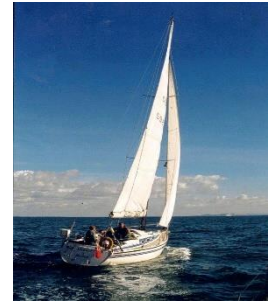




TOGLINE

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



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2015/16

Yacht:- A hole in the water, surrounded by planks or fibreglass into which a sailor pours money.....



We have already started but, as ever with this edition, welcome to the New Year. It's a bit later than usual but, with the dinner, the Caribbean and fresh articles, photos *et al* – I've been fairly busy of late! It is amazing that, after ten years and forty editions,

to still have the privilege of producing this dispenser of knowledge and updates to our select readership. As ever, the knowledge and updates provided exclusively by that very same readership. My deepest thanks to you all. We (the Council) hope it is a good way of keeping everyone in touch with what has been happening - and long may it continue.

Our Caribbean trip has been and gone, but the effects of events during the trip may be felt for a while longer. What was meant to be a lazy cruise with the winds over the port quarter and with spice islands to visit, turned into something not quite as idyllic. One of the two boats, the 48 foot Benetteau Oceanis, *Joule*, was lost. In 600 metres of water..... Our Presiding Master mentions it in his musings and the article by Stewart Cook, the skipper of *Dalton*, relates some of the events at the time. What was most apparent was the skill and experience of *Joule's* skipper Adrian Johnson combined with mate Keith Stedman, in handling the emergency. Towing by *Dalton* proved impossible due to the yaw experienced by *Joule* and eventually, the transfer of the crew had to take place as she sank lower and lower. Here again, the skill of Stewart Cook, the skipper of *Dalton*, came to the fore. His helmsmanship kept the two boats safely apart whilst coming alongside for that transfer. Time and again I iterate how fortunate are we to have this level of expertise in our skippers – safety paramount at all times. Eventually, the French coastguard was called to the scene. Keith's reported comment at the time by one of the coastguards – hand drawn across the throat and a downward pointing motion – how graphic is that? It must always be a moving sight to see any vessel go down, but at least

Joule disappeared with the TOG burgee still bravely flying..... Welcome home one and all.

On a somewhat touching note, I received a letter at Christmas from Ann Allen, our first Presiding Master's lovely wife. Norman passed on in October 2014 as most of you know and is still sadly missed by those of us who knew him well. The family had a few difficulties deciding how best to deal with his ashes. Initially, the thought was the Western Isles which was one of Norman's favourites. In the event, there is a converted WW II launch that plies out of Orford, cruises up to Aldeburgh, back down to Shingle Street where the river meets the sea, then back to Orford. In June of last year, Ann, together with the family, chartered that boat. Dinner and drinks were enjoyed aboard during the trip. Norman would have loved it, the social side being so important to him. Norman's ashes were then gently scattered at the mouth of the Ore, to drift quietly and finally into the North Sea. It was a fitting departure for someone who had so much love for the waters surrounding this lovely island of ours. Rest in peace Cap'n.....

Rereading this editorial, there seems to be a certain amount of sadness in it. This is not my intention. Rather a celebration of the existence of the Trent Offshore Group and its ethos. The founders have every reason to be proud of their success over 25 years – sailing experience for everyone, young or old, male or female, with safety and experience well to the fore. Here's to the forthcoming season and more Happy Sailing....

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PRESIDING MASTER'S MUSINGS

by Neil Macfarlane.

Presiding Master's Speech – February 2016

Welcome to the annual dinner of the Trent Offshore Group now in its twenty fifth year. Firstly, on your behalf, I say thank you to the

staff of Quorn Grange Hotel for providing us with this excellent meal and I hope that you will later join in the dancing to the music provided by the Bright Stars Disco. Also, our thanks should go to Andy McWilliam, our social secretary, for organising the dinner on our behalf and indeed other enjoyable social events during the past year. As well as much sailing and organising our social events, Andy continues his political activities. I nearly choked over my Sunday morning kipper when I saw this purple-clad figure pictured in *The Observer*, busy canvassing in the Oldham West by-election. The headline - "Why Labour has good reason to be nervous.....".

Other members of your council have also contributed a great deal to the success of TOG through 2015. It may be a touch invidious to mention some by name and not others, but here goes. **Stewart Cook** as administrator, organises our council meetings and then records their profound and arcane deliberations. **Graham Wassall** keeps a close eye on our finances which are in a solvent and healthy position, thanks to his stewardship and the support of members. **Paul Ratcliffe** keeps track of members and after a period of grace, pursues them vigorously for payment of our extremely reasonable subscriptions. **Ian Calderwood** does a sterling job in producing out quarterly organ *TOGline* and is always on the lookout for new contributors. **Dave Bond** is busy as our Training Master and is also very enthusiastic about recruiting new and younger members to the club. Looking around, it's clear he still has some work to do!

The heart our activities is sailing and thanks largely to the work of our expeditions master, **John Bryant**, our last season has again been very successful. As many of you know, in 2014, John's wife Margaret had a stroke and John continues to support her through a slow but progressive recovery. Thus we are very grateful for John's assiduous work in researching yachts and securing us excellent deals on charters. Not forgetting flights such as those to the Caribbean last month.

We should once again acknowledge the key role of our skippers in promoting particular trips and for taking responsibility for giving their crews a rewarding, enjoyable and safe experience. At Easter, Phil Greetham skippered a yacht on the Solent which included his wife Emma, son Tom and other friends in the crew. They explored familiar haunts in the Solent and played some pool. In early June, Alan Mortimore and Paul Ratcliffe skippered two yachts out of Pembroke which included visits to Lundy and Skomer Islands. Their yachts were *Otter* and the intriguingly named *Lucky Tarte* – for her activities, Jean Bevan gave us the low-down in *TOGline*. At the end of June/early July, our traditional visit to the Scottish west coast filled four yachts. Skippers were Stewart Cook, Alan Mortimore, Kevin Martin and Andy McWilliam. Our crews included some complete novices and amazingly, they have sailed with TOG again. That trip, out of Largs, demonstrated the splendid variety of sailing and beautiful locations available within the confines of the Firth of Clyde and its associated sea lochs. In

September, our largest fleet for some time sailed from Split, Croatia under skippers Dave Bond, Andy McW, Adrian Johnson, Graham Wassall, and Stewart. It was not feasible to sail as a flotilla, but we all met up in Split over a meal and wine to share our experiences. It was really good that John Bryant joined us to share the fruits of his hard work. In October, Andy McW skippered a small but exclusive group on the Solent. Overall in 2015, we chartered thirteen yachts and filled some seventy berths.

Of course, that's not quite all of our sailing activities to date. In January, fourteen of us flew to St Martin in the Leeward Isles in the Caribbean to charter two Beneteau Oceanis 48ft yachts on a planned one-way sail from St Martin to Martinique via St Barts, St Kitts, Antigua, Guadeloupe, and Dominica. The bald statistics are: fourteen TOG members reached Martinique safely; seven by sailing some 350 miles on *Dalton*. Seven more by sail and aeroplane, having lost *Joule* as sunk in 600m depths about seven miles north-west of Guadeloupe. The result of a failure in the steering gear. More will be said about the loss of *Joule* and the causes thereof, as various investigations are underway. For the moment, suffice it say, no responsibility can be placed on skipper or crew who did all that was possible to save the yacht and ensured the safe transfer of crew to *Dalton*. Some crew lost luggage and personal possessions. At the start of the cruise both yachts had decided to sail in company – a wise decision as it turned out.

We have planned and already publicised to members a wide-ranging and interesting programme for the main 2016 sailing season. Bookings have been brisk, but a number of berths remain available (see elsewhere in *TOGline*) – some of these dependent on skipper availability. Now for the awards.....

REPORTS

Annual Dinner and Dance, Saturday 13th February 2012 at Quorn Grange Hotel.

Fifty-four members and friends attended a very enlightening and amusing evening of good company, much laughter with entertaining speeches. A disco followed and as it finished at midnight, the bar was the scene of a catch-up and enclave of the stalwarts afterwards.

The awards were part of the evening and the following were the lucky recipients:-

The Millenium Trophy for the most interesting and considered article submitted to *TOGline*, as ever, was the really difficult decision to whom to award it. Thanks to all those who submit articles, keeping everyone informed of the goings-on within TOG, (*I hope – Ed*) provides our readership with a wonderful collection of laughter and news. Without a



doubt, the ladies excelled this year. The trophy was, therefore, presented to **Susan Perkins** for her well-

written article as a first-timer with TOG.

The **Ellis Trophy** for the most promising newcomer goes to a woman who has only recently joined TOG but she has

already made her mark for her enthusiasm on board on various trips and also her eagerness to sign up for more – so much so

that she is currently the only member to sign up for the 2016 Easter Sailex. Congratulations - **Ruth Edwards**.



The **Navigator's Tankard** goes most appropriately to a very long-standing member who had a stint in his relative youth as a professional navigator in the Merchant Navy plotting



courses all over the world. He is a stalwart of TOG sailing trips and our social events, and in

the Caribbean showed his expertise not only in navigation, yacht electronics and setting up a tow but also in sail trimming and tutoring the art of helming skills to others – **Dave Clark**.

The **Commodore's Cup and the Norman Allen Trophy** went to the two crews of *Dalton* and *Joule* for the exemplary actions taken by the skippers and crew members of both boats during the Caribbean Cruise. The adept helming of Stewart on *Dalton* in coming alongside *Joule* for the transfer of crews, was outstanding. The danger of masts and shrouds entwining ever present. The skilful transfer of crew members in 1m seas without mishap, reflects the skills of our skippers and crews, in large part due to their training and experience. There is so much common sense there as well..... Hearty congratulations and warm applause on their safe return.



Crew of Joule.....



Crew of Dalton.....

TOG Croatia, September 2015 (Yacht Ivory, Hanse 415, 140 NM)

By Kevin Martin



Sirocco sailing – Crew
Dave Bond (skipper),
Kevin Martin (1st mate),
Linda Martin,
Ronney Panerai
Ivone Panerai
Diane Rowbotham

The **Dalmatian islands** sit near the southern end of the long coastal strip of Croatia that stretches from the Gulf of Venice to Dubrovnik, the so-called jewel of the Adriatic. The area is a sailing paradise, with many picturesque coastal towns and harbours offering shelter and berthing facilities for sailors. The islands are separated by exceptionally clear blue seas and are mostly within easy sailing distances of each other. The main coastal town of Split lies within an inner sea protected by the islands of Brac and Solta and just to the west is Kastela Marina, where our Croatian odyssey was to begin. This new marina sports 420 very sturdy pontoon berths and some very impressive concrete breakwaters. It is rightly popular with yacht charter companies, due its sheltered position, which also gives easy access to this popular sailing area.

On Saturday 12th September, our crew of 6 arrived on various flights but, sadly not at the same time as some of the check-in luggage. After a long wait in Split airport for a following flight, Ronney and Ivone and their luggage were finally reunited with the rest of the crew on our yacht *Ivory*. She was a Hanse 415, delivered to the charter company only 5 months earlier. After a brief handover from a rather less than well informed member of the charter company, it was time for late-night shopping and food.

Sunday morning dawned bright and clear with little wind. After breakfast ashore, it was time to get the boat organised, check the weather reports and do some passage planning. In the Adriatic, the winds are strongly influenced by the local geography as well as by passing weather systems. This leads to local variations, many of which have names such as the Mistral, the Bora and the Tramontana. The Sirocco, also known as the Jugo, is a warm wind that blows up from the African Sahara under the influence of low pressure, picking up moisture as it travels up the Adriatic. The result is a pattern of strong south easterly winds, high humidity and poor visibility. In local Croatian tradition, it is blamed for bad behaviour, low work productivity, headaches and mental

breakdown! Once it starts, it tends to blow for 3 or more days. Traditional methods of predicting the onset of the various local winds seem to depend on what sounds like a mixture of folklore and astrology. Fortunately, we can now use the internet and sites such as Wind Guru to tell us what to expect.

Sunday's forecast was for light southerly winds, with a strong south easterly developing for Monday, moderating over the following two days, the typical pattern of the Sirocco. In view of Monday's forecast, the plan was to head for Palmitzana Marina on the island of San Clemente. San Clemente is a narrow strip of land with more bays than island. It faces the south coast of Hvar island and its main



town of the same name. The marina sits within a deep bay on the north side of the island, giving good shelter from southerly winds and easy access to Hvar town by water taxi. The light conditions gave us a welcome opportunity to get familiar with Ivory's rigging and self-tacking jib, while we motored out of Kastela Marina and headed south. With the mainsail up and the vang tight, the boom was still too high to stretch out the sail. A lengthy series of adjustments to the lazy jacks, topping lift and vang followed. Finally, with a member of the crew hanging on the end of the boom, we managed to get a little tension in the mainsail leech. After motoring through the gap between Brac and Solva islands and on southwards, we got our first taste of Croatian sailing with a slow beat around the western end of Hvar island and on towards Palmitzana Marina.

The best dining facilities for Palmitzana are at the head of a deep bay on the south side of the island, directly opposite the marina, accessed by a 10 minute walk over the hill. The bay is evidently a popular place to anchor overnight for those who would rather dinghy to the restaurant. Sitting later that evening in Toto's restaurant, with a romantic view down the bay, it was difficult not to feel smug as the many anchor lights rolled about in the rising southerly wind. Monday's forecast gave SE5/6, increasing to SE7 later. Well, Hvar town is a very attractive place to visit, especially when the prospect of going to sea is not! It would have been churlish not to take the water taxi across and enjoy this tourist hotspot with a little shopping and a long relaxed lunch. This was clearly a popular choice judging by the lack of yachts out as we bounced across the channel in our little water taxi.

Tuesday's forecast was for SE4/5 gusting to 6, but moderating the next day. It was time to get on with it. Motoring out of Palmitzana Marina and into the southeasterly, we hoisted the main with 2 reefs and some headsail. Once around the end of the island, we set a course of 235 degrees for Vis, putting us onto a beam reach. We were off! As we ploughed along at 7 – 8 knots through the 1.5 metre swells in 20 knots of breeze, there was no sign of Vis, even though it was only 10 miles away. This was Sirocco sailing and Sirocco visibility. An hour and a half

brought us to a welcome coffee stop in a sheltered bay on the North coast of Vis. Then hugging the North coast where the sea was flatter, we headed west under headsail, but still with 20 knots of wind behind. Lunch was in a very sheltered, high sided creek, where the shallow water had already been bagged. With all 60 metres of chain out, we only just made 3 times the depth of water. Rounding the light at the most westerly point of Vis, we felt the full force of the wind and waves on the nose as we punched on under engine to Komiza, hoping there was going to good shelter behind the harbour breakwater. Unfortunately, all berths on the dock were full and after several attempts in the choppy conditions, we managed to thread a mooring buoy in the harbour. After a bumpy ride to Komiza town in a water taxi and a walk back along the shore, we found Barba restaurant, highly recommended by Adrian and crew. A fine meal on solid ground with views across the moorings was a welcome respite between the day's sailing and the forthcoming bumpy night.

Wednesday's forecast had a touch of déjà vu: SE4/5 gusting to 6, but moderating the next day. The Sirocco continues. Reversing our journey along the North coast of Vis, this time under engine, we reached Vis town where the largest swells were now up to 2 metres. It was time to leave the relative shelter of Vis and head North to round Hvar Island to today's destination of Stari Grad, at the head of a deep west facing bay. With 2 reefs and head sail, we again made good speed with the sails holding the boat steady in the swells, until off the western end of San Clemente, where the seas became very confused. As the rest of the crew ducked for cover under the spray hood, on the wheel, Linda was soon looking like first prize in the wet T-shirt competition as she struggled to see through the layer of salt on her sun glasses. Once around the end of Hvar Island, things became much calmer and we started the long motor up the bay to Stari Grad. The bay is like a 10 mile funnel and as we approached the town, the pace of the many converging yachts suddenly quickened into a race to get a berth on the town quay. Alas, we were all too late, and the unseemly crush was directed by the harbour staff to a pontoon on the opposite side of the creek, where we queued and jostled in the breezy conditions until all were safely berthed stern to.

By Thursday, the weather had improved and we gybed back out of the long bay in that rare combination of sun, flat water and the right amount of wind. In the channel between Hvar and Brac, the wind was up to 20 knots again and now broad reaching under full sail, we made our maximum speed of 8.6 knots as we headed to the gap between Brac and Solta. Back in the inner sea, things were much calmer and after a lunch stop and swim, we motored to Rogac on the North coast of Solva.



By Friday, the Sirocco had blown itself out and we set off from Rogac in a flat calm, back to yesterday's Bobovisce Bay on Brac for a long coffee / swim / lunch stop. We were soon

joined by an old German couple in a motor cruiser who dropped their anchor uncomfortably close to us. Our discomfort was soon to get worse. What is it about elderly German men? Why do they feel obliged to take all their clothes off when they get on a boat? With the ladies jostling for a place in the cockpit where they could sit with their backs to the offending boat, we had lunch then alternately motored and sailed slowly back to Kastela marina. Naked Germans and capricious winds notwithstanding, Croatia is an excellent place to sail and to visit. Its popularity, as judged by the number of yachts actually out sailing rather than sitting in the marina, is richly deserved.



CARIBBEAN CRUISE – LEEWARD ISLANDS

By Stewart Cook

Yachts: Oceanis 48.

Dalton

Neil Macfarlane
Dilys Carby
Stewart Cook
Mary Bancroft
Dave Clark
Peter Perkins
Susan Perkins

Joule

Adrian Johnson
Diane Johnson
Keith Stedman
Sheila Spikins
Ronney Panerai
Ivone Panerai
Diane Rowbotham

This year's trip to the Caribbean was planned as a one-way passage through the Leeward Isles from St Martin in the north to Le Marin on the Island of Martinique

The crew of both yachts met in Paris on the evening of the 13th January prior to flying out to St Martin the following morning. On arrival in St Martin, we were taken by minibus to Dream Yachts (DM) base in Marigot Bay. Over a refreshing bottle of beer, we were treated to a presentation by DM staff on our route and possible stopping off points. It was very informative.

The following morning DM staff came on board to undertake the handover, timed to coincide with the opening of a road bridge to allow access from the bay to the sea. Once out through the bridge, the yachts dropped anchor. As the skippers went ashore to complete custom/immigration requirements, DM staff came back on back on board *Dalton* to rectify a problem with the fresh water and electrical system. The DM crew on this occasion were responsive to a problem with the yachts as they were on numerous other times. The skippers discovered that dealing with customs, immigration and port authorities was not a quick process. In fact many hours were spent "booking" in and out of islands throughout the journey.

To settle the crews into the yachts, we headed north some 10 mls to Grand Case Bay spending a pleasant evening at anchor, with the added bonus of being under the flight path for a local airport. With a good wind, the following day we went S and E to the Dutch side of the island to spend the night in Philipsburg, Groot Bay.

Sunday 17th Jan. With our first open-water passage and a F4/5 we set sail for St Barts and the town of Gustavia (51)ml. With the yachts safely moored stern to on the town quay, the crews went ashore to see the sights. It was an unpleasant evening with the yachts moving around on their warps due to the heavy swell.



Monday the 18th Jan. we remained in Gustavia, giving us the opportunity to take in what the island offered and we sunbathed etc at the local shell beach. With *Dalton* not having the benefit of an on board generator, today like other days, we were required to run the engine for 4hrs. minimum to ensure sufficient battery charge.

Tuesday 19 Jan. Today we were off for St Kitts (51mls) and the town of Basseterre. Again with steady wind, we made good progress passing between the islands of Saint Eustatius and St Kitts to close-haul down the leeward side of the island. On passage, *Dalton* received a request from *Joule* to retrieve a fender they had lost. With an agreed fee of beers all round, the fender was successfully retrieved. When I



remember, we are still waiting for our beers. During this activity, we found that *Dalton's* instruments had switched off. Checking out the fuse panel etc with no obvious fault found, we continued on our trip to drop our anchor alongside *Joule* outside of the town marina. We managed to make contact with DM to advise of our problem and attempts to fault find. The following day, once customs were cleared, was spent around the town trying to avoid tourists from the cruise liners rushing for the "gold" shops. That evening we moved into the marina to take on board water.

Thursday 21st Jan. With an early start we headed for Antigua and Jolly Harbour (52ml) where DM had a base. So with no depth gauge or support instrument, we motor-sailed through The Narrows between St Kitts and Nevis prior to setting a course for Jolly Harbour. With a blue sky and a steady F4 we arrived at the customs quay at 15:20. Once formalities were complete, both yachts moved onto the DM pontoon where 2 engineers came on board to resolve our problem. As the problem was not resolved overnight, it was decided to remain in harbour allowing the engineers to continue. Both crews spent the day visiting the island, in particular the town of St. Johns, with its colourful market, local beaches to swim and sunbathe. Mary and I had the pleasure of meeting an interesting character when we took a taxi ride. He drove with a can of beer balanced on his head, never dropped it once and never stopped talking



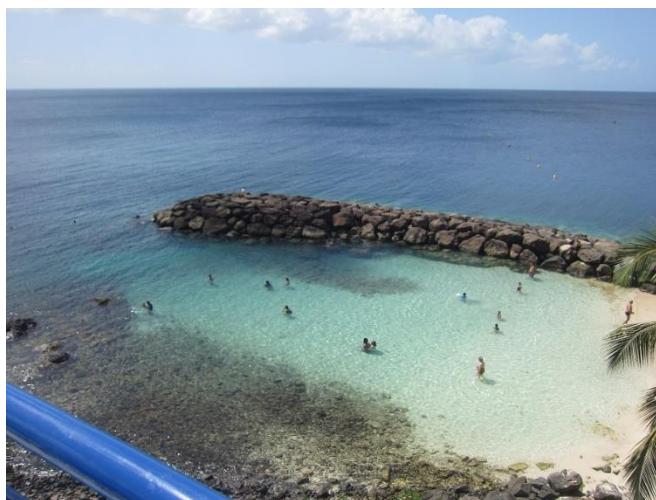
Saturday 23rd Jan. Engineers back on board to finish off their work and now with functioning instruments, we set sail for English Harbour (17ml). During this leg of the trip, *Dalton's* radar reflector fell off its mounting to smash onto the deck. Later, the yacht began to fill with smoke and a strong burning smell. The Inverter socket had burnt out. We discovered this was due to water that was leaking through a port side window, tracking along a ledge to drip onto said socket. A towel was used to stem future leaks. *Joule* also had electrical problems, their chart plotter switched off, so apart from their other issues i.e. no wind instruments, all was ok. (so far). That evening DM engineers were on board both yachts to resolve problems..

Sunday 24th Jan. Both yachts cast off early in the morning to head for the island of Guadelope and Basse Terre. By prior agreement, the skippers had decided to remain within visual contact during the trip. This was to prove its worth during the day. Again, with blue skies and F4 we headed south, reducing sail as a squall passed through. Around lunchtime *Joule* contacted *Dalton* to advise of an issue with their steering and that the coastguard had been alerted via a Pan Pan. They attempted to use the emergency tiller, without success. As the incident is well recorded and the final moments prior to the yacht sinking is available to view on Facebook, I will only outline what happened from my perspective.

After discussion with *Joule*, *Dalton* decided to take *Joule* under tow. With bridles set up, a line was passed between the yachts and the tow started. This proved to be challenging, with *Joule* veering off to one side and attempting to overtake the towing yacht. With the tow ongoing, it was discovered that *Joule* was taking on water and with the pump failing to

operate, the crew began to use whatever was available to bail. The Pan Pan was upgraded to a Mayday. The coastguard advised *Dalton* to remove the crew apart from skipper and mate. With a metre swell *Dalton* came alongside *Joule*, a tricky operation, especially in trying to ensure no damage to the yachts, in particular the masts. Diane, Sheila, Diane, Ivone and Ronney were safely brought on board. Whilst this was on going a coastguard helicopter arrived on scene, initially dropping one diver in the sea.

***Dalton* withdrew from *Joule*,** moving off to circle. The coastguard now asked on the VHF that we come back alongside to take on board Keith and Adrian. With all 14 crew now on board, *Dalton* continued to circle *Joule* until it



became clear we were no longer required to assist. *Dalton* set a course for Deshaies on the NW coast of Guadelope. Once the crew of *Joule* were taken ashore they were met by DM representatives who transferred them to a local hotel. The crew of *Dalton* now enjoyed a stiff refreshment and reflected on the day. We were extremely pleased that the rescue had been successful and no injuries sustained by any crew(s).

Monday 25th Jan. Once custom requirements were met, the



anchor was raised and we set sail for Basse Terre (23ml) SW Guadelope. After yesterday, we experience an uneventful day with blue skies and a light shower to arrive safely mid - afternoon.

Tuesday 26th /27th Jan. With the weather forecasting strong winds and the prospect of an open sea passage between islands, we decided to remain in harbour. The forecast for the following day was of even stronger winds. Never let it be said that the *Dalton* crew do not like to live dangerously. On the 30-minute walk into town, we came across a wooden humped back bridge across a river which had a barrier across

preventing access onto the bridge. As we were about to turn back to find an alternative route, a local man advised that the bridge was "safe". The main wooden strut running the length of the bridge was rotten and disintegrated along with a number of planks, but it was safe if we crossed evenly spaced and walked on one edge of the bridge. Being of stout hearts, we crossed the bridge. With the assistance of the tourist office we booked a minibus for the afternoon to take us on an island tour. With instructions to the driver to give us a circular tour that must include a beer halt, we were off. The beer was the first halt, then on into the mountains for a zoo visit (very good). Further into the mountains and a walk to a



water cascade. To complete the tour we came down to sea level to return via the East coast back to the harbour. On Wed. 27th the crew split up, some to go shopping, some walking the coast and some to take it easy.

Thursday 28th Jan. With the wind dropping as forecast, we set off early for Roseau on Dominica (50ml). Once clear to the south of Guadeloupe we felt the full effect of the wind and waves. With 3 reefs in the main and a small jib and a steady 25 knots gusting to 35 knots we continued south. By late morning the wind had dropped, the sea slight and the sun shining, life was good. But tell that to the instruments. The Lat/Lon position reading on the VHS started to give false reading before giving up completely. We were lucky to come across a large pod of dolphins/porpoise. By mid-afternoon, we picked up a mooring buoy off Roseau town. Once customs was cleared, some of the crew went ashore to see the sights in a very attractive Caribbean town, but with an English flavour, i.e. watching a cricket match in play on the green.

Friday 29th Jan. Slowly getting used to these pre-dawn rises, but I try to look on the bright side, no new mosquito bites (urgh). Today, it is Roseau to Le Marin, Martinique (68ml). This is the longest section of the trip, but the sun is shining and there is a steady F5 as we head across the Martinique Channel and down the west coast of Martinique. Some of the crew take the opportunity to sunbathe on deck, whilst others catch up on their reading, bliss. By mid-afternoon, we are around the south west corner of the island, turning east for the final 10 miles into the wind and sea for a bumpy end to the trip. Once fuelled up in Le Marin, DM crew took over for the final berthing.

Saturday 30th Jan. With our final custom clearance behind, a snagging list was prepared for the yacht handover. With our flight to Paris not until 19:30hrs, we decided it would be nice to meet up with the other crew. At the DM office we were given the name of their hotel. With a minibus booked, we were off. I do not know what the reception staff must have thought when we arrived at the hotel complete with luggage, looking for guests that they did not have. With the dining - room closed over lunch time, we proceeded to eat our own sandwiches in the foyer. After a phone call to Keith, we discovered they were in another hotel on the beach with swimming pool etc. As we were already close to the airport we decided to spend the afternoon in the airport, thereby preventing any other calamities occurring. Both crews finally met up 15 minutes before the flight gate opened.

After an overnight flight to Paris, the crews said their goodbyes as we split up for our journey back to England and home.

Reflecting on the trip and ignoring what happened to the yacht *Joule*, the overall trip to give us sufficient time on the islands, although it was definitely achievable it was ambitious. The electrical faults with both yachts cost us time, which impacted upon the overall trip and the mileage we covered in the last few days. The support from the DM technicians was good, even to the extent of them coming across Antigua by road to work on the yachts one evening, as occurred in English Harbour. The quality of the handover is a concern as it was timed to fit in with a bridge opening, the handover effectively being carried out partially underway, when a crucial piece of information was missed out - as we found out later.

The Leeward Islands are very attractive, sailing along the coast the style and colour of the land reminded me so much of the west coast of Scotland, except it was a few degrees warmer!!.

Both crews would like to express their thanks to John Bryant for his hard work in organising the trip and especially for his support during the incident with *Joule*.

Now looking forward to a future trip.



A good replacement, well earned.....



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



IOM16 Isle of Man **FULLY BOOKED** This 10 day sailex has attracted the full complement and is now closed to new bookings.

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 vent 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.



What it's all about.....