

Commodore: ALECK TIDMARSH  
e.mail : [aleck@mq-sales.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:aleck@mq-sales.fsnet.co.uk)  
mob:+44 (0) 7905 105 596

Treasurer: SUSAN STACEY  
e.mail: [susanmstacey@sky.com](mailto:susanmstacey@sky.com)  
mob: +44 (0) 7985 022 540



Secretary: PETER GIMSON Tel: +44 (0) 1 202 773 749.

e-mail: [Peter.Gimson@sky.com](mailto:Peter.Gimson@sky.com)

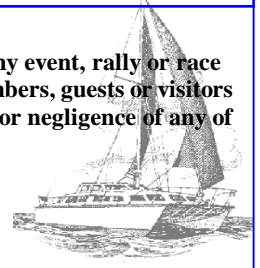
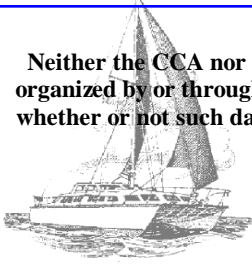
[www.bobcatandcatalac.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.bobcatandcatalac.btinternet.co.uk)

#### Disclaimer

Neither the CCA nor Committee will accept any liability for personal injury arising out of participating in any event, rally or race organized by or through the CCA 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 CCA.

#### 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.



### July - August 2011

Hi to all you Catamaran Sailors.

I hope you have all been enjoying the sailing season so far. I intend to be enjoying the Cote du Granite Rose of North Brittany during the next two months but intend to be back in the UK for our Poole Meet, so will be unavailable to answer your queries till then. Our next events are as follows.

**9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> July:** More of the IOW enjoying the delights of Ryde.

For further details and the number in your party please contact Bob Freeman by e.mail [bobatlongleaze@aol.com](mailto:bobatlongleaze@aol.com) or mobile on 07807 907796.

**18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> August:** Poole BBQ at Bramble Bush, anchoring off Brownsea Island for the night and enjoying Bournemouth air show during the day. Midday meal at Poole Yacht club, depending on numbers. For further details and the number in your party please contact Chris McCarthy by e.mail [aleck@mq-sales.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:aleck@mq-sales.fsnet.co.uk) or mobile on 07905 105596.

As I read this article below it made me think back to the equipment - or lack of it that I had on my first boat many years ago, we did have a compass, but that was about all, no VHF, GPS, AIS, internet or mobile phone, one needed to be far more aware without the use of the modern toys of today.

**This month we have an article taken from Catalac News 1984,  
written by Dr Ben Ridge, on his Catalac sail no 9.63 "Pavona"**

#### THIRTYNINE STEPS AROUND BRITAIN

It has been my good fortune to have sailed on much of the water round England, Wales and Southern Scotland but it was only the advent of semi-retirement that made it possible to be away long enough to put it all together in a circumnavigation. An offer from a Cordon bleu to 'man' the galley in return for a trip round Ardnamurchan and the sound of Eigg sparked off the notion that there could be no better way of celebrating the acquisition of senior citizen status.

(1) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ

The decision to go anti-clockwise was governed mainly by meteorological considerations: Provided that the weather pattern did not develop to give a long spell of strong winds between N and NE, they were more likely to be favorable in the North Sea going North, and if, as in so many years recently, the weather pattern was upside down, ie high pressure to the North and low to the South, then early in the season rather than late should give the best conditions on the West Coast of Scotland – and – the rhododendrons could be at their best, a show we had always missed when tied to school holidays. The other influence was the choices made by my crews as to which part of the trip they would like to do.

- a. From Tollesbury to Inverness, for which Jim and Albert were signed on and the guiding principle was to get there as quickly as possible. The cruise plan allowed 8 days and it actually took 10, and even then the ship was under way for 61 per cent of the time, which is hard going in anybody's language.
- b. From Inverness to Falmouth. All my lady crews gave this as their first choice for differing periods, so Vera (my wife), Aleine (my daughter), Kate (much experienced) and Ashley (Cordon Bleu) were to join ship at Inverness and Jennifer (Bird expert) at Corpach. She had least time to spare and would be put ashore as convenient to her plans, whilst Ashley, who could stay a little longer, would follow suit. Vera would be landed at Ardglass (only 6 miles from our friends' farm) and Aleine and Kate would crew me as far as Cornwall.
- c. From Falmouth back to Tollesbury, Jim would return for a second innings, ably assisted by Colin – both have their own boats and I am indebted to them for giving me their time.

The months of May and June had been chosen, and having organized the crewing, the next question to be settled was that of charts. In the light of previous experience I opted to rely principally on Stanford's Coloured Charts for coastal navigators and Imray's Series C and their Fishing Charts for the West of Scotland. Peter Ellis kindly lent me Admiralty Charts from Buckie to Oban and three more covered from the Tyne to Buckie. With the help of Reed's, Macmillan's, the Cruising Association Handbook and the Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions, we found our way and successfully avoided the dangers.

The equipment on board comprised ship's compass (Sestrel), Lokata SS/RX with RDF, Smith's Electronic Log and Speedometer (Paddle Wheel), Echosounder, Lokata Watchman, Sargent Auto-Pilot and Portable TV. The Lokata Watchman detects operating Radar within a range of about 6 miles, giving a close approximation of the bearing and with a little practice, a useful indication of the proximity. Having tested it several times in good visibility to see just what its signal indicated, we found that we could rely on it with confidence when the visibility was bad. It was not until near the end of the trip that I got evidence of how good our Firdel Radar Reflector is, which probably accounted for the wide berth we were given by all the shipping we encountered, so much so that we could never pick them up on the 'local' scale of the Watchman.

A television set may sound a bit luxurious but being able to see the weather chart whenever we were within range of a station was a great asset, whilst its safe carriage presents no problem in a cruising cat.

For communication we carry VHF Radio and the ability to orchestrate crew changes whilst at sea via coastal radio link calls proved most helpful. All the way round we kept in touch with the Coastguard under their Yacht and Boat Safety Scheme. The further we got from home the greater the satisfaction in answering the routine question that our CG66 was held by 'Thames', and most useful local information was speedily available. Direct communication with Port Control can likewise be most helpful, whilst that with Range Control served to relieve what would otherwise have been acute anxiety.

During last winter's refit, both engines (Dolphin) had been reconditioned and modified to provide a V-belt drive. On the port engine this was coupled to the compressor of a 'Thermacool' installation, which kept a 'fridge' cold enough to keep milk fresh throughout the trip, and many other items of fresh food, which would otherwise have suffered, not least the bread. On the starboard engine, an auxiliary alternator was set to charge a very large capacity battery which then supplied all the electrical equipment aboard, leaving each engine's batteries solely for starting, ignition and fuel pump.

Leaving **Tollesbury** on Saturday, 30 April, we had a short beat against an easterly force 3 to **Brightlingsea**, where I had promised to leave some papers concerning a forthcoming Class Rally.

(2) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ

Departing next morning at 0830 it was misty with force 2 from E x S, but once past Walton Pier, the rain stopped, the wind veered to SE3, visibility improved and we were really on our way. At 1733 a gale warning for Thames and Dover 'SW gale expected soon' at 1750 became 'SW 4 to 6, locally 7 or gale 8'. By 2100 we were approaching **Lowestoft**, so decided to go in for a night's sleep and see what developed.

In the two weeks preceding our start, three low pressure areas had been circulating anti-clockwise round Great Britain and all the appearances suggested that we were in for a repeat performance. We should, therefore, experience repeated changes in wind strength and direction, but equally any adverse wind would not last long. The next two forecasts reduced the expected wind from '6 to 8', to 6 decreasing 5 so we left at 0930 to suit the tide and by keeping close inshore in calm water had a marvelous sail as far as Cromer where the wind increased to WSW 5, the tide turned against us, and we needed the help of both engines to weather the S Race buoy where flogging sheets got in a bit of a tangle and the Firdel elected to come adrift from its halyard and crash to the deck. The 0015 forecast SW 5 to 6, moderating 4, whilst 'coastal waters' only spoke of SW to W4. The log records NW4 at 0355 and WSW 5 at 0635 when we were 2 miles east of the Inner Dowsing Tower – slow bumpy progress. By 1000 the wind was again NW2 to 3, we recovered the errant signal halyard, re-hoisted the Firdel and set off on starboard tack to close the land, where the Protector buoy, just south of the Humber entrance was identified at 1420, where upon, the sky cleared, the sun shone, the wind died and we motored past Spurn Head up to **Bridlington**, entering at 0240 on 4 May.

This is a useful harbour to get a rest, but with the seaward pier overlapping the landward pier at right angles, the entrance is difficult to see in daylight. Finding it in the dark was made more difficult in that the light on the end of the landward pier was extinguished (unbeknownst to the HM), having been in before, I knew just where it was, but it was only after we had passed the end of the seaward pier and were committed that we could actually see water in the entrance.

Rested, refueled and victualled we left again at 1315 – Fine and sunny, wind E2. Once round Flamborough Head, we were off to the North with the Genoa pulling us along in fine style. Off **Whitby**, the wind veered S3 to 4, easing to 2 in the early hours next morning. The plan was to put in at **Blyth**, but the early forecast promised us SE5 to 6, locally 7, which was too good to miss, so we stood on, phoning our apologies to the friends we had been booked to visit. The promised wind reached us by 1120 when we hove-to south of **Coquet Island** to take 5 rolls in the main and change down to No 2 jib. We then made super progress, passing inside the **Farne Islands**, whose lee gave us calm conditions, then out round Holy island and quickly back into its lee, where gusts of 7 had us flying across smooth water.

It was now mid-afternoon on the 5<sup>th</sup>, so **Eyemouth**, which I have wanted to visit for some time, seemed to offer an appropriate respite. It would be below half-tide when we got there, so having passed **Berwick** and with the wind easing to 4, a little local advice via the Coastguard was deemed desirable. The nearest MRSC was at **Fife Ness**, where the duty officer expressed doubt about the wisdom of entering Eyemouth in the prevailing conditions – he was still recording Force 7. However, having phoned the coxswain of the Eyemouth Life-boat, who confirmed our assessment of conditions there, he thought that provided we had a good chart and followed the entry directions precisely we should be alright – as indeed we were. The little bay into which the harbour opens was calm (SE wind here us off-shore) and there was ample water for our shallow draft. All fast by 1850 but damp and misty.

On phoning home, Albert got an urgent recall signal to which he felt bound to respond. Fortunately, Kate was able to respond to our SOS and by dint of plane, train and taxi was aboard by 2030 the following evening.

Leaving **Eyemouth** at 0830 on Saturday, 7 May, there was no wind and poor visibility. After a brief light air from NW, at 1130 we got E1 so kept an engine on for some 12 hours to maintain progress. Then it backed two points and settled in from NE2. We took repeated RDF bearings on Girdle Ness and after closing the land on starboard tack finally sighted cliffs well South of the point at 0545. Five hours later we were off the point and could see the top of the Lighthouse above the mist. Aberdeen Coastguard was able to tell us that no major shipping movements were expected into or out of Aberdeen and we bore away for **Buchan Ness**. In the late afternoon, visibility improved briefly and we got visual bearings on the Skares Buoy and the Ness which was just as well as no sooner past the Ness than we were back into thick fog and we had to work our way round **Peterhead** and **Ratray Head** on a combination of Distance

(3) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ

Run, the foghorns and RDF bearings on kinnaird's Head. Cautiously closing the land, a brief clearance showed us the beacon on **Cainbulg briggs** at the E end of **Fraserburgh Bay**. Strictly steering by compass through the gog brought us to within 200 yards of the entrance and then we heard the banefully wailing foghorn; all fast at 2130. Having done three consecutive passages of 125 miles (give or take a few) we reckoned we had beaten the North sea bogey even if it was still damned cold.

Next morning, it was overcast and cold with SSE4/5 and we cleared **Fraserburgh** at 1035 on the last leg of Phase a. We bowled along, the wind slowly easing and the sky gradually clearing. At 1440, a hailstorm with cyclonic winds passed over us, so again it was engines to the rescue but we were entertained by a school of porpoises doing all their tricks around us until we were brought up sharp by a voice on the VHF calling the yacht with blue sails, which identified itself as **Lossiemouth** coastguard and enquired our intentions; this was specific reference to the **Covesea Skerries** which he advised should only be passed on the inside with local knowledge. The point was moot but it was so refreshing to encounter a Coastguard who was looking out as well as listening out that we altered course to pass to seaward. We reached the entrance to **Inverness Loch** in the early hours and were enthralled by the unfolding beauty of the scenery as the light increased. Passing under Kessock Bridge at 0730 on Tuesday, 10 May, we locked into the **Caledonian Canal at Clacknaharry** at 0755 (the lock-keeper was of the old school and had the lock ready for us ten minutes before the official starting time) and moved along to Muirtown Basin. Here Aleine was waiting for us and Kim said 'Au Revoir, see you in Falmouth'. What touching confidence!

During the morning we moved up to Muirtown Top, put "Tanga", the folding moped, ashore and ferried petrol in 2-gallon cans from the nearest garage about a mile away, ending with a run to Inverness to meet Vera and Ashley off the express from Edinburgh. Only then was it warm enough to remove my polar suit which I had worn day and night since Tollesbury.

The canal did us proud for good visibility and all the views thereby revealed including the top of Ben Nevis, still with an extensive mantle of snow. I can't say the same for the younger generation of Lock-keepers who both at **Fort Augustus** and **Banavie**, deemed that we had arrived just too late at the beginning of each 'stair-case' to be able to get us through by knocking off time at 5pm, so perforce we had to wait till next morning in both instances, and Jennifer had to walk all the way up the Banavie flight of locks to join ship. However, the enforced delay there with the height of the lock gate just right for the mast head when lowered, enabled me to replace the masthead tricolour with a tri-white in readiness for the new regulation on the 1<sup>st</sup>. June We didn't see the monster in Loch Ness!

Having taken the best part of three days to traverse the canal, we defied superstition and locked out at 11.35 on Friday 13<sup>th</sup>. Sailed quietly down to **Dunstaffnage** at the entrance to **Connell Sound**. There were plenty of vacant moorings and we picked up one tucked well in on the Castle shore.

From this point, we started a leisurely cruise, revisiting some of the places we knew from years gone by and exploring others for the first time. After calling at **Oban** for stores and visiting the only chandlery I have ever encountered run by a lady, we sailed across to the **Sound of Mull** and into Loch Aline for the night.

15<sup>th</sup>. May, Sunday, it rained all morning, so after a late 'Reveille' we sailed at 14.05 bound for **Loch Drumbuy** – the first on the right in **Loch Sunart**. Three of us then took the dinghy to explore the Eastern entrance, which was choked with seaweed, but we got through to identify the entrance to **Loch Teacuis**. Whilst we were away "Pavona" dragged her anchor, so we moved back to the recommended anchorage in the SW corner, in company with two other Yachts, for a quiet undisturbed night.

On Monday morning we motored across to **Tobermory** and berthed at Macbrayne's Pier to land a shore party for more stores. We had to move off to anchor whilst the ferry called, returning after its departure to take on water, for which we were charged 50p – the only time we were specifically charged for water on the whole trip.

Leaving at 13.25 to catch the W-going tide and wind ESE-1 we lazed our way round **Ardnamurchan** in glorious sunshine, whilst the South of England was experiencing the heaviest rains for years. North of the peninsula, the wind was NE1 or less so we motored along to **Loch Moidart**, using the entrance to the South of **Eilean Raonul**, and came to anchor off the jetty opposite Castle Tioram. Next morning, we explored further up the Loch as far as the junction between the North and South channels with the upper reach revealing a distant view of Rum to seaward. Returning to the entrance we left by the channel to the



North of Eilean Raonul and beat gently up the coast to **Mallaig**. This head wind was the start of Northerly breezes which were to take us all the way South as far as **Dublin Bay**! Arriving at Mallaig on Tuesday or Friday is a mistake since these are the days when the fishing fleet comes in and no yacht is welcome alongside the piers. Jennifer knew the only doctor in town and went ashore to look him up, but even his kind words in the HM's ear didn't soften his heart and we spent the night at anchor, with a kedge out as well to limit our usual dance round in the limited space available. Activity on the pier was frenetic until late in the evening as all the catches were landed but by 0930 next morning they had all gone out again and we could come alongside as we pleased to take on water from the large hose provided for the trawlers!

Our next destination was to have been **Loch Scathvaig on Skye** and we set off in style with the forecast N-3 but instead of increasing 4 to 5 it dropped away to nothing. We rounded the Point of **Sleat** as the tide started to run South. On learning that Jennifer wished to leave us next day from Eigg, where the ferry was due to make it's weekly call, we abandoned Skye and started the southward leg of the trip.

I went ashore with Tanga to deliver all our postcards to the island Post Office which the crew wished to be postmarked Eigg. Next morning the Post Office launch came alongside to collect Jennifer and took her and the mail out to the ferry hove-to in the offing – VIP treatment if you like!

Leaving Eigg at 10.45 on 19<sup>th</sup>.May we headed for waters not previously sailed to the West of Mull, making our first stop at **Arinagoar on Coll**, where the craft shop solved our take-home- presents dilemma. We had berthed alongside a fishing boat at the old pier whose youthful crew were endeavoring to repair their compressor for recharging their air bottles used for skin diving for scallops.

Next morning we moved down to the new pier to take on water – a tricky exercise in a NE-4 blowing across the pier with the hose was on the lee side. With full tanks we then steered 145` to pass North of the **Treshnish Isles** before turning South for **Staffa**. The cliffs at Staffa provided exactly the right lee to anchor off **Fingal's Cave**. Having explored in the dinghy , we listened to Mendelssohn's Overture on the tape recorder – all this and culture too!

Heading on South we anchored in **Martyr's Bay on Iona**, midway through the Sound just South of the ferry slip. We all went ashore to visit the Cathedral and marvel at the wonderful work that has been done in its restoration.

Left next morning at 11.12 with wind NW-4 heading South out of the Sound and turning East along the South coast of Mull, passing inside the **Torran Rocks**. Visibility continued to be superb, indeed we could see so far that it was difficult to be sure which headland was which, seeing them as we were from a new angle for the first time. This was especially true of the **Garvellachs** which previously I had only seen end-on and now seen broadside looked very different. In due course this sorted itself out and we slipped round the North end of Garbh **Eileach** and its offlier, **Dun Chonvil**, heading for the Sound of **Luing**. The tide had just started running to the South so we dived across South of **Belinahua** and **Fladda**. The wind was now W-4 giving us a beam reach and we covered the four miles to **Ardluing** Bouy in 35 minutes and the next four miles to **Craignish Point** in 40. Under its lee we lost the wind and half way up the loch handed sail and motored gently to **Ardfen**.

The next day Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>.May – was observed as a day of rest, naturally, but also because the **Crinan Canal** does not work on Sundays. We exchanged greetings with "Mutineer" Cl 9.94, and though the day was sunny, there was a cold SW wind. Monday dawned bright and clear with not a cloud in the sky and we were off at 0800, locked into the basin at Crinan at 0945. Apart from the sea lock and the bridges, the Crinan Canal is now strictly DIY although the dues have risen to £20.70 for our 9metres. We had the good fortune to make the transit with "White Lightning" which had just won the Three Peaks Race. By comparison running the canal and operating the locks was for them a mere doddle from which we profited. A special accolade was awarded to Ashley for mastering with grim determination the art of throwing a warp from the deck up to the lock-side and then organizing the Glasgow bus to make an unscheduled stop at the roundabout a hundred yards from Oakfield Bridge to start her journey home.

After shopping at Ardrishaig we locked out at 15.45 and with the wind SSE-3 started to beat down **Loch Fyne** until two hours later it fell light so we motor-sailed to East Loch Tarbert for a peaceful night on a mooring.

25<sup>th</sup>.May Wednesday-wind round to NNE-3 we sped down to Ardlamont Point and then a brisk beat against N-4 up the West Kyle to **Caladh Harbour**, opposite the **Buttock of Bute** at the junction with  
(5) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ

**Lock Riddon.** Twenty years prior it had captured our hearts and we had named our house after it, only to discover later how apt was the choice – Caladh is Gaelic for ‘Harbour of Refuge’ or ‘Haven of Peace’!! This year it marked the end of our sentimental dawdle round old haunts – 18 days with only 24% of the time underway and there after we embarked on the serious business of getting to Land’s End.

The first leg was the 36 miles to **Campbeltown**, where a cousin who has retired to **Macrahanish** came with his wife to dine onboard. Thence a cracking sail across the North Channel with the NW wind steadily picking up from F-1 to f-4. Skirting round **Patterson’s Rock off Sanda Island**, Aleine at the helm asked whether we should encounter a castle in mid channel, but closer inspection revealed this to be the conning tower of a nuclear submarine making her stately way towards the Clyde.

Visibility was excellent – we could see **Rathlin Island** to the West, **Ailsa Craig** to the East and the Rhins of Galloway to the South, and we were able to spot the overfalls to the NE of the Maidens in time to skirt round them.

Entering Larne we picked up a mooring labeled “Maid of Malin” off Curran Point.

Whilst ashore we enquired at the local garage about Calor Gas and chatted to a customer on the forecourt who turned out to be the owner of the mooring. We dropped the mooring 0610 the next morning and with a Northerly 3 increasing 4, gusting 5 we made what proved to be the fastest passage of the cruise to Ardglass 44 miles made good at an average 5.7 knots. The only berth free was at the end of the inner pier; Being Saturday the local fishing boats were all in and much of the main quay was shrouded in scaffolding for renovation, so to get Vera ashore in her folding buggy, instead of carrying her serenely up the steps we had to haul her some 10 feet up the face of the pier from the deck, but with extra hands from her hosts to be, she was up on top before she had time to open her eyes and none the worse for the somewhat unorthodox landing. Notwithstanding Raymond and Veronica’s overwhelming hospitality – with baths, laundry a magnificent meal and conducted tours round their seven acres of garden (100 varieties of rhododendron, to name but one) we were up betimes the next morning, hauled Kate to the masthead to straighten the VHF antenna and were away by 0955.

The wind had eased to NE –2 strengthened to 3 for an hour then slowly died so that by the time we passed **Rockabill** at 2125 we needed an engine to keep us moving. Darkness fell and we crept round Lambay Island, which is unlit, and finally picked up a mooring in **Dun Laoghaire** off the Royal Irish YC at 0200 the next morning. Visibility had been mainly poor on this passage so that we had been denied the splendid views of the Mourne Mountains that one usually enjoys.

Whilst alongside for fuel, water and stores, I landed “Tanga” and took the VHF set to Marconi’s in Dublin to get it checked out. Ever since Tobermory, though receiving normally, we did not appear to be ‘getting out’ except over short distances. Marconi who couldn’t have been more helpful and charming, found that the transmitter output stage was faulty and as no replacement parts were available, a replacement set was acquired in **Dun Laoghaire** and has functioned normally so far. Riding the mini moped in Dublin traffic was hairy by contrast with my ride on **Eigg**, and I felt much safer when back on board “Pavona”

We left Dun Laoghaire at noon Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup>.May and the 1355 forecast promised us S-3 backing NE-4 occasionally 5. We ran slap bang into a fog bank outside the harbour along the shore so beat along the shore against a SE-4, motored through **Dalkey Sound**, and then with the wind easing to 1 to 2 and visibility slowly improving, beat gently down the coast, taking a peek at the little fishing harbours as we passed by. Having rounded **Wicklow head**, we could bare away enough to lay the course for **Arklow**, where we berthed very comfortably in the dock at 2107. Strolling up to the town we found some shops still open and were able to get all the stores we needed for the next leg.

The start of this leg at 0530 to catch the South going tide visibility again was poor and a course to pass outside the offshore banks, notably the Blackwater seemed to be more sensible. The crew steered so diligently that we caught sight of the East Blackwater Bouy whence a straight line to the **Tuskar Rock** was clear of all dangers. Its Radio beacon made sure that we found it and leaving it 1 cable to starboard we exchanged waves with the keeper at 1255. The early forecast was NE-3 becoming SW to W-4 occasionally 5. The destination in mind was the **Scillies** and this was on if we got a true Westerly. However, three hours later some 11 miles South of Tuskar (tide running to the N.) the new wind came in from SSW-4+ which would have meant a 100 mile thrash to windward so the Scillies were abandoned and we laid off on starboard tack to **Milford Haven**, notifying the Coastguard there of our change of plan. The wind soon eased to F3 and we shook out two of the four rolls in the main (leaving two rolls in for night passage as a precaution) but carrying our No.1 jib. At dusk we were approaching the S-going

lane of the separation scheme off the Smalls and watched a conventional submarine crossing our bow. As it drew away to the South, we were surprised to see that it showed a flashing stern light and for once Reeds failed to provide the answer. Perhaps the Navy has its own Regulations about lights but it would be helpful if one knew what they were. By 2215 we had visual bearings on the South Bishop and the Smalls and a series of fixes showed the extent to which we were being set to the North by the Tide and we had to steer more and more South until at 0330 on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, we had to hand the head sail and motor-sail until we had passed **Skokholm Island** and could bear away for the entrance of Milford Haven, here the coastguard, perched high on **St. Ann's Head** also keeps visual watch and as we passed asked what ensign we were wearing as he couldn't identify it through his binoculars. The answer 'Cruising Association' seemed to stump him but he none the less friendly and helpful for that, indeed he phoned customs for us and relayed the advice that they would be quite satisfied if we posted the quick procedure form when landing.

We were enchanted by **Dale Bay**, which afforded perfect shelter, and dinner at the Dale 'Bistro' (sic) was the epicurean highlight of the cruise.

A low was tracking slowly Eastwards in the Western Approaches it rained all night and all the next morning. We waited in the hope of getting a favorable slant for Land's End and the local forecasts from Milford Signal Station were particularly helpful – and accurate. At 2200 the Station expected SSE-20 knots veering SSW 10 knots by morning, so with the prospect of moderating wind we got under way at 2240 with the last of the light to pick our way out of the moorings and with full details of expected traffic movements from the Coastguard.

Accordingly we left by the East Channel so keeping well out of the way of two large tankers coming in, passing the **Tubot Bank Bouy** at 0100 with the wind SSW-3. We stood on starboard tack until 0900 when we were 6 miles from **North Lundy L.H.** where the wind died and we started motoring towards Land's End some 80 miles distant. It was not until 2045 that a light breeze came in from the SE and **Trevoose Head** was still some 20 miles away (RDF plot). We sighted the light at 2145 and an hour later a cross bearing on **St Mawgan Aero Beacon** gave a distance off of 17 miles. By 0100 Sunday the wind at last came round to NE F1 at first then F2 by 0350 when we passed our TR to Falmouth Coastguard as "Pendeen Point 025` 15 miles" F-3 off **Cape Cornwall** at 0725 and F-4 as we raced past **Lands End** and an hour later via the passage inside the **Longships**. The race was just beginning to develop as the tide set to the North, not that we noticed any hindrance – we were sailing so fast in calm water with the wind off the land. We close hauled to the **Runnelstone Bouy** where we reefed down, but progress was so slow against the tide that having closed the shore, we handed sail and motored hard to **Penzance**, even cutting inside St. Clement's Island off **Mousehole** to make sure of getting there whilst the dock gate was open, confirmed by the Coastguard as being 2hrs. before to 1hr. after HW.

We dined at the Bosun's Locker – skipper's treat this time, and on Monday, Aleine and Kate left for home and I awaited the arrival of Jim and Colin. The wind blew 6 gusting 7 from the East until the next morning. The morning was very misty and even by 1320 when we left Penzance as soon as the dock opened, there were still patches and now very little wind. Visibility slowly improved as the sun burnt through and we rounded the **Lizard** within half a mile of the off-lying rocks but saw no sign of the race.

We had to motor again to save our tide to the Manacles, beyond which we were surprised to find a drilling rig eerily shrouded as the evening mist drew in. We crept into **Helford River** with the last of the daylight and picked up a mooring for the night off Helford Village – still quite unchanged.

8<sup>th</sup>. June, Wednesday the mist has all gone, we slip the mooring at 0930 and set course for the **River Yealm** hoping to keep a rendezvous tentatively arranged at the London Boat Show. At 1345 the **Eddystone** was bearing 115` distant 9 miles, and half an hour later we heard Wembury Range announcing that firing was about to begin.

The Coastguard advised that we could call the range direct and having given the Range Officer our position, course, destination and ETA, were relieved to be told that firing would cease at 1600 and it was ok for us to proceed as planned. Colin had come aboard with some reservations about the value of VHF but having listened to our conversation about the dock time at Penzance and this latest advice, began to reconsider his attitude. In any case, he had hedged his bet by sending his wife on a course to learn radio procedure and entering her for the examination for the Certificate of Limited Proficiency!

The wind held Southerly F-2 to 4 so we were into **Newton Ferrers** by 1825, to be greeted by Wendy Bloomer in her speedy inflatable to show us a vacant public mooring which we could occupy for the night. With her personal introduction we dined well at the Yealm Hotel, and then went aboard “Dona Maranda” Cl. 9.133 for a convivial evening, her husband, Andy, having returned from his daily occupation ashore.

9<sup>th</sup>. June, Thursday, the polls in the general election had been open for an hour when we slipped our mooring, and with the wind SW-F3 enjoyed a most interesting sail to **Dartmouth**, keeping close in round the headlands. There was a lumpy sea between Bolt Tail and Bolt Head, we could see arace quite active to the SE of **Prawle Point**, but off the Start it was flat calm, with no sign of a race. We hauled close round **Start Rocks**, so getting an unusual view of the Lighthouse, and picked up the new wind from NW slowly up to F-2 as we passed inside the **Skerries Bank**. We moored at Darthaven Marina at 2030 but found no sign of official life. Having witnessed the fairyland scene of Dartmouth by night, we sailed at 0430 on a fine morning and later landed our only catch of mackerel – wind W2 ( any more wind than that and we are going to fast for them). Soon after noon the wind picked up to WSW-4 and “Pavona” really started to shift: at 1600 we were 4 miles South of **Portland Bill** but neither saw or felt any sign of the Race. However our course to **Anvil Point** took us slap through the St. Alban’s Race which was working energetically. “Pavona” dances about a bit in those sort of seas but not a drop came onboard. We berthed at **Poole Quay** at 2100.

Our next destination was **Christchurch** to visit the home of Catalacs. To get the tide right for the entrance meant leaving Poole Quay at 0820. It was past half tide up at Poole Entrance so we used the East Looe Channel when turning for **Hengistbury Head** and there was ample water for us quite close in over Christchurch Ledge. There was plenty of traffic in The Run so we had no difficulty in finding the entrance to Christchurch Harbour and were all fast as Tom Lack Catamarans by 1115, only to find that William was the only member of the family on station- well you can’t win them all!

Next day 12<sup>th</sup>. June, Sunday, the sky cleared early, we cast off at 0957 and with the wind WSW-3 just carried the E going tide to the **Hurst narrows**. With the genoa boomed out, we sailed the entire length of the Solent over an adverse tide and were passing No Man’s Land Fort at 16.04 before turning in our favor. The wind had picked up to SW-4 so we had a fast run to **Brighton** which we entered at 2215 – 66 miles made good at an average of 5.6 knots.

Monday was considered a rest day, partly because I needed time to bring the log statistics up to date and the forecast kept talking about SW-5 to 7 perhaps gale 8 later. It was a lovely quiet day but the bow did arrive during the night. It was still a solid 6 at 0500 when we had planned to start. The coastguard reported that it had moderated at Portland and by 0700 the cloud had broken up and there were sunny intervals. We left at 0720 wind WNW – 4 and with the East going tide were due South of **Beachy Head** Light House by 1000. We needed an engine to get us through the calm under the lee of the Head. By 1130, the wind had backed to West and increased and I had a very good chat on the phone with Vera in Northern Ireland. By 1330, the wind had backed to West and increased to F-5 and having streaked past Dungeness we hove – to in the East Road to take 4 rolls in the main and change to No. 2 jib. I passed our TR to Dover Coastguard who after eliciting further details re-course and speed, replied “We have you on radar”. At a range of 20 miles this speaks volumes for our Firdel and as I mentioned earlier, clearly demonstrates its efficiency. Alas the W-5 soon dwindled to NW-2 and we needed engine to get through the lumpy sea off Dover Harbour . We handed sail and motored up to Ramsgate, entering harbour at 2120 – 77miles made good at an average speed of 5.5 knots. We certainly had no cause to grumble at our rate of progress up channel since leaving Penzance.

We started the final passage across the Thames Estuary and one began to feel a sense of achievement but resolved to be all the more careful for that. Indeed we had two surprises. Leaving Ramsgate at 1330, perhaps a little late on the tide, wind W-3, and once clear of the North Foreland the forecast NW-2. Deeming it desirable to get through the North Edinburgh channel before the ebb started to run we put both engines on to be sure of skirting across the corner of Long Sand we continued up the Whitaker Channel and into home waters and on to Tollesbury Yacht Haven. Having made good 1,591 miles in 47 days, with only 4 full days in port, at an average speed made good of 3.9 knots, we felt every justification for rating this a successful cruise, and celebrated accordingly. May - June 2011