

# Atalanta Owners Association

2010—2011  
52nd Annual Bulletin



**Atalanta Owners Association  
2010 – 2011 Bulletin**

**52<sup>nd</sup> Edition  
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Front cover photograph: © 2010 *The Beaver* A38 by Harry Budden

## **Message from the Commodore**

Our year has been tinged with sadness with the loss of our Patron and former Commodore, Charles Currey. Charles and his family have been supporters of the AOA for many years and his presence and humour were always at the forefront of our activities, whether it was an AGM or a Forum.

The sad breaking up of A69 *Laq Laq* and A144 *Clymene* in November is a reminder that we must not neglect our Classic boats. There are many laid up and, with the snows falling early this year, the covers must be checked and engines wrapped up to avoid any damage or deterioration.

On a happier note 2010 has been a year of great achievement with the successful completion of the Round Britain Relay, which illustrated the strength of commitment by those taking part and the versatility and durability of our beloved boats. The Autumn Laying Up gatherings in the South West and South East have been well attended (in spite of the weather) and the total of around 43,000 hits on our website to date demonstrates the interest there is in the Association. The membership has been restored to its former level by the great efforts of our Hon. Sec. and our Editor. The finances have benefited with the sale of items from the break-up of A12 and A69 and I thank all those who gave their time and effort to achieve this success.

I hope to see a goodly gathering at our AGM/Dinner on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, to be held at a new location on the South Bank of the Thames, there have been good reports of the food and facilities at the “Doggett’s Coat & Badge”.

Have a great Christmas and here’s to a lot of sailing and social gatherings in the coming year.

Colin Twyford

## **Message from the Editor**

This has been an eventful year for the Association, with the successful completion of the Round Britain Relay.

As you might expect this has resulted in a wonderful set of articles submitted for this Bulletin. There have also been lots of photos to go with these articles, largely because you have become used to having photos in the bulletin, but also I hope as a result of the photo competition.

You will find plenty of details of the trials and tribulations of completing various legs of the Relay. There are also lots of ideas for repairs and modifications to enhance your own boat. There are even some articles which involve sailing our boats, which did not make it to the Relay.

It was difficult deciding which photo to use for the Cover, but in the end it was the photo of *The Beaver* A38 sailing on the Great Lakes (yes in Canada) and which was submitted by Harry Budden.

Hoping for fair winds, flat seas and lots of time afloat in 2011!

Trevor Thompson

## A New Season and West Mersea Regatta 2010

By Colin Twyford

Erith Yacht Club was most fortunate to receive grants from the Thames Gateway Olympic Fund, Sport England, and some others to the sum of £3.5 million to build a clubhouse and improve facilities enabling them to become a major training unit on the Thames. This meant that the builders took over the club premises from about November 2009. Boats were moved around to enable a great deal of earth moving etc. This, added to the inclement weather, meant the winter refit was slow to start. A major repair to the rear deck was a surprise necessity as the loss of the fairlead at West Mersea last year had caused quite a bit of delamination. I took the precaution of replacing both fairleads onto the deck rather than screwed to the plywood transom, bolting them onto a thick pad and brackets bolted through the transom. Hopefully they are there to stay now.

*Toco* A99 was passed on to the AOA by the Greenhithe Sea Scouts and had been towed upstream from Greenhithe and placed on the EYC club's moorings early in the year. Fred Whiteside bought her and joined the AOA and so we had two Atalantas at the club.

When the Club building was completed and our Club Ship the Norwegian car ferry *Folgefon* had been carried back to her homeland, we had lots of clearing up to make the club habitable again and only then could *Hiran's* refit be completed. Fred was determined to join in the Relay with *Toco*. With much work still to complete on her and our Hon. Sec., John, aboard as crew, *Toco* left EYC on a falling tide to meet *Bluster* in the Estuary. Janet and I watched them set off with much trepidation.

*Hiran* was launched at the beginning of August and I then decided that we would travel to West Mersea and join *Bluster* and *Kookaburra* in the race. A quick call to Norman Dorrington (*who does such sterling work each year*) to register our late decision and on 11<sup>th</sup> August Peter and I left EYC at 1445 hrs to take the ebb to Gravesend. This would give us a couple of hours start for the early morning tide. We passed under the Queen Elizabeth Bridge at the Dartford crossing and just past Greenhithe we saw a large red carrier travelling towards us on the Kent shore. As she was inside us on the wrong side of the river we assumed that she



Toko leaving Erith

had just left a mooring or jetty. Without any signal (*one short blast*) she turned to starboard and pointed her bow towards us. I considered that there was not sufficient time to turn to starboard and go inshore, so I turned to port and showed her my intention. She then straightened up and passed between us and the shoreline about 100 metres away from us. Some ten minutes later the PLA Harbourmaster's boat came alongside us and asked where we were from and where we were going. Then he stated that a complaint had been made about us by the parcel tanker, *Alice* who stated that we had been on the wrong side of the river and had turned across her bow as she was travelling upstream. She had tried to raise us on the radio and we had not responded. He asked if we had our radio on, but we were on the wrong channel and our cockpit speaker was not working, plus under engine it is difficult to hear. I disputed this description of events and pointed out that *Alice* had been on the Kent side and we had been in the correct position, she had not made any sound signals either. The PLA crew then took off up river and we continued on to pick up a mooring at Gravesend Yacht Club. As we were tying up we heard over the radio the PLA telling *Alice* that we had been admonished for being on the wrong side. (*I decided that a letter would be sent when we returned*).

As it was one of the highest Springs we dried out and had an early night to wake at 0230 and be on our way at 0300 on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August. No wind was there to help us, so the engine took us to the estuary and it was going to be the normal trip with little sailing. We arrived at the West Mersea Piles after an uneventful journey at 1300, straightened out aboard and erected the cockpit tent. We were having trouble with our tender outboard so we worked hard to cure it but were unable to get at the impeller. I telephoned Mike Thorley A141 and he came out to visit us bringing his

son who was to crew with us for the race. We arranged to meet him in the morning to refuel and buy some provisions. I contacted Fred Whiteside to arrange picking him up Friday as he wanted to sail in the race and he offered to bring his outboard. Friday morning we met Mike and went to his house for lunch and to see his empty garden to now that A141 *Rakia* has been launched after a long refit. Returning to the Piles, Jane and her crew arrived in A183 *Bluster*. Later Peter Keighley and his son Theo joined *Bluster* to crew for Jane, and Fred arrived complete with outboard to complete the party. Saturday morning we both went out to the race start in windless conditions, a repeat of last year. The committee boat announced that there would be a delay of 30 minutes, to pray for wind we thought. The courses are not announced till the race is called and you are not aware which of the 13 courses you will get. Eventually the races started. We were the third to be called and it became apparent that all the 9 races would be on the shortest 6 mile course. There were ten minutes between races but you can imagine the mixture of fast and slow Cruisers, Smacks, Bawleys and Fisherman's Open Wooden Boats, all competing on the same course and with wind at a premium there was a great deal of wallowing. *Hiran* was first across the line for a change with Peter on the helm, much peering through the various sails as we made our way to round No. 3, then down towards No. 12 on the Blackwater. Matthew took the helm. As we approached the mark on starboard tack a large cruiser headed straight at us on port tack. We called "*starboard*" and with all the pompous arrogance of a one time Colonial colonel, he quoted some strange verse about wind from the west. We lost wind avoiding contact, noting the boat was called *Memsahib*, what a surprise! We struggled in light winds and as the rising tide past Bradwell Power Station to clear No. 5. mark. About this time the committee boat radioed that the 4 hours allowed for the race

was up and no times would be recorded after 20 minutes. During this time we had maintained our lead of two or three hundred metres over *Bluster*, with *Kookaburro* going on a long tack across the bay. We took a long tack but *Bluster* was doing shorter tacks staying in the shallows and had closed up. As we tacked back towards her, Jane radioed the committee boat retiring from the race then turned towards us and asked if we were continuing. With 2 miles left to the finish and still some way to No.2 mark, we decided to join *Bluster*, Norman joined us in *Kookaburra* and we told him that we were retiring. Then Norman radioed his retirement and we followed suit. It had been an enjoyable sail and in Matthew we have found a helmsman to note for the future. As the race had been abandoned it was decided that the Hon. Sec. should contact the Committee about the award of the plates given for the first three places. Back on the moorings *Bluster's* crew took off to watch the various local games and we relaxed before the evening supper. As Fred was driving home after the supper, we took all his gear ashore and joined all the others at the Scout Hut. Sadly our Hon. Sec. John had a suspect battery in his car and could not risk coming to join us, driving home from *Kookabuua's* mooring. All present enjoyed the fish and chips with the usual magnificent array of sweets and cheeses. John texted me from his home to announce that he had just received a subscription from our 100<sup>th</sup> member. After the supper we made our way to the pier with the fireworks cascading overhead. They are set off from the mud at low tide alongside the pierhead. We had to drag the inflatable round to the front to row back to the piles, no outboard this time. When I awoke next morning Jane had already departed, I believe that Peter saw her off, then we had a lazy Sunday and Monday with strong winds keeping us on the mooring before departing about 0800 Tuesday morning. With as usual the wind on the

nose and reaching 5s & 6s there was not much sailing. We heard distress calls from someone on the Foulness Sand and saw the lifeboat standing by later. All seemed to be under control, which gives you a satisfying feeling when weather is a little threatening. When we reached the more sheltered conditions of the Thames we could relax and reflect on the weekend. We reached the Erith YC pontoon at 1830 having travelled just over 51 N Miles that day, an average of 4.9. The Beta performed well and the fuel consumption for the whole trip of 129 miles was about 8 gallons. This equals about 25 hours motoring and about 3 hours a gallon of diesel.

P.S.

*The incident concerning the red carrier Alice was reported to the PLA on my return from the East Coast. It appears that the PLA centre in Gravesend had a fault on their radar recording system for two weeks in August, so they were not able to confirm my description of the incident. Many letters were exchanged and at last the PLA told me that "The incident has been discussed with those involved, with measures taken to ensure there is no repeat. As a measure of good faith the Marine River Inspector's reprimand has been set aside". I have responded saying that as a measure of good faith I set aside my formal complaint about the passage of Alice. I have my doubts that the system was down for that period, but the PLA are unlikely to admit that their MRI was at fault, or that a commercial vessel would commit such a fraudulent complaint. Colin*



## ***Caperdonich* and Round Britain Relay, legs 3, 4 and 5.**

by Bill Kennaway

2010 was the year in which we completed A31/6 *Caperdonich*'s restoration, and made the 380 mile delivery cruise from Pin



### ***Caperdonich* ready to go in**

Mill in Suffolk to her new home port in Fife.

Last year's sea trials had shown up various keel box leaks, so the winter was taken up with sealing the keel boxes.

We also took the opportunity to renew hull fastenings in bronze, and to overhaul keel bolts and plates.

The photos above are of A31/6 in Kings boatyard Pin Mill, and shows the excellent paint job done by the yard. We planned the delivery cruise for early June, so as to be able to take part in several legs of the AOA Round Britain Relay. The cruise started from Woolverstone on the River Orwell on Saturday 5 June with sunshine and light southerly winds, and we made the 45 miles to Lowestoft that day.

Lowestoft was the start point for Leg 3 of the Round Britain Relay on 6 June, taking over from A183 *Bluster*.

Leg 3 from Lowestoft to Grimsby was the most problematic on our route, as it is almost 100 miles with the only intermediate ports on the North Norfolk coast having poorly-lit tide limited entrances, and with

HW that weekend during the hours of darkness. So a night sail was called for, and to cater for watches we had a crew of 5, including my son Chris and his wife Saskia. The overnight sail was planned to take 24 hours, but ended up taking 32, due to headwinds and an engine oil pressure problem in the night, meaning we had to tack to and fro



### ***Caperdonich* at Kings of Pin Mill**

for a long time against an adverse tide in lightish winds. i.e. going backwards. In daylight we tracked down the problem to a faulty sensor. So it was Sunday evening and LW when we got to Grimsby, too late according to the pilot book to get through the locks into the fishdock's yacht harbour. Grimsby lock hadn't answered our VHF calls while we were going up the Humber, so we assumed the locks were unmanned and that we were facing a long wait at anchor. But while we were circling at the lock entrance and almost touching the bottom, a lockkeeper showed up and opened the gates for us. It turns out that the gates can be opened at all states of the tide but locals only use it HW $\pm$ 3, as otherwise they are charged a tenner. Another local custom is that the lockkeepers only use handheld VHF's, explaining the unanswered calls on our approach

Leg 4 of the Relay was from Grimsby to Tynemouth, and the plan was to carry straight on with a reduced crew of two fellow retirees, as Chris and Saskia had jobs in Leeds to get back to.



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boat till the end of the week, when Chris & Saskia were again available to crew.

Strong northerlies ruled out Saturday, so it was Sunday when we set off from Bridlington to do the 40 miles to Whitby.

Although the pilot book recommends keeping a couple of miles clear of Flamborough Head because of overfalls, we could see a fleet of Contessa 26s on their Sunday morning race close in to the headland and sailing nicely. So we followed the fleet's in-shore course, only to run into a very heavy swell as we rounded the point – the top photo shows the top of a Contessa sail under the boom, only about 50 yards away, and also

### ***Caperdonich and crew***

So we set off from Grimsby at dawn on Monday to do the 46 miles to Bridlington, aiming to get there late afternoon as entry is tide limited.

We had a fast and lively sail in heavy rain, averaging 5 knots+, and made it into Bridlington with about a metre of water at the entrance.

The photo shows A31/6 luckily on the only pontoon visitor's berth in Bridlington harbour - another bit of luck was the bargain £5 per night mooring fee, including shorepower and water.

But the consecutive early starts, long sails and miserable weather had taken its toll on my crew of retirees, who decided to jump ship at Bridlington, meaning I had to stay there with the



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### **The only pontoon berth in Bridlington**





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the next weekend, when Chris re-joined the boat. The photo shows Chris on A31/6 in Hartlepool marina with Nelson-era *HMS Tricomalee* in the background. On the Saturday we had a good sail for the 25 miles to Tynemouth, staying over at Royal Quays marina, where we collected another crew

### Large swells off the east coast

shows our genoa stowed on the foredeck, the result of a halyard problem

The lower photo shows the dramatic harbour mouth at Whitby, with the Abbey of Dracula fame on the hilltop.

Arriving at Whitby late in the afternoon, we were pressed for time as Chris & Saskia had to be back in Leeds that night.

Nonetheless we managed to borrow a bosun's chair, hoist Chris to the top of the mast to sort out the halyard, have dinner at one of Whitby's excellent seafood restaurants, and still let Chris & Saskia catch the last bus back to Leeds at 1930.

The photo (page 7) was taken by Chris from his mast top perch, with me and Saskia in the picture - I have now invested in a bosun's chair for *Caperdonich*.

Their return to Leeds meant another break in Leg 4 of the Relay for Caperdonich till the end of the week, when my other son James was available to crew.

Our delivery cruise was a week behind schedule, so I planned to catch up by sailing from Whitby to Fife over the weekend of 19 June.

However weather intervened, so instead of making Tynemouth on Friday, we only managed the 25 miles to Hartlepool against a F5 northerly and a nasty rolling sea that left my sole crew very seasick.

Worsening weather over the weekend of the 19th meant a stopover in Hartlepool till



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### Hartlepool

member, Tom Lawrence a friend from Pitteenweem.

Sunday saw a very early start from Tynemouth (4am) because we had to get the 60 miles to Berwick so as drop Chris off at a railway station to get him back to work for Monday - and because 6pm was the latest we could get across the bar at Berwick harbour mouth.



On our arrival at Pittenweem my wife Beth had a surprise reception party arranged for us. Conveniently the Kennaway household is on quayside at Pittenweem - the white house in the photo.

Less conveniently Pittenweem's outer harbour in the photo dries out to a rock bottom, and its deep inner harbour is reserved exclusively for fishing boats. So as the tide fell we

had to interrupt the party to move A31/6 to its permanent berth in St Monans, about a mile west of Pittenweem.

## Whitby

We had a great fast sail with a F4 westerly in warm sunshine, and made it to Berwick in time for both train and tide – with time to spare for a lunchtime stop at anchor in the Farne Islands, complete with flocks of puffins.

The Relay handover point was Anstruther, a mile east of Pittenweem, but A104 *Arosa* had reached Anstruther on 23 June, and A133 *Scallywag* had already departed from there on Leg 6, hence our appearance at Anstruther was not required.

So Caperdonich is now ensconced in St Monans harbour. Initially this was on a visitor's berth on the outer wall but because of its exposure to southerlies she was moved to a fore and aft mooring we put down in the middle of the harbour. This proved its worth in September's gales when 3 boats were sunk and one wrecked on the visitors berths.

The last stretch of the delivery cruise was the 40 miles from Berwick to Fife, on Monday 28 June.

Again an early 6am start was needed to clear the bar, and we had more glorious weather with a flat sea and F4-5 westerlies.

We called in en route at Dunbar for a lunchtime stop and to pick up my son James, not discouraged by his earlier mal de mer.



## Pittenweem



## **Round Britain Relay Legs 4 and 5 – Grimsby to An- struther in A104 *Arosa***

by Simon Cooper

The day ordained for the start of leg 5 was Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of June. Intelligence from Graham Walters, our invaluable co-ordinator, indicated that A31 *Capardonich*, undertaking the previous leg, had arrived in Grimsby on the 8<sup>th</sup> and then continued north towards her home base in Scotland.

*Arosa* was launched at Hull Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a trial sail on the 11<sup>th</sup> showed that everything was working. On Saturday afternoon my wife Sue drove me to Hull where we met Peter Keightley, owner of A121 *Kotora*, who had kindly agreed to accompany me on the leg to Tynemouth. The intention had been to start for our first port of call, Bridlington, on the tide at 7am on the following morning but, it being a pleasant evening, we decided to set off and anchor for the night in the lee of Spurn Point. We slipped at 6.30pm and after sailing for a couple of hours the wind dropped and we motored the rest of the way, giving Grimsby a wave as we passed. (Although Grimsby was the start of the leg there seemed little point in actually going in to the port.) Arriving at Spurn Point at midnight (and low tide) we crept past the pilot and lifeboat jetty intending to anchor in 2 metres of water. Although the depth sounder was reading a steady 2½ metres we realised after a time that we were not making much progress, and a torch shone over the side showed we were stationary although we were still bobbing up and down and the keels were firmly down. Resorting to heaving the lead showed a depth of but a metre and a half proving we were indeed aground, stuck in semi-fluid Humber silt. So up with the keels and into slightly deeper water to anchor for the night.

## **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June, Spurn Point to Bri- dlington**

The wind had freshened during the night and our anchorage had become a little bumpy. We were on our way at 7.20 am, rounding the Binks buoy at the end of the Point 20 minutes later and heading north to Bridlington in a satisfactory F4 wind. The wind didn't last and by 11am we were motoring, berthing on the south wall of Bridlington Harbour at 5pm. A stroll ashore showed that Bridlington is not the most lively of resorts on a Sunday evening, however we did find an excellent fish and chip supper in a café at the top end of the harbour.

## **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June, Bridlington to Scarborough**

We were on our way by 9am, reefed and hard on the wind (F5) to weather Flamborough Head. By 11.30 the wind had reduced so we were able to shake out the reef. We berthed in Scarborough Old Harbour on an almost deserted visitors' pontoon at 3pm. During the day the port keel box washboard had become detached at its aft end from the stay (*Arosa* does not have keel rubbers), so we set to to extricate the washboard and found that the bolts attaching the bracket at the aft end had corroded through. The bracket was reattached with stainless steel bolts and Peter successfully performed the tricky operation of re-securing the linking strap to the keel through a fairly small gap. Work done, we repaired to the Golden Grid on the waterfront.



days. *Arosa's* stern gland had been leaking quite badly, so I decided to stay in Whitby the following day to beach her (so preventing any sudden ingress of water) and repack the gland. We inspected the chosen beaching area and found that there were several bricks on the sand, so at midnight (low tide), after another excellent fish and chip supper, we walked round to the beach and removed the bricks.

### ***Arosa* at the quay in Lindisfarne harbour**

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June, Scarborough to Whitby**

We were off at 8.30 am and were wafted up to Whitby on a gentle breeze, arriving at 3pm, but having to wait a couple of hours before we could pass through the swing bridge and reach the marina, where we found *Caperdonich* but without her owner, Bill Kennaway, who had left her for a few

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>**

**June, Whitby to Sunderland**

The beaching operation was successfully carried out. So on Thursday we had a 6am start and motored in very light winds until off the mouth off the Tees when we were able to sail under main and genoa for 3 hours until, off Seaham, the wind failed again. We passed between Sunderland harbour pier heads at 5pm and were secured in

the marina 25 minutes later. Peter promptly 'jumped ship' to catch a train home as he was attending a wedding the following day.

### **Friday and Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June, at Sunderland**

Peter's replacements, Wally and Karl, were due to arrive at Newcastle on the Saturday, so I planned to sail the boat to Tynemouth and motor up-river to St Peter's Marina, near the city centre. I set off at about 9am on the Friday, but once through the pier heads found things a trifle rugged with a F6 wind on the nose and 2 to 3 metre waves. I decided to try and motor the 5 miles to Tynemouth, but the 8hp Yanmar was no match for the elements and after 20 minutes of minimal progress I decided to call it a day and returned to the serenity of the marina. I phoned Wally and Karl to ask them to come to Sunderland instead of Newcastle.

Saturday was really stormy with waves breaking over the harbour and spray as high as the lighthouse on the north breakwater. Unexpectedly I met a friend, Norman, at the marina: my brother and I helped him sail a boat which he had purchased from Bristol to Bridlington some years ago. Wally and Karl duly arrived during the afternoon and we dined that evening in the Italian restaurant at the marina.

### **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June, Sunderland to Blythe**

We inspected the ocean in the morning, which was still looking pretty rumbustious, but we decided to give it a go. We

therefore very cautiously set off at around 1pm with well reefed mainsail and no 2 jib, however once out, although we were bouncing around a bit, there was not a great deal of wind, so the reefs were shaken out and no 1 jib hoisted. By 2.30 the wind had almost died so the remainder of the passage was completed under motor, berthing at the Royal Northumberland YC at 6 o'clock.

The RNYC 'clubhouse' is a massively constructed 1860s wooden lightship and we were made very welcome in the bar by the members. We weren't able to eat there as the clubhouse closes early on Sundays, so had to make do with an Indian take-away.

### **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June, Blythe to Inner Farne**

We departed at 7.30am in a flat calm, but, after motoring for an hour and a half, a light breeze from the south picked up and wafted us, with the genoa goose-winged, gently northwards. By lunchtime we were passing Coquet Island and from there on the coastline became really scenic. With conditions calm and weather settled, we decided to anchor for the night in the Farne Islands, and made for the Kettle, a sheltered anchorage among the Inner Farnes. With the anchorage to ourselves we spent a magical evening among puffins, guillemots, terns, cormorants, shags and inquisitive seals. Karl, being a keen birdwatcher, was jubilant.

### **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, Inner Farne to Eyemouth**

A windless morning: we weighed anchor at 9am and motored 4 miles up the coast to Lindisfarne, mooring to the stone jetty known as the Heugh. After buying bread (and ice creams) we set off again past the spectacular Holy Island Castle: by now a breeze had arrived and we were again able

to goose-wing our way northwards, passing Berwick-on-Tweed at 2.30 and arriving off Eyemouth at 5.30pm. The harbour entrance is very narrow between high walls – almost a slot. Making our way up the harbour to the visitors’ pontoon we grounded so once again were glad of the lifting keels.

### **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, Eyemouth to Anstruther**

Eyemouth is a busy fishing harbour, and at 6 in the morning was very active with fishing boats coming and going. Our departure was at a rather more civilised 9.30. Once clear of the harbour we had a good breeze and under full main and no 2 jib were making 5½ knots. At 10.15 we rounded St

Abbs Head and were into the Firth of Forth. The wind now became more fickle, and as we crossed the Firth to Anstruther on the north side we changed between genoa and no 1 jib several times. We were soon in sight of the Bass Rock to the west, white from the mass of gannets nesting and guano. Continuous strings of gannets passed overhead coming and going to the Rock. By 4pm the Isle of May, another seabird sanctuary, was abeam to the east, and guillemots and puffins replaced the gannets. Shortly after we arrived off Anstruther at the bottom of the tide. The harbour dries, and the pilot book advises access two hours either side of high tide, however with the keels wound almost right up we made it through the harbour entrance and managed to moor just inside the west wall.



**Pontoon berths in Anstruther harbour**

We had now finished our part of the Relay. Wally and Karl were due catch the train home on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June and the plan had been to spend a couple of days cruising in the Firth before they went and another friend, John, arrived to help sail the boat back. John unfortunately had a personal problem and had to cancel his trip so we decided to head back southwards on the next day, and Wally and Karl were keen to do a night sail. We chose Hartlepool as the destination as it was conveniently close for trailering the boat home.

9.15am the wind had died and we continued under power to Hartlepool, arriving at lunchtime. On entering the marina there was *Caperdonich*, but again no sign of her crew.

The total mileage of the trip, Hull–Anstruther–Hartlepool, was approximately 340 nm.



### **Thursday and Friday 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June, Anstruther to Hartlepool**

Slipped out of the harbour, again at low tide, at 9am, hoisted main and no 1 jib and started to make real progress with a beam wind, *Arosa* really picking up her skirts and making a steady 6 to 7 knots. By lunchtime the wind had lightened a touch but speed was maintained by replacing no 1 jib with the genoa. St Abbs head was rounded at 2pm and Berwick-on-Tweed was abeam at 3.30, when sail was reduced as things were getting a little too exciting. Passing Holy Island 5.15pm we noticed some damage to one of the shroud chainplates; one of the crew had braced his foot against to give himself more purchase and it had visibly bent so we decided to again to visit the Inner Farne anchorage to do a repair. While Wally and I made a bit of a re-arrangement to the rigging so that some of the shroud load was transferred to the adjacent chainplates Karl cooked supper. By 9pm we were on our way once more but by now the wind had all but evaporated so we motored until midnight when wind arrived and we could sail again. Karl took us through what was left of the night (we were close to the longest day) and by 5.15am Tynemouth was abeam. By

## ***Mourne Goblin's Relay***

by Dominic Dobson

### **Friday 23/7/10**

1000 Skipper Dominic and Bosun Henry depart Ilkley for trip up to Gourock to pick up *Mourne Goblin* from her mooring.



***Mourne Goblin***

1400 arrive Royal Gourock Yacht Club to find the boatman was on his lunch so had to have a quick pint and contact A147 to confirm rendezvous.

1530 Motor sailed towards Largs meeting up with A147 off Inverkip sailed in company in dying winds until we finally had to motor so as to arrive at Largs Marina in time for food.

Evening spent ashore at the local curry house with *Chamois's* crew

### **Saturday 24/7/10**

*Chamois* departs to head back north. We spend day sorting out *Mourne Goblin* whilst we await the arrival of Pamela the third member of the crew and chief caterer who arrived late afternoon just in time to depart for the pub.

### **Sunday 25/7/10**

Let the leg begin! Departed Largs 0925 under motor. The sails were hoisted but without the engine we were only making 2½ knots so a discussion was had and the decision made to motor sail to try and keep the average speed up as it was going to be a long trip to



***Chamois***



**Approaching Ailsa Craig**



Port Patrick. Henry dropped his role as Bosun and took up the cook's apron to fry up sausage butties. Weather although mainly dry there was a mizzle about and the rain decided to have some fun with us. The rest of the day was spent alternating

Monday 26/7/10

A day in Port today after all we are on holiday and as usual there was maintenance to be done, first how to get rudder back down luckily we were able to walk *Mourne Goblin* back to some steps in the corner of the harbour and push the rudder back down. Pamela decided that her job for the day would be chief scrubber so it was off around Port Patrick to look for a suitable bucket as the ships bucket was sitting at home in the garage. The Skipper and Bosun took it upon themselves to install a hand bilge pump but failed due to lack of enough piping so it was onto playing with the new boom



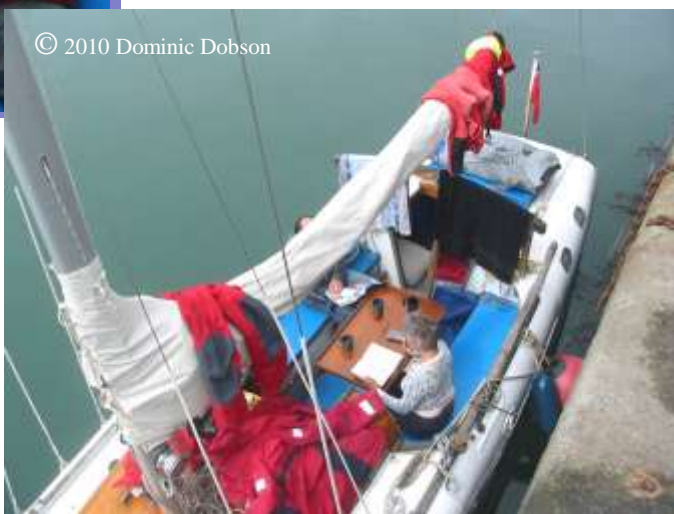
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**Pamela and Henry**

between motoring, sailing, motor sailing and putting reefs in as the wind was so variable. Ailsa Craig was her usual spectre hanging around for hours never seeming to get any closer but was eventually passed.

As the day wore on the helm became heavier. Pamela, who was on the helm and is used to sailing an Elizabethan 30, put this down to the increasing wind and so a deep reef was called for which made no difference. A new diagnosis was made - the rudder blade had lifted slightly. As we were unable to pull it back down it was decided to drop the sails and motor the last couple of miles so as not to put undue stress on the steering gear. We arrived at Port Patrick just after dusk allowing us to use the leading lights to guide us in. Once tied up against the wall it was time to retire to the pub but not before the customary tot of Sloe Gin which always completes any passage on *Mourne Goblin*.

Days run 59.4 miles at average speed 5knots.



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**Relaxing at the end of the first passage**



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**Port Patrick Harbour**

tent. Once out of the bag it became obvious that the makers had followed the pattern given to them precisely, which was unfortunate as the skipper had asked them to make it 2 foot longer. Never the less we semi fitted it and worked out what adaptations needed doing. All this work meant we had a thirst running so we retired to the pub for the evening.

Tuesday 27/7/10

0845 snuck out of Port Patrick, with keels partially raised due to low tide, under the iron topsail due to lack of wind passing a Sadler that had gone aground in the entrance. Luckily for them the tide was rising “George” was soon press ganged into service with the course been set for Port St Mary, further than Peel but accessible at all states of tide. Henry again took up the role of cook, frying up another breakfast. *Mourne Goblin* kept plugging away under engine, what little wind there was from dead ahead and we needed to make the tidal gate at Calf Sound. You know how it is all going great, everyone enjoying the voyage even some sun, when suddenly there was a rattle from the engine, revs off all quiet. Engine cover off, nothing to see, so back on with the revs. Still no noise so off we go again, then definite rattle. Off with cover to be met with smell of burning rubber so engine stopped and a further examination was made. After much poking around the problem was found. The prop shaft had moved slightly, probably due to picking up weed, causing the rubber drive shaft coupling to catch the top of the shaft tunnel (*Mourne Goblin* has a similar arrangement to *Hiran* using a ford Sierra prop shaft to allow the engine to sit lower in the boat see bulletin 1999/2000 for details). We had no saw so it was out with the battery drill to make a line of holes and then, using a trusty pen knife with a mini saw, the top of



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## Approaching Calf Sound

the shaft tunnel was shortened. Problem solved. The next issue was the Calf Sound. Reading the pilot gave plenty of clues as to headings to take and apart from a little turbulence there were no problems.

On arrival at Port St Mary all the visitors' moorings appeared to be occupied so we decided to tie up alongside the only other Yacht on the wall, just squeezing in between them and a local fishing boat rigging, long lines to cope with the 8m tidal range. Then it was out with the Sloe Gin before contacting Keith Shawcross (T4 *Brother Jack*) and finding dinner ashore. Having arrived at the Isle of Man we now planned to become tourists for the day before back tracking slightly to Peel to meet up with *Brother Jack* and hand over the “baton”. This plan was soon changed after talking to Keith who was currently in Castletown and planned to sail to Peel the next day so it was arranged to meet him as he went past and sail in company.

Days Run 55 miles average speed 5knots.

### Wednesday 28/7/10

0900 departed Port St Mary with the intention of meeting up with Keith. A quick phone call again changed this plan as Keith was still aground waiting for the tide to allow him to leave. Ever mindful of tidal gates both through the Sound and at Peel the decision was made to head North and let Keith catch us up. The passage through the Sound was a little more eventful this time having to whack the revs up to beat the flow. Motor sailing was the order of the day again with *Brother Jack* visible on the horizon for much of it. All was going fine until the engine note deepened, went back to normal, and then deepened again. After a short discussion “engineer” Henry and the Skipper decided that it was probably a fuel issue due to the swell running. Topped up with diesel and all was fine again. Lesson learned don’t let tank get below ¼ full. As we neared Peel the amount of VHF traffic increased with boats requesting entry. We rounded the breakwater and then had to hover to await the bridge swinging. Despite the offer of 2 free nights against the wall we opted for a pontoon berth. After all we were on our holidays. After the end of passage gin a pleasant afternoon was had in the sun admiring boats that were here for the traditional boat meet and convincing people that we weren’t a converted lifeboat. However it always amazes me how many people know what an Atalanta is, and have had some dealings with one in the past. In and amongst this socialising we even managed to complete fitting the new bilge pump.

Days Run 14 miles average speed 5knots



**Laxey Wheel**

### Thursday 29/7/10 – Friday 30/7/10

Full use of the local transport system was made to become tourists for two days the island is easy to discover using the buses, steam train and electric tram system. The size of the Laxey wheel has to be seen to be believed as is the engineering that went into turning water power into pumping power.

### Saturday 30/7/10 Sunday 1/8/10

Peel traditional boat meet took place over the weekend with many traditional working boats and other wooden craft taking part many from Ireland. It was good to meet up with other AOA members. Having 3 boats make the festival was an excellent turnout, Keith Shawcross’ *Brother Jack* based on the island and John Glynn A68 *Curlew* making

it from Glasson. The Peel sailing club made all visitors welcome providing both food and entertainment for registered boats. It must have taken some organising to get kippers, bread and eggs delivered to every boat each morning in time for breakfast, especially after taking part in the previous nights social at the club house. If your wanting a destination for next years' cruise I can recommend The Tradboat Meet. Sunday also saw T4 *Broth-*



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### **Brother Jack leaving Peel to start the next leg**

*er Jack* depart for the next stage of the relay.



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Having done our bit for the Relay it was now time for us to think about heading back North. Various suggestions were considered Ardglass, Bangor and then back into Clyde. Ardglass, Port Patrick, Clyde. All had their appeal but eventually the decision was made to have a long sail north to Bangor and then cross back into the Clyde after a days' sight seeing and relaxing in Ireland. Due to the restrictions on access to Peel and to have a favourable tidal stream we needed to set off as soon as the flap gate dropped. This meant either an early morning start arriving late afternoon in Bangor or an afternoon departure arriving at about 0200. Although nobody likes the early departures it was decided to bite the bullet with a 0400 wake up. So after paying our dues (we even got the 2 free nights) early to bed was the order of the day.

### **Monday 2/8/10**

0400 skipper awoke to sound of wind in rigging. It wasn't looking good but quite often it can sound worse than it is. On with waterproofs to have a look. Obviously others were having the same idea so a group made its way to the harbour office to look at the weather station. Not good: Winds NW force 4 gusting 6 right where we were going. Ever the optimists the huddle decided to have a look for themselves from the breakwater. It looked even worse, white water everywhere. The decider was when a 42 footer bravely put her head past the entrance and started wildly pitching and rolling. Back to bed.

Things always seem better in the daylight and by the afternoon the wind had dropped as had the swell. We now became involved in a La Mans start with boats jockeying for position waiting for the bridge to swing and flap to drop. 1520 we were off. I'm always amazed how the wind can disappear so quickly. Less than 12 hrs earlier we didn't set off due to its strength now we were having to motor due to lack of breeze. We made good speed, skipper must have got the tides right, and were alongside in Bangor Marina 0020.

Days Run 45 miles average speed 5knots.

### **Tuesday 3/8/10**

Day in Bangor cannot really call it sight seeing more ambling around, refuelling. Thank goodness we only had to put £10 in the tank compared to the £600 top up of a motor boat next to us, he had come across from Carrickfergus as the fuel was cheaper!!

### **Wednesday 4/8/10**

Another early 0530 start to catch the tidal streams back across the North Channel for

the Clyde. Again the wind was variable with patches of calm and at times reaching 4/5. This led to an interesting day with plenty to keep the crew occupied and allowing us to make a healthy 5½ knot average for the day, picking up a buoy in Lamlash at 1600, which was fortunate as shortly after it became the place to be with a steady stream of boats arriving only to find they needed to drop the hook. The evening was spent on board due to mutiny amongst the crew who were too lazy to inflate the dinghy, so it was out with the cards until the early hours talking of the highlights of the trip.

Days run 59 miles average speed 5½ Knots.

### **Thursday 5/8/10**

Departed Lamlash at a more civilised time, 0900, heading for the traditional end of holiday dinner at The Chartroom, Inverkip. The day proved to be a great end to the Relay experience with fair wind and relaxed cruising in one of the best sailing areas of the country.

Days Run 27 miles average speed 4½ knots.

### **Friday 6/8/10**

Short run from Kip Marina back to Gourock. The trip had proved to be an enjoyable one for all onboard proving that the Atalanta can still hold its own when passage making.



## ***Brother Jack***

by Keith Shawcross, (T4)

### **Chapter I**

The Titania lay at the back of Castletown Harbour on the hard. It had been there for several years.

I had looked at it out of interest, but knew nothing of it. One of the boys there had helped the owner fending off as she sailed/motored in. After it was lifted out another said it had a new Beta engine installed but not completed.

I was busy with my own 19ft Castletown One Design and when that was up and sailing I got involved in getting a 46ft Watson ex-Baumaris lifeboat conversion in working order.

In the meantime here was this Titania slowly getting mouldy, the mast exposed on the top was curving and I saw holes appearing where the deck delaminated.

A Lancashire farmer friend to whom I had sold a One Design made an offer on T4, and then on returning home found he could not go through with the restoration due to a family death, so he asked me if I would take over and pay the remainder of his offer. I said "no - too busy".

After the trip to the 2009 Peel Traditional Boat Rally in the lifeboat I subsequently sold the lifeboat, and after a few weeks I asked the owner of T4 if it was still for sale, as he had returned my friend's deposit.

"Yes" he said "I'll bring the keys up now if you want to look her over". He dropped off the keys saying "Take as long as you like".

I was slipping about on the engine cover as it was all moulded up, and when I opened



© 2010 Keith Shawcross

***Brother Jack*** had suffered from neglect

the inside of the boat it was 10 inches deep in rainwater. With the varnish breaking up on top of the cabin plus muck had bunged up the drain holes, and water was coming in over the lip in front of the hatch.

I thought the project lost, but pumped out the water and spent three days cleaning. In fact, everything was good, the original paintwork was sound, and the water did not get into the engine compartment. Everything worked, the lights, radio and entertainment worked, sea cocks were free. The ships batteries took a time to charge. The only part that failed was the depth sounder.

The boat was just as the previous owner had left it, with all the equipment and even food in the pantry. Autopilot, liferaft (new in 2002), anchors, ropes, binoculars.

When I asked the owner to come down and talk prices he showed no interest in going on board. "Just want to get rid of it" he said. So when I pressed him for a price he just shrugged his shoulders and asked for the harbour due for that year. In the Isle of Man that is not a large sum. I won't tell you how much, you would not believe it or else you would all want to come and keep your boats here!

## Chapter II

I built a tent over the boat and as June went on the deck dried out and I was able to tackle the holes with new laminations, which I cut with the bandsaw.

I completed fitting the engine. A friend sold me a coupling to connect the drive, I bought new controls and fuel filters, rearranged the fuel system, and serviced the



### The temporary skeg fitted

engine with oil and antifreeze. She went first kick and has done ever since. I didn't want to paint the deck so used Sikken's wood stain.

The wooden mast was looking sick, a previous repair was coming away and the glue had failed over two thirds of its length. I took all the fittings off and split the mast in two halves. After cleaning up I re-glued it, carrying out the repair that had failed. Made some new crosstrees and reassembled everything. All the lights worked.

With all the other millions of small jobs we finally got the boat sailing one week before the 2010 Peel Rally.

### Chapter III

Doesn't she sail well! I have a tendency towards seasickness but have had no hint of it in this boat.

At Peel we joined up with the *Atalanta* from Greenock, A90 Mourne Goblin, and took on the next part of the Round Britain Relay to Anglesey, and on Sunday afternoon set sail. The overnight sail went well. Mike my crew navigated and I did as I was told (he has fished for 50 years and more). Dawn found us off Lynas Point by a couple of miles with Puffin Island ahead.

The wind was about F4-F5 seastate 6-8ft with wind behind us, and the autopilot had been on overnight but things were getting a bit strong so I took the helm while Mike made a brew.

At about 7am I looked back and saw the rudder waving about, obviously the bottom hinge had gone.

I had built a crane to lift the rudder so Mike went back and lashed the rudder to that. We had rolled up the foresail and rounded up into wind with the main. We had some control with the rudder but not enough. I thought it too risky to run down to the gap between Puffin Island and Anglesey so I called up the Coastguard and asked for a tow. The famous Moelfre Lifeboat came out to us and after some skilful throwing we made a tow.

We were towed back to Amlwch and enjoyed a gentle ride, while the lifeboat seemed to be leaping and rolling over the waves as we were now crossing the sea. Some of the lifeboat's younger crew were seasick.

When safely tied up at Amlwch the harbourman offered us a place at the top of the harbour where we could dry out as the tides were falling that week.

We were able now to see the damage. The skeg and a steel bar attached to the prop bracket had gone. The hardwood vertical

member down the rear of the transom, that joined with the skeg to support the bottom hinge had failed at the bottom of the transom. Only now could we see that there was rot in this vertical member, which also served as the rudder hinge post. When I was inspecting the boat there was no hint of rot in this member.

The lifeboat crew had given us the number of one of them who has an engineering business. He came and quickly saw what was needed, and within five days had made a steel bracket to fix the rudder.

The weather remained strong so we stayed another two days after moving the boat back down the harbour. We left at 5 in the morning as Mike said it was calming down, I didn't think so but I do as I'm told. It was a perfect sail home, 44 miles in 11 hours.

I have now lifted out *Brother Jack* so I can make a more substantial rudder support, plus I want to take the keels out and check them, other than that, millions of little jobs, but we hope to be back on the water early next year.

I still want to go to Caernarvon, and then the plan is to go up the Mersey to Fiddlers Ferry Marina. It's only 10 miles from my son's home and four grandchildren. There are so many sailing destinations from here: the Lune, Arnside, Ravensglass, Maryport, Kippford, Kirkudbright, Isle of Whithorn, not to mention Ireland.

I'll leave it at that. All the best for the New year and safe sailing!





## Round Britain Relay –Milford Haven to Caernarfon on *Calista*

by Cathy Brown

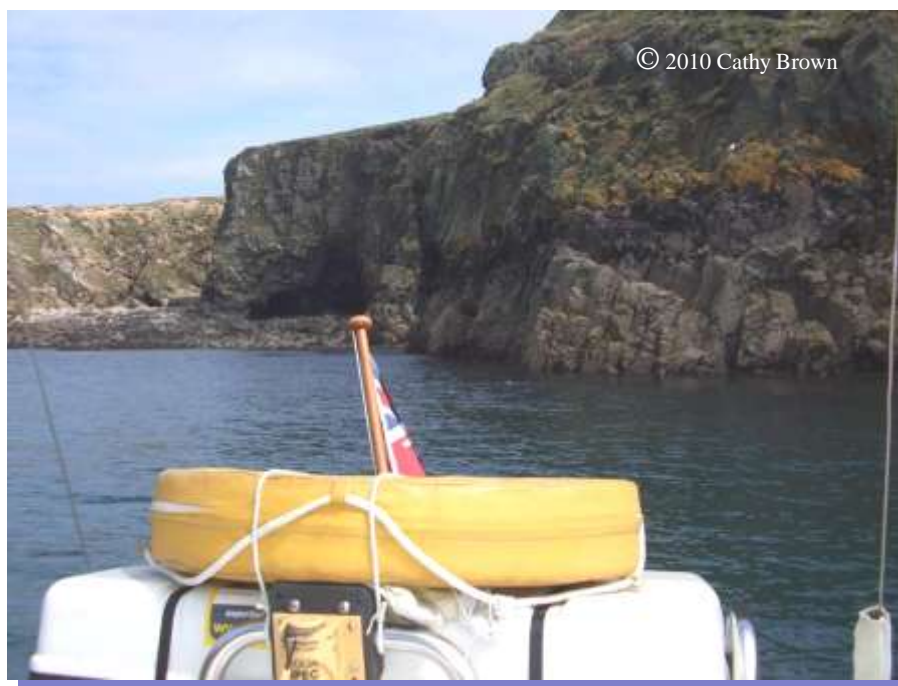
In the relentless heat of May and June I jumped at the offer to join *Calista* during her part in the Round Britain Relay, imag-



© 2010 Cathy Brown

### Industrial installations in Milford Haven

ining a fortnight of sunshine, sand and swimming from secluded beaches. An inexperienced sailor, with no more than a couple of weeks sailing to my name (plus some 20-year old theory). I was not fully prepared for the early departures, the long days and the amount of bumps and bruises I would acquire over the holiday. I never did get to go swimming, but I did discover many of the things



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### Anchored at Skomer Island

which make sailing such a magical and addictive activity.

The trip began inauspiciously. Skipper Trevor and son Magnus had just collected me from the bus in Carmarthen when we were involved in an accident. Fortunately no-one was hurt, but Trevor's Discovery was a

write-off and our departure preparations were delayed. We finally set off on Friday afternoon for Angle, at the mouth of Milford Haven, where we spent the first night – a very short one, as we were off again at 0415 the following morning heading for Sandy Haven where we were to dry out and clean the bottom of the boat. Motoring in the dark, we could see the lights of a massive gas tanker being turned by 2 tugs as it headed for the gas terminal.



© 2010 Cathy Brown

leak in the engine we were falling behind schedule and reached the notorious tide race at Jack Sound with the tide against us. Though we made it through the evil bubbling mass of water, by then we were making no progress against the tide and were forced to turn back, go through the tide race again and find a quiet place to wait for the tide to turn. This was the first of the magic moments – a beautiful cove on the south

### Visitors' moorings in Solva Harbour

After Sandy Haven and the bottom-scrubbing, the next stop was Dale – but only briefly. The swell made things very uncomfortable, and keen that his crew was not discouraged too early in the journey, Trevor decided we should return to the shelter of Angle despite poor visibility.

We were also experiencing a problem with the engine and, in addition, the navigation software was not functioning which left us reliant on traditional methods for the rest of the trip.

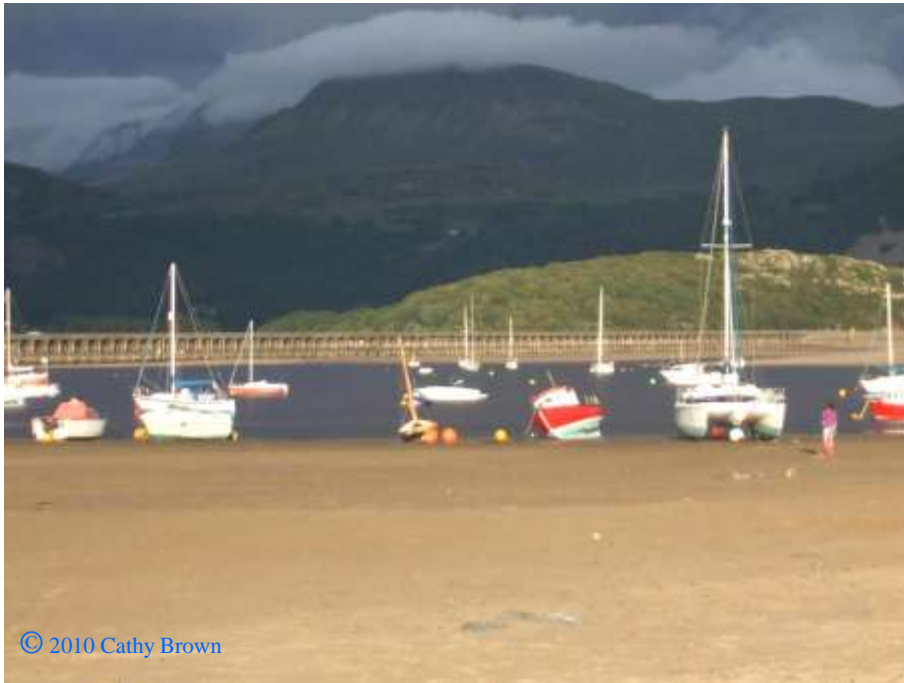
Sunday 25 July – At last we're on our way! We set off for Solva, with the exciting prospect of a landing on Skomer en route. With little wind and a recurrence of the diesel

side of the island where we anchored and had lunch surrounded by seals and puffins in a perfect blue sea with a perfect blue sky. The afternoon provided ideal conditions for learning a bit about sailing – enough wind but not too much – and as we



© 2010 Cathy Brown

### The old harbour at Fishguard



© 2010 Cathy Brown

### **Barmouth harbour at low water**

approached Solva, *Ereina* came out to meet us and sail alongside us in the sunshine.

Solva was as beautiful as I had imagined. We had a day to explore and enjoy it as we were leaving on the afternoon tide. Another beautiful summer's day. We were so relaxed after lunch we failed to notice that someone had forgotten to tie the dinghy on (no-one has owned up!). With the tide flowing in fast, Magnus saved the day. To avoid the undignified sight of his father stripping down to his underpants, he quickly donned his swimming shorts and waded and swam across the river to safely retrieve the dinghy. It was 1645 before we could leave so we faced a late arrival in Fishguard – and another tidal race through Ramsey Sound. The sea was calm and we were tacking for quite a while (more good beginner's practice). The tide was with us when we reached Ramsey Sound, so we went through alarmingly fast. At one

point someone said: "I think that's Horse Rock" ..... Finally through – and without incident - the sea started to get bumpier. As we were due to arrive so late, I set myself the challenge of trying to cook dinner as we went along (partly to see if my stomach would stand up to it). I learnt a lot from this, mainly that it is best to keep things simple! Anyway, I succeeded and we were glad to be able to eat as soon as

we had anchored in the shadow of the ferry terminal at Fishguard at 1045. Late to bed.

Magnus was leaving ship at Fishguard so we saw him onto the train before moving to the inner harbour to fill up with water. Having only been to the ferry port I had not realised how pretty and picturesque the old part of Fishguard is. We had time to explore and to enjoy a drink in the Ship, a



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### **The sun setting over the Anglesey shore**

friendly old-fashioned pub in the lower town.

An early start next morning, heading for Aberystwyth – a necessary stop for showers and a launderette. Although the wind was only 4-5 it seemed very bumpy to me so when we finally arrived after 14 hours sailing with grey sea and sky (having stopped at New Quay for a couple of hours to time it right for the tide) I was really quite glad when it stopped. Not one of the best days!

Aberdyfi would be our next stop and the first of a series of harbours with bars at the entrance and long winding channels to navigate. A beautiful estuary, seen from the land, but not such a nice experience in bucketing rain buffeted by the wind and strong current. We had an afternoon confined to the cabin by the weather.

We then stopped at the busy resorts of Barmouth and Porthmadog where we shared the harbour with crab-fishing holidaymakers and enjoyed the atmosphere of the traditional seaside holiday.

From Porthmadog to Caernarfon involved another early start – 3.30 am - another tide race at Bardsey Island and another bumpy ride. Not sure whether I was feeling sick, hungry, thirsty or just plain exhausted, I was persuaded to go below and sleep in the afternoon to be woken up 3 hours later as we came into sight of the bar at Caernarfon. Gradually coming to, I suddenly



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### **A sheltered anchorage just inside the Menai straits**

caught sight of a school of dolphins passing right across the bows of the boat! They were gone in an instant, but I couldn't have seen them more clearly.

We anchored in a sheltered anchorage in amongst sand dunes and wading birds, and the sun reflected on the water as it sank lower in the sky. It was sad to think the journey was over. I had seen puffins, seals and dolphins, and visited quiet inaccessible places – just as I had wished. I am looking forward to many more cruises in the future, perhaps with the addition of warm sunshine and swimming to make it even more special!



## Round Britain Relay leg 12 Caernarfon Milford Haven with T10 Calista.

by Trevor Thompson (T10)

### 7/8/10 Caernarfon

By the time I had seen my delivery crew, Cathy, to the bus home, it was too late for me to start a long passage, because I had missed the tide out of the Menai Straits. I left Caernarfon's Slate Quay before the tide was completely out and anchored off Waterloo Point just west of the town. It wasn't really the best anchorage, so I went back to anchor in the lee of Abermenai Pt, sheltered by a sand spit, and close to the channel to the bar ready for the morning.

### 8/8/10 Abermenai Pt to Abersoch

The anchor was up and we were motoring out at 0800 the next morning, just over an hour before high water. The tide was still making over two knots against us in the narrows, but we were on our way. The forecast was for S to SW force 3 or 4, increasing to 5 or 6 later. Well it was flat calm as we motored out, and it stayed that way until 1000 when I was able to hoist the main, unroll the genny, and reduce the engine revs in a light beam reach. By 1315 we were rounding Brach-y-Pwyll into Bardsey Sound at 8.5 knots with a strong south going tide. Having completed most



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### Approaching Bardsey Island

of the distance to Abersoch, it was time to sail properly, so with the engine off, broad reaching at one knot, we passed through Bardsey sound at a respectable 4 knots (thanks to the tide), in glorious sunshine. The fishing line was over the side and we caught our own tea in the shape of a fine mackerel. We were anchored in Abersoch bay, just clear of a group of moorings by 1800, cooking tea. So much for SW 5 or 6!

### 9/8/10 Abersoch

The 5 to 6 certainly materialised overnight. *Calista* was snatching at her anchor in the



© 2010 Trevor Thompson

### A rough day at anchor at Abersoch

swell working its way around the headland into the bay. On the basis that it always looks worse than it really is, I double reefed the main and recovered the anchor at 1030. It was at least worth poking our head out of the bay to see what it was like. Having settled down to sailing with the engine off, two reefs in the main and a well reefed genny set, it was clear that it would be close hauled all the way, to perhaps Aberystwyth. An uncomfortable 12 hour beat to windward, and a shallow tidal entrance exposed to the swell at the end of it? I was on a borrowed mooring in Abersoch bay by 1130!

### 10/8/10 Abersoch to Fishguard

The next morning we were ready to try again, so with a single reef in the main and a



### Crossing Cardigan Bay with auto-crew steering

rolled genoa, we were on our way by 0800. Certainly there was still wind, but not as much as yesterday, so this time we kept going. By 1100 we had full main and genoa pulling well and making 5 knots in the right direction. The afternoon passed quickly, sailing fast in wonderful conditions (perhaps more swell than would be ideal) until the tide turned against us. We closed the coast near Cardigan, and anchored in Port Cardigan Bay close to the beach, to wait for the foul tide to slacken so we could actually motor against it. The tide had slackened a bit by 2100, so we motored with stowed sails close to the shore until we entered Fishguard Harbour. There were at least 4 other yachts anchored there and numerous fish keep boxes, so it was a good job I had been in there recently and had an idea of what to look out for in the dark, as I slowly motored in. We were anchored clear of the ferry berths, in a shallow area known as Goodwick Bay by 2345.

### 11/8/10 Fishguard to Solva

A busy morning! Food and diesel to fetch from the local garage / shop before Dinah arrived. There was also a tight tidal window to get through Ramsey Sound. Dinah was aboard at 1030, and we were off by 1130, motor sailing with full main and

genoa set into a light SW wind. Reassurance was sought, “you are not going to frighten me are you?”, to which the only truthful reply was “probably!”. Approaching Strumble Head we could see the overfalls, and no clear way to avoid them, and a strong tide pushing us forward. We furled the genoa and tightened the main sheet as we motored into the overfalls. *Calista* was falling 6 feet vertically as she fell off the top of each wave, crashing into the trough, and

sending green water back into the cockpit as she rose to climb onto the next crest. We were surrounded by spray, and could only see where we were going when we were briefly on the top of each wave. The motion was awful. I have rarely been so frightened. Within half an hour we had left the headland behind, and the waves had dropped, so that we wondered if we had imagined it all. We set the genoa again, and started to sail properly, with a force 3 on the beam. By 1400 we were in Ramsey Sound, sailing close to the mainland shore, at perhaps 3 knots through the water – but over 10 knots against the land. I had expected Ramsey Sound to be difficult, it was flat calm. I had expected Strumble Head to be calm, but it was horrific. We were able to identify the Horse Rock easily by the water rushing past it, and we headed east close inshore easily



### New exhaust fitted at last

avoiding the tidal race where the water rushed out of the Sound, and were clear by 1500. We relaxed to enjoy a gentle run at 3.5 knots, with the fishing gear over the side.

We were on a visitor's mooring in Solva Harbour by 1645.

### 12/8/10 Solva

A relaxing day spent replacing the exhaust pipe (a five minute job), before entertaining our elder son Alex and his girlfriend Cara, to lunch in the cockpit. The afternoon was spent walking the dog, Lily, and carrying out minor repairs, before they all left, leaving me to walk alone up to Peter Crane's house for tea.



© 2010 Trevor Thompson

***Ereina* reaching towards Jack Sound**

### 13/8/10 Solva to Mooring

Peter Crane and son Kiran sailed A9 *Ereina* in company with *Calista* (single handed again). We left Solva in company at 0930, both hoisting full mainsails and foresails, to reach south in a NW 5. We were both sailing fast, at about 6 knots, with Pete adjusting sail to keep close to *Calista*. Within half an hour we were both reefing down – not because we were over pressed, but to slow down. We were approaching Jack Sound far too quickly, and were likely to arrive when the tide was strongly against us. The

sounds on the west coast of Wales all have strong tidal streams running through them, streams which have no slack water, but just change direction suddenly. We could see from the tidal race ahead of us that the tide was still against us. We even tacked to the west and then reached back to the east, all at 6 knots, just to kill time. Reducing canvas had little effect – we were still sailing fast. Eventually it was time for the tide to turn (according to the tide tables) so we headed into Jack Sound, with the tide still against us. We were soon through and tearing down wind towards St Ann's Head, and the entrance to Milford Haven. We spent the afternoon sailing up the Haven against the outgoing tide to pick up moorings at Rhoose Ferry (home to *Calista*). We spent the evening ashore at our Cottage, with Dinah, Cara, Alex, Pete and Kiran, as well as Pete's wife Louise. A fitting celebration of the completion of *Calista's* first leg of the Round Britain Relay.



## A gentle jaunt?

by a Loyal Wife

I don't like being frightened, so what was I doing being tossed about in a cockleshell in the race off Strumble Head? Especially since I knew there was a fair chance of me being frightened even before I boarded *Calista* in Fishguard harbour. And I hadn't quite run out of excuses for staying at home.

Trevor spent the summer taking part in the Atalanta Round Britain Relay. He had undertaken to sail *Calista* on two legs of the Relay from Anglesey to Milford Haven and then round to Falmouth. As *Calista* is based in Milford Haven he had had to sail up to Anglesey. Fortunately he had had crew for most of the journey north, including going through Ramsay Sound and round Strumble Head. However, Trevor had sailed single handed from Abersoch back to Fishguard, and didn't really want to do Ramsay Sound solo. On the way north he had confessed to being frightened by the experience of going through Ramsay Sound. The spring tide had whipped *Calista* through the narrow channel at 11 knots over the ground, and Trevor had been worried about the possibility of ending up on Horse Rock or the Bitches as the GPS and electronic charts hadn't been working. Magnus on the other hand hadn't been frightened by that section, but had found broaching in the Race off Strumble Head scary.

Since I couldn't twist anyone else's arm into joining Trevor (they all had pretty convincing excuses), and I had a few days off work and had managed to persuade Alex to take our dog, Lily, camping with him and his girlfriend (in a two man tent, but that is another story....), I found myself being dropped off on the slipway of Fishguard harbour. It was a glorious summer's day, with the sun shining from a cloudless blue sky, and *Calista* serenely at anchor on the clear blue waters of Fishguard harbour. It could have been the Mediterranean (until I dipped an explora-

tory toe in the water). Trevor rowed over in the dinghy to collect me, evidently pleased that I was actually going to be spending some time on *Calista* with him. He had spent the morning refuelling, ferrying containers between the nearby filling station and *Calista*, but needed some more food. After a quick trip to the supermarket we were ready to leave.

We motored out of Fishguard harbour, hoisting the sails as we went and giving the end of the breakwater a wide berth, in case the Irish ferry was hidden from view. Once beyond the confines of the harbour we turned off the engine and sailed, gathering speed as the tide caught us. Trevor was keen to be out of Ramsay Sound before the tide turned, and at the speed we were doing we were going to make it comfortably. Or not so comfortably. Before long the seas grew rougher and rougher, although the wind hadn't strengthened. *Calista* was tearing up the waves, taking off the top, and being dropped into the trough beyond. Gradually it dawned on us that we were in the race off Strumble Head, although Strumble Head looked to be a long way away, and then we were abeam of it, and then past it, but still the seas were rough. I had gone down below to make Trevor a sandwich since he hadn't had any breakfast, but it was difficult to brace myself in the galley. Trevor said grimly that he didn't want anything to eat, so I rejoined him in the cockpit and carefully avoided looking at the seas. We were doing an incredible speed over the ground with the tide, and there was no way we could turn back to Fishguard. We were committed to continuing, however unpleasant. It was definitely not fun, rapidly adding itself to our list of horrible sails. I was just glad that Lily was safely with Alex, and that we didn't have to worry about her being frightened as well. We started to debate whether we should continue with the original plan of going through Ramsay Sound, or whether we should head out to sea to pass it. There was a big swell running, and we decided that at least we would be sheltered from that in the Sound. Trevor had also managed to get the



GPS and electronic chart to speak to each other, so felt that it would be easier to avoid the hazards in the Sound with me down below keeping an eye on our progress. He had also decided on a strategy to get through Ramsay Sound, with an option of anchoring or picking up a mooring at Martin's Haven. Rapidly the point was coming where we had to make a decision, and we opted for passing through Ramsay Sound. With heart in mouth I went down below to the chart table, taking a quick look at the Sound. The water inside was flat, no sign of Scylla and Charybdis, and amazingly the sun and sea were still blue. Onshore we could make out people on the beach, and there were walkers on the coast path. Another normal summer day for Pembrokeshire then.

Trevor's strategy was to keep close to the mainland shore to ensure that he wasn't swept by the tide onto Horse Rock, with me checking that we were in deep enough water. This time through Trevor could make out where Horse Rock was. He called me out so that I could see the tide spilling over it like a waterfall. Then as the tide shot us past he had then to make sure that his course was going to take us clear of the Bitches, a reef extending from Ramsay Island. Again it was visible, with various RIBs zooming past. As we came to the southern exit from Ramsay Sound we could see breaking water to the south west, but as we were aiming for Solva we just turned east. All of a sudden the pressure was off, our speed dropped, and we were enjoying a wonderful gentle sail. What had all the fuss been about?

As it was low water we were not going to be able to get into Solva harbour, so we relaxed. We put a mackerel line over, and had soon caught our dinner. Just off the entrance to Solva we took down the sails and went to anchor inside of Scar Rock in

company with several other yachts. As the tide rose we kept an eye on the channel into Solva and the boats aground in the harbour. Eventually Trevor judged that with our keels raised we would be able to creep into the harbour and take the pick of the visitors' moorings. With an Atalanta's shallow draught jumping the queue becomes child's play! We had picked up a mooring, tidied everything away, and were sitting enjoying a cup of tea in the cockpit long before any of the other yachts anchored off were able to enter Solva.



### **In Solva on the first of the flood**



## Round Britain Relay leg 13 Milford Haven to Falmouth with T10 *Calista*.

by Trevor Thompson

### 14/8/10 Mooring to Dale

*Calista* and *Ereina* left the moorings at Rhoose Ferry, with the ebb tide. *Ereina*'s crew were still Pete and Kiran, but *Calista* was now crewed by Trevor and No 1 son Alex. Both boats set reefed main and headsail to the strong northerly wind. We had a fast and uneventful trip to Dale, where we anchored in 1.5 metres just clear of the moorings.

### 15/8/10 Dale to Rock

An early start with clear skies, we set full sail to a gentle North East wind, and turned the engine off. We had the spinnaker set and pulling before breakfast, until we had the Turbot Bank abeam. As the wind died we reluctantly handed the spinnaker and started the engine, motor sailing to keep the speed up. Of course the NW winds of the last few days had left a swell which was



## Rounding the Longships



### *Calista* and *Ereina* in Penzance wet dock

less than comfortable for Alex, who had not had the benefit of weeks on board to gain his sea legs. By lunchtime the wind had returned and we re-set the spinnaker, running at 5 knots with the engine off. In due course we had the spinnaker down again and made our way over the Doom Bar towards Padstow, threading our way delicately through the crowded moorings at Rock in pitch blackness, to anchor on the beach at Rock at 22.00.

### 16/8/10 Rock

A day of rest following a long day at sea, saw us exploring Rock on foot, crossing the ferry to Padstow, and exploring there before indulging ourselves with an early tea of fish and chips.

### 17/8/10 Rock to Penzance

A late start, to fit in with the tides, and we had the sails set and the engine off clear of the bar by 1230. We reached fast all day with a westerly force 5 to 6, and an uncomfortable swell which made it difficult to work down below. By 19.00 we were off the North Western tip of

Cornwall motor sailing, as the wind strength slackened. Unfortunately the swell increased in height, as we rounded Lands End and we had an uncomfortable time running fast down the waves with slatting sails and the propeller clear of the water on each crest. The swell diminished rapidly as we worked east along the coast into the shelter of the land. Motoring hard we managed to get into the wet dock at Penzance and tie up before the lock gate rose out of the water, locking us inside until the next high water.

### **18/8/10 Penzance**

Another day of rest allowed us to explore Penzance, and fill our fuel and water tanks, before locking out in the evening and spending the night on one of the waiting buoys outside the harbour.

### **19/8/10 Penzance to Falmouth**

An early start again, and we were reaching at 4 knots in a South Westerly force 3, which strengthened as the morning progressed until we were creaming along passing the Lizard. By 13.00 we were entering Falmouth harbour to tie up in the Visitors' Marina in the heart of Falmouth. Completion of our sections of the Round Britain Relay were celebrated with a meal ashore for the crews of both boats.

This just left us to retrace our steps back home with both boats – but that is another story!



## **Truro to Milford Haven with *Calista* and *Ereina***

by Cathy Brown

I joined *Calista* again (now in company with *Ereina*) a couple of weeks later for the final leg back to Milford Haven. The quayside at Truro was a perfect place to tie up - with only a couple of permanent residents for company we virtually had the facilities to ourselves (a shower and toilet on the quay). Tesco is very convenient - just across the bridge - and the centre of the town only a couple of minutes walk. Waiting for the tide we had most of the day on Sunday to explore, before setting off down the River Fal. The forecast was not good so we found a sheltered creek to anchor for the night out of the wind.



© 2010 Cathy Brown

***Ereina* and *Calista* in Truro**

In the morning we continued down the river, past huge ships laid up waiting for work, between the wooded banks past King Harry's Ferry and on towards Falmouth. On the VHF came a constant stream of reports to the coastguard of dinghies which had capsized in the strong wind – it was clear that it would be a while before we could go round the Lizard to Penzance. Parting company with *Ereina*,

we explored up the inlet past St Mawes, through crowded moorings to a quiet anchorage beyond. The neighbouring sailing school gave us plenty of entertainment watching the children enjoying the water. As it was a beautiful sunny day, we rowed ashore and walked the couple of miles back to St Mawes to look at the castle impressively perched on a windy promontory. The clear Cornish colours were at their best, and the castle grounds were full of late summer flowers. I, for one, was glad to have postponed the inevitable long passages that lay ahead.

Next day, with the weather still unfit for rounding the Lizard, we met up with *Ereina* and crossed the bay to the Helford River. The visitor's moorings were quite exposed to the wind so we only stopped for lunch, then continued inland up the river to see what we could find. Our plan was to go to Gweek, but as the channel winding through the river got narrower and shallower we wondered if we would make it. Past the seal sanctuary and nearing the village, we passed untidy-looking



**The quay at Gweek when the tide is in**

industrial buildings and the channel became little more than a muddy ditch. But we had found one of the most interesting hidden places of the trip. More of a working village than a tourist trap, Gweek provides good facilities for the visiting boat. The shallow quay has no ladders so when the water goes down it's quite a scramble to get ashore! Once on land you find yourself in the middle of a fascinating and friendly boatyard, building and repairing wooden boats. The village has a shop and pub and a fish and chip van on Wednesdays. As usual, by the time we had cleared up, showered and eaten there wasn't much time to look around, but we did manage a pint in the pub, strolling back to the boat by the light of the full moon.

As it was a 6 am start in the morning, it was breakfast en route. We had to get back to Falmouth to get Magnus to the train. It was quiet across the water but high winds were forecast, and it started to rain as we approached Falmouth marina. By the time we walked to the railway station the streets were running with water – everything was

soaked and the rain continued all day long. It looked as though we were stuck, so we took the opportunity to get some washing done and do a few chores, and tried to dry out all the wet oilskins.

Next day Falmouth looked better – perhaps there'll be a chance to explore another time.

Rounding the Lizard was still out of the question so we headed back to the Helford

River to an anchorage we had seen the previous day. This is next to Tremayne Quay – a grassy landing place owned by the National Trust and accessible either by boat or by walking down through the woods. It's popular for picnics and barbecues as it catches the sun late in the evening – a beautiful spot. We shared the quiet, idyllic anchorage with two or three other boats, surrounded by wooded banks and fish jumping in the still water.

The moment I had dreaded had arrived and we were at last to attempt the Lizard. What a relief to find that conditions were not half as bad as anticipated! We reached Penzance unscathed and picked up a mooring outside the harbour. The hoped-for visit to the Isles of Scilly was by now impossible as the poor weather meant that we were running very late, so next day we were to continue round Lands End to Padstow.

The day dawned fine and sunny – and the sea was pretty smooth. We couldn't be-



### **Sailing in company — homeward bound at last**

lieve our luck as we sailed through shining seas in company with *Ereina*. Unfortunately, it began to get a bit lumpy and by early afternoon I was beginning to feel sick. I don't want to remember too much about the rest of the day – 8 hours later it was all over and we anchored at Rock.

After this experience I was dreading the next 12-hour passage across the Bristol Channel to Milford Haven, so was relieved to find that we had to delay it by a day. It was the Sunday of Bank Holiday weekend so Padstow was heaving with visitors and there was lots going on – brass bands, buskers, queues for everything! A real seaside holiday day! Rock, despite having a big RNLI event on, was much quieter. At the end of the day, dried out on the sand, we were surrounded by the soothing cries of oystercatchers and wading birds as the water gradually lapped up towards the boat.

We were off early next morning and I looked anxiously at the ragged horizon anticipating another uncomfortable passage.



© 2010 Cathy Brown

Dolphins were with us for nearly the whole of the passage - sometimes one or two at a time, sometimes in their tens. It was a magical end to the adventure – an incredible experience to spend the whole day watching dolphins and sea-birds – and even to see a whale surfacing near Lundy. We entered Milford Haven in the dark and anchored safely at Dale at 10.30, ready for the last few miles up the Haven in the

***Ereina and Calista* dried out at Rock (in Padstow har-**

There was quite a swell left over from the previous day's wind, but it was tolerable and as the day went on it gradually subsided into a shiny blue expanse of calm. Suddenly we were joined by dolphins, swimming alongside the boat and riding the bow wave, moving between *Calista* and *Ereina* and then disappearing into the distance.

morning.

Thank you Trevor and *Calista* for a truly memorable adventure!



© 2010 Peter Crane

**Dolphins playing around *Ereina's* bows**

## A “Cunning” plan for raising the jib

By Richard Hall

Last winter I decided that I did not want to go the route of changing to a furling jib. I had several jibs of differing sizes that had many years use left in them and I didn't want to throw them away. However I did not like the way I had to walk around the deck while raising or lowering the jib. Whilst I was still in the harbour and it was safe to walk around the deck, I could run the jib sheets outside the shrouds to the cockpit and snap the centre point to the pulpit. Then, once under-way I could proceed forward below decks and pop out of the forward hatch. This allowed me to hank on the jib, fit the halyard and the jib sheets, all while standing half in and half out of the forward hatch. I always felt incredibly safe standing there even if *Aquilo* was heeling to 20 or 30 degrees. Unfortunately when I wanted to hoist the jib I had to go back to the foot of the mast and haul the jib up from there. This meant the jib had to be left so that it was free to be hoisted, but out of reach. It could also be caught by the wind and get tangled or part of it blown over the side and into the sea. I found it easier to stand at the foot of the mast and, if necessary quickly move forward to hold the jib if it got out of control. Not nice when the deck was wet and *Aquilo* heeling. Also this did not fit the ethos on how I felt *Atalantas* should be handled. There should be no reason to put oneself at risk. That's not what *Atalantas* are about!

What I really needed was to be able to do everything from the forward hatch.

Hence my “CUNNING” plan.

I made certain that the halyard pulley at the top of the forstay lay athwartships rather than fore and aft. This meant that

the halyard could be led from the top of the jib, over the pulley and back down to the bows.

I should mention that *Aquilo* has always had rope halyards rather than the prescribed wire. I personally find them nice to handle and with modern pre-stretched ropes more than adequate.

Back to the “Cunning” plan!

Another pulley was fitted alongside the bow roller using a stainless steel spacer with holes top and bottom. I put the roller bolt through the lower hole in the spacer, then through the port cheek of the bow roller, through the roller and then through the starboard cheek and fastened the lot with a nut. The pulley was fitted to the top hole in the spacer. The halyard was fed through the pulley and the tail tied to the pulpit. All was now within easy reach of the fore hatch, and I could raise and lower the jib whilst



**The Cunningham slack.**

still standing in the hatchway. The problem was, how could I tighten the halyard without a winch? I came up with what somebody described as a sort of “Cunningham for a jib”.

### A CUNNING CUNNINGHAM!

I got together the pulleys for a six way purchase. By having snap shackles, I could snap the bottom of the “Cunningham” onto the bow fitting and the top onto the clew of the jib. I could then raise the jib to the maximum that the “Cunningham” allowed and cleat the halyard off using the main mooring cleat. I could then pull on the rope from the “Cunningham” and after pulling in about three feet the jib would be pulled down tight. And when I say tight I mean really tight! The purchase allows me to easily tighten it up to about a quarter of a ton, probably more than the old winch would have achieved. That's it, the jib's up and ready to go. Not once have I had to



**The Cunningham tightened.**



**The 6:1 purchase.**

move from the safety of the fore hatch.

If I want to change jibs, the process is just as simple and just as safe.

The first picture shows the “Cunningham” in use, with the Cunningham rope slack. The blue jib halyard can be seen coming back down from the top of the forestay, and passing through the new pulley and cleated on the main mooring cleat. The next picture shows the “Cunningham” nipped up tight. The “Cunningham” could be pulled tighter with ease if the winds demanded a taut jib luff. If the foot of the jib was required to be lower then it could be dropped by slackening off the halyard and re-tightening via the “Cunningham”. The minimum length of the “Cunningham” is nine inches from the bottom of the lower snap shackle to the top of the upper one. That's about one inch longer than the existing strop plus shackles which I used to use at the bottom of the jib.



I include the details of my purchases to show what could be achieved and also the sizes to show that it is not bulky. I bought:

1. A Ronstan 20mm triple pulley plus becket plus cleat
2. A Ronstan 20mm triple pulley.
3. Two Stainless steel 55mm snap shackles
4. 3mtrs of Marlow 8 plait pre-stretched 5mm rope for the "Cunningham"
5. A Barton 45mm single pulley for the bow roller pulley.

This came to just under £110 from Northampton Sailboats and included £5 P&P.

I chose these triple pulleys as they included a removable pin so that the snap shackles could be fitted without the need for a shackle between the pulley and the snap shackle. The pins could also be fitted in two positions with axes 90 degrees apart which is also necessary as the threading of the rope around the pulleys is unusual as the best layout is with the axes of the two sets of pulleys not in the same plane, but at 90 degrees.

The third picture shows the triple pulleys with axes at 90 degrees, and the connection of the snap shackles which are both in the same plane.

The spacer I made from a piece of stainless off-cut that I already had.

So for just over £100, I can now fit, raise or lower the jib totally within the safe confines of the forward hatch. The jib is always under my control and the possibility of "an early bath" eliminated. I can also change jibs at sea, safely, in any conditions, to ensure the right size sail for the wind speed.

Carol is very happy too, as her confidence in me and *Aquilo* is maintained. It really frightened her to think of me in the water and her alone on *Aquilo*. I now have no need to go on deck whilst at sea.

## Emergency steering

by Norman Dorrington

It was the Commodore, Colin, who pointed out to me that the metal spigot that protrudes into the rear cabin from the top rudder pintle was intended for an emergency tiller. Until then I had not considered the vulnerability of all the wires and pulleys that make up the whipstaf steering. I decided that I should have such a tiller and looked around my shed for inspiration. I came up with a five foot length of stout copper tubing and a sack of galvanised box spanners.

One of the spanners was a perfect fit over the spigot and the tube fitted fairly well into the barrel of the spanner. I drilled two holes in the tube in line with the tommy bar holes on the spanner and inserted a bolt. The whole tiller was then painted with green hammerite.



Its grip on the spigot is firm enough to keep it horizontal even though it is rather heavy. It swings within the cabin and can be controlled by reaching down through the cabin hatch.

With a stick inserted into the tube it could reach into the cockpit but movement would be restricted by the width of the cabin entrance. I have never steered with it but I do know that it can operate the rudder.



## Aft Cabin Modification A15 *Artemis II*

By Joe Lloyd

Some time ago when working at a local boat yard I was intrigued by a transatlantic rowing boat that was being fitted out. The raised cabins at either end, which gave the craft its self righting capability, provided a surprising amount of accommodation. The Atalanta's aft cabin always seemed cramped

due to the lack of sitting headroom and consequently only gets used for storage. This tends to put too much weight aft and immerses the transom. I decided to investigate the feasibility of raising the aft deck. From a photocopy of the plans I made a scale model with a raised aft cabin and when I had convinced myself that it looked 'all right' I



**The model used to judge the final appearance**



**Saw cuts enabled the aft deck to be raised in one piece**



### **Tapered ply sections filling in the saw cuts, and a modified transom**

decided to take the plunge. I had initially thought that a completely new construction would be necessary due to the changing contours of the rolled topsides and the increased camber I had modelled, but when I started the job I found that simply

raising the deck gave an acceptable result with much less work. I found that a pleasing appearance was achieved by increasing the height of the transom by 12 inches and repositioning the toe rail such

that it took a straight line in the horizontal plane. As can be imagined quite a bit of juggling was required but to my eye at least it looks all right. As can be seen from the photographs the first job was to remove the sheer strake as far as the aft cockpit bulk-



**Ready for painting**



## The finished job—back afloat

head and the toe rail to the front of the cockpit. Some careful work with a panel saw was then required. I think the photographs are fairly self explanatory. The cockpit coamings had to be removed and the skin freed from the stringers under the sides of the cockpit ie the stringer under the toe rail moulding. A hack saw blade was used for this but the glue 'let go' fairly easily. This was to allow this stringer, which was not cut, to take up a fair curve as the whole aft section was hinged up. The 12 inch increase in height of the transom resulted in the aft cockpit bulkhead increasing in height by 4 inches. As can be seen a new bulkhead was fitted here anyway as the old one had 'had it' as they say. Another stringer was fitted along the upper cut section of the rolled topside and deck beam extensions scarfed into place. 9 mm marine ply 'wedges' were fitted either side and an inch and a quarter sapele plank let into the transom to close the gap. Epoxy glue and glass cloth for sheathing were used and quite a bit of filler ! The upper section of the transom had to be packed out with a wedge of sapele and two ports

were cut out. These were fashioned after an L.F. Herreshoff design on his 'Marco Polo' cruising schooner, incidentally another lean boat with high crowned decks fore and aft. The twin skegs/rudders were removed as I have reverted to a single rudder. This was an earlier experiment which, although it made straight line tracking a 'hands off' affair, proved much slower on the bends ! Although this was more than a weekends work it proved much easier than I had anticipated. I should like to have repositioned the sheer strake as it runs aft but as it covers the hull/topside joint I decided to leave it as original. Would I do it again? Yes, I'm pleased with the result and the aft cabin is now the Captain's cabin, and that extra five square feet of 'sail area' downwind can only help.



## Quick Repairs

by Norman Dorrington

One of the drawbacks of keeping the boat a long way from home is that quite small repairs can take a long while to complete, if, between processes, they need time to cure or dry out. Faced with a small problem just after launching I thought I would try something different.

I had discovered a soft spot in the plywood wall of the cockpit just below the seat. I removed the timber seat extension and pulled out the rot with my fingers until I felt solid wood.

A rectangular piece of plywood of about the



### The plywood patch

same thickness was then placed over the hole and drawn round with a pencil. Using a Fein Multi Master tool (ideal for the job) the hole was enlarged to reveal an upright on the left, the seat at the top, and a void to the right and bottom.

I made up a quantity of David's Isopon and spread it on the face of the upright and the

seat. Two small strips of ply were also coated and used as blocking pieces on the void sides.

The edges of the patch were liberally coated



### Cutting with the vibrating saw

with Isopon and it was then pushed gently into place.

This has to be done very quickly as the Isopon soon hardens and I wanted the whole thing to knit together whilst it was still squashy.



### Removing excess glue

It was then left while I attached the mainsail to the mast and boom.

By this time it had set hard and I rubbed the whole surface down with an angle grinder fitted with a flap disc. When all was smooth and flush I coated it with plenty of wood hardener. This served three purposes. It helped protect the wood, it acted as a primer for the paint, and just before it dried it was sticky enough to hold the plastic seat covering in place.

The wood hardener also dried quickly, especially in the sunshine, and I was able to apply a coat of white paint. I re-fixed the seat



## Ready to paint

extension, which covered the plastic seat edging, and the repair was almost unnoticeable. All done in one afternoon together with other jobs.



## GOOD INTENTIONS, *SOLONE* A 162

By Keith & Frouwke Viewing

The Round Britain Relay was a grand idea; we would join the fleet in Falmouth and cruise in company to Hamble, well remembered from the 50 th. Anniversary. The newsletter and a note from Dinah brought us back to the fragility of life for Charles Currey, grand fellow, had passed on. But had we set a record of our own this year? There was No Show at Falmouth or at Hamble, and we qualified only for the scathing award of a dearly departed Headmaster; ‘scrimshanker!’ Our Award had nothing to do with logs, renovations or derring-does upon the deep, but rather with a full three months on board. What would the real sailormen make of that? It was bad even in mid-June when our friends at the Yard called their cheerful and daily greetings. The sun shone, gentle winds barely ruffled the surface, and ‘not ready yet?’

The excuses were numerous, but dealt mainly with prior support to Lord Nuffield and we sailed, drifted and fished the waters between Poole and Christchurch to ensure access to road and rail at short notice. The upper reaches of the River Frome close to Wareham

were preferred for the endless review of an amazing mix of modern and ancient sailing craft, go-go boats of all shapes and sizes, one or two seaworthy motor boats and a steady flow of canoes of all shapes and sizes, but few designed for the river. Most of these were down on the ebb for the day, but would stop for a chat when the flood was young and they had run out of water. It was the head-winds for the canoes, a stalwart bunch.

One visitor had lived the history of Fairey’s, and knew all about Charles’ fa-



**Frouwke in the galley of *Solone***

mous win in Canada, and the wonderful way in which our boats were built. It was a tale of chance; the aviation company had bet on a Eurofighter, had completed a new factory in Belgium and recruited the staff. All was ready, but the project was shelved and the terminal benefits consumed the resources. It was all over now but Peter Twiss, the Chief Test Pilot managed the marina and our man was the assistant. His expression relaxed, a beautiful smile for a moment and then sorrow descended; there were 600 in Belgium.

The way to the river in Poole is clearly defined by channel markers and bouys, and the only real problem is to be wary of the occasional water-ski driver whose 180 degree turns at speed may not take into account your side of the channel. A near miss at 30 knots was near indeed; the poor lad took fright as the collision was imminent, he gave the motor-car handle a desperate wrench to avert a certain head-on and passed a metre off our port bow.

The moorings start in the river and are strung close to the port bank all of the way to Wareham with occasional red and yellows to indicate private occupation, for example at Ridge Wharf Yard, and Redclyffe Yacht Club where painted yellow lines on the pontoon may not be seen from the approach, but are important. The temporary Duty Officer, all peaked cap and embroidered badge, explained that 'all sorts of people come up here'. Our visit was simply to return the keys, but we and our old boat were weighed in the balances and *Solone* moved on.

Other mooring lines between less attractive white bouys are put out to grass by the Environment Agency and are fair game for itinerant voyagers. They dry at Springs, are uncomfortable when go-go boats open taps, and accumulate masses of osier washed from the banks. These are shallow rooted but stand about two metres and

gradually slump into the river. Beautiful, slender, with delicate narrow leaves, and each a model for an oriental painting. So much for the warning signs of 4 knots as we lean forward against the acceleration, and wonder about our raw water filters.

The problem is really where to land. The obvious choice is to moor at Wareham Town Quay, where 48 hours is free and you are welcome to enjoy King Alfred's port (885 AD) and imagine the fleet of marauding Long Ships hidden below the banks. That small town has everything you need within 10 minutes walk, but the Quay is popular, and the space available is constrained between the bridge and the reserve for large river boats from Poole and best to be there by 0900, before the throng.

The Quay is special for the fair on Saturdays, and also for training in basic seamanship. For example, the prevailing wind sets across the river and can pin you against the wall. Close to the bridge, the wall turns in-shore a few feet, but sufficient for the stream also to set you against the wall until the current eases at HW. The problem was considered at length. If you backed out against the wind and across the stream, the current on the bow would be strong, and weak on the stern as it moved into the shallows of the opposite bank. The boat would turn as required, but the rudder at full depth would probably ground on the rocks of the south bank, wrench the pintles and bend the blade. Steerage way could be a problem too as your attempted a 90 degree turn downstream, and you might be set on the bows of other craft below!

A diver, ex-RN, referred to the handling of warships of substance, but was this the place to learn? Our man stood resolute, collapsible boat hook in hand; we would push as never before, place the bow against the current, turn 180 degrees and



hope to avoid the rocks on the south bank, never mind the wind. The watchers watched, the wall of stone was crowded on a sunny afternoon, and the collapsible boathook collapsed. Down he went, missed the stone by a hair and the boat was pinned back against the wall. The watchers failed to cheer as he surfaced and nor did they offer words of encouragement as he swam to retrieve the dreadful pole! The solution is simply to turn the boat downstream at slack water with warps from the outside boat in the raft, or back-off for about 200 m where there is a lee from the trees. There were no rocks that we could touch, sufficient space to turn, and adequate water between the trots when the river is *completely* occupied by a river-boat.

The dinghy sailors from Poole re-enacted their 100 year race to the Quay and those confined to motorised tricycles had stories of a lifetime to tell. ‘Yes, I was with Boulton & Paul when we developed the aircraft ejector seat for the Swordfish. The first seats were fired with shotgun cartridges--.’ But the river was the place. A seal, all whiskers, beady eyes and glistening, would take a rest from the search, decide upon the threat if any, and sound again. On Springs great shoals of mullet would drift up on the flood and so close that one would cross another by moving gently, belly over back, dorsal fin at surface.

So we had settled for the first free mooring on the river; just the osiers, a few wild duck, an occasional swan, and a grand view to the swell of the Purbeck Hills at the top of the tide. Paddle over to the north bank



***Solone* tied up by the bridge at Wareham**

and find a tiny jetty, then walk for half an hour between hedgerows adorned by flowers of all sorts, and between water-meadows and ancient pines to Wareham. The rewards are great; the ginger cat turned out to be young fox; you find the ancient wall (east flank), intact and wonder how many were involved, India-style, in building a defence about 15 m wide at the base and say 8 m to the crown. And the mysteries of discrete comings and goings of pitch-black RIBS in the night, in-board engines, the first a pathfinder and the other to land the shore-party, invisible. Occasional green lights were held still, even at 0130 hrs, about 5m above the osiers until those began to jump and sway and then be held still again. There were even two chips of green plastic in the cockpit after a walk one day; had the little green men arrived, or was this simply evidence of fly-fishers and outside dapping rods with lights at their tips?

The F9, when it came, found us astern of a huge rectangular section motor boat, coned from about 8 m above the stream. Ugly beyond belief but a great wind break as the rigging and the mast rattled and we wondered how our friends would survive around the coast. 'Yes', said the surveyor 15 years ago, 'this is really a young man's boat'. But in the calm, two go-go boats in opposite directions could create a standing wave of substance, and better have your stern mooring lines made short and fast. Some of our canoe enthusiasts were terrified of the wash for the lightest of these have no bulkheads and when filled simply break in half. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to clamber out of the mud and into the dense and slippery wall of osiers that line the banks and no path above.

Another F8 was at anchor in Christchurch Harbour, take the mud between the tides and wonder at ducks and ducklings that cross busy waters to roost safe from Brer Fox. The mullet here are almost aground

at low water, too big for herons that stand for hours and too selective it seems, for egrets take the pickings. Good company, but no stories and so we moved back to the Yard to find friends and lots of stories, concerned mainly with trans-ocean rowing boats. The first of these was being unpacked, fresh from a record-breaking trip over the north Atlantic in 44 days. A double sculler, with a crew of four, arranged as an open boat with elegant small cabins at the ends, lots of high-tech equipment for navigation and provisions in abundance.

The season moved on, the weather dreadful from the north and east, and should we take a chance on Nuffield's best efforts, beat through Hurst to Hamble, and if a problem, lose our bookings for the return? The fact is that we were very comfortable; the lighting from the ports was elegant and gear was readily accessible from the bunks. The ancient Sailor radios were handy and the bulkhead seat gave complete access to the galley and chart table on either hand. In classic fashion, the companion steps gave another comfortable seat to watch the world go by, reach for the glass on the chart-table, write a card, or savour another coffee and Hot Cross Bun!



## Harnessing the Horse

by Colin Twyford

In 1983 Janet and I purchased A95 *Hiran* and on many occasions in our years of ownership I have wondered why the mainsheet horse has two holes at each end, when only one is used to hold it in place. A couple of years ago I visited Mike Thorley at East Mersea, he had A141 *Rakia* in his garden being restored. He told me he that he had removed some pieces of equipment fitted on the horse some years before and did not know how to refit them. I could not help but it reminded me of my former thoughts.

Then when I went to greet *Tammy Norry* finishing the relay at Hamble Point in August and Ian Pollard invited me aboard, the first thing I saw was the fitting on his horse. It is quite simple and enables the

mainsheet to be hauled across with relative ease. Here is an illustration of my version using bits that I had available, four S/S rigging plates about 4" long, four S/S nuts & bolts, two pulleys, two jamming cleats, two small shackles and a suitable length of rope. It does the job well but there may be better examples. On reflection I think that the rope should go through a ring fitting before the jamming cleat to make it easier to operate.

I have asked our Drawing Master Trevor Thompson if there are any drawings of this fitting and he has not seen one. It would be interesting to see how many of our boats have an original fitted, as the outer hole on the horse is probably on most *Atalantas'* and I cannot think of another reason for their use.

I had noticed that the track on the horse was sticking in some areas; my crew Peter produced a simple tool made from brass (*illustrated*) to rectify this. By inserting the



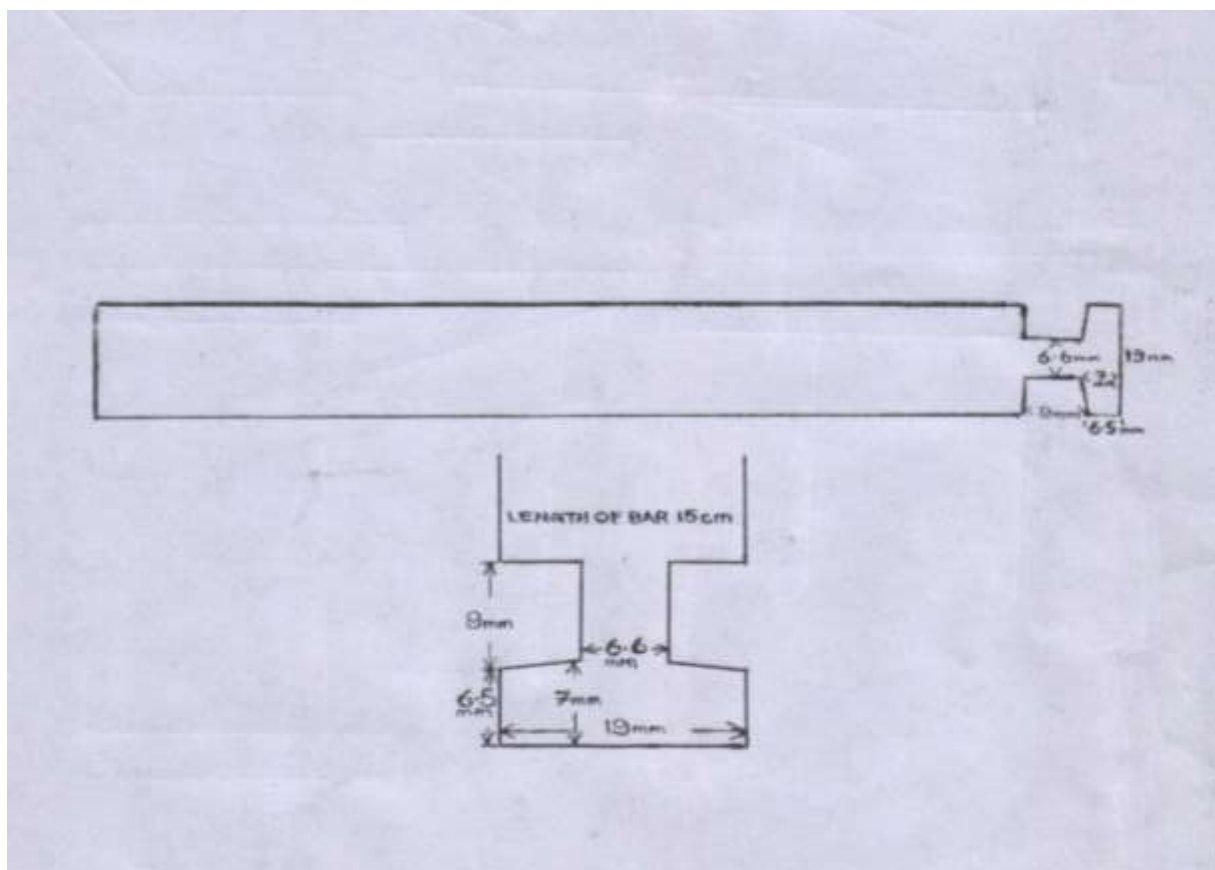
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**The modified track**

tool and gently tapping it along it solved the problem. The sail track could be eased with it if needed. If you made the tool with a material harder than brass, it would need to have the edges rounded to avoid damaging the track.



(The measurements fit my track which is a standard original track.)



**The tool for clearing obstructions in the track**



## Leg 14 – Falmouth to Hamble Point (or it should have been)

By Rob Wooley

Well looking back the plan was good - it's just a shame about the weather. Still that's sailing around Britain for you, isn't it?

The plan was to sail from Axmouth on Thursday 19th and slowly make our way down to Falmouth to meet up with T10 and A9 on Saturday 21st, giving us six days to easily cover the 160 miles up to the Hamble.

### Thursday 19th

The forecast for strong winds and rain coming in was not good, so the decision was made to wait for it to blow through then make for Falmouth in one hit. Eighteen hours should do it.

### Friday 20th

Up on the top of the beach at 0430 to check the harbour entrance. Not good - we aren't going anywhere today.

### Saturday 21st

It's 0430 and here we are again on the top of the beach but no change. We still have strong winds and heavy surf in the harbour entrance, so it's back to bed for me and George (the crew).

### Sunday 22nd

At last we depart Axmouth at 0600 headed for Falmouth.

Now I have to make an admission here. By this time I'm sick of weather forecasts

so I've walked up to the beach as usual, taken a good look at the situation and decided lets go. If I wait for the met office to come up with a good forecast we'll be here all week.

Once clear of the bar the sea state in Seaton Bay was fair combined with a good force 4 plus from the South West. Clearing Beer Head the wind freshened (as expected) and we were making a good 5 knots hard on the wind under full genoa and main. What a great way to start the day, too good to last! Brixham coastguard came on the VHF with the weather broadcast. South West 6 going gale 8 later is not what you want to hear



### *Epenetus raring to go*

when you are enjoying yourself especially, if at the same time you notice that your feet are wet. I must admit to being a little concerned about my wet feet as standing in the hatchway by the chart table one would generally expect dry feet. Well on investigation the cause of my wet feet turned out to be a good two to three inches of oily water seeping in from the engine compartment. I've never been happy with the seal on the engine hatch but in fairness it's never given me any problems, then the keel box seals have always been good in the past. The



### **On our way west at last**

starboard keel box rubber had split and water was surging up the keel box and into the engine compartment in an alarming quantity; time to pump! After a few minutes pumping the engine compartment was dry and all was well with the world once more, unfortunately we were going to have to pump on a regular basis for the rest of the day.

The swell had been building all morning and by the time we cleared Berry Head the sky was jet black with heavy low clouds. The forecast had said gale 8 later, given what we were looking at I was starting to think perhaps they meant soon. We pushed on but by 1230 with the wind building we decided that discretion be the better part and diverted into Dartmouth.

A beer or two in Dartmouth Yacht Club to drown our disappointment, oh well tomorrow will be a better day.

### **Monday 23rd**

Strong South Westerlies and heavy rain, not the weather to round Start Point; so its breakfast at Alf Frescos (the best breakfast in the South West) and a day spent hiding from the rain tracing those little leaks which have eluded me for years.

### **Tuesday 24th**

A dry sunny morning with a forecast 4 to 5 South Westerly, that will do we're off again.

As we poked our nose out of the Dart and into Start Bay it was obvious that the Met office were not exactly right. The chop in Start bay was short and horrible accompanied by a strong South Westerly, so much for 4 to 5. With a reefed genoa and full main we were seriously over canvassed in the gusts having to spill the main on a regular basis. We took a few wraps of main around the boom and the situation was soon a lot more relaxed, but we were taking water again and quite a lot of it.

Considering the water in the engine compartment situation, combined with the fact that at this point we were still not round Start Point and hence not exposed to the full force of the weather the only sensible thing to do was to head back to the Dart. We binned the main and ran back under genoa.

Back in Dartmouth Yacht Club, beer in hand (getting to be a bad habit) I was told by the skipper of another yacht that they had been reading 35kts of wind pretty much constant with the gusts going well above.

Well it's Tuesday and we are still in Dartmouth, we're fast running out of time. I feel plan B coming on. Speaking to Graham on the phone he tells me that Chris Perkins in *Noggin* F14 has sailed up from Falmouth to Newton Ferrers a week be-

fore. Chris you have saved the day, thank you. All we have to do is sail down to the entrance to Newton Ferrers (Wembury Bay) turn around and get ourselves to Hamble Point by Saturday morning and all of the dots will be joined.

### **Wednesday 25th**

Well what do you know strong winds and rain just by way of a change, oh the joys of being weathered in Dartmouth. Breakfast at Alf Frescos again, at this rate we'll be looked on as locals soon.

### **Thursday 26th**

A slight improvement in the weather but really it makes no difference. We have to go today or we will run out of time.



© 2010 Rob Wooley

At 0400 we depart Dartmouth to sail to Wembury bay and back to Dartmouth (approx 60 miles).

Not the best of days at sea, wet, bumpy, punching tide a lot of the time, lots of pumping but a good if not uneventful sail. *Epenetus* sailed herself for most of the day whilst we tried to keep dry. By the time we arrived back in Dartmouth around 2030 there were just two things on our minds, beer and sleep.

### Friday 27th

After a final breakfast at Alf Frescos (it just had to be done) we slipped out of Dartmouth at 1000 bound for Hamble Point and the finish. As it is impossible when sailing from the Dart to the Solent to hit both of your main tidal gates (Portland Bill and St Albans Head) without stopping the plan was to catch the tide at Portland, wait a while then push on to the Hamble. Best made plans again.

The day started out well with a good 4 to 5 North Easterly (whatever happened to the South Westerlies?) a moderate sea and sunshine. The wind vane was set and *Epenetus* set about eating up the 45 miles across Lyme Bay to Portland Bill. For the next three hours it couldn't have been better, then we started to lose our wind. I don't know what I've done but I must have offended the weather gods at some point because now we're trying to punch tide with next to no wind; nothing for it but time to hoist the iron sail and burn some diesel. Now I find motoring pretty dull, better than sitting in harbour but pretty dull all the same. That said I would rather have dull than an engine which coughs and dies after a couple of hours work!

The cause of our dead engine was soon discovered, a blocked primary filter, no problem fit the spare, bleed the system and on our way in no time. Wrong. The spare filter is the one which I had fitted at the beginning of the season and failed to replace, what a first class plonker. I tried all of the usual things which you know won't work even before you try as we drifted on making all of .2 of a knot over the ground. Desperation followed by caffeine, followed by nicotine and finally inspiration. Cut out a piece of pipe from the stern gland greaser and use it to bypass the primary filter, RESULT.

1900 and we still have a long way to go but now I'm enjoying the sound of that old engine and we have a little more wind. By the time we approach the Shambles the daylight has long given us up as a lost cause but with a revised plan of calling into Weymouth for a couple of hours sleep before pushing on we are in good spirits. BANG! I lift the engine cover and all that I can see in the torch light is smoke, not good, dead engine for the second time today and this time it looks terminal.

Plan F I think. I call up Portland to check the weather (don't know why as it's been wrong all week) we'll sail up to Weymouth beach and drop the hook, catch some sleep and look at the situation in the morning.

What is it with sailing, why is the wind always coming from where you want to go? We tacked backwards and forwards across Weymouth Bay, east bound tacks punching the tide as we headed towards Portland harbour, west bound tacks sailing up to a dark unlit shore with the tide behind us. On and on it went making little progress in the desired direction.





and running again, well running enough to get us into Weymouth under our own steam.

Once tied up in the cove inside Weymouth harbour it was

## The offending exhaust

### Saturday 28th

0420 and with a delightful splash the anchor descends to the sandy bottom of Weymouth bay. We feast on a meal of diesel flavoured bacon sandwiches (I stink of diesel, everything stinks of diesel, the whole boat smells of diesel) and fall into our pits for a glorious sleep.

0720 after three hours sleep I called Graham who to my relief had just arrived at Hamble Point with Ian Pollard on *Tammy Norry* (A45). Its done the relay is complete, all of the dots are joined well done everybody.

After a celebratory caffeine fix, with added diesel of course, I set to work on our dead engine. Now with the aid of daylight I can see what's happened. The water pump has sucked air and failed, the water pipe connecting into the exhaust elbow has melted and fell off and the exhaust pipe has blown out just below the elbow. Within two hours the engine was bodged up

showers, a late breakfast (without diesel) and sleep. As breakfasts go it was good but not a patch on Alf Frescos in Dartmouth. Thinking about it the waitresses weren't as easy on the eye either, but it was more than welcome.

### Sunday 29th

Sunday was a quiet day spent doing proper engine repairs and boat cleaning whilst watching the local wildlife of Weymouth parading around the harbour (very entertaining on a Bank Holiday weekend).

### Monday 30th

We departed from Weymouth at 0400 to make the tide around the Bill headed for Axmouth and home. Sailing the inside passage around Portland Bill in the dark, but that's a tale for another day.



## The long way home

by Dinah Thompson

“I’ll pick you up after work”, promised Trevor. Come 5.30 there was a text from Trevor, “I’m waiting for you at the mill”. As I walked down towards the mill, I could see Trevor coming along to meet me. A few minutes later and I was stepping into the dinghy for the short row out to *Calista* where she was anchored in the Carew River close to the French Tidal Mill. In the cockpit I was greeted enthusiastically by Lily (our Border collie), perhaps hoping that sense would prevail and that she could go for a walk around the mill pond. No such luck. Trevor hoisted the sails, and then, whilst I took the helm, he raised the anchor.

Within a few minutes *Calista* bore away and headed downriver, a gentle breeze filling the sails. Our departure was observed by a solitary heron, standing sentinel on the

riverbank. The sheep in the nearby fields ignored our passage, as did the cattle. In the distance we could see Carew Castle and the mill, but as we rounded the first bend they disappeared from sight. Soon we were rippling through the water, with fields, banks of gorse, and trees slipping by. As we passed the inlet leading up to Paskeston we caught a tantalising glimpse of a mast, and then we pulled in the sails and were soon beyond it heading towards the creek leading to Upton Castle.

The weekend before we had walked from our cottage to Upton Castle, and had wandered through the woods to the head of the creek. We had discovered signs of a quay and stone built buildings, all today surrounded by trees. Passing the creek we could see the trees, but not the quay. As the Carew River widened we could make out the inlets on the far side leading to old quarries. From Upton the Carew River is deceptively wide but from experience we know that it is shallow for quite



© 2010 Dinah Thompson

some distance from the banks. Some of the cuts have perches to mark the channels up to the quarries, but they are unreliable.

There used to be an oyster farm up one of them, but the *Sea Empress* disaster of 1997 ended that venture. We believe that there is a naturist campsite there now, but have never investigated it for ourselves.

In the past this area would have been busy with sea going vessels sailing to the various quarries to load limestone, and with other vessels going up to the tidal mill at Carew with grain for milling, and returning with bags of flour. Further up the Cresswell and Cleddau Rivers coal would have been an important cargo. Today these upper reaches of the Milford Haven rivers are tranquil haunts for birds and otters, with the occasional canoe or sailing dinghy. We have explored some of the cuts leading to the old quarries and even spent a night tucked up in one of them.

On summer evenings when the tide is right the peace of the Cresswell River is disturbed by motor boats rushing up to the pub at Cresswell Quay. We have sailed there ourselves, grateful for the lifting keels of the *Titania* when we lost the channel. As the quay at Cresswell dries out exposing rocks cruel to *Calista's* hull we have only ever had a quick drink before returning downriver.

We were still making good progress, but it was starting to get chilly, so we put on woolly hats and thick fleeces. I was also getting decidedly peckish, but unfortunately Trevor had forgotten to bring any food for supper, and the chocolate supply onboard was non-existent. I had to make do with a cup of tea.

Where the Carew River joins the Cresswell River there is an extensive black rock, the Black Mixen, which is clearly visible at low water. At high water it is invisible, but still a hazard best avoided. The moorings in the river are however a good indication of where the deep water is to be found. We turned to port and started to make our way

down through the trots of moorings off Lawrenny Quay. The light was fading fast, so we put on the navigation lights, and an extra layer of clothing. Lily snuggled up to me, resting her head on my knee, helping keep my hands warm.

As we joined the Cleddau it was time to turn on the engine and take down the sails. Our mooring is just across the river from Lawrenny on a sheltered stretch of the Cleddau. We sometimes pick up the mooring under sail, just as sailors in the past would have done, but on this occasion we were keen to get home for some dinner. We picked up the mooring, packed up, loaded up the dinghy with dog and Dinah, and motored across to the slipway. Half an hour after picking up the mooring we were home. Door to door it had taken over four hours to get home from work, a journey which normally takes less than ten minutes by car. But what a lovely way to end the working day!

Incidentally, the next time Trevor came to collect me from work by boat he remembered to bring some food for dinner onboard.



## ***The Beaver and her elec- tric motor***

by Harry Buddon

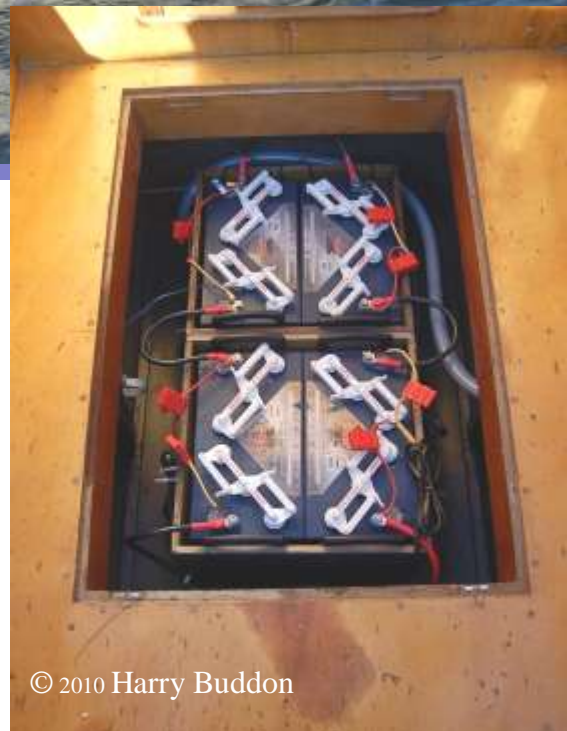
Here are a few photos of A38 over the summer of 2010 plying the waters of Lake Nipissing in Northern Ontario. I have this year removed my Vire gas engine and installed a new Torqueedo

4.0R electric outboard, equal to the thrust power of a 9.9 hp gas engine. Battery power 4 - 12 volt golf cart batteries, wired to provide the required 48 volts, each battery capable of 150 Ah. There is a GPS in the top of the motor, which determines position, then travel time, speed across the water, and most importantly endurance time left. I am finding that I can run the motor at full speed for a full two hours, or at half speed for up to 8 hours, and for double that time at quarter speed, which is very adequate for moving the boat in and out of harbor. The motor and all it's electronic gadgetry is a marvellous piece of German technology, you do have to give them credit.

A38 was in my shop all last winter and the centre-boards were dropped and the boxes rebuilt, and various sections of the hull planking replaced.



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## ***Noggin's Outing***

by Chris Perkins

Sometimes everything seems to come together in a way which encourages one to take the next step. *Noggin* had been looking at me sullenly for at least three years and complaining about the lack of attention; my son, Daniel, returned from a death defying seven months in Afghanistan was hoping to see his father and *Noggin* in Devon towards the end of August; I wanted to go sailing and if possible join the Relay. This happy combination of aims and aspirations was encouraged and supported by M, an old friend living in Falmouth who would give all necessary connections to get *Noggin* up and going. Thus, on 27th July I towed *Noggin* the 450 km to Roscoff and caught the ferry over to Plymouth. The combination of my 3D Isuzu Trooper, Fairey Marine Fulmar, on the double-axled Tournier trailer, seemed perfect.

Having parked the vehicle and trailer close to my sister's house near Yealmpton in a neighbouring farmyard, I set off again the following morning for the three hour drive to Falmouth. Here it was that the Isuzu really did have to work and I was reduced to third gear on several occasions. It is one of those roads which are made to catch the unwary: one section is quite fast and the next, without any warning is quite slow, and so my driving was less than smooth. Thus it was that I reached Falmouth Marina shortly after midday and the boat was in the water by 1600. A2 Rigging did an excellent job on mine the following day and it was not long before I had the outboard on the stern with help. The pressure was then on me to do something about it.

As I started to check over my gear in inclement weather, the trouble started. The radio which I had carefully installed (or so I thought) refused to function and when I was able to find someone who knew their way around marine electronics, the aerial was



### ***Noggin* about to leave the garden**

said to be only 70% efficient, and, there was a catastrophic short on board. A new aerial was called for but having just had the mast erected, I was not in a hurry to redo it all again. To sidestep the problem, I bought a handheld and put off the renewal until the following year - thinking that I could 'wing' it in the meantime. I found the Garmin GPS 152 completely incomprehensible and not at all like a Garmin I had previously had. It was for all practical purposes a complete



write off and I will have to make other arrangements for the future bearing in mind the huge difference between navigating from a dry and commodious wheelhouse, and navigating on a small and heaving boat. When eventually I did set out, it was all pilotage: a quick look at the chart and then a longer look for headlands and seamarks.



Earlier on in the year I had heaved out the old custom made bench seats and substituted those padded covers which convert reclining garden chairs into something more comfortable. I was enormously pleased with myself for saving so much money and thought that they would be a perfectly adequate substitute with their bright red and white floral patterns. However, in the month running up to my departure I had worked hard to get the boat ready: completing the wiring and painting the interior - as best I could given my length and age. Unfortunately I had injured my neck in the process and was rarely able to get much sleep on board despite buying new pillows of assorted sizes. No doubt lack of decent seats to sleep on was a contributory factor. M came to my rescue and kindly offered me the use of a far more comfortable bunk aboard his ketch.

One of the good things about being pinned bows first into my berth by the north westerly winds, was that I could, with the right contacts, get things done which would have been difficult for me to arrange in France. The absence of a pushpit was, I thought, a major blemish and A2 Rigging were able to fix me up with one which looks as though it has always been part of the boat. M sourced some stanchions for me and so by next year, I should be a little safer at sea. However, with my stern to the wind, use of the spirit stove was very difficult and, cooking inside when it rained, rendered any bedsit more attractive. We considered whether it would be a good idea to take her out and turn her round, but, in the end, M

## Waiting for the ferry

thought I would prefer the seaward view from a seated position and avoid the embarrassment of having my exertions open to view. And so it was that I stayed stern away from the club. However the corollary was that I would have to reverse out of the berth with an untried outboard parked on one side of the boat. The likelihood of a successful exit was small. Fortunately, M found time to come out with me for a trial outing and after fending us off several times while I fiddled with the tiller and outboard, we eventually got out of the marina for twenty minutes in the river. Our return was not brilliant, but it was a relief to find that the combination of boat and engine worked.

Of course my sister V quietly suggested that several trial sails before setting off up the coast might be advisable, but my courage was unequal to the horror of exiting and entering the marina berth singlehanded more than once. I also suspected that the boat would do anything, save steer on a steady course like a long keeler. So working on deck was a no-no. Not only was I lacking a furling foresail, I had not found the time or inclination to install my tiller-mate. The other option to going on deck would have been to handle the sails from below but the installation of a privy in the forepeak put paid to that idea. And so, I reasoned afterwards, it was easier to go to sea and stay on one tack up the coast, than to attempt tacking up and down creeks and rivers - given my present equipment, lack

of training and, health. Although my sister's advice was as usual sound, there was no one who I knew of who would make the trip with me and it was clear that if I were to go anywhere in *Noggin* by sea, I would have to throw caution to the winds. It said something for V's reputation as a trainer of men and dogs that she embraced my sudden arrival at Plymouth not only with evident relief but positive encouragement - as well as offering sisterly help and comfort.



### At sea at last

One morning when I was wondering which coffee house to dry off in, M came along and said that he thought I ought to get moving up the coast or I would be in danger of missing the North-Westerlies. And so I resolved to set out the following morning having had M's old rockets pressed into my hands - a delightful gesture which can be taken any way one likes. I had done plenty of dinghy sailing in my youth but had never sailed *Noggin* before and indeed had not been on the water for four years. However the conditions were reasonably settled with the wind still off-shore

And so on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August, I cast off from the marina and motored out towards St Antony's Head in time to catch the slack water before the flowing tide would take me up the coast to Fowey. Fortunately there was little wind at the outset so that my first challenge of hoisting the mainsail was unopposed by the wind. But did the mainsail actually fit the mast? Mel at A2 thought it did but there might be difficulties. I was enormously relieved when after three or four attempts, I got the mainsail

up and drawing, and hastily retreated to the cockpit before the boat went about. And so it was that I set off for the Dodman roundabout midday. The weather was overcast but there was no change in the North and North Westerly winds running at about F3-4.

After half an hour at the helm with chart, binos, water bottle, and fruit, I realised that taking my hand off the tiller was not an option. *Noggin* wanted my participation all the way; she wanted to be sailed. She was also intent on making sure I was well exercised by raising myself from a seated position to a crouch in order to see what was on the starboard side. I believed I was doing a good job keeping a lookout until a yacht passed me on the starboard, 25 yards away. "Nearly got you!" yelled the skipper and so it was that my exercises from seated to crouched position were redoubled. My right (and tiller) arm had not been so thoroughly exercised since sawing timber the previous winter.

Fortunately the better part of my youth was spent dinghy sailing out of Fowey and east

of the Dodman; it was always rather a forbidding view in those days: too far to sail to and hellish seas in rough weather. And so it was that I never went anywhere near, much preferring a cream tea with my crew, at Mevagissey. But that was no longer an option and I had to go where I had least wanted. I had mentioned my concern to M who had said that, with an offshore wind, there should be no problem. And so I had to move on in more ways than one. Fortunately he was right and by 1400 I had cleared the headland without drama or loss of sanity. Everything would be downhill from now.

As I drew past the Dodman I had difficulty in seeing Gwineas Rock Cardinal buoy but no sooner than I had seen that then, I headed to where I hoped the Gribben might be. Although there had been a short fetch for the wind to travel across at Veryan Bay, the distance was longer across St Austell Bay.

Not only were the gusts a little stronger but the sea was more troubled with occasional white horses. Indeed the ride was a bit like crawling over a rough country track in a 4x4. Clear too, that I had more canvas up than I needed but not so much that I wanted to get up on deck. And so I thought that the sooner I get into Fowey the better and so why prolong the agony by shortening sail? By this time *Noggin* was pressing along at a good five knots and the situation may not have been easy, but it was manageable.

At last I could make out the Gribben and once I drew abreast of that I could enjoy the calmer waters off Polridmouth as I headed toward Fowey Harbour - still on the same Port tack I had been on since midday. Just outside at 1700, I started the motor, luffed and got both sails down quickly, making my way into what has become a crowded harbour since the late 1950s. I berthed initially at the visitors' berth and was then



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## Moored in Newton Ferriers



asked to moor up in Polruan. Off I went again and potted over to where the visitors' moorings were, only to experience another moment of truth: the buoys had no pick up buoys and I could not reach down far enough to put a warp through the eye. After a short penance, one of my neighbouring yachtsmen kindly asked if I would like some help. On such occasions, I know no pride; thanks to this man and his dinghy, I was soon tied up - exhausted but pleased to have made it. The thought of going ashore and finding (or not) old acquaintances quickly evaporated when tiredness kicked in. A tin of hot soup cooked on the spirit stove in the cockpit sole, brought my first day to a successful conclusion.

On the following morning, I had a call from one of my other sisters saying that it would be a very good idea if I went and looked up so and so - an old family friend from the 1950s. An excellent idea were it not for the fact that I wanted a comfortable bed in Plymouth as soon as possible. And so I had to ignore her kind thought and set off for the mouth of the harbour when others were sitting comfortably with their coffee. The day's sail to Plymouth was much the same as the previous day: too much crouching and a bit too much wind and wave despite the fact that I had taken in a couple of rolls on the mainsail and was flying the smallest jib in the pack. In fact the boat went really well and usually doing more than four knots, although when we got within two or three miles of Rame Head she touched six knots, when nearly surfing. However the fetch across Whitsand Bay was probably in the region of three miles. With occasional gusts of F5



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## Rame Head

the going was quite uncomfortable and despite my best endeavours I broached two or three times but without any problem. True, I might have hove to, but I am afraid I never even thought of such a manoeuvre and, if I had, I doubt I would have had the courage to do it. All I could really focus on was getting into the lee of Rame Head so that I could take the sails down and motor head to wind into Plymouth Sound. Throughout this taxing little voyage which certainly tested *Noggin* as well as myself, she never gave me a moment's worry.

One of the things I did get right was to telephone Queen Anne's Battery Marina and reserve a berth for that night. So I knew where I was hoping to go. I had however, never been into Plymouth in a small boat before. What I could see from *Noggin's* deck resembled little I had seen from the deck of Brittany Ferries' *Armorique*. In fact I could not see either of the ends of the breakwater until late on - fortunately no later than I needed to. Despite my hurried furling of the sails, the 6 horsepower 2-stroke longshaft Suzuki with a reduction gear did all that it needed to. Gusts were recorded at the breakwater of 30 knots that evening and

*Noggin* pushed her way up to QAB Marina where one of the guys was waiting for me (at my request). The relief at getting in to a berth in an unknown and complicated harbour at the end of a hard day, is very considerable. I am not sure that the size of the vessel makes much difference: docking is docking.

Having got to Plymouth, I was able to ring up V and ask her to collect me. After a couple of nights rest and recuperation, I ventured back to the boat on a beautiful and quiet Sunday morning to take the boat from QAB Marina to Newton Ferrers. My brother in law N, who had spent many years learning about the Yealm, suggested that I should enter it at high tide. So I left the QABM without incident under power and drove into Cobbler Channel, past Mount Batten breakwater, leaving Jencycliff on my portside, and headed down toward the Eastern end of the breakwater. The views were amazing and enough to expunge any thought of hoisting the sails. Shag Rock came into view and after that the Mewstone, which I knew I had to keep well clear of, before turning into Wembury Bay. Once again on the best of mornings, trouble lay ahead.

With the sun in my eyes, I could not see where I was going and I could not see the perfectly-obvious-when-you-see-it landmark which N had told me about and which marked the entrance to the Yealm. So I had to cheat: I noticed that other boats were coming out of the blind patch so I motored into it in the sure knowledge that they had to come from somewhere and that place had to be the Yealm. So I phoned ahead to V and N who were in their dinghy, and told them I was on my way and I should soon be there. Then quite suddenly I was upon it, but, because of the sun I could not see any of the marks I had seen previously seen from the shore, so I followed the line of moored boats. Then my mobile rang. It was N: "We can see you" he said. "Tell me where I am" I re-

plied, "In the middle of the river. Just carry on." And so I did, until finally I spotted their dinghy rowing back towards the Harbour Master's Office at Newton Ferrers. They had foreseen the problem I had had in Fowey and were waiting to help at my allotted buoy. I would have had a much more difficult time of mooring in the Yealm with its strong tides than I would have done at Fowey or Polruan.

After that bad weather set in, thoughts of sailing out of Newton Ferrers with my son never came to fruition. I did however stay with him and my daughter in law at the Coastguard cottages, so all was not lost. I would like to have sailed on up to Port Hamble after their departure and make a bit more of the ferry crossing but I really did not have it in me at that time. And so there were no more boat trips until it was time to take the *Noggin* back to Plymouth for hauling out onto the trailer. As I did so, I thought I heard a *Noggin* whisper sadly, "Est-ce tout, mon amour?" All of which goes to show that boats have a strange pull over us, families are indispensable, small boats and relative poverty can give rise to rich experiences...and Fulmars are great boats!



## Final Mooring at Plymouth



## A very long journey

By Ian Pollard

The last leg of the Round Britain Relay might have been Portland Marina to the Hamble, 14 hours of exhilarating sailing, 87 miles of intricate navigation through one of the busiest seaways in England at night (which without the keen eyes of Cameron aged 15, Graham Walter's son it would not have been possible). To do this there were many other obstacles both prior and during the trip from re-rigging the mast with Richard and his wife, rewiring my



## Repairs underway

hoped would bring me an easy restoration project and the chance to sail.

Is there a difference between luck or fate, what makes us dismiss logic and go with a gut reaction or a feeling, has a boat a soul, are we owners or mere guardians of these vessels? There are lots of unanswered questions, but most of my experiences with Atalantas has been with time constraints due to work, family commitments that has led to minimal planning and lots of luck!

Common sense would state that to buy a restoration project that wasn't on a



## The damage

Landover during the 300 mile tow down south to bailing out a gallon every hour from a tear in the hull whilst launching from the trailer. Not forgetting the issues with the engine which was using a litre of oil every hour whilst in the Solent tracking against the tide once it turned. The actual journey for me started a long time before.

My particular journey began 5 years ago on responding to the 'boats for sale' section in the Bulletin. After a motorcycle accident I had a couple of thousand pounds to spare which I



## Raising the mast at Portland



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**Setting off for the final leg**



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**Hamble here we come!**

road trailer, was 400 miles away from home, would be a bridge too far. However, there is something that draws us to these odd looking vessels.

Luckily Hugh Eaglesfield's restorations project had only spent a year out of the water and just needed a lick of paint. Hugh, a retired engineer from the Doonraey Nuclear Power Station had renovated and modified *Tammie Norrie* over the last 15 years whilst running a croft 50 miles from John O'Groats. During this period he'd sailed mainly single handed all over the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland Islands with more tales of adventure that he may recall one day.

For the next 3 years I sailed with dolphins off Cromarty and the Moray Firth as well as having a fabulous summer vacation in 2008 with my wife Jayne, son Aidan and two daughters Rebecca and Katie, through the Caledonian Canal to the West Coast and back. During this last trip my wife persuaded me that perhaps that 'lick of paint' was now overdue and it would be a good idea to bring her back home.

Best laid plans, the summer of 2009 brought new tyres, new hubs for the renovated trailer and perhaps the first Atalanta to journey over the Cairngorm mountains. Unfortunately 6 miles into this next journey produced a puncture, a wobble and suddenly the boat is facing the wrong way down a 20 foot embankment on top of several 3 x 2 inch fence posts and, bizarrely, upside down. Luckily no one was hurt, apart from my pride and the utter feeling of despair and responsibility for not looking after this historic boat.

Six weeks, two cranes and a lot of welding saw the journey continue, finally back home where I could examine the damage...Six months later, February 2010, with warmer weather I bought my first staple. It wasn't the temperature that held me back, it was the lack of confidence in my woodworking skills, the sheer enormity of the task, even of where to start.



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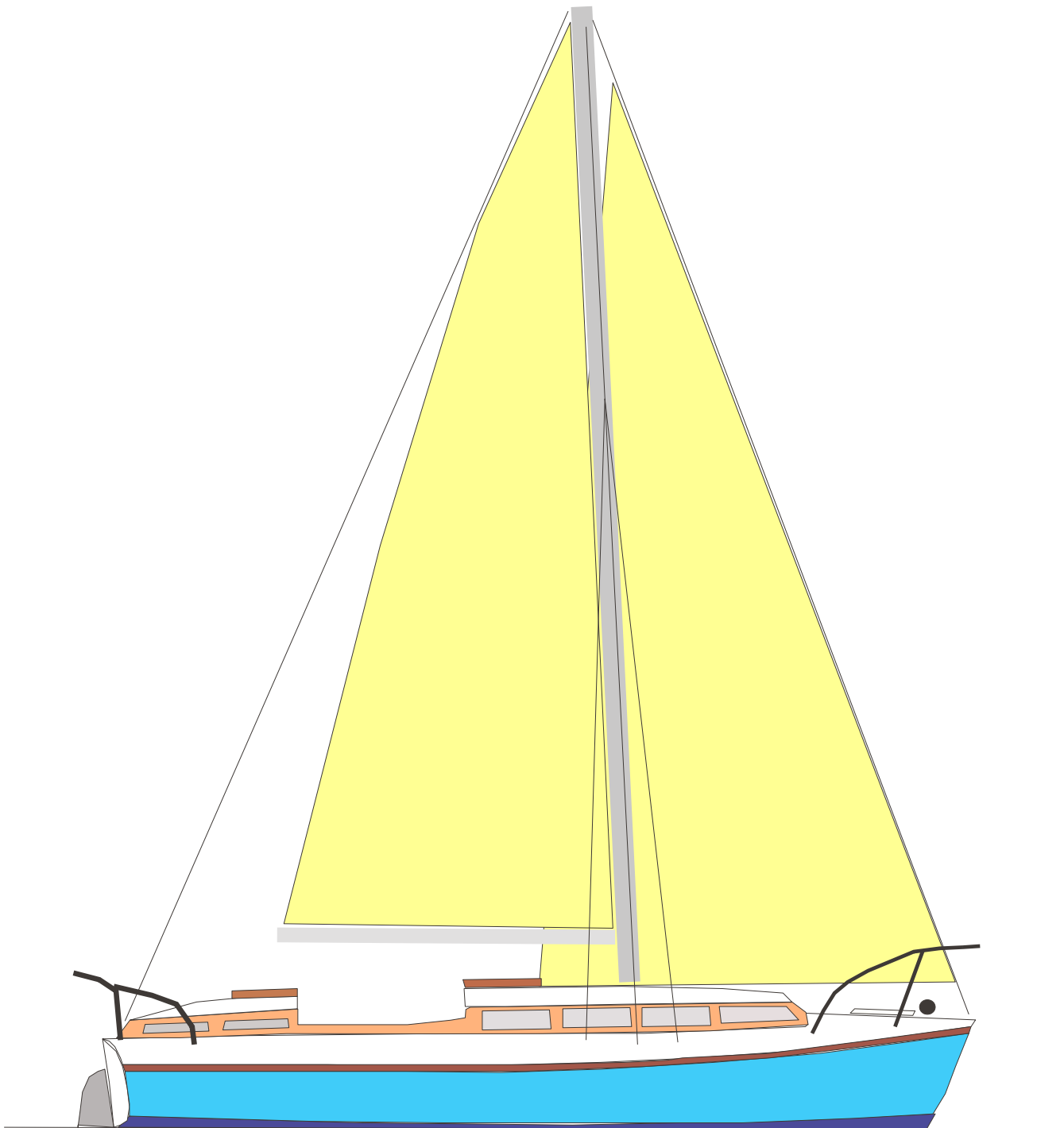
## Hamble!

Sometimes you need a goal –like the relay, or the persistent reminders and encouragement, like from Graham, as well as some really good guidance from the various repair articles from old bulletins.....

Two thousand staples ( I didn't count them – just 2 packs ! ) ,two 8'x4'sheets of Agba, lots of epoxy resin and the hours after midnight were a blur as the 14 major holes were glued, filled, and painted by whoever stood close enough, for long enough. Neighbours, family and friends seem not to visit nowadays. My son, Aidan, has nightmares about staples and brother in law ,Tim, is undergoing treatment for an expensive epoxy resin habit (if it moves he glues it!). The most difficult task was to re–construct a replacement wooden mast, re-glueing the 9 splices that make up an early mast. The last of which was glued and clamped the night before setting off for Portland. It doesn't say on the tin that the M1, in August, is a good aid to curing!

When I arrived in Portland, I've got to say, that it's only then when I re–focussed and realized that I needed to start planning a journey, the boat wasn't quite ready and lots of things were missing or 300 miles away! Without the help of Richard, Graham and respective families I would still have been asleep in my boat shaped caravan on the quay side. Within 12 hours a week's worth of boat building from the team brought *Tammie Norrie* into the calm waters of Portland marina ready to start a new, lucky adventure.....





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