



# TOGLINE

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



## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2016

**Chart: A large piece of paper, useful for the protection of furniture from food and beverages..**



**Have you noticed how** the days are drawing out, the birds are starting to sing, the world is waking up and the sap is rising? Yup – the first signs of an incipient spring and imminent summer are approaching. Hallelujah say I! Bring it on!

**Welcome once again** to this Spring Edition of your TOGline. In spite of cancelling the Easter sailex (good job too in retrospect!), the season is underway. The Isle of Man (fully booked), receives a visit from us starting the 14<sup>th</sup> May for the next ten days, then the Channel Islands (weather permitting) in June with four more trips still to come. Once again your Council's decisions and John Bryant's expertise have pulled the rabbits out of the hat... What delights in store.

**Erratum**.....In my editorial of our winter edition, I mistakenly classed Stewart Cook (Hon. Sec), as skipper of *Dalton*. It should have been our Presiding Master, the worthy Professor Neil Macfarlane (small "f"). Stewart was on the helm, but Neil was Director of Operations aboard... Apologies, Neil.....

**Once again** the America's Cup has come to the fore - in New York this time. Coming fifth in this latest session, Land Rover-BAR were 3<sup>rd</sup> prior to this but Ben Ainslie is still pretty positive. He criticised the course organisers for setting it in the most difficult of situations – skyscrapers and wind shifts don't go well together. But again, they have to provide entertainment for the public to get the support they need and the sponsorship. I am fascinated to read about these fabulous machines, as far removed from the early yachts as the Earth is from Venus. They are so exciting to watch as well. Flying, rather than sailing, at over 40 knots in a puff of wind. We struggle to hit 9 knots in our monohulls! Mind you, we don't have the advantage of carbon fibre and ours are MUCH more comfortable. The sight of those things virtually airborne, with foils and lifting fins on each sponson makes one wonder where we are going ultimately. I

know the public want fast action and rapid motion, with not too long a concentration range, but twenty minutes per race is really squeezing the lemon. The surprising thing is, these aren't the boats they'll actually be racing next year! Those are still under development throughout the world. They even use wind tunnel testing to fine-tune them. Talk about sailing Formula 1 - and some F1 engineers are acting as consultants. Oh, if only we can manage to get that cup back....

**Talking of catamarans** – have you seen the latest one having been built in Southampton? Luxury afloat, built on 60 foot wave-piercing sponsons. The saloon (suite?) standing on four spidery legs – capable of fifty knots in comfort. Toys for boys.....

**The absence of the Easter Sailex** means we are somewhat short of reports this month. We have received a thoughtful follow-up to her last report from Susan Perkins. Susan and her husband certainly had an interesting year with TOG and I can see why they have bowed out gracefully. Thank you for the contributions, Susan and we wish you both well for the future. Our Deputy Presiding Master, Arthur has also sent in an interesting slant on a motorhome holiday..... Clive Crankshaw, our Navigator, drew my attention to an interesting article in Navigation News. Mobile 'phones have a lot to answer for but do have their uses! Hope you find it interesting.

**As we go to press** (hur, hur), the weather has changed again. Looking out of the window, I see grey skies and wet roads, definitely cooler temperatures but the promise of more sunshine and happy days to come. I will keep my fingers crossed for the Isle of Man trippers, wish them fair winds and glorious sunshine.

**Finally**, to one and all, keep enjoying life and - most importantly – keep those stories coming.

**Happy Sailing** to you all as well

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## PRESIDING MASTER'S MUSINGS

by Neil Macfarlane.

**Spring has clearly sprung** and our sailing programme in UK and European waters will be underway in mid-May with the Isle of Man Sailex departing from Largs under the able skipper of Alan Mortimore. Meanwhile, the aftermath of events on the TOG's Leeward Islands trip in January continues. As reported in the previous TOGline, one of our charter yachts *Joule*, an Oceanis 48, sank north of Guadeloupe after a catastrophic steering failure. No responsibility for this loss has been placed on the skipper and crew and the security deposit for the yacht has been refunded by the charter company. Indeed, after the steering failure, *Dalton* took the yacht under tow but it proved very difficult to make progress. The realisation that *Joule* was taking on water necessitated a Mayday. The Guadeloupe coastguard took control of the rescue and even their efforts with pumps and flotation devices were unsuccessful in preventing *Joule* from sinking. The crew successfully boarded our sister yacht *Dalton*, but three members lost most of their luggage and others a significant proportion of their belongings. A claim for lost personal effects and subsequent accommodation and flights down to Martinique has been submitted to the charter company's insurers. We have met with the insurers' claims adjuster and made a full report on the incident and now await progress on the claim. This experience also highlights the importance of individual TOG members having their own travel insurance cover on our charters.

**A propos** of not a lot, I wonder why a basically French charter company should be chartering a yacht *Joule* named after the 19<sup>th</sup> century British physicist James Joule and now an SI unit of energy. The other, *Dalton*, presumably after the 18/19<sup>th</sup> century chemist John Dalton, who developed fundamental atomic theory – atomic mass is measured in Daltons. Maybe when the dust has settled, we will ask them .....

**Members who sail regularly** with TOG will be aware of the importance of being alert to lobster and crab pot markers in coastal waters. These range from a polystyrene float with a clearly visible (in daylight) staff and flag, to a barely bobbing plastic bottle or small float on the water surface. This range of markers from adequate to totally useless, have in common, a line attached to the pot on the sea bottom that can snag the keel, rudder or propeller of the unwary yacht and cause severe problems. There has been some correspondence on this topic in the RYA magazine and a reported response from the Cornish Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) caught my eye. *Gear marking is something the IFCA can regulate ..... It doesn't have to make it a statutory condition of setting pots, lines, and nets etc, and there is no such identified reason to do so at this time. .... There is an EU regulation for the marking of fishing gear, but it only applies in respect of gear set outside the 12-mile limit. These particular requirements would not be practical or affordable for many inshore fisherman using small boats.* Don't expect any improvement to pot markers any time soon!

**After our Caribbean experience** attempting to tow one 48ft Oceanis with another, I was interested to see an RYA article on "Safe Towing". However, it turned out to be sponsored by

Volvo about boat trailing and a Volvo XC90 would not have been any help to us.....

**Yachting Brexiteers** with an eager eye post-June on the triumphant return of cheap red diesel, retaining the freedom to slap on their own antifoul, or who have lost their boat's VAT certificate, should bear in mind the benefits of the European Single Market formed in 1993. This allows our free movement by boat across the channel and North Sea and elsewhere within the EU, without the need for formal customs clearance – and you can even take your dog with you! If *Remain* wins we might even get EU regulation of lobster pot marks.....

## REPORTS



### Sailex January 2016

By Susan Perkins

**When my sister invited us**, back in 2014, to join TOG's 2016 Caribbean Sailex, we thought about escaping a North Yorkshire January's short, cold, wet days and said 'yes'. Our lack of sailing experience seemed irrelevant. We would be warm, basking in golden sunshine.



As my idea of golden sunshine comes from North Yorkshire, I was unprepared for the intensity of Caribbean heat, the



brevity of the days, and the humidity when we were not at sea. I burn rather than tan, and on land needed to seek shade in the middle of the day. That didn't leave a lot of time for doing things, since the sun sets by 6.30.

**However, on most days** we were on the sea when the sun was at its zenith; the air was fresher, and the bimini top gave



protection. By my standards we got up early, and after an evening meal cooked and eaten on board, and washed down with gin and tonic/rum punch/ beer/wine, I didn't care that we'd done most of the eating and talking and laughing after



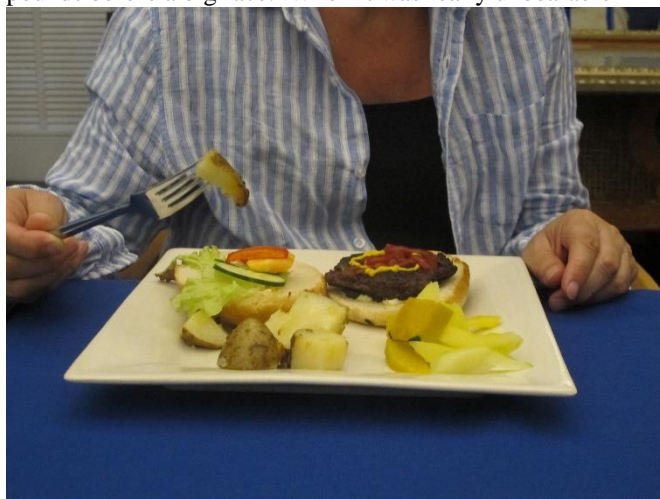
the sun went down.

**What was difficult** was managing in the cabin. We had the port forepeak, and the wall that divided us from Dave in the corresponding starboard cabin was lined with mirror. An illusion of spaciousness didn't fool us! There was insufficient room to move round each other, so when one of us was in the head and the other standing in the cabin, trying to dress, we had gridlock.



**Our largest locker** was under the two-piece mattress, inaccessible without a lot of effort, though I got quite good at raising a section of mattress, propping it up on my head and shoulder while I heaved at the locker's plywood cover, pushing that to one side, pulling out a bag to retrieve whatever was needed, then restowing the bag and replacing the plywood – swearing when it would not fit. Fortunately, as my head was still under a mattress, no one heard. Finally, the mattress had to be repositioned and the bed remade, which meant crawling over it to tuck in the sheet at the narrow end. 'The narrow end?' Ah yes. We ended up sleeping top to toe because of the trapezoidal shape of the bed: 1m80 (72 in) in length, 1m38 (54 in) at one end, but only 76cm (30in) at the other. Although there is not much fresh air when your head is in the forepeak of a cabin on a boat with no air conditioning,

I consoled myself with the thought that sleeping in a sauna must lead to weight loss\* – after all, jockeys sweat off the pounds before a big race. When it was really unbearable I



spent the night on deck.

**The first time I did this** was on St Barts, or Saint-Barthélemy, a chic island that is officially a Département of France. To my nearly stifled mind it seemed appropriate that, after being kept awake by French-speaking teenage boys who seemed have too much *liberté* and *fraternité*, I was later



woken by what sounded like very avant-garde atonal French music. It was in fact the clanging and ringing of ropes and



rigging, while something thumped irregularly in the near distance. My sister's sleep was also disturbed. When she came up at 4:30 to see what was making the din, she was startled by a gently snoring white-swathed shape lying in the cockpit – I had wrapped myself in a sheet against nasty flying biting things and then dozed off.



**Dave in our crew explained to me** one day that he saw everything in terms of angles and vectors. He probably approved of our boats' names: *Joule*<sup>1</sup> and *Dalton*<sup>2</sup> for two eminent English physicists. I spotted *Cavendish*<sup>3</sup>, a large catamaran, in a marina. Sorry – I haven't got to the sailing.



And that, in a way, sums it up. On our first day, we picked up the boats after a fairly brisk handover, and almost immediately needed help from Dream Yachts because something hadn't been explained.

**I see from my diary** that three days in, by the time we reached Gustavia, in St Barts, our heads was leaking; fortunately Keith has a plumber in his family, and knew how to fix that. But there were further problems; instrument failure between St Kitts and Antigua delayed us, and the



weather forecast meant we spent three nights in Guadeloupe after *Joule* sank. This left us with a lot of motoring to do to return *Dalton* on time; the last two days were spent just getting from Guadeloupe to Dominica, Dominica to Martinique. El Niño had affected the direction of winds, too, so that the motor had to make up for their not doing what they were expected to do. For people who joined the Sailex because they love *sailing*, this was undoubtedly frustrating. What no one had expected was that one of our boats would be even more unpredictable, and just give up.

<sup>1</sup> **James Prescott Joule** (1818–1889) gave his name to the **joule** (symbol **J**), a **derived unit** of **energy** in the **International System of Units**.

<sup>2</sup> **John Dalton FRS** (1766–1844) was an English **chemist**, **physicist**, and **meteorologist**. He is best known for pioneering work in the development of modern **atomic theory**, and

**I was then, and continue to be**, very impressed by the cool-headed and practical approach taken by the crews of both boats. This continued through towing, bailing, frogmen descending, the poignant moment when Adrian stepped from *Joule* to *Dalton*, right until he and his crew left us at Guadeloupe. No shouting, tears or hysterics. Vital things, from passports to shoes, were rescued. The nearest I heard to a critique was Sheila's tongue-in-cheek comment that the hours spent bailing had left her thinking she would like a



manicure.....

**What are the best memories** of the holiday? They start with Perla, who drove us from the airport to the marina to collect our boat. She was large, loud and jolly, a very assertive driver, and she gave us a near non-stop commentary on the island. (She also told us to Google 'planes landing St Maarten'. It's worth doing.) Our first Caribbean supper of red snapper and crevettes. Dipping off the bathing platform. Eating the tuna Neil bought. Seeing flying fish (I had expected them to be bigger than sardines) and pelicans. Being warmly welcomed by the Methodist congregation in Philipsburg, whose minister had gone to St Kitts for the



Leeward Circuit meeting, and then coming across delegates to that meeting when we were on St Kitts. Having my hot legs rubbed with cool aloe leaves by Dr Sugar (no relation to Alan). Bathing at sunset at Jolly Harbour (we'll forget the

research into **colour blindness**, sometimes referred to as **Daltonism**.

<sup>3</sup> **Henry Cavendish** (1731- 1810), natural philosopher, the greatest experimental and theoretical English chemist and physicist of his age. His experiment to weigh the Earth has come to be known as the **Cavendish experiment**, and Cambridge's Cavendish laboratory is named for him



stubbed toe that turned purple after the dip). Air con in our cabin one night – bliss. The avocados, mangoes, even the strange soursop fruit we tried. The taxi tour of Guadeloupe, and the high-level walkway in the Zoo. Just about every meal we had on board. Mutton stew somewhere. Regaining enough confidence to use my almost forgotten schoolgirl French. Seeing superyachts. Sunrises. Sunsets. Sitting on deck, eating and drinking and laughing. Visiting Nelson's Dockyard, exploring picturesque corners of towns, seeing neatly-uniformed children as young as seven running home from school by themselves, the markets... The Sailex was great.

**I can now say** I have visited the Caribbean.



**Of course** I would like to have had more time to explore the islands we touched at, and more chances to swim and snorkel. I am not grumbling or complaining: circumstances conspired against this. I was very glad to be with such competent sailors as Neil, Dave and Stewart, who made it all look easy and enjoyed instructing novices, and with Mary (well, she is my sister) and Dilys, both of them good-natured, easygoing and helpful.

**I am very pleased we accepted the invitation** to join the Sailex, but during it I became aware that I'm not prepared to put in the time and practice to develop muscle memory in order to tie a running bowline without thinking. I don't really want to know how to take bearings, but I do really hate having to pump a head. Add in that my legs have little spring, that my sense of balance deserts me from time to time, and that I have a strong preference for sleeping in a full-size bed. You will agree I am never likely to become an ideal crew member for offshore sailing. I think I started too late. Since June last year, when we sailed with TOG for the first time on the Scottish Sailex, we have learned skills, had experiences and – much more importantly – formed friendships with people we would not have met without TOG. But now we are probably putting offshore sailing behind us as a leisure activity. My husband reckons we've done it all: in eight months we've gone from being absolute beginners to experiencing a sinking. What else could sailing possibly offer us?

\*it didn't.

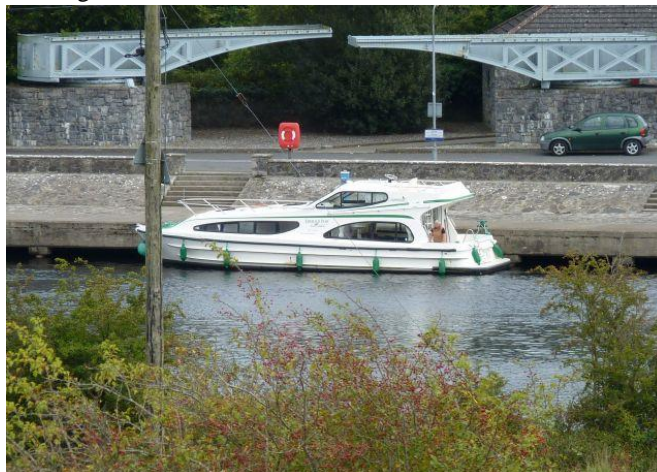


#### **FOUR OLD TOGGERS GO BOATING IN COMFORT.....**

*By Arthur Wood.*

In September Brenda and Arthur Wood and Brian and Grace Morris went touring in the Irish Republic in our camper vans. Checking into a delightful woodland site on the

shores of Lough Derg the owner pointed to a tree covered island and proudly told us that it was there that white-tailed sea eagles were breeding. Sure enough we had the pleasure of watching one of them sitting on a treetop perch in the evening sunshine.



**Lough Derg** is some 40km long and a major part of the Shannon Waterway and watching the boats going past caused us to go to a local cruiser base "just to see if?" They did.



They had a vessel arriving at the weekend that was not booked for the next week. Brian, using his professional seaman's experience soon negotiated a very good deal for a 4 berth boat with 2 bathrooms 2 steering positions and various goodies including television.

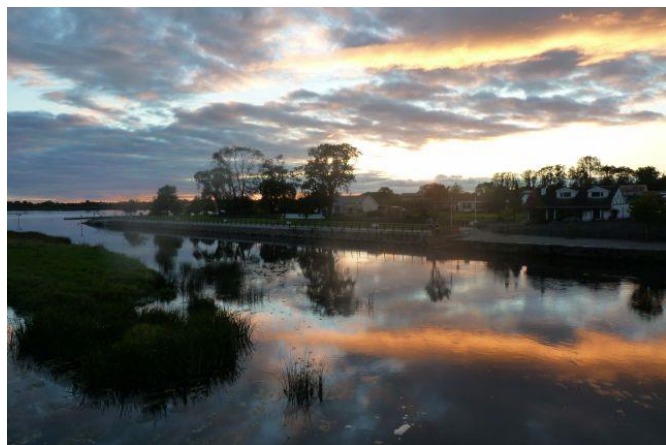
**We took over the boat** on a wet Monday and had lots fun learning to handle it as, like most of these "floating



caravans", it has no keel and like a dinghy with an outboard, when you close the throttle, you lose the steering. Fortunately the lock-keepers like all the people we met in Ireland are friendly, helpful and never in a hurry.

**The next 5 days were fine** with lots of sunny periods. We visited many local places with free moorings, markets, pubs

with food and Irish music and places with historic interest. At Athlone we visited the old castle and the modern cathedral and an exhibition of contemporary sculptures by Mel French. At Shannon Bridge we explored the fortifications built by the



British in the early 1800s as a defence against Napoleon. Carrick on Shannon had a splendid farmers' market and a pub with live Irish music. The Shannon is never boring as you cannot see what is round the next bend on the river sections. On the other hand when you are in the big loughs you can see for miles and the challenge there is navigation. According to the authorities, Lough Ree is "32 km long, it gradually widens until about two-thirds of the way south it is 10 km across."

**As boating holidays go**, it was as enjoyable as any I have done even though it lacked challenges of a normal offshore cruise.



**DOWNLOADING RESCUE – it makes you think.....**  
*with thanks to Navigation News – the Magazine of the Royal Institute of Navigation.*  
*and Clive Crankshaw – Navigator*

**The latest version** of the RYA's SafeTrx app has been designed in close co-operation with Coastguard and Search and Rescue Organisations, so it gives all recreational boat users, particularly dinghy cruisers, PWC users, canoers, kayakers, wind and kite surfers and smaller boat users who don't have or use AIS, a cheap, easy and reliable means of informing the Coastguard of their voyage plans and dynamic location in the event of distress.

**We know what you're thinking.** Either 'I won't get into distress,' or 'I've already fitted the InDistress 2000. I'm sorted.'

**Firstly**, we hope you never do get into distress. But, distress is notorious for not needing your permission to happen, for upsetting the best-laid plans of mice and men, and for having the capacity to really ruin your day - or end it altogether. It's unpredictable.

That's why we call it distress. If it was entirely predictable, we'd call it Thursday. Being confident of your skills is one thing. Being overconfident of them can lead you to a life that's both fantastically eventful and regrettably short.

**And secondly**, the RYA App is free to download - why would you not go equipped with it? Quite apart from anything else, it's RYA-approved. You know, the same people who approved the training that lets you sail about, confident in your own skills and knowledge. Download now.

**The app is a fully automated**, proven, cost-effective and 'easy to use' tool that exploits Smartphone technology to supplement traditional communications equipment (e.g. VHF DSC) and alerting methods (e.g. distress beacons) to increase your safety. Now the standard solution in mobile application vessel tracking in the UK, Ireland, Australia, Spain, South Africa and the Netherlands, SafeTrx takes the 'search' out of search and rescue. In fact, it turns it into 'Oh there you are' and rescue. Welcome to the age of OTYAAR.

### What's New?

**Apps of course**, are impressive things, but they need updating to evolve and adapt to new information, new functionality. Through collaboration with SAR organisations, improvements have been made to the technical and operational aspects of RYA SafeTrx 2015, which offer significant functional enhancements to the previous iteration of the application.

**Cruising Manager** Stuart Carruthers explains: 'A major focus in SafeTrx 2015 is to assist trip planning. With this in mind and in addition to the alerting and tracking function, RYA SafeTrx now has the ability to display live weather data. The addition of Personalised Checklists promotes further safety awareness by encouraging the boater to create and review a list of checklist items prior to departure.

RYA SafeTrx 2015 Track Only mode broadens the use of the app to the cohort of the boating community who prefer a 'quick start' mode without the alerting function; this enables boaters to log a number of performance functions, yet still record their track details - ideal for those who like to race.

**The new Emergency Call** feature also allows boaters to quickly activate a distress call from within the application, which also automatically sends their location to the SafeTrx monitoring console for use in search and rescue.

### Exciting New Features

**A new Emergency Call feature** which allows you to quickly make a distress call from within the application; the App sends an Emergency Location update to the SafeTrx Monitoring Console if you have a data connection and it shows your location, course and speed on the screen so they are available to you immediately.

**Improved trip planning** with access to UK Met Office sea area.

**Weather forecasts** from within the App

**The addition of personalised** checklists allows you to create and review your own list of checklist items prior to departure.

**A new' Mobile Logbook** feature which stores up to 20 trips on your phone and can be replayed at any time within the App in video playback mode.

**Sail Plan Mode** (formerly Alert Mode) and Track Only mode (formerly Performance Mode) will be available to both RYA members and RYA registered SafeTrx users for free.

### ASIDES

#### European Union Directive No. 456179

In order to bring about further integration with the euro, all citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must be made aware that the phrase "spending a penny" is not to be used after 30 April 2015.

From this date onwards, the correct term will be "europeanating".

It is hoped that this will be a great relief to everyone. If you have any questions, just give me a tinkle



## IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Do you have feelings of inadequacy?

Do you suffer from shyness?

Do you sometimes wish you were more assertive?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist about Cabernet Sauvignon.

Cabernet Sauvignon is the safe, natural way to feel better and more confident about yourself and your actions. It can help ease you out of your shyness and let you tell the world that you're ready and willing to do just about anything.

You will notice the benefits of Cabernet Sauvignon almost immediately and, with a regimen of regular doses, you can overcome any obstacles that prevent you from living the life you want live.

Shyness and awkwardness will be a thing of the past and you will discover many talents you never knew you had.

Stop hiding and start living.

Cabernet Sauvignon may not be right for everyone. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not use it. However, women who wouldn't mind nursing or becoming pregnant are encouraged to try it.

Side effects may include:

Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, incarceration, loss of motor control, loss of clothing, loss of money, loss of virginity, delusions of grandeur, table dancing, headache, dehydration, dry mouth, and a desire to sing Karaoke and play all-night rounds of Strip Poker, Truth Or Dare, and Naked Twister [whatever they are.]

### WARNINGS:

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may make you think you are whispering when you are not.

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them.

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to think you can sing.

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may make you think you can converse enthusiastically with members of the opposite sex without spitting.

The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

Now just imagine what you could achieve with a good Shiraz

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**A thief in Paris planned to steal some paintings from the Louvre.**

**After careful planning, he got past security, stole the paintings, and made it safely to his van.**

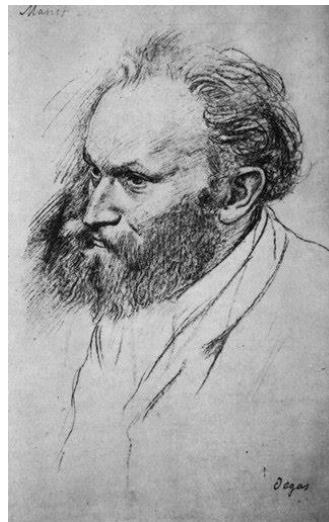
**However, he was captured only two blocks away, when his van ran out of gas.**

**When asked how he could mastermind such a crime, and then make such an obvious error, he replied,**

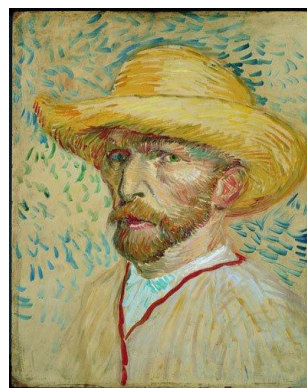
**"Monsieur, this is the reason I stole the paintings.**



**I had no Monet**



**To buy Degas**



**To make the Van Gogh."**

**'Nuff said.....sufficient unto the day**



**TOG 2014 Sailing Programme**  
**Trent Offshore Group**  
TOG Members and Friends,  
November 2015 -2016



**CIS16 The Channel Islands Sailex** **OPEN FOR BOOKINGS** Starting from Lymington on Friday 10th June for 7 days with three Jeanneau 42i yachts. Cost £380 We have just been able to add a third yacht to this event a new performance version of the 42i and have just 5 places available for members and friends to book.

**SCO16 Scotland - The Isle of Skye** **OPEN FOR BOOKING** Sailing from Ardvassar on the Isle of Skye starting Saturday 2nd July for 7 days. Cost £425 A well loved sailing destination for TOG. We have chartered two modern Jeanneau 439's for this event and the sailex became fully booked fairly quickly. However one of our members has had to withdraw so **we have just ONE place available** on this event.

**PEM16 Pembrokeshire with options to sail to the Scillies or Southern Ireland** **FULLY BOOKED** We were able to add an extra yacht to this event however the sailex is now closed to new bookings as we have a waiting list.

**DUB16 Croatia Dubrovnik** **OPEN FOR BOOKINGS** Following on from the successful sailex in Croatia (Split) in 2015 a second has been arranged from Dubrovnik. Cost estimated £350 We have made provision for three yachts and this sailex is **now open only to TOG skippers**. If you are able to join the event, please call me to discuss or make your booking now.

**EOS16 The End of Season Sailex** **OPEN FOR BOOKINGS** This year we are working to promote this event as "Bring a Friend" for a long weekend final sailex for 2016. We will hold this on the South Coast - charter company to be agreed, starting Friday 7th October for 3 days.

All these events are detailed on our web site - see the sailing page reference -

<http://www.trent-offshore-group.co.uk/sailing-programme/>

Bookings can be made by following the link at the top of the sailing page. Further information from any TOG Council Member or myself.



**Happier days.....More to come!**