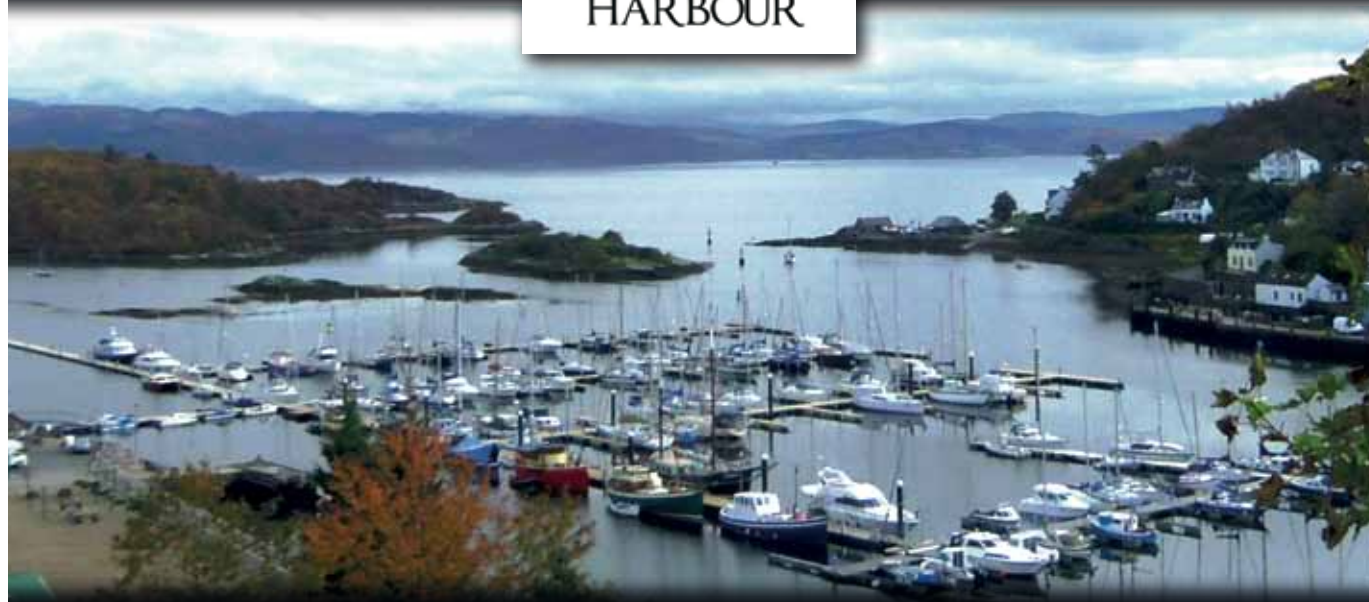




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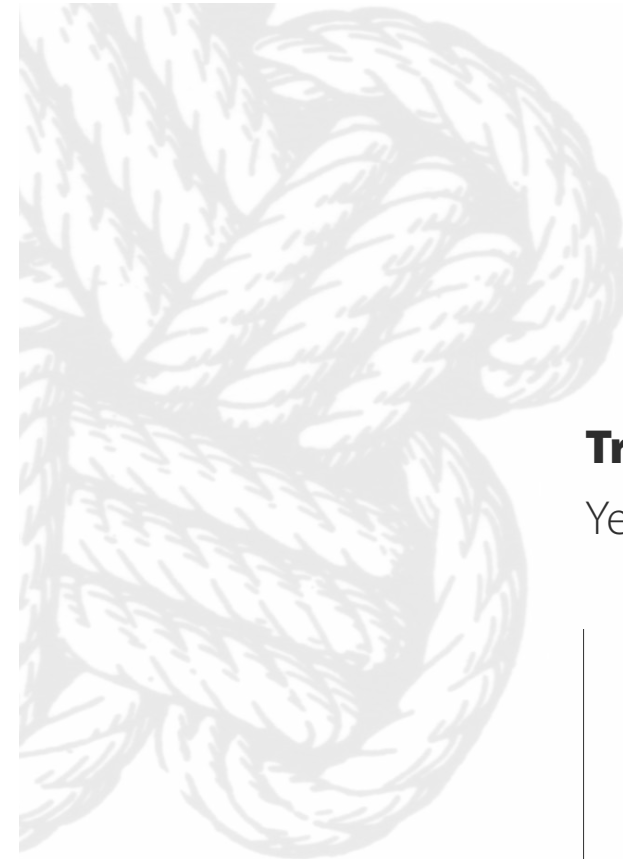


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Troon Cruising Club 1955 – 2013

Yearbook Number 29 : 2013

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Cover Photograph - Settled at anchor at Kings Cross

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Commodore's Welcome

Welcome to the 2013 Troon Cruising Club Yearbook.

It doesn't seem that long ago that I joined this highly respected club and now I find myself Commodore I have some very big boots to fill. The list of previous Commodores that hangs on the clubhouse wall is a mere historical skeleton that gives no insight into all the work enthusiastically undertaken to establish and develop the club we all enjoy today. For those of you who haven't done so dig out a copy of the Club History from the committee room (£5 and well worth it) and I promise you that you will find it full of inspiration. From the determined legal fight to ensure the club's continued existence to epic accounts of seamanship and navigation in the days before GPS and reliable marine engines.

In 2012 we were told by Lord Coe to 'inspire a generation'. Well, Troon Cruising Club has been doing this for many generations and you will find fine examples of it within these pages. Roger Coutou's (multi award winning) log of his single handed cruise around the islands and Davy Bone's account of his and Gary's trip to St Kilda differ diametrically. Roger's log is filled with detail and few photos while Davy's narrative is minimal but the story is fulfilled by the illustrations. However different they are, both had the same effect on me — I want to do that! Could I do that? Not this season perhaps but I could get the charts out and start planning...

As editor I would like to thank all contributors to this and past yearbooks. I eagerly anticipate the articles arriving in my in-box and delight in their diversity. This year we are slightly down on the number of articles, probably as a result of the poor sailing weather last season and, while commodores can influence many things, meteorological manipulation is beyond the best so I cannot guarantee anything but, however curtailed your cruise or race may be, I urge you to tell us about it - long or short, humorous or adventurous, each adds to the rich and colourful history of the club.

We also need to thank the advertisers without whose loyalty this yearbook would not be possible. So next time you meet one of them I would be delighted if you could let them know how much we appreciate their support.

Enjoy the yearbook and be inspired.

Doug Lamont *Commodore 2013*

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Convenor's Reports

Financial Review 2013

The Budget for 2013 is based upon; no increase in full membership subscriptions; no increase in berthing rights fee, and a £2 increase in associate membership subscription. It also assumes a slightly lower membership and mooring occupancy together with a budgeted contribution from social activities so please continue to ensure that they are supported.

On routine expenditure a surplus of £1000 is expected, this will cover improved compound drainage and repair to the clubhouse windows.

Now that the club has reduced its capital reserve to an accepted minimum as requested by the members it is worthwhile considering how major items of expenditure such as improvements to the club toilets/shower, improvements to the slip, compound and dinghy storage should be funded. To build the clubhouse in the 80s a bond scheme was introduced where members loaned money to the club and were repaid over five years. This was successful and all monies were repaid, however it is not really appropriate for projects envisaged today. To fund a project such as the £4000 required for the toilets cannot realistically be done by small increases in subscriptions. A £5 increase would only raise £750 requiring 5 years to fund such a project. Without further significant increases such expenditure would inhibit developments more appropriate to a club involved in boat maintenance and sailing. It is important to identify well in advance specific capital and major maintenance expenditure so that funding can be planned. Simply to increase the subscriptions as a precaution does not work because there is a reaction to further increases once the capital accrued exceeds £25,000 without any specific and defined objective.

For some specific projects, which are reasonably well defined, both technically and financially, a one off charge to the Membership can prove to be a cost effective way to proceed for all members. It results in a lower membership subscription which in turn attracts more new members.

John Hall

Cruising Report 2012

Cruising 2012 We sailed to Largs, Lamalash, Kingscross, Rothesay, & Tarbert.

The opening muster

We kicked off the cruising season up at Largs Yacht Haven on Saturday 28/29 April for the opening muster, with a record number of boats and club members for the opening muster. We had 25 boats up at Largs and 67 members enjoyed a hot buffet in Largs sailing club on Saturday night.

Lamalash muster

Lamalash muster on Saturday 26/27 May saw six Club Boats make it to Lamalash in a north easterly wind where 14 members enjoyed a BBQ at Lamalash in front of Arran Sailing Club. Some went on to the local hostellers and sailed back on Sunday

THE KINGSCROSS MUSTER

The Kingscross Muster on Saturday 23/24 June: with the wind coming from the west 5 boats made it to Lamalash and not Kingscross. Due to weather conditions the BBQ at Kingscross was cancelled 12 members went to the Pierhead Tavern to enjoy a meal and good night was had by all. On Sunday they sailed back home to Troon

THE ROTHESAY MUSTER

The Rothesay Muster Weekend of the 6/7/8 July saw six boats get to Rothesay in an east wind. At night 15 members went for a meal in one of the pubs in Rothesay some went on to the local hostellers. Sunday saw all five boats sail back home at leisure.

THE TARBERT MUSTER

The Tarbert Muster on Saturday 1/2 September saw a number of club boats leaving Troon on the weekend to make for Tarbert eight boats

made it to Tarbert on Saturday and made the most of the local hostellers on the Saturday night. Sunday saw all eight boats sail back to Troon.

CLOSING MUSTER

The closing muster was held up at Largs on the 15/16 September. Due to adverse weather conditions the total number of boats was 11 and not the anticipated 21. However this did not detract from the numbers who attended the dinner in Largs sailing club. Those members who attended (40 number) enjoyed a very successful evening.

REDWING TROPHY...	ROGER COUTO
NAUTICAL NARRATIVE...	JIM GOODLAD
TANKARD TROPHY...	DAVID BONE
ANCHOR TROPHY...	DAVID BONE
COSALT TROPHY...	ANDREW DUFFIN
SATURN SAIL TROPHY...	DAVID CAMERON
NEBULA TROPHY...	ROGER COUTO

Ewan Black and Robin Ferguson

Racing Report 2012

The number of Wednesday evenings where the Wacky Races didn't have enough wind to take place was unbelievable. Then moving onto the weekend races it's the first time I've seen that the full complement of the Spring and Autumn series of races have been fulfilled and we've only missed three of the weekend races namely, Lamalash, Crews/Ladies and the Arran trophy.

Many thanks have to go to the Racing Committee comprising Robin Ferguson, Stuart Powrie, Colin Thomson and John MacKinnon who have all helped to keep on the straight and narrow and allow me fulfil this position in 2012.

Finally thanks has to go out to all members who have raced in 2012 comprising thirty plus boats that have entered into one or more of the races.

Racing Results for 2012

Club Championship — 1st Argento/Hoodlum, 3rd Green Kestral
Offshore Championship — 1st Hoodlum, 2nd Argento
Spring Series — 1st Ariadne/Argento, 3rd Hoodlum, 3rd Hydra
Autumn Series — 1st Argento, 2nd Hoodlum

Offshore Championship Race Results

Blue Peter — 1st Hoodlum, 2nd Argento, 3rd Gannet
Millport — 1st Green Kestral, 2nd Argento, 3rd Hoodlum
Mullach Mhor — 1st Hoodlum, 2nd Argento
Hamilton Rock — 1st Argento, 2nd Hoodlum
UFG Trophy — 1st Argento, 2nd Hoodlum
Warden and Bell — 1st Elektra, 2nd Hoodlum
Tarbert Trophy — 1st Green Kestral, 2nd Eliza
Thistle Trophy — 1st Hoodlum, 2nd Gannet, 3rd Green Kestral

Other Races

RNLI/Lady Isle Race — 1st Argento, 2nd Elektra, 3rd Green Kestral
50th Anniversary Race — 1st Argento, 2nd Oberon, 3rd Green Kestral

Wednesday Night Wackies Monthly Medals

April/Sept (Short Course only) — 1st Malibu
May Short Course — 1st Gannet
May Long Course — No Winner
June Short Course — No Winner
June Long Course — No Winner
July Short Course — No Winner
July Long Course — No Winner
August Short Course — No Winner
August Long Course — No Winner

Phil Beard

TCC Racing Secretary

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Convenor's Reports (continued)

Social Convenor's Report 2012

The year started with a Glenfiddoch Tasting Night presented by Linda McGowan. Numbers were disappointing but members who attended enjoyed the evening, and to these members it gives me great pleasure to say Linda was chosen to do the Glenfiddoch Challenge which was a trip to Cambodia to assist in the building of two houses for families affected by landmines, she went in November and has wonderful memories of this trip.

Curry Night, the clubhouse was filled with wonderful aromas, with this it also gave Members a thirst, well that's their excuse, and who am I to disagree.

Mediterranean Night, it's always nice to taste different dishes by Members reminiscing of our foreign holidays, pity it wasn't as warm.

BBQ was very well attended we had to rush down for more supplies. I think this was a lot to do with Julia Porter's cooking skills, (Pete said she doesn't do cooking or is it Can't Cook or Won't Cook) either way she was a star. Huge thank you. This was also a good chance to catch up and discuss sailing adventures.

Lift-In & Lift-Outs – Busy days for all. Special Mention to all my trusted helpers in Galley, Agnes Gairns for being Banker!! and also everyone who donated soups and baking. Without you we would have a great deal of grumpy men and ladies we don't want that.

Dinner Dance – This event was well attended. This is an occasion when we ladies notice the Chaps scrub up rather well, A wee change from the usual attire we see at clubhouse.

Well done boys we do appreciate you glamming it up

Kids Party – 11 children had a fun day and this was completed with a Special Guest. Thanks to all for assisting, couldn't do it without you.

Burns Supper – Members and Guests enjoyed good Scottish Fayre washed down with drink of your choice. Speakers were most entertaining.

Most social events have been well attended, but it would be nice to see new faces, we are a friendly bunch, so why not give at least one of the events a go.

I will finish by thanking everyone too many to mention who assisted me throughout this year.

Also thank you for voting for me for the John McFarlane Trophy which has pride of place on my Sideboard. Each time I pass by, it brings a wide smile to my face. Perhaps Ricky's thinking I should pass it more often.

Izzy McGowan

TROON CRUISING CLUB COUNCIL 2013



Back row left to right - Arran Cameron, John Haston, Don Lindsay, Bill Stewart, Jack Gairns, Phil Beard, Kyle Stewart, George Whiteside, John Hall, Robin Ferguson.

Front row left to right - Isabell McGowan, Jim Short, David Hutton, Doug Lamont, Ewan Black, Babs Henderson.

Prizewinners' Gallery



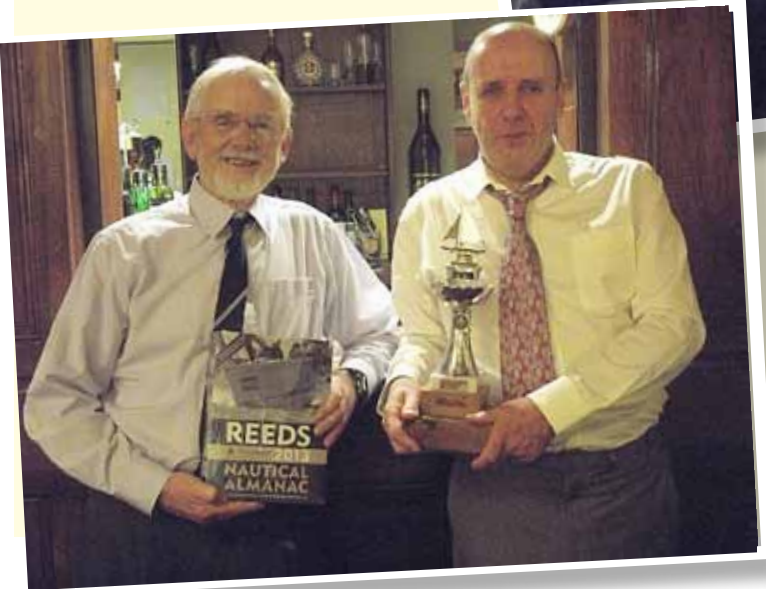
Roger Coutu



Ken Andrew and Robin Ferguson



Back row: Ken Andrew, Robin Ferguson, Arran Cameron
Front: Gary Muir, Phil Beard, David Cameron



Jim Goodlad and David Cameron

TCC Racing Results 2012

Club Championship...	1st = <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 1st = <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 3rd <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie
Offshore..... Championship	1st <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 2nd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew
Spring Series.....	1st <i>Ariadne</i> G Clyde 2nd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 3rd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson
Autumn Series.....	1st <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 2nd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 3rd <i>Hydra</i> G & J Dickie
Blue Peter.....	1st <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 2nd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 3rd <i>Gannet</i> S & D Scott
Millport.....	1st <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie 2nd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 3rd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson
Mullach Mhor.....	1st <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 2nd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew
Hamilton Rock.....	1st <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 2nd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson
UFG Trophy.....	1st <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 2nd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson
Warden & Bell.....	1st <i>Elektra</i> A Dean 2nd <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 3rd <i>Argento</i> K Andrew
Tarbert Trophy.....	1st <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie 2nd <i>Eliza</i> D Hutton
Thistle Trophy.....	1st <i>Hoodlum</i> J & R Ferguson 2nd <i>Gannet</i> S & D Scott 3rd <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie
RNLI/Lady Isle Race.....	1st <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 2nd <i>Elektra</i> A Dean 3rd <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie
50th Anniversary Race...	1st <i>Argento</i> K Andrew 2nd <i>Oberon</i> 3rd <i>Green Kestrel</i> S Powrie


TCC Cruising Awards 2012

Redwing Trophy.....	Roger Couto
Nautical Narrative.....	Jim Goodlad
Tankard Trophy.....	David Bone
Anchor Trophy.....	David Bone
Cosalt Trophy.....	Andrew Duffin
Saturn Sail Trophy.....	David Cameron
Nebula Trophy.....	Roger Couto



At the Lift-In Roger Coutu was presented with the Trident Owners Association MARCON TROPHY 2012 for the best nautical narrative by a Trident sailor. Congratulations Roger!

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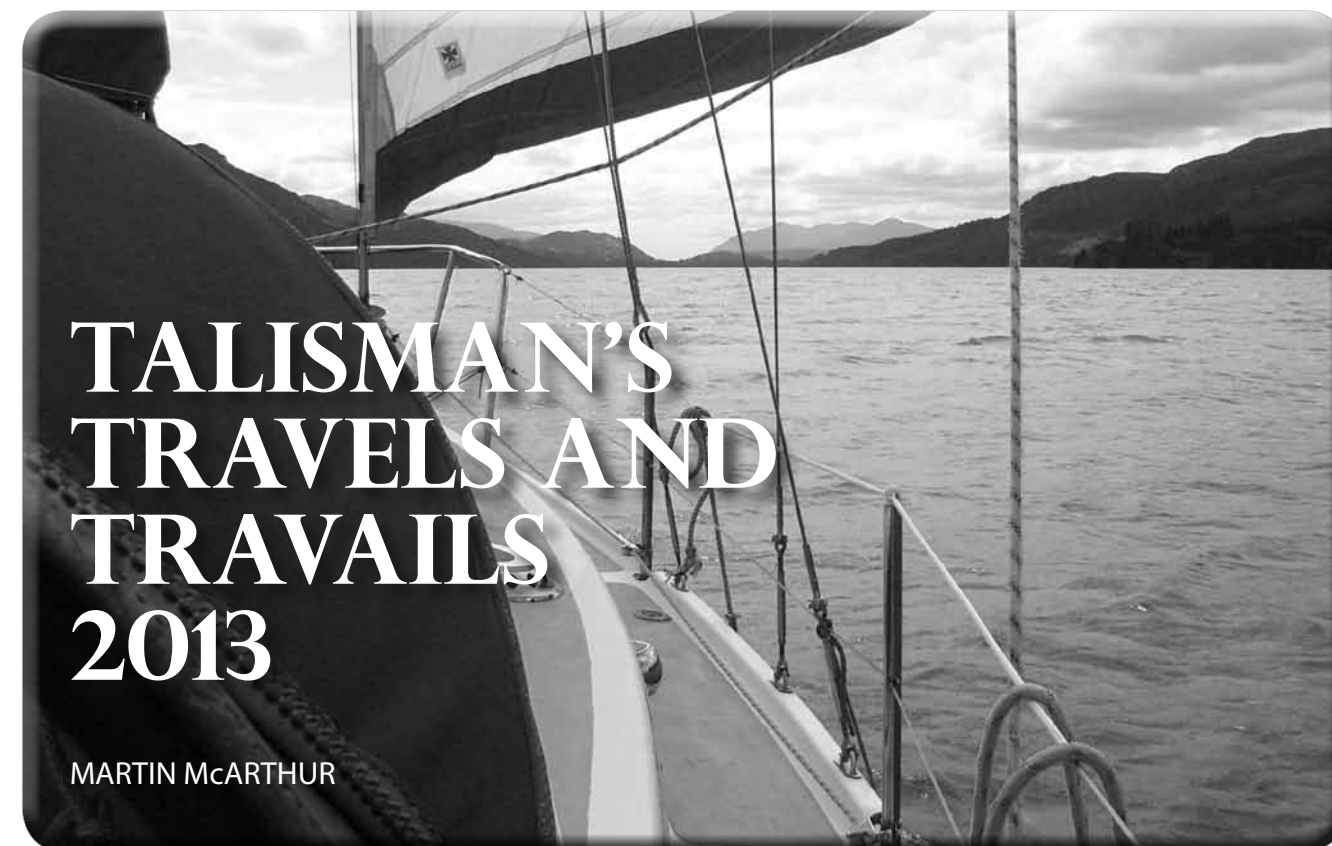
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Talisman's (failed) Cruise to the Channel Islands

This cruise did not start off well. First day, Monday 21st May, we set off for Portpatrick (on our way towards the Channel Islands) and only made it to Girvan. In Girvan, while setting up the shore power cable, I stepped off the boat, caught my heel on a warp and fell backwards on to the pontoon. I landed awkwardly and had a great rush of fear that I was going to fall off the pontoon into the water. I was not badly hurt but the flash of fear stayed with me. Next morning we set out, once more aiming for Portpatrick, the wind was on the nose, the sea was lumpy and I was not happy. Less than an hour out I told Anne that I was going back to Troon. She was surprised at my decision, but not unhappy.

By Friday I had recovered from the fall and decided that we would set off once more. Early Saturday morning off we went, aiming for Girvan. We made it to Girvan, and then on to Portpatrick, Peel and Holyhead, arriving there on Wednesday 30th May. I had planned to stay at Holyhead for a few days so that I could go to Tesco for fresh stores (mostly gin and whisky but some non essentials like bread, butter, milk, etc.) By the time I was about ready to move on the weather had turned a bit nasty. It was the weekend of the Diamond Jubilee river pageant and we had good tv reception so we decided to stay put and watch that. About this time I became aware that there was a leak, somewhere near the heads. Initial investigation found water trickling (apparently) from the base of the toilet sea cocks. I arranged with the marina that, once the bank holiday was over, Talisman would be lifted out so that work could be done on the sea cocks. In the meantime I tried other solutions; adjusting the tensioning of the Blakes type sea cocks, closing the sea cocks and only pumping the loo when really necessary. This resulted in a significant reduction in the water in the bilge. Eureka, this meant that the leak was not at the sea cock seats but somewhere above so I was able to cancel the arranged lift out thus saving a large amount of money.

On the day of the river pageant a gale blew up driving waves on to the marina pontoon, together with heavy rain it was not a pleasant day. Before the tv programme started, shore power, to

the whole of the marina, failed – no TV!!!

The weather was rubbish, I missed the river pageant and I was worried about the leak near the toilet, I decided that this cruise was fated and once more decided to turn back towards home. The weather didn't improve until Wednesday 6th June and we set off on quite a nice day with a following breeze (about F3) and, once out into the tidal stream, a 3.5 knot current setting us to the northeast. Less than 2 hours out, approaching the traffic separation zone after having passed the Skerries, Anne said that she had a pain in her left upper arm. She assured me that it was quite sore. I gave her two paracetamol, then as an afterthought I also gave her 2 x 75 mg soluble aspirin. (I have carried these with me ever since I suffered a heart attack over 20 years ago.) Half an hour later the pain was still there, maybe even a bit worse. I called the coastguard and told them that I wanted some medical advice. By now, although I didn't say to Anne, I was convinced that she was having a heart attack. The coastguard asked some basic questions then said that he would patch me through to a doctor. The doctor (who was in Aberdeen!) asked more questions then told me to give her two more soluble aspirins and turn back to Holyhead as she needed to be examined in a hospital. I knew that, with the tide going NE, and a following wind, it was going to be difficult to get back to Holyhead. I advised the coastguard, and he said that as he had been following our conversation with the doctor, he was aware of our situation and had already tasked the lifeboat, there was also a helicopter on it's way!

Having turned Talisman around towards Holyhead I went below to set up a reciprocal course on the plotter. I had hardly started when I saw, out on the starboard beam, orange smoke. The helicopter had arrived in very fast time, must have been exercising nearby. From now on things became quite intense. I tried to call the helicopter on channel 16 but, because of the noise could hear nothing. Back out in the cockpit I signalled to the pilot and he backed off about half a mile. With communications established he told me to move the boom to starboard, I unclipped the main sheet and hooked it to the starboard guard rail. He then told me to sit to starboard and to disengage the autopilot. I had to steer by hand. The plan was to lower a paramedic into the cockpit over the port side. Doing my best to maintain my course into wind I could not resist looking round to look at the approaching paramedic, as

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a result I leant forward thus pushing the tiller to port and steering the boat to starboard. Instead of arriving over the port side the paramedic came over the pushpit demolishing the dan buoy as he passed over the pushpit. However, apart from the broken dan buoy there was no other harm done and the paramedic was safely on board.

He went below and examined Anne, carrying out an ECG as part of his procedures. This all confirmed that in his opinion she should go to hospital. When he said to Anne that he would transfer her to the helicopter on a strop and the winch she responded with a resounding 'NO', under no circumstances would she go up on a strop! By this time the lifeboat had arrived and two lifeboat crew had come aboard, the deputy coxswain and a lady crew member. They persuaded and assisted Anne to go up into the cockpit where they supported her standing on the cockpit seat and asked her to step from Talisman over to the lifeboat. They had the same level of success as the paramedic from the helicopter. I must admit that it would have been very difficult for Anne to have made that step across as both boats were moving out of synch with the other, and timing the step would have been essential to avoid any injury.

The lifeboat coxswain made the decision that he would tow Talisman back to Holyhead, leaving his deputy on board Talisman he replaced the lady crew member with a man trained in first aid and carrying an oxygen cylinder. He went below and administered the oxygen to Anne, the deputy coxswain went on the foredeck and arranged the tow rope and we set off towards Holyhead. The lifeboatman sat in the cockpit simply watching that all was going safely, no hand on the tiller, Talisman followed the lifeboat with no deviation, he left the engine running, but out of gear, to prevent any water running into the exhaust. Travelling at 10 knots we were back into Holyhead in a very short time, a very smooth ride despite the speed.

At Holyhead marina there was a paramedic waiting for us, he carried out another examination and ECG and once more said that Anne needed to go to hospital for further tests. An ambulance was being arranged, although at that time it was unclear where the one ambulance allocated to Anglesey was! Eventually it turned up and Anne and I sped off to Bangor hospital. Reception and treatment in A&E at Bangor was very good but it became clear that Anne would have to stay overnight. By now it was becoming quite late and by the time I got back to Talisman by taxi, train and another taxi, it was too late to go back to Bangor. Next day I hired a car and drove to Bangor where Anne was waiting to be discharged.

The diagnosis was that she had NOT had a heart attack but may be suffering from angina. I was advised to take her home – by land, not by sea. Returning the local hired car I arranged another from Enterprise and we drove home next day.

Since all this occurred Anne had another episode and spent the night at Crosshouse hospital with the same end result. She has subsequently seen a cardiologist and he has said she is 'probably' suffering from angina?

After being reassured that Anne was (most likely) all right I went down to Holyhead and brought Talisman back to Troon.

Talisman's Cruise to Inverness

After our failed cruise to the Channel Islands and Anne subsequently been given the all clear (well nearly) I wanted to get back to sea, but not so far from home. I had been talking to my brother on the phone, he lives in Inverness, and he suggested that maybe we could go to Inverness. About the same time I heard that the Crinan canal were offering assisted passages at no extra cost. Having once paid an exorbitant fee to a 'pilot' for assistance to transit the Crinan I had said that I would not go there again but this made all the difference!

Nearly a month after getting back from Holyhead, we set off on Wednesday 4th of July for Tarbert, arriving there after less than seven pleasant hours of gentle motor sailing. We left early

next morning (07:00) for Ardrishaig and were into the canal by 09:35 having paid the fee of £201.85 for a 14 day licence to cover transit of both the Crinan and the Caledonian canals. Passage through the canal was swift and trouble free, at every lock there was someone to take my warps and operate the gates. We were in Crinan basin in just under five hours from starting out! We were so early that I decided to move on to Craobh rather than the planned stay overnight in the Crinan basin. Next day, after refuelling, we set off to Oban Marina at Kerrera. On the way there I was given a sharp lesson in seamanship! As we approached the southern end of the Sound of Kerrera I was reading a very exciting story (on my Kindle) and had not been following my usual procedure of reading 2 or 3 pages (4 or 5 minutes) then having a look around, I had been spending a lot longer NOT keeping a good lookout. I had looked at the approach to the Sound, judged that we were aimed in the right direction and were in safe water with no other vessels in sight and went back to a very exciting part of the book. Ten minutes later I got a big shock as, with an enormous bang Talisman stopped abruptly. We had hit the rocks on the eastern side of the entrance to the Sound! I was soundly berated from down below as I extricated the boat from the rocks and then quickly checked for visible damage, ie no leaks. All seemed well and we went on, this time with a much more attentive skipper! Notwithstanding the lesson I had just received I managed to put Talisman on the rocks again! At the buoy marking the Ferry Rocks, nearly at Oban, I took the buoy on the wrong side and we slid, quite gently this time, on to the rocks marked by the buoy. Fortunately the tide was rising so we came off quite easily with no great shock. Two lessons in one day!!!

The following day (Saturday) at Kerrera I was allowed to put Talisman on the slipway to examine the damage. The lower leading edge of the port keel had taken the blow and a strip of gel coat about 10 inches long and less than 2 inches wide had been



The gelcoat had been removed exposing glass fibre strands



A liberal coating of epoxy served as a temporary repair

knocked off exposing glass fibres. I made a trip across to Oban and bought a kit of two part epoxy. After rinsing the damaged area with fresh water and drying as well as possible, I applied the epoxy to the 'wound'. When lifted out at the end of the season the repair was still there and appears to only require some dressing off and covering with coppercoat to be permanent.

Sunday we were off again to Corpach, the entrance to the Caledonian canal. With a fairly strong wind just off the port bow progress was slow and it took over 8 hours for the passage. Longer than expected and we arrived at about the time the lock gates were due to close until the next tide. Fortunately I called on VHF and the canal staff said that if I was quick he could hold the gate for a short time. We were no sooner into the lock than the gate closed behind us. As I already had the necessary paperwork there was little administration to be done but I did not get the chance to arrange to refuel Talisman before venturing into the canal. In Corpach basin we met Rik Eppens from Holland on board his yacht called Fin Fin. He was returning to his home berth at (was it) Gairloch? He spent some time working in Scotland for the Forestry Commission and lived aboard while here. We had an enjoyable meal with him on board Talisman.

Next morning we set off at 08:40, we had to be at the foot of 'Neptunes Staircase' by 09:00. We were nearly half way up the Staircase before I had a chance to ask about fuel, only to be told I should have got it at Corpach! Fortunately my brother was due to meet up with us later that day – with his car. He met up with us at Laggan and took me (and my diesel can) back to Corpach where I got 11 litres which were immediately decanted into the tank. He went off home carrying the can which he would fill and bring back the following day. On the way to Laggan we had to cross Loch Lochy against a stiff breeze and I was surprised by the size of waves generated, not that they were so big, just bigger than expected. We spent the night in the marina, a windswept and



Rik Eppens from Holland on board his yacht Fin Fin

lonely place where we saw not another person until we passed through the locks next day.

We had an easy day on Tuesday, leaving Laggan at 09:30 we cruised gently across Loch Oich then through the Aberchalder swing bridge, Culloch and Kitra Locks before arriving at the top of Fort Augustus Locks at 12:15. Here my brother delivered the fuel that he had picked up at Inverness marina. I had given him very clear instructions to make sure that he declared our 60/40 use of marine diesel.

From Fort Augustus we descended to Loch Ness. Still the wind was blowing from the northwest so we motored steadily along this impressive stretch of water with the really marvellous scenery. The only problem came when, nearly at the end of the loch, we were hit by a big wash that came unexpectedly from our port quarter. Talisman rolled violently and something fell from the engine box on to the quarter berth, striking a cough bottle that was lying there and smashing the bottle. Cough mixture on the cushions, what a sticky mess! We never did see what had

caused such a big wash.

From Loch Ness we crossed Loch Dochfour, through Dochgarroch Lock and Tomnahurich Swing Bridge, then down the Muirtown Locks to the Seaport Marina. After refuelling we were allocated a berth in the marina where my brother and his wife joined us for dinner. Very posh – fish and chips!

Next night they took us out for a meal.

All too soon it was time to make the return trip. From Seaport marina we made for Fort Augustus where we spent the night. Crossing Loch Ness the wind was at last favourable and for the first time we were able to sail. PHOTO 4. On the way up the Fort Augustus Locks I managed to remember to take a photo showing the water swirling into the lock. PHOTO 5. On the way back we stopped at the top of Neptune's Staircase and in the sea lock at Corpach. The sea lock was quite busy with boats coming into the canal and those, like us, about to leave. PHOTO 6.

From Corpach we sailed to Kerrera and on to Craobh. Leaving Craobh the weather was poor with rain and a fairly thick mist. Fortunately this cleared up soon after we arrived at Crinan. Passage through the canal was slower this time than the passage north but we still managed to make the passage from Craobh to Tarbert in just over 11 hours. The following day we returned to Troon having been away for 15 days and logged 283 miles.



Rik Eppens from Holland on board his yacht Fin Fin



Rik Eppens from Holland on board his yacht Fin Fin

Talisman's Short Cruise to Ireland

Not sure where to go for this cruise we set off from Troon with the intention of letting the wind decide which direction to take. The wind was from the SW so I decided that we would go to either Largs or Rothesay. Unfortunately Anne had forgotten to take Stugeron before we set off and before we had gone far she was not only not feeling very well she was actually sick. The nearest port, downwind, was Ardrossan so, less than 10 miles from Troon, we went in to the marina. We were to stay another day there as the wind was quite strong again from the SW. Next morning we set out, with the forecast for a westerly, or north-westerly, wind, this time considering going to Campbeltown and then on to Ireland. The wind was still from the SW so we went north – it is said that gentlemen never beat against the wind – with a choice of Largs or Rothesay as our intended destination. Eventually I decided on Rothesay, and then later changed to Port Bannatyne, as I had never been there. We found it to be quite a pleasant marina with a friendly welcome.

In the morning, at last, the wind had eased a little and there was more west than south in it, so off we went to Campbeltown. Not a bad passage, a reach until we were out of Rothesay Bay, close on the wind to Garroch Head. The hardest part was from the Clyde to the north end of the Kilbrannon Sound with the wind directly on the nose. Bearing off course to the south I found some shelter behind Arran and, as we got closer to the shore found that the wind, coming round the north of the island, tended to be a little more from the north west. Eventually we were able to turn south and the remainder of the 42 mile passage went without any problems and we arrived in Campbeltown after 8 hours at sea.

After two nights in Campbeltown, then two more in Ballycastle we sailed to Coleraine, the furthest west we have been in Talisman. On the way there we diverted in to the Giant's Causeway to have a look at this famous tourist attraction. From the sea it certainly did not look like much however I did plan to take the bus there from Coleraine. The approach to Coleraine is on the river Bann via a well-marked channel. Near the river mouth there were several fishermen, all were very pleasant giving friendly waves as we passed. As we approached Coleraine marina I tried to contact them on VHF with no success. However there was another yachtsman who pointed out a suitable berth. Later the marina manager (same surname as me!) confirmed that the berth was ok. Coleraine marina was a bit of a disappointment; very high cost and the showers were from the dark ages, very primitive. It was also a fairly long walk into town where I had to go to get an internet connection. The yachtsman who had pointed out the berth when we arrived came down to talk, his yacht (a big Bruce Roberts Spray class), he told me, was moored further up the river, beyond the railway bridge. After a bit of chat he offered to take me in his car to see where he was moored, and to see his yacht. The moorings were alongside a new pontoon in a commercial setting. There was fresh water and shore power available, it was very close to the town centre, and the cost was very cheap, but there were no showers or other facilities.

After Coleraine I abandoned any thought of going further west to Londonderry and we returned home via Ballycastle and Campbeltown. We had been away from Troon for 11 days and had logged 200 miles.



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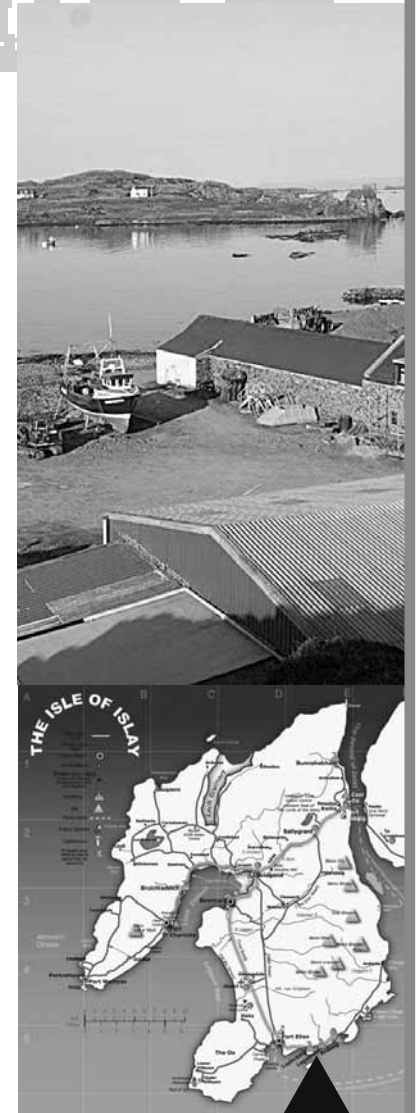
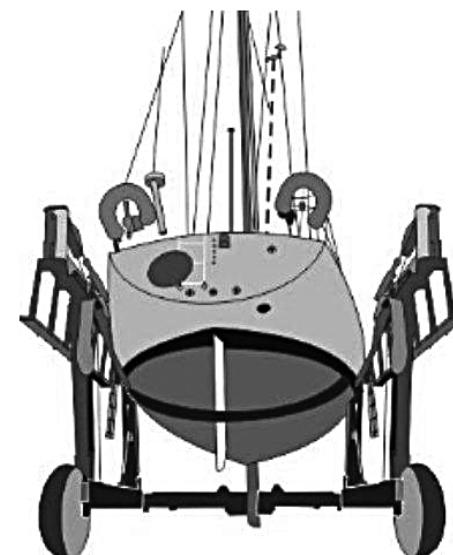
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We headed ashore for a pub lunch and on our return both fell asleep for two hours, I wonder why!!!!

TARRAGON 2012

Agnes Gairns

Monday 21st May

This year started off very slowly with the ticket machine on the bus from Ayr refusing to work. The delay made me rather anxious as I didn't want to miss my connection at Glasgow for Oban. Next hold up was road works, resulting in single file traffic all the way from the Erskine Bridge to Dumbarton. This took us half an hour, a journey that normally is about 10 minutes. However, after all that, it was a pleasant change for Agnes boarding Tarragon in lovely sunshine.

Tuesday 22nd May

After a very quite night we headed for Tobermory with a slight sea, light winds and a clear sky. What more could I ask for? It was a very pleasant sail and we arrived in just over four hours. The bay was very quiet with lots of spare moorings even later in the evening. The two Ocean Youth Trust yachts followed us up from Oban. We noticed them practicing "man over board" techniques just north of Kerrera.

Wednesday 23rd May

Up early, but not very bright, even after 10 hours sleep. I am blaming this

on all the fresh air, light sea breezes as well as the sun, all of which is alien to me in this area!!!!

Set off after showers, breakfast and shopping to a bright but hazy morning. Another "Granny" sail all the way to Moidart. We saw our first porpoise and quite a number of sea birds. There was one yacht here in the anchorage when we arrived.

There are very few rhododendrons here now, as there has been a massive clearance, also many of the fir tree have been blown over. Whither this is due to all the clearing or the winter storms or even both, I'm not sure. I must admit I miss the lovely colour they provided.

Thursday 24th May

We arrived in Canna at 3 30pm, exactly six hours after leaving Moidart. We were blessed yet again with hazy sunshine all the way. That said, we had to have our fleeces on all the time until we were in the shelter of the anchorage. The wind was right on the nose, needless to say that was a different direction from the forecast, and it was also very chilly at times. The Atlantic swell certainly gave us a run

for our money. Agnes's tummy new all about that, so much so, it was Stugeron that had to come to the rescue.

It was really hot and tranquil in the bay with only two other yachts when we arrived. Now there are nine yachts and a fishing boat and it is still very peaceful.

There were quite a number of seabirds around again today including two puffins. Porpoise were also in evidence a few times which was nice to see.

I keep thinking I'm dreaming with all this sunshine and light winds. It certainly is not the norm for Agnes but long may it continue.

Fri 25th May

Awoke to another beautiful morning and it was still lovely as we set sail from Canna. We were hoping to sail most of the way over to Loch Boisdale but the wind had other ideas. The result being the engine had to go on three quarters of the way. It was much more comfortable with only a very gentle swell to-day. When we left at 9 o'clock there were only two boats still at anchor. We made good time and

arrived here at 2.50pm to an empty bay so we had a choice of moorings. We headed ashore for water and a visit to the butchers and even managed to get a daily paper.

Early evening we heard the Hebridean Princess had a medical emergency and saw the Stornaway Coastguard Helicopter fly overhead. We think the ship may have been in Castlebay or that area as we saw it heading north again shortly after.

It's now just after 9 o'clock and the sun is still shining. I'm certainly lapping all this weather up although it was still chilly on the way over.

A short time ago we had the privilege of seeing a pair of geese with six little goslings swimming between them it was a lovely sight and a nice ending to the day.

Saturday 26th May

It is just as windy this morning as it was during the night. I saw every hour of the clock with the noise in the rigging. We decided to stay put as we were sure it would be worse further out. That said I started to do a wash and it was dry in no time --- great. Just after that the wind dropped considerably so all change and we were heading off to Loch Skipport. Yet again we were hoping to get a good sail but it was a motoring job with the wind more or less on the nose. As it was another nice sunny day and a slight sea we carried on up to Loch Eport.

Just before the entrance to the Loch we saw an eagle soaring above the hill. Deer and sheep were also grazing on the hillside. It is so nice seeing wildlife in their natural setting. We didn't see a single yacht at all on the way up, only commercial boats which were further out, so it was lovely to see one yacht here in the anchorage on our arrival at 6 45pm.

I prepared dinner en route so it was ready when we got here which pleased both of us. My fingers are still crossed for this weather to continue.

Sunday 27th May

As Jack wanted to have a fishing day, that suited me just fine. After the usual chores I was able to take full

advantage of the beautiful sunshine. The shorts even got an airing (the first time in years) and to think I nearly didn't pack them!!!! It was all very relaxing watching the eagle again and the lambs frolicking among the rocks. A lazy looking seal sat on the same rock the whole day long, I guess it was enjoying the sun too. Some white fronted geese were making plenty of noise for a time and disturbed the peace.

Jack had a very successful day at the fishing and solved the dinner menu, plus the morning one. The loch is only a few minutes from the side of the bay. He said this was great as he had no hills to climb this time!!!

In the afternoon a little boat sailed round the bay and passed very near to Tarragon. What intrigued me was its name, Loch Broom Mail Boat. I did say hello to the man, but got no response, not even a smile, so much for the shorts!!!!

Monday 28th May

Quite a wind in the anchorage this morning and gusting a bit too. However, we still decided to head for Lochmaddy none the less. Just as we were heading out of the bay, which has a very narrow entrance, a huge fish farm boat was baring in towards us, oh, !!!!!!! It was then a very quick turn about and unfortunately, it started to gust up to 33 knots. Fingers crossed it was a little better further out. The

wind certainly was a good bit less but we had wind over tide and a horrible, horrible sea. Thank goodness it was a short sail up here or we would have gone straight back in. We were being thrown all over the place so it was such a relief to head in the bay. It was then we noticed the "Hebrides" heading in the same direction.

We were lucky enough to get the mooring nearest the landing steps. As lots of vehicles were waiting to board the ferry I was keeping everything crossed I wouldn't make a mess of mooring when so many eyes were watching. Thank goodness I made it.

After lunch we went ashore for water and some supplies. On our way up to the shop we stopped to admire a vintage car which was in mint condition. The owner came out just then and gave us its history. He has only had it five years and was justifiably very proud of the work he has done on it.

The ferry has come back in this evening and looks like it's staying the night. We are quite happy as it is giving us a lot of shelter. I counted 49 cars and vans plus two lorries disembarking. I think with this evening's forecast we could be here for another night.

Tuesday 29th May

This was the first overcast morning I've had so far, but pleased to say it cleared up later. As we went ashore for



Porpoises of Moidart



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the paper after lunch there was still a cold wind. After we had been to the shop we then went all the way out to the Outdoor Activity Centre. On our way there, we noticed there have been some new builds and renovations since our last visit here.

Lochmaddy is spread out but still has a lot of facilities e.g. a bank, a post office, police station, fire station and even a sheriff court house. The place is all up hill and down dale and little roads. This means you can only see a small part at a time. Jack went into the Visitors Information Centre and managed to get a five day forecast printed out. They are still reporting northerly wind for most of the time so we may have to change our plans. Two other yachts came on to moorings today, one is Norwegian. Needless to say both of them are big. We've had the most beautiful sunsets nearly every night.

Wednesday 30th May

Yes all change, up with the lark and left the mooring at 5.15am to head for Loch Harport on Skye. We didn't fancy

battling the north wind and opposite tide again. It was a brisk sail to begin with but once we were in the lee of Skye we had to switch the engine on. We had intermittent sunshine most of the way.

On our arrival at 12.30pm there was only one other yacht here but other four have come in since.

We headed ashore for a pub lunch and on our return both fell asleep for two hours, I wonder why!!!!!!

I reckon it will be another early start tomorrow to get the benefit of the tide as we have another long haul. I'm certainly looking forward to some shorter trips. Last night and tonight have been the first of the cockpit tent getting some use.

There are many houses scattered along the shore line here and some quite a size. One in particular had its hot tub on the veranda and its own landing pontoon. It is nice to see trees and the gorse again, as this was something I missed in the Outer Isles.

Thursday 31st May

It was a 6.15am start today and pouring much to my disgust. All of the moorings were eventually filled last night and we saw four others at different anchorages on the way out of the Loch this morning. Needless to say we were the only one on the move and yet again the smallest.

The rain stayed with us for about half way but there was little wind. As we were coming over the Sound of Sleat we saw a minke whale. By the time we unearthed our cameras it had dived unfortunately. We decided to try out the new pontoons at Mallaig and arrived here at 1.45pm. They are really nice and far enough in to be sheltered from the northerly wind.

It has been busy with fishing boats coming and going since we arrived, as Thursdays and Fridays are their offloading days. The sun eventually came out mid afternoon but it has turned cold again tonight. Jack has gone for a walk round to the pier to have a look at the fishing boats



We've had the most beautiful sunsets nearly every night.



The new pontoons at Mallaig

while I'm writing this. On his return he complained bitterly how cold it was.

Friday 1st June

It was lovely having a leisurely breakfast after the past two mornings. Jack had to go back to the pier for fuel at 11 o'clock and I was going for a paper, only to discover there were no papers in, due to a very bad accident involving two lorries. On our return we decided to head up to Sandaig bay as the forecast was for stronger winds tomorrow. As our timing was still alright for Kyle Rhea we just kept going and arrived here at Kyle of Lochalsh at 3.30pm. We were experiencing gust up to 27 knots at times and it was still strong as we approached the pontoon. The sun was kind enough to stay with us most of the way but still cold. The surrounding hills were beautiful in the sunshine and so clear.

There are two boats from the Netherlands and one from Denmark beside us tonight on the pontoon. We were so disappointed to discover you could no longer get showers up at the toilet block. The gentleman who used to look after them has retired and hasn't been replaced, such a pity as they were well used by a lot of the sailing fraternity.

Saturday 2nd June

It was another nice morning, but with quite a strong wind. We are staying here tonight and have stocked up with stores and a washing has also been

done. I noticed on my way back from the supermarket how low the tide was and remarked to Jack. As we were in the inside of the pontoon he thought we only had 6 inches under the keel. I haven't seen it so low here before.

We've had a good old chin wag with Nigel from the Atlantis trip boat each time he has come in. Only a few yachts have been in or out of here since we arrived. After dinner we hiked it up to the view point and could see for miles. It was nice to get back to the boat as it had turned really cold.

Sunday 3rd June

We thought it prudent to make a move early as we may have had difficulty in getting out as the tide was going down. Unfortunately the otter had paid our mooring lines a visit during the night and left a fine old mess, which I duly got all over my hands. Needless to say I was not amused.

Arrived here in Plockton just after 11 o'clock and had a big choice of moorings. The place is dead quite and eerily so. There is a scar in the landscape too with a big number of trees having been felled just as we also noticed at Sandaig as we passed on Friday.

It has been overcast all afternoon and Jack has now just turned on the heater as it has turned decidedly cool. We were given a present of mackerel last night so were able to enjoy them for our dinner tonight.

Monday 4th June

It started off a beautiful morning with very light winds and a calm sea as we left Plockton on our way up to Portree. We liked the forecast, N/E 3 to 4 knots, great. It didn't last unfortunately, what we did get was a westerly 5 and 6 right on the nose. I was beginning to wish we had stayed in Plockton. However we ploughed on and arrived here in four and a half hours. The sun stayed with us most of the way but we were still well wrapped up with hats and gloves.

As we entered the bay it was a surprise to see a cruise ship anchored. It was called Azamara Journey, not one I had heard of before. Its tenders were certainly kept busy ferrying folk back and forth to the town.

This evening the wind has completely died away!!!! Tonight there are only other two boats on visitor moorings, again we had a choice when we arrived.

Tuesday 5th June

It has been a day of intermittent sunshine and it looks as if there could be a change. On our way back from the shops we had a chat with the Harbour Master and he was saying this was the first time in ten years he has had to water the garden.

Just before lunch Jack checked the bilges and to his horror discovered they were full. It was then the case of finding the leak. Fortunately it didn't take him too long to find the source of the problem as it was the seal in the engine water pump. He has made a temporary repair until he has sought out a new one.

This evening Jack had a job convincing the occupants of a boat which came onto the mooring next to us they would have to move. As the mooring was for a boat for only up to ten metres and his was forty!!!! One of the men asked Jack if he was worried about it!!!! They did eventually move to another one thank goodness.

Wednesday 6th June

On our way down from Portree to Kyle of Lochalsh this morning we had light winds and slight sea. The amazing

thing was, we had exactly the same forecast as on the way up but with opposite conditions. It was a pleasant surprise to meet Beeswing in the Sound of Raasay on their up to Rona. We had been trying to contact each other a number of times by mobile, but not getting a signal with one or the other of us in a blind spot.

There was a little sun today but turned very cloudy later, and then there was a very heavy shower just before teatime. Fortunately Jack just managed to erect the tent in time. We were well entertained by a dozen youngsters in canoes this evening. The three leaders were putting them through their paces. At one point they had to jump off the pontoon and then swim over to their canoes and climb into them. It was making me feel decided cold just watching them in the water!!!

The Waverly came into the pier tonight. This is the first time we have encountered it up this neck of the woods.

Thursday 7th June

It started off a beautiful morning but as the day progressed it became cloudier. The rain did make an appearance by mid afternoon and it has been on all evening. Jack rescued the washing while I was at the supermarket and luckily most of it was dry.

The Lord of the Isles arrived here today and its passengers have been getting entertained with the Pipes and Drums this evening, pity about the weather.

There has been a lot of coming and going of boats here all day. Many of them were here for the showers and very disappointed when hearing of their closure. The pipe band is still playing merrily and now the Waverly has just arrived back so they too are getting the benefit of their music, which is nice. I'm now all packed up ready for the homeward journey tomorrow morning.

Well, what can I say about this year's trip ---- didn't she do well!!!!!! I think I have broken all records, with glorious sunshine and only two days with rain, plus visiting more new anchorages.

Till next time.

Agnes



We were well entertained by a dozen youngsters in canoes this evening.

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Tranquillo's Story

Alan Davidson and Crew

Alan Davidson

It began with a trip to Dublin when we hired a car and drove across the border to County Down, where we just happened to come across a boat sales yard. Curiosity took over! The owner greeted us and as we looked around, he approached us again to find out what we were looking for. My description encouraged him to open the doors to a big shed at the back of the yard and there we saw her! A pretty Colvic Watson (described as a 26ft) was half way through a refurbishment. Our eyes lit up, tapping and banging of the hull started and no problems so far! Up the ladder we went for an internal viewing; yep we had the feeling of something good!

After lots of questions and financial discussions we put down a deposit, subject to survey. The survey came back which read well. However the advertised 26ft Colvic Watson turned out to be more of a little ship at 28ft with good toys! A bottle of wine later and the family agreed we should buy. So, all that was left was for arrangements to be made to be delivered to Troon Marina.

Tranquillo arrived in Troon as planned at the end of May and she was lifted onto the hard standing for a couple of weeks. This was my opportunity to familiarise myself and play with my new toy! Eventually she was lifted back into the water and taken to her temporary berth (Jack Gairns' pontoon) before settling at her new wall mooring. Thanks to Jack for the use of his berth.

After a few trips around the bay the time for a cruise was upon us! Several discussions later we agreed on Portavadie (facilities for the female crew members!) Crew for this trip were wife Liz, daughter Claire, Sheena and Mike (niece and husband who sail a Macgregor 26ft, down in Fowie). Day one was 2nd June, we set off bright and early, the sea state was a slight swell and winds were 3-4. We were on track, with Ardrossan on our starboard side, when the radio went and it was the coast guard reporting easterly winds increasing 5-6. We were now bow into the swell. After a quick discussion we agreed to alter course to hug the coast. We decided to motor sail with feet braced against the movement of the boat. She settled into her new course and all were happier. As we eased into Loch Fyne the Tarbert Ferry and hundreds of triangular sails from the Scottish Series were there to greet us. We contacted the marina and by 2.30 Tranquillo was in her berth resting.

Soon the gins were on the table. Great test for our first cruise and she performed to my expectations. After the drinks were done the girls went to check the excellent facilities. Hair was quaffed and it was time for aperitifs and dinner on board. After tidying up our destination was the large white marquee where there was loud music, buckets of beer and late night curry (bed).

Day 2: As the Scottish series was running it was decided to take the ferry across to Tarbert. Although cold and wet there was plenty of entertainment around the harbour.



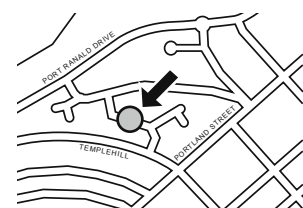
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After a well earned rest back on Tranquillo it was soon time for dinner and back to the marquee. More buckets of beer, more loud music, more fun times.

Day3: 7.30am, all awake and in the sunshine we decided to head for Lamlash. All checks done we headed for Arran at 11am. Once out the marina, the wind was 3-4 still easterly which this time pushed us along nicely. As we neared the cock of Arran the wind disappeared, the main and mizzen came down and with the genny up and the engine started for a bit of motor sailing again we hugged the Arran coast into Brodick Bay for a viewing. We then moved on to Lamlash where we picked up a mooring (wind now south west, much to the crews pleasure as most of you know easterlies can be a no go). Once settled we got into the dinghy and it was time to go to the Drift Inn. As the sun was out it was dinner in the beer garden.



Tranquillo sits proudly on her Lamlash mooring

Day 4: 7.30am start, into the dinghy, quick wash and breakfast in the slipway cafe then back to Tranquillo to set off. All checks done, genny up, engine started and the course was set for Troon. Once in mid channel the weather closed in. On our starboard side Ailsa Craig disappeared, looking astern Arran then disappeared and eventually the Carrick hills disappeared. It was time to motor sail again and the radar and GPS were switched on! Mid channel we had to change course to avoid the pairs of fishing boats but thanks to the crew and toys on board we arrived in Troon safely. Verdict: all on board enjoyed and most of all, Tranquillo gave us comfort and looked after us safely.

The season continued in June with a couple of short trips back to Arran to show off to our French friends and then in July a night out fishing with Jimmy Short. Jimmy was acting captain and put Tranquillo through her paces. Back on the mooring all checks were and done and nothing seemed a miss. However...

Monday 12th July: George Hunter phoned me at home to tell me that my boat was sinking. At first I thought someone was having a joke but sadly George was serious. I think the speed limit was broken getting from Prestwick to Troon. Arriving through the gates I was able to see Tranquillo's stern sinking on Jack's berth. George and a couple of members were frantically bailing her out with buckets. Thankfully a dinghy was waiting for me but as I got on board I realised the water was reaching the cockpit

seats. I managed to get the cabin door open to find the water was above the cooker in the main saloon.

On opening the engine room hatch I noticed bubbles coming up from around the raw water intake valve. I jumped in and found that the hose was not attached to the stop valve, which was open. As the boat had recently been surveyed, all valves serviced and the engine had only done approx 100 hours I had felt that I didn't need to shut it off (wrong decision!). After closing the valve the bubbles eventually stopped. George and his team were still bailing out and the water level was slowly going down. Thankfully George took control and the fire service were called, who arrived with their pump. One hour later 90 per cent of the water was out and it was then that we found that the hose had ruptured approximately one inch above the neck of the valve.



The burst hose pipe

Once sure the water ingress had stopped I was able to contact my insurance company (Navigators & General) who instructed me to get west coast marine to first aid the engine as soon as possible. I contacted Neil of West Coast Marine and within 15 minutes his guys were on board stripping the engine and gear box. The insurance company sent their surveyor in to ascertain the damage and obtain a quotation for repairs. These were tense times. Fortunately West Coast were given the go ahead to start work, which led to a major re-fit from the cooker down and included bow thrusters, wiring, upholstery etc. The financial implications of the problem were in excess of £18000. A very expensive situation and I hope all reading this story continue to do their own checklists.

Tranquillo has now been relaunched and is on her permanent mooring waiting to see what the winter weather will throw at her. I think have learned the hard way not to take anything for granted and have several must do checklists before Tranquillo is left for the evening. We are looking forward to next season and fair weather.

I would like to thank George Hunter and the other members for all their help because without this and their commitment to the club, I probably wouldn't have a boat now.

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Belfast, Islay and Jura

Jim Goodlad
NAUTICAL NARRATIVE WINNER



After a nine week cruise in 2011 Margaret fancied something shorter and no long cold sails. The fact that I had a hernia which was due to be operated on when we got back resulted in only two weeks away.

We set off on Monday 2nd July sailing at 1530 into a Southerly wind and heading for Girvan. We motor sailed most of the way with occasional rain. Past Dunure, Culzean and Turnberry and past the Brest Rocks When we arrived in Girvan the harbour master told us to tie up to a fishing boat - which had a notice do not tie up here ! He said he couldn't take our money as he was off duty. We told him we were sailing at 0800 next day - his office was not open

until 0900. "you will have to do what 8 out of 10 yachtsmen and don't pay".

Sailed at 0830 and after a long, cold, bumpy and wet at times sail we arrived in Carrickfergus at 2020 with 54 miles on the log. Marina berth was £19.75 for Bali Voe with the second night free.

Late start to the day with showers ashore. Then visited Carrickfergus Castle. Very impressive building with interesting history. Figures around the castle made it very realistic. Then visited museum, Sainsbury and then had dinner ashore.

On Thursday 5th July we moved round to the fuel

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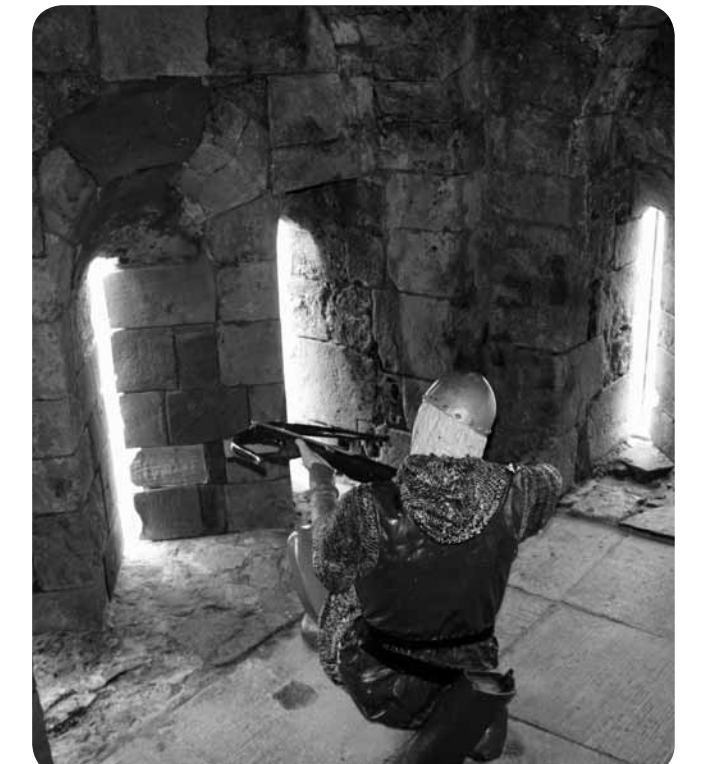
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pontoon in the old harbour underneath the walls of the castle (£1.31 per litre) fuel pontoon Underway at 1009 and called Belfast Harbour Radio for permission to go up the Lagan River to the new pontoons. There was a twenty minute delay while a ferry turned then told to proceed and that there were plenty of spare berths. Very interesting trip up the river although visibility wasn't very good. We tied up at 1230.

The pontoons in Belfast are only £8 a night. Electricity, water and pump out facilities. Toilets and showers were ashore in portacabins. Payment is by a machine and the receipt has the code for the gate (unfortunately it did not work on the toilets!) Cover shows Bali Voe on pontoons across from the Titanic exhibition). The pontoons are beside the Odyssey centre with all sorts of entertainment facilities - including bowling and cinemas.

We had never been to Belfast so decided to walk into the city centre. We were quite impressed. The city hall is well worth a visit. Unfortunately we were too late for a tour but the entrance hall is full of marvelous architecture with lots of marble.

A huge screen outside the City Hall was showing Wimbledon ladies final. We then made the long walk back to the marina calling in for a quick look at the Odyssey centre - good place for a rainy day.

We were up early on the Friday 6th July to see the Titanic exhibition - which was fantastic and well worth the effort to get here. We walked past the *Nomadic* which was built in Belfast and was the tender for taking passengers out to the Titanic at Cherbourg.

The building that houses the exhibition is amazing. Like a series of ship's bows. The exhibits inside included giant photographs, details of building, a ride down through a reconstruction of part of the 'Arrol Gantry'.

The Arrol including 6,000 tons of steel and was built over the building site of the two ships the "Titanic & the Olympic". It was designed by the builder of Tower Bridge and the Forth Rail Bridge.



The reconstruction of 1st, 2nd and 3rd class staterooms were most impressive along with public rooms and staircase.

Ballard's film of the finding of the wreck of the Titanic is shown on a large screen. We spent three hours in the exhibition and would have liked to have spent longer. Unfortunately time was pressing as we wanted to visit Roy and Deirdre in Ballycastle - and our three grandchildren.

We sailed down the river at 1400 and although we planned to go as far as Glenarm, the weather was and sea were very unpleasant and it was raining. Tied up in marina at Carrick Fergus at 1603.

On Saturday 7th July we were underway at 10.40 to catch best of the tide. We sailed north past the Maiden's lighthouse (old one shown) and by Red Bay we caught a strong tide and we were shooting north at 8 knots.



Odyssey centre, pontoons and bridge into Belfast from the Titanic building



Superfast ferry passing in R. Lagan



City Hall, Belfast.



The Titanic Building



Nomadic being restored in dry dock

Old Maidens Lighthouse



Limestone cliffs of Rathlin Island



Tied up in Ballycastle at 1910 and had our dinner. Family came down and dragged us off to their new house for the night.

We stayed three days at Ballycastle £19 a night and bought 26 litres of fuel - £30.21. Very wet when we were there so we watched Andy Murray losing at Wimbelton and had a day with Sunday papers.

We left Ballycastle on Tuesday 10th July intending going across the North Channel to Islay as the tide was favourable. Unfortunately the weather was not and it was cold so we went to Rathlin Island for the night.

Just as well we stopped there as the bilges were full of water. The pipe had come off the pressurised water system and over 10 gallons of hot fresh water were pumped into the bilges. After mop up and tea we went for walk ashore.

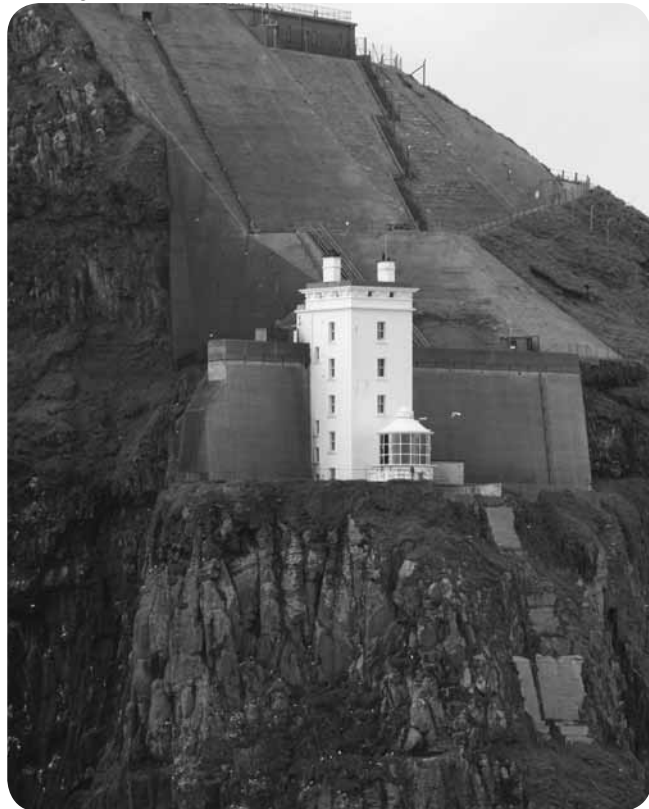


Isla & Aileen - Ballycastle

Sailed at 0550 to catch tide past the limestone cliffs and the upside down lighthouse Limestone cliffs of Rathlin Island. We picked up the wind off the lighthouse and sailed all the way to Lagavulin bay on Islay.

It was a good sail and sunny but very very cold. We arrived at 1227.

Rathlin Lighthouse



After lunch we decided to try out the new outboard and dinghy - both made in China. The dinghy is a 3D 2.7m and outboard a 2.5 hp four stroke Hidea. We motored up to Ardbeg distillery and had afternoon coffee and scones in their restaurant. We then succumbed and bought a bottle of Ardbeg. Good night at anchor.

Next day we were underway at 0903 motoring north in beautiful sunshine through the Ardmores islands with masses of seals and into Craighouse at 1245 and the sun still shone Ardmores islands

Ashore for stores, visit to whisky shop and paid £14 mooring at the Hotel. Sunny all day - is this summer ?

Next day beautiful morning and went ashore for stores and water. Margaret did all the water carrying (due to my hernia). At 1150 we were underway and anchored in



The new dinghy and outboard



Margaret and purchase

Ardmore seals



Tropical Craighouse

Lowlandman's Bay at 1247. Nice motor up through the islands.

Clouded over in the afternoon and while Jim found a loose wire on speedo Margaret rowed ashore for walk and to txt the outside world.

We spent Saturday 14th at anchor. Cold NW wind blowing up to 25 knots so we stayed aboard doing odd jobs and reading.

Sunday 15th we sailed for Gigha 0850 anchoring in Ardmish Bay at 1211. Rolled jib and main all the way averaging 4 knots.

Ashore for walk in afternoon and brought back some more water. Thank you Margaret ! Went ashore for meal in hotel with Roger from *Escape*. Then went and joined John and Jenny on Hallmark for drinks. Very pleasant.



Bali Voe at her Craighouse mooring



Texting from Lowlandman's Bay



Escape - at Ardrinish

Sailed at 1415 on Mon 16th July for the Mull with virtually no wind. Doing 4.5 knots against foul tide at first then over 9 knots around the Mull. Anchored inside moorings at Sanda at 2007.

Tuesday 17th July. Tide north would not be until the afternoon. Stripped pump for loo and put in new diaphragm beginning to show problems. Ashore at lunchtime to the new Sanda Hotel. We would have had a full meal but they didn't take plastic, we didn't have our cheque book and were low in cash and had to settle for a drink and a starter. It is now a 4 star hotel - rates were £85 ppp day which included a free mooring (normally £10) or free passage to Sanda from Campbeltown. Very much a posher establishment with white table cloths etc.

Nice walk to the lighthouse and Margaret carried back more water! Sailed at 1700 with the tide but no wind, rolly sea and it was raining.

It was very wet when we picked up a mooring at Kings Cross point at 2157. The whisky/sherry was extremely welcome.

Wednesday 18th July very gusty with rain so stayed aboard. Is this summer? After lunch we decided to sail back to Troon as the wind was down and the rain had stopped. We sailed past at first past the South end of Holy Isle and the new retreats. Seems its inhabited by troglodytes!

Motored home in an uncomfortable sea and tied to our pontoon in Troon at 1830. Dinner on board then packing - home tomorrow!

Total mileage :- 245 miles +



Holy Isle retreat

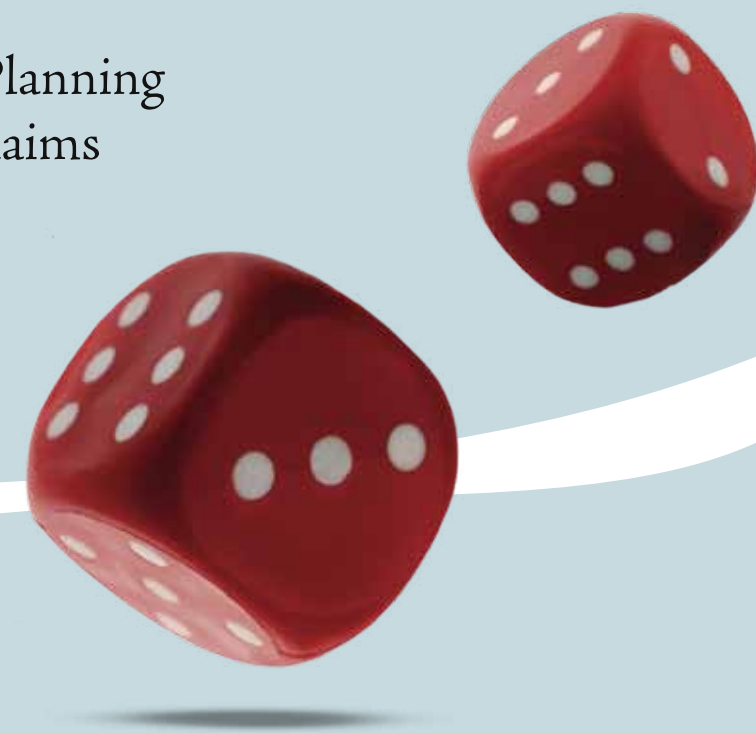


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ESCAPE'S SINGLE HANDED CRUISE

TO THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND

Roger Coutu

REDWING TROPHY AND NEBULA TROPHY WINNER

The Trident Owners Association 2013 Marcon Trophy Winning Article

I've been dreaming of sailing up the West Coast of Scotland long before I even owned a boat. I had studied all the sailing directions and in hindsight I had become what you would call an armchair sailor. *Escape* is a Trident 24 bilge keeler and this was the second season I have owned her. Last year I sailed in circles around the Clyde for the entire season getting used to her idiosyncrasies and that was enough for me, it was time to lose the baby teeth and stretch my legs. So where shall I begin this narrative... with preparations of course.

I started dropping hints to my wife that I wanted to make this cruise last year and didn't get much of a response. Undoubtedly she was hoping I would forget about it and happily sail within a 30 mile radius all my days. However, at the beginning of April (and no we hadn't fallen out) she asked when I planned to depart. Bingo! I was off and it was time to move into high gear. In the ensuing months I installed an anchor windlass, upgraded to 8 mm chain, and installed a water stowage/pumping system. Simultaneously the boat was working against me and things were breaking unexpectedly, most impressively the diamond stay spreaders failed which required the mast to be dropped for repair. Finally, the boat was ready and this is where my adventure begins.

Friday, 13 July

Troon to Campbeltown. 33.8 nm, 8 hours, departed at 1015 en route Sanda Island with force 3-4 easterly winds. My plan was to anchor overnight and round the Mull of Kintyre the following morning. All was right with the world and I was flying the drifter since it was a downwind run. However, 10 miles before reaching Sanda the wind shifted from the north and increased in strength. This meant that Sanda was no longer a favourable anchorage so I diverted to Campbeltown and tied up to their pontoon.

Saturday, 14 July

Campbeltown to Ardminish, Gigha via the Mull of Kintyre. 42.8 nm, 9.5 hours, departed 0600. In hindsight the forecast wasn't very good, W/NW force 4-6 winds. The vast amount of guidance on how to properly round the Mull of Kintyre could make your head spin and it did, thinking I was well schooled I got stuck in. My plan was to remain 2 miles off the coast and enjoy a smooth sail by proceeding south of Sanda around Patterson's Rock. However, due to my impatience it wasn't very smooth and I was soon beating my way through some pretty nasty overfalls... the wind remained against my nose 75 percent of the passage just like the forecast said it would. The sprayhood kept me fairly dry but the few waves which did make it over the bow were enough to let me know that

my "Creeping Crack" cure didn't work... my windows were leaking. Anyways, after battling my way north Gigha rewarded me with a stunning anchorage, the water was turquoise, and the sun was shining. Upon arrival I discovered *Hallmark* from Troon was anchored next to me. The following day while I was off exploring the island and visiting the botanical gardens, *Bali Voe* from Troon pulled in on their return trip from Ireland. I had dinner ashore with Jim and Margaret and then we all went on board *Hallmark* to drink some of John and Jenny's Highland Park. As for the windows, undeterred I covered them with my dodgers as a temporary fix.

Monday, 16 July

Gigha to Carsaig Bay, Sound of Jura via MacCormaig Isles. 23.6 nm, 7.25 hours, departed 0830, W/SW force 3-4. I stopped to anchor for lunch at Eilean Mor, MacCormaig Isles. The island is absolutely gorgeous and John Paul Jones is supposed to have lived here for a short while. After eating, I rowed ashore to visit the bothy, Saint Cormac Chapel and the Celtic Cross. I was the only person on the island and felt like Robinson Crusoe until two other boats arrived with their BBQs... after the population exploded to eleven I knew it was time to get moving again. Continuing north, I anchored in Carsaig Bay for the night. Upon arrival I discovered my mobile phone wasn't receiving coverage so I rowed ashore and walked two miles to Tayvallich on Loch Sween to call home, drink a pint and have dinner. Upon arrival I bumped into John and Jenny who were leaving the boat on a mooring and returning to Troon via car.

Tuesday, 17 July

Carsaig Bay to Craobh Marina, Loch Melfort. 14.3 nm, 3.25 hours, departed 0730, W/SW force 3-4. I have visited Craobh during West Highland Week a couple of years previously while crewing on a race boat. The marina is located in a great location, it was exciting then but it certainly wasn't now... it was sleepy hollow and nobody was about. No problem, the purpose of my visit was to purchase diesel, pick up charts for north of Ardnamurchan (they didn't have) and await a favourable tide for transiting the Cuan Sound.

Wednesday, 18 July

Craobh Marina to Loch Aline, Sound of Mull via Cuan Sound and Oban. 31.3 nm, 8.75 hours, departed 1000, W/SW force 3-5. I have heard they are planning to build a bridge between Luing and Seil Island which would prevent yachts transiting the Cuan Sound in the future. I could barely contain my



Lunch Stop in MacCormaig Isles

excitement as I eased my way around the island of Torsa inching my way closer to the sound, I had everything all figured out and I was on schedule and on course... and then it was over in a flash since the sound is less than a mile long and the tide runs at 7 knots. By the time you realize you are in it you are out of it... so after a quiet laugh to myself I reefed the main sail off Easdale Island and continued to sail north via the Sound of Kerrera. Upon entering Oban Harbour I tied up to the Oban Sailing Club pontoon and walked downtown to purchase charts from Black's Chandlery, stores at Tesco and a cool box from Argos. Weighed down, I took a taxi back to the boat. Upon departing the harbour was congested with boats and ferries moving in every direction. After clearing Oban I sailed NW to Loch Aline on the Sound of Mull where I anchored for the night. I went to bed armed and dangerous now that I had the additional charts, my confidence was high and I was eating up the miles. I was looking forward to rounding Ardnamurchan Point the following day.

Thursday, 19 July

Loch Aline to Loch Ailort via Ardnamurchan Point. 47.6 nm, 11 hours, departed 0815, W/SW force 3-5. Passed Tobermory on my port side at noon time, thought briefly about heading into port but discounted it for several reasons: I've been there before, it was early in the day and the conditions were favourable for rounding Ardnamurchan. A couple of hours later I passed Ardnamurchan lighthouse 0.5 nm to starboard. Suspecting that Troon boat *Tarragon* was in the area I sent Jack a text stating I was rounding Ardnamurchan and heading for Loch Moidart. He replied that he was at the very top of Loch Ailort which happened to be the very next loch north. It took me nearly an hour before I replied. In the interim I was studying the charts, sailing directions, and tidal vectors, etc to see if it was possible to rendezvous with him. What I discovered wasn't good reading and entry was even discouraged by the sailing directions. This would be a true test of my piloting skills since Loch Ailort is infested with rocks and I would be arriving with less than an hour remaining until HW so many would be hidden just beneath the surface of the water. So the challenge was on and that's where I headed. I am sure glad I did, this loch was the most wild and remote of all the highland lochs I visited during this trip, it was magnificent! Upon arrival Jack and I celebrated my arrival with a few drams of 'Morrison's'. The following day I rowed ashore and took the bus to the Glenfinnan Memorial, afterwards I had dinner on board *Tarragon*.

Saturday, 21 July

Loch Ailort to Mallaig Marina. 20.8 nm, 4.75 hours, departed 0530, SW 8-9 (+24 hour). The forecast was very poor and I was running for shelter from the gales, and so was what appeared to be every other boat on the west coast. Just prior to entering port the mainsheet captive clevis pin chose to do a disappearing act. I managed to tie the mainsheet off and upon arrival it was temporarily fixed it with a stainless steel bolt since I didn't have a clevis that size on board. The marina is new and had only been open ten weeks so I had to shower above a restaurant downtown. Mallaig is a true fishing port and they eat very well here, the mussels at the Clachain Inn were some of the best I've ever eaten and were presented on top of a fish stew. It was a feast for a tenner and I couldn't finish it. The owner must have appreciated my compliments for the new chef he imported from Edinburgh, later in the evening he bought us both a free round.

Monday, 23 July

Mallaig to Plockton via Kyle Rhea. 28.1 nm, 5.5 hours, departed 1330, W/SW 4-5. Prior to departure I had replaced the impellor and soon discovered the cover was leaking so I had to pump the bilges every half hour throughout the entire passage. Kyle Rhea is twice as long as the Cuan Sound and also has a fast running tide, sailing through the eddies and whirlpools was great fun. After passing the Kyle of Lochalsh and going under the Skye Bridge I took a right and arrived in Plockton. I was surprised to see so many boats and it was impossible to identify the buoys or designated anchorages. I eventually found a suitable spot amongst the moorings to drop anchor. Soon thereafter while stowing the boat, John from local boat *Sleeping Eagle* shouted over and asked where I was sailing to. Although I didn't have a plan I replied Rona and he asked if he could sail in company with me since he was also single-handed.

Tuesday, 24 July

Plockton to Arcarseid Mhor, Rona. 23.1 nm, 4.5 hours, departed 0800, W/SW 4-5. Prior to departure I fabricated a gasket for the impellor cover out of a bit of rubber sheeting I had on board. I sailed in company with *Sleeping Eagle*, and upon passing the Crowlin Islands we were confronted by a security boat in the Sound of Raasay who felt it necessary to remind us we were travelling 5 miles south of a submarine exercise area... although clearly outside the area we headed west until we were 0.5 nm from the Raasay coast and then resumed our journey north. Just prior to entering Caol Rona the internal compass on the tiller pilot failed which placed it out of commission. This is a significant piece of equipment when you are single-handed. Consequently I was unable to leave the tiller unassisted for more than 30 seconds for the remainder of my cruise. Coffee, lunch, foul weather gear, etc.... from now on everything I could possibly require



Anchored in Rona

throughout the day needed to be at arms length and pre-staged. And every time the heads were used it was a gamble leaving the tiller unattended so I monitored my coffee intake very carefully. I do not use 'the side' when single-handing, the only time my harness comes off is when I am down below or when the boat is stopped.

Anyways, I arrived in Rona safely and was rewarded with a spectacular anchorage... it was more beautiful than I could ever imagine and is definitely on my list of favourites. John and I walked ashore, enjoyed the views, and met the gamekeeper only to discover he was originally from Mauchline, five miles from where I live. I had pre-dinner drinks on board Clyde boat *Ziggy Stardust* followed by dinner on board *Sleeping Eagle*. The 48 hour forecast continued to report that the winds were to become northerly, so my plan was to begin heading south tomorrow to be favourably situated for sailing outside the west coast of Mull when they did turn. Rona was my furthest destination, 305 miles from Troon.

Wednesday, 25 July

Rona to Inverie, Loch Nevis via Kyle Rhea. 49.1 nm, 10 hours, departed 0630, W/SW 3-4. Firstly, I called home to wish my wife a happy birthday and let her know where I had hidden her card and present. Heading south, I passed Portree to starboard and encountered a school of dolphins between Raasay and Scalpay. Thereafter I retraced my steps, passed beneath the Skye Bridge and transited Kyle Rhea before entering Loch Nevis. It was a very long day and throughout I experimented with tying the tiller off with a bit of rope, this allowed me to take my hand off the tiller albeit briefly but it still couldn't be left unattended. I stopped at the village of Inverie that evening which is located in the Knoydart region, although famous for being isolated from the mainland road network it was very popular. I used one of the Olde Forge's 'free' moorings with the condition that I eat dinner there. I ate my £20 scallop dinner with Knoydart's longest resident (John x51 years), met the guy who dove for the scallops as well as the local ranger. My log book contains the note "use pier to right of Olde Forge" which resulted from me having to strip down to my boxers to retrieve my dinghy when returning to the boat.

Thursday, 26 July

Inverie to Eigg via Arisaig. 29.2 nm, 7 hours, departed 0730, W/NW 3-4. On this passage I briefly stopped in Arisaig at the top of Loch nan Ceall so I could purchase diesel and stores. This loch is narrow with many turns so you motor through it but it is well marked with perches so it is easy to navigate. Upon arrival in Arisaig I found everything I needed was conveniently located but the concrete pier closest to the fuel pumps was very rough. Use plenty of fenders and be alert to chains hanging over the pier, a potential prop fouling disaster was narrowly avoided upon departure. Afterwards I crossed the Sound of Arisaig and anchored in Poll nam Partan bay on the Isle of Eigg. During the night the weather unexpectedly developed into a SW/W force 7 and I was very exposed to the swell. The following morning's forecast indicated the strong southerly winds would continue so at high water I relocated to a sheltered drying harbour north of the causeway. This was the first time drying *Escape* out and I discovered that it is a very noisy and prolonged process. Once dry I did a walk about, removed some minor weed from the prop shaft, and



Drying out in Eigg

made a brief venture ashore. The island is privately owned by 40 residents, they generate their own electricity and one building contains restaurant, pub, post office, shops, etc.

Saturday, 28 July

Eigg to Coll. 23.8 nm, 4.75 hours, departed 0400. W/NW 3-4. Departed early to avoid drying out again. While raising the sails I discovered the roller furling reefing line had become snarled during the previous days storm and in my haste to depart before daybreak it wasn't discovered in the dark. It was an easy fix but would have to wait until arrival since heavy swell precluded a trip to the foredeck with the tiller tied off. Proceeding under mainsail alone I anchored in Arinagour Harbour on the Island of Coll several hours later between the stone beacon and pier. Prior to entering the harbour and to my amazement I saw seven basking sharks feeding which made me wonder whether they are as rare as we are led to believe. Upon arrival I had the furling gear fixed in minutes. It turned out to be a beautiful sunny day and every person on the island appeared to be in a cheerful and friendly mood. The Coll Hotel did my laundry for £10 and I was invited to an 18th birthday house party which I had to decline due to an early departure the following morning to catch a favourable tide.

Sunday, 29 July

Coll to Tinker's Hole via the Treshnish Isles, Staffa & Sound of Iona. 27.1 nm, 4.25 hours, departed 0250, W/NW force 4-5. This passage was the most memorable sail of the cruise with plenty of adrenalin pumping because there was zero room for navigational error. I sailed on a beam reach the entire morning with a strong tide behind me, entering the

the Treshnish Isles between Lunga and Fladda in the dark. It was an absolutely thrilling and a bit of a crazy thing to do.... it was also the only time on the cruise I wished someone was there to share the experience and pump their fist in the air with me. I then continued on to the Sound of Iona, swinging by Staffa an hour south to take some pictures of Fingal's Cave. Sailing through the Sound of Iona was surprisingly enjoyable because it was full of rocks and has some seriously shallow bits in the middle opposite the Abbey to keep you honest. Nevertheless, the favourable winds and deep water close to shore allowed me to easily tack between them and sail the entire length. I turned the corner and arrived in Tinker's Hole under sail, to discover Troon boat *Cracker* was the only boat at anchor. Since it was 0700 in the morning and I was hungry I reached for the fog horn to announce my arrival and get Brian and Gillian to put the kettle on. After their departure the anchorage became very busy. I had an after dinner drink on board Dunstaffnage homeported *Tangon* with Paul and Linda from Edinburgh. This anchorage is very scenic and therefore popular. However, the through traffic on a sunny Sunday afternoon was excessive so the next time I'm in the area I'll anchor in "David Balfour's Bay" which is located around the corner.

Monday, 30 July

Tinker's Hole to Loch Tarbert, Jura via Colonsay. 36.9 nm, 12 hours, departed 0600, W force 4-5. Arrived at Scalasaig Harbour in Colonsay at LW to pick up stores. I briefly tied up to the concrete pier south of the ferry terminal which is only possible if you are a bilge keeler since the water was 1.5 metres at best. En route the small shop I inspected the drying

harbour for possible future use, good thing I did since it would be a very poor choice in a storm. Underway again, I headed east to Jura and entered Loch Tarbert, anchoring off the bothy at noon time to await HW so I could continue exploring the loch beyond Cumhann Beag. Loch Tarbert is spectacular and feels very remote with raised beaches at the entrance. The water is dark and peaty looking just like their whisky, water visibility is less than 2 metres. During the waiting period I rowed ashore to visit the bothy and sign the guest book before taking a nap. While weighing anchor, a fitting on my windlass broke so it joined the growing out of commission list. Nevertheless I continued my journey to the “Top Pool”, also known as “The Hole”. I used the engine alone since the piloting is very restricted and there are no charts for this part of the loch, instead you line up painted marks on the hillside. Upon arrival at the Top Pool my engine overheated so I dropped anchor to investigate but could not find the fault. However, upon restarting the engine it began cooling again so I raced to get below Cumhann Beag since I was very exposed to the westerly wind and the tide was beginning to fall. Once south of Cumhann Beag I found a place to anchor and celebrated with the steak I had purchased earlier in Colonsay.

Tuesday, 31 July

Loch Tarbert to Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland via Sound of Islay. 52.4 nm, 13 hours, departed 0230, W/SW force 4-5. I departed early intending to catch a double tide, round the Mull of Kintyre and anchor at Sanda Island. The Sound of Islay has a 5 knot tide with huge eddies and whirlpools. Everything was going great until I was 15 nm north of the Mull... the engine overheated again. I hove to for further investigation and still couldn't discover the cause so I decided to continue under sail alone. This decision was very brief since I was making very slow progress and I had no chance of making the tidal window. I then decided to give the Mull a wide berth and sail to my new destination, Rathlin Island. Three hours later, at 1330 the Coastguard put out a flash weather report stating a strong wind warning was now in force, the wind was shifting to the east and a force 7 storm was imminent. The forecast was very accurate and I was located five nautical miles north of the East Lighthouse on Rathlin Island. Soon I found myself unable to make any progress to windward and unable to clear the east coast of Rathlin Island against the strong easterly wind and tide. I briefly thought about turning around and heading to Port Ellen on Islay but I was growing tired and knew that it would be high risk to try and do so with the current forecast. My next decision was to try and approach the island from the west and I contacted Belfast Coastguard to notify them that I didn't have an engine and would require assistance in entering Church Bay against the prevailing wind and tide. Once assured that they were en route I closed the island and headed west which was downwind. I had no problem heading in this direction... 9 knots under sail alone, the overfalls were gigantic and the sailing conditions were absolutely crazy. RNLI Red Bay arrived shortly thereafter to spoil my fun but I did manage to convince them to allow me to sail for a few more miles since I was making such good progress but just north of the West Lighthouse they attached the tow rope and I was forced to drop the sails. Upon arrival in port the engine was stripped down with a vengeance, the thermostat was removed and all inlet hoses were cleaned of heavy salt deposits. It resumed cooling again and I could think of nothing else that I could do to fix it. That evening I

ate a fish supper in a garden shed with a family on holiday from Denmark, one of the women was celebrating her birthday. The storm was now in full force and would remain so throughout the following day, the garden shed leaked like a sieve.

Thursday, 2 August

Rathlin Island to Troon via the Mull of Kintyre. 57.4 nm, 10.5 hours, departed 0540, N/NE 3-4. Departed early to catch slack tide at Rathlin and a fair tide around the Mull of Kintyre. The Rathlin overfalls and whirlpools remained formidable until I was well clear of the Northern Island coast. I motor-sailed all the way home primarily because I was afraid to turn the engine off. However, I would have needed to do so anyways since 0.5 nm from the Mull coast it became flat calm, and upon passing Sanda Island to starboard the wind died completely... the dog had lost its bite and my voyage was approaching the end. At 1620 I arrived back in Troon unannounced and was very surprised to see Jack and George standing there to catch the lines.

This year I discovered the joy of single-handed sailing primarily because I wanted to go sailing and did not have crew standing on the pier when I snapped my fingers. Making the decision to sail solo was liberating but for me it has become addictive because of the mental and physical challenges it contains; reaching the finish line is not optional. A review of my logbook indicates that I spent 45 days at sea and accumulated 1,092 miles this season, with crew onboard for just 112 of them. My 623 mile west coast cruise was the centerpiece and throughout the three week trip I was presented with one challenge after another; learning to deal with them and persevere is what turned it into a real adventure. This season it sometimes felt like I was never home but as someone reminded me... it does take a long time to go places at 5 mph. Anyways, I am hoping that by sharing my story it will encourage others to sail a bit more next year. I know there is a lot of water out there but perhaps our paths will cross.



Tinker's Hole



2013 Dairy Dates

Racing, Cruising and Social

April	
5	Curry Night - informal and flavoursome!
14	Spring Series 1
17	Wednesday Wacky
21	Spring Series 2
24	Wednesday Wacky
27/28	Cruising Muster Largs / Blue Peter (Largs)
May	
1	Wednesday Wacky
5	Spring Series 3
8	Wednesday Wacky
11/12	Millport/Lochranza
15	Wednesday Wacky
17	Mediterranean Night
19	Spring Series 4
22	Wednesday Wacky
24/25	Cruising Muster Port Bannatyne
29	Wednesday Wacky
June	
2	Spring Series 5
5	Wednesday Wacky
10	RNLI Lady Isle Race (with Prestwick Sailing Club)
12	Wednesday Wacky
15	50th Anniversary Cup Race
19	Wednesday Wacky
22/23	Cruising Muster Kings Cross / Mullach Mhor Sat / Hamilton Rock Sun TBC
26	Wednesday Wacky
July	
3	Wednesday Wacky
5/6/7	UFG Trophy Fri-Sat / Cruising Muster to Rothesay
10	Wednesday Wacky
14	Crews / Ladies Races
17	Wednesday Wacky
20/21	Cruise in Company to Ardrossan
24	Wednesday Wacky
28/29	Arran Trophy Race to Lochranza Sat/Race to Troon Sun
31	Wednesday Wacky

August	
7	Wednesday Wacky
11	Warden & Bell Race
14	Wednesday Wacky
17/18	Cruising Muster to Lamlash
21	Wednesday Wacky
28	Wednesday Wacky
September	
4	Wednesday Wacky
8	Autumn Series 1
5	Autumn Series 2
11	Wednesday Wacky
21/22	Cruising Muster to Tarbert (Music Festival) / Tarbert Trophy Race Sat
28/29	Closing Muster to Largs
October	
6	Autumn Series 3
13	Autumn Series 4
21	Autumn Series 5
November	
3	Frostbite Series 1
10	Frostbite Series 2
17	Frostbite Series 3
24	Frostbite Series 4
9	Dinner/Ceillidh
December	
1	Frostbite Series 5
7	Childrens Christmas Party
January 2014	
1	New Years Day Race
24	Burns Supper
27	Annual General Meeting

Please watch the noticeboard for details about events later in the year, and also in newsletters and on the website - www.trooncruisingclub.org.uk.



**David Bone and
crew Gary Muir are
determined to make their
destination**

We thought we would leave earlier this year and take the boat to Barra, if the wind and weather was not suitable it left us June and even July to head out to St Kilda. In late May, the long range weather forecast was light to moderate easterly winds, perfect conditions. However, as happens, the last crew member I had who was willing to go dropped out due to family commitments. I intended on making the trip myself but a chance meeting with Gary Muir shortly afterwards meant I had a crew again for the trip to Barra. We set off for Campbeltown on Saturday the 2nd of June 2012, wind North-easterly with a full mainsail, five and a half hours later we arrived at Davaar Island after a great sail.

03 June

Next morning we woke early to catch the tide, however, the wind was blowing force 5-6 so we spent a frustrating afternoon in Campbeltown.

04 June

Monday morning, Again woke early for the tide, the wind was a more

suitable force 1-2 North-Easterly. We motored round to the Sound of Islay, where we anchored until the tide changed.

We headed off, and kept sailing through the night, on shifts of two hours watch, two hours rest. Due to the drop in temperature, it took a lot of cups of soup and hot water

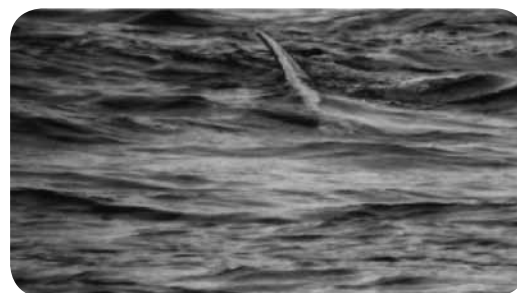
bottles in our sleeping bags to keep us warm.

A pod of Dolphins Joins us for lunch, another local joined us at Barrahead.

The latest forecast we had was a North-easterly 3-4 for the next two days, moving to a force 7, Gary and I decided to head directly for St Kilda.



A pod of Dolphins Joins us for lunch



Another local joined us



Sunrise over Tiree (4am 05/06)



Rounding Barrahead (6pm 06/06)



First sighting of St Kilda



Village Bay - it doesn't get better than this



Gary celebrates



Setting foot on St Kilda

We set sail for St Kilda, again journeying through the night again with the two hour shift pattern that had got us through the night before. The sun never set as we heated our soup and filled our hot water bottles

0830

We entered Village bay, we had arrived at St Kilda after sailing non-stop for 48 hours, We dropped anchor at 9am and had breakfast.

We rowed ashore and and walked to the road where a landrover pulled up and a familiar voice asked "what are you doing here?" It was John,



the manager of all the contractors stationed on the island and also a regular in the South Beach Hotel in Troon. He invited us to take a tour of the island in his landrover, where he took us to the highest point, where we watched the Hebridean Princess anchor in Village Bay.

John asked if there was anything I would like from the island, my request was some St Kilda water to mix with my whisky. He took us to one of the sheds, which contained a large drum full of water, This drum has been the main source of water for the islanders for over 500 years. It travelled via copper pipe from the bowels of the island.

We had a walk around the village, a truly magnificent place and met a day visitor who had left Campbeltown the same day as us to travel up and catch the day boat to St Kilda.

We had our evening meal on *Verlanda* before heading back to the shore for a drink in the Puffin Bar before heading off at 9pm.

Sailing through the night the plan had been to head for Barra, the forecast at 8am was advising of a force 7 North-easterly in 12 hours time, a quick change of plan and we headed to Tobermory.

We got the full force 7 two miles off but arrived safely into Tobermory at 2am minus one fender lost on the way.

When We woke the following morning it was flat calm, we set off for Oban.....only to find the fender we had lost the previous day! From Oban it was on to Crinan, Tarbert and then the final leg home to Troon to end the trip.

Troon to St Kilda 528 miles.



Hebridean Princess anchored in Village Bay



The Puffin Bar



Leaving St Kilda for Barra



A makeshift dinghy made by visiting fishermen to get ashore for a pint!



Gary retrieving the lost fender

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One trip has already been organised for the week 6 – 13 Oct, flying from Manchester to Corfu. A Bavaria 40 and flights work out currently at £400 per head based on four sharing. Prices can be negotiated for a variety of craft, please contact me.

Give me a buzz on 07955 853558 to chat, and let's go sailing!

John Woods (Free Spirit)

Osmosis EXPLAINED

by courtesy of the Westerly Owners Association

Osmosis is a condition that affects GRP boats, cars and watertanks and manifests itself by the appearance of blisters between the different layers of the layup.

Osmotic blistering occurs because free water-soluble chemicals such as glycol found inside the laminate cause a pull on the water outside of the hull. Some water molecules penetrate through the gelcoat and as water is drawn into the pockets of hydroscopic liquid the pressure inside the pocket rises creating a raised blister that can be seen on the outside of the hull. The new solution or chemical has a larger molecular structure that can't be pushed back through the gelcoat as its molecules are larger than that of water. These new solutions can be acidic or alkaline and can contain glycol.

Glycol is a chemical used in boat building that helps pigment to mix properly with gelcoat resin to stop it becoming streaky and can help with the mixing of polyester resin used in conjunction with glass fibre matting and woven roving glass fibre cloth to create the laminate. The glycol can be separated from the laminate by water ingress as this chemical is hydroscopic (it attracts water). The glycol that is liberated from the laminate by water often collects into pockets. As these pockets collect more water due to osmosis the liquid changes into a sickly-sweet smelling sticky brown solution.

The PVA binding solution that is used to glue the strands of glass fibres together to form matting can react with seawater to create an acid. The resultant solution will be thicker than water and will create a blister.

A strongly acidic, vinegary smelling liquid can be detected inside of the sample blisters. I test this liquid with PH paper as acidic indicating that they were osmotic blisters as seawater is slightly alkaline. The liquid within the blisters are at great pressure which is another indicator of osmotic blistering as apposed to dry void non-osmotic blistering.

Blisters are often between the two layers of gelcoat or gelcoat and the laminate. This is much less serious than if the blisters were within the laminate itself.

Gelcoat is polyester or epoxy resin coating that is painted or sprayed into a female mould as the first operation of the moulding process. The gelcoat forms the outer shiny, waterproof surface of the hull and is clear in its natural form. Pigment is added to the gelcoat to colour it. The pigment is an impurity, which makes the gelcoat slightly porous.

When the blisters are opened up for examination it is often noticed that the underlying laminate contains dry fibres of

glass strands that had not been properly wetted in or soaked with resin during manufacture. This manufacturing defect could well be the cause of the osmotic blistering as the PVA binding compound that surrounds the strands of glass and which is normally safely absorbed into the resin has been allowed to come in contact with seawater and created an acidic solution.

Polyester resin is slightly porous. Moisture does after a time travel through it and will collect in any voids in the GRP construction. These blisters can be very small, about the size of a half of a 'hundred and thousand' cake decoration, about the size of a split pea or up to the size of half a cherry. Any bigger than this is described as being delamination.

The problem is caused by many different factors or a combination of a number of factors. Osmosis is more common on vessels used in warm waters or fresh water lakes or rivers. Some yachts in yards around Lake Geneva show terrible osmosis. However their owners keep on using them and apart from being a little heavy due to water ingress not much else happens and they are fine to carry on sailing.

Boats used in the Lake District tend to suffer from Osmosis more than vessels found in the cold salt water. Ice often does not form within the laminate as the glycol or acid within the blister does not freeze. If it did the laminate would delaminate.

Osmosis can also manifest itself in the water tank and also under any areas of Treadmaster decking. This is where warm rainwater has collected. The water tank can continue to be used without noticing a lot of smell.

Reasons for osmosis.

- 1 Failure to mix the resin and catalyst together properly during manufacture which creates pockets of uncured resin and glycol;
- 2 Leaving the layers to cure for too long between coats of resin. For example over night or over a weekend;
- 3 Poor attention to humidity levels in the workshop where the boat was layed up. If condensation is allowed to form between the layers the gelcoat or resin will not adhere properly;
- 4 Poor levels of cleanliness in the workshop ie contamination by dust etc.

Moisture travels through the one or two layers of gelcoat (resin and pigment) towards the layers of matting or rovings which are wetted in with resin. It is attracted by the pull of the hydroscopic solutions of glycol. Glycol is used in boat building to aid mixing of the pigment in gelcoat and prevent streaking. It is hydroscopic and simular to brake fluid.

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The moisture collects in pockets and creates areas of high pressure i.e. the chemicals in the dissolved resin mix with water to form a mixture that has a higher pressure than that of the water outside the hull.

Osmosis is often most evident when a vessel is taken out of the water. If the sun is strong the warmth will increase the volume of the water in the blister pockets and make it expand. The blisters will become larger. If you burst a proper osmotic blister you might be able to smell acetic acid.

Osmosis is commonly found on boats from the mid seventies which was around the time of the oil crisis. At that time boat builders were experimenting with alternative types of synthetic catalysts to save money. Not all worked. Luckily Westerly used resins which were of good quality and the boats were well made.

Modern boats are built in workshops where humidity is controlled. Boat builders work throughout the clock to ensure that curing and layering times are kept precise. Resins are now advanced.mUSA and Canadian boats can suffer excessively as their governments have forced boat builders to reduce styrene levels by using alternative resins.

If you go Emsworth Harbour near Chichester you will see lots of almost new Trader motor yachts being treated for osmosis under warranty. Emsworth is shallow, the water is warm and brackish. Same thing happens to boats in Christchurch. There are loads of Westerly Centaurs in Christchurch. Many suffer from osmosis but don't come to come to any real harm. The owners just antifoulover the blisters and go sailing.

Alternatives — what to do.

Ask a surveyor how bad the blisters are and ask him to check moisture content. If the blisters are small or the vessel is of low value then just carry on using the boat as if nothing had happened. Monitor the blisters each year. Take photographs and record moisture levels. However, the moisture levels will change depending on atmospheric conditions and should be taken as a relative reading against the reading taken of the topsides above the waterline. Typically three or four times higher below that waterline compared to above is normal.

Typically on a Sovereign meter the reading above would average 4 and below would be between 14 and 19. This would be fine for a Westerly but wet for a newer boat. A condition called wicking might occur where moisture 'wicks' up through the glass fibres to the topsides and creates small blisters around the waterline. This is not a great problem.

Cures.

1. Do nothing and carry on using the boat knowing that the value of the boat might be affected;
2. Remove the gelcoat by peeling it off by a hired plane type device, by having it slurry blasted of or scraping it off with a scraper and hot air paint stripper. This last way is messy, might damage the laminate, might poison you with fumes or might set fire to the boat but is cheap.

You will need to remove all of the gelcoat and allow the hull to dry for a very long time until the moisture levels fall to about the same below the waterline compared to what they are above the waterline. This will take up to nine months but depends on climate. Drying times can be speeded up by using infra red lamps or de-humidifiers but this is expensive.

It is not a good idea to paint epoxy resin onto a damp hull. This will just trap moisture in and cause the lay-up to delaminate. If this happens the structure will be scrap. Epoxy resin should be applied to a dry hull striped of gelcoat or you will be wasting your money.

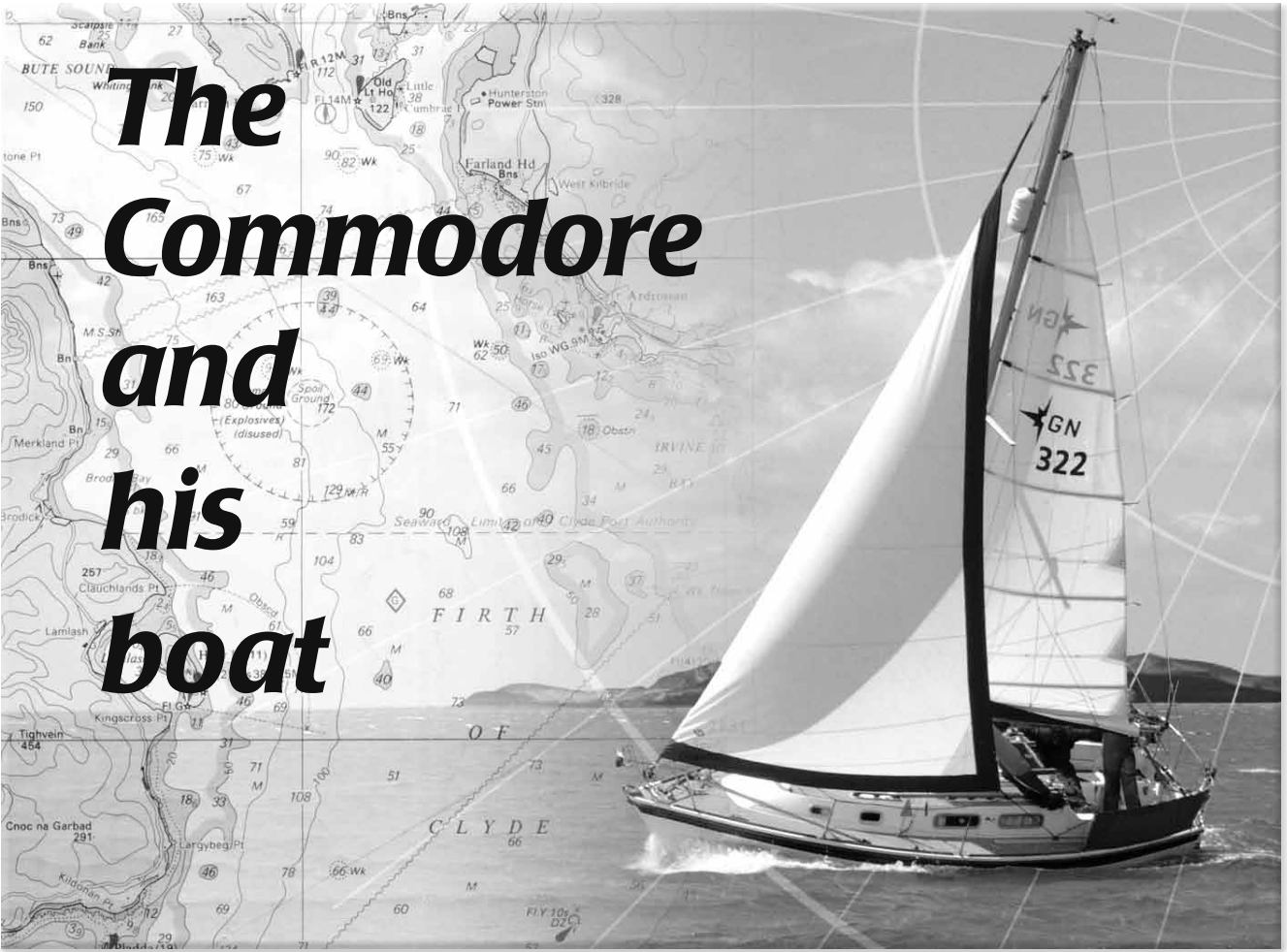
This is a simplistic explanation of osmosis and there will be lot who disagree as it is a very contentious issue.

Before inspecting the vessel gather the following tools:

- Scarsedale type scraper to remove 'coupon' sized areas of anti fouling paint;
- Sharp wood chisels to remove sample areas of any epoxy coating should they be found to be painted to the hull;
- Cloths to dry areas to be tested for moisture;
- Moisture meters;
- PH test papers;
- PPE including rubber gauntlets, coveralls, facemask, hat, goggles and visor. Antifouling dust can be very irritating;
- Magnifying glass;
- Digital camera;
- Hammers to check for delamination;
- Paint brush, disposable gloves and anti-fouling paint should the vessel be returned to the water after the inspection.

Some surveyors carry a small bottle of acetone to evaporate surface moisture from the sample scraped areas but others believe acetone to be a strong solvent which can soften the gelcoat and damage it.

The gelcoat should be removed by peeling machine and soda or slurry blasting. Voids and pockets of liquid should be opened up. The laminate should be cleaned with fresh hot water several times to wash away any acidic or undesirable solutions and the hull should be either allowed to dry naturally or dried out with infa-red lamps or heated vacuum pads. The hull should be dried to the extent that the moisture meter readings are the same or as close as possible below and above the waterline. This is known as the target level. All skin fittings should be removed and later replaced and all internal locker lids and portable upholstery should be removed to aid the drying out process. De-humidifiers could be fitted to the interior to dry out the hull from the inside. The bilges should be kept dry. The poorly wetted in strands of loose glass fibre should be painted with a thin penetrating solvent free epoxy resin to seal the surface. Voids or imperfections could be filled and faired off with solvent free epoxy resin filler. The hull should then be painted with at least five coats of standard solvent free epoxy resin and finished with antifouling primer that is suitable for use on epoxy resin.



Doug has always had a close association with the sea. His first maritime experience was on the RMS Lochail the David MacBrayne steamer which plied the West Loch Tarbert to Islay route until the late sixties. He was ten days old at the time and his father recalls that it was a wild day and with the Lochail's propensity to roll like a Glasgow drunk the infant Doug turned as green as wake trailed by the ship! However he hung on to the contents of his stomach and his parents knew that another seafarer was in the family. Although he left Islay when only seven he is and always will be an Illeach and if you ever wonder

RMS Lochail at Port Askaig 1956



why the 'ile' in Sileas is highlighted in light blue on her transom it is to mark his birthplace - 'Ile' being the original gaelic name for Islay.

At the age of 13 Doug found himself up to his knees in the River Tay learning how to rig a National 12 dinghy. The following year he was crewing on a Hornet in the Scottish Junior Championships at Granton on the Forth ending up 7th overall on corrected time. It was only a matter of time before he bought his first boat – a single handed British Moth which he continued to race until his family moved back to Argyll when he was 17. However it was at Perth that his thoughts first turned to

cruisers. A day sail to Abernethy and back on a Hurley 22 made him realise that his future lay on boats with a cooker and booze locker.

Although he took the Moth with him to Tarbert it was soon sold to help fund a sail training trip on the three masted topsail schooner Malclom Miller. His fellow Oban High School pupil who accompanied him on the Miller was Dan Russell. Dan's father John was a contemporary and good friend of Blondie Hasler and Francis Chichester, was an RYA Yachtmaster Instructor Assessor and yachting author. He also ran a charter business out of Ardfarn on a 46ft McGruer's Yawl called *Ismana*

Ismana at Gigha



and *Haigri* a Rival 38 which provided much cruising experience for Doug.

Doug's photographic skills were developed (if you excuse the pun) in Oban High by classics teacher Cunningham Irvine, who, along with his wife, was tragically lost overboard from his Folkboat off Ardnamurchan. When John Russell was asked by publisher David & Charles to write the Shell book of Seamanship he asked Doug to provide the photographic illustrations. One of Doug's abiding joys is remembering two weeks sailing round the Western Isles, taking photographs and getting paid for it!

Studies intervened and too many years passed without serious sailing although a few delivery trips and diving filled the void. After graduating he spent a couple of years in the merchant navy working on supply boats, ferries and a high speed catamaran. North Sea roughnecking in the Ninian field followed before marriage, mortgage and mouths to feed pushed sailing further down the priority list. However the sailing bug returned when he met Simon and Sheila Eves in the Cross Keys Inn in Eaglesham after a traumatic parents evening at the school. Simon had just bought Petra Beta a Westerly Griffon and invited Doug to help him deliver her from Strangford to Rhu. The damage was done and a boat of his own was back on the horizon. When Simon decided that his family didn't quite fit in a 26ft Westerly and upgraded to Ohana, Doug jumped at the chance and committed to buying Korrigan as she was then called.

A survey was commissioned and the deal was sealed. Poor Sheila was filled with visions of Doug at the helm, rounding the Mull in a wind against tide F6 while she mopped vomit from the saloon floor. Within a year however Doug struggled to get a turn on the helm. Sheila had taken to sailing (except in the rain!).

The Boat

The design of the Westerly Griffon was commissioned from the drawing table of Ed Dubois as the replacement for the highly successful Centaur. Some 450 were built in various configurations but her numbers didn't match the 2500 Centaurs that came out of Westerly's Waterlooville yard. First launched in 1979 the Mark I Griffon was followed three years later by the Mark II with upgraded internal joinery, windows and equipment. Sileas (pronounced Sheelas) appears to be a transitional

model combining features of both the Mark I and II. She was fitted with a Bukh 20 engine, standard to the Mark II. Her windows are those of the MII but while her saloon teak joinery and fixed saloon table differs from the MI she doesn't have the MII's cupboards and lockers. The Mark II's upgraded finish and equipment also meant upgraded costs and as a result only 90 were built.

The Griffon earned her reputation as a safe, solid and sea kindly boat with lots of living, sleeping and stowage space for a 26 footer. A dedicated nav station on a 26ft boat is a big ask but with modern cockpit plotters and gps it is not a real issue. Likewise a spacious galley would be advantageous in a family cruiser but the reality of her size inevitably forces compromise.

Her heavyweight lay-up makes her a bit of a tortoise in light airs and Doug reckons that she doesn't begin to sail properly until in 15kts of wind when she brings a smile to his face. To windward she can slam a bit in steep short seas, her flattish forward sections push rather than cut the wave comfortably. Only once has she run out of rudder and rounded

up and that was when overpressed in a F6 with 6-7ft following seas, otherwise she consistently instills confidence even when three reefs are called for.

Since her purchase Doug has upgraded her deck equipment by adding additional foredeck and midships cleats, running the reefing lines back to the cockpit and installing a stackpack and lazyjacks. A new DSC VHF, EPIRP, chartplotters (x 2 - a Yeoman for paper charts below decks and digital for the cockpit) have been fitted. The mainsail was replaced with a three reef, fully battened cruising cut Saturn sail which transformed her performance but the big decision was to replace the 22 year old Bukh with a Yanmar 3YM20. The Bukh was going to require a major overhaul and at £3k compared with £5k for the Yanmar the piggybank was raided. Today the Yanmar's horsepower flows sweetly through the drive chain to the three bladed prop ensuring that Doug gets home before the pubs shut. That's what it is all about - isn't it?



GREEK ISLANDS IN THE IONIAN SEA

SAILING HOLIDAY - OCTOBER 2012

SKIPPER - JOHN WOODS (FREE SPIRIT) , NEXT IN COMMAND, IAN BROUGHTON (ODESSEY)
 - CREW BABS HENDERSON AND SUSIE LATTA.

Friday 5 October - Left Glasgow about 12.50 pm and headed south on the M74. John set the sat nav so it was just a matter of letting the cruise control take over. However, just before the border, John felt tired and was in danger of falling asleep at the wheel (I was already out cold!) so we stopped at Services for a coffee and wee break before continuing on down the road reaching the Crowne Plaza hotel about half four. Booked in, with Susie and Ian just behind us. Had a nice meal in the restaurant (although a bit pricey) and went to bed, having asked for an alarm call. Up at 4 am and over to the airport for check in, boarded the plane and took off just after 6 am. The Jetstream made it a bit of a bumpy ride, but the benefit was we made it to Corfu in just over three hours. Grabbed our bags and got a taxi which took us to Gouvia Marina in about quarter of an hour. Cosmos reps waiting at the quayside, while Susie and I went and picked up some beers, the check in got underway, paperwork sorted, boat inventory - everything ok apart from a couple of heavy duty batteries which were necessary for the power and water on the boat had to be replaced - and it was time for us to get our bags on board boat - Allegría! Called the cleaner back on board as the rep wasn't happy with the state of the fridge and she was instructed to clean it again. After all that John took us up to the village of Gouvia where we enjoyed Greek salad with chips and beer, then we headed back to boat, calling in at a couple of

supermarkets to pick up some essential basics to start us off on our journey.

John was desperate to get away and not waste another minute, so we weighed anchor and we're off! Susie and I were tired so went below for a nap, while the guys chuntered on! On awakening we asked 'where are we?' - 'over there' was the reply - 'over where?' - 'from where we were!' In other words we were in the middle of a sea and we (at least Susie and I) had no idea where!! Anyway, we journeyed on along the coast of Albania over the horizon and as dusk was falling we reached Sagiadha. After manoeuvring a very narrow harbour entrance (well done the Big Guy) we tied up (Susie and I actually helped) and toddled along the quay to a wee taverna where we had a lovely meal. Susie and I had fish (no bones the waiter said - never mentioned the head would still be on!) Still it was lovely with a salad to share. Ian had prawns in spaghetti and John took chicken and chips. Susie and Ian went back to boat while John and I went into a pub for John to get his 'fix'!

Slept well and rose about 8.30. After much messing about in the toilet which also doubled as a wet room, where we were able to shower, had breakfast, yoghurt, cheese, cold meat and coffee/tea. Underway again just after 9 heading for Lakka. Flat calm more or less so we had to motor. Wild



John was desperate to get away.

life – saw a cormorant and some dolphins yesterday in passing. Next stop Lakka, had to use dinghy – great fun (not) but had a lovely lunch and moved on again. Lovely meal at Pen and Theo Restaurant right opposite our mooring at Gaios. Back on boat for a night cap then bed. Radio alarm went off about 4am, something to do with the electrics and John switched it off. Heat terrific! John and Susie badly bitten which is a pity. Topped up with water and some provisions before leaving Gaios.

Anchored at Emerald Bay a short sail away, and had Brunch, while John donned his wet suit and had a swim. Was going to go in but John said it was difficult getting up ladder back onto boat, so I passed on that idea. Decided to make for Levkas which was a long haul but had a go at the helm, trying to appreciate the intricacies of the instruments in front of my eyes!! Sailed down the Levkas canal, after just making it through the swing bridge which only opens every hour on the hour for passage. Sailed down the canal passing a few anchorages including Niddri. Passed the island of Skorpis belonging to the Onassis family, and saw Jackie O's beach house. Heading now for the island of Megannis, i and the little village of Spartakhor. Had a lovely meal after docking in Vahti, the main port of the island immediately east of Spartakhor, at the Stavros Family Taverna, where the owner apologised for some omissions on the menu due to the lateness in the season but no need, because it was great! – starters of fried cheese, dolmadi, baby octopus and Greek salad. Susie and I had the moussaka, and the boys had chicken in the oven. The taverna was decorated with tea towels from various parts of the world and we thought we might send one when we got home – the one with the real Scottish words would really stump them.

Got back to boat to find a note that we had moored right where the ferry would come in so had to get it moved to a more suitable point with the help of the marina staff who apologised that they had not been on hand when we arrived. Safely moored up again we had a nightcap (one of our purchases was a gallon of red wine for 10 Euros) and off to our cabins (have to get out of the habit of calling ours the front bedroom!).

Nice showers and a washing machine available at the Marina which Susie and I took advantage of. Unfortunately the first cycle left the washing soaking and full of soap

suds, so we put it on for another half an hour, while we toddled up the town. My feet were swollen and none of the shoes I had brought were fitting me, so I bought a pair of deck shoes for 7 Euros 50 in a bigger size which were great with a sock on – and my feet felt so much better.

Lovely people in the restaurant and the marina guy was very polite too apologising again that he wasn't around when we arrived the previous night. Think we are heading for Kefalonia (where Captain Corelli's Mandolin was filmed) today but who knows! Long haul, sailing most of the way which the boys really enjoyed Finally arrived at Fiskardo about 5pm where it was difficult to get a mooring as it was very busy (lots of Flotilla yachts in). We moored at the end of the line which involved tying up to a nearby tree, but fortunately there were two guys in a dinghy keen to help so that was a plus. Got ourselves organised and got into the dinghy and started for the quay, but the engine ran out of petrol (well why wouldn't it be any different in Greece?) so John had to row the rest of the way, and I had great difficulty getting out of dinghy but they promised to find an easier position for me when we got back.

Another lovely meal in one of the many nice restaurants along the quay. I had seabass, Susie had stifado, John and Ian had the creamy chicken. Susie and I had a lovely Greek dessert and Ian had a special ice cream, John had a Rusty Nail! We wandered along the quay and found a flight of steps so the boys went back to where they had tied up the dinghy and brought it along so that we could get aboard more easily. Safely back on boat for night.

Wed 10 October – Weighed anchor at 10.30 heading for Preveza, sailed up the west side of Levkas. Very bleak outlook on the starboard side - Ian reckons Italy next stop to port! Arrived in Preveza about 4.30 pm and after the usual faffing about, moored for the night side ways on to the quay this time, lots of Flotilla boats coming in behind us. Susie and I went for more provisions and after a quick tidy up (we have run out of water again) we wandered through a maze of restaurants and decided on one which provided us with a lovely meal for about 2/3rds of the price we paid in Fiskardo – oh well, who's counting! Oh that would be me! We wandered down to a bar near the boat and had a night cap – John staying for 3 or 4 with the owner, so I waited for him coming back just in case he missed the boat and ended up in the drink! He snored most of the night but I finally managed to get a couple of hours til about 10 am by which



time the others were well up. Got John up about 11 am, and as we were out of water Susie and Ian walked along to locate the pump and then we moved the boat to the pump and filled her up, after me making a fool of myself again, this time with the hose instead of the ropes which have to be thrown off the boat when we moor up, which I never get right! Oh well, I'll learn! Weighed anchor about 12.15 pm to who knows where! John made up a pasta with peppers, onion, and mayo, which we had for a change from cold meat and cheese for lunch! Nice!

Also in between times, Ian gave me and Susie (although she knows more than I do) a few lessons on knot tying and working out where we are on the chart (not map Babs). Oh and I do know that port is left with a red light, and starboard is right with a green light!

After a long sail (about 7 hours with Ian at the wheel most of the time) we arrived in Sivota. Quite rocky going in and it was a balancing act getting off the boat, but we managed it with no one falling in! Had another nice meal in a nearby Greek Taverna. Lovely mix of starts including fried zucchini and fried peppers. Susie had calamari, Ian and I had pork, and John had a pork kebab. Finished off with a gratis Greek sweet – very nice!

Susie and Ian went back to the boat while John and I went for a week walk round the village, then finished up at the Bamboo Place for a night cap and were entertained by the look-a-like Basil Fawlty waiter who gave us crisps, a couple of small cocktails, some apple slices with honey, and John got a gratis whiskey when he paid the bill. Turned in for the night and rose about 8.30 am.

Friday 12 October. Weighed anchor at about 11 am heading for our final destination to get the yacht back to the port of Gouvia. Nice sail to start with then suddenly a thunderstorm blew up and we quickly took the sails down. It was crash bang wallop for a while but eventually we reached Gouvia about 4 pm. We had passed several cruise liners parked up outside Corfu, with the passengers being ferried by dinghy into port. They are huge and look top heavy. Several Flotilla yachts sailing along with us, and one or two ferries coming and going. Also a hydrofoil.

Went straight to the fuel pontoon and filled the boat up with diesel ready to return it. We were welcomed back to

the berth by the reps who came aboard and checked that everything was ok, while John and Ian reported a couple of snags they had come across on the way. A diver also checked the underside and thankfully everything a-okay.

Susie and I went for a much needed shower and then we tried to pack most of the stuff for tomorrow and tidied up the boat. Unfortunately one of the ports had been open during the storm soaking the bunks and we had to decamp to the cabin at the stern end (not the back bedroom!) We had hoped to go into Corfu town for the night, but with the weather the way it was, we decided just to stay in Gouvia and went to the marina restaurant (equivalent of Scotts methinks) and had a lovely meal there, while watching the sheet and forked lightning and listening to the thunder accompanied by heavy rain – a spectacular end to our holiday! We had mixed starters, Ian and John had pork kebab, Susie had a lamb dish, and I had veal coated in flour and friend with garlic and parsley. Ian had quince, and I had pannacota, and John had a Drambuie on ice!

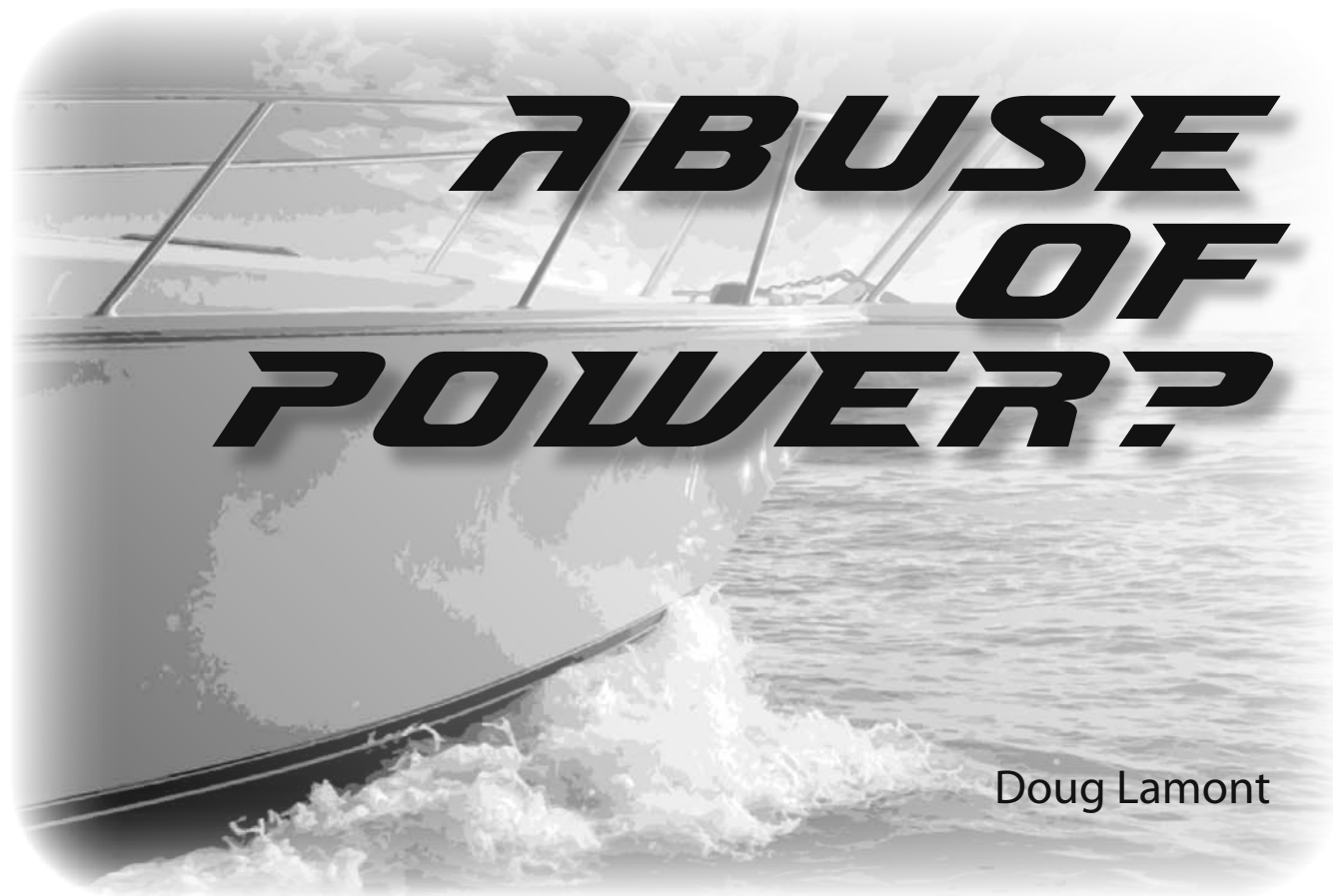
Back to the boat for our final night aboard. Taxi called in the morning which took us back to Corfu Airport, where we found that our flight had been delayed one hour due to operational difficulties. However, the time passed and we were soon on the flight back to Glasgow which got us in about 1 pm. We were picked up by the hotel mini bus to collect the cars, and soon set off up the road home to Troon. John has lost his keys so we had to locate Helen to get hers. They had been at the Beer Festival, but had moved on to the Lonsdale where we joined them for a few drinks (Eilidh there too) and then took them home.

The end of a lovely holiday and would never think twice about going again.

Our Passage

Gouvia – Sagada – 16 miles
Sagiada – Lakka – 27 miles
Lakka – Gaios – 5 miles
Gaios – Emerald Bay (Anti-Paxos) 4 miles
Emerald Bay – Levkas – 30 miles
Levkas Canal – 3 miles
Canal – Vahti – 8 miles (Meganissi)
Vahti – Fiskardo – (Cephalonia) 24 miles
Fiskardo – Preveza (Mainland Greece) 30 miles
Preveza – Sivota - 50 miles
Sivota – Gouvia - 25 miles





It was the fortnight of Eaglesham BB Annual Camp at Kings Cross. My friend Alastair MacBride, whose son was attending the camp, joined my daughter Catriona and myself at Troon to take Sileas across for the camp open day. The weather lived up to the forecast westerly 5 and some extra as we rounded the south end of Holy Isle. The wind instrument was showing 27kts gusting 35kts. Silverwing – the British Airways Sailing Club boat – was dragging her anchor rather rapidly in the direction of Whiting Bay so I decided to accept the invitation to pick up a vacant fish farm mooring.

By our planned departure time of 3pm on Monday the wind had dropped to a pleasant southerly 8kts and we set main and genny and exited Lamlash Harbour.

We arrived back at Troon at 20.30 somewhat later than planned and as we hadn't eaten there was a bit of a rush to get home. We put Sileas onto her wall mooring carefully adjusting the springs on to Jester to ensure that the masts were not in alignment – thank goodness we did. The dinghy was inflated and Catriona rowed Alastair and the baggage ashore whilst I did the final tidy up.

Around 9.10 or so I was below in the heads shutting the seacocks when she called me to ask if she should come back on-board. I told her no, that I would be up in a minute once I had switched off the batteries. Still below I heard the whine of a motor boat's prop, was alarmed by the apparent speed at which it was approaching and knew it would be on us very soon and with Catriona still in the dinghy I was very concerned. I leapt up into

the cockpit to see the power cruiser 'D███K███' (name redacted for legal reasons) immediately astern of Sileas travelling at what I estimated to be around 10-12 kts and pulling a wake of 2 – 2.5ft. Cat had turned up the dinghy painter onto the stern cleat and I was terrified that the dinghy was going to drop into the wake trough and that the painter was going to snatch the tender forwards throwing her into the water. I shouted to her to grab hold of the stern ladder which she did about five seconds before the wake hit us. I reached through the pushpit but couldn't catch her arms as the inflatable was surged backwards and forwards by the wake. As Sileas and Jester rolled wildly out of sync the fenders between them popped out and grp hit grp. I looked aloft and saw and heard the two sets of cap shroud sawing against each other. Fortunately the masts were sufficiently far apart to avoid clashing but there was still a danger that the spreader ends could catch under the shrouds and bring the lot down on us, I was already aware by the noise that TCC boats moored further towards the outer harbour had clashed hulls and masts. The big, expensive yachts moored to the marina hammerheads were rolling heavily. I can't remember exactly what I shouted at DK's skipper but when Catriona made her statement to the police she refused to quote verbatim! In essence it was "slow down you stupid **** look what your ***** doing!" the driver looked round surprised as if unaware of result of his actions!

The immediate danger passed I got Cat on board and after ensuring that she was physically ok I got the handheld VHF radio to call the harbour master. I

watched 'DK' to establish where she was berthing, she turned in between J and K pontoons but reappeared heading back up the fairway. I shouted to her driver that he was going to be reported to the harbour master and that he would want to speak to him and received the response "Aye – Cheerio". The driver appeared totally unconcerned about the danger that he had put my daughter in and the damage he may have caused. 'DK' then turned in between H and I and took up her berth on H9. I called Troon Harbour on 14 and reported the incident to the duty harbourmaster and made him aware that I intended to call the police. Unknown to me at the time the incident had also been witnessed by a Mr Lyons – a visiting yachtsman from Carrickfergus. He was alarmed by the power cruiser's speed through the marina. Alastair McBride was loading our bags into the car in the club compound heard the boat coming down the fairway at speed and followed events from the beach.

I called the police on my mobile to alert them to the incident. They were unable to dispatch officers to the marina at that time but said that they would investigate. I had a quick investigation of any damage to my and my neighbouring boats and noted a bent stanchion on 'Jester' (although George told me later that it was already bent and had not been caused by the incident). I secured Sileas, rowed ashore with Cat and with Alastair drove round to the marina office. The THY night watchman told us that the driver had already been questioned by the duty harbourmaster and that the other witness – Mr Lyons had challenged the driver of 'DK' regarding his actions. We then went to berth H9 where we found 'DK' unoccupied. We met Mr Lyons who told us that in his opinion all three men who came off 'DK' had been drinking and did not appear to be fit to drive the boat. He also stated that when challenged they were abusive, swore at him and were threatening in behaviour. He noted that they were removing a number of plastic bags of 'empties' from the boat. They then got into a car in the marina car park and drove off. Mr Lyons offered to act as a witness and when asked he estimated the speed of 'DK' in the marina fairway as in the region of 10 kts or more.

We then drove to the harbour master's office on the west pier and confirmed with the duty officer what had taken place and discussed the best course of action to follow. Whilst we were in his office he was called by the police who were seeking confirmation of the incident. He told them that he had noticed DK at excessive speed transiting the outer harbour and had a record of it on CCTV. The duty officer made a record of the events and details of those involved to submit in a report to the ABP Harbourmaster. We thanked him and left.

When we went back over the incident on the journey home my daughter said that when she was in the dinghy with the vessel approaching she had looked directly at the driver in alarm and made eye contact with him but he did not attempt to slow down when he saw her. She was still considerably distressed by what occurred.

When we got home I immediately wrote down the sequence and timing of the events and emailed it to Troon Yacht Haven and Clyde Coastguard. I contacted

Babs and asked her to email TCC members whose boats were on the wall alerting them to possible damage. The following day I received a call from the senior officer at Clyde CG who said that both he and Allied British Ports were determined to achieve a successful prosecution. Cat and I were formally interviewed by the police and were asked if we would be willing to appear in court.

In response to my email I received a call from TYH Manager who had made an immediate decision to lift DK out of the water as it appeared that there was some additional 'history' regarding the boat and its owner. The boat was held on the hard until all issues were settled by the owner (including the cost of the lift out and back in). The owner was then required to remove DK from TYH. I was informally told that word had got round the other Clyde marinas about the incident. The boat was later reported as being berthed at Ardrossan.

A number of weeks passed until I heard again from the police. They had been in discussion with their marine division, ABP and the Coastguard and while all parties were very keen to prosecute the fiscal's office was unsure of the detail of maritime law under which he could be charged however the deputy fiscal in Dundee had had recent success in a similar incident and they proposed getting his assistance.

Several attempts were made to interview DK's owner. Eventually the police were told that he had moved 'down south' for work reasons and had, conveniently, not left details of where he was going to be staying or working or a mobile number. The police did however have his car registration and were confident that in time he would be picked up by ANPR cameras and stopped. However in an update call from the police I was told that he had voluntarily contacted them and had been interviewed by telephone. He denied speeding in the harbour (despite the CCTV evidence) and endangering my daughter. Strangely he couldn't remember who was at the helm when the incident took place. The police were still confident of the case going to court.

Nothing more was heard until last summer when the police called to let me know that the fiscal's office had abandoned the case citing that the helmsman could not be positively identified and that, unlike commercial shipping, the skipper/owner couldn't be prosecuted for failing in his responsibility to command his vessel safely. To me it appeared that it was just too difficult for the Procurator Fiscal to proceed in an area of Law where they had no experience. I don't know what happened to the Dundee fiscal's proposed assistance.

I am still of the opinion that the majority of power boat skippers operate their boats in a safe and responsible manner however the moral of this story is to ensure that you are constantly vigilant both at sea and in the marina – and that you set up the springs on to your neighbouring boat so that your masts can't clash.



fair winds to old friends

DR JAMES WILTSHIRE

Born in 1924 in Sheffield, an only child, James went on to successfully attain a scholarship to Grammar School and subsequently went to Queens College Cambridge. His degree in chemistry led him to work with ICI until his retirement, having spent two years in Canada during his working life. He met his wife Janet, and they were married in 1947, and lived in Woodcockhill, where their family, Louise was born in 1957 and Tom arrived two years later. They moved to Ayr in 1969, and Jim took early retirement in his mid-50s. He was awarded with an OBE for his services to Manpower and Youth Training to which he was dedicated. In 1989 their first grandchild arrived and in 2008, their first great-grandchild. Jim was a great hill walker around the hills surrounding Alloway, and indeed created many walks for his friends, a vast number of whom attended his funeral. He was actively involved with the OIR in the area and had a great love of music. Even with his wife Janet's passing in 2009, Jim was still active until the day of his death.

His association with Troon Cruising Club began around the mid 70s when he was the proud owner of the yacht Gannet, enjoying many voyages up the West Coast of Scotland. Gannet, a Westerly Griffon. Although not around the club latterly, Jim kept up an associate membership, and always had a cheery note for Babs in with his subscription. Jim was known for his kindness and warmth and was always hard working whether in industry or his leisure pursuits.

JOHN LAPPING

A Renfrew boy John moved to Glasgow early in his life where he survived a close encounter with a Luftwaffe bomb which landed close to the family home severely damaging the building. When John left school he served his apprenticeship with Albion Motors in Scotstoun. National Service in the RAF saw him posted to Aden, Egypt and Cyprus and after a two year spell in Canada he joined Scottish Aviation's machine tools division. During this time he met and married Mona.

A career change took John into education and he taught at various schools in Ayrshire before becoming principal Teacher of Technical Subjects at Kilwinning Academy. John retired from teaching after 29 years service.

John's father kept a small wooden sailing yacht at Inchinnan. However it was on Viking, a clinker workboat that John and his father had bought and refitted, that he had an horrific experience. During a wild passage to Corrie she sprung three planks and started taking water fast. They turned back towards Ardrossan baling and pumping furiously. In a inspired moment John rerouted the engine cooling system which helped clear the bilges allowing them to limp back to Troon where they ran her up the mud! John's last boat was Boomerang II which is still in the club.

A club member since 1957 he joined the Council from 1981 to 1995 and in 1984 had a very busy year as Commodore and was made an Honorary Member.

John had been ill for a considerable time, an illness borne with great dignity and supported by his devoted wife, Mona. John passed away on New Year's Day and will be remembered as a highly respected and committed member of the Club.

ARCHIE MACNIVEN

Archie was born near Harwich in 1912 but moved to Renton in 1919 to stay with his grandparents. The young Archie was a keen outdoors man and competitive sportsman and golf satisfied both for 50 years until sailing took over. After a period with Oldham Press as a Technical Author he applied for and was appointed to a job in the Meteorological Office at Cranfield becoming an accomplished forecaster. During the Second World War his skills were utilised at several air bases on the South Coast of England and in North Africa. Post war he continued forecasting in the Mediterranean before transferring to RAF Northolt, London. 1948 - 49 saw him serve on weatherships.

It was during that time that he met Elizabeth Girvan who shared his love of the outdoors and they married in 1950. John and Eve followed and Archie's job took him around the country ending up at Prestwick Airport in 1955. A 3 year spell in Gibraltar followed and after a spell in Yorkshire he returned to Troon and Prestwick Airport until he retired in 1973.

Archie bought his first boat Tanda an Alacrity 18 in 1964 which later, during a race suffered hull failure, swamped and was abandoned. She was subsequently recovered, sold to and repaired by Charlie McKinnon.

Retirement gave Archie time to dedicate to sailing and as a member of the Ocean Youth Club sailed with often troubled youngsters who learned much from him and him from them.

Two other boats later Archie bought Datestamp, a 75th birthday present to himself, in which he continued to cruise until in his mid eighties.

Archie served on the Club Council in the 70s and was Commodore in 1976 the year in which the plans for the new marina shocked the club. He received Honorary Membership in 1993.

Elizabeth passed away in 2007 and Archie managed well at home on his own until he fell ill in July 2012 and was taken into Crosshouse Hospital where he passed away peacefully.

DONALD McCALMAN

Donald McCalman was born and educated in Glasgow obtaining a B.Sc. in Science at Glasgow University. He had a very adventuresome life before coming to Troon Cruising Club. His professional life took him firstly to Kenya and then on to Antarctica where he was Rothera Base Commander and had a newly surveyed mountain named after him. Donald returned to Kenya and met Jean who he married three months later.

Returning to Glasgow to teach he later took up a lecturing post at Dundee and ten years later took up a post as an HM Schools Inspector where he remained until he retired. They had three children, twins Donald and Gordon and daughter Fiona. Both he and Jean were keen mountaineers and added to their adventurous lifestyle when they acquired the 20ft *Grey Starling* and joined TCC. After a Westerly Centaur *Knotyet* they bought the Macwester ketch *Cristala* which they cruised extensively around the west coast and to France returning via the west coast of Ireland. *Cristala* took part in the Banff-Stavanger race winning the Karmoy Cup and then cruised the Norwegian coast for which they won the Redwing Trophy (despite hitting an overhead powerline and extinguishing all the lights on the island of Arnoyl!). He was again awarded the Redwing for a cruise to the Faeroe Islands. Donald served on the Council of TCC from 1996-98.

In 2000 Donald and Jean sold *Cristala* and moved to Speyside where they lived happily until his death in January of this year.

I am reminded of a quote from Donald - 'Keep up your membership of TCC - you meet some very useful people'. Donald was a very useful and kindly person to have in Troon Cruising Club

Jim Goodlad

KAYE ANDERSON

Keay joined TCC after spending several years racing with Troon Sailing Club. Prior to this he was a master bowman and, for three consecutive years, Scottish archery champion. However sailing changed the nature of an otherwise peaceful man and developed a deep and determined streak in him which prompted him to say 'nobody ever remember who came second'.

Keay became Racing Secretary with TCC and became the only person in the history of the club to hold this busy post continuously for three years when the Club was turning out 20 boats for every race. He impressed when racing his own boat and was hard to beat - as the Club Championship Board testifies.

Apart from sailing Keay excelled in everything he did. His woodworking and turning skills were second to none as can be seen in the Ship's Wheel trophy he made and presented to the club.

A former pupil of Marr College Keay went on to university to study Chemical engineering followed by national service where he was commissioned in the REME. A long and distinguished career with ICI followed, travelling the world as a pioneer in metal cladding. He finished his time with ICI in 1984 as a Chief Engineer.

Keay was well thought of for his commitment to Portland Church where he was a board member, elder and choir member for many years.

In all he was an exceptional and fine man in all he did.

John MacKinnon



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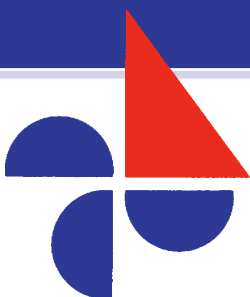


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