members' boats in order to keep their own boats sailing. The junior officers in charge were not sailors and didn't seem to appreciate the problem and it was not until Tom Todd, an experienced dinghy sailor, took over later that this annoying issue was settled.

With hopes of any racing activity thwarted by the lack of water, we settled for just sailing around and racing informally for the rest of the season whilst work continued on the infrastructure.

Meeting on 12th November, the Committee decided to create a sailing committee with Dave Goble as Sailing Secretary and the obvious intention of a full programme of racing for the following season.

It was agreed to hold a members' social in the coming January and a formal Dinner Dance in the March so, clearly, hopes for the future were still high but, this time, with more facilities available and, hopefully, more sailing water for our use.

A PROPER CLUB 1957-1959

Meeting early in January, the club reported 42 members with the dinghy park fence completed and the dinner at the Kings Head in Aylesbury booked for 16th March.

At the beginning of March, Mary Robinson took over as Secretary and reported 3 new members and 1 junior had joined the club. The bank balance was boosted to £60.18.2d by the Xmas Draw, which became a regular source of funds, and once, courtesy of Paddy's efforts, featured an innovative first prize of "a pint in every pub in Aylesbury"! The guess was that numbered nearly 100 but I cannot confirm it from experience!

By April, the Sailing Committee of the Officers, Eric Manchee, Herbert Nicolle, Dave Goble and Miss Williams had commenced the first formal racing programme at the Reservoir. In May, the Committee confirmed a 10/- fee for a key to the club compound, with no keys for juniors, and a further 6 new members and 3 new junior members, one of whom was my school friend, Mervyn Brion.

The growth in membership was typified at the time by the letter from Keith Bent of Tring Road, Aylesbury, who said he had got details from the library, would like more information on the club, and wanted to learn more about sailing having done a little dinghy sailing on the Devon coast.

The main purpose of the Committee meeting was to review the club classes and a proposal was made, and carried, to replace the Heron by the GP14 as a family boat, to concentrate on the three 12' classes for racing with the Cadet for Juniors and to delete the Merlin. This seemed to bring the classes more in line with the experience of the Demonstration Day and it was agreed these classes remain in force for 5 years and, in fact, they served the club well for the next 15 years.

The racing programme was based almost entirely on handicap points racing involving all the classes with some separate events for Juniors, Single-handed, and, from quite an early stage, Ladies. The series were split into Spring, Summer and Autumn events and the adult classes also had separate class championships for the Twelve-Foot Class and, later, the GP14.

There were specific handicap events for special days such as the Hot Cross Bun, the Whitsun Handicap, the KGFS pennant and RNLI pennant for raising funds for those charities. The Hot Cross Bun, still sailed for today, was hand-made by Don Packman and, together with the later Spring Trophy made by Al Humphreys, gives a unique flavour to Aylesbury trophies not often found elsewhere

This programme would be easily recognisable to mem-

bers today, except perhaps the inclusion of all classes on handicap, which suited some boats better than the others, and was keenly argued over by the growing membership.

In the Cadets, Geoff and Chris Packman with Mick Rose headed the fleet including Richard Robinson and Ian Duffill with all the various sea cadets from Aylesbury and Berkhamsted.

In the Fireflies, 'Kiwi' Cochrane from the RAF led the fleet from Tom Park, Arthur Scarisbrick and George and Dora Butler, for whom Ron Eden often crewed, and, later, Bruce Bosher and Tom Todd with his son, Paul.

The National Twelves were led by Tony Tompkins and Mike Gurr from Martin Sleat, Vic Trump, Ernie Adams and Miss Williams. This fleet was later increased when Don Packman, Syd Blum and Herbert Nicolle all bought or built new boats.

The Graduates were led by Dad, Norman Rogers and Don Packman with Syd Blum, George Fountain, Mike Ryles, Richard Robinson, Don Smart, Paddy Hutton and others making up the largest fleet.

The GP14's were the smallest group for some time with Herbert Nicolle and the Douglas family using the boats in that manner until the arrival of Robbie Allen-Wright brought real impetus to the competitive side. They may not have been impressed by the Club's description of 'a family boat equally suitable for picnicking or racing'!

For all the relief that a proper racing programme brought to the club, business still needed to be done. Agnes Power wrote to Dad in July to apologise for her absences at recent meetings and for 'not pulling her weight with the working parties'. She explained her work difficulties and ask him to 'overlook my apparent neglect and I shall give a hand as soon as I am able'.

A Committee meeting in September reported profits from a summer dance and St Ledger draw and listed 73 members with 32 boats berthed. This led into a half-yearly meeting in November where Dad was able to report good progress on site with completion of a launching ramp and a regular sailing programme. He said 'our activities have aroused public interest resulting in a good increase of members'.

Actually, the sailing and racing did appeal to the general public and, on a sunny day, the high bank provided a grandstand view for numbers of people, enlivened by occasional mishaps as members left their boats to improve their swimming or otherwise.

He reported good work by the entertainments committee with a laying-up supper. It was proposed to finish

the boathouse over the winter and extend the landing stage. Winter sailing would be optional! Mr Cooper was agreed as a Vice-President and Mike Ryles co-opted onto Committee.

On 2nd December, Dad attended a meeting of the Aylesbury Association for advanced planning of an Arts and Crafts Exhibition to be held in the Town Hall in October 1958. New clubs were allowed to exhibit free on the first occasion, which must have been an encouragement, and the list of participants shows some rather strange bedfellows:-

Floral Society and Allotments,
Choral Society and Amateur Dramatics,
Cage Birds and Rabbits,
Weavers and Artists,
Camera Club, Cyclists and
The National Council for Women!

On the basis that all publicity is good publicity, we applied for a stand.

1958 started with the Committee ruling the Enterprise out of order as an Aylesbury boat and that the sailing season would start on 23rd March.

In February, it was announced that permission had been obtained from BWB for a Sea Cadet pulling boat to be used for rescue and 'for conveyance of people with disabilities to the site'. This was necessary not only for Ron Haynes but, also, Peter Freshney who had had an artificial leg fitted following a serious car crash.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 17th March. The report of a successful year, the first with organised racing, and completion of much of the work was endorsed by the members. For the future, improvements to the site and facilities were planned together with the removal of reeds to increase the sailing area and a good racing programme.

Dad mentioned that some members had sailed at Woburn Park with some success. This was actually the inaugural day of that club in the grounds of the Woburn Abbey although it didn't last and was resurrected as Emberton Park later. We took a number of boats and I remember it as being flat calm on an enclosed water notable only for the debut of the Solo, designed by Jack Holt and proud of his creation.

Committee meetings continued with discussions over the rateable value of the clubhouse, a partitioned kitchen refreshment area and the charges for winter storage of boats when using the building for its' original intention. In fact, we were not charged and 20 plus boats hibernated comfortably through the winter.

The member numbers continued to rise and the bank balance followed to grow above £200 for the first time. In September, the Committee decided the correct place

for the AGM was at the end of the season with a half yearly meeting at the start of each new year. It was agreed to hold the AGM at the end of October giving 1958 the distinction of two such meetings.

Before that date, there was considerable effort in making the Aylesbury Exhibition a success with our stand being given pride of place on the stage. Martin Sleat's new National 12 "Foray" took pride of place and many members took a duty to man the stand for the public including Ron Eden representing the Sea Cadets.

Meeting on 27th October, the formal nature of the Club now showed with the need for Standing Orders. These stated that 'members would rise to address the Chair' and 'speeches were limited to 5 minutes and only once on each matter'!

In his final address as Commodore, Dad reported a successful seasons sailing and that members had 'showed the flag' at Open Meetings and the Cadet Week at Burnham-on-Crouch. He reported a further agreement with BWB for sole sailing rights, of 45 boats at a license cost of £120 over the next three years, and welcomed the RAF as part of the Club. He thanked all the Officers and committee members for their work and paid tribute to Vic Trump as Catering Officer and all the ladies who helped with the teas. He finished with a reminder that there was still more work to be done including the clearing and fencing of more land for the extra berths needed through the growth of the club.

The Club thanked him for his contribution in forming the club and presented him with an ornamental lighter in the form of a ships' wheel and a book by Robin Steavenson "When Dinghies Delight". This book was inscribed by Vic Trump with a message and listing all the club members and was much appreciated.

The Club then elected Don Packman as its' second Commodore with Ron Haynes as Vice Commodore and Dad remained involved as Rear Commodore with Mary Robinson and Syd Blum remaining as Secretary and Treasurer. The Committee members were Arthur Scarisbrick, George Fountain, George Butler and Herbert Nicolle and it was also agreed that the President, Dr. Lloyd-Hart, be invited to chair future AGM's.

The sailing committee of the Officers and Messrs. Blum, Butler, Park and Scarisbrick met on 9th December for a full discussion of the new sailing programme for 1959. Starting on 22nd March, they included a Regatta and Barbecue on 21st June and our first Open meeting for Cadets on 28th June. Abbey SC had asked for a team racing match in Graduates and it was agreed that the race duty officer would be by rota.

The year ended with a social evening for Juniors on 29th December but, through the mists of time, I can't

remember any of the details!

1959 might be seen as the year when the Club moved from its start up period into full operation and the details of discussion support this view.

The Committee, in February, were keen to state that 'racing flags must be capable of being lowered' whilst the Half-Yearly Club meeting in March was preoccupied with the need for a Club tie, Club burgees, an Official Handbook and a Rigging-Out Supper to complement the Annual Dinner.

The ties were organised by Ron Haynes from William Douglas of Godalming for Terylene motif to a special design at 17/- each with a note 'the workroom unfortunately damaged a small length of material so the delivery is 7 ties short of the 6 dozen ordered'! Sold at 18/6, funds were helped as most members ordered their tie.

The burgees came from Zephyr-Race, again showed the Club emblem, and were a most popular buy towards the Club funds.

I got involved to write the text for the Club Handbook which showed Don and Chris Packman sailing their Graduate G401 "Whim" on the front cover and other club photos inside with a map showing the long forgotten marks Red 1, Red 2 and Middle Deep.

The sailing was fully subscribed with up to 25 boats in summer points races and an increasing tendency for members to try their luck away from home.

Don Packman sailed with Mary Robinson in the Graduate Northern Championships at Tamworth SC and Don Smart tried the Graduate Nationals.

The Cadets went to Aldenham SC, the Thames clubs and a new Cadet Week at Whale Island, in Portsmouth Harbour. Geoff and Chris Packman were now both setting the junior standard with top places in the Burnham Cadet Championships.

I crewed for Syd Blum in his new National 12 at Pitsford Reservoir where a wet reach in a blow prompted Syd to the question 'is this what they mean by planning?' although I was too busy keeping us upright to give a sensible answer!

I went to Portsmouth with Ron and Peter for the Sea Cadet Nationals held in RNSA 14's. Sleeping overnight in hammocks on the battleship HMS Vanguard was new and, helped greatly by a local briefing on the tides, we managed to win overall. The next year it was Ron's turn to win and our efforts gave welcome publicity for both Sea Cadets and the Club.

It was all a bit different from Halton but good experi-

ence for the future and showed that the water was more than capable of producing competent sailors which it did at the highest level in the Eighties.

That we were becoming more competitive is shown by our first recorded protest in the 2 pm Points Series race on 7th June between George Butler and Syd Blum who protested each other for a relatively simple issue of windward boat keeping clear. For some reason, the protest was reheard by the full Sailing Committee 3 weeks after the event and they found that 'the leeward boat, in establishing a leeward overlap, had allowed ample room and opportunity for the windward boat to keep clear' and George, in F2005 "Doge", was disqualified for failing to do so.

The minutes of a Committee meeting held 24th September, taken by Dad in the absence of the Secretary, show the more formal approach, mirrored in the forthcoming AGM. The meeting opened with the Commodore in the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. It was reported that the clubs' liability policy had now been extended to cover food poisoning risks up to £20,000 at an additional premium of 8/2d. Also, as requests for 50 club ties had been received, the order had been placed with the manufacturer in the hope of having ties available for the Annual Dinner. The Committee agreed to pay the invoice as soon as it was received.

Paddy Hutton proposed, seconded by Ron Haynes, 'that a small Honorarium be paid to the Secretary and Treasurer whilst Herbert Nicolle moved an amendment 'that Honorary membership be extended during their term of office'. This fine idea was agreed but I never remember it being carried out in practice!

In correspondence, a letter was received from Vic Trump saying that, owing to personal circumstances, he would be unable to continue as Catering Officer. This was received with regret and tributes paid to the way in which the catering had been organised and a vote of thanks was passed.

Sadly, Vic, a strong swimmer, was shortly to drown in a seaside holiday accident when, whilst rescuing another person on a line, he was pulled under by helpers on the shore. He was never a top racer but always tried hard on the water and his legacy remains in the Vic Trump Trophy to encourage such sailors.

The Treasurer reported a balance of £215.19.9 with 41 Family members, 36 Full members, 7 Junior members and 2 Block members, the RAF and Sea Cadets.

Four amendments to the Club Rules had been received in due time and would be circulated to members and

placed on the AGM agenda.

Ron Haynes reported the arrangements for the Dinner were all under control and appealed for helpers to decorate the hall on the Friday evening. It was agreed that 2 Sea Cadets be invited to the dinner and also an invitation be extended to 2 Officers and their Ladies from the Prestwood Angling Club (as hostilities had long since died down).

The 1959 Annual Dinner Dance was a grand affair.

A printed invitation sent to members requested 'the pleasure of your company' at the Annual Dinner Dance to be held at the Kings Head on 7th November. The Assembly Room, an old coaching hall across the stable yard from the inn, would open at 7 pm and 'Carriages' were at 1 am!

Those attending received a printed menu card inside an ASC cover and although the meal was plain, at 17/6d per head for tickets, it was clearly good value.

The Kings Head invoice was for £42.16s, printing by the P.E. Press cost £5.11s and floral sprays from Fleur Des Lys were 17/6d whilst the live band was £6.10s. The raffle assisted the income for the event and, with 67 club members attending, the event was deemed a great success.

The evening concluded the entertainment for the season and Aylesbury Sailing Club moved into the new decade of the Sixties in good shape for the future.

Bucks Advertiser & Aylesbury News, Friday, March 25, 1955

Here's A Yachtsman Who

Dreams Of Red Sails

On Halton Reservoir

"RED sails in the sunset" may well be seen at Halton Reservoir, that favourite haunt of fishermen and, in the past, swimmers, that is if a visionary nurtured by a local man bears fruit.

Man with a plan is Mr. R. L. Lamdin, of 93, Churchill-avenue, Aylesbury. Mr. Lamdin is a keen yachtsman. But like most Aylesburians interested in that most fascinating sport he has to wait for his summer holidays and a trip to the Norfolk Broads to enjoy yachting.

One day, about six months ago, Mr. Lamdin was reading a Bletchley paper. He discovered that there they had a sailing club which had grown rapidly since its formation, with the local disused quarry pit as the venue for its sailing activities.

"So why not here?" he thought. "Why not the reservoir?"

Not Wiltstone

FIRST he tried those out Wiltstone way. But the answer from the Regional Office of the Inland Waterways Section of the Ministry of Transport was "No. This is a nature reserve."

Then Mr. Lamdin's thoughts turned towards Halton.

The reply he received here was more promising.

It amounted to the fact that if the Regional Office could be satisfied the fishing and access problems could be smoothed out they thought it would be possible.

The next step will be a visit to Aylesbury by an official of the Office who will go to the reservoir with Mr. Lamdin to discuss the matter.

We sincerely hope Mr. Lamdin is successful in his bid. Many a local person who has at some time or another done yachting longs to return to the sport. The reservoir could fill a great need.

If a club is formed, what would it cost to run your own vessel? Mr. Lamdin favours dinghies, and a good one of the "Heron" class costs about £90 new. But there is the second-hand market, and of course the enthusiast may build his own.

No. 6316

Registered at the G.P.O.

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1955

Aylesbury Starts A Sailing

First Boat To Be Launched On Halton Reservoir On June 25?

HOPES THAT R.A.F. MAY JOIN IN

SAILING craft may soon be part of the view at Halton Reservoir. Aylesbury and district now has its own sailing club. In all probability the first boat will be launched on June 25.

By Post-15 Press

Club

It will certainly be a great day for Mr. R. L. Lamdin, of 93, Churchill-avenue, Southcourt. For, as reported in the "Bucks Advertiser" of March 25, Mr. Lamdin was the originator of the idea, and it is mainly through his efforts that the club has been formed.

At a meeting at Mr. Lamdin's home on Wednesday it was decided to call the new club "Aylesbury and District Sailing Club."

MEETING WITH MINISTRY

Mr. Lamdin and two other club members met a representative of the Inland Waterways Division of the Ministry of Transport at the reservoir on Friday. They viewed the banks and discussed the possibilities of the reservoir for sailing.

And the result was Mr. Lamdin was able to report on Wednesday that unless any snags arise the club can use the water. All that now remains is for an agreement to be signed.

When that is done it is planned to launch a "Yachting World Cadet" belonging to Mr. S. E. Manchec, of 123, Wendover-road, Stoke Mandeville, on Saturday, June 25.

The boat will have to be man-handled over the high bank at the World's End-lane approach to the reservoir. This boat is rapidly becoming a well-known craft. Readers of the "Advertiser" may remember the story of the boat being built in a bedroom of Mr. Manchec's home, with the aid of Aylesbury Sea Cadets, and being lowered out through a bedroom window.

Since then it has won two races.

HARD WORK

Following the "Advertiser" story of Mr. Lamdin's efforts to get permission to use the reservoir, there has been a good response for the Club. There were 10 enthusiasts at Wednesday's meeting. But the hard work will start if the Club becomes established at Halton. Then scrub will have to be cleared, pontoons made, and shelter and an enclosure erected.

Mr. Lamdin thinks a sailing club here should be able to expand rapidly. Aylesbury Sea Cadets will take part in any activities, and he hopes R.A.F. Halton, will participate at a later stage.

ANGLING CLUB

Halton Reservoir is the home of the Prestwood and District Angling Club. They came there in the summer of 1949, when a ban was placed on swimmers. But swimming soon restarted. Since then their membership has expanded, and people come to Halton to fish from as far afield as London.

Now it looks as if, almost six years to the day later, they will be sharing the reservoir with the Sailing Club. And Mr. Lamdin, Acting Chairman of the sailors, says he hopes the two clubs will be able to co-operate and work in harmony.

FOOTNOTE.—Nearest sailing club to Aylesbury is Bletchley.

SAILING TO-MORROW? JUST ONE MORE "IF"

SAILING starts on Halton reservoir to-morrow, if... The "if" is the news, eagerly awaited by members of the new Aylesbury and District Sailing Club, that the agreement giving them sailing rights has been signed. On Wednesday acting Chairman Mr. R. L. Lamdin said there had been a hitch.

"The interests conflict," said Mr. A. "If we are going to get done out of our sport on Sunday I think it is a poor show."

But he did not blame the Sailing Club for trying to get the water.

Mr. B. felt even more strongly. Sailing would disturb the fish.

He condemned the yachtsmen, saying, "I always thought a sportsman did not cut the feet from under another sportsman." He thought the yachtsmen had displayed bad sportsmanship by going ahead without approaching the Angling Club.

And as a parting shot he said it was "a jolly shabby show to do 140 working men out of their sport."

But he expects news to-day.

The yachtsmen are just rarin' to go, and on Wednesday evening made plans for their first launching to-morrow morning.

On Sunday morning several of them discussed problems amicably with officials of the Prestwood Anglers' Club at the reservoir.

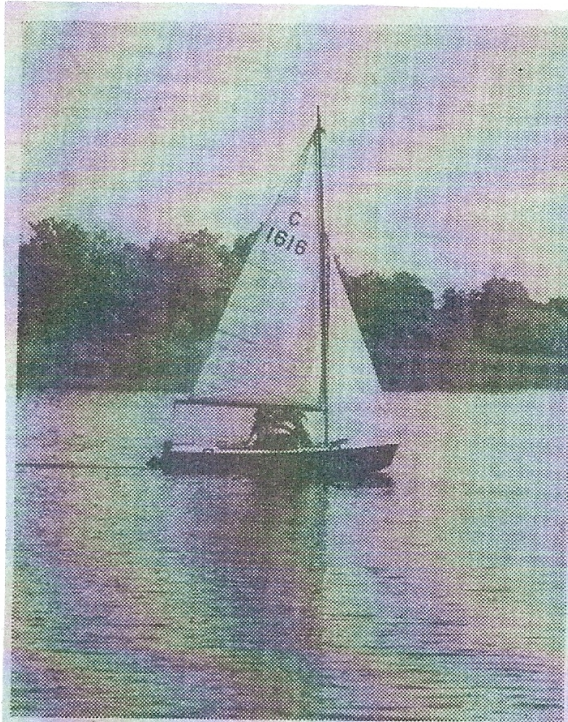
But during the week Mr. W. Craven, secretary of the Anglers, declined to comment on the club's behalf.

"It is rather controversial at this stage," he stated.

But some anglers hold strong unofficial views on the subject of sailing on the reservoir, which has been their home from home for the past six years.

On the first day of the fishing season, two anglers, who would not give their names, but said, "Call us Mr. A and Mr. B," condemned the move.

A RESCUE ACT LAUNCHES SAILING CLUB



Five pictures from Alec Weston which show that there is plenty of excitement in a yachtsman's life. The newly formed Sailing Club launched its first boat on Halton Reservoir on Saturday and all went well.—AO97. But second time out the wind played a trick and club chairman Lamdin, and committee man Nicholle were in the "drink."—AO102 right.



Eventually Mr. Nicholle swam to the shore and Mr. N. V. Rogers swam out to the "wreck," on which Mr. Lamdin was still perched, to fix a line.—AO95

SAILING STARTS WITH A SWIM AT HALTON RESERVOIR RESCUE ACT AS THE FIRST DINGHY CAPSIZES

AYLESBURY and District Sailing Club got well under way with their new venture of sailing on Halton Reservoir when they began their activities on Saturday. And not without excitement, for the first dinghy capsized a quarter-of-an-hour after launching.

The club can almost certainly lay claim to the swiftest first launching and capsizing of any sailing club in the country. First came the launching, after Mr. S. E. Manchec's Yachting World Cadet "Amazon" had been man-handled over the 18-foot-high bank by six club members.

Mr. Manchec and his stepson Michael Rose soon had the "Amazon" rigged, and with Michael as "cox" and fellow Aylesbury Sea Cadet Philip Wrench as crew, the trim red and white craft was quickly sailing serenely on the tranquil reservoir. The sailing club party gave a cheer, a few fishermen watched rather glumly, and a fine pair of swans ignored the scene, and went on preening themselves.

Back to the bank came the "Amazon," and Mr. R. L. Lamdin, acting chairman of the sailing club, and the man who has pioneered the sport in this district, stepped in, followed by a member of the acting executive committee, Mr. H. L. Nicolle, of Chearsley.

drained, and her sails laid out to dry. And after lunch she was launched again, together with a sister ship and a dinghy of 12ft. length.

And visitors to the reservoir were treated to the sight of three boats under full sail in the middle of the Vale of Aylesbury.

"Amazon's" sister ship "Kiwi," painted turquoise and white, was built at home by Mr. S. W. Allright, of Weston Turville. The third dinghy afloat belonged to Mr. F. W. Hewitt, of Dinton.

THROUGH THE REEDS

After the sailing had ceased for the day Mr. Hewitt's dinghy was rowed to the Perch Bridge road end of the reservoir, where members searched for a channel through which to launch their boats, so that they can leave the World's End bank free for anglers. They found it, and on Sunday morning, and Wednesday evening, a working party was busy clearing weeds.

It looks as if sailing is here to stay.

Mr. Lamdin got "Amazon" under way, and then, about 40 yards from the bank, came the disaster.

A gust of wind heeled over the craft, Mr. E. Nicolle counteracted by sitting on the thwart, but so delicately balanced are Cadets that the boat lurched the other way, against the wind, and turned turtle.

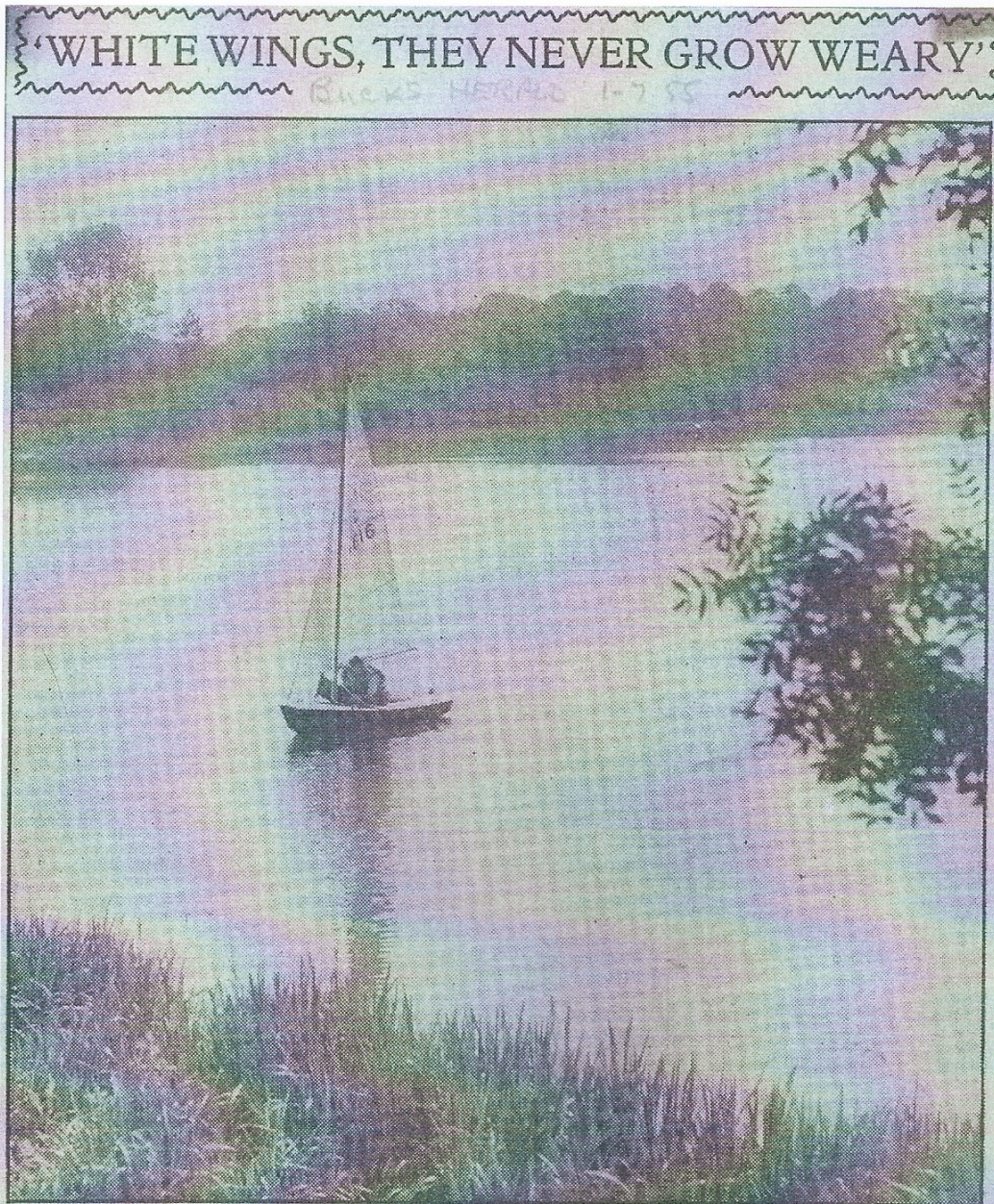
SWAM FOR THE SHORE

Within seconds Mr. Lamdin and Mr. Nicolle were hanging on to the centre-board, which was reaching skywards. Then Mr. Nicolle swam to shore, and Mr. N. V. Rogers donned a life-jacket and swam out to the "wreck" to hitch on a line.

And so "Amazon" was pulled in, with Mr. Lamdin still unconcernedly perched on the bottom of the hull, which was now temporarily the top.

And to prove that fishermen do not resent the yachtsmen too much one very sporting angler offered his line to assist in the pulling. Although not used, the sailing club appreciated his gesture, and Mr. Lamdin said afterwards he hoped the two clubs would be able to co-operate in that spirit all the time.

"Amazon" was beached, and



WHITE sails reflected in calm waters will enhance the pleasant scene at the Halton Reservoir at week-ends now that the newly-formed Aylesbury Sailing Club has procured the sailing rights of the water.

On Saturday morning the first boat was launched on the Reservoir by Club members. The boat, a 9ft. "Yachting World" Cadet, built in

a bedroom by Mr. E. Manchee, was man-handled over a steep bank to get it to the water's edge. Then it was rigged and with a cheer from the small crowd watching, pushed out with two young Club members as crew.

During the day two other boats were launched.

Now that they have made a start, Club members have a lot of work ahead of them. The big drawback

with having boats man-handled is that it means five or six club members have to wait until the boat is taken home.

To obviate this, club members intend to clear weeds and shrubs and build a boathouse.

First mishap of the day occurred when Mr. R. L. Landin, chairman of the Club, was ducked when the "Yachting World" Cadet he was sailing turned over.



14—Bucks Advertiser & Aylesbury News, September 23, 1953

It Was Full Sail Sunday Down At Halton Reservoir

THE ENTHUSIASTS

WHEN we introduced the subject of sailing way back in March the sceptics pursed their lips, shook their sage heads, and murmured "impossible." And when the first sails made their sparse debut still they forecast, "It will die a natural death." But the pessimists were wrong. Sailing is here to stay. Or it certainly looked that way when this column visited Halton Reservoir on Sunday.

How the fishermen stared, and how the visitors to the reservoir gaped when they saw boat after

Spectator's Column

boat being floated down the channel which the yachtsmen have made by their own labours through the reed-clogged mud at the Halton-lane end.

By mid-afternoon there were no fewer than 10 white-sailed craft scudding across the reservoir. And for the technically-minded they included a Yachting World Cadet, a Heron, a National, and a Merlin Rocket.

Queue To Sail

THE 10 craft attracted in turn about 100 people who are interested in sailing. They queued up on the shore to take a turn on the reservoir in the boats which caught their interest. And all to good purpose.

For the idea behind the day was to demonstrate the various classes so that the Aylesbury club members can make up their own minds, at a later meeting, as to what type of boats the club should officially adopt.

One thing which did cheer the section of the sailing club who favour larger craft was the fact that the 14 ft. Rocket navigated the water with ease. It had been feared that only smaller boats would sail the water.



This was the scene at Halton Reservoir on Sunday when Aylesbury and District Sailing Club staged a demonstration day of different types of sailing craft to enable members to decide which types the club should adopt. The event attracted 100 people and there were 10 boats on show. Photo by Ron Haynes.

A Boat-House?

THE demonstration was staged from the bank at the point where the yachtsmen have cleared about 100 square feet of brushwood and trees. This is the site for the future boat-house. Already the club are negotiating for the purchase of a suitable hut.

They have certainly made progress. They have even issued the first copy of their news-sheet. But as new Secretary Mr. N. V. Rogers of Burcott—he has taken over from former acting Secretary Mr. S. Blum—reminds members in the news-sheet "Much remains to be done."

Tree roots need to be dug up; thorns and twigs will have to be raked away; and bumps and hollows must be levelled. In addition the water frontage has to be cleared of reeds and deepened, and the bank levelled off. There is still work to do on the channel the other side.

Easter Hopes

AND of course one of the hardest tasks will be erecting the boathouse when a suitable building is obtained. Then it will have to be fenced off, leaving access to the water for the fishermen, who have that privilege from the fishing rights.

The members who have been doing all the hard work are not despondent at that which remains to be done. True they express the hope that others will join them and swell the numbers of the working parties. But by next Easter they hope all will be ready for the start of their first season proper.

Encouragement was given by a member of Aldenham Sailing Club who visited Sunday's demonstration. Commenting on the fact that there was plenty of hard work before them he added that at his own club members had shifted 300 tons of hard core and ashes—in wheelbarrows.

NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS - THE ANNUAL DINNER



A PICTURE of Aylesbury Sailing Club's founder, Mr. R. L. Lamdin, who is also its first commodore, was presented by Mr. R. Haynes, the vice-commodore, to the club at its annual dinner on Friday.

The hon. secretary, Mrs. Mary Robinson, received the picture on behalf of the members and it will be hung in the club-house at Halton Reservoir, where the club sails.

The dinner, held at the King's Head Hotel, Aylesbury, was a success. There was a company of 56, some of whom are pictured above, with Mr. Haynes presiding in the absence of Mr. Lamdin, who was unwell. Mr. S. M. Blum, the hon. treasurer, proposed the Loyal Toast.

Mr. D. L. Packman, the rear commodore, expressed the commodore's regret at being unable to attend, then Mr. Haynes proposed the toast to "The Visitors" and F/Lt. Roland, of the R.A.F. Halton Sailing Club, replied.

Mr. Haynes, recalling the highlights of the season, made special mention of the success of two junior members, Christopher and Geoffrey Packman, aged 15 and 11, respectively, in the Yachting World international cadet championships at Eurnham-on-Crouch. They sailed their craft in a series of nine races against 120 other boats, took one first place and finished ninth in the series. They were each awarded a medal for the race they won.

Referring to the R.A.F. Halton Sailing Club, which also uses Halton Reservoir, Mr. Haynes said it would be amalgamating with the Aylesbury club in a number of racing events this year. He thought they would get on well together.

On the walls of the dining hall were 40 photographs taken by Mr. Haynes showing the history of the club since its formation in June, 1955.

THE FIRST SAIL



UP AND OVER
THE HIGH BANK
THE HARD WAY TO
RIG



THE FIRST THREE BOATS



SAILING AT LAST

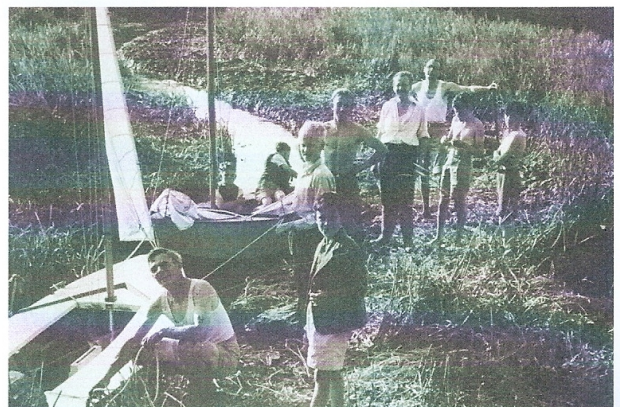
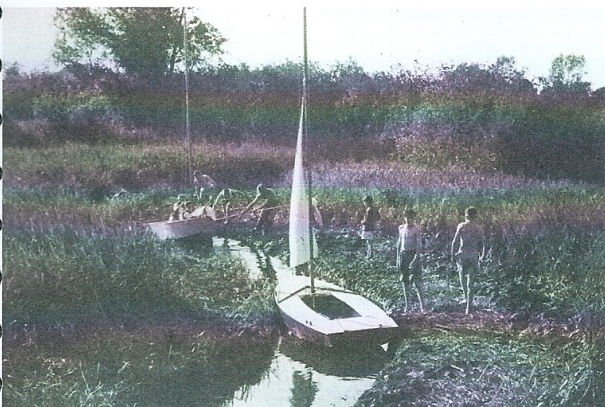
EARLY EXPLORATION



THE SITE OF BRAMBLE, SCRUB AND TREES

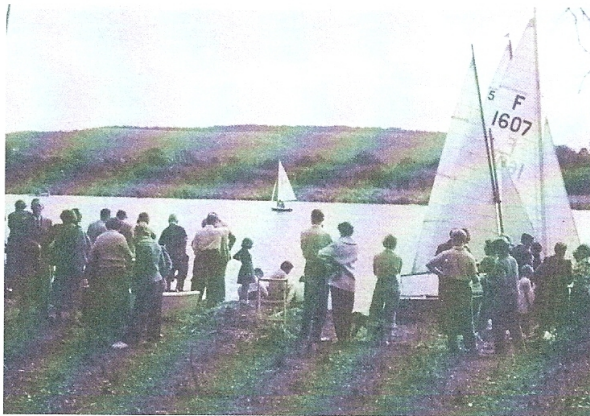


CUTTING AND BURNING



DOWN A MUDDY AND WINDING CHANNEL

THE DEMONSTRATION DAY



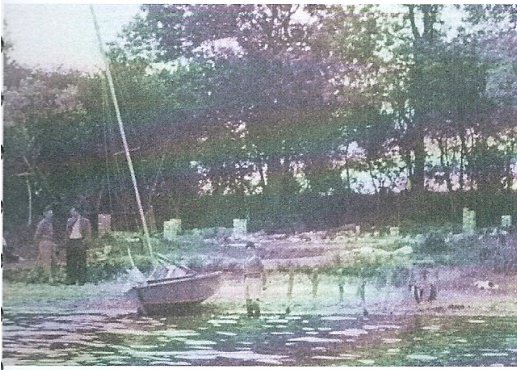
FROM THE BANK
AND
FROM THE WATER



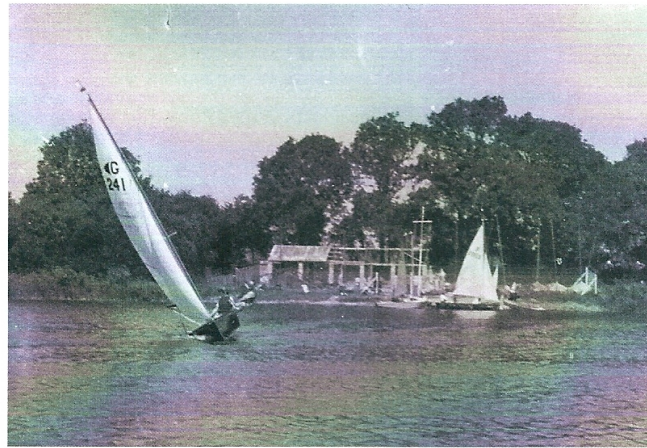
RELAXING ON THE WATER



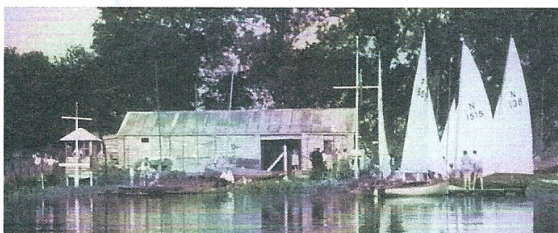
DEVELOPING THE CLUB SITE



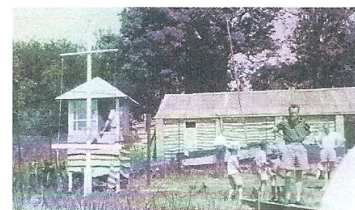
THE BRICKLAYERS AT WORK
ON THE CLUBHOUSE



REFRESHMENTS
FROM THE
KITCHEN



THE CLUB HOUSE
AND
UNCLE TOMS
CABIN



DEVELOPING THE CLUB



OUR STAND AT
THE TOWN HALL
EXHIBITION



RACING UNDER THE HIGH BANK



NATIONAL 12" FUN



THE FIRST CADET OPEN MEETING

THE MEMBER'S THANKS

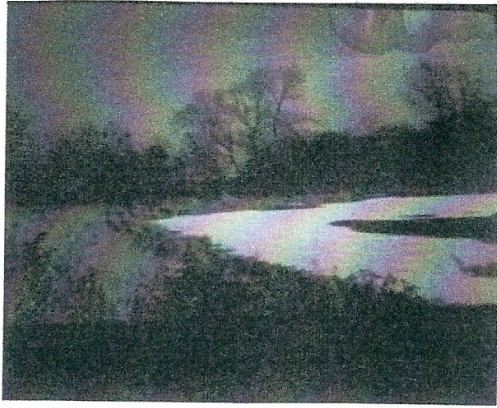
To Bob Lamdin —
Founder & first Commodore
of the Aylesbury Sailing
Club 1955-1958.

A small token of our appreciation &
thanks for many happy days at
Halton.

Mrs & Mrs. S. Allwright	Mr E. Manchee
Mr & Mrs S. Blum	Mrs. A. Nicolle
Mr S. M. Blum	Mr H. Nicolle
Mrs & Mrs G. Butler	Mr & Mrs. C. Nash
Miss P. Bussett	Mr T. Parke
Mr & Mrs J. Douglas	Mr & Mrs D. Puckman
Mrs W. Duffill	Mr & Mrs M. Ryles
Mr G. Fountain	Mrs M. Robinson
Mr P. Freshney	Mr A. Scaristrick
Mr & Mrs. I. Forbes	Miss L. Slater
Mr G. Hale	Mr M. Sleat
Mr E. Haynes	Mr & Mrs V. Trump
Mr J. Hewitt	Mr A. Tompkins
Mr P. Hutton	Miss E. Williams

INSCRIBED BY VIC TRUMP

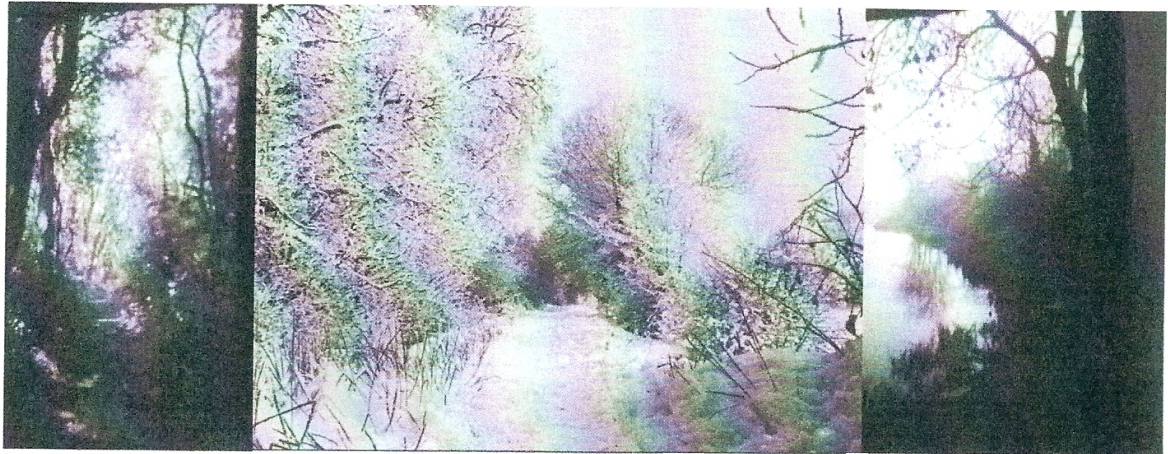
HALTON RESERVOIR — A PICTORIAL ESSAY



COWES CORNER IN WINTER



HIGH BANK IN SUMMER



THROUGH THE TREES

HIGH BANK CORNER IN MIST

FROM COWES CORNER



THE CLUB BANK IN AUTUMN

