

Part Six: Towards the end of an Era at Poole 'Au Revoir'

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BCC Ward a flying boat enthusiast living in Parkstone, noted that during this period as many as 4 were moored together at Poole, having flown in, often with BOAC personnel brought back, before heading to Hythe, and then to the *breakers* !

First back to Poole was *G-ADHL Canopus* in the Autumn of 1946, and coinciding with delivery of the last set of Hythes. A little later, others followed: *G-AFRA Cleopatra* on 4th. November. Next *G-ADUV Cambria* & *G-AEUF Cameronian*. Capt. James Peers brought in *G-ADVB Corsair* January 1947; then sadly witnessed its scrapping at R.J.Coley & Sons. The 3 former QEA C-Class that had been swapped with BOAC *G-AFBJ Carpentaria* (also in January), *G-AFBL Cooe*, and *G-AEUI Coorong* (Feb.) were dismantled. [Later their counterpart *G-AETV Coriolanus* was scrapped at Rose Bay.] Meanwhile, the Poole stalwarts *G-AFKZ Cathay* and *G-AFCT Champion* finished the routine weekly service to Lisbon. Also, *G-ADUW Castor* wound up the last remaining easterly section of the Horseshoe service between Calcutta & Cairo. Although *G-AEUD Cordelia* was the last to be dismantled *G-ADHM Caledonia* was last home fittingly, with Capt. Horn and his crew (leaving Durban on 12th. March), to then depart Poole at the beginning of April on its final flight to Hythe.

Picture: *G-ADVB Corsair*
brought to Poole Harbour
by Captain James Peers...

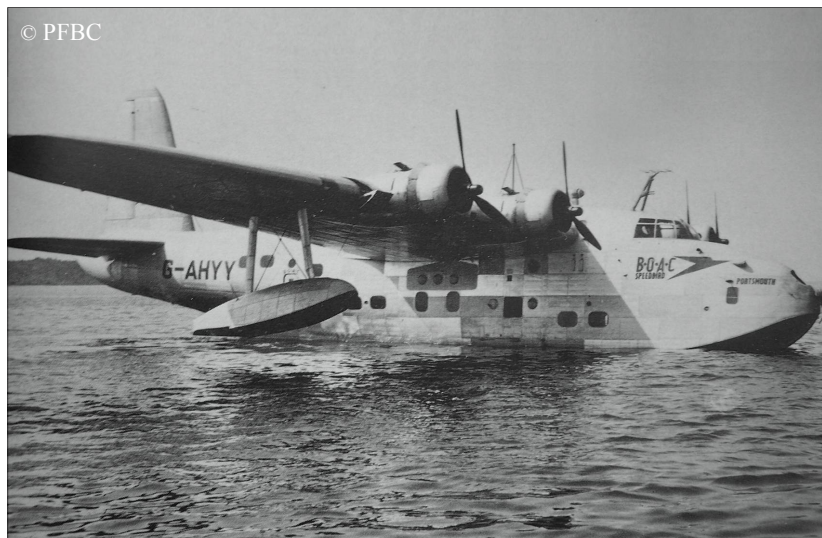
Photo. by Sidney Batting
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The harsh winter weather of 1946/47 mirrored the great freeze of January 1940 when the C-Class were moored at Poole. A few C-Class after being returned eg *Corsair*, were necessarily brought up the slipway at the former RAF Hamworthy to be checked out for icing, and to make sure that they were still airworthy to be readied for the short hop over to Hythe. *Canopus* had been offered to Poole Council, and *Cathay* to the Science Museum but both these authorities had declined, so that by the end of April 1947 all BOAC's Empire C-Classes had been broken up, leaving only G-Class *Golden Hind* !

By May, the profile of Poole's Flying Boats was changing with arrival of the first of nine *Sandy 5s* *G-AHYY Portsmouth*, which was delivered to Poole just prior to the appearance of another new type - the Solent 2 with *G-AHIM Scarborough*.

The eight others were *G-AHZA* → *G-AHZG Penzance*, *Portland*, *Pembroke*, *Portmarnock*, *Portsea*, *Poole* and *Pevensey* with *G-AJMZ Perth* later as replacement for *G-AHYZ Perth* - which had been destroyed (testing) by fire before delivery.



Picture: *G-AHYY Portsmouth*
on the Moorings off Salterns,
- with the island of Brownsea
glimpsed in the background...

Sandringham 5 ~ *Portsmouth*
was later dismantled in 1957,
at the former RAF Hamworthy

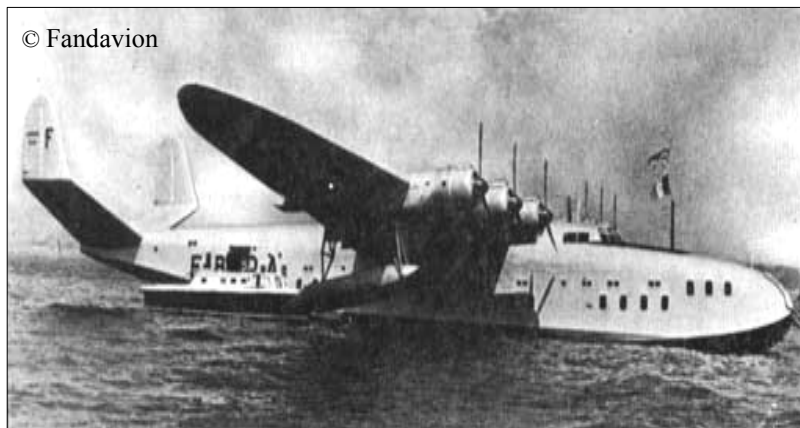
On the 2nd. May BOAC introduced the Sandringham 5 Plymouth Class into service on the Poole-Bahrain-Karachi route. The next leg where the Hythes were again replaced was to Rangoon and Singapore - and the link to Hong Kong in June .

The Sandringham 5s were also deployed upon proving flights to Japan early in 1948 with the service linked on 5th. April so the return leg was through to Southampton taking 7 days from [Iwakuni](#): In due course this was extended on to Tokyo.

Another set of Sandringhams passed through Poole: The three of these were Sandringham Mk 7s *Bermuda Class* ~ so named as they had been intended to replace the ex-Poole Boeing 314As flying the Bermuda - Baltimore route until 1946. [G-AKCO St. George](#), [G-AKCP St. David](#) & [G-AKCR St Andrew](#) were placed on BOAC Far East services (1947 to 1950). Yet during the Summer the fate of BOAC at Poole was sealed with a decision to relocate to Southampton /new facilities: Consideration of this had first been reported in April 1946, when all BOAC's premises by Poole Quay had been vacated. BOAC's Flying Boat services at Poole were considered too costly, the harbour runways too constricted and pressurised. In advance, work began on BOAC's new facility at [Berth 50](#) opp. Southampton's Eastern docks and [Hythe](#) was updated.

Flying Boat Services were dwindling across a wider front Pan Am Flying Boat operations were terminated in Oct. 1945. Subsequently [NC18612 Capetown Clipper](#) was sold, then completely overhauled and renamed as the [Bermuda Sky Queen](#) and used for Charter: On one such flight to Poole from New York, the passengers visited London leaving *BSQ* at Poole... On 12th. October 1947 they re-boarded for a return trip to Baltimore via Foynes but encountered fuel-sapping headwinds which forced the crew to ditch by the coastguard cutter *George M Bibb* to save everyone but with the loss of this aircraft. An accident Inquiry focussed on overloading but the incident marked an end of flying boat visitors to Poole from abroad.

In August of 1947 KNILM Catalina *PK-TCD* called at Poole - but the reasons for this unusual visitor remain obscure... [French Latécoère 631 F-BDRA](#) had completed a hop over the harbour on 15th. July 1947, but this too had been a finale !



Picture: Latécoère 631 *F-BDRA* was required for French flights via the S. Atlantic route to the Antilles, carrying 65 passengers

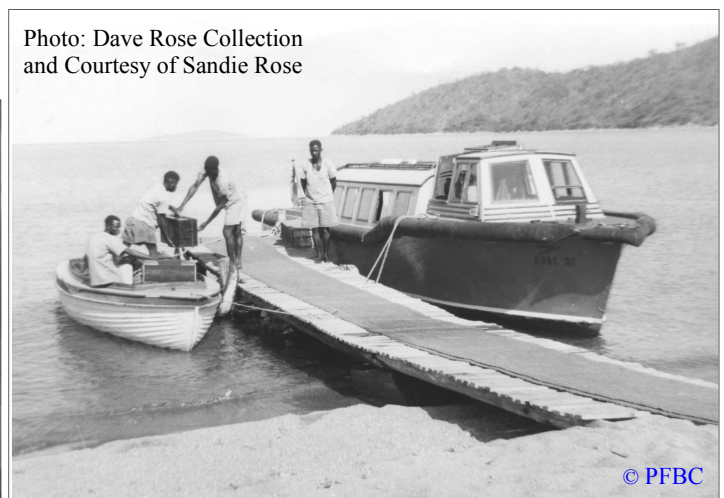
However, BOAC was to experience a 'Last Hurrah' with the volume of publicity associated with its best tourist route... The Solent Classes were destined for long hauls through to the Far East, but principally for a new route to South Africa ! So twelve Solent 2 Class had been ordered and built using the jigs at Rochester from the cancelled Seaford programme. [G-AHIT Severn](#) was allocated the proving flight to South Africa from Poole on 2nd. December (**problems at Port Bell*). Others calling at Poole included [G-AHIN Southampton](#), [G-AHIU Solway](#), [G-AHIV Salcombe](#) and [G-AHIW Stornoway](#). [*G-AHER Halstead had been rapidly called on to undertake the proving flight to Vaaldam as a replacement. aircraft.*]

Picture: [G-AHIN Southampton](#) over-flying the new Berth 50 at Southampton's Old Docks, piloted by Capt. James Peers to inaugurate BOAC services from the UK to South Africa on the new Springbok Route



Withdrawal of the Empire C-Class had controversially meant the loss of BOAC's through air services to South Africa: ~ It had been envisaged that a new faster route with fewer stops would head down the River Nile to the Lakes then directly to [Lake Nanyasa](#), with a terminus at Johannesburg (instead of Durban), so avoiding flying to + along the E.African Coast, but also taking in the exciting tourist attraction of the [Victoria Falls](#) (- alighting upriver), before proceeding to [Vaaldam](#)... PFBC HLM [Dave Rose](#) was Coxswain at Victoria Falls, then was responsible for establishing a station at [Cape Maclear](#).

Picture: *G-AHIN Southampton* with Capt. James Peers alighting at Cape Maclear on the Springbok Route 1949



Picture: Dave Rose brings BOAC MCU Launch alongside the pier he constructed at Cape Maclear

Teething problems with the Solents caused a frustrating delay in putting this in place but after belatedly getting trialling services underway from Poole in December (and January), more serious problems would be encountered in due course ! Again difficulties resurfaced after the move to Southampton, and the re-launch of this prospect as the '[Springbok Route](#)', until [Capt. James Peers](#) described those problems and came up with his solution of an outward realignment of the floats !

Golden Hind's service through to Cairo from Sept. 1946 brought operations to a close for BOAC at Poole in April 1948. During Spring 1948 the residue of BOAC's fleet was moved to the Solent to leave behind *Golden Hind* and *G-AHJR* ...



With the closure of BOAC Marine Terminal (*see above*) at Salterns - Lilliput, Poole and the various facilities on that site, legal arrangements were enacted for those remaining premises which had been requisitioned to be quickly handed back. The Marine Terminal re-emerged with a new identity as [Poole Harbour Yacht Club](#), and today is part of [Salterns Marina](#).

Poole was left with lasting memories & a proud record that during the years of IAL and then BOAC operating from here, of 50,000 Flying Boat passengers, none were lost nor injured, whilst being carried on outbound flights from the Harbour.

(*Aimée* - with acknowledgement to Mike Phipp, also Capt. James Peers, Leslie Dawson, Graham Lake and BCC Ward, with Ian Andrews, Harry H. Pusey, Norman Hull and Bryan Ribbans)