



TOGLINE



The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group
Formed and constituted, 26th September 1991

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2014

HATCH: An opening in a deck to the cabin below designed to let in water – and keep fresh air out.



Alas -sic transit gloria.

We have lost a bright star in the history of Trent Offshore Group, Squadron Leader Norman Allen, prime mover in the foundation of TOG, way back in September 1991 – well before my time!

Whilst looking back

over the history of TOG (see **TOG STORY**-available on request), the Group has had quite a few ups and downs. Overall, the first Council led the Group forward and continues to do so today. Although there have been many changes in the make-up of Council, I know we are all grateful for the solidity of those initial foundations, laid down by the Founders – again led by Norman. The contribution he has made for the membership – the encouragement to all those budding Skippers who have passed through his skilled hands – cannot be overstated.

All who have met Norman have their own memories of him. His training as a teacher stood him in good stead at his nightclasses. On a personal note, I owe whatever knowledge I have to his teaching – backed up by his fund of real-life stories, to emphasise some particular point. It was an honour, at the conclusion of my Yachtmaster theory, to be asked to join him, on an expedition from Caen on a 32 footer. My first voyage on a cruising yacht. We had a wonderful time – and I was hooked!

Thereafter, Norman made sure that I was asked on any of his expeditions, even if at times it was impractical for me to go. You learn a lot about someone when you sail regularly with them. The times we just sat, with Norman's favourite tippie on the continent – Kronenbourg 1664 – *seize soixante-quatre* as he called it. I could listen to his stories for hours (and very probably did – alcohol dulls the memory), but they were always so good. His experiences with Decca position-finding – a (very) early form of GPS, using fixed transmitters to obtain cross-bearings. Complete with sound effects. His confidence in one when he disappeared below to the

Times crossword – “you have the con – just call me....”

Norman it was who asked me to take over this publication following Peter Fletton's handover. He often spoke of the history of the Group. I felt, from these talks, there was a story there and who better to do it? I got my own back by asking him to do just that! The result was a serialised history over several issues. At the end, it was produced as an A5 booklet and presented to Norman at our Annual Dinner. He was delighted! “What a lovely thought, dear boy” - (another favourite expression).

I could go on, but others on Council have also had their say within. Neil's “musings” are those he read at the moving funeral service on the 7th December. Arthur's are purely unbidden, a natural reaction as one of the (very) early members of the Group.

It is difficult to accept he is gone, but his legacy of the aims and ethos of the Group from the very start, still continue today. Doubtless they will go forward, perhaps even grow from strength to strength, constantly evolving. What an epitaph – so much pleasure granted to so many people from such an example of fellowship. To his widow Ann, such a warm lady, his four daughters and twelve grandchildren and other family, we extend our deepest sympathies. As we reflect on the passing of a man of many talents and considerable skills, we thank you, Norman, rest in peace, and may your sails draw well as you fade into the sunset....

Enough said..., until January 31st, when the Winter edition is to be produced, thank you all once again, for the gems you have provided over the past year. The pleasure of picking a winner for the Millenium Trophy at the Dinner Dance (see back pages) is sooooo difficult! But a pleasure nevertheless.

See you there? - and as ever, **Happy Sailing.....**

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PRESIDING MASTER'S MUSINGS

By Neil Macfarlane



Sqn Ldr Norman Allen
First Presiding Master of
The Trent Offshore Group
1991 – 2004

The first chapter of Norman's "The TOG Story" starts thus "How did it all begin – and how was I roped in?"

That phrase is apposite to many of us present today to honour Norman's memory and celebrate his life. My own case, as the third Presiding Master, who succeeded Keith Stedman about three years ago, who in turn had taken over from Norman in 2004, is typical. I had sailed dinghies since the age of thirteen, larger yachts on the Norfolk Broads, and then with my brother in his yacht on the River Hamble from the mid-1980s. I decided to get some RYA navigation qualifications, so enrolled on a RYA Yachtmaster Theory course at Brackenhurst College. The tutor was Mike Hall, or "plumber" as designated by Norman, as I learnt later. Mike, no longer with us, was an idiosyncratic tutor and excellent sailor. He gently seduced me, and several others, to TOG. My logbook records my first sail with TOG from Shotley on the east coast in December 1998 – so I must have been keen.

My maiden voyage with Norman as skipper, was on *Skywave*, a Dehler 35 from Gosport. This was one of the Royal Corps of Signals yachts which were noted for their Spartan accommodation and the poor quality of their electrics and radios! Norman was a highly experienced and knowledgeable skipper and completely laid back – though he may not have recognised that term. We can all picture him, perched in the companion way, Breton cap at a subtly jaunty angle, keeping an eye on things; imparting his navigational wisdom garnished with many splendid anecdotes. Often he would retire below to complete The Times crossword – with clues being called up from the saloon – particularly if it was raining.....

Mark Davis has provided this recollection from a May 2001 Sailex to France aboard the Royal Corps yacht *Pegasus*, a Victoria 34. It was satisfying but gruelling sailing, with lots of night hours and 60NM qualifying passages from Gosport, via Cherbourg, Ouistreham and Dieppe - then to Boulogne for some welcome rest and time ashore. Returning aboard at midnight from the Boulogne nightspots, the relaxed and happy crew received instruction from Norman. *Pegasus* would make an immediate overnight passage to Eastbourne! At sea, soon after leaving port, Norman disappeared below to his cabin On arrival mid-morning in Eastbourne, Norman emerged from the companionway, dapper in slacks and sports jacket. He delivered his bleary-eyed and exhausted crew, a full debrief on their night passage, then disembarked for a long-arranged lunch with an old RAF chum.

In July 2001 there was an eventful Sailex from Falmouth to the Scillies. On our return in *Farthing*, a Farr 36 against wind and tide with a very dodgy engine in foul weather, Norman kept up his crew's morale in exemplary fashion. Such indeed, that I now firmly believe that I really enjoyed that trip.

TOG has evolved; this year we organised successful expeditions to the Caribbean Sea, France, the Scottish west coast, Pembrokeshire, Turkey and the English south coast. We have a newish crop of enthusiastic skippers and we hold to Norman's original vision – "to provide offshore sailing to members to relevant RYA standards".

Not only was Norman the driving force behind TOG, but he also taught RYA courses in the East Midlands for many years. His long service to sailing was recognised by an RYA

Community Award (Lifetime Commitment) made by the Princess Royal, President of the Royal Yachting Association. Keith has proposed some lines from John Masefield's poem, *Sea Fever*:

*"I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,*

*.....
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow rover,
And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over."*



My memories of Norman Allen

by Arthur Wood, Deputy Presiding Master

I first met Norman in the 1980s, when he was leading the Toothill Flotilla, a school sailing club at Bingham. At that time, I was sailing as a volunteer mate on Ocean Youth Club sail training vessels and was chairman

of the club's East Midland Support Group. A meeting took place to consider liaison between these groups. Norman was very much in command of his group and approved the idea. I arranged for 2 of his skippers, Mike Hall and Mike Lawrence, to take part in an OYC mates training weekend aboard *James Cook*, a 70 ft ketch. Later, I was invited to sail with the Toothill Flotilla for a week in the Clyde. There were 9 yachts on this trip where Norman, as Commandant, demonstrated his man-management skills. He had an amazing ability to harness enthusiasm and continued to do this when he formed and led TOG.

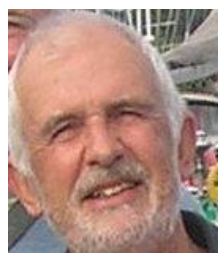
He invited me to join TOG soon after it started and I was happy to participate as a skippers mate for a few years. In 1995, we had 3 yachts from Kinsale and Norman invited me to be one of the skippers. Later, due to Norman's encouragement, I qualified as a RYA Offshore Yachtmaster and tester for the ICC. I was always happy to work with Norman and did several years as Training master before becoming his deputy.

I have lasting memories of sailing from Falmouth with Norman, skippering *Farthing*, an offshore racing yacht that had seen better days. Twice on that trip, Norman used his communication skills to get us out of trouble when the engine failed. When Norman and Ann retired to France, we visited them and were made very welcome. Brenda and I will continue to have many happy memories of them both.

REPORTS

Yacht Soiree - 2014 Baie de la Seine Sailex

by Alan Mortimore



CREW: Dave Bond (Skipper), Paul Burghart, Mike Crabb, Andrew Lacey, Alan Mortimore

The wind doth blow and on the first 2 days of this Sailex, it certainly did, such that we could not sail as planned to the Normandy coast. Having remained stormbound on Saturday, we motored to Cowes from the Hamble on Sunday. Here, we planned to see our skipper, Dave, part with some money and get some flashy Dubarry boots! Alas, he held out and his wallet refused to venture forth, so we did instead. With well-reefed foresail, we sped before the wind down to Haslar for the night. After a trip on the ferry for a meal in Pompey at the Lough Fyne, we retired early to prepare for a 04.00hrs departure for Le Havre.



04.15 hrs Dave at the helm with Mike - Pompey lights in the background

All boats assembled and with Dave as lead skipper, we led the flotilla across La Manche to Le Havre. After a 12-hour motor-sail in lumpy seas with WSW F4/5, we were bemused to be met at the entrance by the Harbour master gesticulating and shouting with a great deal of gusto. The noise of the wind did not help Anglo-French understanding but, eventually, he led us in to moor up at the visitor's pontoon in the inner marina. Adrian suggested a restaurant and what a gastronomic delight it proved for the *Soiree* and *Carte Blanche* crews.

As we left the following morning, Le Havre looked like the furnace of hell. After the usual chop outside the harbour, we put the left hand down a bit, and headed up the Seine with the Normandy Bridge visible in the distance. The weather improved and by the time we reached port buoy 20, crossed the river and entered through a free-flowing Honfleur lock, the sun was shining. We moored in the Vieux Bassin for a leisurely late breakfast overlooking Honfleur's inner harbour. After showers in a white and black striped wooden box in the middle of a car park, we watched Gareth on *Vis a Vis* being hauled up the mast in a bosun's chair. He was trying to retrieve their main halyard, much to the locals' amusement! Honfleur is a delightful town to amble through, with its art quarter and quirky streets, plus a grand selection of restaurants.



Leaving Honfleur

Wednesday morning saw 4 yachts, with ensigns flying, pass the lifting bridge, with tourists waving us off; after locking down into the Seine estuary, we made passage to Ouistreham. Luckily, as Paul and Andrew went to hoist our mainsail, a very worn halyard was noticed. After cutting away the offending

section and making good, we hoisted the main and sailed on a broad reach to Ouistreham. (*Vis a Vis* had had the same problem and lost their main halyard!). We locked up with the rest of the flotilla and this process gave our skipper and mate a chance to lie down and take life easy, see photo.



Skipper and mate lying down with feet sticking out the side of the boat

Once into the Canal de Caen, we motored south, moored and went ashore to visit the Pegasus Bridge museum and surrounding sites. Then back to the Port de Plaisance marina by the lock, to fuel up and let a Normandy establishment, within easy walking distance, produce an excellent evening repast.

Next morning, after collecting fresh croissants, we locked out at 07.30hrs and set sail for Blighty in light winds. About half-way through the passage, dolphins, busy fishing, appeared on the port side, but too distant for any photos. As we neared the Isle of Wight, St Catherine's Head Lighthouse was winking at us on the port side. We took the inner passage past Bembridge Ledge, then on to Haslar to tie up at 21.30hrs, just as the evening shadows started to close in.

Friday saw us leave late (Dave!!!!) for the Beaulieu river and Bucklers Hard for luncheon. This was a fine day but with not much more than a variable breeze.



On passage to Beaulieu our mate was caught doing we-were-not-quite-sure-what!

For some of us, it was a first visit to a tranquil and very pretty Beaulieu estuary before we headed for Cowes. A curry evening marked the end of the trip, with all crews attending to sing happy birthday to Emma and to Paul, who both had birthdays during the trip. As Paul was celebrating his Half

Century, he slipped off and paid for the evenings drinks - a very generous action - cheers mate, may they never rot !

Next morning was spiced-up by a stale baguette barrage from *Carte Blanche* as we went astern to clear our mooring. We managed our own broadside shortly afterwards, as we sped down the Medina, heading for The Hamble; and so ended a very pleasurable week's sailing.



October Sailex 2014 by Will Russell.

Neville Buckle started the sailex on board *Femme Fatale* on Tuesday night with Will Russell and a couple of wee drams. Paul Burghart (Skip), Stewart and Steve Ecclestone joined on Wednesday. Pretty horrendous weather and bad traffic, meant

a short sail to Cowes and a generous Pub meal.

Thursday breakfast had a stuttering start with a faulty gas solenoid. With a F8 forecast, we were instructed to make leisurely return to Fairview. While we were waiting for repairs, we had a coffee in the Banana Wharf, which seemed to be have been taken over by Ned Kelly. Even though there were two Scots on board, £23 for 5 coffees seemed a wee bit dear (a deep-fried Mars bar would have softened the blow).

Half-way through a relaxed lunch, a Fairview employee came to tell us if we wanted to leave it needed to be NOW!! I am not sure what we said to upset Fairview, but necking our coffees and sandwiches, we barrelled down the Hamble to be hit by a squall. A F9, 44 knts driving wind and hail, made Skip look more like Titus Oates, but colder. Still, it wasn't like the repair that left the gas cylinder with a massive leak and an explosion risk. Also, it was far too windy for Russell to light a ridiculous Nicaraguan cigar!

We made the most of the afternoon learning how to sail backwards down the Medina. I still don't think ten tacks to progress forward 10 yards is sooo bad? After a bit of sailing, pontoon-bashing and mucking about, we returned to our private berth at Shepherds'. Honestly, we stayed there because it was cheap. It had nothing to do with the "Girls for Sail" boat! It would have been better had they had been ogling us constantly and knocking on the boat at all hours (or was that a dream?) Beer in The Anchor and some ridiculous football match, dinner and an early night!

Lovely sail around the Solent Friday, really nice breezy day, lunch in Osborne bay. Ending up in Yarmouth, where we had a rubbish steak but a good Aussie bottle of Shiraz, called "Bushranger" which skip thought was a good job. I explained no shears are required!

Saturday, another tour of the Solent, with the highlight a lovely quiet sail up the Beaulieu. The sail back down looked a bit like Dodgems, but no gel-coat was harmed.....

Back to Shepherds', to be harassed by Girls Aloud - no, sorry - Girls for Sail. Quite a breezy evening and the harbour master seemed determined to get us to wipe out multiple strings of kiddies in Lasers. Other small floaty things also, by changing our berth multiple times. Still, the downwind, narrow berth, surrounded by people drinking G&T's, could have been a challenge. However, Skip's gentle coaching style of **"DON'T LOOK AT ME, LOOK WHERE YOUR F&%*ING GOING!!!"** made it a doddle.

Quite a reasonable Curry was almost marred by Steve unexpectedly having an anaphylactic attack from rice. No

worries - the doctor could have helped but needed to finish his Cobra first. Followed on to the Anchor, where Black Squaw were playing. They were really good and again, apart from being mobbed by adoring girls, it was another easy-going, early night.

Sunday, some coarse sailing which Steve and Nev made look easy but, despite our endeavours, 'Girls 4 Sail' found us and chased us back up the Hamble.

A really good Sailex,, near-death experiences aside!! Good sailing, good company and some great socialising.



The Experience of a Sailing Rookie By Dilys Carby

I was persuaded to join the West Coast of Scotland Sailex and after careful thought and some misgivings, as I had little experience of sailing,

decided to give it a try. We had a relatively straightforward journey to Scotland and the weather was warm and sunny - the Erskine Bridge was very interesting, especially the second time!!

On arrival at the Crinan Canal, I was pleasantly surprised when I saw our Yacht "*Bravado*". She was very sleek, spacious, with good cabin facilities, cooker and fridge. No worries about wandering in the night to find the toilet and bumping into another blurry-eyed crew member! We unloaded a huge amount of food, but just managed to find space for it all - were we going to consume all this? Our skipper Stewart, gave the crew a health and safety briefing, then went through the week's sailing plan. We were all to take an active part in crewing, including navigation - great, just what I was hoping for but navigation?..... I'm used to Ordnance Survey maps and footpaths - but charts, tide times and depths!!

The crew were great and I was made to feel welcome and at ease. I was very impressed with the professional way they worked together and handled *Bravado*. It was great to see the Western Isles from the water and see the various wild life. I especially enjoyed going into Fingal's Cave, which was amazing. I was asked to take the helm for a while most days which was great, but why two wheels? It was of course explained to me - it was to help visibility when under sail and heeling. Our varied daily menus were excellent and we did indeed consume most of the food we took. I'm sure the chaps were not used to such healthy breakfasts, let alone the opportunity to join in with on-deck yoga! Stewart provided music CDs - mostly Scottish of course, which was just right for the occasion.

Neil gave Mary and me a lesson in navigation one evening, which made it easier to understand. So much so, that I felt keen to have a go the next day when we were "volunteered" to navigate. The partially-sighted leading the blind springs to mind, but we coped very well. Setting a course from Tobermory to Loch Aline, we arrived without any hitches.

The weather during the week was mixed and the last day was pretty awful for sailing. However, our excellent crew steered us safe to Crinan and by late afternoon the sun came out. This enabled us to dry wet-weather gear before our journey home the next day.

I certainly enjoyed my week and I wasn't seasick, nor did I fall overboard. Bruises and bumps seem to be part of sailing! I enjoyed meeting up with the other crews and their on-board entertainment. Maybe I could get my first stripe for "Fender Handling".....?



PEMBROKESHIRE SAILEX – 1st to 8th August 2014.

by Brian J Rowlands

Skipper:- Alan Mortimore

Mate:- Andy McWilliam

Crew:- Brian Rowlands, Andy Warren, Bryan Russell

The “Intrepid Five” assembled from numerous points of the compass at 10.00hours sharp on 1st August 2014 in leafy Rothley, ready for a week of

sailing off the Pembrokeshire coast and the Bristol Channel.

Under grey skies, but little wind, we noted the weather forecast for the next week promised a mixture of sunshine, showers, strong winds and rough seas – PERFECT CONDITIONS for TOG enthusiasts! We were not disappointed!!

As with most recent TOG trips, we departed adequately prepared. The TOG trip in 2013 was cancelled, for administrative reasons - only the skipper had local sailing knowledge from his days as a yacht-owner in Swansea Bay. He used this to good effect at our briefing session in July where he rehearsed several scenarios for our trip. These included Milford Haven, St Brides Bay, Carmarthen Bay, the Bristol Channel, the North Devon Coast and Cardigan Bay. “It all depends on wind and tide” – that oft-used sailing mantra that sometimes is a substitute for unpreparedness – was clearly not the case here. Every aspect of the trip was discussed in great detail. Routes, victualling, equipment, watch system, fluid and alcohol requirements. Nothing was left to chance, provided we remembered to pick up the pre-ordered provisions from the supermarket in Haverfordwest on the way to Neyland. We knew we would enjoy this “come hell or high water”.

Two cars made the journey to South Pembrokeshire – “Little England beyond Wales”. As its name suggests, few speak Welsh south of a line (Landsker Line) from Laugharne Sands (remember Dylan Thomas?) and St David’s Head – where linguistically and culturally the population are English. This despite being far from the border with England. Apparently, Henry I was responsible for this anomaly. He repopulated the area with settlers from Wessex and Flanders, land previously owned by the Welsh. By mid-afternoon, all had arrived at

provisioned and equipment stowed, despite the difficulty of negotiating the significant incline from shore to jetty at low tide. After safety briefing, we decided that an early supper (home-made lasagna) followed by sleep and pre-dawn departure, was the preferred option for negotiating Milford Haven Waterway and beyond.

DAY 1

Early start saw us leaving Neyland in clear, cool conditions to make our way via Pembroke Dock and Milford Haven. We passed numerous chemical and oil installations, several large tankers before seeing the entrance to Dale Bay. Later in the week, on two occasions, this would provide overnight shelter. Each member of the crew got a chance to helm and trim the boat as we gauged sailing characteristics of “Otter”. We then settled into a routine of 2-hour watches throughout the trip, with Andy and Brian alternating with another Andy and Bryan, under the watchful eye of Alan. Navigation, cooking, cleaning, communication and preparation of snacks, happened without too much discussion, and no rancour. A happy crew from the onset! After passing St. Ann’s Head at the mouth of the Milford Haven Waterway, we headed SE in fair weather, a gentle swell and breeze towards Lundy Island, 40 nautical miles away. For some of the time, we were entertained by dolphins and porpoises crossing our bow, stern and under the boat. Alas, these were the only sightings during the week. Later, there were plenty of seals and sea-birds to satisfy our curiosity for nature in the wild throughout the trip. We arrived at Lundy in the late afternoon in fine weather, picked up a buoy close to the ferry, long since departed, and enjoyed ‘vegetable curry a l’Andy’ on board. As twilight beckoned, we went ashore and via a steep climb, found the local pub for liquid refreshment. It had been a long day, and despite the falling rain, rugged terrain and poor light, we all made it back to the boat, and our welcoming bunks, without mishap.



Arrival at Lunday Island



Enjoying the view of North Devon Coast from lighthouse on Lundy

Neyland Yacht Haven after a picturesque drive through middle-England, the Wye Valley and the Heads of the Valleys Road – note absence of services stations in Wales until you get beyond Swansea. Our yacht – “Otter”, a 38 foot Jeanneau – was soon

DAY 2

After the exertions of the first day, we planned a leisurely start to a bright and breezy day and a chance to explore Lundy Island. The island is about 3 miles long and half a mile wide and is owned by the National Trust. Besides holiday accommodation, a Victorian church and the ruins of Marisco Castle, there is a tavern and a lighthouse that were worth visiting. The view of the North Devon Coast and Bristol Channel from the lighthouse was magnificent on this clear day. Ponies and sheep roam the plateau and on the day of our visit the airport was busy with light aircraft attending a Flying Club Show. It was wonderful to witness the skills of the pilots as they arrived and departed from

the short grass runway in a stiff southwesterly breeze. Great sport!

At noon, we returned to the boat to prepare for an early afternoon departure that would take us due E to Bull Point and Ilfracombe. With the wind at our stern, we made good progress to the magnificent North Devon Coast. By late afternoon we were arriving in the picturesque Watermouth Bay and anchoring at its entrance. Some time and energy was expended securing the anchor and shore stern lines against a moderate swell. We dined well on pork chops, before settling down for the night with anchor alarms set! Needless to say, they went off - several times I understand. The rest of the crew reassured me the following morning, that the boat had not moved during the night. How embarrassing – I guess they would have wakened me if they had really needed me!



Watermouth Bay

DAY 3

We left the sanctuary of the bay at 08.30 hours to travel northwards towards the Gower Peninsula. We were expecting SW winds Force 3/4, strengthening to Force 5/6 later, with occasional showers. A good sailing day was anticipated and we soon reached Oxwich Point and Worms Head on the south Gower coast. Later, we headed WNW across Carmarthen Bay, towards the NE tip of Caldey Island and on to Tenby. Again, we enjoyed freshening westerly winds, a helpful tide and bright afternoon sunshine. Covered 40 miles in a little over 7 hours and found a convenient buoy for overnight mooring. Here, we had a good view of Tenby beach and the new and old lifeboat houses...those who are devotees of Grand Designs will know that the latter is now a modern house with sea views...all around! Vegetable curry was on the menu (again, but no complaints!). Some of our attention was diverted to the evening Maritime Safety broadcast. This predicted strengthening winds, rough seas, rain, worsening visibility and a high moving away to Europe from the East Coast. Batten down the hatches and sweet dreams! Who's on anchor watch overnight?

Day 4



The “storm” arrived in the “wee small hours” making sleep difficult. Early risers witnessed a grey dawn and the launching of

the Tenby Lifeboat just before 07.00, to rescue a small fishing vessel in distress. Conditions were forecast to improve later. Rather than ride out the storm in a relatively exposed position, we chose to get underway and head for the shelter of Milford Haven Waterway and Dale Bay. The inclement conditions abated to some extent as we travelled west around Caldey Island and Saint Govan's Head. By mid-afternoon we were moored on the pontoon in Dale Bay. However, the winds were still strong, but sheltered from the swell of the open sea. Some intrepid members of the crew took the ‘rib’ for ‘emergency rations’. Others concentrated on the preparation of gourmet Spaghetti Bolognese. After dinner, discussion centered on the need for a decent night's sleep, a proper shower, the relative merits of custard, medicinal effects of ginger nuts - that's the biscuits! - and the rise of UKIP. Somnolence rapidly ensued despite the strong winds.

DAY 5

By mid-morning we were back in Neyland for much-needed showers, shave, a spell on ‘terra firma’ and a chance to replenish the store cupboard. Around noon, the culinary bouquets wafting from the marina restaurant induced a sudden desire by the crew to consume fish and chips. Sated, we resumed our journey early in the afternoon, heading for St Bride's Bay and Skomer Island. Here we found a sheltered anchorage for the night in South Haven. A fine evening allowed us to watch several seals, numerous puffins and assorted birdlife from our deck over several glasses of chilled South African Chenin Blanc. An idyllic location and safe in the knowledge that anchor alarms and safety lines were in good working order. The wind was



Skipper and mate in charge!

predicted to be from the NW, so we settled down for a restful night. Unfortunately, a shift in wind to the south, produced a constant swell that countered the desire for deep REM sleep.

DAY 6

We awoke to beautiful sunshine and a magnificent dawn chorus of gulls, kittiwakes, puffins and manx shearwaters from the cliffs surrounding our cove. Skomer Island is an interesting location that has international importance for the study of the habitat of marine animals, underwater fauna and nesting seabirds. It is home to the largest colony of manx shearwaters in Europe, and many rabbits. Visitors are limited in number and strictly controlled by the resident wardens. You are only allowed to land at North Haven, which we reached via the exposed west and north coasts in mid-morning. Alan volunteered to cook lunch – chicken hotpot – on board in the sheltered bay, while the crew explored the island. This is clearly a bird-lovers paradise and we were fortunate to see many puffins still on the island – they usually leave by late-June. Visitors can follow several trails

across the island, with some areas off-limits for research and breeding and the wardens are most helpful.

Lunch on deck was excellent – and for dessert the skipper served up the best sailing of the week over the next 7 hours, armed with local knowledge and careful study of tidal streams. Mainly motor-sailing North across St Brides Bay towards Ramsey Island and St David's in bright sunshine, we had good views to the west of the Bishops and Clarks. By late afternoon we had almost reached White Sands Bay and could see St David's Head in the distance. At this point, we turned and with 7 knots of tide pushing us southward and a favourable wind, we made good progress through Ramsey Sound and across St Brides Bay. Later, some precision navigation between Wooltack Point and Skomer saw us safely through Jack Sound and past Skokholm Island. We cleared St Ann's Head as the light was failing, but made it back to the pontoon at Dale Bay; exhausted, exhilarated and in need of a nightcap.



Skomer Island from the west showing North and South Haven and Jack Sound.

DAY 7

Up early on the final day to consume a hearty breakfast of 'leftovers' and start cleaning and packing. We meandered back to Neyland and up the Cleddau River for several miles,



Crew of "Otter" head for Ramsey Island across St Brides Bay

reaching the marina at about 11.00 hours, followed closely by a yacht dressed up with the flags of multiple nations. This, Mr TOGLINE Editor, is the couple you mentioned in your last editorial. Clive and June Green from Abergavenny, returning to Pembrokeshire after 16 years away, circumnavigating the World and covering 51,000 nautical miles over 5840 days.

Congratulations to them! Our achievement was more modest – just over 200 nautical miles in 7 days!

IMPRESSIONS

This was the most enjoyable TOG trip that I have been on – good sailing, superb skipper and excellent crew. I was pleasantly surprised at how few other yachts we met compared to the Solent or Scotland. There are fewer marinas, but plenty of bays and coves for overnight anchorages. It pays to be well-organised and self-sufficient – watering holes and toilet facilities may be sparse. The sailing is excellent and varied - good onshore and offshore winds, interesting islands to explore and significant tidal streams and heights to test your navigation skills. As crew, we all contributed to the success of the trip, whether it was navigation, helmsmanship, sail trimming, gallery skills or after-dinner scintillating repartee. Of course, it helps to have outstanding leadership.

Pembrokeshire is an ideal starting point for trips to the West Coast of Wales, the Bristol Channel and North Devon Coast. On



longer trips, you could venture further afield. I strongly recommend its retention as a TOG sailex venue in the future – after all it is just like England!

The Wooden Spoon, but no custard!

IN MEMORIAM



**Squadron Leader NORMAN ALLEN.
Founder Member and first Presiding Master
TRENT OFFSHORE GROUP**



TOG 2014 Sailing ProgrammeTrent Offshore Group

TOG Members and Friends,

NON Members of TOG are welcome to join any of the following sailing programmes and will be invited to join the group as a temporary member for the at an additional cost of £20. We hope that all sailing members will find something

interest in this programme. Some events will not suit those with children in school but hopefully may appeal to others. If you have an idea for a future event – please get in touch with me with some detail and I will investigate for a future programme.



year
of

EAS 15 Easter on the South Coast

START Thursday 2nd April

END Wednesday 8th April

WHERE – Port Hamble – the South Coast COST £310

This regular event has proved popular over the years and gives all a chance to get out on the water and find your sea legs to start the year in grand style. The popular Beneteau 37's have been reserved for this event.

SAILEX OPEN FOR BOOKING

PEM 15 Pembrokeshire

START Friday 5th June

END Friday 12th June

WHERE – Neyland, Pembrokeshire

COST £290

Sail the Pembrokeshire coast, the Bristol Channel, visit Lundy, Skomer Island, or visit The Bitches off Ramsey. Options include a visit to Swansea or the north Devon / Cornish coast or cross to southern Ireland, weather permitting, on a night passage. The Pembrokeshire sailex offers some not so familiar seas, coastal scenery, and magnificent wild life. We chartered one yacht in 2014 and feedback from the crew was excellent – see TOGLine. This year we hope to charter both of the available yachts from this charter company, but early commitment from membership is vital because we cannot Commit TOG to charter both yachts without your support – early booking required to secure the yachts.

SAILEX OPEN FOR BOOKING – only one place available on the yacht chartered but we have three skippers on board and can charter a further yacht if more bookings are received shortly – book soon.

SCO 15 Scotland – the west coast

START Saturday 27th June

END Saturday 4th July

WHERE – Largs

COST £385

We will sail from Largs on the west coast with the option of visiting Northern Ireland, The Isle of Islay and Jura as well as the Firth of Clyde. Final plans will be presented at the Sailex meeting by your skippers. We are holding reservations on three large yachts, each with 4 cabins, planning for berthing 6 members to each yacht. Members who have yet to experience the fantastic sailing, dramatic scenery and excellent wildlife on the west coast of Scotland are encouraged to make an early booking. The number of berths available this year will be down on previous years, members keen to join this event in 2014 are advised that an early booking would seem to be appropriate.

SAILEX OPEN FOR BOOKING

CRO 15 Croatia - Split

START Saturday 12th September

END Saturday 19th September

WHERE Croatia – Split, Kastela Marina

COST - £380

September is time to explore the Mediterranean. Four yachts chartered including three 2015 Hanse 315's, 3 cabin 2 heads yachts – cost to include all local “extras” such as end cleaning, transit log and outboard.

The Adriatic coastline with its clear seas, gentle summer climate, quaint villages and historic towns, is a magnificent sailing area, which reveals Croatia as one of Europe's leading bareboat charter destinations.

SAILEX OPEN FOR BOOKING – four yachts chartered only one place available – book soon.

EOS 15 The October – End of Season Sailex

START Wednesday 7th October

END Sunday 11th October

WHERE - Port Hamble – the South Coast

COST £265

A great way for us to finish the 2015 season. Weather may be unpredictable but the water temperature is good and the company great. This regular event attracts people to one of the most popular sailing areas in the UK with many options for passage planning and good restaurants.

SAILEX OPEN FOR BOOKING

CAR16 – The Caribbean – The Leeward Islands

START Wednesday 13th January 2016

END Sunday 31st January 2016

WHERE – St Martin to Martinique

COST £1170 for 17 days + flights

A Beneteau Oceanis 484 Super Premier and a Beneteau Oceanis 485 Super Premier have been chartered for a 17 day sailex one way from St Martin to Martinique in January 2016. January is typically around 80F with 8 hours of sunshine a day and low rainfall. This charter has been planned as a “one way” sail to enable members to visit more islands and achieve a good point of sail with the prevailing trade winds. Flights will be block booked with Air France departing Birmingham on Wednesday 13th January, overnight in Paris CDG then onto St Martin on Thursday 14th January to board the yachts. Return flights from Martinique on Saturday 30th January to Paris Orly on Sunday 31st January, transfer to CDG and fly Paris to Birmingham.

SAILEX OPEN FULLY BOOKED



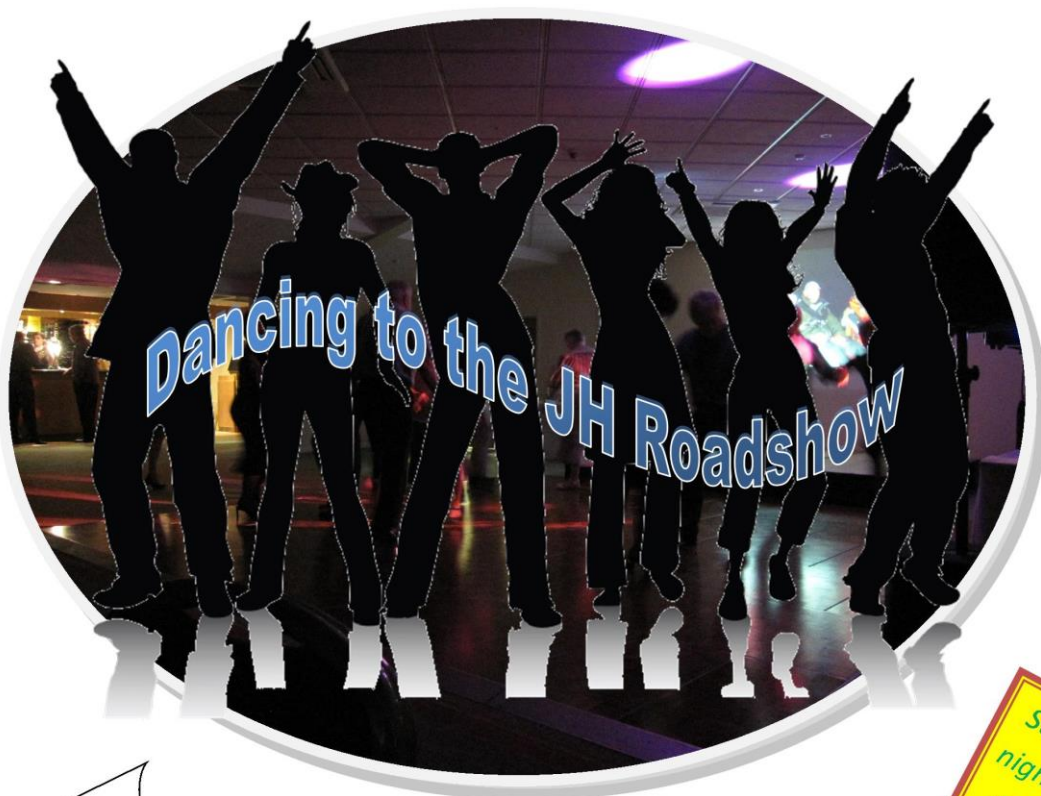
Annual Dinner Dance

Saturday 31st January 2015

7-00 for 7-30pm til Midnight

Greetham Valley Hotel & Golf Course

Wood Lane, Greetham, Oakham, Rutland,
LE15 7SH



Menu

Assiette of three
Starters

Carvery with
vegetarian option

Assiette of three des-
serts

Coffee, Tea & Mints

Tickets £28 per Person

P.T.O. for more information & for
booking see the separate form

Stay the
night and
enjoy a
leisurely
breakfast



Dress

Smart casual.

Drinks

There will be a wine ordering table in the reception so that you can order wine for your meal. All wine and drinks must be ordered and paid for by individual guests. There will be a bar serving drinks all night.

Dinner

There is a 4 course dinner with a choice of carvery main course or vegetarian option. The menu is in the bottom left hand side of preceding page. Please let Andy McWilliam know if you have any special dietary requirements. Tables accommodate up to 12 people. Groups up to 6-7 may be tabled with other smaller groups. Any other seating arrangement preferences will also be considered and should be indicated on the booking form.

Speeches and Annual Awards

There will be a brief after dinner speech followed by the distribution of annual awards.

Raffle

A raffle will be held in aid of the RNLI. Please contact Andy McWilliam if you can donate a high value / high quality prize for this good cause. We wish to have a small number of desirable prizes to encourage ticket sales on the night, to support this worthy cause.

Dancing

Following the dinner, speeches, awards and raffle in aid of the RNLI, there will be a Disco, 'JH Roadshow', who will play an appropriate selection of varied music.

Booking/Queries

To reserve your places, completed booking forms and payment are to be with Andy McWilliam, by the 5th January 2015, mobile 07714 951395 or email andrew.mcwilliam2@btopenworld.com.

If possible please pay by bank transfer to Trent Offshore Group, Sort code 20-50-21, Account Number 80390461 adding the reference ADD15 plus your initials if possible.

Overnight Accommodation

The Hotel is able to offer special rate rooms to TOG guests wishing to stay over and take advantage of the resident's bar. Rooms are £70 per room (B&B based on one or two in a room). The telephone number for booking is 01780 460444. The website for further information is <http://www.greethamvalley.co.uk/>.

Golf

If you wish to book a round of golf either on Saturday or Sunday, please contact the hotel direct to book.

Directions

From the North/South/East, take the turning off the A1 onto the B668 Stretton Road signposted Greetham, Cottesmore and Oakham. After 1 mile, turn left at the crossroads following the brown signs to the Golf Club entrance.

From the West either head for the A1 and follow the directions above, or head for Oakham, then follow signs for B668 Cottesmore and Greetham.



Annual Dinner Dance

Saturday 31st January 2015

Please complete the form below to book your place.

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Email	
Tel No	

I would like to book [] places for the TOG Annual Dinner Dance at £28 each

For direct payments (preferred) use the details below:

Account: Trent Offshore Group
Sort Code: 20-50-21
Acc No: 80390461
Use Reference: ADD15 + (your initials) - if possible please

Cheques to: Graham Wassall (Treasurer), Trent Offshore Group,
 C/O Global Safety Ltd, 7 Jubilee Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1ND.

Please enter below the name of each person in your party and any special requirements

No	Name	Please state any special dietary requirements/Preferences
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

Please return your form before 5th January 2015 to:

Andy McWilliam (TOG Social Secretary),
 6 Spinney Drive, Quorn,
 Loughborough,
 Leicestershire, LE12 8HB
 ✉ andrew.mcwilliam2@btoopenworld.com

☎ 07714 951 395 **GOOD NEWS SECTION**

Member is riding on crest of a wave

By Elizabeth Hambidge

e.hambidge@newarkadvertiser.co.uk

A SAILING enthusiast from Southwell has been hailed a hero in a nationwide initiative that rewards passion, commitment and achievements in maritime communities.

Arthur Wood, who is in his 70s, has been nominated for The Old Pulteney Maritime Heroes Awards by Trent Offshore Group, which aims to provide offshore sailing experiences for people in the Midlands, for his outstanding service to the club.

He is one of 30 national semi-finalists selected from across the country.

Now in its third year, the annual awards competition was initiated by Old Pulteney Single Malt Scotch Whisky to reward the outstanding passion, commitment and achievements demonstrated within Britain's maritime communities, at local and national level.

To launch this year's scheme Old Pulteney contacted UK sailing clubs asking them to nominate any members they felt deserved recognition within one of the following three categories, club service, bravery or sailing achievement.

Mr Wood first started sailing in the 1970s, and over a 20-year period, went on to receive a Day Skipper Certificate, a Royal Yachting Association Coastal Skipper Certificate, and a Yachtmaster Offshore Certificate.

During that time, he dedicated much of



MR ARTHUR WOOD has been recognised for his commitment to sailing.

his time to the Ocean Youth Club, often taking young sailors to training events and journeys up and down the coasts of Britain, Ireland, Holland and Norway.

In 1991, Mr Wood helped found the Trent Offshore Group.

As the training master for the club, he dedicated himself to organising Royal Yachting Association courses, training and managing groups of new sailors, and in the process, has logged over 15,000 sea miles.

Club members said they were proud to

have Mr Wood serving as their deputy presiding master, and they were delighted to nominate him as a maritime hero.

To reward his enthusiasm and dedication, Old Pulteney has presented Mr Wood with a Maritime Heroes Awards certificate and bottle of 12 year-old single malt.

Mr Wood is one of the 30 shortlisted sailing stars going through to the competition finals in December.

If successful he will win £2,000, a commemorative trophy and a bottle of whisky.

Can't be bad – Congratulations Arthur!