

BISMA

CLASSIC INTERNATIONAL SIX-METRE NEWSLETTER No. 2

This newsletter is a follow on from Newsletter No. 1 and is intended to keep all owners of Classic Six-Metres in touch, both with the class happenings and with each other. It includes items which might be of interest to you all and snippets of historical information.

As you will all by now know, at the AGM held in Hamble in November, I retired as Chairman and as Class Captain after 12 years. Tony Canning has taken over as Chairman and Poppy Mellor continues as Secretary while Tim Russell has very kindly offered to extend his tenure as Hon. Treasurer. Please pay your class subscriptions as soon as possible (£45 for a classic boat in commission, or £15 for associate membership for those still rebuilding).

I am only covering those classic boats who's owners are members of the class association although I do include others where information is available. You will recall that I wrote to everyone this autumn asking for news for this newsletter but only one member (Sioma II) has replied or kept me updated.

K1 Maida I. A most original design by "Wee John" Stephen and built on the Clyde in 1932. Her mast was designed to be rigged with the pointed part to the front. Defended the Seawanakha Trophy. Now totally restored by David Spy at Helensburgh and for sale for £12,000.

B3 Edelweiss II Recently purchased by Ivan Heymans and Dirk Hesse and now being restored at Kapellen in Belgium. She has taken some time to identify as there were two Edelweiss's but at last she has been positively identified. The answer was there for all to see, in the Lloyds Register of 1919; the difference in the two boats being some 10 feet LOA. Then a chance discussion with John Leather, the yachting historian revealed that he had partly owned Edelweiss I at Burnham in the 1950s. During his ownership she leaked terribly badly and he believes she was subsequently broken up.

Edelweiss II was designed by Linton Hope and built by Frank Maynard in his yard at Chiswick (a new housing project is now underway on the site). She was the third 'Marconi' rigged 6M, initially so-called after the very tall masts required for suspending the aerials for Marconi radio systems. The rig was subsequently called Bermudan after the rig on the Bermudan working boats. She was re-rigged in a more modern style in the early 1920s, possibly 1922 when advances in gluing techniques made it possible to have a taller mast.

She then raced internationally until at least 1928. Ivan and Dirk plan to restore her, fit a cockpit cover or skylight, and sail her to the UK to race.

CAN8 Carin II. Built in Finland in 1937 she was taken to Canada in 1950 and has been owned by the Wittstock family for over 50 years. She was beautifully restored in the Elephant Boatyard by Chris Wittstock and his father and has subsequently been raced successfully by Chris and Cindy Wittstock who won the classics at the British Open Championships in 1996. Chris and Cindy are now based in Stamford, Connecticut but at the present time plan to fly over during 1997 to race her in the various regattas and championships.

K12 Nada. Built by Fife in 1930 and rigged by Uffa Fox with the first "modern" rig, she was still sailing in the Solent in the 1970's. A very successful boat she is now believed to be under restoration at English Harbour, Antigua under the auspices of Andrew Robinson, for a German owner.

GBR17 Sioma II. Built by Anker & Jensen in 1927, initially for Mr. Claud A. Allan on the Clyde, Sioma may be considered as one of the strands in the re-formation of the Six-Metre Class in 1984. She was converted for ocean racing in the early 1930's and raced under the

name of Sona (Sioma I was a pre-1914 Six Metre) as one of the RYA offshore class, based at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Subsequently she was located lying at Hamble Yacht Services and purchased for restoration by the Classic Boat Company at Poole who made a dreadful mess. Jonathan Fairchild has owned her for several years, now in partnership with Roger Baker, and she is in the midst of a massive rebuild and modernisation at Clare Lallow's yard at Cowes. Ian Howlett has designed a new rig and she is being substantially strengthened to take the resulting strains. She is due for launching on 10th May and will be taking part throughout the season.

GBR 19 Finvola. A beautiful Fife boat built in 1925, (also formerly named Hexe and Cariad). Jurgen Lunshof has had her extensively and beautifully restored by Classic Craft at Lowestoft. Now complete and fitted with a new wooden mast, she is expected early on the Solent to begin working up. There is also the possibility that she might attend the World Championships at St. Tropez May 3rd-9th.

GBR24 Jo. (Originally numbered K24 in 1921, then K19 in 1922 only to revert again when Finvola was built). Jo was built by Anker & Jensen in 1920 and came to the Clyde to compete in trials to represent the UK in the British/American Trophy. Unfortunately the rules specified that boats must be built in the country they represented and so she was excluded from selection but came third in the trials on the Clyde. She raced regularly until 1925 and subsequently was based in Scarborough and then Bridlington in the 1960s (together with Rozel and Gypaetos). Found in a sad way in a hedge at Pin Mill she was subsequently identified by Peter Wilson of Aldborough Boatyard who recovered her. She is now undergoing a major rebuild there for Mr. Jack Bielecki.

K28 Nancy. Designed by Sparkman and Stephens in 1932 she came to the UK as part of the US team for the British/American Trophy, in which she finished fourth. Purchased in the UK by Harold Edwards, she was taken to the Clyde and re-named Dragon. Although she returned to Cowes to race after the 1939-45 war she returned to the Gareloch where she was converted for cruising. For many years owned by Captain Mike Henry RN, she was recently purchased by R. Dean Wilson and Valerie Wilson-Trower who had her maintained by the Elephant Boatyard and raced her in 1995. They have had further work done on her, by Ben Bradley at the Traditional Boats Yard in Cowes, and it is expected that she will be launched again in May.

K32 Abu. Built by Anker & Jensen in 1931 when she won the One Ton Cup, she was brought to Burnham by A.E. Lees who raced her for three years before she was sold and used for RORC racing. Purchased a short while ago by James Weir who sailed her single handed in late autumn 2 years ago, from Brighton Marina where she had lain for several years round to Tollesbury, Essex where she is now lying.

K34 Monsoon. A very interesting boat designed by W. Maxwell Blake for his retirement and built by United Engineers, Singapore in 1925. She is believed to be the last Six-Metre designed for gaff rig. However it was not a success and it was replaced by Bermudan within a month of her starting racing in the Solent. There is a photograph and information about her in the January Classic Boat (page 45). She was purchased in 1994 by David Elliott who has been steadily restoring her at Coombes Boatyard, near Bosham. She currently still has a cabin for cruising.

K46 (Now SUI 46) Fiona (1935). W. Fife's last and possibly most beautiful Six-Metre she has been beautifully restored by E.W. (Ted) Baillie and has been racing on Lake Geneva.

K47 Catherine. A 1935 Camper and Nicholson hull which was very successful until Lalage was built. She has never been converted and is now owned by Gerard Sounier. After several years under restoration she has finally been completed by the Elephant Boatyard. It is expected that she will race in the Solent this year.

K48 Caprice. James McGruer's penultimate 6 metre design and one of the prettiest Six-Metres ever built, she was built by McGruers in 1946 for Sir Frank Spriggs (one of Sir Thomas Sopwith's team). She raced until the mid-1950s. Recently recovered from Northern Ireland by Richard Bond she is undergoing a total rebuild in Somerset and it is hoped that she may be out this year. Her number is somewhat of a mystery as there are two other K48's - Eyra and Nike. However Eyra was broken up after 6 races and Nike was dropped from a crane during lifting, when the electricity failed.

K61 Asti V. Formerly E31 she was designed by Morgan Giles and built in Bilbao in 1930. Renamed Saxon when she came to the UK she has recently been most beautifully restored as original but with a teak laid deck, by Peter Brookes and her owner Ross Perkins at Peter Brookes yard at Malden. She is currently gaff rigged.

K71 Kyria. A 1947 Camper & Nicholson boat built for Air Commodore Paddy Quinell she is being very carefully rebuilt on the beach at Caernarfon (opposite the castle) by Richard Jones. Richard was given her by his father who had inherited her from his grandfather who died 6 years ago. Kyria took part in the first British Open Championships in 1985.

K72 Thistle. A beautiful boat designed by David Boyd (later the designer of the America's Cup challenger Sceptre) in 1947, she was still in the British Team for the British/American Trophy in 1956. Beautifully restored by the Elephant Boatyard, she is immaculate. Probably the best heavy weather classic six-metre in the world she finished 8th out of 28 in the European Championships at Falmouth in 1988 beating 17 modern Six-Metres. She thus may be considered as the winner of the first Classic European Championships.

Although owned by Tom Richardson, more recently she has been most notably raced by his father Michael Richardson as Tom himself races the modern 6m 'Georgia'. This has meant that Thistle has raced in recent years with 3 generations of Richardsons on board.

Simon Richardson, who crews for his father on board Thistle, makes many of the best sails for the class.

GBR91 St. Amour II. Designed by Henri Coppenex and built at the Corsier Port, Chantier Naval, Geneva in 1945, (formerly Z36) she was brought to the UK by Richard Arden in 1987. Subsequently purchased by Mark Kinkeard she has been beautifully restored and fully modernised at the Elephant Boatyard, finishing 2nd to Asti in the Classic European Championships at Benodet in 1994 and 3rd in the Worlds at Sandhamn in 1995. She is currently for sale.

GBR 98 Silene II (Formerly Z30). Designed by Knud Reimers she was built in 1943 at the Corsier Port, Chantier Naval, Geneva for General Guison, Chief of Staff of the Swiss Army, who owned a series of 6m's called Silene and an 8m called Glana. In 1951 she had her counter shortened and was renamed St. Yves. She remained in Geneva, winning many races until she was purchased by Tim Street in 1992. She was collected by Rupert Street and driven direct to Benodet where he took part in the British Championships. She was subsequently renamed Silene II and restored at the Elephant Boatyard. She came 3rd in the Classic European Championships at Benodet in 1994 and is currently for sale.

In addition to the above boats Andrew McMeekin, who's grandfather and great uncle between them owned around 10 Six-Metres before and after the First World War, is actively seeking two of their former boats with a view to restoring one of them. They are Gypaetos, built 1908, last heard of in Bridlington in the early 60s and Gybo, last seen at Burnham in the mid to late 1970s. If anyone has any information on either of these could you please let me know.

Ian Cotcher is also searching for S3 Rozel, a 1928 Anker and Jensen, last seen at Bridlington, again in the 1960's (together with Gypaetos and Jo). Since Jo ended up at Pin Mill she could be anywhere between Burnham and Sunderland.

As you will see from the above notes there are now 9 Six-Metres restored to racing standard with several other major re-builds in hand. Classic Boat magazine are again to hold a rally at Beaulieu and it has been suggested that the Six-Metres might attend, in addition to the regular racing laid on by BISMA and the R.Sn.Y.C. Perhaps you could let me have your views.

Good sailing to everyone for 1997.

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