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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.

September - October 2011

Hi to all you Catamaran Sailors.

We had hoped that this year we could get more catamaran owners interested in meeting up during the year. With 4 rallies arranged, 1 in Christchurch 2 in the Solent area and 1 in Poole, it seems that most owners just want to do their own thing.

27th May - 3rd June: our first Rally was held in Christchurch. (The home of Catalac) Bob Freeman organized a meal at the local Sailing Club, The owners and crew of the boats that attended: Catalacs 12m. DRAGON SLAYER, 9m.s ARD-NA-GREINE, and CATBALLOU M, 8m.s THINK AGAIN and ME-AND-ER, Aristocat RUMPLETEAZER, Summer Twinns SWAN SONG.

18th - 19th June: Cheese & Wine afternoon on the I.o.W. at Newport. The adverse weather resulted in only three boats attending but those that managed to get there were fortunate to be well sheltered from the winds and enjoyed the company and the cheese and wine hosted by Ann and Bob Freeman. We all decided to continue the following day and went for a Sunday Lunch at Premier Inn on Newport Quay. Good weekend enjoyed by all that managed to attend.

9th - 10th July: More of the IOW enjoying the delights of Ryde. Strong winds again hit our rally, Two boats made Ryde 8m. THINK AGAIN and 12m. DRAGON SLAYER who with a good F6-7 behind him completed his journey from Poole to Ryde in 4 hours rather than the 6 hours he had allowed for the trip. His quick passage however, now necessitating him to have to wait outside Ryde for enough height of tide before he could enter the marina. The only other members who made it were the crew of 8m. ALLEZ CAT, care of the hovercraft, and ex-member of 10m. NOMADS CAT.

18th -21st August: The venue of Poole and the Bournemouth Air Festival which only saw 'Think Again' 'Arde-ne-Griene' & 'Dragon Slayer' Anchoring in Blood Alley, Bramble Bush & Poole yc.

Chris & Aleck had worked hard to arrange an evening meal in the yacht club on Friday night and then on the Saturday instead of the planned barbecue Chris put on a super Bangers & Mash evening, then we had a nice Sunday lunch / carvery at the yacht club.

I must thank Chris for the lovely Birthday cake she cooked for me.

The one thing one can say about our meet & eats and rallies, the members that, despite the aggressive weather, managed to attend always seem to get a lot of pleasure from them.

If any of you reading this newsletter feel you can give some input as to make the meetings more attractive to catamarans and their crews then please let us know.

We are more and more just surviving with Peter's newsletter, so, if you can try and put a few words together and tell us what you would like to see & do also something you have changed on your boat or a nice place you have visited please, please let us know..

The modified fridge with compressor that I put in last year ran extremely well and we are more than pleased with it, the solar panel kept the batteries continually charged and we had no problems with them at all.

The change of autohelm worked extremely well, even though I ran it on the old 4000 control unit, I feel that this has added advantages of being less complicated!

The change of Chart Plotter was super, having colour instead of black & white really made a difference it was a lot easier to identify things and follow your track / course

Also using depth contours to keep close in shore at times. I also have the use of AIS which I found very useful but did not get to test it in anger across channel.

Good sailing Bob & Ann 'Think Again'

Many Thanks Bob.

I hope you have all been enjoying the typical summer weather of the last few years. Let us all hope we are blessed with an Indian summer. This year we have had more NW winds than the usual SW winds resulting in colder weather but smoother seas for our many South Coast sailors. In comparison the areas of the Cote du Granite Rose of North Brittany and the Channel Islands where the seas are usually calmed by the SW winds were at times both confused and bumpy. After an aborted attempt to cross the channel from Studland and a return to Christchurch three days later our cruising holiday restarted with a good channel crossing from Studland to Alderney despite a forecast of NW 5-7. It had been six years since I visited Braye on the Isle of Alderney, and I was pleased to see that the island and its residence are little changed. The Islanders are probably the most hospitable and friendly people that you can meet anywhere. As you climb up the hill from Braye to the main street at St Anns you can't help but notice most of the cars on the island are left unlocked with the keys in the ignition. Shopping, handbags and even laptops being left in full view sitting on either the passenger or rear seat. It is true to say that many of the cars on the Island are old and rusty and not worth much money even if you could get them off the island but were they left on a street in any town in the UK with keys in their ignition and goods on the seats, I am sure that either the goods and car would soon disappear. The cost of a night on a buoy in Braye is £15.00 or a night at anchor £5.00. The showers are free, unlike many marinas in Europe. We stayed just the one night and after a truly excellent meal at 'Bumps' restaurant to celebrate the crossing and successful start of our cruising holiday, we set sail with a W3-4 down

the Alderney Race. Our plan was to sail to Port Bail for a couple of days. By leaving Braye and making use of the strong tides to take us south down the French coast, we would arrive when Port Bail is dry and be anchoring on a lee shore waiting for the water to return. We sail to St Catherine's on Jersey, being protected from the westerly winds it provides us with an ideal lunch brake and while there we are joined by a family of dolphins with two pups who played around the many boats in the calm waters of the bay. Although we are tempted to stay the night we up anchor and sail from our lunch brake toward Port Bail passing one of the Channel Islands many groups of rocks on our port beam called Les Ecrehous. We intend to explore this small group of islands on a neap tide when some of the rocks will not be awash and should give us some protection from any swell. We entered Port Bail an hour before high tide and crept slowly round to the far side of the drying harbour and beached on flat sand for the night.

To be continued in next newsletter.

Last Year we read Aleck's report (with the help of John) on his trip across the bay with his friends from Australia in two new Lipari Fountaine Pajot catamarans "Whiskers" and "In Tune" This month we read an update on their progress.

Hi Everyone,

I have finally finished my " Tuning-In No. 7 - after 8 weeks it is a double issue I'm afraid. Seeing the length of it when I'd finished nearly prompted me to cut lots out but I decided that different things interest different people so

Would you believe - I have also finally managed to add some photos. Hope it doesn't take forever to download for you. It will take a bit of time to read.

Hope this finds you all well and coping happily with life.

Except for my back - which is fine now - we have been very fortunate to have no complaints in the wellness department.

Here's hoping that it is the same for you.

In advance, I apologise for any tardiness in answering your e-mails.

I DO manage eventually and we are very happy and interested to hear how you are going.

Love to you all and may the sun keep shining on your wishes and may your dreams come true,

Lucy (Louise) and Mum and Auntie.

***** We have just spent hours trying to send this as an attachment - keps kicking us off - sorry we have taken out the photos and just added it as a letter - will send the photos when we have a better connection - Sardinia perhaps

TUNING IN to " IN TUNE" Episode 7 25th June 2011

Hi everyone,

It is hard to believe that 8 weeks have passed since my last 'Tuning-In'. Time seems to be standing still.

I have filled a 100 page note-book which I will try to condense here with the more interesting bits - but it is still a " double-issue" and will take a while to read.

Nothing untoward has happened but each new location has its own uniqueness.

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At the end of my last letter we are making our way to Palma - Mallorca in the Balearic Islands where we are to meet friends of "Whiskers".

We leave Ayamonte on the border of Portugal on 28th April (wow - that long ago!) and continue along the coast into Spain, anchoring in the Ria Guadalquivir River which leads up to Seville. It is tempting to make the 50 mile journey to Seville but with poor weather forecast and a deadline to meet we continue on.

The amazingly sculptured Algarve cliffs with their varying bands of ochre soon flatten out with large areas of multi storied buildings replacing the isolated villages.

A day sail attempt, to Rota, results in a shackle flying off the end of the boom. It causes the grey topping lift (rope) to release and fly up the mast. The boom crashes down and is thankfully stopped from landing on our solar panels by the very torn remains of the sail bag.

Another repair job.

David is becoming very adept at going up the mast now as well as very skilled at sewing by hand through the thick fabrics.

Still in Rota, the following day, we unfold our bikes and travel along the waterfront and through the narrow, winding streets, but an hour into the journey my pedal falls off.

The ever gallant David insists we swap bikes and it is a very funny sight watching him pedal - with one pedal - back to "IT" where he eventually fixes it.

Next day we continue on to Barbate and even manage to sail for a few hours with the motors off.

There is no time to explore Barbate. The next leg of the journey will be to Gibraltar. We were looking forward to this.

It is hard to contain our excitement and we feel very humbled and privileged to be sailing past Cape Trafalgar and the straits of Gibraltar where so much history has happened and so many battles have been fought.

"You know I was Lord Nelson in a past Life!" announces David - with a wide smile.

For some reason, I thought the rock of Gibraltar was an island but it is attached to La Linea in Spain by a narrow strip of land which has been extended to accommodate an airstrip running across it. With 30 miles of tunnel dug through the rock, it is easy to see how they have disposed of some of the fill.

We visit the tunnels next day, on a guided tour. Just the four of us - one little bus, a driver/guide and our four fold-up bikes in the back. We see fortresses, siege tunnels, Trafalgar cemetery, amazing St. Michaels' limestone cave - (we just missed a classical concert there) and lots of Barbary macaques (apes).

On our return to the border (Gibraltar is British of course) we are stopped by a siren and boom gate and along with hundreds of people on foot and in cars, we wait for 15 minutes while a plane crosses in front of us on the runway for take-off.

"IT" is moored in a brand new marina in La Linea in Spain with the rock as a back-drop. It is an awesome sight. I take many photos - see below

Another cold, bumpy 23 hour, overnight motor, takes us further along the Spanish coast to Almerima.

It is 8.00am and I can't believe my eyes when I see what I think is snow on the mountains. I look up the Garmin chart plotter and discover that they are the Sierra Nevada mountains and they still have snow on them. I am tempted to wake David who is having a sleep following his night watch.

Almerima doesn't impress us very much as a marina - but it looks spectacular with the snow-capped peaks behind. We stay only one night after the weather report indicates we should move on. We also experienced our first Mediterranean moor.

We think we have the weather right this time. The three forecasts, we checked, all told us that the winds would only reach 20 knots and would be from the south which would allow us to sail - but once again the wind was on the nose and we had not counted on the huge swell.

The 26 hour trip is the bumpiest one yet. The winds are OK - only 20 to 25 knots and the sky is certainly blue and cloudless - but we still get soaked. The waves are close together and coming straight for us. To stop poor "IT" thumping down and crashing over the bigger waves, David eases back the motors - then revs up again once the wave has passed - watching intently for the next big wave to continue the process. It keeps him busy and helps the time pass more quickly.

We are determined not to let it get to us.

We have accepted that we are motoring again and we are thankful that it is not also raining - though the waves hitting the bow have us covered in salt spray.

Thank goodness for our water-proof jackets and multi layers. We just have our eyes exposed.

I always sit up at the helm too in conditions like this, so while David is busy 'driving' the boat I am 'rodeo-riding' next to him.

"Ride-em-cowboy!!!" comes to mind.

Sitting forward on the seat and keeping the body upright, provides a great torso workout.

It is the rolling motion that causes my stomach to do flip-flops. I can cope very well with the up and down action as long as I stay up at the helm.

I am even rewarded with rainbows. As the sun lowers in the sky the salt spray is creating rainbows over the bow. Watching for them adds some cheer to an otherwise trying time.

Cartagena is lovely - it reminds me a little of La Rochelle with its quaint shops and cobbled streets. We visit an old restored Roman theatre, walk and ride our bikes and stay two nights.

The locals seem much more appreciative of tourists here too and are friendly and very helpful - even approaching us with helpful advice when we appear lost.

However I can't say the same for the fuel dock machine.

It was one of those self-service types where you put in your credit card and then type in the amount of fuel you think you might need. I typed in 220 euro to begin with but it wouldn't work. Realizing that I had put my card in upside down I pressed "cancel".

The machine wasn't at all pleased and displayed its displeasure by spitting out my card with such force, that it shot past my hand and bounced down into the cavity beside the machine.

Aghast, I had visions of it disappearing into the murky water. Afraid to look and holding my breath I peered into the cavity. There it was, just visible, on the floor.

Relief of sortsbut it was well out of reach. The cavity had an opening at the top, just big enough for a body to lean in.

So, David to the rescue -- with him suspended up to his thighs and me holding onto his knees and feet he managed to retrieve the card and somehow get back out again.

The machine must have seen the funny side and thankfully decided to co-operate the next time.

We were soon off after Whiskers.

From Cartagena we motor and even have a short sail to Mar Menor - a huge lake where we are able to anchor behind a small island.

The evening is magical - perfectly still and quiet with 360 degrees of shore lights surrounding us - in the far distance.

Our next port is Alicante marina - our last stop on the Spanish mainland.

We really like it here and could happily stay for a few more days but again, we need to move on if we are to get to Mallorca by 20th May and get the weather right.

The marina fees are also starting to climb - 62 euro at this last one (about \$ 80) per night and that is on the visitors pontoon without power. The fees double and triple or worse, in tourist season.

Coralie and I do have time to visit a very spectacular Moorish castle while the guys are busy with some boat repairs and adjustments.

We are starting to feel the pressure of continually travelling and the journey has become a bit of a chore for David. He really feels the responsibility of the sailing and looking after the boat.

Many things are new to us and we are still on a steep learning curve.

There have certainly been good times but there are a lot of doubts and uncertainties too - especially with wintering options, visa problems, and finding anchorages in peak season not to mention if things go wrong with the boat.

At present the difficult, stressful times, have an edge.

We discuss the option of selling the boat at the end of the year when we get to Turkey.

It is May 18th and we have crossed from mainland Spain to the Balears (Balearic Islands) We anchor at Espalmador - an island peninsular off Formentera.

Whiskers left this morning for an overnight sail to Palma in Mallorca - no point in us going too when they intend coming back to Ibiza with their four friends on board.

We spend 5 days here and our spirits lift daily.

Finally we are experiencing the picture that the word 'Mediterranean' conjures up when people talk about it.

Soft blue skies and clear turquoise water tempt us in for a long snorkles and swims.

Before us lies a long stretch of beach with brilliant white sand. At one end, a shallow spit of water reaches to the Formentera mainland. Here the consistent breeze produces ideal conditions for a group of kite-surfers.

Around the corner, on the western side of the peninsular, the coast is craggy with the limestone rocks. It is littered in places with washed up bits and pieces gone overboard and I have fun, by myself, sifting through it - a bit like a treasure hunt.

They can have bad storms here in the winter.

Sand-dunes stretch between the sand and rocky shores.

We walk every day and find wild rosemary, a freshwater lake with breeding ducks, a deserted house, ancient stone walls and an old look-out tower. Except for the day-trippers on the beach - the island is deserted.

It is such a contrast to where we have come from, so peaceful and quiet and a wonderful place to rest and re-charge the batteries.

We make some decisions regarding our wintering and have time to research places where we may be able to anchor easily. We catch up on chores still not done and on e-mails.

It is a wonderful 5 days.

Too soon, it is time to leave and we sail to Ibiza - only a few hours away - to meet Whiskers. Jan , Brian, Kel and Helga have joined them.

Our happy accounts of Espalmador entice them to go have a look.

We don't mind.

Did I mention that it is a popular nudist beach? The very free antics of the bathers and walkers keeps everyone entertained - especially the guys.

And so our adventure into the Mediterranean has begun and continues in much the same way.

From recommendations by other yachties and the pilot book, we have been anchoring for 6 weeks now - going from one beautiful spot to the next.

Ibiza really impressed us and although we managed to sail quite often from one location to the next I was just as happy to motor close to shore so that we could really absorb the scenery.

For someone who loves rocks, the steep limestone cliffs dotted with caves and old fishermen huts, built into the rock, were incredibly interesting.

We head for Cala de Roig and anchor in crystal clear water and I enjoy another swim.

Kel checks our anchors - they are easy to see. See photo below.

I am in Heaven sorting through the mounds of ageless polished stones on the shore and in the caves always trying to find that "perfect one." I find quite a few and add them to my collection.

Later that evening, the six of us go for an evening walk past beautifully designed, white and pastel haciendas with lovely open courtyards and designer gates set in stone walls. Fences don't exist here - or anywhere in the Balearics it seems. I suppose that the stony, rocky ground must be cleared for any crops to have a chance. The piled up rocks creating the endless walls. Many have been here for centuries and longer.

We move on to Cala de Bassa and then San Antonio -a thriving holiday place - perfect for tourists but not spoiled either. Jan, Helga, Cogs and I have a ball wandering through the many interesting shops, each with its own unique items.

I have been cured of buying any souvenirs or "useless stuff" but still enjoy browsing and admiring.

The men have 'boat stuff' to entertain them and are very happy not to join us!

Kel and Brian, both experienced sailors, enjoy having 'boat-work' to do.

We spend 3 days here and another 3 days at the next cove - Cala Salada - another beautiful favourite. With a final stop at the port of Portinatx, we leave Ibiza and sail to Santa Ponsa in Mallorca.

If Ibiza impressed us Mallorca is amazing.

The incredible cave-dotted cliffs, topped with green mantles of pine trees, with steep mountain peaks rising behind.

Fishing villages cling closely together on any land that has enough flatness to support them.

We arrive at Santa Ponsa which has some of the clearest water we have seen, It is also close to the main city of Palma. We plan to stay here a few days.

Coralie and Allan join us and we take a bus to Palma and enjoy exploring the beautiful old city, an impressive cathedral, the many street performers and artists, as well as shop at the huge Carrefour.

We meet up with John and Maria who were a great help to us in La Rochelle last year and who also have a Lipari.

We hear from them later, after their return to their boat - wintered in Valencia- that a lightning strike has destroyed all of their electrical instruments and equipment.

After a few days to wait for good weather we have a spectacular sail and motor to Puerto de Soller. Spectacular, because of the incredible scenery.

Hugging the coastline as much as I am permitted - (the wind was mainly on the nose again) I had a birds-eye view - enhanced by our 7X power binoculars which rarely left my eyes.

7 hours of scenic bliss I soak up cave after cave, tiny villages, ancient cliff dwellings and a variety of rock structures and small islands which change with the varying perspectives as we move slowly past.

It is easy to see why everyone says you must visit the Puerto de Soller.- it is the most stunning setting for a port we have yet seen and it goes right to the top of my favourites list.

It is the place that Coralie and Allan's son Peter and daughter-in law Jo, have chosen as their base for their visit next week. They are rock-climbers and this place would have to be perfect.

Someone tells us about the many good walks you can do and so, back-packs on, and walking poles in hand, we set off the next day winding up into the mountains along well worn tracks.

Old olive trees with thick twisted trunks stand regally in the levelled terraces while the occasional sheep grazes underneath. Orange and lemon trees thrive here too. Their branches heavy with fruit, tempt us, but the wire fences on top of the rock walls stop any possibility of us indulging ourselves. We reach Fortunatx, a pretty village which has been restored and left untouched by any modern development and then continue on to Soller where we board the little wooden, open, train for a 20 minute ride back to the port. It has been a rewarding and enjoyable day,

It is here that Coralie and Allans friends leave them to fly out of Palma and they are joined by Peter and Jo and the girls.

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It is also here that we farewell Whiskers. With 17 days to go before we meet our friends Brad and Erica in Sardinia we need to make our way to Menorca.

We pick the weather well for our 8 hour trip to Menorca and with our sails up the whole time and our motors mostly off we actually sail for 7 hours, The longest yet. David cannot stop grinning. " Ahhhh:" he sighs " This is what it is all about !!"

The Cala near ancient rock dwellings, where we intend to anchor, is full and the next one is filled with buoys so we continue on to the Bay of Mahon and anchor in a sheltered Cala Taulera just beneath an old fortress Isabella 11

Menorca is quite different to Mallorca - much flatter and not as beautiful but much older and therefore no less interesting with its array of historic sites.

David finally puts the motor on our dinghy and we motor off to explore the many shores around one of the largest natural harbours in Europe.

We are not disappointed.

Folding our bikes in the dinghy the following day, we motor to Es Castell, a lovely old town created by the English in the 18th century to house their military people. We have a great day cycling around the coast and inland to a 1400 BC site called Trepuco - not unlike stone henge.

We also use our time here, in the quiet cala, to rest up and we make a final decision to winter in Tunisia. We are assured that it is safe and it feels good. It will be far too rushed trying to get to Turkey. We will save up Turkey for next year when we have a fresh visa to travel through Greece.

It is June 25th now and in a few days we must leave the beautiful Balears. This part of our journey must end as a new one begins. We have loved it here.

I must get this sent while we still have our Spanish dongle . I will need an Italian one in Sardinia.

We have no idea what we will encounter in Italian Sardinia. We will be entering their summer holiday season and anchorages could be scarce. Also our visa runs out mid July and we are no longer legal in the EU. The Italians are very relaxed about this we are told - not so the French and especially not the Greeks so we will keep away from Corsica and not approach the Greek islands until next year after we have been out of the EU in Tunisia.

No we are no longer intending to sell the boat at the end of the year.

'Down' times are inevitable and only help enhance the good times.

I cannot believe, sometimes, that we are in these exotically beautiful places, that so many dream about - in our own home!!! We are so very fortunate.

We have also been very fortunate with our health - apart from putting my back out again which was a bit debilitating for a week or so, we have been very well.

So, on that positive note I will say 'Adios' and.....

Hope this finds you all well and following some of your dreams and I apologise for being very slow at times in responding to any of your letters.

Love, and warmest wishes,
Lucy (Louise) and David
Mum and Dad