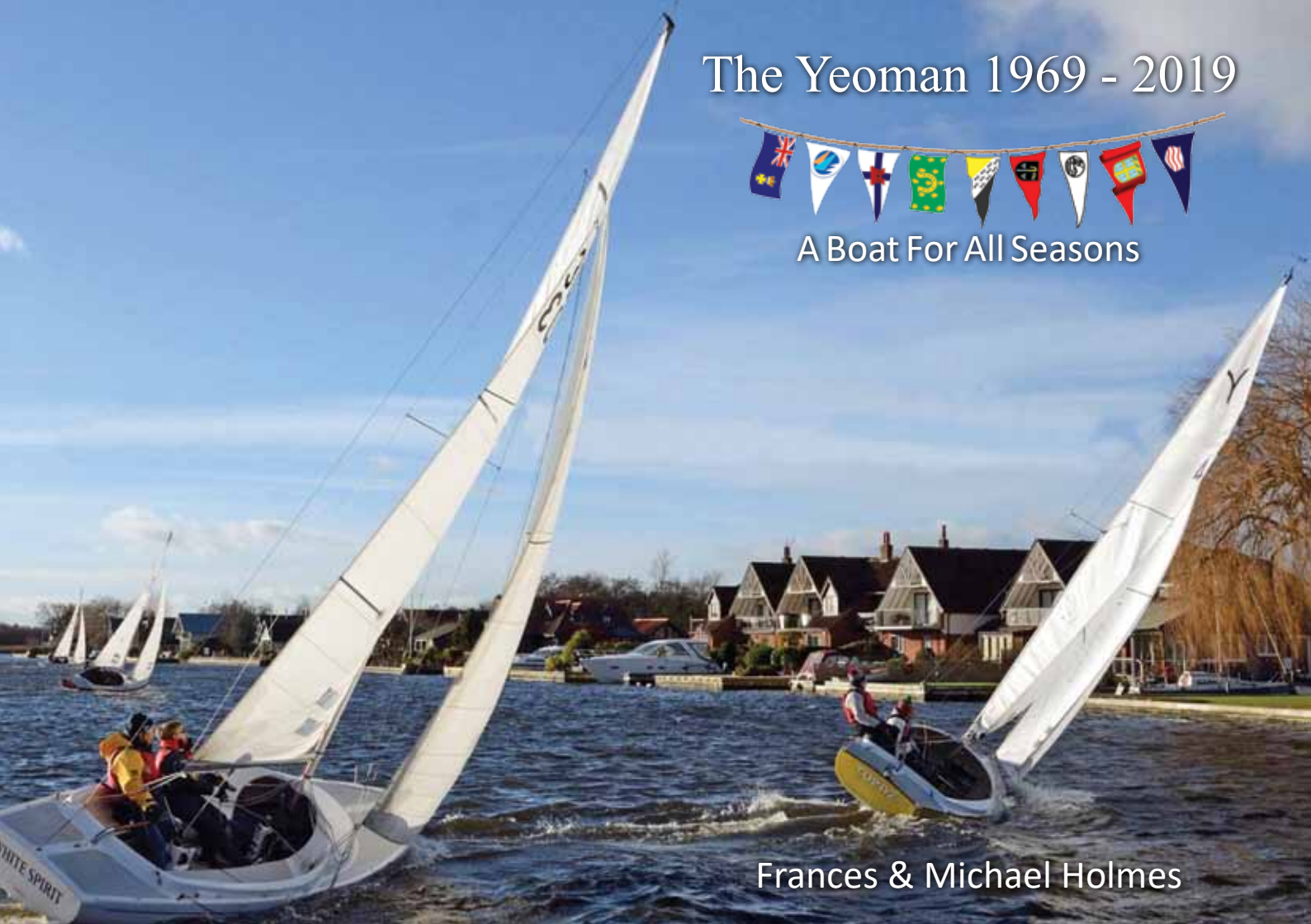


# The Yeoman 1969 - 2019



A Boat For All Seasons



Frances & Michael Holmes

## **The Yeoman 1969 - 2019: A Boat For All Seasons**

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*Front cover: Winter sailing at Snowflake Sailing Club, Boxing Day, 2018.  
Image reproduced by permission of Neil Foster/Waterfront Yachting*

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## A Boat for All Seasons

Celebrating Fifty Years of the Yeoman



Frances and Michael Holmes

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## INTRODUCTION



*Leslie Landamore*

Back in the 1960s Ernest Yeoman asked Leslie Landamore to design him a boat 'that is 20 foot long and faster than a White Boat'. Leslie took up the challenge and, as they say, the rest is history.

In 1969 Ernest sailed his new yacht (Y1 *Zircon*) for the first time. Since then the boat has evolved and developed. But the story of the Yeoman is about so much more than a vessel, it is also one of support and rivalry, controversy and disaster but, most of all, of camaraderie and friendship.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Yeoman we must thank Ernest and Leslie for their vision, which has given so many sailors so much pleasure, both on and off the water.



*Ernest Yeoman*

## EARLY DAYS

It was in 1968 that Ernest Yeoman visited his old friend Leslie Landamore, a skilled naval architect, with a very precise instruction, as explained by Leslie's son Anthony: 'Mr Yeoman wanted a boat a bit different from the White Boat that was popular at the time, and still is. He wanted one that was easier to rig, a cuddy that presumably people could hide under if it rained, and also a rig with sails that were much easier to get up and down.' But more than that, he wanted a 20-foot boat that he could sail single-handed because, as he said: 'There was no question of anyone going with me...I don't think that anybody dare.'

On 19 October the very same year the design was complete, and in 1969 (*Zircon*) was launched. Ernest was very proud of his new wooden boat: 'When Leslie finished it and it was ready for painting he said, "What colour shall we paint it?" I said, "Hard racing copper on the bottom, blue on the hull with a two-inch band of white topping, and tan sails." And he said, "Well that should be very nice." And, of course, it was very nice.'

*Zircon*, was one of only two Yeoman made out of wood. The second was not numbered nor made to be sailed, but was used as the plug for the mould from which subsequent glass-fibre boats were made (it is currently housed in the Museum of the Broads). Leslie's intention had been for all Yeoman to be named after gem stones. However, he was soon thwarted. By the end of 1970 of the six boats launched although Y3 was

dutifully christened *Moonstone* and Y4 called *Topaz*, we also had *Snowgoose* (Y2), *Slipstream* (Y5) and *Contest* (Y6).

The early boats were basic and cost around £1000 (equivalent to approximately £14,500 in 2019). They soon proved popular and in the following five years more than 80 Yeomans were launched. Although designed to sail on the Norfolk Broads early records indicate that they were being bought across the country, particularly around the London area (where a fleet was established at Queen Mary Sailing Club) and Scotland. With no formal class association in place early modifications to boats were not monitored, and so enthusiastic owners were free to make their own 'improvements'. Early racing adaptations included gear and hull strengthening, whilst it is believed that in the mid-1970s the Campbells were the first to experiment with a spinnaker, reputed to have come from a Dragon (yacht).

In the early 1970s Landamores developed the Kinsman, a drop-keel version of the Yeoman which was specifically designed for sailing in shallow waters and to be left on moorings that dry out. By 1975 around ten had been built.

In 1977 Landamores made the decision to concentrate on building larger vessels, and so they passed the licence to make future Yeoman and Kinsman to R. Moore & Sons (Moores). David Moore, a Yeoman sailor himself, took over responsibility for the design.

## Sun, Sea and the Kinsman

### FUN UP THE CREEK



Early editions of the YKA Newsletter include tales of both Kinsman and Yeoman competing at Falmouth Week, in the waters of Falmouth Bay and the Carrick Roads (lower Fal estuary). The trips were spearheaded by the QMSC fleet who combined the week-long regatta with 'fishing, walking, sightseeing and cruising'.

The Beggs family still have great fun sailing K52 *Tarka* in the area - as pictured above.

### GOING EIGHT UP



K18 is based at Bosham. Proud owner, Peter Pleasance, explains: 'Back in 2004 I called my new acquisition *Hipshape* as I had just been fitted with a new hip.

'We do race, but only to the beach at East Head. Here we are all sailing back after a wonderful day on Sunny East Head. We do take such trips seriously making sure we take essential equipment: picnics, buckets & spades and our beach-cricket equipment. Our Kinsman is much used and loved. It is perfect as a beach boat in the tidal Chichester Harbour...even if the sand from the beach always makes its way on board!'

### DOWN UNDER



This is Dunsborough Bay Yacht Club in Perth, Western Australia. It is the home of a Kinsman which the owner tells us was called *Pavlov's Dog* when he purchased it. Unfortunately it displays no other identifying marks, and so its origins remain a mystery as does how it came to be in Australia.



## In Conclusion

Over the years many changes have taken place in the design of the Yeoman and its sails. Some were introduced to make the boat easier to sail, others to make it safer or to meet changing legislative guidelines. Improvements have also been driven by technology – after all evolution is the name of the game. Although some have been contentious and provoked 'lively' discussion the majority have proved popular and ensured the longevity of the class.

*Running down the Bure, 2019*



*Back cover: Competitors at the 2014 YK Nationals at NBYC*



In 1969 the first Yeoman was built. This book celebrates both the boat and its owners. As with all sailing yarns it tells tales of friendships and rivalries, of successes and disasters. But most of all it tells the story of a boat that for fifty years has given both excitement and enjoyment, a boat that has been sailed around the country in all weathers. Truly, a boat for all seasons.



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