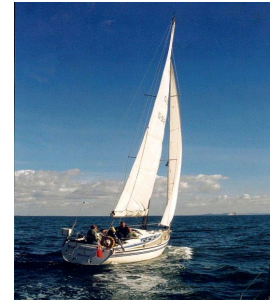




TOGLINE



The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2010

RHUMB LINE: Questionable dance aboard ship, similar to a somewhat wobbly conga line.



As May opens, as the spring flowers start to fade, as the bluebells at Rutland Water are in full bloom and pretty as a picture; as we “ne’er cast a clout ‘til May is out”, the sailing season has kicked off

and clouts have been cast off – at last! Hallelujah and Hail Phoebe! Having said which, I must temper my enthusiasm with a cautionary note about the chill northerly that is busy rustling our skirts, has blown the Bank Holiday Weekend and is threatening to continue for awhile. By the time this edition is put to bed, no doubt we will have our answer as to the weather in store.

Back to business!

Welcome one and all, to the Spring edition of TOGLINE. I hope you will enjoy the articles – we try to make them a mix of being instructive, thought-provoking, entertaining and humorous. We have very talented contributors and wordsmiths, and for that I am truly grateful. We guess at the mix, but without any feedback, it’s difficult to know whether we have got it right! My consolation is that no-one has yet complained, so we’ll keep plugging along and rely on everyone’s patience and support where and when they can. Thank you all for the contributions to date. Please keep them coming!

Did you happen to read about the gentleman who bought a cruiser in Kent and tried to get it to Southampton? Apparently he spent twenty-four hours trying to get there, but the Lifeboats had to rescue him as he ran out of fuel. No training, no nothing. He was using a road map to find his way by keeping the land on his right. Unfortunately, the Isle of Sheppey is just that. He had been going

round and round in circles! Hello? Haven’t I seen that landmark before.....?

Joking aside and being dismissive of a road map for navigation at sea, it is apparently very easy to become so absorbed in the chartwork below, that one can forget to keep a check on what’s happening around you. We often struggle to locate our position on the chart, when simply popping up on deck may enable us to pick up a landmark or buoy we have just either passed or are approaching! Reading Keith’s article of the Greek Odyssey, we can beware of the pitfalls awaiting the unwary who may be too reliant on modern navigational aids!

And Finally. If you have a point to make on any aspect of the way we run things, please don’t hesitate to forward it. I will print any items you care to send – brickbats or compliments, bland or pointed. Let’s talk to each other and keep the spirit of TOG alive. It will be our 20th anniversary next year and having survived thus far, I am certain we can do another 20! **Your** membership and participation is **so** important. Without you we couldn’t survive.

Until August 31st, our next deadline, please continue to enjoy yourselves, your sailing and your interests. Remember it takes 4 muscles to smile and 40 to scowl (or something)!

Happy Sailing and my grateful thanks to you all who have contributed in some way, however small.

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e-Borders (Yes again!)

Things have gone remarkably quiet within the realm and remit of the UK Border Agency concerning the proposals for possible future activities of the splendidly named Directorate of Maritime and Aviation Operations

Border Force, so one could presume that the UK government has decided to enhance its popularity with the recreational sailing and motor boating organisations by keeping a low profile with a General Election about to take place! Calm before the storm one could presume if one was as suspicious of this lot as I am. Like me the RYA negotiating team is preparing for an onslaught in 2011 if dear old Red Diesel Gordon is returned to power.

I would advise our readers to peruse very carefully any articles that they come across in the national or yachting press so that they are prepared for the worst. I will continue to monitor and take note of anything that I come across which has a bearing on this subject, so that I can acquaint you with the current situation later in the year. Should the yachtsman's friend, dear old Red Diesel Gordon, not get returned to power then it is to be hoped that the other parties will have been well informed about our needs and aspirations. As the RYA has recently stated the sailing world does not want conflict with the United Kingdom Border Agency and is only too willing to work with it in the war against drug smuggling and illegal immigration.

Our people are out at sea in all sorts of weather conditions and right around the clock for the majority of the weeks of the year and are only too willing to pass on suspicions to the relevant authorities, but what we don't want is to be bureaucratically restrained and subject to irrelevant and pointless paperwork. Just think of your feelings if, through no fault of your own, you have to return to the port that you have listed in your exit document and in so doing have had a frightful passage that has greatly upset the novices in your crew. It's not hard luck it's gross stupidity!

CHARTERS AND CHARTERERS

Reading recent editions of TOGLINE leaves one with the impression that the number of members getting afloat nowadays seems to have fallen somewhat dramatically over the last couple of years and the season just past appears to be the worst ever. Why is it that fewer and fewer of our members fail to take up the opportunities that are advertised in TOGLINE or for that matter by special bulletin – thus meaning that so many end up being cancelled.

My personal opinion is that for some time now we have put too much emphasis on comfort and technology. If one charters very new vessels, with all the latest paraphernalia installed in them then one must pay for it. I am convinced that it was a bad move for TOG when we ditched the Royal Signals Yachts. I know that things had gone sadly wrong with their staffing when it became noticeable that the Boatswain was spending much of his time skippering JSASTC Nick55's across the Atlantic to the detriment of the ordinary maintenance of the Club's own fleet of offshore yachts. The matter was finally resolved but by

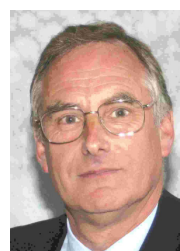
that time we had 'packed our bags' and taken all our trade to a commercial company up the Hamble.

To be absolutely fair one cannot criticize Fairview Charters. The staff are very pleasant and helpful to all joining crews and the vessels are very well maintained, coupled with the fact that we get a very fair discount on charter fees. However does TOG always need to charter yachts with the most up to date electronic aids? Indeed does TOG really need to charter vessels less than five years old all of the time? With the RAFSA and the RS yachts one's navigation aids consisted of a very comprehensive chart folio, a simple GPS either hand held or boxed (or both), a RADAR set and an up to date Marine Radio facility. Did we really need anything more for run of the mill South Coast passages, crossing the North Sea and the Channel and playing around the Channel Islands? We were able to sail fairly cheaply (well under half the commercial costs) and competently tutor our crews in navigation and seamanship skills.

It would seem that the question of cost is very much to the fore at the moment. Even living in France I still correspond and meet enough of our members to realize that all is not well. Some have sadly been made redundant, some have had to close their companies down, many of our freelance professionals have not worked many days since last Summer, and even the ex-pats like me have had to put up with a significant fall in the £ against the € (which put the kibosh on any further French charters until the situation improved – which it seems to be doing at last).

I would suggest that we have to move with the times – and the times at the moment are not geared to expensive (by TOG standards) charters. As I see it we have to acknowledge the fact that we must find cheaper yacht charters if we wish to maintain even a shadow of our previous programme of five expeditions per year, the majority of which consisted of more than one yacht. After all, our main aim is to get as many members as possible to sea – despite the recession

PUSHPIT PRATTLE by Keith Stedman



I'm still recovering from the Greek Odyssey mentioned in the "Reports" Section – I hope that will suffice on this occasion....!

The boat at Easter....!



REPORTS



EASTER SAILEX 2010

by Phil & Emma Greetham

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.....!

Thursday 1st April

Having dropped off our two boys with Grandma in Devon, we'd had the foresight this year to order some genuine Cornish pasties to bring with us on board. Personally I thought this a fair swap – 2 kids for a dozen pasties! We then made the now familiar trip from Exeter to Port-Hamble Marina arranging to meet at noon with the two crews who would be our companions for the Easter week; some old faces and a few new ones who were unable to make the pre-trip briefing at Normanton.



For me, this year was going to be different; Mark (Training Master) had kindly given me the opportunity to use the ticket obtained during November when I, along with 4 other like-minded TOG members, thought it might be a nice break from the relentless daily grind, to take the Coastal Skipper Practical course. It turned out not to be the 'stress free' break some of us were expecting (me) & by day 5 we were all pretty much worn out and questioning our own judgement. After some 20+ night hours, a couple of them in winds recorded at 38 kts, we were all rewarded with the CSP endorsement and 5 new future TOG Skippers were born. Although a very memorable & good experience, you've never seen 5 people de-victual and clean a yacht so quickly with hardly a word spoken.

As usual, Mark was already outside the Fairview office when we arrived, ready to meet and greet & with a keenness to get afloat that is contagious.

There would be only two yachts being chartered this year by TOG, possibly due to the economic situation and the early Easter, or maybe it was neither of these things and people were simply busy. The choice of yacht would be simple, with just one main requirement - the name had to be pronounceable. Some of those French names given to the Fairview Beneteau's can be a bit of a mouthful and there's a

few I can't even get close to, so "Par Excellence" it was to be. This was also the yacht I sailed in November, so an old friend. She had however, suffered a few nicks and scratches in the preceding 5 months which were duly noted on the acceptance check sheet. I've often wondered what kind of person would buy such a luxury item just to allow inexperienced people to play around and wear it out. Whoever they are, I'm grateful they exist!

The crew & yachts;

Par Excellence

Phil Greetham
Mark Davis
Keith Stedman
Emma Greetham
Dan Pimk
Andy Jackaman

Crème de la Crème

Stuart Cook
Andy Steele
Jen Steele
Sam Samuels
Richrd Woodward
John Bryant

Once onboard with our personal gear stowed, Emma & Dan popped to Tesco for provisions whilst Keith, Mark, Andy and myself worked through the handover brief from Fairview in anticipation of a nice mid-afternoon departure from the Hamble Marina (16451cl – Log 2545.5) and to our regular first night destination of Cowes for the evening. As usual, we were happy for Fairview to take us off the Hamble berth – and be dropped off on the fuelling pontoon (not worth the risk of ruining the trip on the first day) - although this proved to be less than the usual slick Fairview manoeuvre with the poor chap, a newbie apparently, failing to anticipate the effects wind & tide and eventually handing the helm back to us, much to our amusement and that of his Fairview colleagues.

The weather as we set off could only be described as normal for the time of year- chilly and breezy – and once out of the river there was a fresh breeze gusting to 20 or more at times, so two reefs were left in the main sail and the Genoa left furled a little. We made the trip over to Cowes along the



Thorn Channel and most of the crew had a chance to helm with exhilarating speeds of 10 kts being achieved on occasion. A rapid tack to port had to be made when Keith spotted that depth had dropped rapidly from 15 metres to 1.5 between Calshot Spit and Bourne Gap, possibly safe to have continued looking at the chart but certainly not comfortable.

Em called up Cowes Yacht Haven on the VHF and we were allocated S3 for the night; a quick look at the plan in the Almanac and we were soon safely alongside with our first solo pontoon manoeuvre completed. Em & I made our normal visit to the Saffron Indian restaurant whilst everyone else met up at the Union pub at the top end of Cowes.

Arrival Cowes - 1845 – Log 2555.6 Wind F4-6

Friday 2nd April

Having checked the weather forecast (SW backing S, SE F5-F7 Moderate or Rough), we decided to stay in the Solent, our chosen destination to be Haslar Marina, Portsmouth. We set the reefed sails early and made our way into a fairly rough Solent which Andy didn't appreciate before gaining his sea legs. As is usual with such a breeze, the sailing was again excellent. Crème de la Crème suffered a casualty enroute with John putting out his back and being confined for most of the day, down below in the cabin – which would not have been the best place to be given the conditions. Upon arrival in Haslar, a couple of us thought it would be nice to take a trip up the Spinnaker Tower – but we were to be disappointed as it had closed 15 minutes earlier, 6pm – even on Good Friday! After hot dogs in gun-wharf quay, a rendez-vous was arranged to meet in the George & Dragon on the Gosport side & probably the closest to the marina – with a table for 11, & very good food. Unfortunately John was unable to join us & remained on board to rest his back.

Arrival Haslar Marina, Berth H22 - 1650 – Log 2556.9

Saturday 3rd April

Departure 0920 .

Examination of the weather showed a very strong chance that it would be much better than forecast, and John felt comfortable so we decided to head out of the Solent and to Poole. Andy had been introduced to the benefits of Stugeron, which I don't mind admitting that I take every time I set out in anything over a Force 3.

Having motored out of the small boat channel as required, we raised the sails, taking the small vessel transit into the Solent and then west, back towards Cowes. The wind was perfect SE F4-5 increasing to 6 and we made good progress running under sail for the whole trip until the approach into Poole. We were able to practice our MOB skills enroute after a loose fender was spotted out in the bay. Now I have a bit of a reputation with fenders. On my first TOG trip, I happened to be on the helm coming out of Weymouth when the Skipper had gone below to read the paper- I mean do chart work- and I spotted a blue fender. Old habits die hard, so I made my way over to the prize with the boat hook, only to see that this particular fender was attached to the sea floor and with it's line running straight under the yacht. This was not a good sight as the yacht promptly pulled up and stopped. The skipper noticed this and after giving him my theory of what might actually be happening, he was not impressed to say the least. After a bit of head scratching and reviewing of options, we were very fortunate to have come free in reverse without catching the line on the prop. (Thanks Neil, for not being too angry although I did feel like a ten year old again for a brief moment!) Needless to say, I vowed never again to collect any flotsam & jetsam. Well, that was until the next year when one of our fenders came off the back of the yacht so we had to retrieve it or pay up. Coming back to this year and the spotting of yet another fender in Poole bay, this time it was Mark who fancied the prize for his own boat. Retrieving a fender can be difficult at the best of times but with a good swell and strong wind, we made a half dozen passes before

eventually bagging the beast with a boat hook through the plastic eye and it took the only woman onboard to capture it!

After berthing in Poole Quay Marina A18, we were all wet and tired and looking forward to a warm meal and a few pints. A table was found in the Poole Arms, a fish-only restaurant establishment, so Em & I went to the Oriel where we bumped into Andy & Jen from our other yacht having a cosy meal for two. No gossip here though as they are both married, to each other.

Arrival Poole- 1745 – Log 2635.4

Sunday 4th April

The forecast was still good & we elected to continue west to Weymouth. After a leisurely breakfast, we were ready to depart although it was quite busy heading out of the channel towards Brownsea Island. Once clear, of the chain ferry, we cut the engine. Enroute we heard a mayday call from a 27' yacht (Blu Argent) who had holed on the Shingles bank at the western approaches to the Solent and was sinking requiring air rescue of the 4 crew on board. Our journey to Weymouth was hard fought, but great fun, with a series of tacks on a beautiful sunny afternoon. We arrived in Weymouth at 1750 and had expected the small harbour to be buzzing as usual since it was a bright but cool bank holiday Sunday, but it was actually very quiet, the temperature probably putting many folk off. We took a berth on Customs Quay close to 2 naval training vessels for the evening. Mark took us into a tight spot showing his experience and making it look very easy. There was also a cadet training yacht next to us – who were busy preparing to depart on a night passage to Cowes – “before the front comes in” which made us re-examine the weather for the next days! However we were happy that there weren't going to be any surprises and we went to dinner, at the George on the Town Quay. Upon our return, we were a little dismayed to find we were the only yacht which had been rafted against – not good since we were planning an early call for an 0600 departure to give us a good window for the Needles channel should the going be difficult; the owner however, promised to be up and allow us depart in time.

Arrival Weymouth - 1750 hrs – Log 2678.9

Monday 5th April

0520 and we're purposely making a racket to let the yacht next us know that we are getting ready to depart: 10 minutes later and still no sign of any movement so I open up their hatch and call inside that we are ready to go. They expected us to slip out of the raft astern so they could leave their bow line attached; this was not a good idea given both wind and tide directions and the proximity of the yacht immediately behind us. We then told them how we would like to depart and they motored off our port side allowing us to run a stern spring on the starboard side.

Clear of Weymouth harbour, the engine and steaming light were off and away we went on what would turn out to be a single tack all the way to the South West Shingles buoy, some 32 miles in near perfect conditions- another 10°C and it would have been perfect! With breakfast “on the hoof”, progress was swift, far swifter than anticipated, even with the main sail reefed and we were at the Needles channel by 1110, a couple of hours ahead of that planned & next to the Shingles bank where the yacht had met with disaster the previous day. Into the Solent, there was a lot of activity with the Trinity House boats working and a “lifting vessel” – being towed, maybe to



recover the Blu Argent, who knows!

We made contact with Crème de la crème to let them know that we were going to stop for lunch on the trots at Yarmouth and would see them there. A light lunch washed down with a beer was most enjoyable in the sun and we were entertained by Stuart & his crew on their three attempts to pick up the mooring buoy and dropping in the boat hook over the side & swiftly recovering it at the rear. (It's harsh having the training master and commodore watching your every move!) As soon as the harbour master came looking for money, we decided to make a swift departure over to Lymington where we were intending to spend the evening. The channel is narrow at Lymington and touching the mud, even well within the Channel is common; This time however I thought I'd passed the

problem area when we went in, and on a lee shore with a good breeze and a falling tide, it's not good, not good



at all! Full power astern and everyone on the starboard side to reduce the draught a little and off we came, much to my relief. Had we been stuck there, I can't imagine anywhere more public than that particular spot, especially as the ferries come by every 30 mins or so. At Lymington we were given berth Oscar 44, port side-to which was great to get into, but would be a challenge to depart from unless the wind eased a far bit by tomorrow. The evening was spent in the Kings Head for food followed by a few jars in a bar alongside the town quay, the name of which I failed to notice.

Arrival Lymington- 1330 – Log 2732.0

Tuesday 6th April

Breakfast in the marina restaurant was followed by quick trip to trip to Ye Olde pastie shop (Sweeney Todd style) before a mid-morning departure. The wind (& tide) wasn't in our favour to get off the pontoon, so it took some thinking

through, in fact I had been thinking it through for the past 4 hours and none of the options were desirable. The wind was midships on the port side and strong, so speed was required and this required revs which means the stern will walk to port, which would be the opposite direction required. In fact just getting out cleanly would be good regardless of which way we ended up pointing. Whilst setting up the warps for departure,



the centre cleat spring was the main working line which made things really difficult; every time I eased the line the yacht moved forward and over to the yacht alongside. Keith was quick to resume control on the engine and as the power was applied the

stern came back over and the yacht became controllable with the reverse speed: This happened a couple of times until we agreed that this was as good as we were going to get and on the next turn we would go for it, even if it meant leaving



someone on the pontoon. Keith applied plenty of power and out she came with the stern walking to port as expected, a masterful departure and if the truth were known, I was pleased not to be on the helm on that occasion.

Once out in the Solent, having not run aground departing Lymington, it was another lovely day and we headed towards Osborne Bay to anchor for lunch. Activity in the Channel was brisk as usual and we watched many container ships navigate their way at the start of their presumably long journeys. After lunch we were keen to coax Stuart & his crew into a competitive sail (not a race!) to one of the marker buoys and a half an hour or so of close quarter manoeuvring ensued.

Around 1800 we headed towards East Cowes and once we were moored up, Dan & Andy took the chance to climb to the top of the mast. Having located the bosun's chair, we set about arranging the lines and a safety harness to winch each in turn to the top. East Cowes – and the final evening get together of both crews. We managed to reserve a table large enough for the 12 of us eat, drink and swap a few stories and to congratulate those who had taken their Dayskipper theory earlier in the day.

Arrival East Cowes - 1850 – Log 2752.5

Wednesday 7th April

After almost a week away, Mark seemed very keen, desperate in fact, to get home for some reason, reminding me of my first TOG trip when Em stayed at home! Leaving East Cowes at 0935 we motored out towards Prince Consort and then put the sails out for the last time and headed back towards Hamble along eastern edge of the Thorn Channel. Just as we approached the entrance to the river Hamble the engine over heat warning alarm sounded. Further inspection alerted us that there was no sign of cooling water being pumped, so we unfurled the Genoa and made our way out into the channel to troubleshoot. Mark called Fairview who didn't appear too concerned and asked us to sail up the river: given the wind direction that wasn't going to be very easy and would require a tack every 30 yards or so to make it work. Having plenty of kit onboard, Mark & Keith took a look at the impeller which had ran dry and was shredded. With the impeller changed the focus was now on a blockage or to find the reason why the impeller had run dry in the first instance. With the engine started again there was still no sign of cooling water being circulated. Keith took another look and found a split hose which was fortunately just still long enough to take the end off and successfully refit, this solved the problem and cooling water started to pump through once more. Back in the Hamble we fuelled up and requested Fairview to come over and berth the yacht, which as usual was made to look simple with what can only be described as a hand brake turn manoeuvre followed by a sliding reverse; quite impressive but you need to be on these yachts every day to be that accomplished.

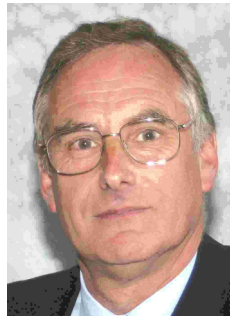
Arrival Hamble - 1200 – Log 2763.4



Total trip log 217.9 miles

My thanks to our crew for being great company. Andy and Dan whom I hope to see on future trips accompanied by a couple of ladies at least next time; Keith and Mark for being good teachers and not taking over (too many times) and last

but certainly not least my wife who I'm pleased enjoys mucking about on the water and who is a damn good navigator and cook. Easter 2011 apparently falls at the end of April (Sunday 24th) so could be a warm one!



ACROSS THE AEGEAN

by Keith Stedman

It all started with a telephone call from Austria just prior to Christmas. "Hi Keith it's Ken, a friend of mine over here has a boat just off the Turkish coast and wants it taken across The Aegean to the Gulf of Volos on mainland Greece. Would you be interested?"

"Ah.....well when would this be?"

"Details not finalised yet but probably in March sometime"

"Ah well.....uhm.....well yes OK, count me in"

So the 14th March found me on a plane heading for Athens where I was to meet Ken and Karl (the boat owner) at the airport ready for our onward flight to the Island of Samos. I had already met and sailed with Karl once before and fortunately his English is very good which was just as well as my Austrian was (and still is) almost non existent.

The intervening period between the initial telephone call and the flight contained a visit to the boat show where I managed to pick up a copy of the "Greek Waters Pilot", a passage planning chart (Imray G2) and four other detailed charts covering our intended passage.

I had also sat down and worked out what I thought was the best plan for the trip, taking into account the prevailing winds, distances to be covered and the notes in the pilot etc. Ken paid me two "flying visits" in this period where we went through the passage plan, found out further information (thank goodness for the internet), decided on alternatives and generally put a bit of flesh onto the bones of the trip.

It wasn't without some doubts that I boarded the plane at Heathrow. However the transport worked well and Sunday evening found the three of us at the airport on Samos. Karl had arranged a hire car and we were soon down at the marina at Pithagorion. The harbour being one of the three great engineering feats constructed in the ancient Greek world under the patronage of Polykrates.

We had intended to spend Monday provisioning the boat, discussing our plans with the company which handles charters for Karl's boat and a bit of a sail to get used to how "she" handles. We had then intended to start our journey on the Tuesday. All went well with a bit of a sail into nearby Turkish



waters and all of us putting our boat “Orion” (a Bavaria 39’ Cruiser) through her paces. Given the size of Orion (with eight berths and two heads) we were in for a fairly comfortable trip with only three of us on board!!”

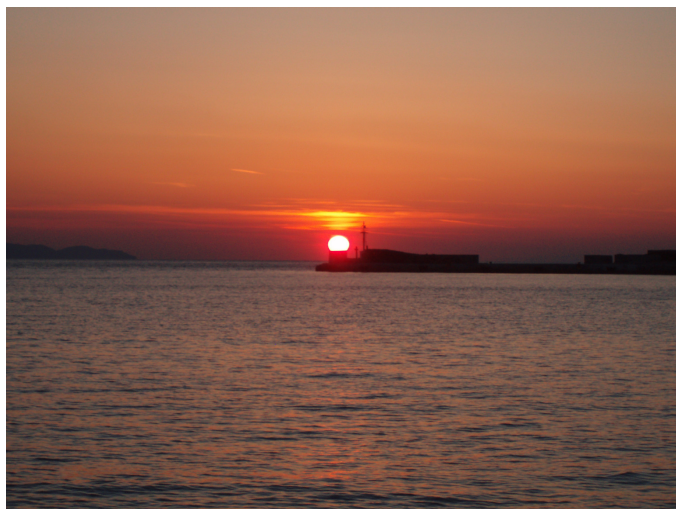
Unfortunately at this point nature intervened and with high winds forecast for both Tuesday and Wednesday we decided to delay our departure until Thursday. As the total journey distance was some 280nm and we had a fortnight to complete the trip none of us were particularly concerned at having to lose a couple of days at the start. It also gave us the opportunity to hang onto the hire car for two further days and to go sightseeing on Samos. “It’s an ill wind....”

When Thursday dawned we were all relieved when with fresh winds from the north (which meant a beam/broad reach for this stage of the trip) we slipped our mooring at Pithagorion said our fairwells to the Island of Samos and headed out into the far blue yonder (and believe me it was stunningly blue!). We completed this first stage of 45nm to the Island of Ikaria without incident and in really good time. I had used the



Isle of Samos

standard 5nm per hour when putting the passage plan together but in fact we were getting more like 7nm - 8nm over the ground. This was good as it cut down considerably the passage time and being in this part of the world there was no need to worry about the state of the tide at the destination. Legend would have that the islands name Ikaria is derived from the name of Icarus – you know – the chap that tried to escape from Crete by fabricating wings from feathers and wax. Unfortunately he flew too close to the sun and the wax melted plunging him into the sea near Ikaria. The pilot book gives a



Sunset at Tinos harbour

warning about high winds being present in the marina with the comment “*personally I think Icarus had his feathers blown off around here.....and didn’t get anywhere near the sun*”

Next day Friday we were to sail across the “open” bit of the journey between Ikaria and the Isle of Tinos some 55nm. The wind had stayed in the north at around force 6 and with mainsail and foresail reefed we set out for a cracking good sail once again on a beam reach all the way. Force 6 winds with beautiful clear blue skies and clear blue seas, what a treat! Once again arriving early at Tinos allowed us plenty of time to explore the town and visit the Church of the Panayia where it is claimed several miracles have been performed and as a result twice a year many thousands of sick and crippled pilgrims come seeking a cure.

The wind had abandoned us on Saturday and we set out to pass south of both the Isle of Tinos and the Isle of Andros crossing the Sound of Kafirea under engine. Our destination was the marina at Karistos on the very large Island of Evia laying to the east of Athens and paralleling the mainland. A quiet day with little wind and calm sea just the putter of the inboard engine to shatter the peace over the intervening 45 nm!

In a way Karistos was a watershed (no pun intended). To arrive at our destination of the Gulf of Volos we had to make a choice of either going south of the Island of Evia or going north about. Going south gave us lighter winds, calmer seas and better shelter but a potential problem at the bridge at our next destination of Khalkis. Going the northern route meant stronger winds from the north with a lee shore all the way on a 120+nm trip with little shelter but, on the other hand, no bridge at Khalkis to negotiate. We had chosen the southern route as the thought of a flog all the way up the north side with little chance of a stop for 24hours to 36 hours was not appealing – this after all was a holiday as well !!

Sunday then, found us making our way up the South Gulf of Evia on the 57nm leg to Khalkis. A good day with mainland Greece on one side and the Island of Evia gradually narrowing down on the other to make for interesting views on both sides of the boat. Having made an early start we arrived in Khalkis late afternoon/early evening and moored in the new marina referred to in the pilot book. This marina is new although it does not have any electricity or water connected but has the distinct advantage that no-one seems to claim ownership and consequently no-one wants any mooring fees (could do with a few of these on the South coast of the UK !!)

Our first job was to report in to the Harbour Police and find out about this b****y bridge. So what’s the problem with the bridge – well it’s just that it is there and you have to get through it. It is low and spans the narrow gap between Evia and the mainland. It is a road bridge that opens by sliding back into recesses either side under the road.

Although the Mediterranean in general is referred to as being non-tidal the amount of water in the North Gulf and South Gulf of Evia is considerable and any tidal flow is therefore exacerbated at this pinch point. The problem is made worse by the fact that high water in the N harbour is approximately 1¼ hours after high water in the S harbour and the range in the N harbour is much greater than in the S harbour, all of which goes to produce some strong tidal streams which can reach up to 7 knots through the narrow section of the bridge. The pilot book also states that the bridge invariable opens after midnight to minimise traffic disruption and will not open for a single yacht. Some yachts have been known to be left waiting to go through for up to 36 hours. So.....it was with some trepidation that we all set out to see the harbour police. On the way we crossed

over the bridge and to our horror saw first hand the water ripping through the bridge at a good 5 knots or more!!

The police on duty were great. They spoke good English and soon reassured us that they only open the bridge between 22:00 hours and 04:00 hours when the tidal flow has subsided. What a relief!!..... But how long to wait? We were told to go and enjoy our evening meal but to be on board by 21:00 hours when they would let us know the position. True to their word the radio call came through to say that the bridge would be opening that evening at 22:00 hours as there was a fishing boat also wanting to get through. We received a radio call 10 minutes before 22:00 hours and were asked to make ready to sail and stand by. We then received the call to make our way through the bridge. Job done! Having made our way through the bridge we moored up in the N harbour to enjoy a good nights sleep safe in the knowledge that the “bridge at Khalkis” was now behind us (or should that be aft of us?).



“That bridge”

Having got through the bridge it was decided that we would spend the next day (Monday) having a day off and exploring the delights of Khalkis.

So it was that on Tuesday we were ready to resume our way up the North Gulf of Khalkis to our final destination. We had originally intended to do this leg in one go of circa 65nm as we had planned on sailing through the night following a midnight passage through the bridge. However having had a day off we were leaving Khalkis at around 07:00 hours so we had to rethink the remaining journey. We decided to split it in two and have two days relatively easy short passages. So it was that we set sail for a relatively short trip of 35nm to overnight at a place called Loutra Adhypsou. An uneventful journey until we were coming into the harbour.

It was one of those occasions when I think that our Training Master would like to have had his students there to witness the anomaly first hand. Ken was at the helm and we were slowly running alongside the outside of the harbour wall. The harbour appeared crowded with sailing vessels and although the pilot book showed a minimum of 3 metres of water inside Ken asked me “Can we get any more detail on the inside of the harbour on the chart plotter?”

“Hang on a moment and I’ll go below and have a look to see if we can get any more detail”

Well..... having pulled up a more detailed chart I was absolutely astounded to witness the electronic image of the boat sailing serenely through the car park of a supermarket – Lidl’s no less!! I know we wanted some more milk but this was taking things a bit far !!

Checking the Lat. and Long. on the chartplotter with the paper chart confirmed our position as being correct – just outside the harbour wall but the boat was now half way down the high street !

Obviously the detail of the harbour had been plotted incorrectly on the electronics. The paper chart did give a warning that some of the information plotted into the electronics was originally taken from charts that were produced in the 19th



Fields of wild flowers

century using celestial fixes etc to determine lat. and long. It was an interesting event and one that goes to underline the importance of not relying solely on electronic navigation. Make sure you know the basics.

Having stayed over-night at Loutra Adhypsou (and by the by having refused the kind offer of a local fisherman to share his home made hubble-bubble pipe during the evening) we left next morning on the home run to Akhillion in the Gulf of Volos. Once again a shortish trip of around 36nm. Light winds and calm seas saw us round the western most tip of Evia through the Sound of Likhadon and head NE to enter the southern end of the Gulf of Volos and hence to Akhillion.



A celebratory meal on arrival – from left Ken, Karl and yours truly. As Karl had been in the catering trade he undertook all the catering on board.....and I soon got used to Austrian sausage!!

Having arrived safely at our destination, we settled down to a few days exploring the local countryside around Akhillion which included a long local bus ride, walking in the snow, fields of wild flowers and some great sights and laughs along the way.

It had been a great trip with good company, good weather and good sailing!



Akhillion is a truly unspoiled part of Greece.



REACH FOR THE STARS
(From Jennie Garrett)

Congratulations to Richard Vincent for achieving the RYA Yachtmaster Ocean shore based course and exam.

From all the many crews that have enjoyed sailing with you over the years.....you really are a star navigator now!

Jennie



TEPs TIME EXPIRED
PYROTECHNICS
aka OUT OF DATE FLARES
by Mark Davis

(Extract taken from MCA website)

ADVICE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF TIME

EXPIRED PYROTECHNICS (TEPs) FROM 1 APRIL 2010

From 1 April 2010 the process for depositing time expired pyrotechnics (TEPs) with HM Coastguard will change.

Following legislative changes in 2005 covering the transport and storage of explosives, the number of HM Coastguard sites which are able to accept TEPs has been reduced to 17 licensed locations. The RNLI also have one facility that is licensed to accept TEPs. Other HM Coastguard facilities **will not** be able to accept out of date flares.

The facilities provided by HM Coastguard should only be used if all other disposal options have been exhausted. If you have out of date or damaged flares you should first contact the supplier from whom you originally brought them to see if they



offer a take back scheme. Some Local Authorities also operate disposal facilities. HM Coastguard is not responsible for the disposal of TEPs and accepts them at its own discretion and subject to storage availability. HM Coastguard will only accept TEPs from recreational water users and does not make active collections of TEPs under any circumstances. If you wish to handover TEPs, like old distress flares, to HM Coastguard you must contact your local Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre details for your local MRCC can be found at Annex A.

When contacting your local MRCC you must inform them of the number, condition and age of the TEPs that you are looking to dispose of. The MRCC will check current storage levels and will advise you on a date and time that your TEPs can be deposited.

HM Coastguard will not tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour to members of our staff and will actively seek to prosecute offenders. In some cases where a TEP has deteriorated and is considered to be in a dangerous condition, the MRCC will arrange for its immediate disposal, but this will be at the discretion of the MRCC and subject to the condition of the TEP. It should be noted that pyrotechnics are manufactured to very high standard, but incorrect storage and handling of a pyrotechnic may affect its stability over a period of time.



.. **VHF UPDATE**

For anyone thinking of going foreign this summer you may wish to read the article below

(Extract taken from the RAINWAT website)

RAINWAT is the "Regional Arrangement Concerning the Radiotelephone Service on Inland Waterways" which, through the Basel Arrangement has introduced an Automatic Transmitter Identification System (ATIS) for vessels making VHF transmissions whilst on the inland waterways of the signatory countries: Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Hungary; Luxembourg; Moldova; The Netherlands; Poland; Romania; Slovakia; Switzerland; Serbia & Montenegro.

Where a VHF is required on the inland waterways of the signatory countries, this must be capable of ATIS transmissions, and have the feature activated. An ATIS number is required which is issued by Ofcom as a Notice of Variation to the Ship Radio Licence. This must be done manually, by Ofcom until such time as changes to the Ofcom licensing system are made to automate the process. The turn around time at Ofcom will increase in line with the number of requests received, however even if this is only a few days applicants must allow up to a month for Ofcom to supply details of the vessel to the Belgian regulator, BIPT, which oversees the ATIS database and for the BIPT database to reflect updates that are sent to it.

A copy of the Basel Arrangement should be carried on board. This can be downloaded from the [RAINWAT web-site](#), however as the RYA has received reports of people having difficulty accessing the document, for your convenience the [English Version from September 2007](#) has been downloaded and converted to pdf.

Ofcom has provided a [comprehensive explanation of ATIS and RAINWAT](#) on their web-site, which explains what ATIS is, how it works and the action you need to take prior to

venturing onto the inland waterways of the signatory countries including how to request the Notice of Variation to your Ship Radio Licence and thereby the ATIS number for your vessel.

It is important to note that under the the Notice to Variation of the Ship Radio Licence, ATIS shall not be used within 14 nautical miles of the low waterline around the coast of the UK, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

The use of DSC (VHF Ch. 70) is in most countries restricted to coastal waters and DSC transmissions should not be made when navigating the inland waterways.

Not all VHF sets are capable of ATIS transmissions; you may need to contact your manufacturer for advice. ICOM have published information on their web-site for owners of their equipment. They have also provided a useful ATIS factsheet and have included information on ATIS within their Marine Radio FAQs.

If you would like more information or advice about any of the courses or topics covered please feel free to contact me. I can also recommend you visit the RYA website for the latest news and updates.

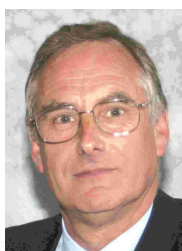
mark@ashoresailing.co.uk

07711 170451

Or visit

www.ashoresailing.co.uk

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Radio (Short Range Certificate – GMDSS etc.)

First Aid

Radar

Sea Survival

RYA/MCA SHOREBASED COURSES

Day Skipper and Yachtmaster Coastal

Intensive and Evening Classes

By the time you read this article the RYA winter Shorebased Navigation classes will be over and a new batch of power boaters and sailors will be taking to the water testing and putting their new found skills into practice. I would like to thank all my students that attended Bottesford and Rawlins Community Colleges over the winter months. Without exception they all worked hard and fully deserved their RYA/MCA certificates. I hope they, and all TOG members have a great 2010 sailing season.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate TOG members Adrian Johnson and Dave Bond who successfully attained their RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Certificate of Competence on the south coast in March of this year. Continuing on the training theme, there are a number of one day and intensive shorebased courses on offer during the coming months. I have listed some of them below:

1. Intensive Shorebased Day Skipper course over 2 ½ consecutive weekends commence Sat 8th May, Sun 9th May, continuing Sat 15th May, Sun 16th May concluding Sat 22nd May
2. RYA First Aid course (one day) Sun 23rd May
3. Marine radio VHF/DSC course (one day) Sat 26th June

WEBSITE

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

www.trent-offshore-group.co.uk

There is a wealth of information on it!

It has been upgraded considerably and now has a "buy and sell" section to help you dispose of those unwanted bits and bobs!

You will also find all the Application Forms as required by the Group

ASIDES

1. A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
2. A will is a dead giveaway.
3. Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
4. A backward poet writes inverse.
5. A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.
6. When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
7. The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine was fully recovered.
8. You are stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
9. He broke into song because he couldn't find the key.
10. A calendar's days are numbered.
11. A boiled egg is hard to beat.
12. He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
13. The short fortune teller who escaped from prison: was a small medium at large.
14. Those who get too big for their britches, will be exposed in the end.
15. When you've seen one shopping centre you've seen a mall.
16. If you jump off a Paris bridge, you are in Seine.
17. When she saw her first strands of grey hair, she thought she'd dye.
18. Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.
19. Acupuncture: a jab well done.
20. Marathon runners with bad shoes suffer the agony of de feet.
21. The roundest Knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
22. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
23. She was only a whisky maker, but he loved her still.
24. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.
25. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
26. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
27. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
28. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
29. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
30. I wondered why the baseball kept getting

bigger. Then it hit me.

31. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: 'Keep off the Grass.'

32. A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital.

When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, - 'No change yet.'

33. The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

34. Don't join dangerous cults: practice safe sects.

Top this for a speeding ticket...

Two British traffic patrol officers from North Berwick were involved in an unusual incident while checking for speeding motorists on the A1 Great North Road. One of the officers used a hand-held radar device to check the speed of a vehicle approaching over the crest of a hill, and was surprised when the speed was recorded at over 300 mph. Their radar suddenly stopped working and the officers were not able to reset it.

Just then a deafening roar over the treetops revealed that the radar had in fact latched on to a NATO Tornado fighter jet which was engaged in a low-flying exercise over the Border district, approaching from the North Sea.

Back at police headquarters the chief constable fired off a stiff complaint to the RAF Liaison office.

Back came the reply in true laconic RAF style:

"Thank you for your message, which allows us to complete the file on this incident. You may be interested to know that the tactical computer in the Tornado had detected the presence of, and subsequently locked onto, your hostile radar equipment and automatically sent a jamming signal back to it. Furthermore, an air-to-ground missile aboard the fully-armed aircraft had also automatically locked onto your equipment. Fortunately the pilot flying the Tornado recognized the situation for what it was, quickly responded to the missile systems alert status, and was able to override the automated defence system before the missile was launched and you & your hostile radar installation were destroyed.

Good Day..."

Booking /Trip Number	Trip Title/Description/Skippers	Dates	Indicative Cost
03/09	SOUTH COAST/CROSS CHANNEL CANCELLED		
04/09	INNER HEBRIDES/ULSTER. <i>Contact: Artthur Wood arbrwood138@waitrose.com or 01636 813781</i> <i><u>Early contact and Booking would be recommended as the boat is filling.....!</u></i>	Saturday 10 th July to Saturday 17 th July	£290
05/09	FALMOUTH/SCILLIES. <i>Contact Keith Stedman : kandjstedman@btinternet.com or 01636 813145</i>	Saturday 18 th Sept – Saturday 25 th ..	£170
06/09	SUMMER DAYS and WEEKENDS 2010 <i>Sail a Classic Boat on the River Orwell for as little as £50 per day.</i>	To suit participants	TBA
07/09	END OF SEASON SAILEX <i>The October “End of Season” trip. We cannot control the weather but we will guarantee that you get wet both inside and out!!</i> <i>Contact Keith Stedman : kandjstedman@btinternet.com o r01636 813145</i>	Weds. 6 th October - Sun 10 th Oct.	TBA
08/09	TRADITIONAL BAWLEY SAILING. <i>Have a go at sailing a traditional wooden working boat along the challenging East Coast. A maximum number on any one day of eight participants but if we want to have a go at oyster dredging under sail then because of room constraints the number of crew is reduced to six. If more than the permitted number is interested then we can always run two trips.</i>	To suit participants	TBA

- Please note that the berth costs are shown as a guide only, as the eventual cost will depend on the charter price of the boat and the number of berths taken.
- Please note that a temporary Membership fee of £20.00 will be charged in addition to the costs shown above to all non-TOG members.