

Bear Essentials

'The Magazine of Cardiff Bay Yacht Club'

SUMMER 2014



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Photograph by Stuart Jones, Penarth Quays Marina

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Club Notes

Welcome to the Summer 2014 edition of Bear Essentials. What a great summer it's been. And that is reflected in this issue which is packed with your boating experiences from a novice's first cruise to racing around Britain and Ireland and ranging from home waters to Biscay and the Med. The SWOG series of cruises in company were again hugely popular with this year's pioneering nine-day 'superswog' being voted an outstanding success. But we're aware that while we've been putting this edition of Bear Essentials together members were still out there, doing things and going places. So as the nights lengthen, take the opportunity to look through those log books and write about your experiences. It doesn't necessarily need to be an epic voyage, perhaps just a day when everything went right; the sort of day that makes the disappointments, frustrations and discomforts that come in the same package pale into insignificance. Then, as the season ends, it will remind us of pleasures to come in the new year.

AROUND THE CHANNEL

Almost fifty yachts and motor cruisers from Milford Haven and Neyland marinas took part in a colourful and historic ceremony by accompanying the Mayor of Pembroke, Councillor Aaron Carey and the Mayoress, Natalie Carey, on the annual trip to assert the right of navigation to the town. The Mayor of Pembroke Dock, Councillor Pam George also attended as a guest. The flotilla assembled at the pool inside the river entrance and followed the mayor's boat upriver to the Mill Pool under the walls of the castle. The event was followed by a barbeque and live music on Neyland Marina patio.

New lifeboat Station

A new lifeboat station is being built at Portishead near Royal Beach to the east of Portishead Quays Marina. It will be capable of accommodating an Atlantic 85 inshore lifeboat and the 60 metre slipway which is also under construction will enable all-tide launching. The existing lifeboat is run by Portishead Lifeboat Trust but will be adopted by the RNLI when the new building is completed.

Welsh Yachting Association 'Re-branding'

The Welsh Yachting Association plans to re-brand itself. The WYA is the sport's governing body in Wales and the RYA's council for Wales but there has frequently been confusion over the distinction between the two bodies. Consultation is being held and it is expected that a resolution to change the name to RYA Cymru-Wales will be put the WYA's annual meeting this month.

Porlock Weir renovation

The lock gates of the inner harbour at Porlock Weir have been renovated and hydraulic paddles have been fitted to facilitate the scouring of the channel into the small port. Both the inner and outer harbours dry but small boats that cannot dry out can be accommodated in a pool at the entrance to the inner harbour. Larger craft can anchor off. Porlock Weir is keen to attract more visitors – the harbour is accessible one hour either side of high water – and potential visitors can check available space with the new harbourmaster, Roland Harding, on 01643 863187

If you've two million quid to spare you can move in next door to the yacht club!



That's the expected price of each of the six, detached, four-level, five-bedroom homes which are planned as part of the Cardiff Pointe development. They'll enjoy the same glorious views as our clubhouse but will come with their own internal lifts and a personal pontoon mooring. There's be few developments in the country that can provide that combination of luxury and location so get in fast – there'll be national interest. But that's a little way into the future. Much closer is the completion of Phase One of the development. We now have a first glimpse behind the steelwork and cladding which also provides clues about the residents who will be out new neighbours. Cardiff Pointe's ethos is to create a community of people with varying lifestyles and of all ages. The development will range from one-bedroom apartments, attractive to young professionals or perhaps as a pied-a-terre for a globe-trotting executive, to five-bedroom family homes. They're all high spec – German-built Rational units, Siemens appliances and Porcelanosa bathroom fittings and ceramics – and highly energy efficient. Cardiff Pointe has been planned not as an adjunct to Cardiff Bay or Grangetown but as a landscaped residential district in its own right supplemented by the sporting and cultural opportunities on its doorstep. The proximity of CBYC itself is highlighted. Publicity material matches the theme of 'A Home for You' with 'A Lifestyle That Knows No Bounds'. It points out that convenience shopping, popping out for a coffee or hitting the gym are all within easy reach of the front door. The serenity of living buy the water is balanced by the opportunity for adrenaline sports. Cardiff itself 'manages to be cool, cutting edge and demographically the youngest of the UK's four capital cities' which is possibly how potential residents might view themselves. Cardiff Pointe will attract people who might have considered the Vale of Glamorgan but think of themselves as more cappuccino and pilates than clay pigeon. Prices, too, are set to appeal to a wide range of people and age-groups. One-bedroom apartments begin at £150,000 and two-bed at £185,000. Four-bedroom house with garages start at £450,000 and with a roof terrace, from £475,000. the homes currently being completed overlooking the moorings on the river are five-bedroom and start at £750,000.

All of which prompts two thoughts. The impending proximity of so many young and active residents as neighbours could provide opportunities for the club. And if you're complaining about coughing up your £230 membership fee – think of the view and STOP WHINGING!

DECLAN THE DUCK DOES IRELAND



Our story starts with Declan, a brave little duck who asked some of his friends if they would like to circumnavigate his home country. Captain Kev found a suitable yacht in France, importantly with a French owner who was prepared to charter to a Welsh crew to race around Ireland.

Conveniently the qualifier for the race was 300 miles and the distance from Dielette to Wicklow was 330. Declan signed up the crew and his adventure was on.



The Scurvy Crew – Spot the Duck!

The race non-stop around Ireland, organised by Wicklow Sailing Club – a small club with a big heart. Our boat was a Class 40, and our crew consisted of : Kevin Rolfe, Richard Pettifor, Ben Redwood, Roger the cabin boy and our two rock stars who flew in especially for the race; Andrea (it's freezing here) Tithecott and Catherine (Bob) Colleypriest.

With Declan safely attached (with Duck tape of course) our cheerful crew departed Wicklow heading south in a stiff northeasterly. Ideal conditions for the boat and it quickly hit its stride.



Sadly the conditions didn't last and by the Fastnet Rock we were becalmed and we watched the majority of the fleet sail up to us. Declan was not a happy duck. We explained to him that Class 40s were quick in a breeze but slow in the light. There was talk of barbecuing the duck but our vegetarian Andrea put up a strong case, and given her legal background we gracefully conceded defeat.



Our Nav Station. The single burner cooker and sink are hidden behind!

Sailing up the back of Ireland reminded Declan of just how beautiful his country was, but we all refused to stop. A whale surfacing right alongside the boat certainly got our attention, although typically Declan didn't have his camera to hand!

We had another Class 40 in the race who we had heard had some fairly sharp youngsters on board, but we were quite happy at this point as we had them in sight just behind us. Their bright orange topped mainsail was to be in sight most of the 700 miles of the race. In the light weather our position in the race was getting worse and worse, but having another similar boat very close concentrated our minds.



As we made our way along the north of Ireland the wind started to build until eventually we found ourselves with a 100 mile beat into 25 to 30 knots of breeze to the finish. A Class 40 eats this up as it is a light boat, but carries threequarters of a ton of water ballast which can be pumped from side to side – or dumped completely. No sitting on the side of the boat with legs dangling for us. It also

has a fixed shelter just behind the coachroof so the crew even stay dry! It was a dark and stormy night and the early hours of Wednesday saw us banging and crashing towards the coast, but predictably we ended up crawling the last few miles in nearly calm conditions.

Thankfully we kept the other Class 40 behind us and the late breezy conditions saw us climb up the rankings a bit.

The rock stars flew home after a beer or two and a meal and the remaining trio of Kev, Richard and the cabin boy drank more beer waiting for the southerly gale to abate before taking the boat back to France. 1500 miles in two weeks and we got the boat back to France with three minutes to spare for our return ferry.

Declan says he will do it again, but not if we take BBQ sauce...



Declan at the Chart table working on strategy



Declan looking for whales with the Fastnet Rock in the background...and guess who we saw going around Lands End on the trip up to Wicklow...



...Challenge Wales!



After a proper shower and a change of clothes the crew (and Declan) celebrated.

...written by Rogest Dunston and Catherine (Bob) Colleypriest.



Protection call for threatened ships' graveyard

Half-buried on the foreshore, just a few miles from Cardiff, is one of the largest collections of marine artifacts on the coast of Britain. Poking out of the silt and grass are the remains of 86 vessels including 36 schooners and 8 trows as well as lighters, barges and workboats.

But this unique collection has no legal protection and is in danger of being lost through vandalism, theft and general decay.

This huge ship's graveyard is at Purton, just a mile east of the entrance to the Sharpness canal in Gloucestershire and it was started by accident. In the winter of 1909 a storm surge and successive high tides caused a massive landslip, taking away 60 metres of the foreshore of the Severn near the village of Purton and bringing the river close to the bank of the Sharpness Canal. The canal company's chief engineer, A. J. Cullis, was called out and realised the canal bank was in imminent danger of collapsing into the river with catastrophic consequences. This was a major ship canal upon which the prosperity of the city of Gloucester and the surrounding region depended. When opened in 1827 it was the largest and deepest in the world. As Mr. Cullis surveyed the destruction he would have been aware that the canal had recently celebrated two records – over 3,700 vessels travelling its length to Gloucester in one year carrying a million tons of cargo. Urgent action was needed and he called for any ship-owner who had redundant vessels to donate them to be scuttled on the site to shore up the remaining bank and trap silt to restore it. Some Stroud water barges were used and it was so successful that the offer remained open. Ship-owners soon realised that this was an acceptable and effective way of getting rid of old wooden vessels and for almost 140 years the practice continued. A favoured method was to tow the redundant vessel with two men aboard at top speed directly across the river at high water. The tug would veer away at the last moment, one man would cast off the tow and the other would steer the vessel straight into the bank. Ships grounded

in this way would then be holed to ensure they gradually filled with silt and that more would build between them. Over the years the silt became dry land and the bank was restored but the wrecks became accessible. Trophy hunters cut off nameplates and anything identifiable, thieves stripped them of copper and bronze, while timber was taken to provide antique beams in homes, to build fences and sheds and even for on-site barbeques. At one point an arsonist destroyed eight vessels. Now the site is watched over by a local volunteer group, the Friends of Purton. They are constantly engaged in archaeological surveys, research and the compilation of written and photographic evidence of what still exists. Each year, thanks to their efforts, new ships are identified.

The ships include the remains of three different types of trow, the Droitwich Trow, Bridgewater Trow and Newport Trow. At one time hundreds of these flat-bottomed sailing barges, unique to the Severn area, were the links between communities on the rivers of South Wales and the West Country and the seaports of the Severn. Today just one exists which makes these remains nationally significant. There's the coal barge *Severn Collier*, her name still faintly distinguishable on the transom, and the wood barge *Harriett*, built on the Kennet and Avon Canal near Devizes in 1905 and the only surviving example of a Kennet Barge. The *Harriett* is also the only one of the remains that is protected – it's a Scheduled Ancient Monument thanks to an intervention by former Culture Secretary Dame Margaret Hodge and by virtue of its stem, stern and ribs being above ground. There's the *Voltaic*, built in Perth in 1867, which carried slates from Porthmadog and the schooner *Dispatch*, built in 1888, which displays the world's only surviving examples of Fells Patent Knees – cast iron plates connecting the ribs to the deck beams. Iron knees, of which there were several different types, replaced the grown timber knees that had been in use for centuries but were difficult to obtain and

prone to rot. And there are a small fleet of ferro-concrete barges, built in Barrow-in-Furness for use on the Manchester ship Canal and which became blueprints for the barges that formed part of Mulberry Harbour after the D-Day landings in 1944.

As well as identifying the ships there the Friends of Purton also work to promote the site as a resource and learning tool for the community, academics and enthusiastic amateurs and continue to press for legal protection. "It's ironic," says Paul Barnett, one of the founders, "That the bank here is protected as a site of special scientific interest and yet virtually all the vessels that lie within it have no protection at all".

You can learn more by visiting:

www.friendsofpurton.org.uk

Two other wrecks visible in the Severn near Purton are not part of the graveyard but remnants of a much later tragedy. They lie close to the site of what was once a magnificent railway bridge, more than 4,000 feet long, linking the lines running on each side of the Severn from Gloucester and providing a short cut between Bristol and Cardiff. Opened in 1879, it had 21 spans and a swing bridge over the Sharpness canal. On a foggy night in October 1960, two small tankers, the *Arkendale* and the *Wasdale*, one loaded with petrol and the other with oil, were approaching Sharpness on the flood tide when they collided. Locked together, they were swept upriver and struck one of the bridge piers. Sparks ignited the petrol and the petrol ignited the oil. The collision also fractured a gas main carried by the bridge and when the gas ignited there was a huge explosion. People on the shore could hear cries for help coming from the river but there were no boats readily available and, as the heat from the fire burned off the fog, they could see streams of blazing oil racing upstream. There were eight crew on the two boats and, amazingly, four managed to swim ashore but four were lost. At daybreak it could be seen that one of the bridge's largest spans was missing and another was close to collapse. Below were the burned-out tankers with a length of railway track across them. The bridge never reopened and was demolished six years later. Today a huge stone tower stands on the bank of the canal, once the support of the swing bridge and today the principal remnant of a bridge which carried trains across the Severn ten years before the Severn Tunnel was built.

'SUPERSWOG'

provides laughs, good landfalls and a lot of great sailing

Mike Slater reports



For the first time this year the SWOG programme included a nine-day, cruise-in-company. Initially it was suggested it might comprise a circuit of the Bristol Channel via Dale and Lundy but at a planning meeting it became clear that many participants had different ports they wanted to visit en route. So an alternative was suggested – three rallying points at Dale, Lundy and Watchet giving time in between for crews do their own thing, singly or in groups.

And it worked perfectly. Thirteen boats signed up initially and most headed off on Saturday. Talking to some of the arrivals on the pontoon at Dale it was interesting how widely experiences varied of the same patch of sea between Tenby and St. Anne's Head. It was a case of 'what a difference a day makes' - or even a few hours – in the Bristol Channel. For Geoff Parr in Jonah it was a tiring slog into wind and a lumpy sea under motor. The same for Mike Golightly in Cazzy for whom the stretch up to Linney Head was complicated by gathering gloom and concern about Crow Rock. Hustler spent the night in Tenby and left via Caldy Sound after which Julian Martin and crew enjoyed a 'benign' sea and passage enlivened by watching Angle Lifeboat recover a broken-down workboat. The previous day Tenby lifeboat had done the same thing with the same workboat. "It's just a giant shed with an engine – you wouldn't get me to sea in it", said Julian. Antaries of London left on Sunday and over-nighted in Tenby where John Thompson enjoyed the quietest night ever at the anchorage and a pleasant sail to Dale via St. Gowan and Turbot Bank to avoid the weekday firing at Castlemartin. Boats that went to the West Country first enjoyed a good sail across on Monday. Sabriel came from Lundy where they had come across Neil Lambden in Zephyr, off to the Scillies, and David Boulton and Sarah Padfield in White Satin who were only out for the weekend but had opted for Lundy in the hope of catching someone from the SWOG. On leaving Lundy Sabriel initially motored into a lumpy sea but soon got a slight wind shift and was able to sail. "We saw another yacht and, as you know, the rules say that when two yachts are in sight of one another a race shall be declared", said Martin Gifford, "so we had a nice little ding-dong across and then we goose-winged all the way up the haven to Lawrenny."

Silver Spirit spent two days in Clovelly everyone swimming in the harbour in glorious sunshine. "The people there were brilliant," said Brian Israel. "From the harbourmaster to the local fishermen everyone

was helpful and friendly".

On Tuesday the days of slight seas, light breezes and bright sunshine continued. Some yachts went to South Haven, Skomer for lunch and anchored at Barafundle Bay for the night where Rob Cowley entertained on board *Libra Lass* with a curry while Jonah and Y Ladi Wen headed for Tenby. The sailing club there has been recently refurbished and the lounge terrace is the perfect place to watch the sun going down over Wales' prettiest harbour. On Wednesday most of the fleet headed for Lundy. I was sailing in Jonah, having joined at Dale, and we were one of several boats to be met by a pod of around a dozen dolphins off the north east corner of the island. On Thursday crews spent a day exploring. Well-kept paths circle and cross the island leading to a small Tudor castle, ruins of quarrymen's cottages and a tiny hospital, a mediaeval graveyard and a disused Victorian lighthouse - 96-feet high - that you can climb to the lantern room. The light was placed that high to make it distinctive and widely visible but mariners complained it was frequently obscured by low cloud and it had to be replaced by the two, lower, existing lights. In a rising wind we could see the catamaran *On YA Marx* flying in across the top edge of the Hen and Chickens race. There are few places capable of hauling the big cat out of the water so Mark and Kay Evans had taken the opportunity of the SWOG to spend two days on a drying mooring in Watermouth Cove antifouling the hulls. They arrived enthused

by the welcome and help they had received there, particularly from Keith the harbourmaster, who drives the tractor, runs the yacht club bar and does just about everything else. On the same morning and in complete contrast to the previous, balmy, five days, Sabriel roared across to Lundy touching nine-and-a-half knots in 24 knots of wind. "That's the Bristol Channel – don'tcha love it," said Martin. By wine-and-cheese-inspired snacks time the fleet was joined by *Polar Bear* and *Chelsea Girl*. The wind had died again and there were occasional showers but the event was enlivened by the presence of four seals which came close-in to stare curiously at the gathering. On Friday, everyone headed east. Jonah and *Hustler* went back to Cardiff and Y Ladi Wen followed on Saturday. The rest went to Watchet for the rally finale joined by *Dreamchaser* and *Harta* who came out from Cardiff. Everyone was delighted with the 'superswog' format which had managed to combine individual choice with some sailing in company and three hugely-enjoyable get-togethers. Yes, there were the occasional little dramas but, proportionately, probably not more than you'd expect from the overall sea hours logged. And 'Superswog' highlighted a big advantage of a cruise in company. The readily-available expertise and assistance meant that those few instances that might have caused major problems on an individual cruise were sorted cheerfully and quickly by the group. Definitely to be repeated!



OVERHEARD ON THE PONTOON!

"I fell out of the dinghy because for the first time ever the outboard started first pull – it was the shock."

"Ilfracombe! I'd rather chew off my own arm."

"Our plans are a bit like our diet...fluid."

"My first thought as I went under was how surprisingly warm Tenby harbour was".



In the Wake of Odysseus – Pam Price Thomas sails wine dark seas

Sailing is a new interest for me – it is something that I took up a mere four years ago and I would describe myself as a fair weather sailor – preferring light winds and sunshine to sudden squalls and a pronounced heel.

However, after a holiday in Majorca last September, where I saw yachts anchored offshore in clear blue waters, a flotilla holiday seemed to be a good idea. Being a sensible kind of guy, Paul was wary of the unknown and cautious about my enthusiasm, but after speaking to several people in the know, we decided to join a flotilla to sail around the Ionian islands.

We chose a Dufour 30, with a tiller, as this was the model that most closely resembled our own boat (Sadler 32). It was also blessed with an electric windlass, an in mast furling mainsail and it also sported a blue bimini.

We opted for the third and fourth weeks of June as we felt the sea would be sufficiently warm for swimming, but, at the same time, we would avoid the very hot weather and the school holidays. So we flew out from Heathrow on 15 June, with anticipation tinged with apprehension. In hindsight, I can truly say that this was a leap into the unknown for me. For example, mediterranean style mooring is a very different affair from our sideways on style. We were soon to learn that three pairs of hands are needed in order to execute the procedure smoothly. I had read up about stern to mooring with lazy lines, but was blissfully unaware of how to do this manoeuvre with an anchor instead of lazy lines.

Tifani met us at Preveza airport and we were taken to Paleiros, where we were introduced to “Ektor”, our home for the next two weeks, we bought some provisions and settled in. We were also introduced to Wil, who would skipper the lead boat, while Tifani was charged with organising the social side of things. The following day we set off from Paleiros, along with the five other boats which made up our flotilla, and sailed north along the mainland coast. We stopped

in Varto bay for lunch and a refreshing swim and then continued up the Lefkas canal to moor stern to on the town quay. The next day, as part of a convoy of boats we passed out of the canal via a strange floating swing bridge heading north to Parga. We were the last to arrive and found there was no room for us to raft up with the flotilla, so we anchored in the bay. There was a heavy swell throughout the night, causing our boat to rock crazily. I found it very uncomfortable and did not get any sleep at all. To make matters worse, our Jabsco was definitely broken – waste water was leaking on to the floor in the heads.

In the morning we made straight for the town quay at Lakka. Wil stripped the Jabsco and replace all the seals and Tifani then cleaned the boat for us. We took ourselves off to a quieter part of the bay, where we anchored. Lakka is a very pretty, sheltered anchorage in an almost landlocked bay and is surrounded by pines and olive trees. I keeled over and slept for twelve hours and woke feeling much happier.

En route to Mongonissi we were horrified to see a twister between Corfu and the mainland. Fortunately it was a few miles away from us and we enjoyed a good day sailing down the west coast of Paxos in a north westerly force 4 to 5. We arrived at the tiny island in late afternoon; no houses, no shops, just one taverna and one bar and nothing else. A cold water shower was available for one euro. Here we had to berth stern to, letting out the anchor in front of the boat when we were three boat lengths away from the quay. As I didn't have a clue about what I was supposed to do, we had several attempts, our efforts being hindered by a stiff cross wind and my ineptitude. When we were finally secured and feeling less stressed we enjoyed a communal meal at Theo's taverna. The fresh swordfish, which had been caught only hours earlier, was delicious.

There was thunder, lightning and torrential rain overnight, but the morning dawned bright and sunny. We had a long day's sail south in freshening winds, culminating in an

anxious wait for the floating swing bridge at Lefkas to open. We again had to tackle stern to mooring without lazy lines, but the flotilla team helped by taking our anchor out in their dinghy. Lefkas is a busy town and we explored the narrow back streets and replenished our food stocks. The flotilla was returning to base at Paleiros for the changeover. As we didn't fancy this, we arranged to leave the group and do our own thing for a couple of days. So we topped up with water and fuel and sailed south through the Lefkas canal. Keeping Meganisi and Skorpio on the starboard side, we had a pleasant sail past the west coast of Kalamos and around its southern tip to enter the well protected bay of Port Leone. The village here was abandoned sixty years ago, after it was destroyed by an earthquake. The church is still lovingly tended, but the other buildings have been left as ruins, which gives the bay an eerie atmosphere.

The erratic winds did not ease and the entire night passed in a series of calm spells alternating with violent gusts which caused the boat to shudder and the anchor chain to groan. The next day dawned to brilliant sunshine and a cloudless blue sky so we abandoned plans to sail to Kastos in favour of a well earned rest so we had a relaxing day.

After a leisurely swim and breakfast we set off for Sivota. No wind at first, but it picked up nicely around midday and we enjoyed a pleasant sail. We anchored in the bay to wait for Wil and Tifani to arrive then the whole flotilla, including four new couples, moored on a private pontoon belonging to Stavro's taverna – food, drink, showers and shops.





We left Sivota in a force 1 but the wind soon got up and we had a brisk passage to Fiskardo on the island of Kefalonia. Moored bows to, explored the pretty harbour (it claims to be the St Tropez of the Ionian Islands) and enjoyed cocktails with some of the group while watching the luxury cruisers come into harbour.

We had a late start the next morning for Kioni where we found the harbour was full and so rafted up with other flotilla members. To get ashore, we rigged up a system of pulling a dinghy along a rope to get to some steps.

With our holiday nearing its end we sailed to Vathi and enjoyed a taverna with a private pontoon, lazy lines and a private beach and the next day, sailed up the east coast of the Lefkada peninsula, passing Nidri and Tranquil Bay before crossing to the mainland and Varko Bay, the venue for a flotilla BBQ. Hitched a lift to the beach, had a very enjoyable evening, great food and company and then hitched a lift back to our boat just as darkness fell. Our last sail was a gentle cruise across Paleiros Bay, arriving at base by 1600. A congratulatory ice cream was called for before tackling the task of emptying the cupboards and the next day we headed for Preveza, Heathrow and Penarth.

I have now had time to reflect on the highs and lows of our Greek odyssey and I have drawn the following conclusions from the two weeks we spent with Ektor:

- Bows to and stern to mooring is best executed with three pairs of hands. This explains why there are so many larger yachts and why so many of them have four or more people aboard. Of course, practice will improve performance and confidence and knowledge of the local moorings helps considerably - the live-aboards and own-boaters manage comfortably.

- The Ionian Islands are very popular with "yachties". Some of the little harbours are so busy that if you want to be sure of getting a mooring, you have to arrive by 2:00pm. Consequently, it appears that many people give up on sailing from place to place and just turn on the engine and motor from one pretty destination to the next. I was surprised to find the islands so busy and I dread to think what it is like during July and August. I learnt from regulars that delaying your holiday until September could leave you with stormy conditions, swarms of wasps and fewer hours of daylight. The weather is good and the sailing excellent, the views are amazing and the harbours are full of tavernas offering delicious Greek cuisine and fresh fish dishes. All the venues we visited were clean and welcoming. They ranged from Fiskardo, with its multitude of bars, tavernas and shops, to Mongonissi, where there is just one taverna and one bar. Of course you can also choose to put down your anchor in a bay

where you can enjoy some peace and quiet. The winds are erratic. Gusts can blow off the mountains and between the islands and a nasty swell can build up at any time. Winds veer around 180 degrees or disappear totally without warning. Often there is no wind to speak of in the morning. Flotilla sailing has many advantages. The lead team are very helpful and do their best to reserve spaces for their boats at each destination. They are there to give you practical advice and help when you are mooring. The social side of being part of a group adds an extra dimension to the experience. We met some very interesting people (including Spanish, New Zealand and Irish nationals) and evenings spent at the tavernas with them were very enjoyable.

- We booked through Nautilus with Odysseussailing, which was a small family run concern. We were happy with the whole experience and would recommend a small organisation, which has advantages over the larger and more impersonal charterers. Before the holiday I was quite apprehensive. I was stepping outside my comfort zone. The first few days really tested my abilities and my resolve and a certain level of fitness and sailing knowledge was required. It was a steep learning curve, which I found quite stressful at times. The second week was more relaxing and enjoyable. And on the strength of those feelings, I would recommend a flotilla sailing holiday in Greece as a holiday with a difference. And I would also return next year to visit all those delightful harbours and bays that we missed this year.

Photo top left: At the helm - the pleasures of a bimini

Photo below: Beautiful Vathi Bay



How do you prepare for a Bristol Channel cruise?... well, a pedicure and manicure for starters! Cruising novice Louisa Laurent takes the plunge

It's been a year now since we bought our Harta, and extensive improvements have been made. However, when Richard suggested a ten day holiday on board in the Bristol Channel I was far from excited. My idea of a holiday at sea was on board a cruise ship in the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, I agreed and was looking forward to it.

Secretly I had many reservations and anxieties about the trip - would I be sea sick the whole time? would I feel cooped up and hemmed in? would I fall overboard in a storm? Harta is a 24ft yacht, she has no hot water or shower, no tv, no microwave - would I cope? At the same time I was excited about experiencing something I never have before and visiting and spending time at places such as Watchet, Swansea and Bristol.

As is custom with any holiday I bought new dresses, a new bikini and had a manicure and pedicure. There was some disagreements to be had over the 4 bags of clothes, 4 pairs of flip flops, trainers, high heels, evening dresses, curlers, straighteners and laptop I insisted on bringing. If I was going to spend ten days on board I needed to be prepared for all eventualities!

Our journey to Watchet was fine, it was calmish and relatively good weather. We spent a few days here enjoying the town and steam train to Minehead. From Watchet we sailed to Swansea in conditions I have never experienced before. Huge swells, strong winds, big waves and nothing but sea around me. I was clipped on and hung to the guard rail for dear life. Although dramatic it felt like a scene out of the film *The Perfect Storm*. Richard of course was a lot calmer and in complete control of the boat. Two reefs later, feeling sick and in great need of a wee, I prayed that the journey would end soon. Richard could see my anxiety so returned from the galley with chocolate - just as I was about to take a bite, a huge wave came. My fruit and nut was now fruit, nut and salt! Nonetheless it did the trick, I relaxed and soon we arrived in Swansea and thankfully no actual sea sickness occurred. It may have only been a good force 5 wind but was enough to leave me a little shaky at the end and in need of a stiff drink. Despite this I did enjoy the journey in some strange way.

After spending three days in Swansea exploring, shopping, swimming and of course having a few beers we set off for Cardiff. By now I had been on board for 6 nights and although I had hit my head many a time, and needed to re-tidy every few hours, I was doing fine. I was enjoying the boat, the meals on board and the overall chilled out atmosphere. This was not what I had expected!

As we left Swansea I prayed we wouldn't have the same sailing conditions as the

journey down. I am pleased to report that this was a much more enjoyable journey as we had wind and tide in our favour so blasted along the coastline. We navigated through the Nash passage avoiding the Nash sands. It was interesting to sail past places like Port Talbot, Porthcawl and Barry. We flew home reaching 12knots (speed over ground) at times, it was great. My skills at tacking and helming have certainly improved although I was regularly told I was "pinching the wind". As we approached the Cardiff area I lay back in the cockpit with my *Take a Break* and *Chat* for some chill out time.



We spent the evening in Mermaid Quay restocking and relaxing - we deliberately didn't go back to our berth in CBYC. The following morning we headed off to Bristol. This was a glorious sail down, light winds and sunshine all the way. With the Bluetooth speaker on, Cinzano and lemonade on tap and the sunshine I could have been in the med. In fact I did get a little sunburnt. We entered the Cumberland Basin alone with a warm welcome from the staff and locals. As we sailed along the harbour I had a huge smile on my face, Bristol was buzzing. There was music playing, groups of people congregating and loads of interesting buildings and boats that kept catching my eye.



After two days sight seeing and shopping it was time to return, especially so as the remains of Hurricane Bertha were getting closer.

We left Bristol bright and early and watched as a mass take off of hot air balloons rose above our heads and the Clifton suspension bridge. We spotted all sorts of wonderful and unusual balloons including a smurf, a dragon and a football cup. The journey back was a pleasure to begin with, calm, warm and bright. However, the wind picked up and so did the waves. With seconds to spare I was putting my oilies on as a huge squawl was approaching. Sadly I didn't get time to remove the flip flops and put wellies on before the hard rain hit. The ginger nuts that had been brought up to nibble on a few minutes earlier were turned to mush. Visibility was extremely poor and the wind seemed to come from every direction. The rain blinded us and again I had to hang on for dear life. Thankfully that lasted all of five minutes before it had moved over us.

Then we were home back in our berth and safe and well. Although I was apprehensive to begin with I thoroughly enjoyed the holiday and would definitely do it again, this time for two weeks maybe. We will also be considering longer passages to places such as Padstow, Milford Haven etc. We learnt a lot about the boat, ourselves and can't wait for the next adventure.



Wales' Tall Ship has a summer to remember; from the Commonwealth Games to the end of hurricane Bertha

What an amazing summer it has been for Wales' Tall Ship; Challenge Wales and all those onboard. We've been racing, dolphin & seal watching, measuring plankton levels, having Duke of Edinburgh Gold Residential voyages, winning prizes, enjoying home-cooked food (ok boat-cooked), watching shooting stars on cloudless nights, wave-surfing on the tail end of ex-hurricane Bertha, watch-keeping in three hour shifts and having lots of fun. This has been sail training in action!

It's been hard work for all those involved, but the rewards have been worth it, as one parent says;

"My daughter had a fabulous time, and we're grateful for the opportunity you gave her on Challenge Wales. She is still full of delightful stories of her time spent aboard, from meeting the crew, climbing the mast, sailing through Ramsey Sound and the once in a lifetime experience of joining the Clippers as they headed out of Londonderry. Challenge Wales is a truly wonderful experience that I know she will keep with her forever. You are a wonderful organisation, thank you for all your hard work, it is very much appreciated."

Racing is part of our heritage and in June, we were really pleased when we crossed the finish line in Round the Island Race. No wind meant a high number of retirees (of the almost 1,600 boats to start the race just over 700 finished). But we persevered. A race which took us six hours in 2013, took us over 12 hours this year. Yet again we beat the other five Challenge boats we were racing against to be first Challenge boat home. -

It was then a mad dash in light airs from Cowes to Derry-Londonderry with young people to be inspired by the Clipper Round-the-World yachts. We enjoyed the atmosphere and celebrations and followed the Clipper boats in their parade as they started their final leg home. A paragraph doesn't do the trip justice but the young people onboard bonded as a team, learnt how to sail the boat and took part in something they didn't think was possible

One of the most memorable experiences this year was our visit to Scotland. The trip was centered around the Commonwealth Games and a Small ships race organised by

the Association of Sail Training Organisations (ASTO) and RYA Scotland. It was Challenge Wales' first visit to Scotland, and the blue waters and scenic backdrop probably means we will be heading back next year! A group from Caerphilly joined the boat in Greenock to take part in the race which was against other sail training vessels from around the UK. The race proved to be one of light winds and a shortened course but the experiences for young people were undiminished; teamwork, dancing, singing, cooking, racing, generally having fun and meeting new people plus picking up a trophy for First in Class and a prize for Line Honours.

The trip to Scotland culminated in the Commonwealth Games Flotilla, a 13 mile voyage up the Clyde into Glasgow. 250 vessels of all sizes took part with Challenge Wales being the third largest vessel of the fleet. We were the second boat in the flotilla and for the last few miles Challenge Wales was given the lead position into Glasgow. What an experience and honour! Thousands of people waved to us as we motored passed and thousands welcomed us in Glasgow. Overall our trip to Scotland will be a voyage that we will be talking about for many months to come!

Challenge Wales subsequently returned south undertaking the first of the summer's trips for the visually impaired. Glasgow to Holyhead and Holyhead to Neyland both enabled youngsters with visual impairment of varying degrees to experience sailing with the aid of audio compasses, tactile and "talking" charts.

After returning south to Neyland we had couple of weeks of welcoming different young people aboard for five-day residential voyages to Southern Ireland before returning home to Cardiff.



Ex-hurricane Bertha almost delayed our plans for sailing back from Ireland, the unpredictable weather system moved further south than originally thought giving a broad reach back to Neyland in 30 knots of wind. The final leg to Cardiff via Lundy Island gave some of the best sailing we'd had for a while. All those onboard were using this trip as their volunteer qualifying voyage (hoping to be volunteers next year) and although the elements were strong with over 40 knots of wind at times the exhilaration was awesome. At night, on three hour watches, the clear sky showed off numerous shooting stars, and in the morning, whilst anchored at Lundy, we were welcomed by a couple of seals paying us a visit. North Westerly winds made for a quick voyage home and completing a log reading of 4,213 miles for the boat this season to date.

Tall Ships Racing and being part of one of London's biggest events will be the cherry on the cake as it brings our summer youth season to a close and then we will be planning to take the boat out of the water as part of her winter maintenance programme.

During the winter months we will be running a few more adult voyages while our youth work will continue shore-side. New funding is enabling the charity to set up a Youth Panel. This will involve a group of 16 – 24 year olds helping us to ensure young people's voices remain central to the organisation and they will feed directly into the board of trustees. If you fit into the age range and are interested then please get in touch. Funding this summer has also enabled us to employ our first salaried crew person and we welcome a new Mate onboard, funded for six months through the Jobs Growth Wales scheme.

Our bursary fund, and other funding, has continued to enable those under 25 years to jump onboard Challenge Wales. We're perfect for those wanting to put volunteering on their CV, those looking for gap year activities, those wanting to give something back to the community and share their sailing knowledge and those who want to be part of the growing Challenge Wales family. This year we have worked with young people from all over Wales, and beyond but don't forget we are an opportunity right on the doorstep. See you on the water soon!



SAIL-DAY IN AID OF THE RNLI

The Annual RNLI Sail-day took place in June this year with more than 27 yachts descending on Mermaid Quay. Last year's event raised a staggering £20,000 which was used to help to fund Penarth Lifeboat Station's new state-of-the-art Training Room. It is pleasing to note that this facility has been used by many groups over the past year.

The Sail-day depends on local yacht owners donating their time and the use of their vessels to enable corporate sponsors to go out in the Bristol Channel for a day's sailing. This year some 250 people were involved aboard the yachts. The start took place near Penarth Pier and a 15 mile course was designed for a sail across the Bristol Channel towards Weston, up towards Bristol, across to Newport to finish once again near Penarth pier.

This year the participants were able to see the three local lifeboats close up, two from Penarth and one from Barry Dock. The volunteer crew, several of whom are former sailors, gave their time to ensure the safety of the event. All the yachts then proceed back to Mermaid Quay for the Presentation, the raffle of many prizes given by RNLI supporters, followed by a superb buffet and then a party long into the summer's night.

The winning yacht this year was Forward Thinking owned by Steve Nichols which was sponsored by Grant Thornton from Cardiff. The W T Davies cup, so named after the Cardiff yachtsman who

founded the event, was presented by Meryl Davies, the daughter of Bill who was one of the old time members of Penarth Motor Boat and Sailing Club.

"Every year this event goes from strength to strength with more and more yachts and corporate sponsors offering their support. The aim of this event is simple – to make as much as we can for the RNLI: one of the best charities in the world. The RNLI are extremely pleased with the amount raised this year which again is £20,000 and obviously will benefit the RNLI massively. This year the money raised will go towards the Flood Rescue Teams and the crews from across Wales and the UK" said Colin Lyons.

Last year's winner Steve Cooper was of the opinion that this is a great way to support the RNLI and to introduce non club members to the art of sailing...**if you would like to participate next year please contact Colin Lyons on: 02920 530611 or phone the CBYC office on: 029 2066 6627.**



Flags flying and buns blazing, Jonah sails to aid the RNLI

Friday June 6th. Up with the lark and down to the boat. Stewart Cokeley and Geoff Parr set off for Mermaid Quay on Jonah and were there before eight, but weren't the first arrivals. Soon the place was thronged with yachts flying assorted bunting and RNLI flags. Coffee and bacon / sausage buns were in ample supply at the Terra Nova before the skippers' briefing. This included a detailed Health and Safety message with insistence on the use of lifejackets and bans on the use of spinnakers and the consumption of alcohol until after the event. Boats were assigned crews, matching up with them in the melee was challenging. The course was set with a start off the pier then going to South Cardiff, Monkstone, Diffuser, First Sewer and the finish line off PYC. Given the Westerly / South Westerly airs this meant an unadventurous series of fetches and reaches - safe but limiting the experience of boat handling for participants.

Jonah was assigned a crew from Arup, a Civil Engineering concern, represented by a young lady called Maggie. We were also assigned Simon – Chairman of the Penarth RNLI and event photographer. We dropped out of the race and went out early with the intention of snapping the boats in a sail-by past the pier and inshore lifeboat before the start. We then got some shots of the boats approaching and going through the start line, before sailing backwards through the fleet getting all the boats under sail again. Some were confused about this yacht going the wrong way, others just shrugged "It's Jonah". Hopefully these pics will become available to the participants, perhaps in return for a further donation to the RNLI.

The day was mainly fine with just the odd flurry of rain to have people frantically pulling on/taking off wet gear. As mentioned above a good day was had by all. Cardiff Barrage control worked well to get us all locked in and out expediently as possible, and once ashore the fun began.

A Wealth of Piers

If you had any pretence to being a flourishing resort you had to have a pier. That was the way the Victorians saw it. Piers were an attraction in their own right - a promenade over the sea. But they also allowed ship to call bringing trippers and trade and linking the town with others around the Bristol Channel. As we saw in the last issue, many have disappeared but for most of those left the future looks more secure. Historian Alan Thorne looks at their background.

Two neighbouring piers were opened in 1868 – Clevedon and Portishead. At Clevedon, the strong iron trestles supporting the promenade deck are reputed to be old railway lines from I. K. Brunel's original broad-gauge South Wales Railway. Two fine stone buildings were opened in 1869 – one each side of the pier entrance – a castellated toll house with living accommodation for the pier master and the Royal hotel opposite. During 1893 the landing stage was rebuilt and in 1894 a large pavilion, a replica Japanese pagoda flanked by two smaller iron pavilions, were erected at the pier's seaward end. The pier, sadly neglected by the local authority, bashed by generations of paddle steamers and battered by winds and tides collapsed in 1970. A band of 'Friends of the Pier', given invaluable support and help by Sir John Betjeman, saved the pier and finally restored it. It was reopened on May 27, 1989.

Portishead Pier was 800 feet long and used extensively by paddle-steamers of P. A. Campbell's fleet, especially the well-remembered PS Ravenswood. A short promenade pier was completed in 1873 and between 1893 and 1895 extensive work was undertaken erecting a semi-circular pier around the rocks, the Stonebench.

The famous pier-builders, brothers Arthur and James Mayoh, who were responsible for Brighton East and Morcombe piers, built Mumbles Pier in 1891. It was 1,000 feet long with the terminus of the Mumbles Railway at the landward end. By 1916 a slipway and approach gangway adjoining the seaward end of the pier had been added, at a cost of £7,800 and after WW1 work began on a lifeboat house. It was opened in 1922 and cost £1,800.

The Mayoh brothers were also called upon to build Weston-super-Mare's Grand Pier. Its purpose was promenading and entertainment and, to this end, a large pavilion was erected with a tower at each corner. In 1905 a short landing stage extension was built pointing south east to accommodate paddle steamers. The Barry Railway Company's vessels the PS Barry, Devonian, Gwalia, Westonia and Campbell's Ravenswood visited 1906–08 but access was restricted to high water. Barry Railway Company sold out to Campbells in 1819 and the extension was demolished in 1911.

Weston's other pier, Birnbeck Island, was also constructed by a master pier-builder – Eugenius Birch who's works included Brighton West and Blackpool North. It was 1,100 feet long with a 200-foot up-channel extension and was opened in 1867 by eight-year-old Cecil Pigott, son of the Lord of the Manor. The first paddle steamer to berth at the new pier was the Heather Belle on June 19, 1867, owned by the Burnham Tidal Harbour Company. At the pier's seaward end refreshment rooms were built and a lifeboat house and slipway opened in 1900. During 1909 a 950-foot extension was built facing down-channel but was demolished in 1922. (The RNLI was forced to vacate its base on the pier in February of this year because the structure became unsafe. Its future is still in doubt.)



Requisitioned by the army, burned out and rammed twice by ships, Penarth Pier is a survivor, now looking good for another century

The idea of a pier for Penarth was first raised in the 1880's but the London-based company building it went into liquidation. There was talk of buying a second-hand pier from the Isle of Man but this never materialised. Nevertheless, guide books in 1885 confidently claimed Penarth did have a pier. Possibly emboldened by this, by 1892 the landowners, the Windsor Estate, were claiming not just a pier but a gym, a reading room, lounge, smoking room and a bandstand. Outrageously, they also claimed this non-existent pier was accessible at all stages of the tide – claims which brought thundering accusations of misleading the public from the Penarth Chronicle. It wasn't until 1895 that Penarth finally got its pier, designed by H. F. Edwards and built by the then acknowledged experts of pier-building the Mayoh brothers. It was 750 feet long – a little longer than it is today - with a small wooden dance hall at the seaward end, the Bijou Pavilion, and on Easter Saturday the paddle steamer Bonnie Doon made the inaugural visit. During the Great War the pier was requisitioned by the army as a searchlight base. In 1929 it was sold to Penarth Borough Council who, the following year, built a large art deco pavilion at its landward end. On the evening of August 3, 1931 both pavilions were packed when fire broke out underneath the Bijou Pavillion. It spread quickly underneath the wooden decking and 200 people from the Bijou fled towards the land. They met hundreds of others from the new pavilion running up the pier – possibly to investigate, possibly in an attempt to help. It could have been a disaster but the pier master and a few local constables linked arms and stopped them, finally marshalling everyone to safety. About 30 people found themselves trapped at the seaward end and climbed down onto the concrete landing stage used by the White funnel Line steamers. They were ferried to safety by boats from Penarth Yacht Club. In 1947 the 7,000-ton Canadian cargo ship Port Park Royal was blown onto the pier in a gale. Repairs cost £28,000. In 1996 the paddle steamer Bristol Queen hit the pier – once more causing serious damage – but with commendable foresight the local authority spend £250,00 to repair and re-open it. A £650,000 restoration programme began in 1994 and two years later £1.7 million was spend on repairs to the steelwork and decking. The final stage saw the restoration of the rest of the pier with the help of a £1.1 million Heritage Lottery fund grant. But the Art Deco Pavilion was now, also, in a desperate state. Penarth Arts and Crafts limited, a community-based arts charity began local consultation and fund-raising for a complete restoration. That was completed in December last year thanks to grants from the Heritage Lottery fund (£1.68m), Community Asset Transfer programme (£700,000), Welsh Assembly Government (£300,000) and others from Vale of Glamorgan Council, the Coastal Communities fund, the Headley Trust and CADW. It now includes a cinema, observatory, exhibition space and the 617 Room, in memory of Wing Commander Guy Gibson who led 617 Squadron on the 'Dambusters' raid. It was opened on December 1 last followed by a fly past by a Tornado from the current 617 squadron.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

After months of checks and tests, equipment purchase, menu planning and a shakedown cruise, Sanamiru and her crew were ready to head for Greece. Mike Bailey continues the story.

So May 4 arrived. After a hearty club breakfast on a glorious sunny day, the crew and all our well wishers made their way down to my berth. The boat had been stocked with food by Nigel and other crew members on the previous day and I can tell you it was a lot. There was eighteen days supply of food for six people with snacks thrown in as well. So we were finally ready to go. With the Welsh flag on the bow and the Greek flag flying, we started the engine ready to make our way to the lock, accompanied by music from Zorba the Greek playing full blast. We were on our way. With boats following us into the lock we were greeted with best wishes from the staff of the lock. Even my GP on her boat was there wish me good luck. Victor in his boat Crews Nest motored as far as Barry, taking photos whilst we settled the boat for the 2300 mile journey. It was an end to all the months of preparation. I just hoped that we'd got it right.

Our sail down to Lands End was fairly uneventful but as we progressed, the wind came round on the nose and the sea state became a little confused. We had intended to sail to Gibraltar without stopping over a period of six to eight days but with the wind on the nose and being pushed hard to the west we passed close to the Scillies and it was time to tack. The manoeuvre would at best allow us to make the Channel de Four and we did so after a very hard sail. All planned voyages should have possible stops on route and Camaret was one of our destinations if it was required. The crew were tired so we pulled into the port in the early morning for a well earned rest, having sailed non-stop for nearly forty hours. It had not been a pleasant sail, quite uncomfortable on occasions but conditions had been well within the boats' capabilities.

The next day the weather was good to go and we faced the challenge of the Bay of Biscay. Taking the boat through the Raz de Seine we entered Biscay. It should be said that the Raz must be sailed at the times recommend in the relevant literature. I have completed the course during the correct times with a wall of standing water of about three feet along the port hand side. Once in the Bay of Biscay we made for the Portuguese corner just off La Coruna. All was going well, snacks were served and the crew relaxed. Anxiety had gone and why not, it was a lovely day. A beautiful dinner was provided, courtesy of crew member Nigel, who is a fantastic cook.



We continued our journey, sailing head to wind at about 7/8 knots in reasonable conditions. It was eventually time to reef down for the night and settle the boat for some crew to sleep and others to keep watch. It was just as well we did. The wind came up and very confused seas developed, slowing us down and giving us plenty to do during the night. Not good, so a slight detour to La Coruna became inevitable. We also had a battery failure during the night, for some inexplicable reason and were unable to start engine until the morning. The solar panels charged the batteries sufficiently to start the generator. The battery was evidently the first problem to be sorted once we berthed in La Coruna. I don't know why it failed and Eddie being an electrician didn't either. It seemed that two cells just died. One new battery later we pulled out of La Coruna and guess what, wind on the nose again but a good forecast and it was fine. We turned the corner and headed south and the wind turned and came from the north, an ideal opportunity to pull the cruising chute out. With flat seas and sailing at 12/14 knots we were there, this was what sailing was about, champagne sailing ... or was it? Part of it worried me. If the wind changed course to the west and the weather conditions deteriorated, then we would have a very long lee shore and the decision to get into port was one that would have to be carefully considered, although there are many places to stop in good weather. Worry changed to enjoyment as Dolphins and other wildlife suddenly started to appear. We were

all getting very excited; it was what we had been waiting for and had worked so hard for and here it was alongside us. We sailed about four miles offshore along the coast, making good speed and enjoying excellent food. Alyson commented, "Mike we are living like kings". As we approached St Vincent's, the wind picked up and it was time to drop the cruising Shute. The 20 knot wind swung and increased straight up to 50 knots. I had forgotten about the katabatic winds prevalent in that area. The sea state jumped and for a while all hell broke loose but we had dropped the sails so it was just uncomfortable again. As fast as the wind came, it went. The sails were hoisted back up and we were now in the Bay of Cadiz. Earlier a brand new large Catamaran had passed us, leaving us with the sensation that we were stationary, although we were doing at least ten knots; more to come on that later.

The Bay of Cadiz is about a little over half the size of Biscay and can be as equally dramatic. We sailed into the evening, heading for the Straits of Gibraltar. Again, Nigel had been hard at work in the galley and had come up with another fantastic meal for the evening. As we were nearing our initial first destination, I brought out a bottle of wine, a well deserved treat for all. The following day was great, all the crew having breakfast together and then everyone looking to see who could spot shore first. Of course we were a too far off but our destination was getting closer all the time. Would we see North Africa or Spain first? As the day went on a

large school of Pilot whales swam with us and numerous large dolphins. So we continued on our way for what we hoped would be our last night's sail before reaching Gibraltar. Wrong! The wind turned right on our nose; the sea came up and became very confused again, changing from 8/10 knots to 2/3 knots over the ground. We battled on in the dark for a good number of hours and suddenly there was a light on our bow. It was the Catamaran that had sped past us early the day before and he was making less speed than us. We overtook him at 2.5 knots with 60 miles to go to the entrance of the Straits. I went below to check the chart and decided that under no circumstance would I attempt the Straits in the conditions we were experiencing, with wind coming from the east at 35 plus knots. Cadiz was 26 miles to port and so we bore away. It took a further twelve hours to cover that distance. We had encountered a levanter wind that was to last about three to four days. Once in Cadiz, Alyson and Eddie had to leave the boat and fly back to the UK from Gibraltar. The remainder of the crew sat and waited for the wind to drop. The Catamaran we had encountered on route got in to port two days later, having turned back to Faro.

After three days we left Cadiz in 12/15 knots of wind, cutter and two reefs in the main as we wanted an easy sail and were pleased to be on the move again. I was down

below when suddenly there was a loud bang. I rushed up top side asking what had happened and turned to see the port hand inner lower wire hitting the deck. It had parted from the cross tree fitting. I called for all lines to be let go and the sails to be dropped. This undoubtedly saved the mast from falling, which was to be confirmed when we returned to Cadiz. We were only an hour out at sea when this incident occurred so it was no effort to get back under engine. When the boys jumped on to the pontoon to tie up, Richard came back saying there was bad news, the mast had buckled. I went to examine the damage myself and so it was. So my trip of a life time was over, for the time being. The duration for this part of the trip with about three days stop was eleven days, sailing mainly in head winds for a good two thirds of the way. A big thank you and well done to each and every member of the crew is well deserved.

So, having done all that you can think of for your trip, just remember that you are out of your natural element and sailing can become an extreme sport/hobby. So always **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED!**

Mike, SANAMIRU

(Mike has now re-joined the boat and is heading for Greece. We will have a full account in the Autumn edition of Bear Essentials).



PETS ON THE PONTOONS



What is it about two-year-old Hallie that leads the UK Border Agency to regard her almost as an undesirable alien. She's half Yorkshire Terrier and you can't get more British than that. Mind you, she's also half Miniature Poodle – but then, I thought we'd given up all that nonsense about the French!

The fact remains that Hallie can sail out of UK waters in David and Georgina Stanger's Dufour 385 but, despite having her own pet passport and papers, she won't be allowed to sail back in again.

It seems that only registered carriers – like ferry companies – can transport dogs into Britain. And as they insist dogs should travel in cars on the car deck taking her abroad by yacht becomes logistically impractical. It should have been France with the family this year but instead she had to stay at home in Chepstow which probably explains the slightly wistful expression. After cruises to Padstow, Lundy, Milford, Swansea she has quite taken to the boat. Her favoured place in fine weather is on the foredeck photoelectric panel. It tends to irritate the skipper but it's nice and warm. Otherwise, she has a cushion in the cockpit. She's got good sealegs but, says Georgina, when it gets a bit rough her eyes tend to glaze over. Yea, tell us about it Hallie.

Things might change, however. The RSPCA are lobbying on behalf of Hallie and other adventurous seadogs. In the meantime, the myriad inimitable smells of France will have to wait.



Let's have photographs of your sea-going animals and a few lines about their exploits



We survived the Round Britain Race, and so did the yacht!

By Nick Groves

For those who missed the “taster” in the previous edition of “Bear Essentials”, we bought our 6th cruiser, a Dazcat 1195 catamaran called “Rock Steady”, in 2013. I happened one day before Christmas to mention to my wife Jane (foolishly) that one of our yacht’s sister-ships had previously competed in the 4-yearly, 2-handed Shetland Round Britain and Ireland Race, and that the next iteration of the race would be in 2014. She fairly soon advised me that I would be doing the race this year, and that as her sailing ability would require me to be on watch 24/7 if she accompanied me, I’d better find a competent crew-mate PDQ. The closing date for entries was 31 January, so I attended the MOCRA AGM in Southampton in mid-January, struck up a conversation with the first person I met, and lo-and-behold, within the blink of an eye that man, Adrian Ezard, was signed up. He is a former trimaran owner, who is about to start home-building his next trimaran, and had an itch to scratch as he had missed competing in the 50th Sydney-Hobart Race 20 years ago because of a pre-eminent family holiday. As it turned out, his various skills in project management, IT, diving and Ebay-ing would all come in useful before long. So, the deal was struck.



We started spending Sundays on the boat to do all the work required to meet the Race entry criteria, which were the ISAF Offshore Special Regulations with some extras added. I printed these off, and even the Extract for Race Category 2 Multihulls (us) ran to 20 pages of small case print. There were loads of what seemed over-cautious (and expensive-to-meet) rules. For instance, it wasn’t good enough for the trampoline foredeck to be laced on with Spectra... one long lashing could fail, so Adrian meticulously spent a happy couple of hours adding extra individual lashings every 10cm. The boat was supplied with two 1kg fire extinguishers... not good enough, these had to be 2kg. Every detail of where jackstays should be rigged, how long safety-tethers should be, how many buckets should be aboard, was specified. A set spare of navigation lights “no less powerful than the installed lights” had to be available. And so on and so on. On the first such Sunday, we went for a little sail around the Bay so that Adrian could get a feel of the boat. While

he was helming, I popped below for something. He shouted down “which side of this fishing boat should I go?” Fishing boat? In the Bay? I rushed on deck to confirm that it was the CBYC committee boat for an early season race, with eager CBYC racers milling about everywhere. A stealthy bear-away and application of afterburners got us out of a sticky situation just before the start of the race....

The rules included a mandatory 300-mile qualifying cruise, so at Easter we set off for Plymouth, intending to add a dog-leg towards France to make up the 300 miles. We had a bracing sail down to the Lands End, blue skies, cold, and dolphins galore off of Bude and again further south. As we turned towards the Lizard, the weather started slowly deteriorating, and a NE6 set in. We passed the Lizard and kept going toward Jersey. We calculated that the place we needed to turn toward Plymouth (to make the 300 miles) would be close to the first moment we could tack and lay the course needed. However, after our second night at sea, I was dozing below, when Adrian shouted that the steering had failed - not a good thing to hear in the middle of the English Channel in a bit of a blow. The Dazcat has twin steering wheels, each separately connected via Spectra cord to its own rudder, which are themselves connected by a tie-bar. We discovered that one cord had been severed by a constant shaving action of a spicule of GRP in the routing tunnel. The other wheel (and the autopilot) were still working. We turned for Plymouth early, and the race organisers accepted our slightly shortened route.



Adrian and I had done virtually no cruiser racing previously... we’d both done a bit of dinghy racing in our earlier lives. So on the May Day holiday weekend, we competed in the Plymouth-Falmouth-Fowey Triangle race, which has one leg on each of three days, with much merriment in Falmouth and Fowey in between. We did ok, finishing in the middle of the fleet.

Then ground-rush set in. The yacht was in Plymouth, moored at the builder’s yard, having last-minute modifications, in particular helmsman’s chairs each side. Also, both Raymarine e7 plotters were misbehaving due to a firmware fault, and they were replaced via Raymarine’s swop program for others which had already been fixed. I still had only a provisional handicap rating, for although I’d been able to supply myriad measurements of the boat (done by me with a tape measure), and of the sails (supplied by the sailmaker), we did not know the weight of the boat. One day, when I happened to be finishing work at 3pm, the builders phoned to

say a crane would be at the yard that afternoon and evening, and they’d hired a load cell, and could I get down there and empty the boat of absolutely everything and motor it to the crane? I left Cardiff at 3pm, got back at midnight, and had backache for days.

I had decided to use my participation in the race to help publicise a local charity called 2 Wish Upon A Star, which assists parents who have suffered the death of a child in various practical ways (grief counselling, bereavement suites in A&E centres etc). The founder, Rhian, supplied me with a couple of large stickers for the hulls of the boat, and I spent a few nights fighting with the vagaries of the JustGiving website to set up JustGiving.com/RockSteady.

So June 1st, the big day, approached. Two days before the race, Adrian and I travelled to Plymouth for final preparations on the boat, which was now in Plymouth Yacht Haven. I browbeat Adrian into getting into the water to wipe off the undersides, which are treated with Coppercoat, so that they only accumulate a bit of slime now and again. He surfaced within seconds to report that the starboard rudder was broken!! The yacht had been taken for a spin by the builders with a prospective client the week before, and it must have sat down awkwardly on something hard in the sloping mudbank at it’s drying pontoon berth back at the factory in Millbrook. The builders happened to visit us 15 minutes later. With Adrian still in the water, it took us 20 minutes to uncouple the rudder-post and drop the rudder out. Simon and Daz took it back to their factory, and overnight they repaired it ... ok it is carbon, and they did a GRP repair, but it was enough for the Race.



On the day of the start, our families, together with Rhian and her children, came to see us off, on a powerboat which we hired for the purpose. Adrian suggested we should look smart on our departure, so we both wore DJs and looked like a pair of James Bonds. The start line was in Plymouth Sound, and a frigate, HMS Kent, was in attendance to fire the gun. As we were maneuvering about 5 minutes before the start, Jane (who, as I have already observed, knows nothing about sailing) telephoned me to ask whether we were a bit of a long way from the start line!



The race rounds every rock belonging to Britain and Ireland except for Rockall, so our first hour was a beat southwards to the Eddystone Lighthouse. In a previous race, one contestant had forgotten this and was nearly at the Lizard before returning to round Eddystone.... On our first 2 days a small depression passed over, so as our route slowly turned to starboard past Eddystone, Lizard and Scilly toward Kinsale (the first of the four scheduled stops), so the wind veered to stay on the nose. The fleet was becalmed south of Scilly for several hours, but eventually a new wind appeared and we had a reasonable beat to Kinsale, arriving after

2 days just as the northwesterly was building to uncomfortable levels.

In Kinsale, we scaled the mast to check that nothing had worn or chafed on the first leg, but all was ok aloft. The only issue from the first leg was that one of the replacement chartplotters stopped working. We phoned Dazcat about it and then partook of the Irish hospitality. Incredibly, 90 mins before we were due to start the second leg, the Raymarine agent from Cork turned up with another replacement chartplotter which had been couriered from the UK, and finished fitting it as we were dropping our lines to leave.

We started the second leg from Kinsale in lovely weather, but with the promise of a vigorous weather system approaching. The view of the "amateurs" in the race was that they would use the good weather to go west to Baltimore, but then seek shelter there for a few hours as the gale passed, rather than being off SW Ireland when it arrived. We sailed on as the weather did not deteriorate until we were long past Fastnet, but by midnight we were in F7 winds, with large breaking seas and a new forecast of further deterioration. Monsoon rain revealed that my oilies and Adrian's boots were no longer waterproof... the cruel blow being that we both had new versions which we'd mysteriously left at home! When the forecast of worse to come was broadcast, we were passing Bantry Bay. This was the last point where we could reasonably shelter, as the upcoming rocks and islets of the west Irish coast were many miles offshore, meaning that a diversion inshore would be many miles both ways. We therefore took a snap decision to shelter for a few hours. A quick review of the chart revealed that we could just make Castletown-Bearhaven, which we accepted gratefully, and even found a mooring to grab a few hours real sleep.

We recommenced battle in the morning, and rode the coat-tails of the depression all the way up the Irish west coast. SE winds kicked in for most of our N/NE route, though we were never really able to put our foot on the pedal for two reasons. Firstly, the seas were frequently confused, with large quartering waves causing us to dig in our lee bow when we went too fast, risking a pitchpole. Secondly, the wind frequently changed strength significantly with little notice, and we were concerned that we would be caught going downwind with too much mainsail, but be unable to turn upwind to reef because of the following breaking waves. We took to pulling in the mainsheet tight, and reefing it while sailing dead downwind, but this was a slow and tricky process. We sailed on past The Skelligs and then Foze Rock, the outermost of the Blasket Islands and the most westerly point of our route. Strangely, the best mate of the man who had replaced our chartplotter in Kinsale was the last child to be raised on Great Blasket, before the islands were eventually evacuated.



The weather abated on the latter part of this leg, and we had a peaceful 3-hour spinnaker run into Barra in the Outer Hebrides, taking just over 3 days for the leg. Many crews who had not sheltered from the gale early in the leg spent a whole day mending sails, drying out the contents of their boats, and with engineers fixing broken hardware. Two

boats had been forced to retire, one with damage from a crash gybe, the other with a crew injury. We enjoyed the stopover in Castlebay (Barra), including lunch at the Kisimul Cafe, an unimposing building housing a national award-winning Indian restaurant, named after the castle in Castlebay. We partook of the connection offered in WiFi Corner in the veg shop to upload some pictures and do some networking, and a kind couple stopped us while we were walking and gave us a lift via the causeway to Barra's twin isle Vatersay for a walk on the superb beach there.



The third leg required us to retrace our tracks south from Barra to ensure that we rounded St Kilda, which we did on a broody morning. We were now far enough north for there to be no overnight darkness, which made the night sailing easier. The weather veered to SW 5-7 for the whole 400 miles north from the Hebrides to Muckle Flugga, the northern tip of Shetland. We passed islets we'd only ever heard of on the Shipping Forecast, such as the Flannan Isles, Sula Sgeir and North Rona. It was very cold, in contrast to the hot summer which we were aware had begun in southern England and Wales (which made it feel even colder...). I was wearing 7 layers on the top half of my body, including a battery-powered heated jacket. I found that the best way to warm up was to do some exercises with a physiotherapy-style rubber band hooked around a winch. I was beginning to find the sleep lack was getting me down, and amplifying the other feelings of cold, fear, boredom, with not much enjoyable sailing. In quiet moments, I read Tristan Jones's book "The Incredible Voyage", and learning of the privations he suffered in his epic voyage via the Dead Sea and Lake Titicaca made me feel not so bad!

Close to the end of leg 3 we rounded Muckle Flugga at the northern tip of Shetland. We got there just before the wind turned from SW to NE, and with the end of the 5 kt tide carrying us round. We were cock-a-hoop at this and thought that we were on the home straight already, with about 50 miles to run down the east coast of Shetland to the 3rd stop at Lerwick. However, over the next 15 miles, the new weather system announced its presence with a period of flat calm. We bobbed about for a few hours, and then were able to get a mobile phone connection, so I asked a friend to do some internet weather-site trawling for us. He phoned back 30 mins later with some depressing news... the forecast for where we were was less than 3 kts wind for the next 36 hrs, and that would be from astern too. We thought about trying to row the boat for the remaining 35 miles to Lerwick, but estimated this would take us over 24hr non-stop, so we decided to review our aims. These, in order, were:-

- 1 Don't die
- 2 Don't break the boat
- 3 Get all the way round
- 4 Have fun
- 5 Try and keep up

Aim number 4 loomed large. We had successfully raced a sailboat 1200 miles to the northernmost rock of the British Isles, but were towards the back of the fleet, so after a short period of reflection, we decided to motor the remaining 35 miles to

Lerwick, and hence not be included in the race stats. We would however continue to sail with the fleet for the remaining 2 legs. We were told that Shetland has only 10 calm days a year, but on 140 days experiences F7 winds, so this was a most unexpected turn of events!



Lerwick is a strange town, much affected by the North Sea oil industry, with numerous hostels, ashore and floating, accommodating offshore workers. However the strangest thing happened as we were berthing. We had only been moored up for about a minute, on the outside of a raft of 4 boats, when from down below I saw legs getting onto the boat. I looked up into the cockpit to see my wife and 8-year-old son, who had decided to surprise us by flying up to meet us. They had arrived a couple of days earlier and been staying in "pods", small wooden structures that resembled a cross between a hen-house and a tent.



Jane had also booked a relaxing event for our day in Lerwick... a boat trip! It was a wildlife tour on a purpose-built boat which had been partly built in S Wales, and we enjoyed it a great deal, not least due to the wildlife knowledge and skill of the captain.

Soon we had to embark on the 4th leg to our last stop in Lowestoft. We were keen to get south asap, as there were gales in SE Iceland and off north Norway, both of which had begun to send in disturbed seas and were threatening to move south. The leg involved a straight route of 470 miles down the North Sea, without sight of land until Norfolk, so we were pleased to see any other distractions, such as helicopters, oil rigs, gas rigs and wind farms. We saw some unusually large dolphins which we thought were striped dolphins, a rare occurrence, but they were subsequently identified by a dolphin specialist as the larger, more common white-beaked dolphin.

We had our best sailing conditions as we approached East Anglia, relatively slight seas and 20kt winds on the quarter, allowing us to sustain speeds of 12-14 kts for the only time in the whole race. Unfortunately this occurred near the Sheringham Shoal Wind Farm, which required us to do a few zig-zags at speed.

We arrived in Lowestoft to the warmest welcome of the trip, with a yacht club tender coming out to lead us through the shoals. It is the most easterly port in Britain, and thus completed our N/S/E/W set, the others being Western Rocks, Scilly (southernmost), Foze Rock, Kerry (westernmost) and Out Stack, Muckle Flugga, Shetland (northernmost). The port is the main entrance to the Norfolk Broads from the sea.

The Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club is a magnificent Victorian establishment, 155 years

old, with a stunning building, but most impressive, a marvellous brass, copper and marble gents' lavatory, see pic. I was taken aback as I weaved my way in there after a few pints to see a woman coming out... she could see that I thought I'd gone through the wrong door, and said she was just having a look because all the men had talked so much about how plush it was!

Our last leg from started well from Lowestoft, with a brisk sail towards the Thames Estuary, with more vast windfarms to negotiate. We crossed the numerous shipping lanes at night, and Adrian remarked that whenever he was on watch, the sea was swarming with ships, but when I was keeping a lookout, nothing ever came near. One North Sea transporter had looked as though it was going to run us down, and when Adrian called them, there was a long pause before they acknowledged that they had seen us 2 miles off... the heck they had!

We slipped through the Dover Strait at night just outside the Traffic Separation Scheme. TSSs were not forbidden to us by the race rules, but we had to obey the TSS rules if we entered them, ie crossing at right-angles, which is not much use if one's course is parallel to them.

The next morning, we at last had a view, and for the first time we were warm, moving from 7 layers in the southern North Sea to t-shirts in the English Channel within 24 hours. We sailed past the well known features of the Kent and Sussex coasts a few miles off, and rather enjoyed it, until as ever, the wind didn't play along, as it died away to very light and variable breezes. We floated along the South Coast, and eventually arrived back in Plymouth 2138 miles and 21 days (including the 4 stops) after starting.

Would we do it again? Me, no. It was an experience which for me underlined the joy of pottering along the coast, arriving at some salty and welcoming harbour, food, drinks and socialising, and repeat as necessary. The preparations were long and the deadlines demanding. However, we both learnt an awful lot about sailing this boat, and strategies for long-distance sailing and racing. Adrian? Not for him either, but he did confide that his plan is to build his next trimaran and sail it around the world singlehanded, with stops in nice places for his family to visit for a few weeks. He has already bought the mast (on Ebay), so there's no going back.

What were the top things we took? Lots of warm gloves (try Dexshell waterproof and cut-proof, toasty), a real coffee maker (not for the monohulls), and a giant supply of Jane's flapjacks, which she kindly topped up when she came to Shetland.

The boat is still in Plymouth, and since the race I have made a couple of family trips along to Salcombe and Dartmouth, but not much further. Jane has booked a holiday for us soon, to..... Barra! (and South Uist and Benbecula), staying in "bods" again. This time we're traveling by airplane...



Mark Walker is hanging on in there – or sometimes out – as a novice dinghy racer



Why did I ever give this up?

I moved to South Wales at the beginning of 2012 overlooking CBYC from Penarth Marina. I must have spent more than year looking out across at the club thinking to myself 'wouldn't mind getting back into that again' although I hadn't sailed for some 25 plus years and that was in a Topper. Nevertheless, I managed to acquire a Laser Pico and so one Friday I went down to the club, grabbed a form, filled it in, had the interview, paid the fees and installed my boat. Idris (who branded me 'Pico Man') kindly invited me to sail while the adult training was on and gave me a few pointers. Just as I got to the end of the pontoon I capsized and that was it - I was once again hooked! After a few months of messing about the Pico was gone, a Laser with Standard rig was parked in its place and joined the Sunday and Wednesday racing. It certainly hones your skills because at some point you have to go downwind and at some point gybe! Before this I'd usually just reach up and down the Bay. And learning to sail a Laser you have your fair share of capsizes, of course, especially the good ol' Laser downwind death roll but my fellow dinghy racers were always there to offer tips! My competitive edge was beginning to show but with my love of Pies and Beer I was starting to realise that I was on the wrong side of the standard rig weight range. The solution was the 'Rooster 8.1' rig of which there are now three in the dinghy section This new rig has an 8.1m² sail plan rather than the 7.06m² of the standard rig. Well what a difference. I edge my way up the results table when the breeze is no more than 15 knots. But in a 20 knot breeze it is absolutely mental. I very rarely make the leeward mark without taking a dunking and usually results in me moving back down the results table again! I think the most fun to be had is reaching across the bay which now has me out the back of the boat hanging on for dear life! I've also probably spent more time out of the boat than in it since getting the bigger sail, even, on one occasion, being rescued by the Bay fire brigade...yes you read correctly the Fire Brigade!



Ah yes!...

...now I remember



Chances are if you look out over the water you'll see me in my 8.1 either racing or just practicing trying to keep the mast vertical but if there is a breeze chances are I'll be horizontal. So if you don't mind, give the safety boat a shout for me or call the fire brigade (we're on first name terms now!) To sum up then, my first year at CBYC has been excellent fun, I have met some great people and had a blast learning to sail a Laser!

Maybe see you out in the bay sometime.

Know your Neighbour on: *H Pontoon*

How many times have you walked to your boat and looked at others, thinking things like “I wonder what that is?” or “who owns that?” In the latest of a series of articles to cover this, we are looking in this edition at H pontoon. Inevitably some of the info will be out of date by the time we go to print, but that’s life. Next edition of BE will look at G pontoon, so if you and/or your boat reside on G pontoon then please do get in touch.

Some of the information below gleaned from the club handbook and other sources – accuracy not guaranteed

(please could owners submit entries to: geoff.parr@gmail.com text to 07817108168,

or leave written entries in CBYC office, many thanks to those who have already done so).

H31 - Onyva, (let's go) Halsberg Rassey 39, Owners John and Kate Linsell joined CBYC in January 2013 and are based in Gloucestershire. The previous owners took her around the world. She featured last spring in BE when she had a real crows nest on the mast-top. We have enjoyed our welcome to the club and the facilities available.

H29 - Henry Morgan Rival 38. Owner, D.Watts. See “me and my boat” article Spring 2013 for details.

H27 - Evader Beneteau Evasion Ketch. Owner, D.Brown

H25 - Megan G. Arvor 210 Fisher. Owner, David Giles

H23 - Taffia Westerly Centaur Yacht. Owner, Michael Barnes

H21 - Clare 11 McGreggor 26x Motor Sailor. Owner, J.W Billinghamurst

H19 - Serenity

H17 - Harta Benetau First 24, 29yrs old. Owned by Richard Batten & Louisa Laurent. Harta is originally from Troon in Scotland but has been in the Bristol Channel for many years. She is a good, solid and fast boat and a pleasure to sail. She has had a significant makeover below and above deck. She can be recognised from afar due to her red sail cover and red fenders.

H15 - Indulgence Jeanneau Sun Odyssey Yacht. Owner, Simon Thomas. Cruises Bristol Channel and further afield

H13 - Libra Lass Moody 31 MK 11, Owner, Robert Cowley. Recently seen being sailed single handed on SWOG+

H11 - Duchess of Cymru. Beneteau 760 M/C. Owner, Andy Vowles. Build 2001, bought in 2008. Replaced Beau Nydle a Jeanneau 605 fishing boat which members may remember from an eventful weekend returning from Ilfracombe!! Duchess used mostly in the Swansea & Ilfracombe areas for holiday & fishing, even spent a week in Milford once.
Say hello as you’re passing... it costs nothing anyway lol

H9 - White Knight Beneteau 34.7. Cruiser/racer built 2006, purchased March 2014 to replace our previous boat Sleeper. We are keen racers who support the clubs racing program where possible. Hoping to go further afield next season & enjoy some cruising.

H7 - Offbeat, Hunter Impala. Owner, Chris Watler. Oldish design but still fast, frequently raced with some success in NHC fleet in club series and events.

H5 - Starlight Express Starlight 30. Owner, Mike Kenrick (Dave Cairncross said that she was the prettiest boat in the club before he sold her and bought Dizzy, which is now)

H3 - Czarek (Pilchard) Catch 22 yacht. Owner, R. Lamazyk. Currently has “for sale” signs displayed.

H32 - Woods Mira Catamaran – Unnamed, Owner, Roger Spear

H30 - Maia of Dart, Dawn 39, a variant of the classic Contessa 38. Owner: David Bevan This one has an elongated stern which gives extra space in the lazarette and set the backstays back. David has recently moved it to Chichester for an indefinite period.

H28 - Daddy's Girl Van de Stat 900 Yacht Owner, David Hall

H26 - Lowender Leisure 27 Owner, Nick Colmsea

H24 (new arrival) - Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 35.

H22 - Evolution, Reika Fiesta 250 Vee, Owner, Robert Bond

H20 - Ottawa Dragon Halman Nordic 20, Owner, Chris Morgan

H18 - Welsh Warrior Quicksilver 630 Pilot House, Owner, Glyn Jones

H16 - Silver Fox, Hardy Fast Fisher 24 with an extended wheel house fitted with a Volvo Penta 220 D/P. Built 2005 and bought by current owner Ian Thomson in April 2010 for all year round fishing in and around The Bristol Channel. Silver Fox has given hours of pleasure to both myself, family and friends, I have also been in a boat syndicate owning a Sadler 32ft Bilge Keel Yacht and currently share a Searay 260 Sundeck with a friend in Mallorca. Ian Thompson

H14 - Currently vacant

H12 - Zander11 Arvor 23 AS, Fisher /Motor Vessel, Owner, Jason Griffiths

H10 - Nutmeg. Motor Cruiser

H8 - Celtic dragon Motor Cruiser, Owner, Keith Wheeler

H6 - Atelo Colvic Sailor Yacht. D. Mainprize

H4 - Mustang Sally11 - Arvor 280 (maroon hull / white top) bought from Essex Boatyards Feb. 2013, by Harvey Preston of Nells Point Barry. Named after his daughter Sally and the many flights taken with Virgin Atlantic's Boeing 747 Mustang Sally. Used throughout the year for fishing and ventures as far as Lundy. Committee member of the angling section. Always down the club - usually fixing the windlass.

H2 - Tiger Lily 11- Arvor 250 Fisher / Motor Yacht Owner, Adrian Mustafa.



Me and My Boat

Owners: Rob & Teresa Cowley

Boat: Libra Lass

For my first seven years I lived in London but then the family moved to Bedhampton near Portsmouth. At junior school our teacher Mr Reid was a great sailor and used to take groups of us out in Langstone harbour in his dinghy which was moored a few yards from his house on Hayling Island. I don't suppose that would happen today! Later at secondary school the headmaster was another sailing enthusiast and the school had an active sailing club. We built plywood dinghies in the woodwork shop and sailed them in Chichester Harbour.

After university and marriage to Teresa and we lived and worked in Cardiff while raising three children. In those days sailing a cruising boat in the Bristol Channel didn't seem attractive – I sailed a variety of dinghies and spent a lot of time windsurfing.

Fast forward to the construction of the Cardiff Barrage.

In 2009 we joined Cardiff Bay Yacht Club and bought our first cruising boat "Bonny" a Hunter Horizon 27. Bonny stayed with us for about 18 months before we decided we needed something bigger with more creature comforts and less like a dinghy with a lid.

Enter "Libra Lass" our Moody 31 Mk2 built in 1990. She was on sale through Ancasta in Gosport. We viewed two Moodys, both on the south coast but decided on Libra Lass because the interior was in better condition and I liked the wheel steering – the other one was tiller steered. The deal was done in October 2010. The boat had been surveyed prior to purchase, a few minor issues addressed and the engine serviced at Gosport Marina while we were away on holiday. In late October I travelled down to Gosport with Chris who had been a regular crew on Bonnie, to begin the delivery trip. My brother John who still lives in the Portsmouth area met us to collect my car and keep it at his place until I could get back down to pick it up. We arrived at the marina before Ancasta's office opened and lured by the smell of bacon visited the local greasy spoon café. While we were eating our full English breakfast John came out with the prophetic words "I bet that's not the last you'll see of that." How right he was.

We got the keys to the boat about 9 am. It was a bright sunny day but cold and there was a layer of ice on the deck as we loaded our gear on board. We set off intending to take short hops while getting to know the boat with Lymington

being the first port of call. With a favourable tide and a good breeze we shot through the Needles Channel with the GPS showing about 11 knots over the ground. As we were doing so well we decided to press on overnight across Lyme Bay. That's when things started going downhill.

After a couple of hours the autopilot started playing up then gave up the ghost completely. Checking fuses and connections failed to fix it so it was hand steering from then on. We were having quite a bumpy trip across Lyme Bay until the early hours when the wind died and we started the engine. All was well for about an hour but then the engine revs began to die, recovered a few times then stopped. I thought it sounded like fuel starvation and tried priming through the diesel filter using the lever on the mechanical fuel pump. The engine would start briefly but soon cut out again. The water separator in the cockpit locker proved to be blocked solid with diesel bug, rust and general muck. With the boat bouncing around and me buried in the locker with the smell of diesel it wasn't long before breakfast lunch and tea had had enough of being down there.....

We got the engine going and continued towards Brixham but there was a lot more muck in the tank and the separator needed cleaning several times. Finally the engine gave up completely and we couldn't get fuel through the engine-mounted diesel filter. Changing the filter didn't help so we were well and truly stuffed.

We sailed on to Brixham and managed to pick up a mooring just outside the MDL Marina about 8am. With my wallet £64 lighter we were towed the 300 metres into the marina for repairs. The mechanical fuel pump had failed and there wasn't one available locally. I phoned the engineer at Gosport who had worked on the engine and he offered to bring a new pump over to Brixham and fit it (on a Saturday evening – how's that for service!) In the meantime I bought and fitted in place of the separator, a combined filter/separator with replaceable elements and a bag of filter elements. By bedtime the engine was back in commission and my wallet again lighter.

Plans to head off next morning were scuppered by a gale forecast and another the following day. Eventually the weather improved and we set off for Plymouth, sailing most of the way. The engine was still sucking up gunk from the tank and would stop at the least opportune moment

but we became pretty good at swapping filters and pressing on.

With more gales forecast we lost another night at Plymouth then headed out before dawn for Falmouth. By the time we were tied up at Falmouth Haven the gales were back - Force 9 that night. This was around the time that the Polish tall ship Fryderyk Chopin was dismasted off the isles of Scilly. After a couple more days storm bound at Falmouth the weather showed no sign of improving and Chris reminded me that he had a commitment back in Cardiff in about four days. I was ready to postpone the rest of the trip and even started looking for a winter berth at Falmouth when a 48 hour window of reasonable weather was forecast. Two 20 litre diesel cans together with a brim full tank gave us enough fuel to motor all the way to Cardiff if necessary. Our departure before dawn the following morning coincided with the stricken tall ship being towed into Falmouth on a 400 metre tow line. There were harbour officials and RNLI personnel whizzing around the harbour in RIBs like headless chickens but we quietly slipped out with fingers crossed against further engine failure.

33 hours later we were safely tied up in Cardiff Bay.

Since we've had Libra Lass we've replaced the engine with a Beta 30, fitted a new plastic fuel tank, Featherstream propeller, calorifier, fridge, autopilot, DSC VHF with AIS, holding tank, Eberspacher heating, cooker, anchor windlass and batteries including a third one dedicated to engine starting.

We've been doing the SWOGs for the last two years and in 2013 the good weather enabled us to visit the Isles of Scilly and Southern Ireland. Tony (Barebones) Davies crewed on both those trips and proved to be an excellent chef specialising in porridge and peanut buttered toast.

Plans for 2014 include doing SWOGs and SWOG Plus. We'll also try to take advantage of any fine weather to go further afield.

If you would like to tell us about your boat and the adventures you've had racing or cruising on it, then write around 500 words (one side of A4) and chose a photo and email us at:

beaessentials@cbyc.co.uk.

Or you can hand it in to the club office, FAO Bear Essentials.

Photo below: St Agnes, Cornwall





If you use Facebook then please do search for Cardiff Bay Yacht Club or copy this link into your browser: <https://www.facebook.com/CBYCWales> and 'like' the page to be kept up-to-date with what's going on and to see all of the latest photos.

BART'S BASH AND AUTUMN REGATTA 20th & 21st September

The Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation is organising a monster sized attempt to set a new **Guinness World Record** for 'The Largest Sailing Race in The World (Multiple locations over 24 hours)', which is called **Bart's Bash**. We're delighted to announce that CBYC will be taking part!

What is Bart's Bash?

Bart's Bash is a global sailing race being sailed at your local sailing or yacht club on Sunday 21 September 2014 on behalf of a charity, The Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation. The Foundation is a charity that was set up in memory of Andrew Simpson by Sir Ben Ainslie, Iain Percy and Andrew's wife Leah to inspire the next generation through sailing.

To find out more about the Foundation, our activities and work with young people please visit the "Charity" page on this site or visit the Foundation website www.andrewsimpsonsailing.org



GALLEY GOURMET

Coq au Vin in a Pan

Serves: 4

Preparation time: 6 minutes

Cooking time: 30-35 minutes

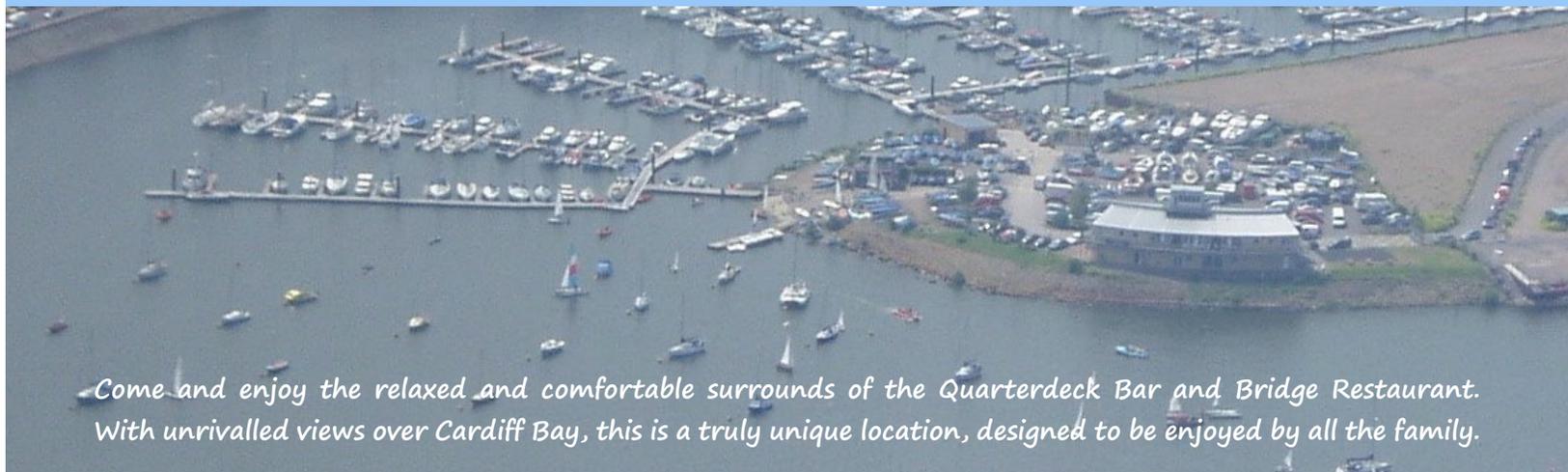
- 30 ml/ 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 100 g/ 4 oz lardons
- 100 g/ 4 oz button mushrooms, sliced
- 4 skinless chicken breasts
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 300 ml/ ½ pt/ 1 ¼ cups red wine
- 150ml/ ¼ pt/ 2/3 cup chicken stock, made with ½ stock cube
- 1 bouquet garni sachet
- 30 ml/ 2 tbsp plain (all purpose) flour
- 30 ml/ 2 tbsp brandy
- 30 ml/ 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

To serve:

- French bread and a green salad

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan (skillet) and fry (sauté) the onion and lardons, stirring for 2 minutes.
2. Stir in the mushrooms and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the chicken and cook for 1 minute on each side to seal. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add the wine and stock to the pan with the bouquet garni. Bring to the boil, stirring gently. Reduce the heat, cover with a lid or foil and cook gently for 25 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.
4. Remove the bouquet garni. Transfer the chicken breasts to a plate and keep warm in a low oven.
5. Blend the flour with the brandy. Stir into the frying pan and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Return the chicken to the pan and turn over in the sauce.
6. Transfer the chicken and sauce to warm plates. Garnish with the chopped parsley and serve with French bread and a green salad.

CARDIFF BAY YACHT CLUB



Come and enjoy the relaxed and comfortable surrounds of the Quarterdeck Bar and Bridge Restaurant. With unrivalled views over Cardiff Bay, this is a truly unique location, designed to be enjoyed by all the family.

Opening Hours - 1st September 2014 until end of March 2015

Quarterdeck Bar opening hours

Monday: Closed
Tuesday: Closed *
Wednesday: 12noon - 23.00
Thursday: 12 noon - 23.00
Friday: 12 noon - 23.00
Saturday: 08.00 - 12 noon
Sunday: 08.00 - 22.00

* except for winter talks when open from 6pm

The Bridge Restaurant opening hours

Breakfast / Lunch

Dinner

Monday:	Closed	Monday:	Closed	Closed
Tuesday:	Closed	Tuesday:	Closed	Closed*
Wednesday:	12 noon - 15.00	Wednesday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Thursday:	12 noon - 15.00	Thursday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Friday:	12 noon - 15.00	Friday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Saturday:	08.00 - 15.00	Saturday:	08.00 - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Sunday:	08.00 - 15.00	Sunday:	08.00 - 15.00	Closed

Last orders will be taken 15 minutes before the end of service

To avoid disappointment, please phone 02920 226575 within the opening hours, as above, if you wish to make a reservation to dine in the Restaurant. Bookings for Sunday roast dinner MUST be made in advance. If outside these opening hours then please phone our Admin Office on 02920 666627.

The restaurant may be closed if we have a function booked. Posters advertising any event will always be found on the main notice board at the Club or on our website.

Cardiff Bay Yacht Club
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