

Laurent Giles

NORMANDY CLASS Yachts

Anelor and her Sisterships



Anelor NY15 *Ex-Normandy*, septembre 1961. Photo: famille Pillet

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Anelor and her Sisterships

January 2025

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Introduction

For the 10th anniversary of the 'Association Coques en Bois ' of Pornic (May 2018) the search was resumed for other yachts of the "Normandy" class, already started in 2010.

Several owners and one other boat were present for the festivities in 2018 and since then others have made contact and have established online communities as well as meeting up on the water. An account of these activities can be found elsewhere.

From the information gathered it is reasonable to assume that about 26 Normandies were built in the '50s & '60s. The class was never produced in grp. There is no trace of a class association ever having been established, and it is probable that this is the first time the research has been undertaken in such depth.

The information on this website is made available bearing in mind that it is accessible to the general public, but additionally about forty owners, ex-owners and friends are kept informed via, and contribute to, an informal periodic newsletter. Contact has also been established with the Vertue owners website.

There has been very little published material about Normandies, but in 1958, at which stage only two or three had been built, the designer 'Jack' Laurent Giles wrote an article for Yachting World which, although out of copyright, is reproduced with the agreement of the publishers,

Information was also sent to us by the late Barry Van Geffen who had responsibility for the Laurent Giles Archives until his death in 2021. This information has been cross referenced with that found in the book 'Laurent Giles and his Yacht Designs' by Lee & Philpot (1991), which is based on much the same data and produces some anomalies which we have tried to resolve. The ownership of the archives has now returned to Laurent Giles who are unable to answer any queries for the foreseeable future.

Numerous other sources have been drawn on and thanks are conveyed to all those who have helped. The following pages give an overview of the present situation and where there is enough material concerning a boat, an individual information sheet has been produced.

Mike Holland, January 2025.

NY Class Yachts synopsis chart

Number in series	Name	Year built	Builder	1 st owner	Country	Year of latest info	Status
NY1	Blue Mink	1957	R&A Hamper	J.A.Peacock	UK	1980	in touch with grandson
NY2	Quasi	1957	Sangermani	Luigi Poggi	Italy		not known
NY3	Sula	1957	A.W.Cuthbertson	D.Ryder-Turner	Hobart, Tasmania	1957	in touch with son in CA & others in Hobart
NY4	Kestel	1957	R&A Hamper		Australia	2024	in touch with previous owner & boatyard
NY5	Gilliflower ??	1957	Chippendale Boats		UK		not known
NY6	Black Witch II	1958	Itchenor Shipyard	D.B.Parkes	UK	1966/80	not known
NY7	Bravade	1958	Chantier de la Reserve		?		not known
NY8	Calvados	1958	Harry Feltham	J.R.F.Daviel	UK	1966	in touch with son
NY9	Maalish	1959	Souter's of Cowes	T.D.Mitchell	UK	2024	In touch with owner
NY10		1959 ?	Butler ??				
NY11	Amitié	1961	P.Meffan	P.Meffan	NZ	1993	In touch with son and previous owner.Believed to be afloat
NY12	Sheesmyne II / Gilliflower	1960	A.A.Coombes		UK	1993	not known
NY13	Neptune	1960	Hansen, Denmark	Christensen	Canada / US	2022	In touch with 2 previous owners. Last seen in Port Townsend area USA
NY14	Surf	1961	A.A.Coombes	" Someone from P&G "	France ?	1961	not known
NY15	Normandy / Anelor	1961	Sibiril of Carantec	Dr Jean Pillet	France	2024	Association Coques en Bois, Pornic, Fr.
NY16	Camay	1962	Plumpton	Plumpton	UK	2019	In touch with last owner. Scrapped 2019
NY17	Karis / Madadh Cuain	1962	A.A.Coombes		UK	2024	In touch with owner
NY18	Favorita	1962	A.A.Coombes	Thornycroft	Italy	1968	in touch with grandson
NY19	Les Six Marie	1962	Sibiril of Carantec		France	2024	In touch with owner
NY20	Cresta of Wight	1963	A.A.Coombes	Lord Brabazon	UK	2024	In touch with owner
NY21	Irene	1963/8	Stewart	J.Stewart	Australia	2024	In touch with owner
NY22	Calluna	1964	A.A.Coombes		UK	2024	In touch with owner
NY23		Not built ?					
NY24	St Agnes	1965	Sibiril of Carantec		France		not known
NY25		?					
NY26	Nérée III / Arvele	1968	Sibiril of Carantec		France	2024	In touch with owner

2018

Although the 'Anelor' team of CEB had been looking for other Normandy class boats for over ten years, the project took on a more serious momentum when it was decided to find out if any were available to join us for the **10th anniversary celebrations of CEB at Pornic in 2018**. There was one boat, NY26 'Arvele', known to be based at Port Louis (Lorient) who we managed to contact and she made it to Pornic just in time for the parade. Contact was also established with the owners in the UK of NY16 'Camay' and NY22 'Calluna' whose owners came without their boats. The owner of NY20 'Cresta of Wight' was hoping to come but cancelled at the last minute, and the owner of NY21 'Irene' phoned in from Australia to wish everyone a happy birthday.



NY26 'Arvele' being led to her berth by NY15 'Anelor'. Photo credit: J Duchemin

The research continued and more contacts established.

2021. The next 'event' was the **60th anniversary of NY15 'Anelor' in September 2021**. The exact date would have been 10th September. Due to the uncertainty surrounding covid restrictions, it was decided a couple of weeks before simply to arrange a photo display in the CEB boatshed in Pornic. Having just recently made contact with the family of Dr Jean Pillet, the first owner of 'Anelor' (or 'Normandy' as she was known then), they were contacted to see if they had any photos that could be incorporated. They did, as well as an old 8mm film of the launching ceremony. Furthermore they decided to come to Pornic themselves for the weekend, and so a small event was hastily arranged for Saturday 13th September involving a trip out to sea followed by a celebration on the boats rafted up alongside the quay.

In **2023** it appeared that perhaps a few Normandies could possibly gather in Brittany. And so it was that **NY15 'Anelor'** called in at **Port Louis** during her cruise after the Semaine de Golfe in order to say 'hello' to **NY26 'Arvele'** and her new owner on about the 23rd May. Contact had recently been established with the owner of **NY19 'Les Six Marie'** up at Paimpol who was keen to join the party, but probably by car. In the end a message was received from Audierne 48hrs beforehand asking where to berth on arrival at Port Louis ! To add to the surprises, the Australian owner of **NY21 'Irene'** who was in the UK managed to find the time to catch the ferry from Portsmouth to St Malo where he hired a car and made it to Port Louis as well. So with three boats and four owners the party was assured.



NY19 'Les Six Marie'



NY15 'Anelor' arrives at Port Louis



NY26 Arvele



Back in Melbourne 'what a trip' !



On his return to Portsmouth the owner of 'Irene' went straight round to Chichester where he spent the weekend being entertained aboard NY 22 'Calluna'

While at Port Louis, the owner of 'Les Six Marie' extended an invitation to celebrate the 60th anniversary of his boat at **Ploumanac'h** in July. A date was tentatively proposed, and in the end a party was held with all living previous owners, and hosted by the sister of another who sadly died recently. A delegation from Pornic was hastily dispatched by road to represent 'Anelcor', and as Salangane, a privately owned boat, member of CEB, was cruising in the area at the time she put into Ploumanac'h for a couple of nights as well.



'Les Six Marie' as she was remembered by some of the previous owners. Note shoal draft keel, a rarity among Normandies it seems.

2024

After some serious work (replacement of the ballast bolts and the inverter cone; construction and installation of a new mast, **NY 15 'Anelor'** is once again underway at the end of June 2024. The Coques en Bois association is making up for lost time by carrying out 48 outings during the year including 2 very nice cruises.



End of work on **NY19 'Les Six Marie'** with the installation of the original wooden mast, refurbished. And then, beautiful cruises on the picturesque pink granite coast in Northern Brittany.



Work is progressing on **NY20 'Cresta of Wight'**: roof side panels, cockpit, mast...



Peter arrived with the "Yacht Club Punta Del Este" in Seattle (USA) on April 25, having successfully crossed the North Pacific from Qingdao (China) in 18 days 03 hours. Well done Peter (El Presidente)!

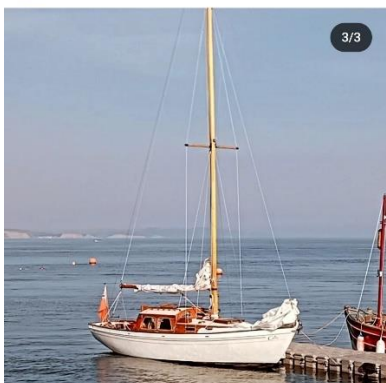
Peter has also completed an impressive list of work on NY21 'Irene':

- Dismasting using 2 yachts
- Mast and boom repairs
- Recaulking the deck



Very nice 23 day cruise for NY22 '**Calluna**' in the West Country, from Itchenor to Yarmouth and back to Itchenor.

dayskip3r
Lyme Regis (Dorset UK)



After her 2024 refit, Elise of NY26 '**Arvele**' went to sail in the summer between Corsica and the French Riviera...but not on 'Arvele'!



70th Anniversary Projet. And finally, a (crazy?) but serious project is being studied for 2026 to mark the 70th anniversary of the design of the Normandy Class yacht by 'Jack' Laurent Giles.

The general idea is that interested British Normandies gather on the south coast - cross the English Channel to join the French fleet in North Brittany - sail together, perhaps to Pornic !

List of Existing Normandy as of end 2024

The latest count of Normandys known to exist, and mostly active around the world, stands at thirteen of the twenty-six believed to have been built. Outside of CEB, there are more than 30 contacts, mainly owners or ex-owners who stay in touch via a newsletter, and some are now actively found on social networks, thus helping to keep the Normandy spirit alive around the world.

A summary of the active fleet, under restoration or for sale at the end of 2024:

France.	NY15 'Anelor' NY19 'Les Six Marie' NY26 'Arvele'	Pornic Paimpol Port Louis
UK.	NY09 'Maalish' NY17 'Madadh Cuain' NY20 'Cresta of Wight' NY22 'Calluna'	Bembridge Scotland E.Coast Plymouth Chichester
Antipodes & North America.	NY04 'Kestel' (for sale) NY21 'Irene' NY11 'Amitié' (supposedly active) NY13 'Neptune' (active ?) 'Galatea M' (stretched Normandy) 'Ariel' (supposedly a Normandy)	Sorrento, Melbourne Melbourne Christchurch, NZ. Port Townsend USA Sydney Melbourne

Normandy Class Yachts (1956 – 1968)

In addition to information previously available, Lloyds Register of Yachts is available on line and has produced some useful data as regards the earlier Normandies. The work of the Lloyds Register Foundation is hereby recognized and appreciated.

In some cases this has led to further lines of enquiry resulting in a fuller picture of the life of the boats in question, without yet establishing their present whereabouts. The full registers were only produced up until 1980, with the editions from 1967 – 1973 not available on line. There was no obligation for a boat to be registered and if there was no sign of life after a certain time then the entry was discontinued.

Below is a summary of information gathered for most of the boats.



NY1	BLUE MINK	1956
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Built in **1956/57** by R&A Hamper of Portsmouth for a Sussex business man who kept the boat at **Itchenor** at least until 1966 but probably until **1970** when he had a new boat built, called 'Blue Mink II'. Contact has now been established with his grandson through Itchenor sailing club, next to where NY22'Calluna' is moored.

" Blue Mink " then sailed out of **Hamble** for five years and then sold in **1975** to a Royal Navy man who took her up to Pinmill on the East Coast. He only kept the boat for two years before selling her on.

From **1975 – 1980** 'Blue Mink' was in the Thames estuary and the Medway with several owners in quick succession. The last registered owner, in **1980**, sailed out of **Gillingham** for a year before his untimely death in Florida. There is no news of 'Blue Mink' after this.

NY2	QUASI	1957
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Built by Sangermani shipyard of Lavagna, Italy, one of the most renowned Italian boatyards for its yachts, both classic and technically advanced. Cesare Sangermani Jnr., patron of the

CONSTRUZIONE 96
"QUASI,"

Data Dichiarazione di Costruzione 19-10-1956 n° 134
Impostazione ufficiale RINA 26-10-1956

Caratteristiche principali:

Linea di costruzione	mc. 8.46
Linea di galleggiamento	" 6.55
Linea di costruzione	" 2.38
Immersione	" 1.58

Acquistata dall'ing. Luigi Poggi - tra J. Poggi, 10 Ge. Quinto
Prezzo £ 1.350.000

Stazza totale	mc. 11.968	T.S.	4.23
Stazza lorda	" 14.623	"	5.16
Reduzione	" 0.941	"	0.34
Stazza netta	" 13.682	"	4.82

Peso bulso in ghisa di (vedi Conto 93) 0 = 621
Varata il 23-6-1957 11 = 197

Canack Lipo BS 2 HP 15 N° 140769

boatyard until his recent death in May 2018, provided a copy of the original invoice in the name of Luigi Poggi, no doubt the renowned sailor and crew member aboard "Italia", gold medal winner in the 8m² class in the 1936 Olympic games. He said that his father knew the whole team very well. The invoice is reproduced here by kind permission of Giacomo Sangermani, who, with his brother, now runs the business.

Current situation unknown. (January 2025)

NY3	SULA	1957
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'Sula' was supposedly built in **1957** by A.W.Cuthbertson of Hobart for David Ryder-Turner of Hutchins School, Hobart. However, after extensive enquiries there is no evidence that 'Sula' was in fact built.

This is backed up by the fact that Alf Cuthbertson himself died in 1958, and also that DR-T had ordered a Dragon to be built in 1957 by Geoff Cuthbertson, the son, who took over the business.

The Lloyds entry for 'Sula' does continue, unchanged, until 1960, but interestingly has no details of engine or sails.

NY4	KESTEL	1957
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Origin uncertain. Believed to be NY4. The last known owner kept her for 8 years (2009-2017) Sold to someone who transported her to a yard near Melbourne where she is now considered to be abandoned and looking for someone to restore her.

<https://woodenboatshop.com.au/Normandy-Class>



Sailing area : Sydney, Australia 2009 - 2017, currently on dry land near Melbourne.

(January 2025)

NY5 ? 1957

NY5	?	1957
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LG archives say she was built by Chippendale boats and called 'Gilliflower', but this is unconfirmed and conflicts with NY12 of the same name.

NY6 'Black Witch II' 1959

NY6	BLACK WITCH II	1959
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Built Itchenor Shipyard **1958** and kept at **Bucklers Hard** on the Beaulieu river, Western Solent.

In **1962** ownership was transferred to a gentleman who sailed out of **Warsash** where he was a member of Warsash sailing club. He owned the boat until **at least 1966**.

From **1974** there is no entry relating to this boat, but a sail number **152Y** attributed to a boat called 'Black Witch II' continues up until the last issue in 1980. Contact has recently been established with someone who owned this boat from 1972 -'78 and kept her at Barry, S.Wales. Awaiting developments.

NY7 'Bravade' 1958

NY7	BRAVADE	1958
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Built at the Chantier de La Réserve according to the Laurent Giles Archives.

We assume that it may be the La Réserve construction site in Nice (France) but this boat yard is closed and we have no further information.

NY8	CALVADOS	1959
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Built in 1958 by Harry Feltham of Portsmouth for an architect from Brighton who kept her until 1960, sailing in the Solent region.



His son, who lives in Canada, found and shared these photos.

The 'Calvados' had two successive owners who both sailed from Warsash until at least 1966, after which there is no sign of the vessel.

January 2025

NY9	MAALISH	1959
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Owned by the current proprietor of A.A.Coombes Boatyard of Bembridge, IOW. Despite the fact that Coombes built 6 Normandies, "Maalish" was built for his parents in 1958 by W.A.Souter & Sons of Cowes, IOW.



Sailing area : Solent since construction

(January 2025)

NY10	BUTLER	1959
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No knowledge. LG Archives simply say 'Butler' 1959 but with the order number of NY13

NY11	AMITIE	1961
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« Amitie » 8,5 mètres, was built between 1962 and 1965 by Dr Peter Meffan of Nelson, N.Z. In 1975 she was bought by a Mr Nicholl who kept her till 1993. He says "A beautiful little boat that had a great influence on our family. "



Photo : « Amitié » passing through the entrance of Lyttleton Harbour, Christchurch. NZ.
Present owner identified and assumed to be still in NZ.

Sailing area : Lyttleton, New Zealand. (January 2025)

NY12	GILLIFLOWER	1960
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1960 The first of six Normandies built by built by A.A.Coombes of Bembridge.

Christened '**Sheesmyne II**' (ref. Lloyds register and Laurent Giles archives, number NY 12.)

1960 – '63 Owned by Peter James of Bembridge. (Lloyds register)

1964 - '73 Under new name of '**Gilliflower**' owned by Col. J.De Vere Hunt of Yarmouth and sailed out of that port. (Lloyds register)

1974 – 1984 situation unknown. No mention in Lloyds register from '74 onwards.



Gilliflower on passage from Brittany to Poole, 1986



1984 - '89 'Gilliflower' was bought in Lymington by John Walden, a Dorset business man, who completely renovated her in a barn and then sailed her from Poole Harbour for five years.

(Photos from «Memoirs of a Moonraker" by John Walden. With permission from his sister-in law and the publisher Mereos Books of Cirencester.)

1990 - '93 situation unknown.

1993 -'94 Owned by Richard B who bought the boat in the Southampton area and took her up to Essex for renovation. He said in Practical Boat Owner 2015:

" By 1993 I had sufficient funds for a 28ft Laurent Giles Normandy class called 'Gilliflower ' . She was an elegant yacht, needing a complete cosmetic makeover.

She sailed like a witch, and was a successful restoration that I re-sold the following year ." He says the new owner took her to St Osyth Boatyard.

Present situation unknown (January 2025)

NY13	NEPTUNE	1960
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Neptune was built 1960 to the order of Ib Windfeld-Hansen, patron of a large textile factory in Vejle, Denmark as a wedding present for his daughter Alice & her husband "Jack" Christensen .



In 1961 the boat was imported to Canada, Vancouver, where "Jack" Christensen had been living since 1946. The boat was then taken over by another member of the Vancouver yachting community who owned her for about a decade and cruised her extensively in the area. He says the boat was built by millwrights in the family factory, planked with Honduras mahogany copper riveted to oak steam bent frames...she was a delightful boat and was immaculate when he sold her...

Neptune then moved south across the border to Puget Sound, off Seattle, USA where she was somewhat neglected for a few years. From 1992 -7 another owner restored her to her former glory. He reports that he last saw 'Neptune' two years ago "pitifully neglected" near Port Townsend.



Neptune in 1996

Sailing area presumed to be Puget Sound, USA
(January 2025)

NY14	SURF	1961
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Information from two people who used to work for Alan Coombes suggest that 'Surf' was built for someone who worked for Proctor & Gamble and was sent down to the South of France.

The other information they supplied concerned NY18 'Favorita'.

NY15	ANELOR	1961
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Ex-‘Normandy’



Anelor is classified as a « Bateau d'Intérêt Patrimonial » (Of National Heritage Interest.)

She was one of several normandies built by Ernest Sibiril of Carantec. His son Alain Sibiril led the construction with the help of Louis Tanguy, Jean Guivarch and others.

In 2007 'Anelor' was offered by her former owner to the Nautical Club of Pornic, who in 2010 transferred her to the « Association Coques en Bois » The boat was completely renovated between 2010 – 2013.

In 2021 contact was made with the family of Dr Pillet, the original owner, and they came to Pornic to celebrate the 60th anniversary since construction.

2023: participation to the NY gathering in Port-Louis (France).

Navigations: the boat sails approximately 800 to 1000 miles per year mainly between Ile d'Yeu, the Bay of Bourgneuf and the Bay of Quiberon.

(January 2025)

NY16	CAMAY	1962
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Built by Bill & Eileen Punton, with help from Bill Campbell, and first registered on 29th April 1965 at Blyth, Northumberland.

Mr & Mrs Punton built the hull in a barn next to their house in Prudhoe (about 35 miles inland). Completion & fitting out was undertaken at Bill Campbell's yard, adjacent to the Royal Northumberland YC, Blyth.

Sailing area - Blyth, N.E. England.

NB. Sadly Camay was scrapped in 2019. The owner, Jim Bell, kindly offered the sails to the Association Coques en Bois to replace those of 'Anelcor' NY15, which were well worn, until new ones can be made.

(January 2025)

NY17	MADADH CUAIN	1962
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Ex-Karis

Built by A.A.Coombes 1962.

Sailed for many years around Lochalsh / Skye. Sold to present owner and known to be on East coast of Scotland and still active. The owner says he sails about 600 -700 miles a year.



NY18	FAVORITA	1962
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Probably the third Normandy built by Alan Coombes of Bembridge. The two gentlemen referred to under 'Surf' NY14 also mentioned that 'Favorita' was built for a member of the Thornycroft family and was taken down to the mediterranean.

Contact has been established with the grandson of the original owner who says that the boat was kept at Portofino and then moved to Porto Santo Stefano where she was sold in about 1968.

NY19	LES SIX MARIE	1962
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Built by Ernest Sibiril

Here is the history as recounted by Mr. Bertrand Quere, 2nd owner, to the current owner:



“Mr Bougain, the 1st owner, had a 6m cutter built in 1958 from the Ernest Sibiril shipyards in Carantec. Looking for a bigger boat, E.Sibiril proposed a Normandy, a renowned boat to a Laurent Giles design, belonging to Doctor Pillet of Morlaix. By accompanying Mr Bougain, who was very demanding, to the yard, I was able to follow closely the construction of the boat.

1964 Launched in July and set off on a cruise to Dartmouth under her current name ..unchanged from "Les Six Marie". The 1st owner had 6 daughters named Marie-, hence the name of this boat.

1969 – 1972 the boat was laid up at the yard in Carantec.

1972 - bought by myself and my friend Yves Marie Guegan.

1975 - having come ashore to enter the pilotage service of the Seine, and with my friend Y.M. Guegan working in Rouen, the boat was based in Le Havre then Trouville.

1981- Sold at Tréguier

1981 - 2005 at least three other owners.

2005 – Bought by the current owner who regularly participates in the very friendly Classic Channel Regatta. Work carried out by Marc Nicolas, shipwright of Le Légué (planking, deck, keel bolts changed 2016). Engine Lombardini 17hp.

2023 – Came from Paimpol to Port-Louis to participate very actively to the Normandy Class Rally!

Homeport Paimpol, North Brittany.

(January 2025)

NY20	CRESTA OF WIGHT	1963
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Built by A.A.Coombes, Bembridge , Isle of Wight. 1963

Owners since construction :

1963-1972 Lord Brabazon (Derek Moore-Brabazon)

1975-1991 Richard C.

1991-2000 Robin J.

2000-2006 Marek L. (Newhaven)

2006-2012 Peter C.

2012-2018 Roger C-O – moored on the Tamar, Plymouth.

2018 sold

2022- The new owner Paul is renovating the boat.

Sailing area : Before 2006 Solent / South Coast , and then S.W. England – Exmouth / Plymouth

(January 2025)

NY21	IRENE	1963
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Built by J.Stewart in Australia between 1965 and 1968. The four subsequent owners all know each other, and there is even one who would like to buy back the boat as he misses it so much ! A regular entrant in the Geelong Y.C. Classic Regatta she is always well placed, so Laurent Giles would be well satisfied when in 1958 he said about the design « will it be fast ? Wait and see ».

Sailing area : Anywhere from Melbourne, Australia.

Masterfully led by Peter, 'El Presidente' of the Normandy Gang!



NY22	CALLUNA	1964
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Built by A.A.Coombes 1964.

Complete renovation 2017-2022

Ownership records available since construction.

Owned since 2017 by Kieran M., one of the very active members of the Normandy Gang.
Complete renovation in 2022, lots of cruises since, and no doubt more to come...



Sailing area – Chichester, Solent, South-West UK coast

NY23 ? 1964

NY23	?	1964
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No knowledge. Perhaps not built.

The information provided in the Laurent Giles Archives refers actually to NY22

NY24 'Sainte Agnès' 1965

NY24	SAINTE AGNES	1965
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No information and Sibiril (or rather Sibiril Technologies as it was renamed) has been permanently closed since March 2022.

NY25 ? 1968

NY25	?	1968
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No knowledge. The information given in the Laurent Giles archives for this boat actually applies to NY26.

NY26	ARVELE	1968
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Ex-NEREE III



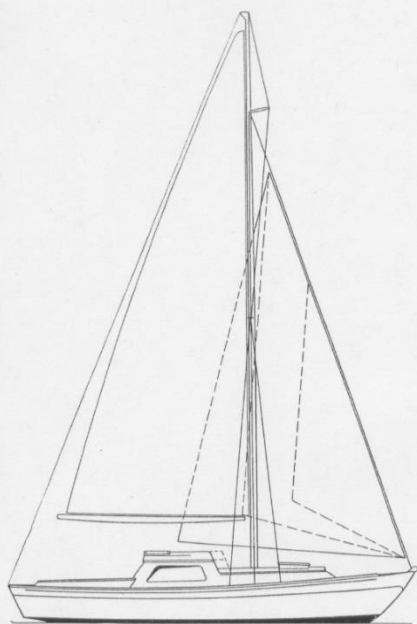
'Arvele' is the Normandy Class NY 26 built in 1968 by Ernest Sibiril of Carantec.

It was bought in '70 by Doctor Renard who sold it in '98. The boat was present at the 10th meeting Coques en Bois, Pornic. Sold in 2019 but still based in Lorient.

2023: The new owner, another active member of the Normandy Gang, led the Normandy Rally Fleet in Port-Louis.

Sailing area : Southern Brittany

(January 2025)



PO 016 A.

DESIGN BY LAURENT GILES & PARTNERS

NORMANDY CLASS

NEW 21.5FT L.W.L. SLOOP

By J. Laurent Giles, R.D.I

L.O.A.	...	...	27.8 ft
L.W.L.	...	...	21.5 ft
Beam	...	...	7.8 ft
Draft	...	4.25 or 5.25 ft	
Sail Area	...	...	343 sq. ft
T.M.	...	...	6 tons
Displacement	...	...	3.5 tons
Ballast	...	...	1.56 tons

DESIGNERS always like to imagine themselves able to produce better and better boats. If we did not have this confidence we should die of exhaustion and morbid self-pity. There is also the public which buys the boats which we design: half of them believe that a new boat will be a better boat—bless them, for they give zest to life; the other half are firmly convinced that a new design is a risk only to be eradicated by long and arduous trial (by others); these buy the good old friends—bless them, too, for they give grist to the mill with a minimum of thought, work and anxiety!

So, having a staunch and trusted “good old friend” in the “Vertue Class,” we

decided that it would be nice to start a new line. After all, the original “Vertue” *Andrillot* was put on paper in 1935 and stands in our boat list as No. 15. So, after a lapse of 20 years, one felt the urge to try again, to make a fresh start for those who believe in progress. Rather slowly in the midst of considerable preoccupations, a new boat was put on the board. At this time the “Vertue” numbers were running up to the 80s, they are now in the 90s, and our overall boat numbers gave the first of the new boats the No. 304; so it can safely be said that they belong to a different era. After some distasteful class names had been chewed over and spat out we settled for “Normandy.” It fell with appropriate

modesty into our other stock design names —“Biscay,” “Channel,” “Brittany”—and it is also the name of that corner of the parish of Lymington in which I live.

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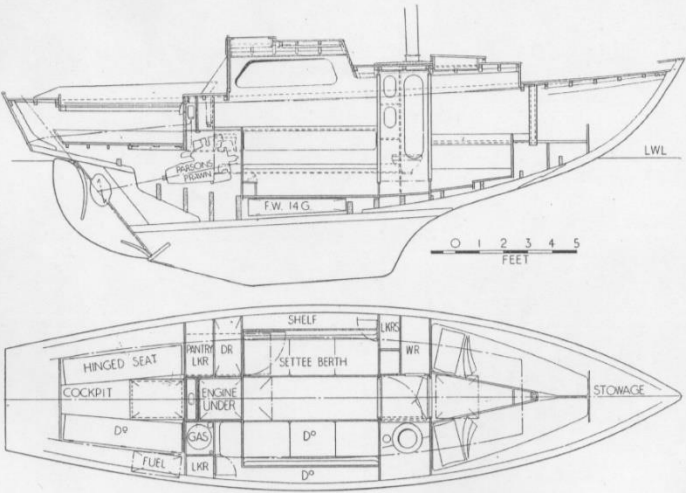
Secondly, some slight economy of construction has been possible. For instance, scantlings have been slightly reduced and the basic model has a simple deck-edge with footrail in place of bulwarks.

Thirdly, the sail area has been reduced, and that and the rigging has been simplified. This reflects on first cost, on maintenance and on handling.

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The accommodation has been tackled as a comprehensive range of alternatives. We felt that we could, at any time, revert to any of the well-tried variants used in the “Vertues” but that it was time to offer some rather different ideas. It was our idea that the “Normandy” would generally lead a less strenuous life than her older and tougher sister, and to begin with we laid her out with a larger cockpit. This is to some extent basic because it has allowed us to incorporate as standard the

(Continued on page 139)



March, 1958

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NORMANDY CLASS (Continued)

Parsons "Prawn" power unit, and the bulkhead between doghouse and cockpit which is an essential part of the "standard" design of hull and deck works. This much, at least, in such a conception of stock design must be kept unaltered, or the idea of building to standard plans breaks down. Within the accommodation space, subject to the essential requirements of mast support (for the mast is stepped on deck) and of the need to pitch bulkheads on the standard timber spacing, certain variations of subdivision are permissible.

The various layouts which we have adopted revolve around lavatory and galley positions. Thus there are forward and midship positions of lavatory; the former generally in conjunction with minor accommodation, forward; the latter where the forward accommodation is more or less of the forecabin type, in which space has been gained by doubling up the galley with the lavatory, which is placed under the cook's seat.

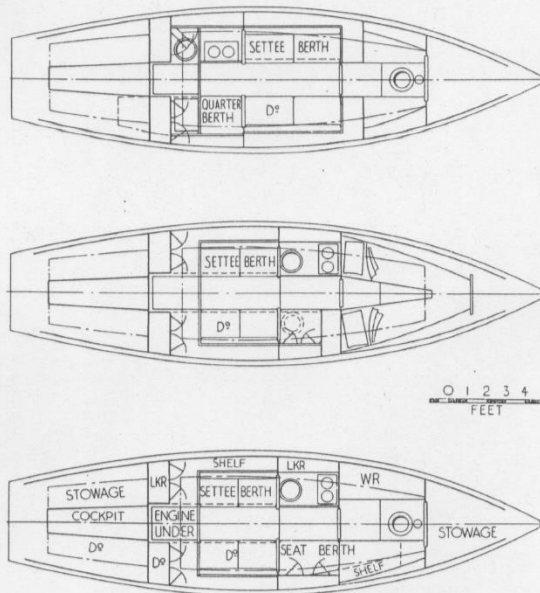
Now this is a fundamental point; should the cook stand or sit? We have to remember that we are dealing with a boat which,

if paralleled to bird recognition gauges of size, would be classified as "very small"—that is, next to "minute," the smallest of all. The effect of this on the galley is that even if we provide standing headroom in the after part with a doghouse, the side deck is so low that the stove is forced down to a height which no housewife would accept. So it may be argued that the cook has to sit even at the conventional after galley. Why not then a "sitting" galley up forward where the ascending and descending angels on Jacob's Ladder neither interfere nor are given in interference?

With the galley at the forward end of the saloon it is still not so forward a position as to render the galley unusable in reasonable weather at sea, nor is the cook any less in and out of the saloon party than in the conventional position aft. The saloon settees benefit by being less pinched at the fore end. Galley ventilation is possibly better this way, certainly for as long as the forehatch can be kept at work, since the normal air stream goes through the boat from aft.

Finally, we set ourselves determinedly to the solution of the æsthetic problem. The "Normandy" was to be as handsome a little yacht as we knew how to make her. We had our self-imposed standards of space below decks but these must be fulfilled with yet something better than no offence to the eye.

Two "Normandy's" were afloat last season—*Blue Mink* at Itchenor and *Quasi* at Portofino. Both have won the hearts of their owners. I have sailed *Blue Mink* once or twice and she seems a promising little boat; she may be fast, but that remains to be seen.



March, 1958

139

NORMANDY CLASS

New 21.5 ft lwl sloop

by J.Laurent Giles RDI.

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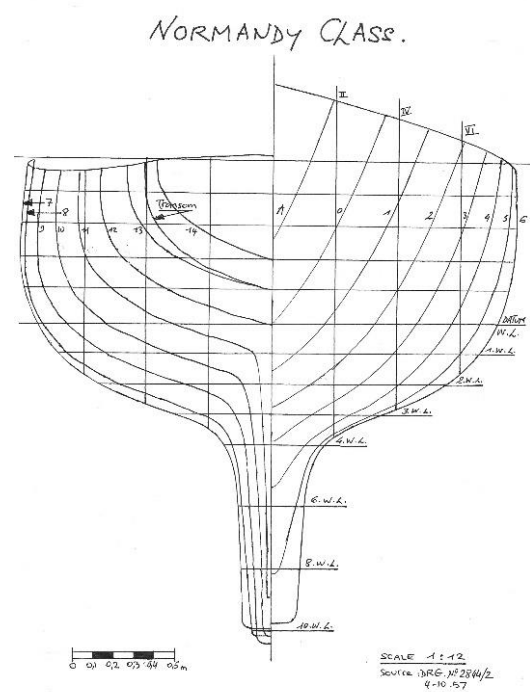
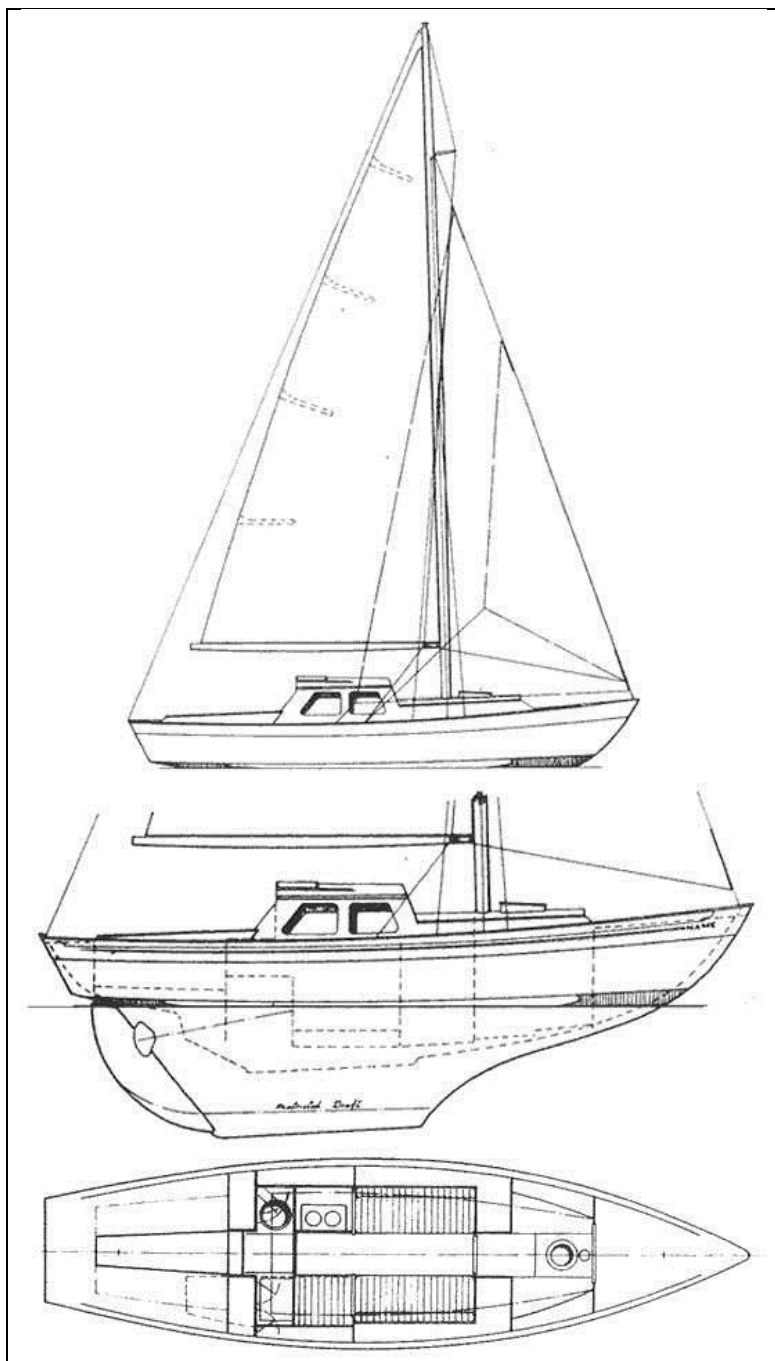
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March 1958



THE VERTUE DESIGN DYNASTY PART V

(extract from Vertue News Summer 2024 courtesy of Roger Robinson)

THE NORMANDY CLASS

The Normandy Class **Calluna** pictured visiting the River Dart recently.



By 1958 the Laurent Giles design practice had already produced a number of ‘stock’ designs, as well as updating the evergreen Vertue, and many celebrated one-off commissions. However, demand for their latest ‘class’ yacht, the RNSA 24, was tailing off, so the Partners decided to create a new ‘line’.

‘Series Production’ wooden cruising yachts were not a new idea. For instance, T. Harrison Butler had seen 48 of his ‘Z 4 tonners’ built by 1939. There were the Maxwell Blake ‘Deben 4 tonners’, the Deben ‘Cherubs’ and, incredibly, Dan Webb had built 70 ‘Blackwater Sloops’ to their own design, in Maldon at the head of the Blackwater River in Essex. There were also Yachting Monthly ‘5 Tonners’, Yachting World ‘5 Tonners’ and another boatyard on the South coast Hamble River produced their own ‘Luke ‘5 Tonners’. Perhaps the attractive 18’ ‘Lymington L’ class yachts, that Giles had developed into Andrillot and Wanderer II in the winter of 1934, could also be said to belong to this range of handy inshore cruising yachts?

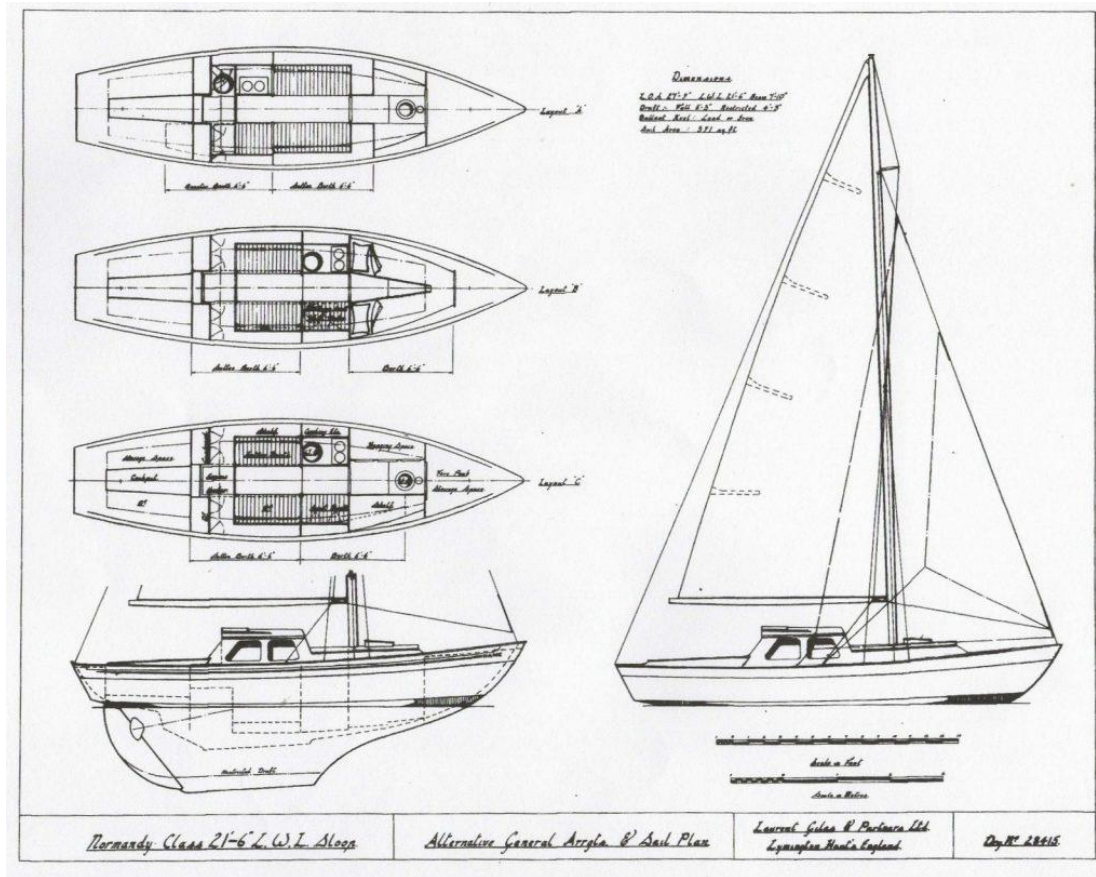
Other, larger cruising yacht designs had emerged from the little design office on Quay Hill in the quaint waterside market town of Lymington. The original Brittany now had 20 sister-ships, the Channel Class numbered 7 boats, and the early ‘motor-sailer’ Peter Duck design was heading well into the forties. However, the Wanderer Class had yet to be conceived, and I will be revisiting their origins in another article, and the grp hulled Vertues were still over 20 years away.

But in 1958 ‘The Partners’ now saw a potential demand for a slightly larger development of the Vertue, and Jack Giles wrote about some of their thought processes in an article in the March edition of Yachting World. The new boat would be ‘sensibly bigger’ than her older cousin; longer and with more beam. She was to have a counter stern and more freeboard, but she would also have less displacement. This was partly achieved by reducing the scantlings, but with the same waterline length of 21’6” these boats give the impression of floating rather more lightly ‘on’ the water, rather than ‘in’ it. This was certainly the impression I took away with me when Kieran Moore very kindly agreed to show me aboard his beautiful Normandy Calluna, here in Devon, recently.





Normandy Class study drawings.



In the article, Jack Giles went on to say that ‘it is difficult to write of the Normandy without comparison with the Vertue’. With series production in mind the designers came up with three accommodation layout variations, all limited by the fixed set of bulkhead positions and all with the much larger cockpit than the Vertue.

One of these shows a conventional layout with the galley aft and heads forward in the focsle. Another similar layout varies the position of the galley to show it at the forward end of the saloon, abaft the deck-stepped mast, with the heads forward again. Incredibly, the third option suggested that it might be acceptable to provide two full-length berths in the focsle, and install the heads underneath the cook’s seat, in the saloon! I wonder if anyone ever took up this extraordinary design ‘option’?

Moving swiftly on to the design of the rig, this followed the general approach that these boats might “lead a less strenuous life than the tougher Vertue”. It was decided to opt for the much simpler and smaller three-quarter bermudan rig with jumper-struts and a single backstay to the end of the counter, thereby eliminating the need for runners of any kind. There was also clearly no need for any inner forestay. This is also the rig used

aboard the RNSA 24 class, although they, as an ostensibly ‘racing’ class were provided with running backstays to stiffen the foretriangle.

It will be noticed that in profile the hull design was following the trend of cutting away the forefoot forward of the ballast keel, just like the RNSA 24’, and of course the famous Myth of Malham herself, presumably to reduce wetted surface area and therefore drag.

With greater freeboard, and a larger, longer cockpit, a typical Giles ‘sawn-off’ counter stern and the large doghouse, there is the feeling of being aboard a much larger yacht than the Vertue. It seems unbelievable that the two boats have the same waterline length. Down below, the illusion is further developed with light flooding into the main saloon from the four, large, doghouse windows, and pair of forward-facing lights to keep an eye on the foredeck and heads’ls. However, apart from having ‘Vertual genes’ in their dna, there are also clear similarities in hull profile between these boats and stunningly elegant Brittany class from the late 1930’s.

I have little doubt that these Normandys do indeed sail as quickly as Giles hoped, and I will try and persuade some current owners to tell us more about this in due course. But there is no doubt at all in my mind that Jack Giles succeeded in designing **“As handsome a little yacht as we know how to make her!”**

Laurent Giles Normandy Class Yachts
by Mike Holland

“Apart from what we have read in the Yachting World article of 1958, very little else seems to have been published about the class. However, for about the last 8-10 years an association in Pornic, which has been in possession of NY15 Anelor (ex ‘Normandy’) since 2008, has been researching the history and present status of these boats. Information has been taken from Lee & Philpott, the Laurent Giles Archives,(courtesy of the late Barry Van Geffen,) Lloyds Register of Yachts plus multiple sources on the internet such as sale adverts, club reports etc.

The full results of this research can be seen on the website in English and French <https://coquesenbois.com/anelor/> where you can scroll to the bottom of the page to view the information.

'Anelor' was the first boat donated to the association launched at the Ernest Sibiril shipyard in Carantec on September 10, 1961.

The Normandy yachts 'Anelor' ahead of 'Arvele' in Pornic, southern Brittany, in 2018.



Photo Jean Duchemin

There were about 26 Normandies built between 1956 and 1968. This was when GRP was radically changing the situation, but the Normandies were only ever produced in wood. Interestingly, the first owner of NY15 in France had the mast made of Aluminium, another 'new' development in yacht construction.

In the UK the boats were mostly built by small yards in the Solent and Chichester Harbour area, usually just one offs. Several were built in the Antipodes, one in Denmark and one in Italy. There may be others.

Two boatyards produced several Normandies. From 1960 – '64 Alan Coombes of Bembridge built six. Ben Coombes says his grandfather was originally going to build Folkboats, but decided he could make more money from Normandies.

The yard of Ernest Sibiril of Carantec, Brittany, built at least three or maybe four. The first of which was NY15 in 1961, and the last was NY26 in 1968. There is no evidence of any Normandies being built after this date. One of the French boats, NY19 Les Six Marie is the only shoal draft version found so far.

The standard rig specified by Giles was fractional, but he did draw up plans in 1962 for a masthead rig for les Six Marie and NY 21 Irene in Australia.

In the end the former settled for fractional rig (would this be linked to the fact that she was shoal draft?) but the plans were used for NY26 'Arvele', also built by Sibiril, in 1968. These are the only two boats thus fitted as far as is known to date.

Traces have been found of over half the fleet and several have managed to get together either on the water or via social media. The search continues.

External Links

Association Coques en Bois, Pornic

<https://coquesenbois.com>

Lloyd's Register of Yachts online

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk>