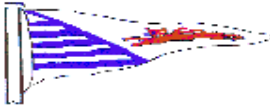


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JULY 2002

***Bonjour Bobcat & Catalac friends,** at last we have arrived in France (Calais) and our trip is really getting under way. We have had the mast lowered and set along the boat, with most things tied up out of the way, we have added a number of flags and burgee's to make it look a bit better and an aerial on the transom for both vhf and hf radio. The trip across took us longer than expected owing to a change in the weather, (what's new) but we had a good trip across from Rye to Calais. Our first venture was up the canal du Calais to Watten and we found a lovely quiet mooring absolutely free, close to a local market for lovely fresh baked bread, so we spent a couple of days here before moving on to Arques. the canals are fairly quiet except for the occasional Peniche (Barge) and every one we meet is so friendly. Every thing seems to be going nicely, apart from a few hic ups with the computer, I had to borrow my son's to enable me to get on line. We havn't made any plans as to where we are going or how far so next month I hope we can tell you a little more of what we are doing.*

Best Wishes from Bob and Ann on board "Think Again" in the French Canals.



ONE DAY AT A TIME

By Ray Astle

May 1st.

The second leg of our cruise Straycat required some minor work. we went traveled to Valence Port l'Eperviere via the channel tunnel in our old Nissan Micra loaded with a folding bicycle, new P.B. loo, extra tools and radio spares, plywood, resin , food and clothing we left the kitchen sink but there is only so much you can get in a Micra.

May 24th.

The work completed the boat was launched. Our son David and his Family joined us.

Next day we motored into the river on downstream through wine country to Viviere, a quiet medieval town in the Cote de Rhone. The bicycle came into it's own here. Next port of call St Etienne after the spectacular Montdragon canal and the Ecluse Bolene with it's 23 m drop in 7 min. it was smooth and impressive, but lonely we are the only boat and a lot of water just for us.

We stayed two days in Avignon just 100m from the famous ruined Pont d'Avignon. This town is worth far more than the two days we spent but so are many places we visited.



The half day sail down to Arles was different. We entered delta country the Camargues the Grand Rhone was slower, with more industrial sites. From Arles David and Family returned by train to Valence before driving home via Paris. We could of gone straight to Pt. St. Louis and the sea however Aigues Mortes is another must not miss town. We were hoping to meet a Belgium couple with their little girl, who had become good friends during our stay in Pt. Eperviere.

31st. May motored 3 km back upstream to the Petite Rhone then into Canal du Rhone a Sette, and through our last lock. Collected a plastic bag round the prop. The Rhone a Sette flows through the middle of the Camargue, horses bulls, birds just as the tourist brochures describe it. Arriving at Aigues Mortes early in the afternoon we moored against our friends Tabby, just 50m from a medieval arch that led into the small walled town. Jean and Marjolen walked and cycled in the Camargue while I enjoyed the waterside and town .

It rained occasionally but I only remembered this after referring to Jeans notes in her diary.



Aigues Mortes is where we finally made up our minds to sail towards Spain and the Balearics in preference to Italy and Malta.

*Charts and pages from pilot books were photocopied, a nautical almanac purchased.
The photocopying turned out to be a waste of money.*

Just as we were about to go I became rather ill. A doctor was called, Miechiel from Tabby translated and I went to hospital by ambulance for an examination under anesthetic. Four hours later I was discharged, prescribed pills and given strict instructions to rest and return for a second examination in one week. I was given the all clear after the second examination. Next day we motored the 5 km to Gran du Roi and waited on the pontoon for a favourable wind in the Gulf de Lion.

20th. June exactly one year after leaving Pwellheli, we raised sail in the Mediterranean. In company with Tabby we headed west towards Capd'Agde and had two hours of good sailing before having to switch on the Honda and motorsail. This became the pattern for most off the summer. In contrast with the sail from N.Wales to the French coast when we hardly used the motor.

The marina at Capd, Agde is large and comfortable. There are so many Marina's and small little harbours along this coast that there is always a bolt hole. We stayed four days in Pt. Barberosse and two in Porte la Nouvelle due to the Tramontane wind. Making an early start against this wind we had our first glimpses of the Pyrenees still with snow on their peaks. In Pt. Vendres we followed Tabbys example and tied up against the harbour wall. (always less expensive than the adjacent marina) This is our last haven in France and we stayed for several days, the foothills of the Pyrenees are Beautiful.

8th. July we motor sailed round Cap Cerbere into Spanish waters and Pt Estartit, (our least favourite Marina). *Bow to moorings, no security and rowdy sea front, inaccessible power and expensive.* On to our next stop, San Felix was just the opposite this is a large sheltered harbour. We moored on the Quay and stayed several days. I had me first Mediterranean swim by falling from the tender. We left Michiel and Marjolen, thinking of staying there for several weeks, before going west along the coast to Torrevieja. They had been a big help to us and became good friends. We are still in touch but we do miss their company.

We entered Barcelona and entered through the busy commercial port into a small marina in the heart of the city. This is another place where like Paris it's tempting to stay. (see Photo May news letter)

We were hoping that our daughter Jane and her two boys could join us in Mallorca. Yes this is streaching our defination of port hopping somewhat. However during a telephone call it transpired that this would be difficult to arrange from Shetland Islands, but a flight to Menorca was available on the 9th. August. Without checking the chart I said "book it" That gives us three weeks to get there. This hop is getting longer. Well a lit of divider stepping a course was set to Citadela in the NW corner of Menorca. On 21st. July with a large moon and a forecast of NW f 3-4 we left the pontoon, picked up fuel and cleared the fairway bouy at 15.00 against a Katabatic SE wind that would become NW about 5 miles off shore. That was the advice we were given! It never happened. We motor sailed all night with either wind against or none. Our crew Magellan and auto pilot worked well while we looked out for dolphins and occasional lights. By daybreak the wind was backing to NE and increasing, so as boat speed increased to about 7 kn water began to splash into the engine box (it always does at that speed when under power and sail). I was about to switch off when the motor died. Vulnerable electrical conections were suspected. WD 40 had no immediate effect. Raising the motor and minor adjustments to the autohelm maintained both course and speed for an hour, during which time I had concluded that to tack the last mile into Cintadela was not advisable when a broad reach into Pollensa (on Mallorca) would be simple but take a little longer. For the next four hours we sailed at 5kn in sunshine to Cap Formentor. The wind then dropped to f1 Jean suggested I try the motor, it worked perfectly. The sky went dark and for half an hour there was a thunder storm with very heavy rain before we motored into the anchorage at 14.30 in warm sunshine.

Puerto Pollensa is in a deep bay wiyh a backdrop of mountains and good drinking water from a tap on the promenade. There were several British boats on anchor. We enjoyed a week of sangre, swimming and sun.

July 28th. After getting a weather forecast from the marina we motor sailed across to the Sw corner of Menorca and dropped anchor in Cala Son Saure the first of many anchorages we used on the S and E coasts of the Island. We had very few mooring fees during the rest of the summer.

The Robin Bradon pilot was all that we used to explore the cales (bays) around Menorca. Returning to the public quay in Mahone several times to meet / deliver our family to the airport, and enjoy the town. Several of the cales we used routinely for lunch time anchorages or overnight havens. Addaya and Fornells were ones most frequently used overnight or longer. After Jane returned home, our son Christopher and his wife Elin sailed with us for a fortnight. By the end of September we had sailed into most of the cales on the SE of the island, and been hit by squalls in Fornells and Binibeca.

We have left Straycat ashore on Menorca.

October 5th. We flew to Barcelona, transferred by Euroline coach to Valence picked up the car and after a night in a hotel, drove home stopping in Poole for a few days arriving in Pwllheli Oct. 10th.

Total six locks and 650 nm.



“We Are All Going On A Summer Holiday”

With Peter Denning, On Redouble (CL9.144)

Over the last 5 years Redouble has been cruising the West Country and Channel Islands for the summer holidays.

This year for many reasons this was not organised so it was decided to take my niece (8) and nephew (6) for a weeks sailing. Along with my parents and the children's father meant that 6 lived on board for over a week, and 7 when my brother turned up for 2 days as well!

The first weekend (wet and windy) was spent by 3 of us tiding up and carrying out maintenance.

It's amazing how much 'junk' accumulates in the cavernous lockers on a 9 metre. This also coincided with the fireworks on Saturday at Christchurch which was most enjoyable.

Monday morning

saw the necessary shop for food, petrol and gas so by lunch time when the others had arrived we were ready to leave. Our first port of call was Keyhaven an epic voyage of 12 miles (it would have been shorter but the tide was against us). As it was half tide and falling we decided to go up one of the many drying creeks to find a quiet spot which also happened to run alongside the spit that goes to Hurst Castle. This gave a chance for the younger ones to burn off some energy. Tuesday saw a mid morning start to get the tide up the Solent to Bucklers Hard on the Beaulieu River. The number of boats entering and leaving made us wonder whether there was any room for us to moor. As it was the marina was full but the piles nearly empty and at under £8 per night very good value. The pub at Bucklers Hard always surprises me that it does not have a better character and selection of beers.

Wednesday

saw us going across the Solent to Cowes and then the Folly Inn. We were hoping to do a short stay at Cowes Marina to visit the shops but it was full of J class and historic boats celebrating the 150th anniversary of Americas cup and getting ready for the Festival of the Sea at Portsmouth. This forced us straight up to the Folly Inn and then water bus *I* taxi back down. We had quite a wait for the taxi getting back up having booked it for 1800 hours and being picked up at 1900 hours. But the sun was out and there was plenty of activity out on the water to watch. After dumping the shopping on Redouble we went straight to the Folly for beer and food. The food queue was not too long but by 2030 hours it was extending to the main doors. Everyone seems to get fed though not possibly as quickly as they thought; it sure helps drink sales though!

Early Thursday morning

saw us heading to Bembridge. Medina River was at low water and we had very little to spare under the keels. The number and size of the super yachts anchored off Cowes was most impressive with the better ones having helicopters instead of dinghys. As usual the wind was light so we just motored and managed to sail a bit once round No Mans Land Fort. The tide at Bembridge was still very low so we went and anchored off the nearby beach. This allowed the children some exercise in rowing and building sand castles though these did not last long with the incoming tide. Bembridge is nice but a lot of money at over £11 per night against a pontoon in the middle of the harbour. That night after a beach barbeque 3 of us got the water taxi to the local sailing club. At 2300 hours we went back but in thick fog. The visibility was down to 10 yards and even the taxi driver was struggling!

Friday morning

bright and sunny, being low water and aground in Bembridge gave a slow start. Eventually the tide came up enough to allow the outside boats to depart and then for ourselves to leave and anchor off the beach for more rowing and sandcastles. It was at Bembridge that we found a pub that stopped serving food at 1400 hours and closed at 1500 hours and we are in a holiday location. The local beach cafe therefore got our trade but they did not sell beer! Once the tide had started to ebb we got ready to leave and head back to either Newtown or Yarmouth.

With the tide helping us and taking shortcuts between No Mans Land Fort and the Island we managed to get Newtown by 1900 hours. At times we were doing 8 knots over the land and as we went past Cowes and all the yachts we were sipping G&T with ice (from the fridge) and lemon.

We anchored in Shalfleet Creek at Newtown and the tide carried on departing ever quicker. Very soon we were aground in the main channel with a 3" trickle of water going past. If the tides had been different we could of gone for a walk to the local pub. It was decided that we would leave early on Saturday to go to Yarmouth for water, fuel and food and then carry on to Studland / Poole.

The alarm clocks were set but by the time we had surfaced the tide was roaring out and we struggled to even reach the anchor. After much engine revving this was achieved and we proceeded to bump our way down the creek. After having travelled 100 yards we found a much larger lump of mud which we could not motor through. Very soon we were again high and dry and looking behind us we could see the furrows caused by the keels. They looked most impressive!

By midday we were again afloat and bashing the tide towards Yarmouth. It was decided to stay the night here and travel further West early the next morning when once again we would have the tide assisting. After watering and refuelling we went to our allocated berth in Yarmouth and then proceeded to do more shopping. The Bugle pub had a very nice selection of beers some of which had to be tried. That evening we barbequed on the nearby beach joining every one else who had the same idea.

Sunday morning

came far too early and was dull, grey and even chilly compared with other days. We headed down through the Needles Channel and then hoisted sail and headed towards Studland catching 2 mackerel on the way. Studland from a distance looked packed even though it was blowing a NE straight in. When we got there a lot of boats were leaving but they were being replaced by the day trippers from Poole. We decide to stay the day at Studland and then overnight in Poole Harbour where it would be calmer. Once again the beach party set off though by now it kept trying to rain. After a few sandcastles the drizzle looked persistent so we thought that a warming pint in the local pub would be a good idea. Unfortunately every one else had the same idea and we ended up drinking outside. At least we had not ordered food whilst sitting outside in the rain.

Once back on board we upped anchor and headed into Poole and Shipstal Point. Here late in the afternoon Oliver (6) went out rowing in one of the dinghies by himself. What a good job he did and it certainly tired him out!

Monday

saw another leisurely start as we wanted to catch the flood tide back to Christchurch. We went for a walk on nearby Long Island before leaving and found a traditional rope swing with a bit of an old mast as a seat. The children thought that this was great but we soon had to leave. I have seen Blood Lake Alley busy before but the number of boats at anchor palled this into insignificance, it was heaving! Poole Harbour entrance was also busy and I felt for the ferry Captain in trying to work his way through all the boats as they enter and leave the harbour.

TALKING HEADS

BARRIE BRIDGEMAN "CATRY" CL.10.25

(acknowledgement to Alan Bennett)

When one buys a yacht there are various quirks that have to be discovered and skills to acquire that are not taught on RYA approved courses.

Meet the Family

However, before telling the tale let me introduce the family. There is the first (and old fashioned we may be, the "only") mate, Anne, my wife. There is our home, Catry, a 10 metre Catalac (No 25) whom we bought in June 1998 and moved into from our previous home of 11 years, a narrowboat, Fletcher Lynd. Finally there is me, Barrie, 64, 5' 8½" in my socks, too portly, bald, bearded, bespectacled and looking in most photographs like a demented gnome.

A Voyage of Discovery

The heads/the John/toilet arrangements on Catry are more complicated than they had been on Fletcher Lynd, which had been of the sophisticated bucket and chuck it type. On Catry sewage can either be pumped into the sea or by means of a two-way valve into a storage tank, which can later be pumped via a Henderson pump into the sea. The hand-over instructions, when we got Catry, had not been entirely explicit about which way the two-way valve handle should point for which operation.

Shortly after taking possession we beached inadvertently on Stone Island in the entrance to Poole harbour. To show that we had planned that all along, I descended to the ground and inspected Catry's hull. We tried by Anne pumping and me observing to work out which way the handle of the two-way valve needed to point to discharge the contents into the sea or in this case over my sea boots. By the time the tide returned and refloated us we thought we had it clear.

"Perchance to Dream"

It was not until we had been lifted out at Burnham on Crouch for some DIY anti-fouling that we discovered that we, correction "I" (*the skipper is always responsible for what goes wrong*) had reached the wrong conclusion. The sewage tank was absolutely full. It was also then that we discovered that the Henderson pump for emptying the tank was not working.

I spent the whole of the next day trying to get to the pump to service it. Not easy. We could imagine the boat builder saying, "Here is a Henderson pump. Let's build a boat round it." There was no way that it could have been installed after the bulkheads were fitted except by a Double-Jointed Orang-utan.

Demented gnome I might appear but not a D-J O-u. After a complete day of removing bits, failing to remove other bits, hanging upside down and darn nearly inside out we concluded that the only answer was to carve an access panel in the bulkhead to which the pump was fixed. We were still concerned that with all our fiddling around with the plumbing we might in our ignorance empty the whole contents of the sewage tank into the boat's bilges by mistake.

That would have been bad enough for us, but the prevailing wind was blowing from our boat across the rest of the marina.

I know not what you do in bed, but strangely I woke early the next morning with a mental map of the whole sewage system which my brain had worked out in my sleep. Each to his or her own dreams, eh? I lost no time in putting it into one of my computers and printing it out as a flow chart (forgive the pun). Suffice to say that another day later I had created an access panel in the bulkhead, refurbished the pump by replacing a gunjed up outlet valve and reconnected a couple of pipes without spilling more than a drop or two of the contents. Now came the moment to test it all.

Anne womanned (a bit of political correctness!) the pump and I went below the hull with a

bucket held to catch the contents from the outlet. You have the scene? I am standing below the hull, bucket held toward the outlet and peering round the rim of the bucket to see if my handiwork was going to work ... well, handily. Unfortunately, what was not known at that time was that the pump did not generate a smooth flow, but rather sudden spurts. Next moment there is a sudden gush of sewage most of which hits the bucket and stays, but some misses and .. well let's put it this way, my beard needed a good wash and I could have done with some windscreen wipers on my spectacles. There is always a bright side, at least it worked as far as I could see!

We still, of course, had a full sewage tank so the answer was to get a large container hold it right up against the outlet and pump. That was accomplished with only a bit of leakage and I decided to take the container and empty it down a lavatory pan in the toilet block. Self-consciously I picked a time very early in the morning when I knew no-one would be around. Unfortunately, the next day was Saturday and the male population of the marina boats turned up in force for a weekend sail. How does one creep surreptitiously through a crowded ablution area carrying a heavy black container, into a toilet cubicle and pour contents as silently as possible into the bowl? To say nothing of the smell! The real art is then to walk nonchalantly back through the ablution area, still crowded, with an obviously much lighter container, trailing odorous air in one's wake and a friendly "Good Morning" issuing from one's lips. Brute Force and ...

It was on our second visit to St. P. P. that we had another trial with the heads. Once again it was Anne who identified the problem; it was impossible to push down the plunger which both empties and flushes the bowl. It was the emptying which was the problem this time. At this point, again, she decided to go shopping. My approach to such problems is always to seek a cure with the least complication. So the obvious first step was to apply a little more pressure to see if whatever was obstructing the operation could be shifted. Picture the scene: in order to exert the maximum force I stood over the plunger, which of course meant that I was bent over the lavatory bowl. I strained to push down the plunger but was unsuccessful in shifting the blockage. However, I had applied a great deal of pressure.

When the handle was released at the end of the effort, the resulting pressure had to find a way out. The easiest was out of the toilet bowl, bringing with it some of the contents which had been caught by the blockage. What stopped the mess going all over the place was me: mainly my face, with beard and spectacles, and hands. Oh well, there was nothing for it but to dismantle the pipe. clear it with a stick and quantities of water, reassemble the plumbing and then take myself off to the shower block. As I told Anne afterwards, "It was as well there was no one else there; I could hardly bear to go into the shower cubicle with myself." It took two days before I was sure that I could no longer smell my hands, let alone my beard.

International Co-operation

The last occasion, to date, of having to use one's head to use one's heads was at Carentan, Normandy. Once again the they would not pump out. By now I am well practised in locating the source of the problem. This one was an accumulation of rock hard deposit in one of the pipes. It must have built up over the years. It was but a moment, comparatively speaking, to remove the pipe, but then what was the best way to clear it. I tried poking it clear with a boat pole. A neighbouring Belgian boater produced a more effective spiked boat pole but it was not working very well. Then I found the solution: banging the pipe on the pontoon dislodged the deposits. In a fit of enthusiasm in my new found technique, I swept the pipe over the top of my head in a vigorous movement onto the pontoon. A fine spray of particles escaped the end of the pipe landing on me as the pipe went overhead and then a large chunk came out of the pipe when it hit the pontoon. "That was a big one", said the Belgian approvingly. And when I said at the end of the operation that I needed a shower now, the Belgian responded equally enthusiastically,

"You surely do."

Postscript

There are many joys of yachting: the constant learning, taking the rough patches with the smooth, being responsible for one's own craft and finally, a sense of achievement.

What Anne might call "going shopping" and I, "being flushed with success."

Hi Peter:

As I told you before this is my first Cat (I used to sail Hobbie Cats in my youth) so this is a learning process and I think I started with my right foot on a Catalac.

I bought this boat from a lawyer that at one time was talking to Tom Lack about purchasing the whole Catalac company leaving Tom and Mary doing what they knew.

This person bought 2 boats a 9 meter and a 10 meter and started putting all of the options and then some on these 2 boats, mine has a mast 51'10" with special traveler combination, in boom furler (I hate it) oversized winches, 2 x 30 hp Yanmar saildrives, 8 kw generator, 2 A/C units, freezer and refrigerator, has all of the electronics available in 1985 would you believe that this boat has 12 bilge pumps? 3 manual and 3 electrical in each side, is wired for TV, telephone, lightening, etc.

I am hoping that the toilet breaks down to replace the famous "ROYAL FLUSH" I am afraid that if I activate this monster with me sitting on it I am going to be sucked down and transformed into not exactly ashes before my time, it is basically an air compressor that blows compressed air into a water chamber that it blows the combination of the two into a third chamber that has already swallowed the brown stuff and dilutes it into gray water and then violently disperses it into the ocean; I am describing it because I know you Britts love this kind of American decadence. Now I am dismantling some of the obsolete gear and replacing with just a radar and a chartplotter;

I'll deal with the boom later on when I get a couple of pennies.

My wife and I are fixing the leaks on the windows as all the workers I hired to do this mysteriously dissapeared and if we don't do it nobody else will.

We sail in South Florida mainly in Biscayne Bay (not nearly as windy as yours) and will go to the Florida Keys and the Bahamas as I am still working to earn a living.

Best Regards
Ed Tamara.

>>>>>>>>>> OWNERS MODIFICATION'S <<<<<<<<<<<<

"STILL TALKING HEADS"

In days of old when knights were bold

The boudour had one main accessory, **no** not the bed...but under it was placed a *chamber pot or potty*. What the el has this to do with sailing you may ask.

Read on it does not matter whether you are sleeping at anchor on a sandy beach waiting for the tide or in a marina berth. The excess of food and drink from the night before will take its toll. How long you lie there and fidgget will only makes matters worse. Mother nature wins in the end. The solution is of course a "potty" for the holding off until one can empty the contents at ones leisure.

We have under our berth, alas no room for the pot!! And to date full or empty I have never seen a **pot** being carried along a pontoon or beach.

We are past the days of Le bucket-and-chuckit used by older vessels and are fortunate in that our more modern boats have a wide variety of more agreeable means of sucking, pumping, chopping, or mashing before dumping waste into the water.

The loo's fitted on most boats have an inlet pipe dia. 19 mm and an Outlet pipe dia. 38 mm both connected to seacocks with shut off ball valves secured in the hull. The loo pumps water into the bowl via the inlet then out via the outlet the sea cocks remain open at all times during this operation.

Back to the *pot/holding tank*, I read this article that article. Talk about diverter valves, breather pipes, pumps, tanks, (fixed & portable), and inspection hatches. The mind boggles, how big a tank do you want/need? a question not easily answered, and who in their right mind would want to inspect the contents of a holding tank!!

To save money and try my idea I purchased from a camping shop,
One 20 ltr. Water tank with a small air vent and a large screw cap(*make sure the vent is not in the cap*).
From a chandler I bought I meter of outlet hose and skin fitting,
1 watertight screw hatch (*large enough to get my hand in*)
Vent hose ie.(*a suitable length of windscreen washer hose or similar*).

First decide where to fit the tank. (*We will fit it later*) ideally fit it as close to the loo as possible and secure with straps to bulkhead or similar keeping the outlet from the tank at the lowest point but ideally above the boats water line (*in case of any leaks*).

To modify water tank cut a hole and fit the watertight hatch near the top of the tank then fit the skin fitting near the bottom corner of the tank. Connect the one end of the new hose to the tank bottom skin fitting, the other end to the outlet seacock. Cut a hole in the top of the screw cap and fit the outlet pipe from the loo through the hole so it protrudes into the tank. Fit the tank as above. Refit the tank screw cap and hose, seal with "O" ring or sealant then connect other end to the loo.

It will need a vent, (vent to be kept as high as possible to prevent blockages) and vent the tank to the outside forward locker then between the hulls on 8mtr Catalac or on a 9mtr. vent to rear locker put a turn or "U" in the vent pipe and fill initially with water to prevent any offensive odors.. JOB DONE.

All that we have done is make the outlet longer by fitting a tank in-line between the loo and outlet seacock all waste now passes through the tank in normal use then out the seacock.

In marina etc. shut the outlet seacock the waste is then retained in the tank.

To discharge when at sea open the seacock gravity will do the rest or pump to clean.

BEWARE make sure the vent is left open and not pinched or kinked.
Failure to do this while pumping will cause the tank to blow up like a balloon need one say more!!!

This has been in use for three seasons without blockages, ballooning or the need to get up dressed and plod of to the loo in the middle of the night.

Total cost under £50.00.

MODS DONE ON AKU AKU



It occurs to me that a word on the subject of cooling water strainers may not come amiss at this point. Readers will I hope have noted our enthusiasm for the remote or inboard Strainer rather than the more traditional type which is incorporated into the skin fitting. We have had occasion to experiment with various types and have concluded that Vetus undoubtedly make the best and most efficient one. This type has a water entry and exit tube set in the base of the filter housing with corresponding holes on the bottom of the debris catchment basket. There are alternatives available where the entry point is central, and incorporated into the transparent inspection

lid securing pillar. The exit which feeds water to the pump is set in the side. It has been our experience that this type tends to choke up at the point where water should spew out into the separator basket. It has to be said that it is only the common green floating seaweed which does this, but it is of course this weed which largely causes the very problem which we need to eliminate. By contrast the Vetus water Strainer, which is of course the more expensive (does this sound familiar?), dumps the weed neatly into the collector basket without impeding water flow! The other types tend to restrict entry flow leading to overheating which again is precisely what we are trying to avoid. The cooling water entry skin fitting need have no Strainer or grille, the theory being that it is better to allow foreign objects to reach the inboard strainer where they can easily be deported! "- Back to the story:- In the morning we decided to go further up the Medina towards Newport. By the riverside I noted a large but obviously deceased tree. I put the hook down opposite and went astern towards the tree. Going ashore, we took a warp from an aft cleat, around the trunk and back to the remaining aft cleat. Using the lead, we sampled and sounded the bottom. It was as expected, mud, with a gentle slope down towards the middle of the river. There is little actual tidal flow this far up, so lying abeam was not a problem. We dried comfortably and level in the shelter of tall trees.

Ashore was a picnic area, a path, a cycleway and a main road some one hundred yards away. The edge of the river was shingle so going ashore required no more than the descent of our aft ladder. We keep two mountain bikes on board. We find them much more fun to use than gimmicky yotie folding types. Have you ever experienced the form of pain resulting from an involuntary fold up whilst pedalling? Well I can assure readers that it is both eye watering and arrestive of progress. The same is true of Sturmey Archer epicyclic gears when out of adjustment through folding. By contrast, on mountain bikes, we can carry significant loads, general shopping, large gas bottles, beer, wine, and other essentials. Fair distances can be covered with ease. It provides jolly fine exercise not to mention an excellent way of exploring ashore. It is well known that crew legs do not usually get sufficient exercise aboard boats. The Navy invented the Hornpipe by way of solving this problem but we find cycling a quite adequate substitute.

A mountain bike can be dismantled and stowed away almost as conveniently as a folder . However for local cruising we lash ours to the pulpit rail. They cause very little nuisance stowed here, but obviously are completely out of the way when stowed in the cockpit lockers. Because of our midships engine, our lockers are fully available for stowage and two derigged bikes are easily swallowed up.

The engine alternator drive belt had failed and I had fitted our spare during our stay at the anchorage near the Folly. I needed to acquire at least another by way of insurance, until such time as I could ascertain the reason for the breakdown and remedy it. On going ashore we were approached by a local gentleman who, to my surprise, remarked on how nice he thought it was to see a boat moored at that particular spot. It was apparently usually ignored in favour of the town quay pontoons at Newport some half a mile further upstream. On hearing of our problem, he directed us to the nearest spares supplier and even telephoned them on his mobile to check availability of the belt we needed! How kind! We pedalled into Newport, collected our spare belt, explored the town and marvelled at local property prices displayed in the estate agencies, on average less than one half of southern mainland costs!

A friend of ours had recently moved to the Island and bought a house in Godshill not far from Sandown airfield where he kept his aeroplane. We enquired for directions. The locals seemed amazed at our intention to cycle there. Well there were a few hills on the way! ! We enjoyed a convivial evening with our friends who were very happy with their move to I.O.W. We cheated on our return journey, gladly accepting a lift back in their camper van. It was raining stair rods " by then and we were quite glad to be in the dry!

AKU -AKU lay quietly at her Med. style mooring. We clambered aboard and fell into our pit totally exhausted.

They all turned up in the morning;- Mr. and Mrs Swan with eight cygnets, Mother Duck and Drake with innumerable ducklings. Cormorants spread their wings on perches, at least one Egret and a Grey Heron ventured close. Fish jumped and splashed clear of the water and the birds sang their finest dawn chorus.

We felt pleased with this fine little unspoilt spot and pittied others who, by dint of draught and keel, were obliged to go alongside the town quay where a heavy charge is levied. The small Marina opposite actually charges less than the town quay which will not accept fin keel boats!

**We are not responsible for any loss or damage caused by any alterations or modifications from your boats original design .
All mods that appear in this news letter are done by owners who may or may not be qualified marine engineers.**