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# Bobcat & Catalac

**Founder: MARY LACK**



# Cruising Association



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**July 2003**

**Hello fellow Bobcat and Catalac sailors every where.**



**<<<B.C.C.A. Members are affiliated with MOCRA and are invited to join in the following>>>**

## MOCRA 2003

### CRUISING DATES

Below are MOCRA's Cruising plans for next season's events together with those received to date from our Affiliated Groups. If you know of any other local event or have any other entries please let me know. They will be updated in the next issue and updated on our web site. Most of our Affiliated Groups will welcome MOCRA members but please check first with the association. MOCRA events are open to all.

If you wish to have these details sent to you by email when they are updated please email Mike Millerchip with your details and your name will be added to the cruising distribution list. Email: [mocra@mlm.invictanet.co.uk](mailto:mocra@mlm.invictanet.co.uk)

DATE	EVENT	CLUB/CONTACT
4-10 July	MOCRA Crystal Rally	MOCRA Cruising Section
12-13 July	HT Rally at Ryde Marina	HT/All
1-8 August	MOCRA Cruise in company to Scillis	MOCRA/All
August (TBC)	HT Summer Cruise	HT/All
September	Weekend Cruise to Weymouth	MOCRA Cruising Section
September	Southampton Boat Show	CATALAC & MOCRA Cruising Section
September	MOCRA Supper, (after Boat Show)	MOCRA CATALAC & Cruising Section/All
20-21 Sept.	HT Rally at Newport	HT/All
October	MOCRA Cruising Committee meeting	MOCRA AL (LSC)
25-26 October	HT Rally at Gosport	HT/All
November	AGM	MOCRA (RSYC)
November (TBC)	Christmas Cruise - Ferry Day Trip	IOA/MOCRA
16 Jan 2004 (TBC)	Annual Dinner, Speaker & Awards	MOCRA (RTSC)
Autumn/Winter	Lectures and Out of season meets (TBA)	MOCRA Cruising Section/All

#### Contacts:

**MOCRA Cruising Section Chairman** (Mike Millerchip) 01252-794330  
**Committee Members:** Mike Millerchip, John Hurst, Dave Parkinson.  
**Affiliated Groups Representative:** Mike Barnsley

**BCCA:** Bobcat & Catalac Association (Peter Gimson) 01202-773749  
**IOA:** Iroquois Owners Association (Dave Lewis) 01730-267623  
**HA:** Hironnelle Owners Association (Tony Grundon) 01227-276408  
**HTOWOA:** Heavenly Twins & Ocean Winds Association (Sue Morgan) 01635-871559  
**TMSG:** Tamar Multihull Group (Tony Symes) 01752-815962  
**TOA:** Telstar Owners Association (Mike Millerchip) 01252-794330  
**FTA:** Farrier Trimaran Association (Mark Mount) 01227 830680

## **Just a reminder of the two main cruising dates for this summer.**

### **Crystal Rally**

It is intended that we shall retrace most of the route which this race used to follow back in the 1970's. We intend to sail in company from the Solent to Cherbourg, with a days stop over. Then onto Plymouth, via Eddystone, and hopefully meet up with the Tamar multihull group for a BBQ.

(If supported to become an annual event): Currently 3 boats.

**Dates: 5<sup>th</sup>. July to 9<sup>th</sup>.July** (or any part there of to suit your commitments)

#### **Leave Solent:**

**5th July** Saturday (Some boats may leave Friday evening) and aim to be in Cherbourg for Saturday evening, meet in the Yacht Club.

#### **Cherbourg:**

Sunday **6th**, day off and group evening meal ashore, I will book this once I know numbers.

Monday **7th**: Leave for Plymouth, arrive Tuesday morning, suggest we anchor in Cawsand Bay.

Tuesday **8th** evening: BBQ up the Tamar river.

Wednesday **9th**; boats make their way home, some boats may need to sail back to the Solent.

(I will be leaving my boat at Pip Pattersons Yard for the month in readiness for the Scilly Isles Cruise).

#### **Prizes:**

We will be awarding Navigational Software and Charts as a prize should enough boats take part.

### **Scilly Isles MOCRA Annual Cruise:**

This year we aim to cruise in company around the Scilly Isles weather permitting.

We will leave from Plymouth and spend around 5/6 days exploring the islands.

Saturday **2nd August** we will meet in Cawsand Bay and head for the Helford River

Sunday **3rd** we will head out for the Scillies

Monday **4th** should find everyone anchored in Saint Marys Pool.(Our first port of call)

Tuesday to Friday will be decided by those attending, but we aim to visit as many anchorages and islands as possible.

Saturday/Sunday everyone should be back in Plymouth.

This cruise will be modified as we go depending on who turns up and what we want to do.

This is meant to be a relaxing cruise.

**Note: All skippers are reminded that they have the sole responsibility for safety of their vessel & crew.**

8 boats attending to date:

Phaeton	33
Maldives	32
Farrier 9AX	30
Farrier F24	24
Telstar	26
Kelsall Cat	27
Woods	26
Farrier	22

**Plenty of room for a few B.C.C.A. boats to attend and there are prizes !!! ED**











**"The sun always shines and the temperature in winter never falls below 11°C!"**

**This was the carrot that lured us donkeys on our arrival at Siracusa, Sicily. "But what about the Mafia?" - we were dying to ask, but didn't dare!**

**Shortly after we were overwhelmed with friendliness from marina staff and locals alike and discovered a city with a harmonic blend of old and new architecture and a quirky lifestyle unique to Sicilians.**

**So the 'donkeys' decided to stay for the winter and the 'carrot' is proving to be very tasty!**

**When we first set off on our adventures in 1999, we couldn't quite get to grips with the interruption of our cruising having to stop somewhere for the winter. We thought that it was just a waste of time when we could be still travelling and seeing more places. But now we have realised we are (a) time rich (b) it's not so comfortable to cruise after October (generally speaking) and (c) and perhaps most important of all - we can get to know a town/city and it's language, culture more thoroughly instead of just skimming the surface.**

**As you know our first winter was spent in Aigue Mortes in the south of France, the second in Agudulce in the south of Spain, last year in Mahon on the Balearic island of Menorca and this winter in Siracusa on the island of Sicily. In each place we have made many friends, got to know the best bars and 'parlez-ed' with the locals and albeit temporarily, woven ourselves into everyday life. People are as intrigued with us and accept and welcome our unconventional way of life.**

**Let us back-track for the moment to last winter and life in Mahon. In our last letter we left you with the devastating November hurricanes, fortunately there was no repeat performance and we flew back to the UK in early December to spend Christmas with family and friends and to prepare our house for marketing (yes we had finally decided to 'Sell up and Sail' for good).**

**On our priority list on arrival was to visit my Mum who had just moved into a warden assisted apartment after living in the family home for 60 years. Her health was failing, but she still remained fiercely independent. After a spell in London we travelled to Wales and then spent a wonderful Christmas back in Kent at Sam and Richard's house, together with Zöe, Emma and their families. The only cloud on the horizon was that my Mum was unable to make the journey to Kent from London to spend Christmas with us as planned.**

**For once transport wasn't the usual headache as Paul's Dad had decided to buy a new car and**

loaned his 'old' one to us for the duration which saved us the expense of renting one. With so much to and fro-ing and house clearing it was a godsend and in January with our return flight quickly approaching we thought it might be nice to take the scenic route back to Mahon by car and have the use of it (luxury!) in Menorca, so we bought it and did just that. We sold our air tickets to Len and Gill of *Lady Bear* fame, who were also spending some time in the UK and with one last, very emotional, visit to Mum, who by now had been admitted to hospital for tests, we set off on another adventure across France and Spain.

'Bonjour' France! Of course we headed straight for Sancerre to visit Paul's sister Mandy and husband Denis 'en famille', we hadn't seen them since last in the canals in '*Squib*'. As usual they made us very welcome and after a week of catching up with all the news and gossip (and getting to grips with the Euro!) we said 'au revoir' and headed south to the border town of Toulouse. We spent a pleasant evening and the following day exploring this fascinating and historical town and vowed to return by boat someday by means of the canal du midi which snakes its way through the centre. Next stop the cold, but beautiful slopes of Andorra, oh if only we could ski, it looked so inviting - I've got the padding so I suppose that's a start!

'Hola' España! And the next day found us back again to one of our favourite places, Barcelona. We managed to find a reasonably priced hotel on La Ramblas, the main street and proceeded to do the whole tourist bit with a guided tour on an open top bus which was warm in the sun, but incredibly cold in the early evening! It was the start of Gaudi year and naturally all his architecture was being promoted. He designed some wonderful and totally wacky, off the wall (if you pardon the expression), fantasy land structures which we had great fun visiting.

Next evening, we caught the overnight ferry direct to Mahon. This was megabucks so we cut the cost and slept in the bar/ballroom on padded seats, it seems we were the only poor ones as we had the place all to ourselves! Back to Mahon and *Squib* was waiting loyally for us. We quickly settled back into the chilled out approach to life, caught up with all the goss and began to explore the island, discovering inland was just as beautiful as the coast. We got down to a few maintenance jobs which had been nagging and then 2 weeks after our we got back, my brother Nige phoned early one morning in February (Valentine's Day) to say that Mum had died during the night - it was 62 years to the day since she had met my Dad. It shocked me as a phone call to her a couple of days before had been very positive and it seems she was definitely on the mend.

My sister and all my 3 brothers including Chris from Australia made it to the funeral. Having their support and of course Paul's was beyond words. The service was a full on communion insisted upon by the vicar as 'befitting'. In the eulogy and at the wake which followed, Mum was remembered by all without exception, for her sense of humour and fun and her wonderfully daft nature. Goodbye Mum.

Back in Mahon once more and at times the grief was overwhelming; I remembered the good times and the fun we'd had as kids with Mum around, a tradition continued with her grandchildren. She had been an inspiration and had totally endorsed our bohemian way of life and longed for the next chapter of our adventures. So with these positive vibes I somehow made it through the following months.

We kept ourselves busy with more exploring, visiting Mahon's interesting military museum, catching up with, of course, the 6 nations rugby and the inevitable socialising and boules playing. On the subject of socialising, the business of the annual birthdays has to be addressed as were both soon to reach the big five O within a few weeks of each other, we naturally got busy with the plans for a fiesta. At the end of March, on a days' respite from some very wet weather, we had a huge knees up on the quay, with plenty of balloons, flags,

silly hats, posters and a 'through the ages' collage of photos of Paul (did he ever look that sweet?). Of course the champagne (well Cava), wine and beer flowed and when evening fell, we adjourned to a boat and the guitar and mouth organ came out and the sing-song began. A day to remember, the ages we'll conveniently forget.

The car continued to be a godsend until one day when I went into Mahon town centre to collect some foam to make some cockpit cushions and parked the car. The rain was torrential and after swiftly making my purchase I paddled my way back to the car just in time to see the tow truck taking it to God knows where. The traffic warden doing the organising, did his best to direct me to the compound in his best English/Spanish, but after searching for over half an hour and dying for a pee (I blamed it on the rain) I went back to 'Squib' feeling very sorry for myself. Paul offered no sympathy and sent me off again armed with a wad of car documents. Around the corner John, a friendly mechanic from the marina stopped and offered me a lift. When I related my tale of woe he told me it wasn't uncommon in Mahon to be towed away and took me straight to the compound. The whole episode had taken 3½ hours and cost €40, I was very careful where I parked after that.

After Paul's Dad and his friend Joan spent a pleasant few days with us on a diversion from their holiday in Mallorca at the beginning of April, we prepared to have 'Squib' lifted out to change her 'nappy'. Not a job either of us looks forward to, but has to be done. With 'Squib' on the hard, the sun shining and overalls donned, it took us a manic couple of days to anti-foul, replace anodes, check stern glands and sea cocks and then give her a good spit and polish. Paul also serviced and fitted the props which had previously given us so many problems and fingers crossed no more tantrums.

Back into the water and we both immediately got itchy hulls and strained at the mooring line to set off again. We thought it prudent to do a test run before we attempted the non-stop, 2 day, 200 miles crossing to Sardinia, so together with *Lady Bear* we sailed to Isla del Aire on the south eastern corner of Menorca, which is home to a unique breed of black lizards. It took us no time to explore this tiny, normally uninhabited island and found a bunch of guys living almost rough, carrying out an exercise to count and identify the migrating birds, which they caught in huge nets. The lizards just slithered and basked in the sun seemingly oblivious. Back to Mahon harbour and our old haunt of Outboard Lost Overboard fame, (Cala Taulera where we dropped anchor for a tranquil night. The following day with a strong wind forecast, we ducked back into the marina for a week and made final preparations to leave.

Whilst waiting for a weather window we witnessed a fiesta for St George's Day which is quite bizarre as the English don't generally celebrate this. During the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April in Menorca, they stage a re-enactment of the signing of the treaty of Amiens when Menorca was handed back to the Spanish by the English, this is an important event for them obviously and one which demands full on pomp and ceremony. During the day all over Spain, which we don't think is linked to St Georges Day, they also hold a huge book and rose fair in every town, we think the idea is to encourage reading and in the process you get a free rose for your loved one.

With the help of the internet (yes we finally managed to connect after 8 months) and the newly acquired SSB (single side band - short wave radio) we got a good 5 day weather forecast. We sold the car to a guy in the marina for what we'd paid for it. Unfortunately, we were to miss Gini and Ken's return from working and skiing in France for the winter by 1 day, but the weather dictates and no doubt our seas will cross again some day. We said our farewells to the many friends we had made and late one afternoon we set sail in tandem with Len and Gill on *Lady Bear* for Sardinia. Our Longest Journey so far will begin in next months news letter.

*Judy & Paul Thompson.*



