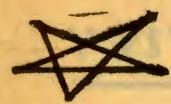


29/6/68



OUT AND ABOUT



With Fiona Chisholm

A dash of salt in the printing ink

77, Burg Street.

IT is a nice thought to have at the back of one's mind these days of seafaring fever that even our Editor, Victor Norton, is a cruising yachtsman. Long before he took over the chairmanship of the Voo-trekker committee the sea had caught him up. . . .

He is a keen yachtsman, sharing since 1963 a little ship with Mr. Justice Louis van Winsen. This craft has her own secure corner in the annals of sailing.

She is the saucy five-tonner whose name appears in many standard works on yachting—Speedwell of Hong Kong—by strange coincidence a sister ship of Bruce Dalling's own private yacht, Vertue Carina, in which he did his magnificent 8,000-mile solo voyage from Hong Kong to Durban.

Hard to believe not a soul knew about it, except his mother and father . . .

● Solo passage

Anyway, Speedwell started her distinguished career in the Coronation year by sailing from Singapore to Britain under her first owner.

Later, she was bought in England by John Goodwin from Hout Bay, who re-fitted her, sailed her all over the seas, including a solo passage of the north-Atlantic from Gibraltar to Barbados — which stood as a record till three years ago, when Bill Howells, the Australian who is now sailing "the catamaran Golden Cockerell, bettered his time.

One way or another this little yacht has done about 35,000 miles of trans-ocean cruising, apart from all the coastal work in South African waters in the past couple of years.

● Dutchmen dangles

But Victor Norton's sailing experiences go back also to less-sophisticated dinghy sailing days on Zeekoevlei in the 1950s, when he crewed for Judge Van Winsen—foredeck hand, centreboard hand, spinnaker hand—in sharpies and 16 footers. Even dangled way out on Dutchmen trapezes . . .

And he hasn't lost any of that agility, either. He's the only member of Speedwell's crew who can climb to the top of the mast, without the aid of a bosun's chair.

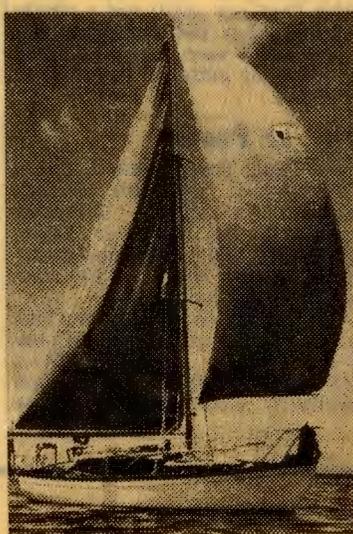
"Me . . ." said Judge Van Winsen. "I get about as far as the first cross-trees and think I'm doing pretty well."

The two have sailed in rough weather over the years, but the head at 77 Burg Street is completely immune to that plague of week-end mariners—*mal de mer*.

● Private legend

There's almost a private legend about his imperturbability in this bounciest of all sports. Even around the office his famous pipe is a formidable proposition, but no gale has been fierce enough to extinguish it in Speedwell's tight little saloon; no rough seas turbulent enough to diminish his hearty appetite—and thirst.

He's also a dab hand at any carpentry repair jobs around the yacht, which helps enorm-



Speedwell of Hong Kong.

ously in making Judge Van Winsen—the neat one—forgive him for dropping pipe ash about the place.

● Coastal work

I'm told the most demanding of all forms of navigation is coastal work—so many more things to bump into than there are out in the deep sea.

That's why people who sail with Mr. Norton have been tickled pink by the compendium of tips he has brought together under one cover, geared particularly to South African conditions.

Seems most of the standard works pontificate about far-away spots like Southampton Water, the Goodwin Sands and tide races between Ushant and the French coast.

But his vade-mecum is the only one where all the tit-bits have been collected that are specially applicable to south-easters, "blinders", Benguela currents and all the other idiosyncrasies of the Cape of Storms . . .

● Courteous Denmark

STILL smarting from a parking ticket this week, I felt even more put out to hear how kindly offenders in Denmark are treated—that is, if they are visitors.

Capetonian Anna Latham, a radiographer in London, has written to her parents of her experiences on holiday in Copenhagen. She committed a parking offence and returned to find a sticker with this message on her car.

"Copenhagen Police must draw your attention to the fact that you have infringed the parking regulations that apply in Denmark. As we assume you cannot be familiar with the Danish regulations we are satisfied on this occasion to ask you kindly to remember next time that in Copenhagen there are regulations which must be observed."

"May we wish you a good holiday.

Kindest regards,
Copenhagen Police."

Cape Town Traffic Department, what about following suit?

Such a friendly attitude is more likely to enrich the city's coffers in the long run than the odd R2 or two forcibly extracted from an irate visitor.

● Female efficiency

I ALWAYS get a feline feminine satisfaction when I hear that I'm not the only woman who does daft things occasionally. It's so encouraging to know this, particularly if (unlike me) these women are usually extremely organized.

The other day Judy Olivier, who has written a couple of Monday guest columns, set off, madly excited, for South West Africa, where she and husband Sigurd were to do a series of articles.

They're a pretty efficient feature-article team, with Sigurd taking the photos, while Judy knocks out the text—no matter how many children are bouncing around her.

● Homeward-bound

Reason they were so keyed up was the acquisition of a new (strictly second hand) combi-type car. Hurrah! No more bother with hotels. With the snappy curtains put up, they could stop and sleep wherever they wanted to.

They intended to leave at a respectable time of the morning, but were so worked up they couldn't sleep. So set off at 2 a.m. Anything to get going and as many miles behind them as possible.

However, they were about 40 miles on the other side of Moorreesburg when fatigue took over. They stopped, and Sigurd thoughtfully turned the car round so that it faced Cape Town. This way they would not be woken up too early by the sun.

Judy was the first to get up. "Ah," she thought, "I'll please Sigurd. Clock up about 50 miles by the time he wakes."

She didn't surprise Sigurd. She shocked him. When he awoke there they were right back at Moorreesburg. Judy hadn't realized she was going the wrong way . . .

● Tailpiece

A SERMON was in progress. The preacher was warming to his subject. He was speaking of the inevitable end that comes to sinners, and he described the scene graphically, comparing the sinner to a ship.

"The waves rush over her," he cried. "Her masts are split, her yards are gone, her rudder's broken, her helm's useless. There is no hope. Who can save her now?"

"Let go the anchor, you lubber!" shouted an excited sailor in the congregation.