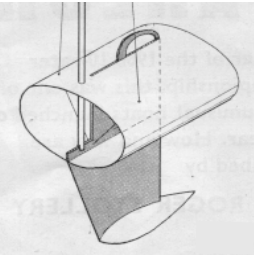


# Fred Shepherd 1931-2020



After a short spell in hospital, Fred died on March 28 from natural causes aged 88. He was a quite remarkable man, a colourful character, a very skilful craftsman, a fiercely competitive sportsman and also a model yacht designer. He was determined to do his very best at everything he tried.

He lived in Chiddingfold, Surrey and was a carpenter by trade and for most of his working life was a foreman for a local building firm, because he was so good at problem solving. He used to say that his trade was the one that corrected all the mess made by previous trades!



SIMPLER,  
LIGHTER,  
QUICKER  
CONSTRUCTION

He was a highly competitive sportsman and his first loves were tennis, badminton and cycling before he became involved in model yachting in 1964 as part of the Guildford Model Yacht Club's regeneration from the doldrums. He had no sailing experience, but quickly became one of the best skippers of that very exciting decade.

Along with the small group of new GMYC members, he started with an old dust covered Marblehead from one of the local clubs and quickly realised that he needed something more modern and so built from scratch a real heavyweight, 23 lb BEWITCHED, regarded then as the ultimate in Marblehead design.

He was part of the Guildford team which campaigned the revolutionary lightweight, bulb keeled, egg sectioned, GRP WARLORD 10 rater to win the 1966 10 rater National Championship at Fleetwood. Similarly constructed Marbleheads followed and Fred's 20lb MARCH HARE was built in a record time of a week after receiving Ray Blick's moulded GRP deck and hull shells. In his 2nd year of campaigning her, he won 14 out of 15 open meetings including the 1968 Marblehead Nationals at Hove.

He did not rest on his laurels, because he could see that there was more potential in the narrower and lighter of the trio of 'Alice in Wonderland' designs, the 18 lb WHITE RABBIT.

He built the BLACK RABBIT a little lighter and with a deeper keel (15 inches). He experimented with water skis on either side of the bow to prevent the bow burying off wind, but much more importantly, as far as Marblehead design legacy was concerned, he designed and built a 100 inch hoist rig not only because the taller, narrower sails would be more efficient aerodynamically, but because it gained extra roach sail area.





In a very light variable wind District Championship at Hove in 1970 it was devastatingly quick and Fred won the event easily. Within two weeks the MYA banned it by putting a restriction of 85 inches on the mainsail hoist, which was subsequently adopted by the International Model Yacht Racing Union and that class rule has been unchanged since then; one of Fred's legacies.



Still not satisfied, in 1969 he designed and built a very lightweight 12 lb Marblehead, ZAZA, but let the sister ship HECTOR win the 1971 Marblehead Nationals at Gosport. This design was the culmination of all his experimental developments, which had reduced displacement by nearly half in a very exciting few years. This design held the record for the lightest winning champion boat for over a decade.

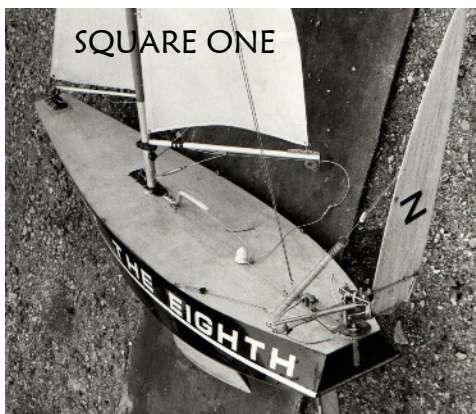
In the following year to keep his children amused, he designed not just the lines, but all of the construction detail of a very simple hard chine 36 inch, SQUARE ONE, which was published in 3 issues of the Model Boats magazine. This is his second design legacy, because amazingly the plans are still available from Model Boats (MyHobbyStore). He also designed and made the vane gear with which he won so many races and this also has often been copied by vane gear designer/builders.



He didn't build or campaign any more Marbleheads, but did one-off designs for friends in all the classes and used to assist in the tuning of these, including the A class LONGSHOT. However, he did borrow one of his 16 lb Marblehead designs, SWEET 16, to win the 1972 Marblehead Nationals at Birkenhead in the strongest of winds, where at the start of the windward leg one could not launch from the end of the lake as the waves were too big, but had to launch off the side.



His main interest moved away to countryside activities, photography and recording of birdsong etc and then he restarted cycle racing in 1986. He trained hard and in 2000 was just one and a half miles short of the National '12 hour' record for the 'veteran age' of 69, with a mileage of 232 miles. During this time he also took several Wessex Regional 12 hour records at different ages.



However, a few years later he had a bad bike crash, which left him unable to do intricate work. His hand skills eventually returned in a limited way and he was able to use his lathe in particular and make marvellous wooden trophies for many radio sailing events. He was able to turn a quick sketch into a marvellous piece of work and was always very careful to choose





MYA 'Step Up' Trophy

the right colour and grain of the timber from his great stock of different woods. Through our friendship, he had always kept in touch with the model yachting scene and the many developments over the years and on occasion visited a few local events.

To demonstrate his skill, this page shows his unique trophies, which range from club Marblehead events to open meetings and national championships for various classes and the 'Step Up' trophy presented every year at the MYA AGM for the winner of the 'best improved club' in the MYA league.

Fred died one day short of his 62nd wedding anniversary to Maureen, who has been his great supporter throughout his life and particularly in his latter years and will miss him dearly. His son David, also a record-breaking cyclist will greatly miss his dad, as will his many friends and I shall miss a very special friend.

Roger Stollery, 30<sup>TH</sup> March 2020

Fred's Big Toephy - Footy Open



Junior Footy National Champion



MYA 10r Classic Trophy

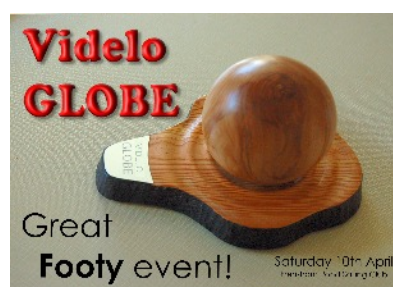


GMYC Icicle Trophy

'Spillane' Footy Open



Junior and Open BOTTLE boat Championship Trophies



Frensham Pond Sailing Club - Model Yacht Group 10 rater/Marblehead Open

