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Disclaimer

Neither the BCCA nor Committee will accept any liability for personal injury arising out of participating in any event, rally or race organized by or through the BCCA whether sustained by members, guests, or visitors, or caused by the said members, guests or visitors whether or not such damage or injury could have been attributed to or was occasioned by the neglect, default or negligence of any of the officers, committees or servants of the BCCA.

Boat Owners Third Party Insurance

It is the responsibility of all boat owners to have adequate third party insurance in respect of him/herself, vessel, his/her crew for the time being & his/her visitors.

February 2005

To all fellow Bobcat and Catalac sailors

This month's "Meet and Eat 26th February, at midday

To be held in

'The Alverbank Hotel' at Stokes Bay Rd. Alverstoke, Gosport, Hampshire.

The Alverbank Hotel is situated about 100metres off Stokes Bay Rd. adjacent to the Solent with views to the Isle of Wight. We have a room booked, the food is varied and should suit both members waist band or pocket.

I hope you can attend.

However, as per usual we do need to know the numbers in your party so please if you are available either e.mail me or send a text to my mobile 07 971 808 777

Please do it now not on Saturday morning, as we need to know 3 days in advance.....

WE ARE DOING A SPECIAL "CASH IN THE ATTIC" OFFER TO ALL MEMBERS!!!

So please turn out your lockers, attics and garrets! We will advertise all your unwanted yachtie or boat items in our "GOODS FOR SALE IN THE MARKET PLACE" section for 3 months. Please make sure all the goods are clearly described - condition - price etc. don't forget a contact number or two. The cost to the seller will be £5.00 for lineage add. And £20.00 for a page ie. boat for sale.

Cheques to accompany your add. made payable to B.C.C.A. and sent to 196 Harewood Ave.

The daylight hours are increasing yippee! The sailing season will soon be in full swing. Have you done all those little jobs on your boat? I know that despite my good intentions I haven't managed so far to complete my list. Where does the time go the first "Meet and Eat" seems a long time gone as one's addled brain tries to remember those members who attended. I know we all enjoyed catching up with friends old and meeting new, each, exchanging tales and information about their personnel experiences, or about places to visit, or photo's and descriptions of individual boats that each owner has adapted to their own needs.

Toni & Alma Mc Rae owners of Cl.9.903 Piper's Dream have been living on their boat this winter on the East coast. Toni has been working hard to get his boat ready before they sail away later this year to warmer waters. The many jobs he has done include replacement engines, new reefing, change of props. all manner of interior mods. we wish them well. They have asked fellow members help/advice (see newsletter).

I am pleased to say despite last minute cancellations, eleven boats were represented at the "Meet and Eat" they are as follows in alphabetical order.

Cl.8.184 ALLEZ CAT.....Cl.9.211 AQUA- GEMINI.....Cl.8.128 CYNDICAT
Cl.8.163 DUPLICAT.....Cl.8.63 HAPTIC DUO.....Cl.8.123 JAZZCAT
Cl.9.906 MADELEINE OF NETLEY.....Cl.8.220 ME - AND - ER
Cl.9.903 PIPER'S DREAM.....Cl.8.07 SEA SPIRITS.....Cl.8.80 THINK AGAIN

Pipers Dream is sporting new engines

We decided to re-engine P.D.

Hi Peter and all fellow members having read with interest the comments regarding engine changes for our boats. I am well aware of all the different arrangements, inboard, outboard, one/two engines, legs/shaft. However I would like to add my thoughts for what it's worth against those more knowledgeable.

AT THE RISK BEATEN WITH THE CAT O NINE TAILS.

I can't get too bogged down with all the technical jargon, it seems to me this can add to confusion and be too mind blowing for my simple mind. I prefer to go with my gut reaction, experience and the little knowledge I have gained over my 20 + boat owning years. It seems to me if you want to put a large engine so you can go faster, why have a cruising catamaran and not a big stinky power boat, after all are the engines not 'auxiliary'. Did I read somewhere boat manufacturers used to allow 2hp per ton some now consider 4hp per ton? Although this is deemed excessive.

Surely the hull speed is set by the waterline length not by putting larger engines in also I do not believe in messing about with changing the water length by adding bits on. Surely the designers/makers knew what they were doing. Just a thought, should anything happen and a claim is made on your insurance could your insurance company argue the claim due to 'modifications' they may not have been made aware of and not authorised by the manufacturers?

So back to our experience, no point putting a large engine in, as this will add extra weight to no advantage. We did however feel a slightly larger engine would assist with pushing through the tides.

P.D's original units were 2 1994 Volvo 2001 9 hp single cylinder with 120S sail drives, some members may recall from our previous write ups we experienced many problems with these on the way round from Totnes. So what should we go for?

Having looked at just about every engine and supplier we could and listening to

‘this is the best available!
We’ll do you a good deal!
And all the rest of the sales talk’

we settled for what we felt to be the best for our use.

THE FOLLOWING IS NOT AN ADVERT JUST OUR EXPERIENCE.

We therefore decided to replace with Nanni 14 hp this was helped by an excellent deal and the offer of support as the supplier is on our doorstep also a 3 year warranty. The bell housings were adapted by the manufacturers to fit our sail drives prior to delivery. The only alterations required was to the engine mounts we made new plates for them to sit on as the new mounts on the engine are further forward, other than this the engines fitted easily. The whole job was simple, had to be for me, trouble free and quick, both in and running in a weekend. They came complete with new wiring looms and panels, we now start and stop via a key. The Nannis are twin cylinder fresh water cooled very quiet, much lighter than the Volvos, 92kg inc gearbox so deduct that and no I don’t know what that is. Two of us struggled to lift the Volvos but I managed to lift a Nanni on my own. We also now notice the transoms are now higher out of the water therefore when motoring, less squat. They also come in a pretty metallic blue; Elma did ask if they came in ‘pink’ only to be told that if we wanted two she could have them in any colour she wanted. We’ve found them so quiet that on a couple of occasions Elma thought they had stopped and I had to lift the hatches to check they were still running. We have found them to be very responsive to the throttle and gear control with no hesitation. All servicing items are easy to get to and even have a built in oil drain pump. Fuel consumption so far appears to be far less than the old heavy donk, donk Volvos.

Our only hassle being the props, now this really did get me frustrated lots of advice! Guidance! Yer right, all great ‘experts’ with their computer programmes etc etc. Manufacturer cons! Oh I think you need xxxx size, no one with a definite answer. So if I pay your £500 and they do not work you will take them back and supply others as you obviously do not know exactly what to supply. Er, well no you will have to buy some more. **Oh whoopee** another £500. You could have the new ones re-pitched, but this will invalidate your guarantee. Yet again the boat owner is taken for a ride its funny how we loose loose loose. Sorry I’ve drifted off again, back to the plot. Our props didn’t suit the higher revving new engines as we were unable to reach the required revs to speed. These were three blade 14x9 re-pitched. My understanding and I stand corrected if you have a sail drive you should use two blade props which we now have. However having now fitted what I felt were the correct ones all is well and we are more than happy and we only had to buy one pair. If anyone wants to know more give me a call.

Toni McRae

‘PIPERS DREAM’

Please Help!

Please excuse my ignorance and lack of experience on cats, we are converted mono owners, I would like to know. When re-stepping the mast what is the correct procedure and setting for the rigging I do not relish the thought of over tightening. Am I correct in my understanding that a cat’s mast/ rigging are set and tightened different to a monohull? I am also aware there may be many varying opinions but there must be a correct procedure. I cannot find any info in respect of catamarans. I have on numerous occasions over the past two years talked with the sailing mags only to be met with a big blank. It appears nobody has the experience or knowledge or maybe the interest to include cats they promise to look into it, we don’t hold our breath. As I put to them it seems ok to advertise the big new very expensive cats or any disasters but general info i.e. sail setting, handling etc etc, they don’t won’t to know. Maybe a write up from the association could prompt them into waking up; maybe there is a role for a knowledgeable and experienced owner amongst our members, definitely not me I wish to learn.

ANOTHER HELP! HELP! HELP!

We notice in some wind directions when moored up we get a lot of 'mast judder' this vibrates down through the whole boat, this is not only worrying but annoying. The rigging was replaced in 2004 and set up by riggers. Are we the only ones to experience this? Does anyone know what causes this and how do we cure the problem?

Finally.

We are taking our 900 through the French canals later this year and through to the Med, would other members having done the same like to write in or contact me with their experiences/advice, 07990528016 we will call you back so the call will not cost you. We do not have email. We would like to know, any problems with air height, width etc where is the best n cheapest place to have the mast lifted we do not have a tabernacle, we intent to carry it with us and will be entering at Calais. When we reach the other end where could we winter, avoiding as much as possible marinas. We have various books etc but feel a personal touch and experience more welcome after all sharing is what we like about and makes this association.

Hi Toni, I know at the "meet and eat" you gained some info from Bob Freeman "Think Again" who was in the canals 3 years ago, also Roger and Maggie "Haptic Duo" from their experiences last year. I am sending you a floppy with information received from members I hope this will help! See also next story..... they set off from your area.

I hope members will pass on their answers to your other queries.

LES CANAUX FRANCAIS

Adventure oui, relaxation non!

Sacre Bleu!

Every time I settle down to a bit of serious sunbathing, another lock appears!

We are having tremendous fun but it's hard work in the canals with all these locks, or ecluses, as they are known here.

To start our adventure, we set sail on the same day as the eclipse - 11 August 1999. It was a mixture of cloud and sun, but most importantly it was a part of the 'window' in the weather we had waited patiently for. At midnight we set off down the east coast passing Ramsgate, Deal and Dover and into the busy shipping lanes of the channel with not a breath of wind to speak of, so the engines carried us along through the night. We took turns in sleeping or should I say catnapping! Nausea got the better of me after going down below to make a cup of tea (big mistake!) but the sight of the huge passenger ferries soon took my mind off it. Calais loomed into sight at about 5.30 and we finally docked at just after 11 am. After a quick tidy up, we settled down to a well earned sleep.

Later that day and the following day, we concentrated on getting ship-shape again and organizing the lowering of the mast to prepare for entry into the canals. This was to be a mistake, as when we finally went to buy the vignette, which is a licence to use the waterways, we found the office closed for the weekend! This was the beginning of our French experience and when we coined the phrase we have used frequently since - 'It's all part of the adventure!'

On Monday, after getting to know Calais quite well, we embarked on the next leg of our journey to the Med. Entering the canal system. This was where my limited knowledge of the French language improved

instantly and Paul's bad language became even worse because, around the first corner we encountered the dreaded weed! When the lock opened, a green tidal wave engulfed Squib and choked the props so badly we were forced to manhandle (or person-handle) her towards the bank to apply a bit of first aid and resuscitation! For the next 2 days the weed stayed with us like a green carpet laid out in front of us, until towards the end of the Canal de Calais, when we began to motor more easily through the water and the engines and props could recuperate.

Our journey continued around the bends, under bridges and through the many different locks and, along the way seeing much wildlife like herons, kestrels, moorhens and even a terrapin perched on a stone. We stopped in some strange places, with at times no other means of securing the boat than the metal stakes we had come prepared with.

However, a short distance further, we found a very friendly "relais fluviale" a small marina with pontoons and a lake with a sprinkling of water sports to keep us entertained. The harbour master warned us about the local "alarm clock" and as predicted we were woken at 5 am to the sound of about 50 ducks with their own version of a dawn chorus! We heard later that the body of a lady was found in the lake by a couple called Judy and Mike, retired teachers on a similar adventure, with whom we have become friendly. They said the French police were informed after the harbour master was finally convinced it was a body and not a bag of rubbish, and the whole entourage stood around for about an hour, debating what to do! Not exactly the Bill. Not wanting to get dragged into a lengthy expensive investigation, Judy and Mike asked a nice policeman if they could be on their way and couldn't believe it when he said yes, without taking any details or names and addresses! This is France!

The weather so far has been a mixed bag but gradually improving the further south we traveled and, after overdosing on French countryside we encountered our first tunnel - Souterrain Ruyaulcourt controlled by a traffic light system, the tunnel is 2-way, 4.5 km long and approximately 5 m wide, which means no room to pass any other vessel. So about halfway there is a passing place. When we got to this part the lights were on red, so we tied up on the left side as we had been instructed to do before entering the tunnel and waited for the peniche to come through in the opposite direction. However as it approached we could see he was heading straight for us!! Realising we had no time to untie and move and the peniche with its immense size could not change easily, I just screamed. Paul, on the other hand, being more sensible, began waving a torch frantically to alert the peniche of our position and fortunately he managed to change direction with inches to spare. With my heart hammering, the peniche captain produced a torrent of expletives as he passed! We still haven't worked out who was in the wrong, but relating the story to other's en route, it would seem he was.

Our journey through the tunnel took 80 mins. And I think it safe to say we are glad to be back to our familiar French countryside! By now we were about halfway to Paris and our next stop was a beautiful town called Peronne a very old town steeped in history and with a lovely market with plenty of fresh fruit, fish, meat, cheeses and live poultry.

After catching up with the washing and checking the engines etc. we moved on, stopping next at a place called Verneuil en Haletter, not for long though, as the natives were not very friendly. A group of teenage boys were using the bridge spanning the canal as a diving board, to cool down in the heat, but took a dislike to us spoiling "their bridge". A few meters further we found a place to moor for the night, only to meet another unfriendly speed boat owner with a scowl on his face - for what reason, we do not know! So we decided to find another resting place further on. In the main we have to say everyone has been exceptionally friendly and helpful, but there are always just the odd few - all part of the adventure!

The scenery began to improve and after a short spell through some industrial parts, we found ourselves on the canalized river Oise, with its uneven banks and a slightly faster current and an abundance of

interesting and beautiful wild life. All this was fine but we needed provisions, as we had forgotten two days ago it was Saturday and everything is closed on Sunday. Not to worry, we carry a supply of tins and dried food including yeast to make some bread. It was now Monday and we found an ideal place to tie - up with a large supermarket a short walk away. 10 minutes later, outside the supermarket, we found out that France closes on a Monday as well and so was our oasis! Never mind , I'll make some bread. Oh \$%^*^""% , the sell by date was last October! All part of the Adventure!!

We managed to find a small town called Pontoise with a couple of expensive shops open, so with the attitude of "any port in a storm" we stocked up with the basic essentials. The River Oise flows into the River Seine at a place called Conflan Sainte Honarie and bordering both sides, is the most wonderful array of very individual houseboats with plenty of character. Some were obviously converted barges and others purpose built floating houses. We did manage to get a glimpse inside one through a large window and it looked like a room in a magazine.

As we swerved round a corner from the Osie on the Seine at aspeedy 5kt, we immediately got caught up in the late afternoon hubbub. Paul thought he was at Brands Hatch and got really exited by all the sudden activity. There were vessels left right and center. Initially I found the whole thing a bit daunting, but was soon caught up in the euphoria. The River Seine winds it's way into the heart of Paris. It's another canalized river and mooring up for the night was very interesting. We managed eventually without much difficulty and was surprised by the tranquility, a contrast with the daytime bustle. We amused ourselves by watching the masses of fish jumping out of the water and swimming close to the surface in search of food, and the birds gliding in the thermals.

The following day was wonderful. As we approached Paris we had a great feeling of achievement and that evening we moored alongside a wall with the Eiffel Tower just 200m. away watching over us, was magical. A warm evening with so much activity on the water to entertain us while we sipped our Bacardis and coke.

Unfortunately, it wasn't a particularly secure place to leave "Squib" for any length of time, so the following day we traveled a few more kilometres to the other side of the central Paris, to the Paris d' Arsenal marina at the Bastille and spent a day sightseeing - Notre Dame, Pompadu Centre (what a monstrosity!) Arc de Triompe, Louvre and much more. With aching feet took the metero back to the boat suprising both of us because we didn't get lost! At this point we noticed that avery popular mode of transport in Paris the bike and from then on, we traveled everywhere by bike, which was great fun dodging the traffic, using the many cycle tracks and up and down pavements. Unfortunately, when going up a one-way street the wrong way on the pavement I did my usual party trick and fell off, grazing my leg and bruising many other parts! I know it serves me right.

The next day we made a decision to return home, as Paul's mom's health was sadly deteriorating.

We return after a very worrying week, but with renewed hope.

The marina held it's monthly barbecue that evening, which was a BYO affair on the basis of "we provide the fire and you provide the meat and wine" It resembled the league of nations with Australian, New Zealand, Belgium, German, Norwegian and of course French and naturally we expected everyone to speak English! We partied quite late and a good time was had by all..

The marina was expensive so we were soon underway again, heading South along the remainder of the Seine passing more interesting and pretty places, before arriving at our next stop at St. Mammes, which is where the Seine joins the canal du Loing.

It was very hot approaching 30 degrees and along the lengthy quay was a cross between a boot sale and a sale of local wares. Many barges lined the quay with a gap for a jousting competition, which I thought looked very painful and dangerous. Fortunately we managed to find a gap and moored up for the night,

much to the delight of a group of local children who asked our permission to use Squib for a diving platform. That evening there was a (Son et Lumiere) firework display in the nearby village of Moret - Sur-Loing, which try as we may we could not find. Next day we were treated to a market on the same spot as the boot sale selling local produce such as meat, fish, eggs, cheese and fresh fruit and vegetables. An ideal opportunity to stock up.

Whilst at St. Mammes, we had hopefully resolved a problem with one of the batteries, which had been with us since our return to Paris. Basically it was flat as a pancake and decided it didn't want to be charged either, so we had to buy a new one. In the UK. This would have taken about 10 minutes, but we are in France and it took 3 hours! Making ourselves understood was the first problem, then trying to pay when they wouldn't accept plastic and then the lack of transport. We managed somehow to resolve all. All part of the adventure.

Still on the Loing we stopped next at Nemours and again forgot it was Monday and cycled 2 miles mostly uphill, to the nearest supermarket, only to find it closed! Still heading South and the weather being extremely kind to us, our walking pace speed allowed us to witness some stunning scenery and much more wild life, as we sloithered through towns and villages and up and down many locks.

Last Friday, 10 September, we arrived in St. Satur at the foot of Sancerre, which is where Paul's sister Mandy lives with her husband Dennis and family. This is an area we are already very familiar with and planned to stay for a week or two. On Sunday, after a series of worrying phone calls, we had a call, we had a call to say Paul's Mum had sadly but peacefully passed away. Paul, Mandy and myself went back to Croydon to join the rest of the family in supporting each other and making arrangements for the funeral. On Thursday we said our last farewells to Mum at a dignified funeral befitting a grand lady.

We arrived home a couple of days ago and will stay for possibly another week, before embarking on the next leg of our journey.

Paul is amusing himself with a spot of fishing and for the fisherman reading this, he has so far caught mostly catfish, rudd and a bream, using sweetcorn as bait. The pike which he swears is there somewhere has so far managed to remain elusive.

We have been able to spend some time with Mandy and Denis's children Jerome, Emilie and Jennifer (10,8 and 4) Jerome and Emilie spent a night with us and we spent many happy hours the following day in the pseudospeedboat (which we call the dinghy) going around the marina. Emilie is the artistic one and made wonderful boats out of leaves and twigs. Paul and Jerome had to go one better and raided a nearby rubbish bin for plastic bottles to make the mark 2 version and write notes to include before the grand launch. It's the simple things in life, isn't it!

The callouses and roughness on my hands caused by the constant use of the lines have healed with the warm weather and my hair has grown used to not being washed every day and, whilst the mail doesn't arrive on the mat every day, Zoe our daughter is very good at finding us, so we get it in batches. Star Trek has thankfully drifted into another universe and the two episodes of eastenders and corrie I saw on the last visit have kept me up to date. We eat and sleep when we want to and are dictated to by very little. This nomad life is most certainly to be recommended.

On a final note, our second favourite phrase is "manjana" or "demain" while we are in France.

So for our next instalment see next months news letter.

Haptic saga(continued).

Hello all,

Wednesday 25th August we arrived back in la rochelle met peter and monica at that the airport monica on the same plane They are going back north.

The boat was ok but the dinghy was flat we spent next few days getting the boat ready for sea again Then had one last look around the old town of La Rochelle.

Sunday 29th August

Sailed at 6.30am for Royan The sea was very rough between the islands, but once through all was smooth it took 10 hrs to reach Royan I wore my GGC shirt on entering but it was not recognised. We spent several days in Royan waiting for tides for the Gironde. Changed the engine oil and fueled up ect... Could not get sterling travellers cheques changed..

Saturday 4th September

We had a pleasant sail of 2.5 hrs to mortagne sur gironde A lovely drying harbour with a marina behind a sill access 1hr before H.W. we dried out flat and comfortable for the night unfortunately could not sit out in the evening due to the mosquitos..

Sunday 5th September

To panillac on the opposite side of the Gironde. Now sailing on brown water. Wow! the tide through the marina is really strong.... Maggie nearly fell in as a helpful local ran to take the lines bouncing a finger pontoon and sending her up and down with it..

Monday 6th September

We lowered the mast first thing and earned a free bottle of wine . They are wine mad here even the port marker on the entrance wall is a large red wine bottle.

We were then put on the fisherman's jetty with less current and spent the evening watching a local otter swimming around us.

Wednesday 8th September

Up river with the tide to Begles, Which is just pontoons out into the river. We had already shot the rapids at the Aquetarine bridge in Bordeaux so were fairly well prepared for the tide at Begles We moored on the outside, as it is impossible to enter except at slack water there is a brand new shopping complex close by and lots of friendly helpful people around.

Thursday 9th September

Up River again to Castets en Dorthe, 35kms. Then into the canal system, arriving at local H.W.

The first lock is very deep and needed long lines, That was ok but it took 2 hrs to get through the next lock.

Only one lock keeper and nobody can be left in the river after H.W so we just had to wait until all boats were in the canal. The night stop cost 3 euro's

Friday 10th September

To Mas D' Agenais.

We Stopped several times to try to obtain the carte navigare but still no luck it made it a long day arriving at 6.30pm. With more rain this evening. The village is mainly very old with some interesting buildings, What looks like roman baths but probably a communal washateria and an unusual church. R & R today then Saunter on tomorrow.

Roger & Maggie

To be continued next month..

"See you at the "meet and Eat"

