

ROYAL ARTILLERY YACHT CLUB



The First Fifty Years

FOREWORD

In this Golden Jubilee Year of the Royal Artillery Yacht Club, we have striven to record the highlights of those fifty years, lest we forget the selfless endeavour of those who founded this distinguished Yacht Club from its early days on the East Coast; the great adventures in which many of its members have been involved; and the powerful organisation which has been created over the years for the benefit of all ranks wherever they may have been stationed around the world.

The archives from which this brief factual history has been compiled are preserved in the RA Mess at Larkhill, resulting from the foresight of Brigadier Maurice Hope, himself a founder member of the Club, and now managed by Major-General John Morris in whose safe-keeping we are singularly fortunate that they should be treasured. From them, Colonel Allan Harvey has edited the history of those first fifty years which, if written in full would have filled a far larger volume.

It is a story of enterprise and initiative by Gunner officers, both serving and retired – and more recently by soldiers as well. They have sailed in the long sea voyages around the world and across the Atlantic; or taken part in the famous Ocean Races and the America's Cup; or raced in dayboats on Blashford Lake and in Hong Kong and Manila. Several members have represented the Army, and in some cases the nation, in both offshore and dinghy racing.

Just as important is the fact that Gunner officers have been, and still are, the mainstay of many sailing organisations throughout the land – the Royal Yachting Association; the Sail Training Association; the London Sailing Project; and many other clubs too numerous to mention. And now in this year 1983, we congratulate Lieutenant General Sir Edward Burgess on his appointment as Commodore of the Army Sailing Association.

I am grateful to Colonel Allan Harvey for the many months which he has voluntarily devoted to compiling this record – a notable achievement which will be of great interest to the older members, and a worthy background for the young whom this club has done so much to foster.

C J CODNER

Admiral Royal Artillery Yacht Club



The First Fifty Years

INTRODUCTION

This history is written in three parts:—

'The Early Days — 1933 to World War 2' by Brigadier M W Hope DSO a founder member, the Club's first Rear Commodore and an Honorary Rear Commodore since 1974.

'Post-war Expansion — 1945 to 1969' by Brigadier C J Codner CBE MC now Admiral of the Club.

'Twelve Good Years — 1970 to 1982' by Colonel A J W Harvey, a past Commodore

together with a number of Annexes listing the Flag Officers, Honorary Secretaries and Honorary Treasurers, the Club yachts and its trophies.

The whole has been researched and edited by Colonel Harvey, who would like to thank many helpers. These include Brigadier Paddy Ryan and Colonel Peter Lowe who kindly acted as publishers; Lieutenant Colonel Peter Sweet the Club's Honorary Secretary; and the Editors of Gunner and the RA Journal who have provided a wealth of material from the past.

IN THE BEGINNING

Doctor Johnson in 1759 wrote:—

'No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail, with the chance of being drowned . . .

A man in a jail has more room, better food and commonly better company.'

What then inspired Major Ralph Blewitt and twenty six other officers to found the Royal Artillery Yacht Club fifty years ago? The author will not attempt to answer the question. Those who sail will know. Those who do not are unlikely to be convinced by even the most eloquent pen. Better to get afloat and see for themselves.

When the Club was formed in 1933 World War 2 was only six years away. In that time Gunner sailing made its mark on the Regiment. The RA Journal for the period makes good reading. 'The Regimental Yacht in 1938' by Lieutenant Colonel John Barry, tells of the forty seven Gunners who sailed in *Rose* at various times that year logging 4000 miles between twenty three different ports from Germany to Ireland. Captain Dick Scholfield's account of his attempt in 1936 to sail *Gullmarn* home from Singapore is fascinating. It is not surprising that thirty years later he became Admiral of the Club and then Race Director of the Sail Training Association. One is struck by his matter-of-fact approach to what at times must have been a hair-raising voyage. *Gullmarn* made the 4500 miles to Port Sudan in fifty four days; a bad leak had developed and her hull was found to be rotten, so there the attempt ended.

The progress of the Club over the next fifty years is now related.

The Early Days - 1933 to World War II

THE FORMATION OF THE CLUB IN 1933

The Royal Engineers, having their Depot and main school at a flourishing yachting centre on the Medway, had founded the Royal Engineers Yacht Club in 1846. The main establishments of the Royal Artillery had no such advantages, though many of the stations of the Regiment were on the water's edge throughout the world and station or mess boats had been maintained there. But it was not until 1933 that events were set in train which led to the formation of the Royal Artillery Yacht Club in June of that year.

The January 1933 issue of the RA Journal contained an article entitled 'Yacht Sailing in the Regiment' by Major Rockingham Gill. In it the author gave reasons for the formation of a Regimental yacht club, and suggested the lines on which it might operate. It is interesting now to see how accurately he predicted the ways in which the club has in fact operated ever since.

Shortly afterwards Major Gill was posted to Ceylon, and the matter might have lapsed had not Major Ralph Blewitt taken over the initiative by putting a notice in the next number of the RA Journal inviting officers interested in sailing to communicate with him and to express their views on how sailing might be encouraged Regimentally.

As a result of the large number of replies and the widespread interest that was evident, a meeting was held at the Royal Thames Yacht club on the 16th June 1933 to consider the formation of a Regimental club. It was attended by twenty seven officers who also represented the views of over fifty others who could not be at the meeting.

The RA Yacht Club was duly formed at this meeting, Colonel Arthur Main being appointed Commodore, and Ralph Blewitt Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. These two appointments provided the greatest possible impetus for the new club and ensured a rapid expansion in size, effectiveness, and prestige. Colonel Main, himself a yachtsman of long standing and skill, was known throughout the Regiment as a most lovable and sterling character. Furthermore he was renowned and recognised as one of its finest horsemen. As riding and horsemanship were then still the linchpins of regimental sporting interest, the attitude of the whole Regiment was 'if Arthur Main is the Commodore, it must be a good show'.

Ralph Blewitt, as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, took on responsibilities which he discharged for no less than nineteen years, working in his own study helped only by his wife, who was in fact for periods Secretary of the RAYC. It was in recognition of this that she was later elected to be the only lady full member of the RAYC. The Regiment, and especially the members of the RA Yacht club, should never forget the selfless and tireless service that Ralph gave so willingly to the club, and which carried it from the beginning to its present flourishing state.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLUB 1933-1939

The rapid growth of the club from its small beginnings can best be seen from the following extracts from the Year Books of 1934 and 1939.

	Number of members serving and retired	Number of Club yachts	Members' Yachts Number	Tonnage
1934	165	4	24	203
1939	455	13	66	540

When the club was first formed the Committee decided that the first priority should be the provision of small sailing and racing boats at any places in the world where members of the RAYC could form a Group, and use and maintain boats provided from the Club's funds. Not until all such requirements had been met could any funds be set aside for the acquisition of a club ocean racing yacht.

Groups were accordingly formed and boats provided, and these were added to, in the following way:

Year	Group	Boats provided
1934	Gibraltar Hamble for Salisbury Plain Colchester Southampton Water for Aldershot	International Star class 19 ft sloop Solent Seagull 15 ft sloop 20 ft Royal Burnham One Design R Southern Y C One Design 14 ft dinghy
1935	Portsmouth Christchurch Malta Manora (Karachi)	7 ton Aux Yawl 'Betsy' Centreboard sloop National Jolly boat Karachi Tom Tit
1936	Portsmouth Woolwich Bombay Aden	Victory class 17 ft sloop Essex One Design Bombay Sea Bird 20 ft sloop Bombay Sea Bird 20 ft sloop
1937	Colchester Spike Island Bere Island	West Mersea Sprite Sloop Sloop
1938	Portsmouth Shorncliffe	A second Victory class 17 ft Snipe

In 1936 the Club was granted a warrant by the Admiralty to fly a blue ensign, but the provision of all the small boats shown above precluded, for the moment, any prospect of financing the purchase of a Club flagship and ocean racer.

So, in the summer of 1936 Lieutenant Colonel the Hon Dick Preston most generously lent to the Club for a month his Falmouth Quay Punt *Cygnét* (which had been converted to Bermuda rig). During that period two two-week cruises were arranged, the first to include the Cowes-Dinard race, and the second the Plymouth-Benodet race. These races were sailed in two divisions, *Cygnét* being in that for smaller boats. With beginner's luck *Cygnét* was first in her class and first overall in both races, having been the only small boat to finish, in stormy conditions, the Cowes-Dinard race.

This performance had an immediate and striking sequel. A Colonel King (retired and not a Gunner) had for years been ocean racing his 32 ton, 1899 built gaff yawl *Rose* which he crewed with young men, in many cases complete novices, using her as a training ship to encourage the young to go to sea. In the summer of 1936 he was building a crack new 35 foot ocean racer and was preparing to sell *Rose* to the highest bidder. So delighted was he with the success of the recently formed Gunner Club in its first two forays into the realm of ocean racing, that he presented *Rose* to the Club thus providing it with an ocean racing flagship years before it could have afforded one from its own funds.

Rose was sailed to Woolwich from the Solent in the autumn of 1936 by an RAYC crew and during the winter her accommodation was in parts gutted and rebuilt Regimentally under the guidance of Lieutenant Colonel John Barry commanding one of the Depot brigades at the time, with a view to her being more suitable for an RAYC crew. Although, when she started racing with RAYC in 1937 she was thirty eight years old, she was still competitive, by the standards of the time, especially in Class B, (Class A being for modern yachts purpose-built for ocean racing).

She was raced actively, and often successfully, up to the War in a full programme of ocean races including the Fastnet Races of 1937 and 1938, in the latter of which she was first in Class B to round the Rock, first in this Class to finish and first in her Class on corrected time. Her last appearance was the Plymouth to La Rochelle race in August 1939 from which she returned to Plymouth to find mobilization in full swing, and, with the outbreak of the Second World War, sailing in the UK ceased.



Post-War Expansion 1945-1969

RE-ORGANISATION

During the war, all civilian sailing ceased in the UK but RAYC Groups were kept going at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Bombay and Karachi. In 1941 *Rose* was hit by an incendiary bomb on her moorings at Haslar Creek and badly damaged, but her hull remained intact. In 1943 she was sold for £475 and in April 1944 *Larry* (18-ton gaff-rigged cutter) was bought by the Club in place of her.

In August 1945 a special general meeting was held to reorganise the Club fleet and institute new groups both in the UK and worldwide. Many members had continued to pay their subscriptions throughout the War, so that by the end of 1945 the Club owned *Larry*, *Betsy* and 12 dinghies, with reserve funds of well over £1000, 369 full members and 61 War Emergency Officers (who ceased to be members on demobilisation).

By August 1946 membership had risen to 457 and the Club owned 21 yachts worldwide. With the coming independence of India and Pakistan the groups at Bombay and Karachi were closed down. *Larry* had served her purpose well and came first in the Aralus Plate for 'A' Division in the RORC Points Championship for that season. It was clear, however, that both *Larry* and *Betsy* were ageing and were no longer economical to maintain. In early 1947 therefore the decision was taken to sell both yachts and replace them with ex-Kriegsmarine 'Windfall' 50 square metre yachts from the Baltic:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Brunhilde</i> — | renamed <i>Brynhild</i> , and later <i>Brynmere</i> as the Club yacht at Cracknore Hard, Southampton. |
| <i>Seefalke</i> — | renamed <i>Sea Eagle</i> , and later <i>Sea Falcon</i> , for the Larkhill Group |

The Annual General Meeting in February 1947 was a momentous occasion. Arthur Main was elected Admiral; the Club subscription was raised to two guineas; and the decision was taken 'to build a 35-foot ocean-racing yacht to be ready by the spring of 1948' — the eventual *St Barbara* — financed from Club funds with help of £3000 from the RA Officers' Sports Fund, and some generous donations from members.

Later that year, on 31st August 1947, the RAYC achieved the signal success of winning the Royal Yacht Squadron Gold Cup at Seaview, under the auspices of the Association of Service Yacht Clubs (ASYC), against all-comers from the three Services. Tony Somers and Jonah Whitcombe formed the crew, and both represented the Army the next day in the Inter-Service Team Racing for the Coningham Cup, which the Army won.

ST BARBARA LAUNCHED

In 1948, with the driving force of John Barry behind her building at Camper and Nicholsons, *St Barbara* (22-ton Bermudan Sloop) was launched on 12th April 1948 by Lady Alanbrooke, and on 14th May she sailed her first race from Harwich to the Hook, skippered by Dick Scholfield. Now that the Club had such a fine new flag-ship stationed at Cowes in the Solent, *Brynmere* was moved up to the Clyde, and *Sea Falcon* was refurbished.

1949

In 1949 the venue for the Commodore's Trophy moved to Yarmouth from Seaview. The Clutterbuck Trophy, first inaugurated in 1934 for Team Racing between RAYC and REYC, was raced for again for the first time since the War. The success in the 1947 Gold Cup was repeated again this year, with the RAYC boat sailed by Farrant, Whitcombe and McCulloch.

Of the larger yachts, *St Barbara* lived up to her promise by winning the Fastnet Inter-Regimental Cup and Class II in the Plymouth-La Rochelle Race. *Rosanna* (another 50 square metre) was taken over, fitted out and stationed at Tripoli in the Mediterranean, and then moved to Malta in the following year.

1950

The sailing successes continued. *St Barbara* won the Dover-Kristiansand Race, with Major Bill Fletcher as skipper. Ralph Farrant and Dick Scholfield represented the Army which won the ASYC Coningham Cup. It was in this year that the famous photograph was taken of *St Barbara* under full sail passing *HMS Vanguard* as guardship at Cowes Week, and this photograph was sent to HRH Princess Elizabeth to mark the birth of Princess Anne. It was even reproduced on the cover of a box of chocolates!

Whilst taking part in the Santander Race in 1950, *St Barbara*, skippered by Maurice Hope, heard on the radio that HRH The Princess Elizabeth had given birth to Princess Anne. A suitable message was placed in a bottle and dropped overboard. It was delivered with surprising speed and acknowledged on 10th October with a charming message of appreciation from HRH.

1951

St Barbara again won the Fastnet Inter-Regimental Cup to continue her successful reputation. It was in this year that Admiralty Warrants were authorised for defaced Blue Ensigns for *Sea Falcon*, *Brynmere*, *Rosanna* and *Larrikin*.

1952 became a crucial year on several counts. Although membership was growing, the problems of finance began to make themselves felt in maintaining so many large yachts in the Club. Ocean racing was steadily becoming more competitive and expensive. The 50 square metre yachts, designed for the Baltic, were unsuitable for the rougher seas of the Channel and Scottish waters. It was decided that *Brynmere* should be sent to the budding BAOR Group at Kiel and *Larrikin* was not to be recommissioned. In May 1952 *Brynmere* was handed over in Rosyth and sailed to Kiel, where she was completely refitted.

This was the Olympic year at Helsinki, in which *Sabre*, owned and sailed by Tony Somers represented the Dragon Class for Great Britain.

On 7th December 1952 a model of *St Barbara*, which had been exhibited at the Festival of Britain Exhibition, was presented to the RAYC by Camper and Nicholson. Twenty-seven officers of 62nd HAA Regiment in Lincoln subscribed to have an iridium plated model of her made. On the disbandment of the Regiment a few years later this model was dined into the Larkhill Mess where it has been displayed ever since.

1953/54

By now the BAOR Group was rapidly becoming a thriving and important Group. The first passage race from Kiel to Sonderborg was held, with *Brynmere* as

Committee Boat, *Sea Falcon* was sent to Kiel later in 1954 and added to the RAYC fleet there, replaced by *Sea Falconet* (9-ton Bermudan sloop) for Larkhill. The first RA Dinghy Regatta in BAOR was inaugurated at Dummer See.

Meanwhile the Club had increased its membership to 824. There were nineteen groups worldwide, and the Club owned thirty five yachts and sailing dinghies.

St Barbara had a very good racing season in 1954 and won the Britannia Cup at Cowes Week, with Major Peter Moore as skipper.

1955/56

Major repairs to *St Barbara* became increasingly necessary, and were carried out by Camper and Nicholsons. It was a disappointing year for her. It also became evident that *Rosanna* was no longer required in the Mediterranean, and she was eventually sold there.

As the Army withdrew from its commitments worldwide, so the number of RAYC Groups diminished to fourteen, although membership stayed steady at 860. The BAOR Group continued to grow in numbers and significance and in 1956 crewed three yachts for the RORC race from Kiel to Marstrand in Sweden (*Brynmere*, *Sea Falcon* and the British Kiel Yacht Club 100 square metre *Kranich*).

1957/58

With so many Gunner regiments stationed in BAOR, in 1957 the Group was renamed RAYC (Germany), and a third Rear Commodore established to be resident in Germany to manage RAYC sailing in the Baltic and the dinghy sailing at Dummer See and Mohnie See.

Membership of the Club increased to 905 with steady support from groups worldwide, particularly in Singapore where the first Triangular Regatta (RA, RE, R Signals) in the Far East was held in 1958. It was won by the RAYC. The groups at Gibraltar and the Isle of Wight were closed, leaving eleven in being.

St Barbara was beginning to feel her age and her sale was mooted. Notwithstanding, in 1958 she won Class I in the North Sea Race from Harwich to the Hook with Brigadier John Morris as Skipper and Lieutenant Colonel Philip Tower as mate. In that year *Toki* (5-ton Bermudan sloop) was purchased for the East Coast and sailed there for two years.

Sadly on 28th December 1958 Ralph Blewitt died. He was one of the founder members of the RAYC in 1933, had given 25 years of his life to the Club, and in many respects may be considered its founder.

1959/61

These were difficult years, especially for the ocean racing section of the Club. This sport had continued to grow more and more competitive and Regular soldiers were finding it difficult to get time off, as sailing had not yet been recognised as an official sport. *St Barbara* had clearly become dated and failed to attract our experts. However, as usual, a few 'steadies' saw us through a very tricky period when it was not unusual for the skipper to be ringing round the night before a race to get someone besides himself who knew how to steer! A few stalwarts like Major General 'Squirrel' Lewis and Billy Auld helped to see things through. A great deal was done, however, to improve our administration in which Colonel Derek Birkett was a tower of strength, and we experimented



with various venues for our Regattas finally settling for Whale Island, Seaview and Yarmouth as permanent locations. Meanwhile sailing in the Far East thrived. Two 'L' class boats were bought in Hong Kong for the three Gunner regiments there; and the Royal Singapore Yacht Club entry in the Dragon Class won the series at Manila, helmed and crewed by Colonel Tom Hunt and Major Ted Dyson.

RAYC (Germany) decided to give up *Sea Falcon* at Kiel because of her age; and in the UK *Toki* and *Sea Falconet* were both sold to be replaced in due course by *Barbette*, (7-ton Bermudan sloop of the Pioneer class). The number of groups dropped to nine, but membership gradually rose to top the 900 mark. Arthur Main resigned as Admiral after fourteen years in the rank and was replaced by Brigadier Gerald Mears.

One major success enlivened the scene. Brigadier Sam Waller, with Brigadier Alan Mills and Captain Chris Beeton as crew, won the ASYC Gold Cup at Seaview in 1961 – a magnificent achievement.

1962

On 31st March *Barbette* was launched by Mrs Mears for the Larkhill Group, which also began the annual series of Navigational Weekends in that year. The Committee decided that *St Barbara* should be sold and set up a working party to consider a replacement yacht. Meanwhile *St Barbara* sailed out to the British Kiel Yacht Club and took part in the RAYC three day passage race as committee boat.

The RAYC Team with Sam Waller, John Codner, Alan Mills and Chris Beeton won the Clutterbuck Trophy at Seaview against a very strong Sapper Team. Waller and Codner had a near miss for the Gold Cup and went on with Mills to provide two of the boats in the Army Team which won the Coningham Cup.

In Dar-es-Salaam, Major James Barden built his own Yachting Monthly 24 ft Eventide 'on the space beside the squash court'. With a makeshift crew he sailed to Aden and then on to Malta where the boat was shipped to UK.

1963/64

The sale of *St Barbara* proved difficult to achieve and her success in winning the RNVR Volunteer Cup from Southsea to Cherbourg in 1963 gave her a new lease of life. In 1964, she went on to win the RORC 'A' Division Points Trophy for Class I – the Emile Verger Plate.

With the reduction of forces in the Far East, the group in Hong Kong closed down, but RAYC (Germany) went from strength to strength. The passage races in the Baltic were well attended; navigation courses were held every year, and in 1964, both 50th Missile Regiment, and a combined crew from 27th and 47th Missile Regiments, cruised in the Baltic.

At Seaview the Glover Cup was inaugurated in 1963 for Team Racing between the RAYC, REYC and R Signals YC. In 1964 Sam Waller and John Codner for the second year helmed two of the boats in the Army Team which, with the REYC Jardine twins, soundly thrashed the other two Services in the Coningham Cup.

This was followed by other proud achievements. The Commodore, Ralph Farrant, took part in the 1964 British Challenge for the America's Cup as navigator and 2nd helmsman in the 12 metre yacht *Kurrewa*. Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy McLean, then at the Royal Military College of Science, joined the second

challenger *Sovereign* as adviser on her rigging. Major James Myatt borrowed Lord Boyd's yacht *Tawau* and skippered it in the STA Tall Ships Race from Plymouth to Lisbon, thence across the Atlantic to New York, and back to Plymouth.

It was in this year that membership reached the 1000 mark for the first time. By now, soldiers had been sailing in RAYC boats for some years, so that a proposal was mooted for some form of sailing association in which soldiers could be officially recognised.

1965

On 19th May 1965 a major decision was taken to form the Royal Artillery Sailing Association (RASA) 'to encourage sailing and seamanship and to organise racing for all ranks of the RA'. The RASA Committee was found from the Flag Officers and members of the parent RAYC, together with soldier representation, but in all other aspects the RASA was completely autonomous, based at Larkhill.

As a first step three Enterprise dinghies were purchased for the fledgling RASA and sailed on Blashford Lake near Ringwood.

The controversy over the sale of *St Barbara* continued, and equally over her replacement. She had served the RAYC magnificently since her purchase in 1948, but her maintenance costs were no longer manageable. In 1965, she again won the Emile Verger Plate for 'A' Division Class 1. However, in July the decision was made to sell her and purchase *Rebel of Corfe*, a Van der Stadt 41 ft Rebel class sloop, for the 1966 season. An appeal was launched throughout the Regiment to raise part of the purchase money needed for the new yacht, and arrangements were started for an RAYC Ball to be held at Aldershot the following year for the same purpose.

At Seaview, Sam Waller and John Codner were again chosen as two of the helmsmen to represent the Army Team in the Coningham Cup, in which the Army successfully defeated the other two Services.

1966

St Barbara was sold for £2700 and renamed *Maresca* by her new owner, who sixteen years later is still sailing her. *Rebel of Corfe* was renamed *St Barbara II* at a ceremony at the Royal Southern Yacht Club on 12th March 1966.

St Barbara II entered many of the RORC races in 1966 with some successes in 'A' Division, and showed the flag in the Baltic by entering the Flensburg-Copenhagen Race to join the Tall Ships gathered there for the Centenary celebrations of the Royal Danish Yacht Club. She returned from the Baltic after the Skaw Race to be permanently berthed at Marchwood.

At Seaview, John Codner was again selected as helmsman for the Army Team, which was narrowly defeated by the RAF, in the Coningham Cup.

1967/68

During these two years, the Club concentrated on the renewal of the fleet. In Germany, the RASA purchased a Danboat (a Danish 6-ton Bermudan sloop) in conformity with the British Kiel Yacht Club's policy of re-equipping their fleet with these yachts. The Danboat was commissioned at Kiel in early 1967 and named *Borgard*.

Barbette was sold in 1968 and replaced by *Xelahu* (Nicholson 32 Bermudan sloop) which proved very successful. *Barbican* was sold and replaced by *Barbican II*.

Brynmere, now 32 years old, was becoming uneconomical to maintain and plans were laid for her sale.

St Barbara II visited the Baltic again in 1967 and took part in the premier German yachting occasion of Kiel Week. Comfortable cruiser as she was, she was not a successful racing yacht so that in 1968 a sub-committee was set up to plan her replacement in 1970.

In 1968, the Club presented the *St Barbara Trophy*, in the form of an Armada Plate, to the Royal Ocean Racing Club, for Beta Division, Class I in the annual Southsea-Harwich Race.

1969

It had become apparent over the past two years that the overheads of managing two sailing organisations in the Regiment, that is the RAYC and the RASA with their own separate regattas, was unnecessarily burdensome. In early 1969 therefore, the RASA was wound up and amalgamated with the RAYC, so that serving and retired soldiers became eligible for election to full membership of the RAYC.

At Seaview, the RAYC convincingly won the Clutterbuck Trophy and the Glover Cup in the Triangular Regatta against the REYC and R Signals YC.

St Barbara II sailed out to Malta in the autumn, and was raced by James Myatt in the Middle Sea Race around Sicily and Pantellaria, finishing second in Class II and first in Beta Division.

Mr Edward Heath joined the Club as a member, and was seen wearing the RAYC burgee on *Morning Cloud*.

So ended a further twenty four years of the history of the RAYC. Although the number of groups had reduced from nineteen to five, in conformity with the reduction of our overseas commitments, membership had risen to over 1000. Officers and soldiers sailed in harmony together in offshore yachts and dinghies. The Club owned three offshore yachts at Marchwood in the United Kingdom and two at Kiel. A fleet of Enterprise dinghies was growing at Blashford Lake, near Ringwood, and Gunners sailed with conspicuous success at Seaview and on the German lakes of Dummer See and Mohne See.

Annual regattas had been established at Whale Island and Seaview for the day boats, and at Yarmouth for the offshore yachts. Each year navigation courses were organised at Larkhill and Dortmund. Every second year members and their ladies dined in the RA Mess at Woolwich with guests of great standing in the yachting world. All in all, the RA Yacht Club had developed with the times into a powerful and flourishing organisation.



Twelve Good Years - 1970 to 1982

A NEW DECADE

The next decade was to see two significant changes affecting day boat sailing in UK and offshore sailing throughout the RAYC world.

There had always been enthusiasm in BAOR for dinghy sailing, but in UK too more and more club members were racing small boats. A band of enthusiasts at Larkhill pioneered the way; they were led by Captain Freddie Thirsk and ex-RASA members including WO2 John Morton, WO2 Steve Entwistle and WO2 Fred Ruddlestone.

Offshore racing was ever more competitive and expensive; few Service yachts were able to compete on equal terms with the RORC fleet. The Club therefore concentrated on cruising, inter-service racing and international sailing with the Sail Training Association. Gunner yachts were still to be seen in a few RORC races, especially the Fastnet, but with little expectation of emulating the feats of the old *St Barbara*.

1970

During 1970 the Dinghy Racing Team won eleven out of sixteen matches. Dinghy colours were introduced and awarded to Freddy Thirsk, Allan Harvey, Jimmy McLean, Major Martin Turner and John Morton.

A new group was formed in the Hebrides. The new Junior Leaders Group prospered.

In Germany, *Brynmere* was sold and replaced by *St Barbara II*, a splendid addition to Gunner sailing from Kiel.

It was decided to buy a new Camper and Nicholson 43 to be named *St Barbara III*. She proved to be a safe, comfortable and popular cruiser; when well sailed she often held her own in offshore racing. She cost £20,000 which was raised from:—

Club funds	£10,000
RAYC (Germany)	£ 4,000
Grant from Army Central Fund	£ 3,000
Grant from Regimental sources	£ 1,500
Loan from Regimental sources	£ 1,500

The February 1971 AGM report for the previous year concluded:

'The Admiral thanked Tower for his untiring efforts on the Club's behalf during his second two years as Commodore, and remarked that during each of his periods as Commodore we had bought a new St Barbara'.

Major General Philip Tower's first two years as Commodore were interrupted by his appointment to command in Aden.

Five logs were entered for the 1970 Cruising Cup, which was awarded to Lieutenant Colonel John Cooper for a 2734 miles cruise in his *Xlendi* from Malta to Greece, Turkey and back. Four other logs covered cruises in *St Barbara II*, *Xelahu* and *Philomelle* to Brittany, Azores, Malta, Gibraltar and return.



Wives and unmarried daughters were made eligible for associate membership while joint owners of British registered yachts.

The Archives Room at Larkhill was taken over by Maurice Hope, the Club Archivist and joint author of this history.

1971

The offshore fleet had a good year. *Xelahu* was at sea for 141 days. *St Barbara III* had a splendid opening season with a record 181 days at sea; she raced in five RORC races, two passage races, and many races in the Solent. Skipped by Major Ralph James, she won the Sunderland Cup for Service yachts in the Christchurch Ledge Race. She was thirty second out of ninety four in the RORC individual points championship. Under James Myatt she was twenty seventh in Class II in the Fastnet, beat all other Nicholson 43s and was second of all Service yachts. In Germany, *St Barbara II* got a third in Kiel Week.

The dinghy sailors removed from the Sappers the Clutterbuck Trophy and the Rochester Cup. They also won twenty two out of thirty eight UK fixtures. The Barron Cup for the champion soldier dinghy helmsman was won by WO2 Mike Mitchell.

With the help of a loan from Regimental funds, the Club bought two £5,000 debentures in Camper and Nicholson's new marina at Gosport. *St Barbara III*, *Xelahu* and the newly acquired Westerley Cirrus *Bustard* were thus berthed alongside: better than moorings at Marchwood.

Club membership rose by fifteen to 1037.

1972

This year saw ever-increasing Gunner commitment to operations in Ulster. The effect on sailing was unavoidable, though some regiments still managed to be represented at regattas. On 27th March direct rule from Westminster was imposed on Northern Ireland. The date coincided with the Club's presentation to the Prime Minister of a painting of *Morning Cloud*. At 6 pm the RAYC party under the Commodore Brigadier David Birch struggled to 10 Downing Street through a large crowd. Affairs of state were put aside for an hour while gin was drunk and *Morning Cloud's* achievements extolled.

The Sappers won the Clutterbuck Trophy and Rochester Cup, though the RAYC won the Glover Cup. The dinghy team had a poor season.

St Barbara III had a good cruising season and also won two trophies: the John Lewis Partnership Inter-Club Trophy and the Camper and Nicholson Cowes Trophy for the best Nicholson 43 at Cowes Week.

The highlights of the RAYC year were the International Sail Training Association Races. Both *St Barbaras* took part. *St Barbara II* under Major Mike May cruised from Kiel to Helsinki for the race to Falsterbo; she was second in her class and seventh overall. *St Barbara III* under Major Mike Brown raced from the Isle of Wight to Skaw; she was placed sixth in class out of twenty one and seventeenth overall. The two *St Barbaras* were the only British Army entries. The crews are unlikely ever to forget the experience.

1973 - RAYC 40th ANNIVERSARY

As a 40th birthday present, the Club bought itself a Nicholson 30 to replace the ageing *Xelahu*. She was named *Bombard* and intended as an out-and-out racer though with a reasonable cruising capability. She cost £9,530 but the sale of *Xelahu* realised £5,500; Lieutenant Colonel Ray Gourd ran a raffle which raised £590. She sailed in 25 races of the Solent Points Championship under the management of Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Hurdall, achieving a creditable twelfth out of fifty four in Class IV. However, raising crews was never easy.

St Barbara III under Major Robin Duchesne and *Bombard* under Captain John Cranmer sailed in the Fastnet; both performed well.

The dinghy racing team suffered from absentees in Northern Ireland; however 49th Field Regiment managed to take the Admiral's Cup in spite of being on an emergency tour. Allan Harvey was second in the ASA Regatta and was in the Army team which beat the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force in the Coningham Cup.

The late Major Charles Ball DSO MC who was Commodore 1951-54 left the Club a substantial bequest which has produced a welcome addition to our annual income.

Club subscriptions were increased to £4 for most members: the first increase in twenty five years.

In May 1973 the following appeared in the editorial of Gunner magazine:

'Soldier an' Sailor Too!

The skiing season is over and with the sailing season under way my thoughts turn to that redoubtable organisation the RA Yacht Club. This gallant band who have even achieved entry into the Prime Minister's parlour do, I regret to say, give me a sense of inferiority when I deal with them. There is a secretary, an assistant secretary, an offshore yacht booking secretary, a racing secretary, a dinghy secretary not to mention a variety of group secretaries and managers and treasurers for good measure. Then there are the Vice-Commodores and possibly for all I know, the odd admiral. Is it any wonder that the poor editor is bemused and confused by such a hierarchy?

Wallowing in self pity I ask myself why doesn't the RAYC like me? Is it because I refuse to put a St Barbara on every cover? (I do have some support here from the dinghy sailors). Is it because I inadvertently published an incorrect telephone number of an RAYC official; adding insult to injury in that the one printed turned out to be the Hon Secretary RA Aero Club? The latter was not amused either.

Alas and woe is me but please don't get me wrong I'm not against sailors and sailing, in fact the sea is in my blood. According to my family historian, a great-great-grandfather was a powder monkey at the Battle of the Nile while a great-grandfather, the captain of a windjammer, perished in a storm off Cape Horn. Perhaps this background does however explain my preference for steam and diesel.

The Admiral's last word appeared in the July edition:

Soldier an' Sailor

Dear Sir,

The Royal Artillery Yacht Club has noted with some dismay the remarks in your May Editorial asking if the Club likes you. Dismay, Sir, because we have obviously failed to put across to you our well established policy of liking anyone who can help us, and you can help us a lot.

You also admit a sense of inferiority when faced with our hierarchy which you note might even include 'the odd admiral'. Our emissaries will wait on you at your convenience to brief you on our command structure and order of battle but, should you and your wife care to visit Yarmouth, I of W during the weekend 1st/2nd September for our Large Yacht Regatta we would be delighted if you would attend, as our guest, some of our functions, both nautical and social, and so gain first hand knowledge of the Club deployed, as it were, for battle.

To end on a plaintive note may I ask what harm I personally have ever done you, Sir? If, as I confidently expect the answer is 'none' then may I further ask why, in your august columns a miserable Vice-Commodore is spelt out with capital letters whilst your humble servant and undersigned receives the studied insult of the smallest of small letters 'a'?

Your faithfully,

Maj Gen J E L Morris CB CBE DSO (Odd-admiral RAYC)'

St Barbara II skippered by Robin Duchesne sailed in the STA race from Copenhagen to Gdynia in Poland. It was the first venture of the STA and RAYC behind the Iron Curtain. Crews were exchanged with other yachts, including the Russian barque *Tovarishch*. *St Barbara II's* crew reported:—

'We had met seamen from sixteen countries, befriended Poles, Russians, Swedes, Germans, Americans and Dutch and more besides. St Barbara II was the only Service yacht to participate and was a tremendous attraction for visitors. By other people's statements we were good ambassadors and Russian sailors sailed in St Barbara. . . .

The aim of sail training is to kindle and foster international relations by linking the seafaring youths of nations. Political motives and aspirations never entered our conversations and we left Poland with a sense of achievement. St Barbara II had come fourth in her class out of twenty eight in the largest STA race ever held.'

In the STA race to Corunna, Douglas Hurdall skippered the Army yacht *Sabre* to first in her class.

Planning began for a RAYC entry for the 1976 STA Transatlantic Race.

Racing round the world was becoming almost commonplace. In the 1973–74 Whitbread Race RAYC members sailed in:—

<i>British Soldier</i>	Lieutenant Colonel James Myatt, Major Bob Barton, Staff Sergeant Jock Doherty.
<i>Great Britain II</i>	Staff Sergeant Mike Thompson
<i>Swedes Life</i>	Captain Billy King-Harman. His contributions for the Cruising Cup and Yachting Monthly made interesting reading.

From Bangkok Major Geoffrey Ransby and his 3rd RHA crew completed a remarkable 2700 mile cruise to Hong Kong in *Russamee*. It gained them the Cruising Cup, in a year notable for well above average logs.

To prove that she could hold her own in Cowes Week, *St Barbara III* was second in the Cruiser Division of the New York Yacht Club Cup Race. *St Barbara III* and *Bombard* both performed well in the ASA Offshore Regatta.

Recently the Army Sailing Association had emerged as a major force on the national scene. James Myatt was Rear Commodore (Offshore) and Chairman of the National Panel of RYA/Department of Trade Examiners. Thanks largely to his influence, the Army was instrumental in preparing the Services Yacht Proficiency Certificate system of ratings. Both this system and the RYA offshore rating system are based on the RAYC and REYC methods – not surprisingly as the present RYA Secretary General and his predecessor are Gunners.

The RAYC Newsletter was launched, with Major Peter Elliott as the first Editor. Its aim was to keep members better informed of Club activities, and to bring in new members. Peter Elliott's recruiting drive included the enlistment of Yachting Monthly's Production Editor for the Larkhill Navigation Course; the Editor proved to be an attractive young woman.

1975

The day-boat sailors in UK failed to impress, losing the Rochester, Glover and Clutterbuck matches. Due in part to the absence on military business of younger helmsmen, Club events were too often dominated by the veterans. However, in BAOR the RAYC won the first ever Quadrangular Cup against RE, R Signals and REME.

Offshore results were happier. *St Barbara III* was third overall in the STA Den Helder-Thames race. She also did well in the Fastnet and, joined by *Bombard*, in the ASA and Inter Staff Colleges Regattas. *Bombard* was thirteenth out of forty two in the Solent Points Championship; a creditable result but it was decided not to enter her in this series again.

Club members continued to distinguish themselves. Major Richard Gatehouse was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of Navigation; he founded the firm of Brooks and Gatehouse and was always a loyal and most helpful member. In the Financial Times Clipper Race Brigadier John Bagnall was Project Manager of *Great Britain II* and navigated her for the fastest ever passage to Australia under sail. Billy King-Harman and Captain Jim Hollingsworth were in the crew for the homeward leg; *Great Britain II* also broke the record from Sydney to Dover.

The Hull Fund increased during 1975 from £2,272 to £4,606, thanks partly to the Ball bequest.

The first award of the Gallipoli Trophy, a painting by Bill Stukey of the old *St Barbara*, was made to Ralph James in the presence of members of Charles Ball's family. These include Padre Ball, the chaplain of HMS Excellent.

The conversion of members' offshore ratings to Services Yacht Proficiency Certificates continued. The new system was superimposed on the old Club ratings, which continued to be recognised for RAYC yachts. Much work devolved on to Colonel Peter Lowe, the Honorary Assistant Secretary.

1976

The Dinghy Team had a good year, winning nine out of thirteen matches. In the Army Inter-unit Championship the runners-up were the Royal School of Artillery.

Offshore, the highlight of the year was the STA Trans-Atlantic Race in which *Sabre*, a Nicholson 55 from the Joint Services Sailing Centre, was RAYC-sponsored, RAYC-planned, RAYC-skipped and 60 per cent RAYC-crewed.

The race was a complex operation. It all began in October 1974 when Mike May came over from BAOR and put his ideas to the Commodore. Thereafter the Committee was responsible for planning, with the help of the race managers Lieutenant Colonel Rex Gorddard, Martin Turner and, in BAOR, Mike May. Crew training and selection, money, change-overs at Tenerife, Bermuda and Boston, logistic support, liaison with the ever-helpful Joint Services Sailing Centre all had to be resolved. The results were:—

From	To	Skipper	Result	
Plymouth	Tenerife	Bob Barton	} First in Class	} First overall
Tenerife	Bermuda	Mike May		
Bermuda	Newport RI	Mike May		
Boston	Plymouth	Geoffrey Miller	First overall	

The Race was part of the 200th Birthday celebrations of the United States. On 4th July watched by five million spectators the STA fleet formed a Parade of Sail up the Hudson River before the President.

The United States Artillery proved to be excellent hosts. After the race the DRA received a letter from Colonel Newell, Commanding the Artillery Company of Newport, from which the following is an extract:—

'Sabre and her crew could not have been finer representatives of the Royal Artillery. Their stay was an unqualified success. Though overshadowed, perhaps, in sheer size by the great square-riggers, Sabre was perhaps the most visible and popular of all the smaller yachts. She was moored alongside the middle of the busiest part of the waterfront and was seen by, literally, hundreds of thousands of visitors. . . .

They (also) manned one of our 1798 brass cannon at a military tattoo in honour of all the visiting Tall Ships.'

Sabre won most of her class honours and was first overall in the four legs of the race. It was a pleasing result and marked the increased Gunner involvement in STA races. The STA's Race Director was Colonel Dick Scholfield, lately Admiral of the Club, and his successor is Captain John Hamilton.

Mike May's achievements in the conception, planning and execution of this race were recognised by the award of the Gallipoli Trophy and the Cruising Cup.

Captain Nigel Lang sailed his own Nicholson 26 *Galadriel* in the Observer Single Handed Transatlantic Race. Extracts from this account in the RA Journal of September 1977 read:—

'I was surfing down huge waves amid blinding spray and shrieking wind. A coaster stayed with me for some time to see if I needed help. There was no way of leaving the tiller to take the staysail down as Galadriel would have broached without a doubt. There was no time for fear, since

one's entire concentration was focussed on running down each individual wave. It was one of the most exhilarating experiences of my life. . . .

The first ship I had seen for three weeks told me my position. After two thousand miles, using an £8 plastic sextant, I was only fifteen miles out, thanks to Mike May's tuition!

There was a tremendous crash . . . I had rammed an old wooden 15-ton yawl . . . sailed by a single hander from Nova Scotia who like me was below decks.'

In 1977 Nigel Lang's log of this race earned him the award of the Cruising Cup.

In Germany, The Club sold *Borgard* after ten years' good service and decided not to replace her for the present. *St Barbara II* was as popular as ever.

The Club adopted the RYA day boat system of proficiency.

St Barbara III had to be treated for osmosis: a threat to GRP craft about which little was then known.

The Hull Fund stood at £8,255 and the accounts were healthy.

The Club Dinner was well attended; the guest of honour was Lieutenant Colonel the Rt Hon Edward Heath PC MBE MP. The other guests included the distinguished ocean racer and author Mrs Mary Pera, daughter of the Club's founder; the Commodore announced her election as an Honorary Member.

1977

The day boat sailors under Major Jim Estcourt had a good season, winning twelve out of fifteen matches in the Inter-Corps League. The Royal School of Artillery won the Army Dinghy Team Championship. Lieutenant Pyers Tucker was fifth Army Individual. The Gallipoli Trophy was awarded to Jim Estcourt for his work as Captain of the RAYC Dinghy Team.

Bombard was sold at the end of the season and replaced by *Congreve*, a Contessa 32. She cost £15,800, which emptied the Hull Fund; *Bombard*'s money was not yet available and purchase was completed thanks to an interest-free loan of £4,800 by two Club members.

49th Field Regiment took *Sabre* from Helsinki to Kiel on an adventure training cruise. HMSTY *Adventure*, a Nicholson 55, was the Joint Services entry for the Whitbread Round-the-World Race. Her crews included Major Ashley Manton and Captain Barry Winfield. Robin Duchesne skippered the last leg from Rio. Manton also crewed in *Great Britain II* for the last leg.

Issue No 4 of the RAYC Newsletter described the activities of two founder members of the Club. Lieutenant Colonel George Grimshaw runs a fleet of nine Optimist dinghies in which he teaches sailing to the youngsters of Stoke Gabriel. In 1977 he was given the International Optimist Racing Association award for the biggest contribution to the class. Maurice Hope has for many years run the Keyhaven Cadet Squadron; a perhaps apocryphal tale relates that when Hope wants his Cadet fleet on starboard tack he blows one blast on his whistle and two for port. One can believe anything of a member who owns a yacht called *Tubthumper*.

1978

The day boat teams had a good year, winning eleven out of fifteen races in the Inter-Corps League and regaining the Rochester Cup which had remained in Sapper hands since 1971. In Germany the Club won the Triangular for the first time since 1964. Major Mike Bremridge was awarded the Gallipoli Trophy for his leadership of the RAYC (Germany) dinghy team.

Three Club crews did well in the Bosun National Championships and two individuals sailed the Club Lasers successfully in the Inter-Service Championships.

Pyers Tucker was third in the Gold Cup and a member of the Army Team which won the Coningham Cup. For this he was awarded the Bombay Cup.

St Barbara III won the ASA Offshore Passage Race under Major Mike Brown and the Ince Trophy in the STA Fair Isle Race under Major Geoffrey Miller. She was holed by a Royal Navy yacht at the start of a Joint Service race but the bill for £1,361 was paid by the Navy. She later visited Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

Major Brian Moore was awarded the Cruising Cup for his log of the cruise to Gothenburg.

Congreve had a good first season and proved a popular cruiser.

1979

The day boat season began with the final of the Admiral's Cup, postponed from 1978. 50th Missile Regiment took on the Royal School of Artillery on 27th March; there were gales in every sea area around the British Isles and Blashford Lake was littered with capsized Enterprises. The School won the Cup for the fifth successive year.

The RAYC Dinghy Team won nine out of twelve matches and were third in the Inter-Corps League.

32nd Guided Weapons Regiment won the Army Team Championships, the first combat unit to do so, and the third Gunner unit in four years. In a remarkable season they also won the Loseby Trophy and the Admiral's Cup.

At Seaview, the Club won the Clutterbuck Trophy.

The offshore season began in February at Charleston, South Carolina, where a Gunner crew under Major Robin Sjöberg took over HMSTY *Sabre*. To their navigator's relief they found Bermuda, liked it and left with regret for an interesting sail to UK; their log recorded storms, broken steering and forestay, re-supply by RFA and a warm welcome at Gosport.

St Barbara III had a busy season, and under Robin Duchesne took a young and inexperienced crew over 1000 miles to the Isle of Man and back for the STA race.

Congreve was entered for the disastrous 1979 Fastnet under Captain Peter Crump. He made a seamanlike decision to retire when west of Lands End and she entered Plymouth undamaged.

The Gallipoli Trophy for 1979 was awarded to Derek Birkett for long and distinguished service to the Club. He had been a member since 1936 and

Treasurer since 1961, during which period he somehow made money available for every worthwhile project, kept subscriptions down to a modest level and yet ensured the Club's independence and solvency.

James Myatt's contribution to the Club has also been immense. He even found time to raise a family, command a regiment and win the RYA Award for Distinguished Services to Yachting. The RYA announced to the press:-

'As Chairman of the RYA/DoT Yachtmaster Qualification Panel from its inception until 1977, James Myatt played the leading part in setting up the RYA courses and qualifications for cruising yachtsmen.

Learning to sail as a Sea Scout in Southend has led to 30 years devoted to sailing but particularly to helping and encouraging young people to go to sea for fun and adventure.

In 1964 James Myatt was responsible for ensuring that there was a British civilian entry in the Sail Training Association (STA) Transatlantic Tall Ships Race. As an impecunious Army Captain, seeing a likely 70 foot yawl named Tawau in Plymouth he set about trying to borrow her. The ease with which this part of the plan was completed was due to a mistake in identities between himself and Miles Wyatt, then Admiral of the Royal Ocean Racing Club. He was invited to visit the owner, Viscount Boyd, a visit which led to the entry of Tawau in the race!

This opened the eyes of the yachting establishment to the need for large yachts to take youngsters to sea and two years later, the first of the STA schooners, Sir Winston Churchill, was launched.

James Myatt was Chairman of the Committee who built her and organised her sailing programme and he has also been closely involved with a great many similar organisations such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and the Scout Association. He was one of the founders of the Joint Service Sailing Centre and organised the entry of Great Britain II in the 1976 Round the World Race with young service crews.

Rule Britannia!

The STA Committee responsible for *Sir Winston Churchill* had three other RAYC members on it: Dick Scholfield, Derek Birkett and Commander David Cobb.

1980

The STA had an interesting programme in the Baltic and once again the Club played a full part. *St Barbara II* skippered by WO2 Tom Graham with a BAOR crew raced from Kiel to Karlskrona. HMSTY *British Soldier* with a mainly Gunner crew was skippered by Robin Sjöberg from Gosport to Kiel to Karlskrona, by Lieutenant-Colonel James Barden from Karlskrona to Frederikshaven and then Amsterdam (second in class and third overall) and by Jim Hollingsworth from Amsterdam to Gosport.

The Dinghy Team were third out of nine in the Inter-Corps League, the Club's record over three years being third twice and first once. Piers Tucker was third in the Army Individual Championships at Netley and won the ASA Regatta at Seaview.

The Admiral's Cup was noteworthy as for the first time in many years a regiment broke the RSA's domination; 50th Missile Regiment beat the School

at the Mohne See. The donor of the Cup, Maurice Hope, came to Germany to make the presentation.

Three new GRP Enterprise dinghies were bought. *Congreve* was sold, with difficulty, for £11,000 and replaced by *Congreve II* a new Contessa 32.

The Club continued to recruit new members, including twenty six soldiers and thirty young officers.

The RAYC's long association with the British Kiel Yacht Club and, more recently with the Joint Services Sailing Centre was marked by the award of Honorary Membership to Captain R E Justice and Colonel L G S Thomas.

The Gallipoli Trophy was awarded to Lieutenant Colonel Roger Young for devoted service to the Club both as a Flag Officer and Offshore Yachts Secretary.

1981 was quite a year: the author was bewildered by the choice of events available. Contemporary accounts showed Gibraltar looming large. Many members succumbed to its charm and celebrated the Regiment's newly-given Freedom.

The Admiral's Cup again went to a regiment when 49th Field Regiment beat 32nd Guided Weapons Regiment. 49th also won the BAOR Inter-Unit Championship against hot competition. RAYC (Germany) led by Lieutenant Colonel James Gordon won the Triangular Regatta, though the RAYC team at Seaview was less successful. Pyers Tucker was second in the ASA Regatta at Seaview, third in the Gold Cup and was again in the winning Army team for the Coningham Cup.

Sailboarding was on the up-and-up particularly in Germany. The Club decided to include an individual race in the 1982 Dinghy Regatta.

Most RAYC members who have served in BAOR knew Herr Bruno Splieth MBE, of the British Kiel Yacht Club. His contribution to Army and Gunner sailing was immense. The Club dined him out in style, with the Commodore and seventy members present.

St Barbara II was again overbooked and was off her moorings for 140 days. Northern Ireland commitments decreased so it was at last decided to provide a second yacht at Kiel – an ex-British Kiel Yacht Club Contessa 32 to be named *Brynmere*, in memory of the faithful 50 square metre which had served us so well for many years in the Baltic.

Majors David Lowe and Nigel Lang both entered for the Three Peaks Race. The race was physically demanding and both teams did well.

Robin Sjöberg skippered a 94th Locating Regiment crew which sailed HMSTY *Sabre* from Bremerhaven to Gibraltar. 49th Field Regiment sailed her home skippered by their old CO, Robin Duchesne.

Thanks to Lieutenant Colonel Tommy Tucker, who was on board throughout, 32nd Guided Weapons Regiment sailed *Bezance* (a Swan 44) from Brunei to Sydney, as the last leg of Bezonian Venture – a long voyage involving several crews from UK to Sydney which Tommy Tucker had masterminded.

Billy King-Harman achieved national distinction by partnering Robin Knox-Johnston in the Two Handed Transatlantic Race in his 70 foot catamaran *Sea Falcon*.

The 1981 story ends with some extracts from accounts of the RAYC's participation in the Freedom of Gibraltar. The Freedom was conferred upon the Royal Artillery by the Mayor of the City, His Worship Abraham Serfaty on 29th April 1981. The Freedom Scroll was accepted by the Master Gunner, General Sir Harry Tuzo (a member since 1948). On parade were contingents from all five batteries with the 'Gibraltar 1779-83' honour title. Also present were the Admiral and the two crews who sailed *St Barbara III* out to Gibraltar and home again.

St Barbara III took her departure from the Solent on 13th April, skippered by Major Paul d'Apice and navigated by Mike Brown. She '... entered the Bay of Biscay in the early hours of 17th April and ... carried the spinnaker for the next thirty eight hours ... averaging eight knots. Shark, dolphin and a killer whale were all sighted in the Bay. ... At 0800 we passed Cabo da Roca, the most western part of Europe and dropped anchor at 0930 in Cascais. The return crew, led by Lieutenant Colonel Rex Gorddard, arrived by Charter Flight ... St Barbara was dressed overall, we drank a lot, we helped host a reception for everyone who was anyone ...'

The return voyage began on 1st May in the calm. *St Barbara III* motored past Trafalgar and Cadiz but during the night the wind freshened. At Cape St Vincent '... the full force of the Atlantic hit us and heavy seas continually broke green over the bows. During one particularly rough period the main cabin table was hit by a flying soldier and disintegrated into small pieces. A leak around the pulpit required 150 pumps every half hour to clear the bilges; the navigation lights failed and, to make life particularly unpleasant, all the hatches leaked which meant that there was not a dry corner to be found. Under these unpleasant and at times quite frightening conditions the foredeck crew survived surprisingly well ... Bob Barton and Jamie Forteath seemed completely impervious to the weather and provided continuous hot meals and drinks. As the night wore on the wind increased to gale force as we continued our rhumb line course across Biscay. The Navigator, disturbed and disgruntled, set to work on sewing up the mainsail. He and the Skipper worked for 18 hours continually until the sail was repaired. By 1100 hours on 10th May the gale was beginning to blow itself out and *St Barbara* was more easy to control. The seas remained enormous for many hours ... At 0215 on 11th May the Ushant Light was sighted.'

St Barbara III entered Gosport early on 14th May having logged 1387 nautical miles, and taken part in a major Regimental occasion which celebrated the Gunner connection with Gibraltar since 1704.

Later in the year *Congreve II* took part in the Fastnet Race, skippered by Mike Holroyd Smith. In contrast to the terrible storms which beset the previous Fastnet, the Race was sailed in light airs and *Congreve* did well to hold her own under these conditions.

1982 was another good year, overshadowed though it was by the South Atlantic Campaign. Despite this, the Seaview Regatta was well-attended on 3rd and 4th of June. A total of seventeen teams took part including ten from Regiments. The Commodore's Trophy was won by the Junior Leaders Regiment RA, who also took the Crane-Mills Cup for the first Regimental Team.

In the Dinghy Regatta at HMS Excellent the following day, Lieutenant Richard Hermon won the Pinchard Pot; and WO2 'Chippy' Wood the Barron Cup as the first soldier helmsman.

Sailboarding came into its own in a big way in the UK under the expert guidance of Lieutenant Colonel Ken Brown at Larkhill, who arranged the first RA Sailboard Regatta at Blashford Lake in the autumn, for which there were nine entries.

The Admiral's Cup this year was sailed at Mohne See in October between 19th Field Regiment from Germany and the Royal School of Artillery – the latter being the winners. Shortly afterwards, the RAYC beat the REYC in the Rochester Cup and regained the trophy.

In offshore sailing, the main event of the year was the International Tall Ships Race, managed by the STA, from Falmouth to Lisbon and return to Southampton. Three yachts were entered by the Gunners, which set sail from Falmouth on 25th July started by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, to race to Lisbon, and skippered as follows:—

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>St Barbara III</i> | — by Major Peter Crump |
| <i>HMSTY British Soldier</i> | — by Lieutenant Colonel James Barden |
| <i>HMSTY Kukri</i> | — by Brigadier Robin Duchesne, with a crew from Germany |

After a fast sail to Lisbon, fresh crews arrived from UK and Germany and, on 7th August, the three yachts cruised in company with eight others to Vigo. From there they raced back to Southampton skippered by:—

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>St Barbara III</i> | — The Commodore, Major General Robert Staveley |
| <i>HMSTY British Soldier</i> | — Major Bob Barton |
| <i>HMSTY Kukri</i> | — Major Jim Hollingsworth |

They arrived to take part in the epic Parade of Sail by all the Tall Ships down Southampton Water on 25th August on a fine summer's day watched by several thousand spectators ashore and afloat, including the Admiral in *Cirrus*.

During the year *Bustard*, which had given ten good years service to the Club, was sold, having been replaced at the beginning of the year by a second-hand Westerly Pembroke *Cirrus* (to be renamed later as *Robinet*) – a larger yacht which has proved a successful venture.

ENVOI

And so, as we peer into 1983 at the time of writing, plans have been laid to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Royal Artillery Yacht Club, including: (a) An epic sail by *St Barbara III* around Britain, to show the flag in six ports around the coast in May and June.

(b) A dinghy team to visit Gibraltar in May to race against the Gibraltar Yacht Club with whom we have had such a close association from pre-war days.

(c) The presentation to Greenwich of a Challenger Trimaran for disabled people, in close association with Miss Diana Campbell, to be named *Jock Campbell* after her famous father.

(d) An assembly of yachts for the Cruising Regatta in early September, at Yarmouth, to be joined by *St Barbara II* from Kiel.

In fifty years the Club has developed what was once an esoteric pastime for the few to a widely enjoyed and often demanding sport available to all Gunners, present and past. Sport has helped broaden the Regimental horizon; skiing, squash racquets, riding and others. But sailing is different. The RAYC has helped introduce the sea into the lives of schoolboys, junior leaders and adult Gunners of all ranks and ages. Unlike other Regimental sports, the Club is autonomous; its members run their own affairs and many sail together from youth to dotage.

Whether circumnavigating the earth, racing dinghies in an inter-battery regatta or pottering round the Solent on a family week-end cruise, members owe a debt of gratitude to the Club's founders. That debt can best be discharged by keeping up the standards of seamanship and comradeship on which the Club has always relied.

FLAG OFFICERS OF THE RAYC

ADMIRALS

1947-1960	Colonel A K Main DSO
1960-1966	Brigadier G G Mears CBE DSO MC
1966-1972	Colonel R G F Scholfield
1972-1978	Major-General J E L Morris CB CBE DSO
1978-	Brigadier C J Codner CBE MC

COMMODORES

1933-1937	Colonel A K Main DSO
1937-1940	Major General A P Y Langhorne DSO MC
1940-1948	Lieutenant Colonel The Hon R M Preston DSO
1948-1951	Major General A H Hornby CB CBE MC
1951-1954	Major C J P Ball DSO MC
1954-1956	Lieutenant Colonel B Blewitt DSO
1956-1959	Lieutenant Colonel R G F Scholfield
1959-1962	Major General J E L Morris CBE DSO
1962-1965	Major General R H Farrant CB
1965-1967	Major General P T Tower DSO MBE
1967-1969	Major General A O G Mills
1969-1971	Major General P T Tower CB DSO MBE
1971-1974	Brigadier D W H Birch CBE
1974-1977	Colonel A J W Harvey
1977-1980	Brigadier R N Ohlenschlager MBE
1980-1983	Major General R Staveley
1983-	Brigadier T R Jones OBE ADC

VICE-COMMODORES

1933-1937	Major H G Moore MC
1937-1940	Lieutenant Colonel The Hon R M Preston DSO
1940-1946	Brigadier W C Holden DSO MC
1946-1949	Major General C D Packard CBE DSO
1949-1952	Major R G F Scholfield
1952-1955	Colonel R H Farrant
1955-1958	Major P W Moore
1958-1960	Brigadier G G Mears CBE DSO MC
1960-1963	Brigadier P T Tower DSO MBE
1963-1964	Lieutenant Colonel J W Madden MC
1964-1968	Colonel D G Birkett OBE
1968-1970	Brigadier C J Codner MC
1970-1973	Major General T A Richardson MBE
1973-1974	Colonel A J W Harvey
1974-1977	Lieutenant Colonel R H Young
1977-1981	Lieutenant Colonel R A Gourd
1981-1983	Brigadier T R Jones OBE ADC
1983-	Colonel H B de Fonblanque

REAR COMMODORES

1933-1937	M W Hope Esq
1937-1939	Lieutenant Colonel J R Barry DSO
1939-1946	Captain W J Fletcher
1946-1949	Major R G F Scholfield
1949-1952	Major P W Moore
1952-1955	Colonel T V Somers OBE
1954-1956	Major E Dyson
1956-1958	Brigadier G G Mears CBE DSO MC
1957-1959	Brigadier J E L Morris CBE DSO
1959-1960	Lieutenant Colonel P T Tower DSO MBE
1959-1962	Lieutenant Colonel R J Brandon
1960-1961	Brigadier R T Priest OBE
1961-1963	Lieutenant Colonel J W Madden MC
1962-1965	Brigadier D R Crane MBE
1963-1966	Brigadier H J de W Waller MBE, MC
1964-1967	Brigadier A O G Mills
1965-1968	Major J E Myatt
1967-1968	Brigadier C J Codner MC
1967-1968	Brigadier T A Richardson MBE
1968-1969	Colonel D W H Birch
1968-1971	Major R J de C Glover MC
1969-1970	Brigadier J M Bellman MC
1969-1972	Lieutenant Colonel R H Young
1971-1973	Brigadier C J Codner CBE MC
1971-1973	Colonel A J W Harvey
1972-1975	Major M A Prichard TD
1973-1976	Brigadier R Staveley
1973-1976	Major R E A James
1975-1977	Lieutenant Colonel R A Gourd
1976-1977	Brigadier R N Ohlenschlager MBE
1976-1978	Brigadier C M F Webb
1977-1978	Major M J R May
1977-1979	Brigadier T R Jones OBE
1978-1979	Lieutenant Colonel R P Duchesne OBE
1978-1981	Lieutenant Colonel K R H Eve
1979-1982	Colonel W E Winder
1980-1983	Colonel H B de Fonblanque
1981-	Brigadier P R Duchesne OBE
1981-	Lieutenant Colonel C R Gorddard
1983-	Lieutenant Colonel N J Bird

HONORARY REAR COMMODORES

1973-1981	Major General A O G Mills
1977-1978	Brigadier C J Codner CBE MC
1973-1982	Colonel D G Birkett OBE
1974-1986	Brigadier M W Hope DSO
1981-1985	Brigadier D W H Birch CBE
1981-1985	Lieutenant Colonel D A Johnson MBE MC
1983-	Lieutenant Colonel R A Gourd

HON SECRETARIES AND HON TREASURERS

Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer

1933–1952 Lieutenant Colonel R Blewitt DSO

Hon Secretary

1952–1955 Colonel D C Curme
 1955 Major M L Steele-Perkins
 1955–1957 Colonel J E L Morris CBE DSO
 1957 Major J D Power
 1957–1958 Major P R A Bagley
 1958–1961 Colonel D G Birkett OBE
 1961–1964 Lieutenant Colonel B A B Taylor MBE
 1964 Major T R Jones
 1964–1965 Major R H Young
 1965–1967 Major J S M Young
 1967–1969 Lieutenant Colonel C Scott
 1969–1972 Lieutenant Colonel D A Johnson MBE MC
 1972– Lieutenant Colonel P A Sweet

Hon Treasurer

1952–1958 Major General A H Hornby CB CBE MC
 1958–1960 Brigadier G M Palmer MC
 1960–1961 Brigadier P R Dayrell-Browning OBE
 1961–1982 Colonel D G Birkett OBE
 1982– Lieutenant Colonel R A Gourd

MAJOR YACHTS OWNED BY THE RAYC
1936-1983

Yacht	Description	Years	Location
<i>Rose</i>	Gaff-rigged yawl (32 tons)	1936-1943	UK
<i>Larry</i>	Gaff-rigged cutter (12 tons)	1944-1946	UK
<i>Betsy</i>	Bermudan yawl (7 tons)	1939-1946	UK
<i>St Barbara</i>	Bermudan sloop (22 tons)	1948-1965	UK
<i>Brynmere</i>	'Windfall' 50 sq metre sloop	1947-1970	UK and Kiel
<i>Sea Falcon</i>	'Windfall' 50 sq metre sloop	1947-1961	UK and Kiel
<i>Rosanna</i>	'Windfall' 50 sq metre sloop	1950-1956	Tripoli and Malta
<i>Larrikin</i>	'Windfall' 30 sq metre sloop	1950-1951	UK
<i>Sea Falconet</i>	Bermudan sloop (5 tons)	1954-1961	UK
<i>Toht</i>	Bermudan sloop (5 tons)	1958-1961	UK
<i>Barbette</i>	Pioneer Class Bermudan sloop (7 tons)	1962-1968	UK (Larkhill Group)
<i>St Barbara II</i>	Rebel Class Bermudan sloop (14 tons)	1966-	UK and Kiel
<i>Borgard</i>	Danboat Bermudan sloop (6 tons)	1967-1976	Kiel
<i>Xelahu</i>	Nicholson 32 Bermudan sloop (7 tons)	1968-1973	UK
<i>St Barbara III</i>	Nicholson 43 Bermudan sloop (15 tons)	1971-	UK
<i>Bustard</i>	Westerly Cirrus Bermudan sloop (4 tons)	1971-1982	UK
<i>Bombard</i>	Nicholson 30 Bermudan sloop (10 tons)	1973-1977	UK
<i>Congreve</i>	Contessa 32 Bermudan sloop (10 tons)	1977-1980	UK
<i>Congreve II</i>	Contessa 32 Bermudan sloop (10 tons)	1980-	UK
<i>Brynmere</i>	Contessa 32 Bermudan sloop (10 tons)	1982-	Kiel
<i>Robinet</i>	Westerly Pembroke Bermudan sloop (7 tons)	1982-	UK

Individual Club members also own 163 yachts and dinghies, of which 64 hold Admiralty warrants for the RAYC Blue Ensign

MAIN RAYC TROPHIES

Date	Trophy	Presented by
1933	Commodore's Trophy	Original Officers of the Club
1934	Clutterbuck Trophy (RAYC v REYC)	Colonel L St J R Clutterbuck
1935	Cruising Cup	Major H G Moore MC
1935	Nass Trophy	Colchester Group until it closed. Now in RAYC (Germany)
1949	Bhopal Cup	Lieutenant Colonel H L F Dimmock OBE
1953	Nawabzada Cup	Lieutenant Colonel H L F Dimmock OBE
1960	Pinchard Pot	Brigadier F B Pinchard
1960	Admiral's Cup	Brigadier M W Hope DSO
1960	Dinghy Cup	Committee
1963	Glover Cup (RAYC, REYC, R Signals YC)	Major E Glover R Signals
1968	Rebel Cup	R King Esq
	Trifle Cup	Major General R H Farrant CB
	Barron Cup	Lieutenant Colonel G R L Barron MC
	Crane-Mills Cup	Major General A O G Mills and Brigadier D R Crane MBE
1975	Gallipoli Trophy	Club members in memory of Major Charles Ball DSO MC
—	Holbrook Cups (2)	Brigadier J St L Holbrook CBE MC
—	Loseby Trophy	F H Loseby Esq late RFA
—	Bombay Cup	The Bombay Group until it closed. Now in RAYC (UK)
—	Rochester Cup (RAYC and RESA)	Royal Engineers Sailing Association
1982	'Digger' Kent Trophy	Lieutenant Colonel N H Kent