

A 2013 Shrimper Storey

A very personal account of a Shrimpering Year in VAGABOND (355)

I didn't get into the water until late May. This was because we had moved house twice since January. We had sold up in Cadgwith because we needed to downsize and after borrowing a house in Cadgwith for three months, we were renting, temporarily, in Cury. At the time of writing we have bought a cottage in Cury and will move there early next year, all being well.

A dull account of the results follows. These do not really reflect the form on the water. The stark facts are the SALAMANDA (133), John Hindmarsh, assisted by either Sheila or their grandchildren won nearly every race they entered, Derek Holman beat him once and Colin gave him some serious opposition. In the view of your scribe the next most consistent sailor was Colin Campbell in CAMILLA (767). There were then what I call the 'usual culprits', MAY BEE (343) Derek Holman; BOYERS SHRIMPER (245) Mark Osborn; and VAGABOND (355) Simon Sugrue, based in Falmouth; and this year and new regular racer based in Mylor, Michael Wilson in HENRIETTA (262) and PUFFIN (431) with Tim Whittaker at the helm.

Others who also turned out for some of the St Mawes races were Nigel Heslop in NEW MOON (909) and Richard Waters in POLMARO (801).

The Results

	Spring Points	Sunday Points	Thursday Points
1 st	SALAMANDA (133) John Hindmarsh	VAGABOND (355) Simon Sugrue	SALAMANDA (133) John Hindmarsh
2 nd	MAY BEE (343) Derek Holman	BOYERS SHRIMPER (245) Mark Osborn	BOYERS SHRIMPER (245) Mark Osborn
3 rd	BOYERS SHRIMPER (245) Mark Osborn	CAMILLA (767) Colin Campbell	MAY BEE (343) Derek Holman
4 th	HENRIETTA (262) Michael Wilson	SALAMANDA (133) John Hindmarsh	VAGABOND (355) Simon Sugrue
5 th	VAGABOND (355) Simon Sugrue	MAY BEE (343) Derek Holman	HENRIETTA (262) Michael Wilson
6 th	NEW MOON (909) Nigel Heslop	HENRIETTA (262) Michael Wilson	CAMILLA (767) Colin Campbell
7 th	CAMILLA (767) Colin Campbell	NEW MOON (909) Nigel Heslop	PUFFIN (431) Tim Whittaker
8 th			NEW MOON (909) Nigel Heslop
9 th			POLMARO (801) Richard Waters

I got VAGABOND (355) on the water just in time for the Frankie Peters Races on 26th May and came 2nd in the morning and 3rd in the afternoon on a day when we seemed to be adjusting everything after the launch the previous day.

A few unremarkable races for us led up to the New format Falmouth Classics and the start of the Village Regattas at Loe Beach. In VAGABOND (355) we came 2nd at Loe Beach and won a race in

Falmouth Classics by virtue of being the only entry on a blustery day. Falmouth Classics had cancelled this race but forgotten to tell anyone. So they let us start, and finish.

Falmouth Classics coincided with our Shrimper Fun Week. This was not a huge success this year, the weather really didn't assist in any way. The planned trip to Helford didn't happen because the weather made the trip impractical. This was a pity because Helford is where I am a member and on Tuesday evenings I sometimes operate their RIB as a Safety Boat for people using the Club Dinghies. I had the Club's approval to use the RIB to ferry Shrimpers ashore; none came and I don't blame them.

The Peter Keeling Memorial Race was held on 21st June. I remember it was a bit of a procession but any day racing is always worthwhile; nearly always!

1 st SALAMANDA (133)	John Hindmarsh
2 nd MAY BEE (343)	Derek Holman
3 rd VAGABOND (355)	Simon Sugrue
4 th DAWN OF POLRUAN (889)	Steve Przybylski

Derek had a little fun during this race. A quote from him here :-

I was on my own running downwind shortly before the final mark and heard a hissing noise which turned out to be my main sheet trailing in the water having detached itself. There followed a frantic minute before the mark during which I managed to retrieve the mainsheet, thread it through the block and tie a stop knot, release and stow the jib pole, and get the plate down and the peak up, all while trying to steer a straight course. Without a second to spare I rounded the mark and beat to the finish to claim second place.

Well done Derek!

Immediately after Fun Week, on June 22nd, the Point and Penpol Regatta was held; the weather was so severe that I decided that no-one would go so I stayed at home. It was only later that I learned that the event was held and that John Bengé (433) won it. My own fault for being reluctant to get wet.

This reminds me about the other Village Regattas.

Loe Beach.

1st Mark Osborn in BOYERS SHRIMPER (245); 2nd Simon Sugrue in VAGABOND (355); 3rd Michael Wilson HENRIETTA (262); 4th AUGUST MOON (491) Nigel Vaughan.

Point & Penpol. See above. 1st John Bengé GRACE OF ST JUST (433); 2nd Nigel Vaughan AUGUST MOON (491)

St Mawes Social Club. 1st and only! Mark Osborn BOYERS SHRIMPER (245).

Flushing. Only Mark and Colin went. All those flags? There was no wind and they didn't finish.

St Mawes Town. 1st John Hindmarsh SALAMANDA (133); 2nd Mark Osborn BOYERS SHRIMPER (245); 3rd Derek Holman MAY BEE (343); 4th John Bengé GRACE OF ST JUST (433); 5th Tim Whitaker (431); 6th Michael Wilson (HENRIETTA (262) and I retired.

Percuil The first four of us crossed the line in quick succession. 1st Philip Swatman ALCINA (976) Philip is a regular Falmouth Week competitor and stayed on to compete here. 2nd David Fawcett

TADPOLE (149) David always does well when he turns up to race. 3rd Tim Whitaker PUFFIN (431); 4th Simon Sugrue VAGABOND (355) and 5th Derek Holman MAY BEE (343).

I didn't go to Flushing Village Regatta, there was no wind and no prospect of any. Brave souls Colin Campbell and Mark Osborn went and they retired because ... there was no wind. The next day, Sunday was the exact opposite, I sailed across from Falmouth with one reef initially and then two. The racing boards were up at the St Mawes Club but most boats were not there and I was the only Shrimper. As I had got over there it seemed a pity not to go round the course so I did; my first 'win' of the 2013 season! There was only one other for me at St Mawes this year.

The St Mawes Town Regatta was a bit of a disaster; I managed not to see Mike Wilson on Starboard and the resulting collision carried my bobstay away. A note of caution here, Shrimpers are robust boats and very forgiving of the scrapes their owners get them into but exposing the bowsprit to anything beyond the normal will bring the rig down. I saw this happen about twenty five years ago up at St Just; a few Shrimpers were rounding this buoy close together and one sailed fairly gently into the stern of another and fractured their bowsprit; their rig came down around their ears.

I retired from the St Mawes Town Regatta and sailed gently into the middle of Carrick Roads, out of the race area. All the boats were going round me. There, I got the Main down and the jib off, complete with furling gear and used the jib halyard secured to the anchor fairlead to replace the forestay and keep the mast up. I had to motor back to Falmouth – something I very seldom do.

I went to David Carne and he made a replacement on the spot which was good of him. He had seen me sorting the boat while he was racing in VICTORY and was expecting me. (I am known to some of the Working Boat people because I crewed in WINNIE for three years) I dried the boat out the next day and put it all back together.

I took the boat over to Helford twice, just for a day out with my camera. It isn't all about racing.

The racing routine continued and John Hindmarsh went on winning nearly every time he came out.

It was a pity that the planned Short Race Day had to be cancelled because the weather was on the wrong side of acceptable – gusting to F6. The idea of this was to get a few more people to have a go at racing and a series of Short Races would have been good fun; but not in F6. We will try again in 2014.

I raced in Mylor in their C-Series. Here we share a start, and some questionable handicaps, with other Gaffers. The results, for the Shrimpers, here were

1 st	HENRIETTA (262)	Michael Wilson
2 nd	VAGABOND (355)	Simon Sugrue
3 rd	PELICAN (109)	Richard Lewis
4 th	DAWN OF POLRUAN (889)	Steve Przybylski
5 th	GRACE OF ST JUST (433)	John Bengé
6 th	KATY OF PADSTOW (1)	Russell Gilbert
7 th	DRAKE (86)	Neil Philpot
8 th	SILVERWIND (580)	Alan Charman

The Evening racing at Mylor stops before that in St Mawes because, being further North their evenings draw in earlier. Er, no. It is because they start later and run out of light. I remember one year when we just completed one round in the gloom so I sailed close to their Committee Boat to confirm that we would finish then only to be told that we were all going round again. That race finished in the starlight after we all, somehow, managed to pick out St Just and Messak against the domestic lights on the shore. The Committee Boat had a very powerful torch to identify the finishers.

I like racing up on the Mylor ground. There is less tide there and lovely open courses and a fair number of Shrimpers race there now too.

For us in VAGABOND, Falmouth Week was a series of 'nice days out' but not something to be celebrated from a racing point of view, I nearly fell into a double-figure place on a couple of days. The least said about racing in that series the better. The days were fun though and the PoFSA Organisation was spot-on this year.

The Percuil Regatta, the day after Falmouth Week was a little better, 4th for us, but it was a very close race. There are always a few surprises here as we all race through the moorings and into a confrontation with dinghies on Starboard and nowhere to go. Lesson here, always dip dinghies – going about for them at close quarters does not help at all.

Colin Campbell (767) started sailing more regularly later in the season and gave John Hindmarsh bit of competition which we mere mortals watched from our positions behind those two.

In early September I realised that VAGABOND's anti-fouling had ceased having any deterrent whatever so we came out for a scrub and immediately won a Sunday Race in St Mawes; perhaps, just perhaps, there was weed on the hull during Falmouth Week?

The VICTORY CUP Race out of St Mawes was an almost mystical race, held in a light but consistent breeze and some drifting fog banks. The sight of a line of Working boats, all visible but with their topsails lost in the fog is something that will remain with me for as long as I sail.

All-in-all an enjoyable season if not a very successful one for VAGABOND; I took advantage of a weather window and took her over to Gweek for the winter in early October. I had a little adventure on the way; I managed to help a man get back into his boat after he fell out. Perhaps a bit of a reminder to us all, if we fell out of our boat, could we get back in?

Until now I have always taken the boat home in the winter but after our move home is a bit small now so Gweek it is.