



# TOGLINE

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



## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016/17 *(ppm note.....)*

### **FIX:- The true position a boat and it's crew are in most of the time...**



**Hello, everyone – and here's to a Happy New Year.** A bit late, really ( we've had Burns Night since), but the wish is there anyway. The year has kicked off with the Annual Awards - of which more inside – and some very mixed weather. February

looks to be somewhat colder for a while, with Siberian blasts coming across later. We'll survive, but roll on the Spring...

**Let me also** bid welcome to Andy MacWilliam, late as our Social Secretary, to be our new Presiding Master. He takes over from Neil Macfarlane (small "f") who had a good run of five years and who's knowledge and skills as an arbitrator may still be called upon from time to time. Andy is well known as staunch supporter of TOG and as Social Secretary, made some good choices for get-togethers within the group. His enthusiasm as skipper of a boat is catching and we look forward to a furthering of the success of the Trent Offshore Group in the future.

**How about the America's Cup?** Anybody fancy a trip out to Bermuda? One can just imagine the mass of humanity landing on such a small island. And the whole course takes place within Hamilton Harbour itself. Even a special mooring for the superyachts (or how the other half live), to spectate. Berice and I were there (very briefly) in 1968 and on a moped you can cover the island easily in a day. And walk from one side to the other at the narrowest part.. Certainly, we seem to be in a strong position for gaining the Cup, with Sir Ben and a terrific crew having shown great form in the heats so far. Nineteen points in the lead. I know I keep tempting fate, but wouldn't it be fabulous if the Cup did come to these shores? The celebration and the boost to sailing would be unbelievable.

Although our hobby is pretty popular now, there would surely be a "America's Cup" moment. Just as the Olympic success triggered so much enthusiasm for

cycling. Hope burns strong, but I am getting ahead of myself.....

**Now – what about Alex Thompson?** What an incredible journey. After 24000 miles to be but 17 hours behind the winner. When I think of all the chances of getting it wrong – weatherwise, tactics, gear failure (which handicapped him in the end) and lack of sleep. Why do they do it? Perhaps when we were younger, we might just have considered it. How about Trent Offshore Group Around the World..? After all – Alex is going to have another go!

**Talking of publicity,** I must congratulate Stewart and Neil on their Radio Nottingham interview regarding the loss of *Joules* in the Caribbean. Their replies to the questions were so measured and precise, so undramatic in spite of the efforts of the interviewer to trigger any potential drama. It certainly showed the professionalism of our Skippers and crews, the hallmark of the safety that we always try to follow. I also enjoyed the interviewer. He asked a question and didn't interrupt the flow with inane observations as some do. Very often they just don't listen to the replies and shape the interview round a list of questions, rather than follow the gist of the answers. He let them talk and talk they did. I feel it did nothing but good for our image. Well done both.

**I must thank the contributors** to this edition – Ruth Edwards, Jackie Oliver, Arthur Wood, Mick Manning and Graham Wassall. Two of which are very appropriate. Winter is usually a hard edition to fill...

**Happy Sailing** and fair winds to you all.

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## (PAST) PRESIDING MASTER'S MUSINGS

by Neil Macfarlane.

### Presiding Master's Valedictory Musings – February 2017

**After losing the California election** for state governor in 1962 Richard Nixon famously told the Press “you don’t have Nixon to

kick around anymore” but he came back as President in 1968 – though that did not turn out too well and he resigned in 1974 (younger readers may need to search “Watergate”). Perhaps we can hope for something similar in the case of the Trump but pray let it not be too long ..... Anyway I only experienced mild Nixonesque sensations whilst giving my last speech as Presiding Master to the TOG annual dinner against the barracking that my discourses were all the same. Checking back numbers of TOGline confirms that my speeches were regularly updated each year – dates, names of council members and skippers acknowledged, summaries of our expeditions, even the venue for the dinner were rigorously revised - I make no apologies!

**I enjoyed the annual dinner** and we had a good turn-out from stalwarts and newer members alike. With my limited computer skills I toiled over putting together the slide show and came down to the hotel the night before the dinner to make sure that it worked on the projector. It did **not** despite my using Dilys’ new lap-top and something called an HDMI lead and even John Bryant’s skills were of no avail. Next day my old lap-top and a VGA lead did the job but then Dave Clark and Paul Ratcliffe had to save the day by unzipping - or somesuch lewd data manipulation. It was good to see that the dance floor was all ready for our stuff-strutting after the dinner – just a shame that the hotel had forgotten to book the disco. However that meant that everyone could chat and reminisce over 2016’s sailing without noisy competition – and enjoy another drink – well at least up to the time that the bar suddenly closed for cleaning and restocking. Many thanks to Andy McWilliam for organising an enjoyable event despite the best efforts of the hotel.

**2016 marked another successful**, and indeed exciting year for Trent Offshore Group. We kicked off with our second trip to the Caribbean Sea planning to sail the Windward Islands from St Marteen to Martinique. We lost the Beneteau Oceanis 48 *Joule* on the way when her steering failed north-west of Guadeloupe and but the crew were transferred safely to *Dalton* as *Joule* sank. More than a year after that sinking we are still pursuing the charter company for the full claims and expenses of the crew, and compensation under their guarantee. We have now engaged our own lawyer to progress our legitimate claims so we hope to resolve matters soon.

**We also organised trips** to the Isle of Man in May, the Channel Islands in June, Skye in July, Pembrokeshire in August, Croatia in September and the Solent in October. The success of those trips is down jointly to the work of the various skippers involved and once more to John Bryant’s key support. John’s data show that our members filled 82 berths and our turn-over on charter fees was some £43,000 – ably fulfilling TOG’s principal aim *to offer affordable offshore sailing experience to its members*. Our sound financial state is due largely to John’s experience in negotiating and pricing our charter fees, our skippers’ and crews’ responsible sailing, and Graham Wassall’s work as treasurer.

**Our 2017 sailing programme** (see back page) may be somewhat less ambitious in its overall scope but offers

exciting sailing opportunities in Scotland, including the Orkneys, the Balearics in the Mediterranean, the Solent and possibly Wales and the Irish Sea. I am particularly looking forward to Alan Mortimore’s plan to *semicircumnavigate* the Scottish mainland.

### TOG Annual Awards



The **Ellis Trophy** for most promising newcomer, on Andy McWilliam’s enthusiastic nomination, went to **Andrew Thompson**, a member of Andy’s crew

on board *Sleat Odyssey* on the Skye Sailex. Andrew could not attend the dinner so Andy accepted the award on his behalf.



The **Millennium Trophy**, a fine silver salver in recognition of a contribution to TOGline was awarded to **Ian Thompson** for an interesting, humorous and considered article on the Croatian Sailex out of Dubrovnik.



**For the Navigator’s Tankard** the very worthy recipient was **Alan Mortimore**, who has organised and skippered some



ambitious voyages involving long passages and night sailing, most notably off Pembrokeshire, Ireland and the Isle of Man.



**The Commodore's Cup** was awarded to the newly retired membership secretary **Paul Ratcliffe** as thanks for his decades of assiduous service in prising our very modest membership fees out of occasionally forgetful members and maintaining our members' database.



**Finally, the Norman Allen Trophy**, in recognition of our inimitable founding Presiding Master was awarded to his long standing deputy and foil, **Arthur Wood**, still in post today and an ever reliable source of sailing wisdom and anecdotes about various scrapes and mishaps both at sea and on land.

**Also worthy of note** is that last year we managed our best ever performance in the **Old Pulteney Maritime Heroes Awards** with three members each receiving a bottle of fine 12 years old Speyside malt – and a certificate. We based our nominations on our Caribbean adventures with *Joule* and *Dalton* and the awards went to Adrian Johnson, Stewart Cook and myself. More significantly this gained TOG good publicity in the local press such as the Leicester Mercury and Newark/Southwell Advertiser and a live interview on BBC Radio Nottingham – the latter having already generated potential new members.

#### Postscript

**In the late 1950s** I started sailing at the age of thirteen in a clinker-built Burnham dinghy among the herring drifters in the harbour of Tarbert, Loch Fyne, my father's village. At school I sailed a Cadet dinghy on a reservoir in Hertfordshire. Back in Scotland I represented Stirling University in regattas at Helensburgh sailing Larks and had an interesting encounter with *HMS Resolution*, Britain's first Polaris nuclear submarine – we gave way! More sailing followed in a Wayfarer at Wells-next-the-Sea and then the Notts County Sailing Club at Hoveringham. Having sailed offshore in my brother's various

yachts since the 1980s in the mid-90s I decided to refresh my theory with RYA Dayskipper then Yachtmaster courses at Brackenhurst College under the late, great tutor "plumber" Mike Hall who started my long downfall by introducing me to TOG and its sailexes. Later, Norman roped me in to Council as Administrator (no mere "secretary") and I did that job for some ten years before succeeding Keith Stedman as Presiding Master. Over the years I joined many TOG trips and along the way Norman persuaded me to gain the RYA/MCA Coastal Skipper Certificate of Competence (now Yachtmaster Coastal) and for a time it seemed that Mark Davis and I skippered most of the TOG trips. However we now have several more enthusiastic skippers. In recent years thanks to them and other council stalwarts we have organised and continue to offer an impressive range of sailings expeditions (hence "sailexes") in UK waters and overseas. I have made some great friends through TOG and done much splendid sailing in many beautiful and exotic locations. I aim to continue and wish TOG well under my worthy successor as Presiding *Grand* Master, Andy McWilliam.

TOG's annual dinner raffle contributed £305 to the RNLI. Such donations are used to finance new lifeboats and facilities such as the new Shannon class lifeboat, here seen under test on Scarborough's famous south beach driving ashore ready to be winched on to the new tractor based launch and recovery system. The lifeboat has top speed of 25 knots and is powered by water jets rather than a prop.



## REPORTS



### End of season sailex October 2016 - PART I

**A new member's perspective**  
by Jacqueline Oliver.

**After not having sailed** for a good two years, I decided to join TOG's End of Season sailex out of Hamble. There were to be three boats, each with a crew of

five. A little daunting at first, being thrown together with a bunch of people I did not know; but soon the banter started to flow. My boat, *C'est Si Bon*, was ably skippered by Stewart Cook, with first mate Neil Macfarlane, Doug Sutherland and another new member, Ian Stevenson as crew. Ian arrived with enough kit and luggage for a global circumnavigation, along with his passport; I did gently remind him that last time I checked, there were no border controls on the Isle of Wight. **Like myself**, Neil is also an avid Marmalade maker; so a "Marmalade Off" ensued at our first breakfast (I think it may have been a draw). I also tried to endear myself to my new-

found “mates” by making a batch of Coffee-Pecan squares, but skipper Stewart decided they were put to better use a missiles to throw at Paul Burghart’s boat when they got too close.

**As we slipped our lines out of Hamble**, the weather was glorious with a gentle breeze. We spent the day pottering about in the Solent, practising tacking and (controlled) gybing. After being handed the helm, the wind subsided a little as I executed a less-than-perfect tack with a Wightlink ferry bearing down on us; thanks to Stewart, we didn’t get quite close enough to count the rivets in its hull. Friday night was spent at Shepards



Wharf Marina in Cowes.

**Next morning** we set off from Shepards to rendezvous at Gurnard North Cardinal mark with the other two boats in our party. The intention was to follow a course around the channel and cardinal marks devised by Dave Bond. As this was on the Saturday, the Solent was chock-full with various races with which we had to avoid tangling. (*They get VERY upset....Ed*). We had to abandon the last two marks on the course as the wind died and it was time to make passage on to Yarmouth.

**For our last evening**, all three crews dined together at “On The Rocks” in Yarmouth, where there was a prize-giving ceremony for the round-the-marks course.

**On our final day** before handing the boat back to Fairview Sailing, we cruised a little way up the Beaulieu River before turning around to head back to Hamble.

**All in all great crew**, great trip and fab skipper; I for one will be back.



### **“Bring a friend” Weekend on The Solent. PART II.**

*by Ruth Edwards*

**Meeting up in Hamble Marina** on Thursday afternoon gave everyone the chance to get to know their skipper, crew and boat. Our Beneteau 37 “Soiree” was expertly victualled by skipper Dave Bond, who with newcomers

Mick and Mark (aka Grego), Mate Nev, and I, spent an enjoyable evening eating in the “Victory” (good food as always) and relaxing ready for an early morning departure. Each day Dave prepared a full English breakfast which set us up nicely for our Solent sail – much appreciated, thanks Dave!!.

**Friday dawned with cloud**, breeze and enjoyable sailing out to No Mans Fort and return. Mick gained his sea legs helming for the first time, and we all shared the wheel as we tacked out and ran back into West Cowes for the night. Meals were taken in on-shore restaurants both nights, making this a bit different from longer TOG sailxes which include on-board home-cooked cuisine. Returning from our dinner, a quick glance at the Ship AIS website showed all three boats, Soiree, Tres Jolie and C’est si bon, nestled in Cowes Marina. But whilst C’est si bon was indeed a sailboat, Soiree and Tres Jolie appeared to be

Bulkers of 16591 and 38567 gross tonnage respectively. Now, I know we’d had a good meal but I didn’t think we’d eaten *that* much.....

**Saturday brought the same weather**, and by sheer coincidence (*expect us to believe that...? Ed*), all three yachts lined up near the same buoy at the same time, and followed the same course round twelve or more marks. This was *not* a race, you understand; we were merely comparing the performance of three identical craft. The Skippers, having passed control to their Mates and crew, had a day off, although Dave was seen inspecting the deck of “Soiree” – and checking the width of its genoa – for quite some time. As this wasn’t a race, no protest flag was raised and we sailed into Yarmouth in the only rain of the weekend.

**Little is known of Dick Turpin’s sojourn** in Yarmouth but his descendants are alive and well running the marina it seems, judging by the berthing fees and token machines. Refreshed by the (expensive) showers we headed for “On The Rocks” to enjoy a splendid meal served on sizzling hot lava stones. Sunday morning saw us extracting ourselves from the melee (we were second in a four raft), heading across the Solent, having a most enjoyable sail into Beaulieu river where we tied up for lunch at Buckler’s Hard in glorious sunshine. All too soon it was time to turn east and return Soiree to Hamble marina where, with the assistance of Fairview’s staff, Dave manoeuvred her into the tightest mooring spot ever. Our journey to and from Hamble was uneventful and took just three hours, which, with being able to muster the previous evening and stay on the boat, would make weekend sailxes a very practical possibility. This format seemed to appeal to the new sailors who enjoyed their experience, so, with our sincere thanks to organiser John and our Skippers and Mates (plus the weather gods!) here are the words of our newcomer friend Mick:



### **Soiree in the Solent 6-9/10/16**

#### **PART III!!**

*by Mick Manning*

**This was my first time on a sailing boat** and it was all made possible by my brother-in-law Neville: he and I married sisters. I have through the years heard much of Nev’s love of sailing and it became infectious. When the opportunity arrived, on TOG’s “bring a friend and have a go”

week-end, I jumped at the chance and my expectations were really high!

**Guess what?** Those expectations were hugely exceeded and I had a truly wonderful and exciting week-end. The sailing was better than I expected, (especially not having a race on the Saturday!!!), as was the company. The social aspect of the whole week-end with 3 boats and 15 crew was great. David was a brill skipper and an excellent breakfast chef and we seemed to all “gel” very well. I enjoyed meeting Grego and also Ruth whom, believe it or not, my wife and I met some 29 years ago when she and her husband moved to this area. Anyway thank you all for making it a very memorable week-end, and I hope that when the Skippers meet shortly, they can put together a similar week-end next year.

Many thanks and best wishes.

Mick (Mr 50%) Manning!!

*Also from Ruth, a non-TOG sail, but VERY interesting and challenging....(Ed)*

**“It’s sailing, Jim.....”**



**An Atlantic coast cruise** - the final leg of a delivery from the UK to Gibraltar - sounded just the job, having had to shelve our TOG Croatian adventure until next year. Cliff and Mick\* had in stages taken Mick's boat as far as Portugal; the end was in sight: would I care to join them?

**We arrived in Lisbon** - 35deg.C - and leaving a trail of bemused Portuguese behind as we sought the main bus station (there are three of them apparently), we finally caught up with Mick and headed north to Nazaire. His Bavaria 31 was loaded and we set off next morning into the Atlantic sunshine. After a glorious sunset we sailed through the night on engine, arriving in **Sines** that afternoon. An interesting place, half heavy industry, half historic buildings, with Vasco di Gama's castle prominent, I'd have liked to explore, but limited time meant an early heads-down ready for the following day's leg to **Lagos**. The fine weather held; the iron sail was used throughout to supplement the cloth ones and, reaching Lagos as dusk fell, we were able to see the truly amazing rock formations on the way in.

**At this point** both sails, which had operated smoothly so far, went on strike. The genoa furling mechanism was askew, and the main stuck in the mast. The genoa remained furled for the rest of the voyage but the main was eventually coaxed out of the mast and could be used once more with care.

**Leaving Lagos at dawn** we headed out across the **Gulf of Cadiz**.

*The next 43 hours were spent at sea.....*

**Gradually, the land started fading** from view into the mist; as we steered south-east a couple of yachts tracked east along the coast but they too were eventually lost to sight. Daylight gave way to a clear night sky with all the stars imaginable; the sea was calm and the air quite warm; an unforgettable time.

We took watches through the darkness, the only vessels passing in the far distance being two liners. And in the middle of the Gulf, just north of our track, was one object, marked by a flashing yellow light. In the pitch black, we left it to port, wondering what it could be, but grateful for confirmation (aside from the plotter) that our track was good. Dawn rose and the next morning was just as idyllic: surrounded by sea in the sunlight, no land in view. Then distant shapes on the horizon slowly turned into shadowy mountains, the coast came clearer, and large vessels were seen to the south leaving the **Strait of Gibraltar**, through which we would pass shortly – or so we thought. Arriving off Barbate we admired its prominent lighthouse and hastily substituted the Spanish courtesy flag for the Portuguese one flown so far.

**Keeping contact with the Spanish coast**, we headed south for the Strait as night started to fall. Our speed slowly diminished with the daylight and Mick was convinced we'd snagged a pot buoy off Barbate. Turning 180deg we sailed more quickly and proved it was indeed the Strait's currents and winds conspiring against us. From then on conditions worsened and the next twelve hours were spent battling the waves at 1.5 knots or less. (An ex-navy colleague later told me their minesweeper had once been reduced to 2kts, so we did well I guess!). Amidst all this yo-yoing, **Tarifa** put on an excellent fireworks display which took our mind off things for fifteen minutes. Our hopes of reaching Gibraltar by the previous evening had vanished, and rounding the headland produced no respite as we thrashed up and down despite hugging the coast as closely as we dared. The lights of Gibraltar came ever nearer as we sought the various marks which would lead us into its bay, alive with shipping and bright lights, and in peaceful waters at last we entered the northernmost marina, La Linea. Arriving at 5.00 a.m. we tied up to the fuel bay and, exhausted, fell into our bunks and slept.....for two hours, until it was time to move and leave the bay clear for outgoing craft. Allocated a distant

berth we tied up again and slept....for another hour, when the Spanish police knocked on the hull demanding our passports. Three sleepy heads popped out of the cabin, whereupon the policeman suspiciously asked "and the other???" We assured him our curious "ménage a trois" was indeed complete and we harboured no stowaways. He continued to eye us doubtfully whilst photographing skipper Mick's passport, then we were left in peace. Later that day, sanity (in part) restored, we restocked a little and ate ashore in Spain, enjoying the typically continental street cafe culture.

**Having reached our goal**, we now had two free days before Mick's boat was lifted out for inspection, and we flew back to the UK. The weather obliged most of the time as we explored La Linea and crossed the border (by foot) into Gibraltar for a day.

**A week to remember – and learn from, as always.**

### **Majorca – Round the Island – 8<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

*by Graham Wassall.*

Sun Charter : Sun Odyssey 409 :

**TRUE LOVE**

Graham Wassall, Clive Crankshaw, Ian Davies, Suzanne Haynes



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#### **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October**

Luton to Palma - Easyjet - 11.25 - 14.40 - Good flight, great times

Taxi to Real Club Nautico de Palma - €25 - 30 minutes

Tip 1 : Ask the driver to take you to your berth as the main pontoon is about half a mile long !!

Tip 2 : Pre-order provisions as the supermarkets are a Taxi ride away.

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#### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October**

Palma to Puerto de Soller - 45nm - 8 hours – arrived 16.00hrs  
Beautiful scenery, especially when you sail past Isla de Dragonera

Tip 1 : IB pontoon is half the price of Tramontana Marina or pick up a ball.

Tip 2 : If you get time, ride on the wooden Tram to the town of Soller - €6 each way



Puerto de Soller is gorgeous, within a large Cala ( Bay ). Very good facilities & restaurants.

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#### **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October**

Puerto de Soller to Alcudia - 42nm - 9 hours ( due to unfavourable winds & weather )

Sail past mountainous cliffs with few options to anchor.

Alcudia has a large modern marina with good facilities & restaurants in the Marina & Town.

Another option is Puerto Pollenca in the next bay

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Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October

Alcudia to Puerto de Ratjada - 22nm - 4 hours - arrived 16.00hrs

An easy sail across the Bahia de Alcudia

Tip : Contact the Harbour Master before entering the harbour or get a b\*\*\*\*cking from him.

Ratjada is a lovely little town - very German (don't mention the war, Pike!) - good restaurants - simple facilities.

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Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October

Ratjada to Porto Colom - 22nm - 4 hours - arrived 15.00hrs

Another lovely sail down the East coast of Majorca with plenty of options on the way for lunch.

Tip : The IB pontoon is much cheaper than Club Nautico - book ahead if possible. Moorings are part of Club Nautico. A Beautiful natural harbour, but surprisingly few bars & restaurants. Good facilities and a nice place to chill out.



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Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October

Porto Colom to Puerto La Rapita - 25nm - 5 hours - arrived 14.00hrs. A good sail around the southerly tip of Majorca (Punta Salinas) with an option to go to Isla de Cabrera (an uninhabited National Park). A permit is required to stay overnight.

Tip : Maybe eat on board as there are only a small number of restaurants some way from the marina.

A modern marina with a bar & restaurant, with a lovely beach alongside.

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Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October

La Rapita to Palma - 25nm - 5 hours - arrived back at 13.00hrs



Fabulous views of the City of Palma.

Tip 1 : Refuel before leaving to avoid the queue for the fuel pontoon.

Tip 2 : Visit ABACO , you are ready for a romantic cocktail.



Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October

Palma to Luton

We had a Taxi from our berth on the pontoon for the 15.40 to Luton for 17.20 - perfect !!

The end of a fabulous sailing week that I would recommend to everyone.

*(In view of the impending sailex to Majorca, I am very grateful to Graham for this article. Useful advice therein...Ed)*



### IPSWICH TO BELFAST VIA SCOTLAND.....

by Arthur Wood

**Jim, a native of Belfast** had escaped the troubled city as soon as he had finished his training as a joiner . He learned the tricks of the building trade in London before establishing his own business in Lincolnshire. In his early forties, he decided to take a

year off and go on an ocean cruise

**In order to achieve this end** he ordered an Oyster 47 and did an RYA day skipper theory course and had a couple of weeks sailing as crew with Oyster's delivery skipper. By July 2003, his boat was ready and he was eager to get going.

**His plan was to sail to Belfast** so as to pick up some of his old school mates and go exploring starting in dreaded Republic of Ireland and then heading for the sunshine. But he needed some help to get to Belfast and was willing to pay his crew's expenses. His night school tutor, a TOG member, put him in contact with me so Brenda and I joined him at Ipswich





.His yacht **SAILAWAY** was a brand new vessel with all the latest navigational aids and equipment including radar. The only thing missing was food and drink so we all went shopping and Jim paid.

**Wed 9th July 04.00** Departed Ipswich and motored out to sea and turned North. It was calm and sunny all day with good visibility and lots to see .In the evening we met the square rigged **ENDEAVOUR** heading slowly South under full sail. During the night we passed through the North sea gas and oil fields. These rigs are lit up like Christmas trees and as much as 300 metres high.

**Thursday dawned calm and sunny** but without any views as we were out of sight of land. We unpacked and fitted the bimini sunshade continued under engine. This was not unpleasant as there was no engine noise or vibration. In the afternoon a breeze arrived and we were able to sail. During the night the wind increased .

**Friday at dawn** it was gusting f8 and forecast to get worse so we altered course and had a speedy sail to Montrose. Here we



moored for lunch at a chip shop....then sleep... then dinner at a chinese and more sleep. By then we had completed 360NM in 52 hours.

**Saturday was a fine day** with a light breeze so we motor-sailed North. During the morning, Jim got quite excited by a phone call from Belfast. "It's the glorious 12<sup>th</sup>, the Battle of the Boyne, we must hoist the flag". So up went the Red Hand of Ulster. Once past Rattray Head we turned West into Moray Firth.

**Long before dawn on Sunday**, we were anchored off the entrance to the River Ness and the Caledonian Canal. Jim was eager to get going, but the waterways people only work 08.00 to 18.00 so we slept. At 07.30, we moored in sunshine at Clachnaharry sea lock behind other boats which had been there all night. Jim was not pleased at having to wait and to pay £210, but this canal is no place to be in a hurry. There are 29 locks and 10 swing bridges which have to be operated by waterways's staff and most often there are other vessels involved. There are also 4 lochs which are the easy bit. It is only about 6NM to Loch Dochfour which connects directly with Loch Ness, but that 6NM took longer than the 2 lochs. We reached Fort Augustus by 17.30 and moored for the night behind the tall ship **T.S.ROYALIST**, having travelled 26NM in 10hrs. Jim was disappointed at our progress.

**Monday was another sunny day** and we were sitting in the

cockpit for breakfast by 07.30, ready to go and ascend the 5 lock staircase which was our next challenge .At about 08.30 the lock supervisor came to say that the boats waiting at the top would be the first to move and we would have to wait at least 3 hours. Jim was not amused.

**At 11.45** we started and entered the first lock, together with several other large, expensive boats, some of which were on charter to very unskilled holidaymakers. They had no idea what fenders are for and were happily crunching the granite lock wall.

**Jim was getting very concerned** about his nice new boat. We went out of the top lock at 13.00 and proceeded to the next lock where we stopped and had our lunch while waiting for the lock keeper to return from his.

**Once out**, we made reasonable time through Loch Ioch and Loch Lochy to Gairloch where we had to stop for the night after less than 10NM. Jim was not pleased, but resigned himself to a lazy evening. Brenda and I enjoyed a very pleasant, sunny evening, with splendid scenery including the Ben Range.

**At 08.00 on Tuesday** they let us though Gairloch lock and we continued to Banavie where we had to wait an hour to be able to enter Neptune's Staircase, which involves 10 locks and took 2 hours. By 14.30 we were moored at Corpach sea lock ready to go back to sea. But this lock can only work when there is enough water on the seaward side so we had to wait until 17.05 to go through. We had travelled 50NM in 57 hours. Jim was exhausted and allowed me to take over while he went



to his bunk. We were in Loch Linnhe with no wind, but full sunshine, blue sea and sky and lot of cetacea leaping about. I set the autohelm, opened a box of wine, and let **SAILAWAY** take us to the Firth of Lorn where Jim took over and we retired.

**Before dawn on Friday**, I was called up on deck. Jim was confused as we were stationary despite having the engine going at top revs. To my surprise, we were in the Sound of Islay heading into an 8 knot tide which had another 2 hours before it began to slacken. When I explained this to Jim he asked me to take over and went to bed.

**We turned round** and soon left the sound turning West. A fresh breeze arrived with the sun and we had a very enjoyable sail for the rest of the day. By 09.00 we were looking at Rathlin Island in the distance when Jim came up to see what was happening. "We can't go that way - it's too dangerous. Rathlin Island is full of Catholics" he said and insisted we get over towards Kintyre..... We finally rounded off with a longer sail, arriving at Belfast early in the evening having cruised 762 NM in 8 days.

*(Again – a timely report on passage through the Caledonian Canal, in view of the upcoming Scottish Trip....Many thanks Arthur - Ed)*



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



- **Thu, Apr 6, 2017 4:00pm Sun, Apr 9, 2017 5:00pm**
- **SSS17**  
A Long Weekend in the Solent ahead of the Easter Weekend to start the year.  
**Lead Skipper Andy McWilliam**  
Member cost £185 per berth.

**13th to 27th May 2017 a 2 week Sailex**

**SCO17 Scotland - The Best of the North.** Lead Skipper Alan Mortimore

Starting near Oban with a plan, weather permitting, to sail north passing Skye and up the west coast of Scotland round Cape Wrath to the Orkneys. To spend several days in the Orkneys before sailing south down the East coast of Sutherland to Inverness and back to Oban via the Caledonian Canal. An opportunity of a lifetime. There may be opportunities for people to sail for just the first or second week if they are flexible on timings and there is a balance of people between the first and second week. Estimated cost for this trip will be **£790** for the full two week duration and **£400** per week for members allocated a place on either the first or second week of the Sailex.  
1 berth remaining.

**Sailing Skills - Long Weekend**

- **Thu, Jun 15, 2017 4:00pm Sun, Jun 18, 2017 5:00pm**
- **SSW17**
- Sailing Skills Long Weekend - Details to be provided later - planned location the Solent. **Lead Skipper Paul Burghart**  
**Member cost £185 per berth**

**Welsh Wonder 2017**

- **Fri, Aug 11, 2017 4:00pm Fri, Aug 18, 2017 5:00pm**
- **PEM17**  
A week sailing from Pembrokeshire Details to be confirmed. Lead Skipper TBA  
Estimated cost £310 per berth. Price includes yacht charter and outboard for the dinghy

**Spanish Jaunt - Palma Majorca**

- **Sat, Sep 9, 2017 4:00pm to Sat, Sep 16, 2017 10:00am.**
- **MAJ17.**  
The Spanish Jaunt - Lead Skippers Dave Bond and Paul Burghart.  
**After a couple of very successful years** in Croatia, this years "Warm Weather Trip" will be a Spanish Affair.  
Many of us have been around the Island (of Wight!) but the aim of this trip is to circumnavigate the Beautiful Spanish Island of Majorca.  
**The Boats will be from Palma Marina**, which is next to the airport, so transfer times will be just a few minutes!  
We intend to charter a couple of 2016 Beneteau Oceanis 41.1's (a bit like the one shown below). Also, currently there are a couple of new 2017 Hanse 415's available. Boats in Majorca do tend to book up rather quickly so members are urged to make their bookings asap to enable us to reserve the boats and also to avoid disappointment.  
**Likely cost for the boats** will be in the region of **£625 - £660** per person assuming 5 crew per boat, this price includes outboards, towels and linen and boat cleaning upon departure.  
Flights will be booked separately and at the moment seem to be **£240-260** return.  
Fully booked.

**End of Season Sailex - Bring a friend.**

- **Thu, Oct 5, 2017 4:00pm Sun, Oct 8, 2017 5:00pm**
- **EOS17** Details to be confirmed **Lead Skipper Dave Bond**  
Member cost £185 per berth

*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.