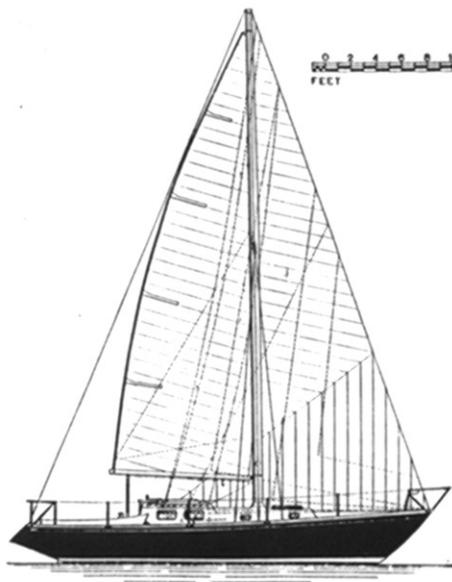


A Snapshot of our Chairman - Terry Sprake

Terry Sprake and *Morning's End*, an S&S 34, have covered 30,000 miles together. He bought her in 1987, the year he gave up full-time work to become a consultant. He was 64.

The 30,000 miles have not been clocked up pottering round the Solent or creek crawling up the East Coast. They include a full-blooded North Atlantic circuit of 10,000 miles, taking in Venezuela and Bermuda.



On the return leg, non-stop Bermuda to Falmouth, *Morning's End* was swept by a succession of gales. Terry was effectively singlehanded, his one crew incapacitated and incompetent, and for the last 1,000 miles he hand steered after vane and autopilot failure. Then the log, heads, VHF, satnav and alternator broke. Despite lying ahull or hove to for days at a time, he made the crossing in 34 days at an average speed of 85 miles per day. For the log of this cruise he won the Royal Thames Yacht Club Twinings Shield.

The other 20,000 miles have been spent JOG and RORC racing, including the odd Fastnet Race and a YM Triangle Race. To fill in idle moments he acts as race officer for the Royal Thames Yacht Club, and has gained his RYA Yachtmaster Offshore and subsequently Yachtmaster Ocean certificates. In 1992, aged nearly 70, he retired to devote more time to the sea!

Since then, despite keeping *Morning's End* up to ORC Category 0, he has competed less with the RORC and more with JOG. He has also raced a Contessa 32 in the national championships and winter series, taken part in Cork Week and Cowes Week, and planned to take part in the 1992 Europa Round the World Rally. Lack of a suitable replacement



Our Chairman shares a joke about the english weather with Juliet Olley

for *Morning's End* frustrated him but a circumnavigation remains his ultimate ambition. Meanwhile, he cofounded the Sparkman & Stephens Association while attending the 1993.

Yachting Monthly Cowes Classics. One of the driving forces behind his sailing career has been the introduction of young people to the sport. His walls are covered with trophies and awards from all over the world, but one of his proudest is the Royal Thames Young Members Cup for getting young people on the water. The mantelpiece of his home in Titchfield is covered with cards from grateful crew. As a member of the Hurlingham Yacht Club on the Thames, he not only encouraged young people, he became an active missionary on behalf of offshore cruising in the dark jungles of river motor-boating. He was so successful in both endeavours that the club made him Commodore.

His love of sailing grew out of his earliest memories as a child in Southsea, where he was born in 1923.'My enthusiasm for sail was born on the Royal Albert Yacht Club start line near Clarence Pier, from which I was enraptured watching the J-Class fleet in action. On a very memorable occasion the curate of my local church had me invited aboard Endeavour 11.'

At school in the town his talent as an artist was also fostered, anti throughout his career, he has found tithe to paint yachts anti marine scenes. He has fulfilled a steady stream of commissions from friends and others who have hearts of his abilities. As a young boy he also designed a Bunter rigged clinker dinghy with a revolutionary steam turbine outboard engine. Unfortunately for posterity neither boat nor engine was built.

Shortly after this burst of inventiveness he was sent to Beachly as an army engineering apprentice. Here he learned the importance of precise tidal calculation by swimming the mouth of the River Wye for half-crown bets.

During the war he was involved in preparations for the seaborne landings in Normandy, but it was not until after the invasion, when he was sent to India, that his sailing career really began. He sailed Sharpies in Bangalore, and RNSA 14s in Karachi. He also commissioned his first Sparkman & Stephens design, a DUKW amphibious truck (for this design, Rod Stephens was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour). Following the handover of India, he moved to Ceylon for that country's transformation into Sri Lanka. There he raced Sharpies, Dublin Bay Water Wags, Seabirds and RNSA 1.4s with the Royal Colombo Yacht Club and became Secretary of the Army Sailing Association.

Demobbed in 1948 as a REME Captain, he was soon to begin his cruising exploits as well as serious offshore racing. In 1950, when he made his first Channel crossing, French Channel ports were still severely war damaged and shoreside facilities were minimal. However, it was an opportunity to stock up with food and drink which were still severely rationed in Britain.

For this first crossing he, Harry Mitchell (now feared lost during this year's BOC Race), and a few other friends chartered a totally unsuitable 10-ton gaffer designed for the Norfolk Broads. With no lifelines, pushpit or pulpit, electronics, radio or lifesaving gear, but with antique charts, war surplus navigation instruments, ex-service foul weather gear, cotton sails, 'confidence and hope', they visited Le Havre, Cherbourg and the Channel Islands. On their return 'we smuggled in a load of long forgotten goodies which lasted well into the festive season.

Until well into the 1960s he crewed for friends on a number of yachts, including a pre-war sloop, *Witch*. It was aboard her that he introduced his future wife, Yvonne, to sailing by running aground on the Buxey. He also chartered yachts and cruised extensively from the Caledonian Canal to Biscay. He joined the Royal Thames in 1959 and became heavily involved with offshore racing and rallying, including passages across France to Spain and the Balearics.

From the mid-fifties onwards, his work took him abroad more and more. His daughter, Tamsin, was born in Venezuela and son, Stephen, in Putney. Despite increased family commitments, he managed to sail out of Rio, Buenos Aires and San Francisco.

Water sport of a different nature intervened in 1982, when he joined the Hurlingham Yacht Club and bought a 35ft wooden motor-cruiser to explore the Thames which flowed past the bottom of his garden. However, in 1983 and 1984 he took part in RTYC/NYYC Challenge Races on both sides of the Atlantic and managed to sail out of Rio, Buenos Aires and San Francisco.

In 1984, he became an owner, albeit only of a part, of a sailing cruiser for the first time.

The yacht was *Tar Baby*, which he bought with John and Elizabeth Ungley. Thirty-five foot *Tar Baby*, built just before the last war, was Charles Nicholson's favourite cruising yacht. Despite her age and nature, and despite spending much of his time abroad, Terry raced her hard in both RORC and JOG events.



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Finally, in 1987, 'with more time' he sought out and found *Morning Tide of Lymington* which he bought from the *Bristol Channel Pilot* and RYA examiner, John Hart, and renamed her *Morning's End*. 'I had found what I was looking for; an affordable, fast, comfortable and very seaworthy cruiser-racer which could be sailed shorthanded'. She is, of course, a sistership to Ted Heath's first *Morning Cloud*.

In 1989, 'after being labelled a purist by my crew', he bought a Dinghy Decca as his first concession to modern electronic navigation. Apart from routine maintenance, he made no significant changes to *Morning's End* until he prepared her for her North Atlantic adventure. For this he increased her water capacity and fuel storage and fitted vane steering, twistle poles and satnav. However, he also fitted oil lamps so that, with sextant at hand, lie could remain independent of batteries and engine.

On returning from his voyage he fitted a roller furling headsail. During the 1991 refit he dispensed with the starboard pilot berth, which was replaced with lockers, and widened the saloon settee. In 1994 he finally succumbed to GPS, though 'I rarely fail to check it against results from traditional methods'.

It would be nice to imagine such a well matched partnership as Terry and *Morning's End* lasting for many more years, but Terry, ever eager to move on, is looking for a bigger, more comfortable and faster yacht. His loyalty to S&S is not likely to be strained, though. He has his eye on a Swan 40, while in his mind he is planning a spell in warmer seas.

JJ

[Reprinted Courtesy of *Yachting Monthly*]