



OCEAN CRUISING CLUB™

OBITUARIES AND APPRECIATIONS

OBITUARIES

The Flag Officers and Committee would like to express their sympathy to the relatives and friends of members who have died during the past year. As Editor I would also like to thank those who have contributed the following appreciations, since Club records are seldom full enough for these to be compiled without additional information.

Howard Fowler

Howard Fowler, who died in February at the age of 88, will be remembered by many OCC members as our Secretary.

The first part of his career was in the Merchant Navy, where he developed an interest in navigation that was to remain with him for the rest of his life. He joined the Royal Naval Reserve, and spent his training year as a Lieutenant in HMS Daring, commanded by Lord Louis Mountbatten, where his distinctive height earned him the nickname of 'Lofty'. Among his proud possessions from that period was a pair of miniature silver oars, gained during the Mediterranean Fleet Regatta -- one gathers that with Lord Louis in charge there was no doubt about which ship was going to win the officers' whaler race!

But the Merchant Navy was sadly hit by the 1930s depression, so Howard joined a couple of colleagues in an air navigation school. Thus it was that the coming of war found him not in the Navy but in the Air Force, where he taught navigation to aircrews, much of the time in South Africa.

After the war he turned his hand to running a family restaurant, but eventually returned to teaching navigation -- this time to yachtsmen -- which he combined in due course with being secretary of the OCC. He was living then in North London but owned a small cruising yacht which he kept at Burnham-on-Crouch, and after a while, with his teaching load reduced, he and his wife Beattie took the sensible course of moving to Burnham where they were to spend several happy years. This sunny time was marred only by the gradual onset of Parkinson's disease which inevitably forced Howard to give up such activities as his yacht and the OCC. A further blow came six years ago when Beattie died and Howard had to move into a nursing home -- firstly in Essex and then near his son's home in Yorkshire. Here he was able to keep in touch with the OCC and his many friends with the help of his son John.

Howard always retained his interest in matters nautical, and after leaving the sea he remained an active member of the Company of Master Mariners. Concerned later with smaller craft, he was proud to have completed, as navigator in Griffin III, a 1000 mile voyage to Gibraltar which enabled him to become an OCC member in his own right. After retiring as secretary he was made an honorary life member.

It was said that during his time as secretary Howard never left a letter unanswered. Certainly he established a rapport with the members, many of them from distant parts of the world, that did much to establish and maintain our present far-flung membership. This he achieved with only an old manual typewriter, while also keeping the accounts and organising the functions.

Those of us who remember his work for the club will view his passing with sadness and offer our sympathy to his son and other members of his family.

