



TOGLINE

The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group
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WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022/23

Quahog: A large, saltwater clam that lives in a shell composed of two ashtrays.....



Greetings and salutations one and all. A special TOGline this quarter. So much on the BVI trip that I felt it merited some space (Also a shortage of alternative text..)
A wonderful time by all accornts and so many pictures!

I hope you don't mind and do enjoy it.....
Until the next quarter, when hopefully we have more

tales, can I wish you all well and HappySailing when you go.!

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

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

Title: Did you hear we went to the BVIs? Jan 2023....by John Bryant et al....

15 days, 9 near strangers, a 47ft catamaran, named Knotty Cat and the British Virgin Islands – what a great TOG SAILEX.....health warning many great photos, sailing exploits, alcohol, animals and some bare skin....

Thursday 26th January. Lead Skipper Adrian Johnson ably assisted by Ross Ryan and Will Russell, plus a crew comprising Diane Johnson,



John Bryant, Diane Rowbotham, Aideen Maguire, Steve Hedgecock and Kathryn Hinsliff-Smith (soon to be Ryan). The team assembled at Antigua airport for the short hop, with InterCaribbean Airways, to Tortola the largest island in the BVI's.

The pre-arranged taxi transfer saw us reach the marina and board Knotty Cat, previously known as Forever Young, for our first night on board before the official hand over the following morning. Kathryn volunteered to take the pursers role at the Sailex pre-meeting, and do a first shop “online” with Bobby's Supermarket. This was delivered to

the boat, with fridge and frozen items stowed by the supermarket guy before we arrived, even though he got the fridge and freezer mixed up, soon



sorted. Stowed gear, then a quick trip for some to sample Peg Leg's and the first of our rum punches and Carib beers.



Friday -After handover and fuelling, we left Nanny Cay marina at mid-day with our first destination Norman Island and to our first



snorkelling (assisted with a local to pick up our 1st buoy) before moving round the corner to The Bight and the famous 'Willy Ts'

No one was up for jumping from the platform onboard, although a certain female crew member did earn a bottom slap and tattoo, guess where?



First of the t-shirts

purchased, followed by an evening meal on board.

Great that Bobbies, the local supermarket chain, offer a provisioning service although only the purser knew exactly what was ordered... how much guacamole?

Saturday – Early departure at 7.30 over to Jost Van Dyke Island, intending to pay a visit to [Sloppy Joes](#) after more snorkelling and swimming ashore.

First sight of a turtle, but he was too shy to wait for snorkellers. While relaxing, Will took every opportunity to strip off and dive in his boxers, first to retrieve a plastic bag he thought was rubbish, but it contained \$50US, then a little later retrieve a plastic bin that went for its own swim.

\$50 !! manna from heaven? Nope it was Steve's soggy dollars. Beautiful clear blue waters, all nine set off ashore for 5pm pre diner drinks at the Soggy Dollar bar....it was shut that day!

Their mistake, as we wandered in to Gertrude's instead to find that we simply made our own cocktails...so that was rum punches, pina coladas, their own painkiller and an original created by Kathryn, sorted before our evening meal at the Stress-Free bar. Great food and party games (Jenga and Connect 4). Special night as Ross and Kathryn announced their engagement, the formalities completed in Antigua 3 days earlier...this was going to be a long engagement party!

Sunday – Another agreed early start as we left White Bay on Jost Van Dyke island headed to a small bay for great snorkelling, before crossing to Cane Garden Bay, Tortola, for our fourth night. Dinghy ashore to a dock that was condemned, but it looked the same as last year so we used it! Ashore we found Rhymer's Beach Bar as before for another Carib and the odd Pina Colada, then

moving on to Myett's Garden Grill (I think) for a meal with a good group – some dancing.



Monday – The BVI virgins amongst the crew put ashore once again to visit the Rum Distillery. All aboard, we set sail at 11:30 with Diane R at the helm in pretty rough conditions, to motor-sail round to Beef Island, finding a sheltered point to anchor overnight. We had to get in quite close to the shore so anchor alarms set, hoping we might hear one and then down to another of Adrian's Dark 'n Stormy.

Tuesday – very early start (6.30) who's idea was this? We headed to Leverick Bay on Virgin Gorda



to arrange a visit to the famous Baths. We picked up a mooring buoy at 9.30 securing the services of Cyril a local taxi driver...well he was a character, having previously spent 15 years working for the man who owns Necker Island.



We enjoyed a guided and steep tour of the island,



wondering if his jalopy was going to make it. It would appear that screeching the engine in 1st gear was acceptable. But Cyril made good by stopping at places for photo-shoots, then taking us to his favourite place, Spring Bay, before heading to the National Park and [The Baths](#). Spring Bay was indeed special and for some it became their favourite spot, so much so after our visit to The Baths, we headed back for snorkelling, swimming and photos. The Baths were definitely a must see, but as one has to wade through water and clamber over the gigantic boulders taking too much gear was not a good idea.



We finished at a bar where many sampled fresh coconut milk, coconuts decapitated in front of us, with a straw, and maybe a shot or two of rum.



Climbing out of the Baths National Park we found Mad Dog Bar so stopped for a snack, and a cocktail, before the return journey to Leverick Bay. Good old Cyril brought the jalopy round and took



care of our gear. Finally, another interesting journey back to the yacht with a stop en-route at Rite Way (another supermarket chain) for essential bananas, that kept on disappearing. We left the



mooring about 5pm heading over to Bitter End marina where we encountered a most annoying and disgruntled shore crew.



This was our most expensive overnight stop at over £150 for the mooring, with power, but NO water and a large restaurant bill (bottle of wine £56 each) but we were on holiday and everything was split 9 ways.

We all agreed this was a very special day....it was now obvious that every day was going to be special, what would tomorrow bring?

Wednesday – Slipped the marina at 7.30 with Will at the helm, would he ever get a turn to switch the engines off and hoist the sails? Our final destination [Anegada](#) for two planned nights in Setting Bay. On the way, we dropped off at Saba Rock to check it out and have a drink, surprisingly we found this to be a lot less expensive than Bitter End so planned a return visit.



Off once again we circled Necker Island and decided it was ok but perhaps, we should head to our planned destination.



We were after lobster and Anegada is the famed place to eat freshly caught wild lobster. After setting the terms for the speed of food delivery at Potters, the lobster didn't disappoint having seen them preparing them earlier in the day. Lobster was followed by dancing to some great tunes and then the limbo dancing. The local lobster catcher was clearly not expecting any competition



but then up stepped Aideen...let's just say he was glad when her boat taxi departed (the rib) and we departed, along with Kathryn who limped her way back after an incident with a low limbo attempt (should have known better). Meanwhile both Diane's wisely decided it was better to stick to drinking and eating and avoid the limbo dancing.

Thursday – a day on land and the hire of a vehicle (a small truck with open sides and bench seating) for a tour of Anegada...the pilot book said there was much to see, including the flamingos, conch islands, museums, beaches, snorkelling, turtles and the Anegada iguana sanctuary.



Steve volunteered to drive or was he persuaded? and Kathryn, (now definitely injured), both got the front A/C seats and became the tour guide for 7 eager passengers. Flamingos – in the distance – no turtles (we just missed 3 being released) – conch shells out of sight or smelly, museums, both closed and the iguana's sanctuary, very small as it was the wrong time of the year to visit.

However, there was a highlight! We had lunch at the Bamboo Cafe with a UK MP, the BVI High Commissioner and BVI Commissioner of Police (see photo's below for proof).



We finished the tour at the famous Cow Wreck Bar and cocktails before heading back to the boat

for a meal onboard. Kathryn, who put the first

draft of this report together, could not remember who cooked dinner that night – it was Will and Aideen, and it was a fitting end to the day. Still only 3 jars of **guacamole** left.



Friday – Ross bagged the sail back which was champagne conditions, full sails no engine, just



bliss as we headed back to [Saba Rock](#) to pick up a mooring about 10 am (dirt cheap at \$30 plus free ice

and water). Another place with a red telephone box (this one was fully working). Today we had entertainment, with Will and Ross showing us how easy or hard it was at e-foiling, followed by Adrian and Ross hiring a Hobie Cat and whizzing around the bay. The rest of us taking it easy reading, drinking and thinking of our luck at staying in such a beautiful spot - this was another perfect day. That



evening we enjoyed an excellent meal at Saba Rock after the ladies descended on the shop, more t-shirts and hats purchased.

Saturday – What would today bring? The forecast wasn't looking too good for the next two days, indeed we decided we would seek a sheltered mooring due to the high winds and rain that were forecast. As Saba Rock offered us free water, with the mooring, our departure was delayed to fill the tank. We then headed to Spanish Town on Virgin

Goud which, like most of the main islands, was badly hit by Hurricane Irma in 2017. In fact, we saw remnants of what destruction 13 days of IRMA had caused to many parts of the BVI and Caribbean. Other parts we had visited such as Bitter End and Sabe Rock were totally destroyed and had been fully rebuilt, not so in Spanish Town.



Enroute, we stopped off at the Dogs, a range of islands. We anchored off Dog Island,

finding ourselves so close to the reefs that it was amazing just to jump off the boat and snorkel. Everyone had a go before lunch onboard. We then did a short two-hour sail to Spanish Town and a booking in the nearly deserted marina. Perhaps it would be full later? Off for local supplies and a meeting of Mama Africa, stated in our pilot the best roti's in the World.



However, she was just packing up having sold all her stock – looks of disappointment got a response. Mama Africa asked if we were going to overnight in Spanish Town? We confirmed, so she offered to make us a new batch and bring them down to her shop on Sunday morning at 8 am if we wanted – order placed. The marina facilities included a good shower block. Another stop for t-shirts. Our destination this evening was another famed restaurant (you by now get the gist of what we were doing, best places for food/drink and snorkelling mixed with great sailing). Coco Maya didn't disappoint, right on the water's edge, just north of the Baths, with lots of places to sit, chat and drink cocktails watching the sunset. This has to be one of the best spots for photos, and the one of Will and Aideen is a classic. By no means a cheap place with shared plates and plenty of unusual choices. This was our most expensive meal out.... but by now the purser didn't care and ordered another cocktail.

Sunday – Still no sign of high winds and rain so, after Will and Ross popped to buy provisions for the next two nights onboard and collect the ordered roti's for lunch, we set sail at 9am with Will at the helm...by now he was wondering why he never had those perfect champagne sailing days when he was helm? The winds this day were 27kts to 32kts with gusts. Our destination was Manchineel Bay on Cooper Island. No Boaty Buoys to pre-book here, just first come, first served buoys. Having said that, Will found a great mooring close to shore and other attractions. Approaching, it looked very polished and like something out of Cape Cod or an episode of Death in Paradise. Everything grey colour-washed and in pristine condition. All the buildings, including the famed rum bar, had been



completely destroyed and re built after IRMA. It was truly lovely with glorious blue and green water, near perfect sand, a bakery and

a boutique (but no t-shirts bought here). However, a visit to the Rum Bar which has over 475 varieties of rum to buy/drink, and the starting of a dance competition with the boat full of Yanks on the next buoy. For some reason, some members of Knotty Cat (5 males) were pleased when our boat swung close to the G-string bikinis?? Buoyed up with rum, which the yanks hadn't realised had been added to their bill (which they paid), after our evening meal we decided it was time to turn on the 'hits' and show them what us Brits are good at.... yes, pole dancing. Who knew that this TOG SAILEX would see three top pole dancers, outperform the Yanks and leave them whimpering? Even more extraordinary, is that one of the dancers was male, but since what happens on a sailex stays on the sailex, we couldn't possibly tell you who (unless you pay us).

Monday – We were determined not to count down to Day 15 we were still on Day 11 and what could be the highlights for today? We had experienced so much, sailed to some amazing places, formed some great friendships and taken some great photos and videos (available to buy). Today we had a planned linen/towel exchange with the charter company so we headed over to an agreed spot-on Tortola in the East of the Island (the direction was very important as you will see, read on).

The destination was Fat Hogs Bay. Very quiet with one or two other cats, it had a shallow channel but eventually we picked up a buoy, as it happened for free. The RIB was launched and 4 large bags of dirty laundry was taken to an agreed spot,

exchanged and after a stock up of provisions by Diane and Kathryn.



Five decided to eat on shore and John booked a water taxi or so he thought, at a local

place listed in the pilot. The afternoon was spent in the tender in search of snorkelling. We should have guessed that this was no ordinary bay... the majority of the coral was dead and was above water level and the locals had boats that had 3 – 4 engines of 50hp each... these locals really wanted to motor at fast speed. Plus, no fish and no good snorkelling to be seen.

18:30 and awaiting the booked water taxi, John recalled the restaurant only to be told they have no water taxi so if we wanted to eat ashore we would need to take the RIB. About half an hour later as we were preparing the RIB to go ashore, we heard the sound of semi-automatic gunfire clearly coming from the shore... binoculars needed15 mins later the local cops arrived (we didn't see the Police commissioner we had met earlier in our trip), for some strange reason the decision was made NOT to go ashore, can't think why? So, John re-called the restaurant to cancel the booking, they did not seem surprised. Nine for dinner on board and a call for Dark N Stormy's with less ginger beer and more rum. We left very quickly the next morning.

Tuesday – The destination for today was Sopers Hole and the famed Pussers Rum and [Pussers bar](#).



A good day for sailing and with the wind direction managed to get the CAT to goose wing. To

change things around we had lunch out, not expecting the American size portions – the US Virgin Isles just a short ferry ride away, and this is one of the ports that handles charter yacht entry from the US. The supermarket was the cheapest we had seen, even stocking Waitrose products. T-shirts purchased. Sopers Hole was home to a South African charter company with a 59ft catamaran (run by VOGAGE).inviting numerous requested inspections. It was awesome, with an eye-watering price tag to charte, even with

Yorkshire negotiating skills. Anyway, who needs a gin bar, an ice-maker, an induction hob, a dishwasher, a 5kWh battery to run everything, a skipper and chef?

Quiet night onboard as we were in recovering mode from the enormous lunches. It might have been



here when we heard the East side, around Fat Hogs Bay, is notorious for crime and we learnt it

was actually a drugs related murder! Well, I don't suppose this happens on every TOG sailex? So this was "murder in paradise".

Wednesday - Still not wanting to count down but two more full days left. How are we going to top off the already amazing experiences on this trip. We head to Peter Island for snorkelling and looking for the wreck of the original Willy T's at Key Bay, another casualty of hurricane Irma. The water was so clear, we could see the crow's nest along with a multitude of fish. This was a great bay and we stayed for lunch. We then travelled down to Norman Island, but this time Benuers Bay and this ended up being the best snorkelling, turtle and ray place from the whole trip. It was simply awesome.



Plenty of empty and new local buoys. We knew it would be good when, with a few crumbs off the boat, we were surrounded by blue and yellow fish and an adult barracuda under the cat. Off we jumped and soon found the most amazing shelf which ran along the length of the bay. It was like swimming in an aquarium. We snorkelled for hours, spotting turtles in the sea grass feeding, even swimming with a large turtle. This was beginning to top all the other days. More snorkelling and then Steve made an awesome chicken curry which was divine. More cocktails, at this stage using up all the various drinks we had collected, but saving the remaining low alcohol Becks for Will.

Thursday - Our last full day. We headed to Great Harbour, picking up a mooring buoy close to the

£115 million superyacht owned by the Blackberry guy. We received no invitation, but this was another nice spot for swimming and snorkelling. We had to be back at base tonight so, heading in at 16.00 for a fuel top up, but not before some RYA-level sailing instruction from that man who always gets the wind. We did a lot of tacks we recall. We safely got the boat docked and that was nearly that. Adrian had arranged for our last meal at Omar's, an Indian place in Nanny Cay with copious amounts of beer, cocktails and last of the kitty money. The charter company had allowed us to stay onboard until our pre booked taxi at lunch



time arrived to take us to the airport, spending the last of the \$ on more t-shirts, mugs and mementoes. Others spent a final hour at Peg Legs for the last Carib. The short hop with Inter Caribbean Airways to Antigua was on time and after a short stop over, it was time to board our BA fight back to Blighty. We left the UK in -2C with average BVI temperatures in the high 20s, minimal rain and sufficient wind every day to sail. We left with a heavy heart but with many glorious memories, new friendships, a love for all things rum and a warm glow. Would we do it again? Absolutely. It was a great TOG sailex made even more special with the company onboard. Thank you, all those that made it so special: Adrian & Diane, Will and Aideen, Diane & Steve, John, Ross & Kathryn.

P.S. Perhaps we should do a film night, we did take over 800 photos between us..... (*sounds great – Ed*)!!!





TOG 2023

2023 Sailing Programme
Trent Offshore Group
TOG Members and Friends



SCO23 Scotland the West Coast

Sat, Jun 24, 2023 5:00 PM Sat Jul 1, 2023 10:00 AM

This year Trent Offshore Group will be returning to Largs on the West of Scotland, this area should be on every one's bucket list. From here we will be able to take advantage of the magnificent sailing area, The Firth of Clyde. It is an amazing place to sail. With the many sea lochs, it offers a wide variety of passages, anchorages and scenery e.g. from the Kyles of Bute to Loch Fyne and Isle of Arran, to name a few. Sailing in June allows one to take advantage of the extended summer daylight hours, refreshments on deck viewing the setting sun.

We have two boats-chartered Spectre and Calico Moon.

This Sailex is fully booked

XCH23/7 Cross Channel Sailex 7 days duration

Mon, Jul 3, 2023 9:00 AM Sun, Jul 9, 2023 5:00 PM

XCH23/7 Cross Channel Sailex of 7 days duration will be led by Paul Burghart. A Elan 45 has been chartered from Lymington Yacht Charters for this event. (We earlier chartered an Dufour 425 which was withdrawn by the owner so have been obliged to charter a different yacht) This sailex will be a serious cross channel sail, Paul intends to make this one to remember.

This Sailex has two berths available.

XCH23/10 Cross Channel Sailex 10 days duration

Fri, Jun 30, 2023 5:00 PM Sun, Jul 9, 2023 5:00 PM

The Cross Channel Sailex of 10 days will be led by Phil Greetham. A Jeanneau 40.3 has been chartered from Lymington Yacht Charters for this event and there will be 6 berths available for members to book.

This Sailex is fully booked

PLY23 Plymouth and the Cornish Coast

Fri, Sep 1, 2023 4:00 PM Fri, Sep 8, 2023 10:00 AM

A return visit to Liberty Yachts, Plymouth for another year for a seven day (Friday to Friday) sailex led by Andy McWilliam. Two Bavaria 36 yachts have been chartered for this event and there will be 5 berths available on each yacht for members to book.

This Sailex has one berth available

EOS23 End of Season Sailex

Thu, Oct 12, 2023 4:00 PM Sun, Oct 15, 2023 5:00 PM

A return to the ever popular End of Season with Fairview Yachting on the Hamble and the Solent. We have booked two Oceanis 37's for this event and could add a third should numbers allow (as we did in 2022). Boarding will be permitted from 4pm on Thursday 12th October with skipper handover and overnight at Hamble, that will allow an early start on Friday 13th.

The event will be led by Dave Bond and 5 member berths will be allocated on each yacht so initially there will be just 10 berths available for members to book

This Sailex has five berths available

This sailex can only be confirmed with the committed support of members. All interested should book a berth on the TOG Booking system and communicate with John Bryant to confirm the berthing requirements on the catamaran. Final pricing and yacht selection will be communicated before making commitments with the charter company.