



TOGLINE

The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group
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SPRING NEWSLETTER 2020



It is infinitely easier to shake out a reef when one is bored, than it is to try to tie one when one is scared...



Let's get the bad news over first....(although you may have already seen it on the website).

From Council...

TOG members will be fully aware of the UK Government's warnings and advice intended to reduce and

delay the spread of the virus and to seek to protect vulnerable groups such as the over-70s and those with pre-existing health conditions. Government advice also covers "social distancing" and "discourages all non-essential travel" for an initial period of 30 days (from 17 March) (and continuing even now).

TOG is affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) which issued its own response reiterating government advice and essentially suspending its events and training until at least 30 April (and continuing even now).

A significant proportion of TOG members fall into the vulnerable groups and, in line with Government advice, TOG council is urgently reviewing the events publicised in its current sailing programme which are due to start at the end of March. We are starting with the earlier events and are in touch with the various charter companies. Possible outcomes may include cancelling or postponing events, and, if we have not done so already, we will contact affected members as soon as we have more information.

What a mad, mad world we live in at the moment....!

I write this in the hope that you are all coping with this dreadful affliction and still able to smile occasionally, in spite of everything. Who would have dreamed that we would ever be faced with a dilemma like this. Plans disrupted, work in chaos, travel condemned and confined to one's own house. Walking around with a 1 metre hoop (metaphorically speaking) round one's waist to assure "social distancing", anathema to humans who are basically social animals. We need the physical interaction and although Zoom, Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp and Skype let us see and talk to each other, it is not the same somehow. The last

Council Meeting was done via Zoom - and it worked - eventually! All we can do is tough it out and those of us in the "at risk" category can sit on our hands and whistle in the wind. Our garden is pristine, everything has been painted that stands still and the house is spotless! All is not doom and gloom though. So far we are both keeping well and can still smile and laugh with each other. Fingers crossed you are the same.

When TOG was started, part of the Constitution specified four Newsletters per year. It was and still is, I hope, a means of maintaining contact across the whole group, scattered as we are. We have managed this so far and in an attempt to maintain a semblance of normality, I have produced this one as a backward look at some of our earlier turn of the century events.

Since there is a chronic shortage of current events (understandably!) I have tried to select amusing incidents and reports from the early 2000s in the hope they may make you smile a little. Many current members do not know the individuals concerned, but I hope it shows that even in the (relatively) early days, TOG was a force to be reckoned with. We have survived as a group for 29 years - quite a record I believe - and we hope to continue when all this is over.

The sailing program may have gone out of the window - see back page - but postponement is one answer and Council are doing their best to alleviate any hardship as a result of the cancellations. So many hopes dashed through no fault of our own.

And finally - as I sign off for now, I just hope that you all stay safe, try to keep smiling and *nil carborundum!*

In the words of our revered Queen and Dame Vera Lynn in this auspicious week- we WILL meet again.....

*Ian Calderwood
19, St. John's Close
Ryhall
Stamford PE9 4HS*

Tel: (01780) 763748. E-mail: berician@aol.com

Presiding Master's Musings

POSITION CURRENTLY VACANT...



EARLY DAYS... by Arthur Wood.

Following our experience with the F12 storm in 1979 (*TOGline Winter 2005-2006*), I decided that I needed to spend some time sailing with experts and in April 1981 I booked a week on

an OYC *fund-raising friends* cruise aboard the 72ft ketch *Falmouth Packet* .

Saturday.

I joined her at Plymouth in the afternoon. We had a briefing and then a run ashore.

Sunday.

As soon as we were clear of our moorings, we did man overboard drills. The skipper and 1st and 2nd mates all did one then the skipper, Andy, knowing that I had my Day Skipper ticket asked me to do one which I managed ok. We then went out to sea and Andy asked me to go down and make coffee for all of us. As soon as I got into the galley I was overtaken by sea sickness and had to dash up vomit overboard. Andy then told me to sit at the back of the cockpit and look at the horizon. This worked well and I was soon introduced to phase 2 of his pet cure when the bo'sun presented me with a large bowlful of potatoes and a peeler. Peeling spuds for 16 people has made me determined to avoid being seasick again.

We then sailed to Guernsey and moored in St Peter Port alongside a cargo vessel at 21.00.

Monday.

We stepped from our deck to walk across their deck and went for a morning ashore. When we returned at lunch time due to the range of the tide, we had to go down 3 decks on the vessel and board *Falmouth Packet* through a cargo door. That evening at 17.40 we sailed for Cherbourg. I was on the helm going through the Alderney Race with F6 wind, 5 sails hoisted and a 9 metre tide enabling us to arrive by 23.00.

Tuesday

Very foggy so we remained at Cherbourg.....

Wednesday.

Departed 0650 It was still a bit foggy with only a light breeze so we set off under engine heading for Cowes. This gave us an opportunity to learn how to use radar on this 13-hour passage. By 19.50 we were secured at a Cowes boatyard for some work on our rigging.

Thursday.

We left at 14.25 heading for Plymouth in hazy, windless conditions but before long a light breeze started and soon all sails were hoisted. During the rest of the trip, the wind continued to increase and sails were reduced until we approached

Plymouth with only mainsail and mizzen, securing to a buoy at 11.45.

Friday

After the usual clean and polish session we departed for home with 290 miles and 12 night hours in our log books.

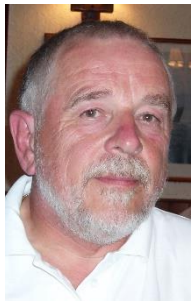
As a codicil to this report, I thought the inclusion of the experience referred to earlier might be of interest.....(Ed)

3 DAYS IN AUGUST 1979 –

The Fastnet Race.

That dreadful year when many yachts foundered during the race, resulting in considerable loss of life. At the time, we were of it, although not in it. We had trailed our homebuilt Manta 19 “Woodpecker” to Dale in Pembrokeshire, an east-facing village in the estuary of the River Cleddau, to christen her at sea. The following detail is extracted from my logbook of those fateful days. *On Saturday 11th, we launched her from the slipway of the Yacht Club about 21:00 and anchored for the night in the bay. Wind direction was N/W F1-2. On the 12th, a lack of wind meant we stayed put. Monday 13th, dawned with a slight swell and some fog. After lunch in the Yacht Club, we decided to sail, but a sudden change in the wind to Easterly, F5/6, soon changed our minds and we moved out to a deeper anchorage. The weather forecast seemed vague F4/5/6/7/8 - so we put out a double anchor. Tues. 14th: 00:15 forecast promised severe gale 9, which began about 02:00 from S/E. By 10:00 veered S/W, F8/9 and by 14:00 veered further to the W. F7-9. At 18:00 (low water), during a lull to F7, we moved as close to shore as was practicable. Our engine was barely able to push the boat into the wind. The new position was more comfortable and the wind finally eased to F6 by 21:00, decreasing to F4 by 00:00. We finally got ashore at about 10:00 on the 15th after 36 long, wearing hours on the boat. I made the following notes a few days later when the terror had subsided!! This being our first gale, we didn't realise its possible severity. When it grew in strength, the swells slammed continual jerks through the boat when the anchor cable came up short. Around dawn, the wind took the inflatable moored alongside by its painter, and stood it, like a kite, on its transom – we lashed it inboard. The boat astern of us had a bow wave as if it were underway. Kelp was forced up the anchor chain and piled on the foredeck. Mid-morning, we heard some bangs and saw a yacht, gunwale-deep in blown spume, drifting towards some rocks with white water blowing 200 ft. into the air. The star-shells had aroused the crew who suddenly appeared on deck, somehow turned the boat and eventually motored back to their anchorage. Two youths, each in an inflatable, one rowing, the other trying to assist with his engine, could make no progress against the storm and had to seek refuge on other boats. While awaiting rescue, the inflatable with the engine suffered the*

same fate as ours – but stayed upside-down. We learned later that a Dutch yacht had broken its mooring and been wrecked, the owner fortunately escaping with his life. The coastguard remarked that he had been “very worried” at the height of the storm. The plate-glass windows were bowing under the pressure of the wind, the mid-channel light, 40 feet high, was being submerged and his anemometer, reading to 80 knots had been destroyed – the cones had been ripped off and the spindle bent!! And you STILL enjoy sailing..... (Ed.)



TOG sailors involved in dramatic rescue.

by Bob Wright

Dateline :-

Plymouth. Tuesday 24th May 2005

The sail-training vessel *Integer* was on a routine exercise off the coast of Devon when one of their main anchors became fouled. The weather was variable, visibility good but the sea state was rough. Despite their desperate efforts to free it they were unsuccessful and were consequently unable to return to port. At 0845 they put out an emergency call to Brixham coastguard, which resulted in the launch of the Plymouth offshore lifeboat.

With the lifeboat in attendance more efforts were



made to retrieve the errant anchor but even the combined endeavours of both vessels were to no avail and a decision was made by the skipper of *Integer* to abandon the anchor. It was consequently detached from the vessel and a buoy left to mark its location, should salvage be deemed an option at a later date.

The *Integer* and its exhausted crew, accompanied by the lifeboat, made their way back to Plymouth

It was then that the gallant crew of *Margarita* showed the true spirit of seamanship, which has made the name of TOG a byword among the nautical classes. At the request of the cable-cutter toting harbour master they immediately, unselfishly and with no thought for personal danger, leapt aboard their vessel and moved it to the other side of the pontoon, thus allowing both training ship *Integer* and Plymouth RNLi boat to moor quickly alongside. Skipper Norman, previously known as “Mon Capitaine” but now, more appropriately as “Mon Brave” was, as

always, in overall command. “The Times” was stowed safely and suffered neither creasing nor dampness. Our intrepid Pilot, Ian the Indefatigable, took up his trusty new digital and without thought for personal safety, proceeded to record the event pictorially while the valiant crew of Paul and Adrian adopted well practised emergency positions on the pontoon, should any of the vessels need fending or mooring. In the meantime Bob the Bosun proved once again that he had “a touch like a midwife”, able to confidently drop large objects in small spaces.

I am happy to report that suitable recognition for this unprecedented act of selflessness and seamanship was not acknowledged by either *Integer* or the Plymouth lifeboat. TOG members can thus rest assured that they need not spend hours perusing the pages of neither RNLi nor STA publications to read of their fellow members’ gallantry and that the true spirit of TOG anonymous heroics was thus preserved.

Mission Improbable – again by Bob Wright
May 2005.....

Your mission, gentlemen, should you wish to accept it, is *****

(If I were to tell you more at this stage I would have to kill you)

In these terrorist infested times it is not surprising that the secret security services, particularly the Naval Intelligence, keep a close watch on maritime websites and publications. Among these are of course TOG and it was therefore, no surprise that the heroic adventures of “Mon Capitaine’s Crew” (see TOG Summer 2005 Newsletter) came to their attention.

Thus it was that on one Friday in May (note the subtlety of a non-Saturday start) the culmination of months of planning commenced with the arrival from various points of the compass of the tried and trusted crew. Ably marshalled by their co-ordinator code



named Ann, they met in a small, newly built port on the Brittany coast - Crouesty. Mon Capitaine (code name Norm) had his usual assistants, Ian the Pilot, Aid the Cox, Burgh the Bosun, Bob the Builder and Jean-Paul the Man from the Maquis.

The gallant crew had been provided with a brand new boat (and you thought the intelligence services were intelligent). So having performed the most important task, fixing a halyard to hoist the TOG pennant, as the alternative - the captain's towel left hanging over the side - seemed inappropriate, the crew immediately set out on a trial run. Having broken nothing it was decided to set sail early next morning for Isle de Yeu. In order to throw off any potential followers, we shortly arrived in Trinite sur Mer! This had nothing to do with the pilot's new set of genuine brass instruments or the fact that the tourist meteo forecast a force 10 and the weather was flat calm. Maybe it was because he claimed "not to have been this drunk for thirty years". A claim disputed after Torquay last year.

It was in fact so that we could look at the sealed orders which had been smuggled aboard inside on of Berice's fruit cakes.

We soon found the truth in that old seaman's saying:

"Calm wind abaft the mast,
Makes Berice's fruit cake vanish fast"

The next point of call was Belle Isle. Here, over a pleasant evening meal, there was much discussion about whether we should stay for a day and explore the island or move on. The vote went 5:1 to remain, so



the next morning at 0800 we set sail for Isle de Groix. Here the party split into three. Jean-Paul the Maquis conducting a solo recce, Mon Capitaine and Pilot sussing out possible watering holes, while Cox, Bosun and Builder took to bikes for an island-wide exploration. Here the first major casualty occurred when Cox broke a rib while hurtling down a dangerous cliff path in search of something. After that he didn't seem to agree that laughter is the best medicine.

At this point it can be revealed that the dangerous mission that the gallant crew had accepted was to photograph the secret u-boat pens at Lorient. Some might mock and think we were sixty year to late, but who knows.

This was, as one might expect, the most dangerous part of the mission, but with a selflessness which has become legendary, our skipper subtly led his crew to a



suitable vantage point by a most circuitous route which would have fooled any watching Germans, or Afghans, come to that. Regardless of the damage to his feet and without (much) complaining we completed the mile in not much over the hour. Again that night, he led by example and without (much more) complaint led his crew on a foot reconnaissance of the area.

Now the challenge was to return with our valuable intelligence, which was accomplished via Quiberon and despite a freezing gale.

Once again, Dad's Navy, aka TOG, had proved their worth to Queen and country. Look out for their next adventure.

(This one as a reminder of the fun to be had on the End-of-Season sailexes...)

TOG SOLENT TRIP 4th – 8TH OCTOBER 2006 by Dan Edson



Day 1:

The tone for the trip was set as we arrived at JSATC Gosport and headed straight into the Yacht Club for beer and a roll before any consideration of whether we had

boats to sail away in later that day. However, forces efficiency meant that the fact should never be doubted (*don't you believe it! – Ed*) and 3 yachts were ready and waiting; *Skywave* (my boat), *Petatus* and the relatively new *Quick Silver*. Across in the Hamble another crew, skippered by Mark, were picking up "Just4Fun". We met our fellow crew members whom, across the whole group of 20, varied from young to old, experienced to novice and one brave lady. All with a simple, common objective of enjoying a sociable few days sailing, - and that is the route of such a trip's success.

By mid-afternoon we cast-off out into the Solent for a sail in a pleasant evening across to West Cowes with the crews getting to know the others' capabilities. On my boat, the Skipper was Norman, who has

considerable experience and was, as he put it in his jovial manner, “In charge so don’t expect me to actually do anything!” Ian was Mate or was it “No.1” (I was never quite certain!) who ensured the rest of us crew were kept in order and doing the right things when we should have been. Sometimes we crew, that is myself, Peter and Tony even obliged! (*The odd touch of the cat helps!* – Ed). West Cowes welcomed us into its very organised Yacht Haven then it was straight off to the second Yacht Club of the day, Island Yacht Club. Here we consumed beer, a three-course dinner and tales from the various Sailing expeditions. Last orders in The Union Flag before back on board to sleep. End of first day balance of drinking time to sailing time about 50:50, how will this measure change through the trip?

Day 2:

Woken to strong winds and the Skippers deliberating over the pressure charts and shipping forecast. Verdict was to go, but head down to Yarmouth only, as shelter may be required as the day progresses and the wind strengthens. However, *Just4Fun* thought it had better live up to its name and try to get in extra entertainment by heading beyond Yarmouth. Little did they realise it was to become *Just2much4Fun*. *Skywave* headed out about 9am sailing into the wind over tide, as the winds strengthened up to F7 the sea started to roll. The sail area gradually being decreased in inverse proportion to the wind, *Skywave* kept sailing on guided by its crew.

Down on the chart table I was plotting our route and course one minute, and sitting on the floor in a heap of chart papers the next as the boat rolled and heeled! Soon learnt how to wedge myself in though. After just over 2 hours we reached the shelter of Yarmouth along with 2 other boats whilst *Just4Fun* continued - *4Fun* of course. Tony cooked a bacon and egg lunch before, guess what? Off to another yacht club, Royal Solent Yacht club. Great location to watch the few remaining boats in the Solent fight their way to shelter and watch the lifeboat fly out of the harbour just 6 minutes after hearing the maroons go up. *Just4Fun* returned to Yarmouth safely but did admit to having *Just2muchFun* down by the Needles. The afternoon and evening disappeared in between yacht Club and Pubs, everyone being very sociable. Ratio at the end of Day 2, 70:30 drinking to sailing.

Day 3:

Oh dear, the stays are whistling and the forecast is Force 8 gusting 9. Safety first, so no sailing today. A free day on the Isle of Wight, somewhere I had not been before. Not to be wasted, a very efficient bus network took a number of us to Newport and a few more changed and headed for Osborne House, Victoria and Albert’s summer residence. What a great place to visit, even when it’s so windy and rainy that you cannot sail safely. The island hopper ticket allowed Peter, Paul, Guy and myself to tour the southwest corner, stopping for a pint at Freshwater Bay overlooking the crashing waves. Back to

Yarmouth for more drinking and eating. Ratio 60:20:20 drinking, sailing and sight-seeing.

Day 4:

At last we woke to a fantastic day for sailing - bright with a F3/4 wind. Off we cast, with smiles on everyone’s faces, out into the Solent. *Skywave* and crew had a fantastic sail across the Solent then tacking up Southampton water, navigating the channels and avoiding the warehouse-size container ships. Everyone having a go at helming - except the Skipper of course - because he was in charge! The sun continued to shine as we ran back down to the Hamble where all 4 boats met at The RAF Yacht Club, surprise, surprise, for beer and a bite to eat. However not wishing to miss good sailing we were soon off again out into the Solent and across to Cowes where we moored in East Cowes Marina - well most of us - as *Quicksilver* sneaked into West Cowes, grabbing the last spot! The crew claim they were duped into it believing there was space for all. In order to avoid the fayre they call food at the Brewers Fayre, we had an enjoyable water Taxi ride, courtesy of Sally, to West Cowes all meeting up for food in the Union Flag. Sal’s taxi took us all back after a good day’s sailing and night’s drinking. Ratio 50:40:10 drinking, sailing, sight-seeing.

Day 5:

Awoke to another good day. A lighter wind but enough for a sail back to Gosport. We cast off with Tony cooking sausage sandwiches which we ate before lifting the sails. By now, we just did it regardless of what “No.1” asked us to do, as we never were quite sure if, when “No.1” said the Main, but meant the Genoa, which to go for. We just put it down to age or beer or both. (*spot on!* Ed). As with the day before, we had a great sail back to Gosport; what an idyllic way to spend a Sunday morning. At the refuelling pontoon the absolute common sense of wind power generation was reinforced as the cruiser in front clocked up £325 of diesel whilst we struggled to squeeze in £2.65 after 5 days sailing. Ratio 40:50:10 drinking, sailing, sight-seeing.

Overall I would like to thank TOG for organising the trip, Skipper for being in charge, Mate for keeping us busy, Peter and Tony for great company and everyone who came along for being sailors. The TOG trip has given opportunity for sailing in varied conditions, exploration of new areas, meeting of new friendly people and of course drinking of copious amounts of beer. Who could possibly complain about that?

From 2007....

The following is an example of the sort of friendly co-operation we can find in TOG as we answer a call for assistance....

OFFICIALS DELIVER!!

by Alan Radley

What do you do when you are relatively new to boating, the ink on your RYA Day Skipper Certificate is hardly dry (well, wet actually), and you have just

bought a boat that needs moving from its current mooring to the one where you want to keep her?

Easy – you call on the Presiding Master and Bo'sun of your local boating association – in my case TOG – to help. If you are lucky, they will come along and help you with the delivery. And if you are really lucky, you get Keith Stedman and Mark Davis to do this for you.

Only last month I bought my first boat, a Sadler 26, with bilge keels. The choice was dictated by the fact that I will keep her in Poole Harbour, on a swinging mooring that dries out. Though I have my Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster theory qualification (courtesy of Mark's evening classes) my experience of practical sailing is slight indeed. I needed an experienced crew for the move, who could give gentle (!) advice when asked for, and who could get me safely through the Solent and on to my mooring.

So, on a bright and warm April morning Keith and Mark joined me on 'Sublyme' and we made our way out of Chichester Harbour, along with a fleet of weekend sailors catching the tide. The wind that weekend was a 2/3 NE, sometimes enough to get the sails up, and sometimes needing the extra push of the motor. At just 9 hp this gave Keith and Mark plenty time to find their way around the boat, try out the autopilot, give me a lesson in reefing and suggest ways I needn't spend more money (very welcome). We spent the night in Yarmouth, where anyone watching the rafting up would have been doubtful who was Skipper and who were crew. (I don't take easily to this rafting up bit.) We had a good pub meal that evening, the odd drink or two, and the next morning set off at sunrise to catch the tide through the Needles Channel. In their haste to get away quickly the crew forgot to remind the Skipper about paying mooring dues. (I made a mental note of that.)



Having crossed Poole Bay we anchored a while between the piers at Bournemouth to enjoy the global warming. Not only did the crew do all the

anchoring but they also examined the anchor, measured the rope and chain and advised the Skipper of recommended changes (which he has yet to do).

We then set off again to enter Poole Harbour by the Swash Channel, to the disappointment of Mark who really wanted to see if we could test clearance in the inshore East Looe Channel. (The Skipper demurred.) With the mooring picked up (again, I had the sense that this crew had done this before, no shouting was required!) we went ashore.

All in all I couldn't have asked for a better maiden voyage on my boat. The crew's advice and their pleasure at being afloat was the best inspiration that a novice Skipper could possibly wish for.

Alan Radley

TOG Sailex 2008; The Hebridean Cruise - what really happened! by *Peter Tytler*



The first day out of Ardvassar on the South West of Skye was a truly scenic experience. The sun shone, mountains were clear of clouds and the visibility was unbelievable. As we sailed sou'west

down the Sound of Sleat, a breathtaking panorama of Small Isles unfolded. Then turning North round the Point of Sleat we got our first sight of the awe inspiring Cuillins, the rugged mountain range which dominates the sky line of Skye. Our destination was Loch Scavaig and an anchorage, which is probably the most impressive in the west coast of Scotland. We had lunch in the company of basking grey seals, surrounded by cliffs rising up towards the mountainous peaks and at the foot of a waterfall cascading about 100ft into the sea. For some of our company this surely was a splendid introduction to sailing in the west coast of Scotland.

The next day was a different story. We left the serenely relaxing anchorage on Canna, the most northerly of the Small Isles and headed for North Uist. It started well enough with bright sun and a fair wind allowing us to sail just north of Canna then it died. We motored on with only the main sail up. It was a time to enjoy a bit of bird watching. We passed rafts of guillemots and razorbills, and spotted the occasional puffin, while Manx shearwaters scudded over the



waves. Ominously the clouds began to gather and the wind strengthened, raising the telltales and heeling the boat. Our speed through the water increased and we began to bash into a rising sea. The skipper popped his head up and assessed the situation. "Why are we not sailing?" The headsail was quickly set at two thirds and the engine was cut, resulting in a much better motion. Even so it was a long haul and for some of us, who had not yet got their sea legs it was hard work. The relief on entering the relative shelter of Loch Maddy was palpable. Conditions here were less relaxed than Canna. I will always remember this place for poor holding and wheeling round like a waltzer in the embrace of a manic north wind.

Stornoway Coastguard had ominously forecast very rough conditions around the Hebrides the night before we set sail across the Little Minch to Skye. Prepared for the worst, we were pleasantly surprised to find the sea state had moderated and a brisk NE took us safely to our destination. Loch Dunvegan was a calm refuge after the wild and bleak Loch Maddy. Crews of both yachts were able to go ashore and indulge in some convivial activities, including lunchtime consumption of the local delicacy, mutton pies and tea, at the bakery. The anchorage is a lovely spot, close to Dunvegan Castle, the ancestral seat of the clan Macleod. Pre-dinner entertainment was an impressive display of fishing by Mark, who proceeded to empty Loch Dunvegan of its mackerel population. Later that evening we settled down to watch a golden sunset, which seemed to go on forever.

Next morning we had a good sail down to Loch Harport. The rugged coastline with its cliffs, large caves and rocky stacks made the approach memorable. As we ghosted along towards our anchorage we were aware of two buzzards soaring above the woods. Suddenly out of nowhere appeared a large white tailed eagle, which was then mobbed by the buzzards. This was my first sight of this magnificent bird and what a spectacle! On we pressed, for we had to get to the famous Talisker distillery before it closed. The anchor was dropped and a foraging party was dispatched to secure our supply of 'uisege beatha' (the water of life). Young David secured a discount on the purchase, and was declared the hero of the day. After a fine home-cooked dinner we settled down to sampling the 10-year-old single malt. We were well into our first bottle when strident anchor alarms disturbed our peace. Rushing to the cockpit we found ourselves about to join the guests in the beer garden of the nearby hotel. After a great flurry of activity the anchor was weighed and laid at a more distant and secure anchorage under the expert supervision of our visiting skipper. We settled down to an anchor watch in which dusk merged with dawn.

The anchor held and after breakfast we were off to complete our tour of the Hebrides. In the shelter of the Loch the sunshine was warm on our backs. The water was flat calm reflecting the surrounding hills. Up on deck hoping to get a last glimpse of the sea eagle I spotted turmoil near the shore. There was a lot of splashing and dark forms leaping out of the water. Like synchronised swimmers a pod of common dolphins turned in unison and made directly for our boat. We were entertained for about 15 minutes by

their antics: crisscrossing under our bow and leaping out on either side. As suddenly as they appeared they left, leaving us in high spirits. Once out of the loch we raised the sails. In the meantime Mark and the crew of 'Thistle' who had raised their main on leaving their moorings (no anchor watch for them) overtook us with the comment 'we are not racing'! Naturally 'Sonas Mhor' took this as a challenge. Off we went goose winging in hot pursuit only to be distracted by another pod of dolphins. We may not be the sharpest boat in the fleet but we are very popular. Meanwhile Peter, our navigator, had hatched a cunning plan. 'Thistle' had taken a course close to the cliffs to avoid the full blast of the North winds but we, bold boys as we are, headed further out with sails well reefed. To Mark's surprise and consternation 'Sonas Mhor' stormed past with young David at the helm. Because we were **not racing** and honour was satisfied we settled back to a more relaxed pace. The next thing we knew was Thistle close downwind and gaining on us. We could see Mark furiously trimming sails and were particularly impressed with his coach roof technique, disdaining the use of cockpit sheets. Hats off to our Master and Commander, he is a cracking good sailor. But 'Peter the pilot' was not finished, and in spite of headsail furling difficulties, our new course enabled us to catch up and both yachts entered the moorings at Ardvassar within minutes of each other. What a splendid sail and a wonderful cruise!

Our crew was a great bunch of characters as the following memorable quotes testify:

"I've been fishin' man and boy, man and boy!" - Mark's explanation for his success in catching all the mackerel in Loch Dunvegan.

"We will move on from the rice!" - the skipper ending comments on a culinary disaster.

"What are your prospects young man?" - Stewart assessing David's eligibility as a future son-in-law.

"Anyone for barley cup (ersatz coffee)? No! Ah well!" - vegan cook.

"Ah, Captain Birdseye is at the helm, we should be OK!" - skipper on seeing the mate's emerging white stubble.

"I don't approve of all this drinking!" - anon.

"My God, look at my deck!!" - the mate when yesterday's baked beans were dropped on a newly scrubbed cockpit sole, minutes before hand over.

You have to smile.....(Ed)



Scotland Firth of Clyde

- **Saturday, June 27, 2020 4:00 PM to Saturday, July 4, 202 09:00 AM** [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)
Sailex Reference SCO20 Lead Skipper Stewart Cook
 - **Sailex plans now being agreed with members booked as FYC has advised :- Flamingo Yacht Charters will no longer be accepting visitors during the period 23/3/20 - 30/6/20. Thus we will be having discussions with FYC regarding our options.**
 - For 2020 Council had recommended that we return to the Clyde for the summer Scottish Sailex. Two yachts had been chartered from Flamingo Yacht Charters at Largs for this event.
. A Beneteau Oceanis 45 Flamingo and a Hanse 400 Tramontana. The Beneteau Oceanis 45 we have chartered - is described as a 10 berth yacht with 4 double cabins and a double berth in the saloon. Berth costs are based on 6 people. The Hanse 400 has three double cabins and a double berth in the saloon. Berth costs are based on 5 people. 4 berths available. The yachts are both complete with a dinghy and outboard. Costs this year will be £580 per berth.

Plymouth - Cornwall

Council agreed to keep a watch on government guidelines in regards to coronavirus and social interaction and to take action as required.

- **Fri, Sep 4, 2020 4:00 PM to Fri, Sep 11, 2020 9:00 AM** [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)
Sailex Reference **PLY20** Lead Skipper Neville Buckle
The Cornish Sailex will set out from Plymouth Hoe, sailing either East or West – or both!. **This cruise is fully booked**
We have chartered a Bavaria and a Delphia 40 for this event. Costs as calculated to include the following extras - an outboard for the dinghy, and gas for the yacht, will be £350 per berth based on 5 members per yacht. Parking is available at the marina.

End of Season

Expectation is that this will go ahead...

- **Thu, Oct 1, 202 4:00 p.m. to Sun, Oct 4, 2020 5:00 p.m.** [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)
Sailex Reference EOS20 Lead Skipper Dave Bond
It has been agreed that crew may overnight on the yachts at Hamble marina on Thursday 1st October to permit an early start on Friday 2nd with the sailex ending on Sunday 4th October at 17:00 hours.
Two Oceanis 37's have been chartered **and a third is an option.** Costs for this sailex will be £195 per berth. Good availability.

• **BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS - 2021**

- [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#) Tue, Jan 26, 2021 9:30 AM Thu, Feb 11, 2021 10:30 AM
Sailex Reference BVI21 Lead Skipper Adrian Johnson



Uncrowded, un-commercialised, unspoilt this is the British Virgin Islands, a true luxury holiday destination.

The British Virgin Islands is an idyllic destination for those seeking deserted white sand beaches, crystal clear waters with amazing snorkelling and diving and arguably, the best sailing in the world. The British Virgin Islands are part of a volcanic archipelago located in the northern Caribbean and is a British overseas territory. Comprising approximately 60 islands, the BVI enjoys year-round temperatures of between 25°C – 35°C. The

largest island in the BVI is Tortola – home to the capital Road Town and Sage Mountain National Park with its lush rainforest. Virgin Gorda is home to the Baths, a labyrinth of massive beachside boulders and even more stunning beaches. Our early 2021 sailex will be to this idyllic destination and for the very first time we are planning to charter one catamaran, an ideal yacht for this destination. The sailex will be 14 days, and start on Thursday 28th January 2021. However there are no direct flights from the UK to the BVI so we are planning to depart London with either BA or Virgin Atlantic to Antigua on Tuesday 26th January and spend two nights there. We will have one full day to explore this fantastic location before taking a local flight to the BVI. All yachts under consideration will have 4 double cabins with full air conditioning and en-suite heads plus two single cabins. Typical example are shown below.

Astrea 42 with Watermaker and A/C 2020

https://client.sednasystem.com/boat/boatdisp.asp?lg=0&id_boat=38699&b_newfic=

The islands are grouped together and sailing the BVI will not incur long passages. There will be ample time for sight-seeing, swimming and sun worship.

- **The yacht, a 2020 Astrea 42, has been secured at a cost of £1,470 per person for the two week sailex This cost includes the yacht, dinghy, outboard, starter packs by the charter company, end cleaning, bedding, National Parks and BVI Cruising Tax.** In addition we have secured full yacht insurance - no “security deposit” to be paid at the base and consequential risk. That is just £735 per person per week. We have four double cabins, and two single cabins, per yacht. Flight costs will not be known until March 2020 but based on this years actual costs we anticipate economy flight costs London to BVI will be approx £900 In addition there will be a two night hotel cost in Antigua.