

‘The Boat’



TRURO AND DISTRICT BOATING ASSOCIATION TBOA NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2015

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The Lifting Team at work during layup at Newham.



Picture: Roger Bromley

Editorial

Many thanks, once again, to all the contributors of this Newsletter, another bumper edition! Articles, material and photos are essential to its production, without them there would be no newsletter, so contributions are always welcome, in any format, any time of year. My contact details are on the website or just hand me bits of paper!

A reminder that the Newsletters are available to download and view, in PDF format from the TBOA website in the Newsletter section.

It has been suggested that in forthcoming years we should discontinue the Newsletter in printed form in favour of emailing out a PDF file each year to all the members registered with email addresses. Printed copies would then only be sent to members without email or internet access. This suggestion has *not* been formally accepted by The Committee but feedback from members would be appreciated.

Also enclosed with the Newsletter is the Membership Card and Programme for 2016.

I hope you enjoy reading it once again!

Phil Coltman.

A Note from the Chairman.

Thank you to all those who were interested enough in the machinations of our club to attend the AGM on the 6th November and thanks to Stefan for connecting the front row to the back row via electronic link with a guitar amplifier and microphones, it worked some of the time, when I remembered to lean forward enough to speak into the microphone! We are investigating the cost of a 'fit for purpose' PA system, so it should be much improved next year.

Thanks also to the new committee members who put their names forward for duties in TBOA, they are all competent people and I look forward to working with them, Ross, Ben and Amanda all have particular skills to bring to our club which will prove invaluable. Also welcome to Mike Biglin who has volunteered for the Treasurers position, a truly demanding job, which from the outset he seems to have thrown himself into with great enthusiasm and energy.

As I said at the AGM, Geoff our Commodore, has through his dogged determination, finally succeeded in getting us a sports club status, and as part of our obligation to make available opportunities to non-owners of boats to sail or get on the water, supplied us with a dinghy for members to use. So a big thank you to Geoff.

Finally, (I've been told to keep this short by the editor!), I thank everyone engaged in the club from Committee to ordinary members who turn out to help with different aspects of TBOA, be it helping with launch or layup or giving their time freely with other functions. It really does underline the fact that TBOA is truly a co-operative in the best sense of the word and all input is important to the club. Thank you.

As Chairman (where has time gone since first elected) I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, be it on the water or in your other lives!

Paul Thomas.



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From:
Truro and District Branch

Holly Cottage
Forth Coth
Carnon Downs
TRURO
TR3 6JY

12 November 2015

Paul Thomas Esq
Chairman
Truro Boat Owners' Association
34 Mount Ambrose
REDRUTH
TR15 1RA

Dear 

On behalf of the Truro & District Branch I would like to express our thanks to you for the invitation to attend your Annual General Meeting on the 6th of this month to sell RNLI Souvenirs and Christmas Cards. I am pleased to tell you sales totalled £167.10, an increase of some £50.00, on last year's sales. With the very generous donation from the Boat Owners' of £100.00, and also the donations from members during the evening of £11.20, we are obviously very delighted.

Every donation is most welcome and makes a difference to helping our Lifeboat Crews with equipment and keeping our Lifeboats afloat.

Please extend our thanks to your Committee and members and Pauline (our Chairman) and I enjoyed and thank you for our Supper!

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely



MARION THOMAS
(Branch Secretary)



Train one, **save many**

The Social Scene

We as a Social Committee have struggled to get enough people together for our summer events, in the past it was deemed we had too many events but this year it was too few, so we're attempting to 'fine tune' it for next year. We hope to bring back the most popular events, fancy dress being one of them (and all that implies about our members habits!).

The year started off very well, the alternative New Years Party arranged for us by John and Lynn Butler with good food, atmosphere and good prizes was a treat. The shakedown cruise to Helford and dinner at the Ferryboat Inn was also well attended as was the final cruise to Fowey in September with 17 boats! In between things were not so well attended but I think the poor weather was generally to blame.

I personally didn't get very far at all in the boat in 2015, but what I did enjoy was the many impromptu gatherings that I was lucky enough to be included in. Cooking for eight people on my boat (bit of a squeeze), sailing to Cadgwith and curry supper at The Ganges thanks to Paul and Dawn, and also three days in Fowey with Peter, Beryl, Brian and Irene with an exhausting hike to Gribbin Head!

I suppose what I'm saying is be there and enjoy what we have and make the most of the people who enjoy the same things as we do - enjoy TBOA!!

Social Committee.



Three on a Boat

'Seaspray' returns to Mylor from the Baltic

The best made plans have a nasty habit of backfiring when you least expect, our aim for the 2015 season was to sail back to Mylor arriving in June, little did we expect Demelza's trip to be cut short – our plans needed to change quickly, and luckily friends came to the rescue.

We had enjoyed a leisurely cruise from the Island of Fehmarn, to the Kieler Bight in the Baltic. We then entered and motored along the Kiel Canal making for the city of Rendsburg famous for its transporter bridge. This town is about halfway along the canal between Kiel and the River Elbe where we were to rendezvous with Steve and Olga Foot who were joining us for 10 days of cruising. After stocking up in the supermarket at Rendsburg and walking back to Seaspray, Demelza tripped in the car park and on looking down at her leg the ankle was at 90 degrees from the vertical (she hadn't even had a drink). Plainly unable to stand let alone walk there was no question of her climbing aboard or continuing our return trip afloat.



So a few days later on the 28th May Demelza flew home and Steve and Olga arrived.



The Route



Rensburg

Steve and Olga are experienced sailors so after a day settling aboard Seaspray we headed west out of Rensburg marina onto the Kiel Canal taking us towards the Elbe and home. Olga produced wonderful meals throughout the trip and our days were punctuated with a constant supply of snacks and drinks, which were very welcome on long passages. Steve's skills at helming and rope work were quickly put to use as we started our cruise.



Timing entry into the River Elbe needs to take account of the very strong tidal stream to ensure you “go” with the tide. Advice is given for yachts not to enter the river in “wind over tide conditions” when wind is in excess of a Force 4.



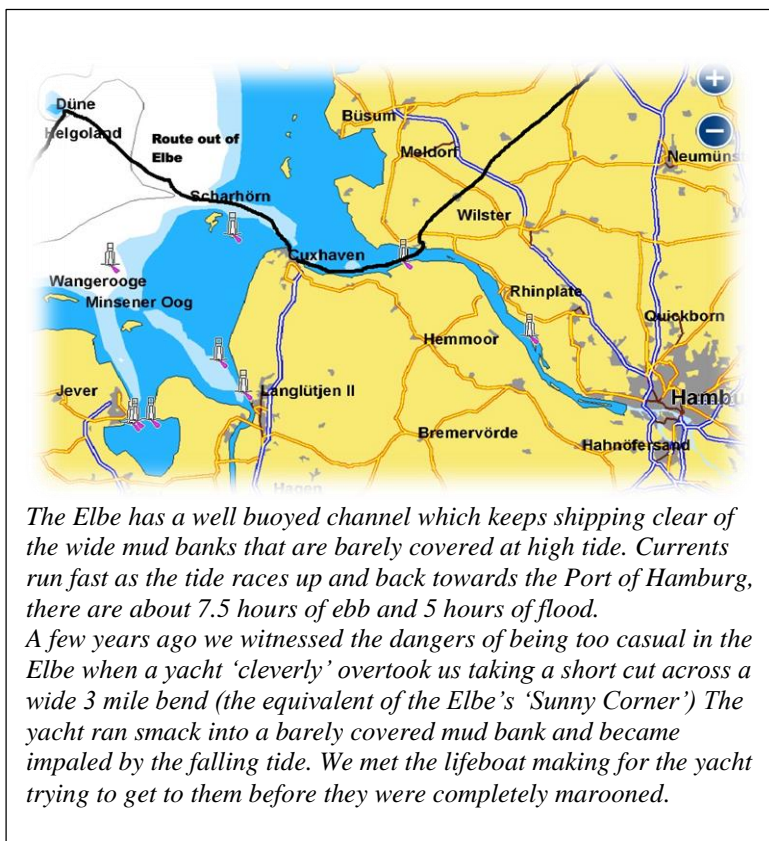
Entering the Elbe

After exiting the canal through the massive Brunsbützel lock we turned right into the Elbe and motor-sailed down the winding muddy waters toward the North Sea. Up stream of the exit lies the massive tidal river port of Hamburg some 50 plus nautical miles from the mouth of the Elbe and there is a continuous procession of all types of ocean going craft going in both directions day and night making for either Hamburg or the Kiel canal.

The ebb tide was adding about 3 knots, to our speed over the ground and after about 20 miles we turned into Cuxhaven about 10 miles before the open sea. Negotiating and exiting out of the fast running river and entry into the still backwaters of the marina is rather like making a late turn onto the slip road of a motorway when you are doing 70mph with no brakes.

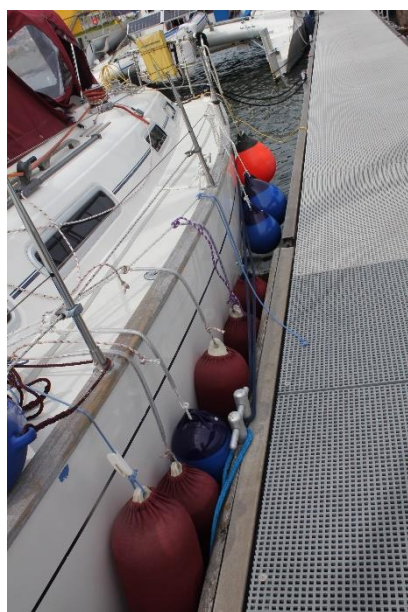
Heading out of the Elbe from Cuxhaven to Helgoland

It was the 1st June but the skies were overcast and the wind did blow in Cuxhaven - 'my gar it was some cold' - not the most exciting or pretty of cities thanks to allied action during WWII and a post war rebuilding programme similar to Plymouth! After biding our time for 24 hours and with a forecasted break in the gusty weather we headed out once more into the river towards the mouth of the Elbe. With the sails set on a close reach we again made a good speed over the ground in force 4/5 SW winds. Skirting the ships entering the estuary we had a lumpy last couple of hours before arriving at duty free Helgoland. For an hour the sun shone and then the clouds closed in once more.



Lumpy Helgoland - a tiny island rock in the German Bight.

The Island is a duty free stopping off point used by yachts working the tides before entering or leaving the river Elbe and is some 35 miles from Cuxhaven.



On checking the forecast on arrival at Helgoland the news was bad – storms forecasted for 96 hours, the good news was the island is duty free with every

opportunity to eat and drink. Browsing the duty free shops is another diversion on the island unless you are interested in guillemots of which there is a huge colony; it only takes a leisurely 30 minutes to walk Helgoland from end to end. There could be worse places to be stuck for a few days.

As I made for my bunk at about 23:00 on 2 June I heard the Navtex beep signalling the arrival of yet another weather forecast. What the Navtex message now advised was to expect hurricane force gusts.....OMG!

Seaspray was moored up along side the inner harbour. We had spent the afternoon preparing for a bumpy time since forecasts were for Southerlies force 8/9. The harbour was exposed to these winds. Every fender was already deployed to keep us secure and we needed them as we were squished against a pontoon. This in turn was twisting and straining, rubbing the harbour pilings. We had doubled up our warps – every piece of rope and string was securing us or so we hoped. Although protected from prevailing SW winds the harbour was open from the south and there was a lot of chop already. With little else to do by way of preparation I decide to keep quiet about this latest news. Despite the storm all was well and we stayed in port for 3 days in safety from some very high winds and rough seas.



To boring Borkum - 80 miles

The winds died down and the restless 3 were keen to be on their way once more.

After the harbour side duty free shop delivered a case of beer with other essentials of brandy and whisky we were ready for departure.

The sea had subsided and the wind continued to abate as we headed out of harbour setting a course to westward once more. This time our course plotted a route down across the Elbe separation zone and skirting to the north of the Friesian Islands. On the chart you head for buoy 19 and turn right. From above these islands look somewhat like a ragged necklace and inside the islands are the sandy shifting shallows of the Waddensea made famous by Erskine Childers book “The Riddle of The Sands”.

The sun shone and it was warming up, there was no wind so we chugged along some 10 miles offshore heading for the sandy island of Borkum. The sea became glassy calm and we were beset by a plague of flying ants, which we merrily swotted to allay the boredom. Resident and self appointed entomologist Steve asserted that the insects had been swept into an updraft and later descended on Seaspray over the cool seawater. As we motored steadily toward the island of Borkum a passage of some 80 miles, Olga kept us nourished with snacks and drinks.

It was a tiresome end to a long day venturing in between the islands and 10 miles up the River Emms (bordering the Netherlands) to overnight in the primitive ex German Navy harbour in Borkum. We squeezed in between two yachts in the almost full marina helped by other yachties, we ate our tea and got to sleep early in readiness for the next days adventure.

Germany into Netherlands Borkum to Vlieland 71 miles

‘You will love the Dutch island Vlieland’ was my promise to Steve and Olga – “it will be so quiet at this time of the season and its got a fab marina”. Following another longish passage continuing to the north of the Friesian’s we entered Dutch waters and Vlieland’s recently enlarged and upgraded marina. Far from being empty it was almost full – not much room and no one would let us raft next to them! There was a race the next day and all the yachts and crews were preparing for the off.

However as there was little wind we managed to find and squeeze into a small vacant space. Again Olga conjured up a super meal and then ashore to savour a few Dutch beers.

From Vlieland inside the Friesians into the Ijsselmeer and Markermeer



The next day we set off early traversing the Waddenzee making for the lock which would take us inside the first of two massive dikes which contain the waters of the Ijsselmeer and Markermeer. Formerly these waters were open to the North Sea and then known as the Zuider Sea, until the Dutch tamed the seawater by enclosure with this civil engineering project.

Keeping away from the drying sands which cover at high tide and following the winding passage requires a degree of

concentration and Olga brandishing the chart kept us to the numbered buoys. This was no mean feat as the chart was a little out of date and somewhat weather beaten, as a further hindrance some buoys had changed their numbers! Steve helmed as we sailed at a good speed in about F4 avoiding the racing craft, traditional Dutch sailing boats and commercial traffic. These traditional distinctive craft vary in length but all have a shallow draft and lee-boards they sail at terrific speeds and are known as ‘chargers’. This name came about as in former days when many acted as tenders to large ships and ‘charged’ for transhipment of cargo.

After jostling with about 30 weekender yachts we emerged safely through the massive lock into the very shallow IJsselmeer. Sharing the helm between us we enjoyed the 4-hour sail into the picturesque former historical seaport of Enkhuisen. It was warm and we had a couple of nights R n R enjoying the sights in a wonderful marina. We had completed the challenging bit outside the Friesian Islands and now enjoyed a more relaxing time.



Almost there

The following days we made our way across the smaller Markermeer sea to linger a couple of nights in the busy Amsterdam Sexhaven marina situated conveniently close to the city centre. There we met a collection of old British lifeboats making their way home after a rally in Hamburg.



Time was pressing and we motored down the Amsterdam to IJmuiden ship canal toward the North Sea and tied Seaspray to a pontoon in the vast marina. The next morning we departed early by car, motoring home via the ferry from Calais to Dover and got back to Truro late the same night.

.....Nearly the end of the story



After a break of 3 weeks Jon Neighbour (recent recipient of a prestigious TBOA yachting trophy awarded at the Club's AGM) kindly joined me to sail Seaspray back to Mylor a voyage taking 8 days including a 2-day break in Brighton due to adverse weather. With early starts this trip was mostly achieved with day motoring

and limited sailing because of headwinds. Our ports of call from IJmuiden were Scheveningen, Zeebrugge, Dunkirk, Dover, Brighton, Yarmouth and Dartmouth. The story of this trip will have to await another time.....

Thanks to all those who offered their help. We were particularly grateful for the support of Steve, Olga and Jon to bring Seaspray back to Mylor.

“Seaspray” is a Moody 36 with 40hp diesel engine.

Steve Todd.

The Rusty Rollock.

At the AGM this year the award was given to Jon Neighbour for his adventures in Scilly.

This is Wendy's account of the 'amusement'!

We were anchored in Green Bay (Bryher) surrounded by French boats. You can see Tresco from there. Sunday morning, Jon decides to go across to Tresco in our new dinghy complete with new outboard for some groceries. When he returned he had forgotten the most important thing he went for which was chicken for our evening meal. So, he went back and returned with the chicken. The chicken was off when I opened it so he had to go back a third time.

On his return we had our lunch sat in the cockpit. Suddenly he said "Oh look, someone's not tied their dinghy up properly and it's heading over to Tresco". I said "yes it's ours!". So within a split second he stripped off down to his underwear, at the same time calling to attract the French on the surrounding boats but to no avail. Next minute he was in the water swimming off towards Tresco to try and retrieve it. By the time he caught up with it, one of the French boats had 'noticed' him - you can imagine them saying "Quest-ce-que tu fais"! He then realised he couldn't get back in it from the water, so the said French owner called him over and let him board it from there.

On my day of departure via the Scillonian, we went to St. Marys to refuel Sigrid before I left, but it was busy at the fuel point and we were short of time, so we went round to Porth Cressa, anchored there and went ashore with 4 fuel cans. Picture the scene of Jon with 4 full fuel cans roped together around his neck walking through Hugh Town - he looked like a suicide bomber! I departed and he went back to the boat and then returned to Green Bay - the French boats probably saying "Oh he's back, what's going to happen this time?". As he was anchoring somehow he lost his shoe which went flying overboard and into the water, but still floating. The only pair of shoes he took with him, so now he has to decide to save the shoe or carry on securing the boat. He quickly secured the boat and then had to jump back into the dinghy to set off to save his shoe, which he successfully did!

Wendy Neighbour.

Editors note: Well done Jon, just the sorts of things that happen to all of us on boats!!

Diary of a Yard Manager

It's July, and I've recently returned from a month off in France having decided that there are far better things to do with life than to just go to work every day. It's a very difficult call to make, but be brave I said, there are plenty of things to do. For instance beginning the layup process. In July, surely not?



Picture: Sam Coltman

Well think about the processes involved.

Number 1 is to find out who wants to come back in from last year, so let's get the letters out nice and early, and hope everyone responds in good time with a deposit.

Number 2 is to receive the confirmations and reallocate the spaces to those who don't want to return, bearing in mind the size of boat and whether the waiting list is still valid.

Number 3 is to chase those who have not replied by the cut-off date, and yes there are usually one or two. The need for a timely response is simply so that I can tell the waiters in plenty of time before they book their layup somewhere else.

Mid August by now, layup minus six weeks and counting.

Number 4 is to do the plan even before we can do the costings.

OK we have the correct number and more or less know where everyone is going. How much is the crane? Currently we pay £1350 plus VAT per day plus £350 plus VAT for a crane supervisor. That's on top of £13800 for the lease, £1500 rates and then all the add-on costs for electricity inspections, Health and Safety, Fixed Assets and Insurance, cost of props and the electricity.

Number 5 prepare the costings spreadsheet and get a shock. Sorry about that. End of August by now, and the final bills to get out. 4 weeks and counting.

Number 6 check tides again, check the plan, check costings.

Number 7 allocate dates and times for everyone taking account of start and finish times, boat drafts and location in the yard. Pressure to front-load the first 2 days to avoid issues on day 3 when everyone is tired after 2 days of hard work.

Number 8 is to check that the crane is booked by Paul and that Lofty has the keys for the gate.

Number 9 and thanks to Jacqui who has done all the typing for us; the initial letter, the contract, the final letter, the labels; is to bag everything into envelopes and stick stamps and get it all sent out.

Beginning of September now, layup minus about 3 weeks. I bet a few are getting twitchy. I certainly am.

In between times get the money banked so people know that they are in the pipeline. Three weeks to day zero it's getting in the money and banking it, checking that everyone has returned the correct amount, and also returned the contract and a copy of the insurance for the boat. Some don't of course.

In the days leading up to day one of layup, it's a keeping-your-eye-on-the-weather game. Remember a few years ago when it was so bad at Mylor that the water taxi was not running for a while and when Eddy Shelton took members out to their boats in his R.I.B.

Number 10 or whatever number we are at now, what is start time so we can do over 20 boats with only about 5 hours of tide to work with.

Number 11 is to get the pontoon in the day before so the early morning start is not delayed. I don't think some people realise that it is absolutely imperative to arrive on or before time. Once the clock starts ticking and that tide starts running there is no way back. The time is lost, that's it.

No one wants to be sent back down the river because someone else has been late.

Work begins, Mark and his crew on the pontoon do their stuff admirably as usual, and the quay crew take the strain in the waiting list. We were lucky this year as the weather was kind with no wind or rain, and the yard crew did the rest.

I think all went to plan, although day one was a struggle for the last few out as the tide was scooting out by then.

Job done for another year, all are safely in. All happy? Probably not, but you can't win them all. Sorry about that.

Anyway, joking aside, the teams do a fantastic job and I won't mention any names as this is a combined effort, so thanks to all for another satisfying if not stressful and tiring three days, or three months depending on who you are.

Until next year then.

Chris Rowe.

The Dreaded Call

We all talk of how we might feel if the phone rings and someone says, "Your boat has come off its mooring and is....."

Nothing is so far from the truth. I will never forget the call I received from the Harbour Masters office to tell me my boat had come off its mooring in the night and was on the rocks at Turnaware.

I made phone calls to some people who may be able to help and arranged with the harbour office a pickup from Loe beach, to the resting place. Luck was on my side as Phil was going to meet me and try and do what he could to help. The sight of Fizgig laying on her port side afloat but with her keel on a rock ledge, below where people camp at Turnaware, was the first thing myself and Nigel Knight (from the harbour commission) saw. Well sick from the bottom of my stomach is no way to describe what I felt, but she was afloat. Phil told me later he had a similar feeling and it wasn't

even his boat. A boat has only one way to go if it has gone wrong, I was not there yet.



With a rope around the base of the cross trees and a big pull from the harbour launch she came off, as soon as she was free she flicked upright and looked normal again. I clambered aboard, unlocked, and went below to the sound of the bilge pump going. It was removing the water that had got in through the aft locker lid, being on her side she was washed by a small chop on the water

coming over the coaming. Remarkably most of the gear was still secure. A tow was given to Mylor as the rudder was jammed and stiff in places. I started the engine and ran it for the duration of the tow to help prevent any problems. A call to my insurance company and to Mylor Yacht Harbour was done while being towed, with a response from both parties, "Yes that's fine bring her in". By the time we arrived I had a call back to confirm a surveyor would be there to see her the same day to assess the damage.

The damage was seen when she was hauled out, a removal of 300mm square from the fibreglass exposing the lead keel and a bent rudder. Inside water had filled the food locker and soaked the port side cushions. Everything was taken out and I gave her a deep clean wash out to limit any further salt water damage. The next day when the surveyor returned again he was impressed at the cleanliness of the inside.

From here on Mylor Yacht Harbour, who completed the repairs, were very professional in their help and workmanship, with authorisation from my insurers Haven Knox-Johnson and the surveyor David Cox. I now have the shiniest boat in the

yard ready for next season.

The reason she came adrift from the mooring is a mystery, how does a riveted, moused and tested shackle come undone? I will never know nor want to experience that again.



Dave Reed.



Collecting Your Thoughts

An idea has been voiced within the club and Paul suggested it be put to the members to comment on. Thus I seem to have drawn the short straw to do that.

Would you, the Membership, be interested in having the Truro Boating Association logo on clothing such as T-Shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies or caps, etc.?

Please reply to me and have your say on what you want. If enough of you like the idea I will look into it in more detail !

For Suggestion Only

The options and ideas are for `Gildan Heavyweight`. Sizes range from Small up to 3XL :-

- 1.) A yellow short sleeve, round neck T-Shirt with a large TBOA emblem printed in black on the centre front - costing around £6
- 2.) A navy blue Sweat-shirt with a small TBOA emblem placed on the front left, printed in yellow - costing about £13 or £14
- 3.) Navy Hoodies, with small emblem printed on front left, in yellow - costing about £15 or £16.

There are many other options, eg; yellow hoodies with large emblem in black on the front (or back) or to use sewn embroidery logo instead of printing, which would be slightly more expensive but much more hard wearing in the wash. Caps- yellow or navy ? How about children`s sizes too ?

If I get a positive response, the Committee will then make a decision. If they want me to I shall send, probably by email, an order form and definite prices so you can have a chance to pre-order styles and sizes for your TBOA crew.

Regards,

Wendy Trebilcock

Thoughts and ideas please, to:-

feockporg@gmail.com

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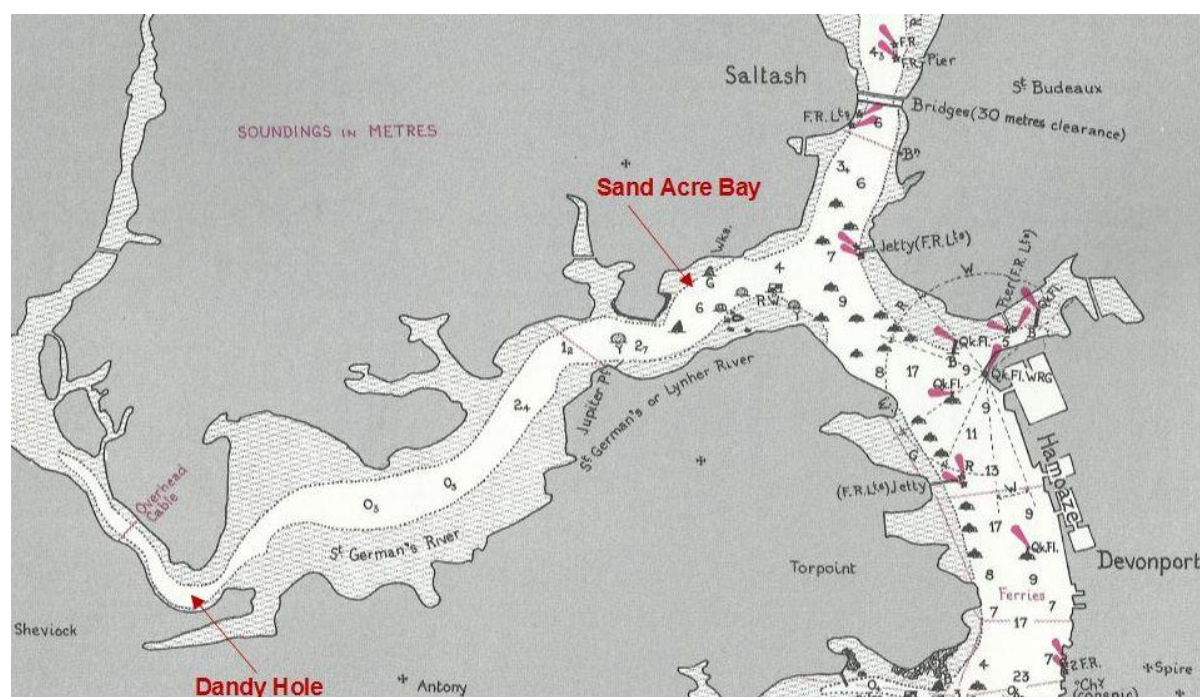
Sand Acre Bay.

Each season I try to find a new local anchorage that I haven't used before. The anchorage has to be reasonably sheltered with deep water at all states of the tide, not overcrowded and picturesque with interesting scenery.

A tall order I hear you say! That's true unless I widen my search area all the time, but this year I visited Sand Acre Bay on two separate occasions and was pleasantly surprised both times!

It had been recommended to me by a sailing friend, Bob, who has been using it for years, he said that it was a good place with free anchorage and good holding in thick mud. I had been past this bay before, several times, on my way to Dandy Hole further up the St. Germans or Lynher River. Dandy Hole is a bit of a trek from Plymouth Sound and also needs a good rise of tide to get up the river. Sand Acre Bay can be accessed at all states of the tide and being just south of Saltash isn't quite so far to go. It's very sheltered from west to north but being in an estuary is pretty sheltered from everywhere except in a good blow.

There is dinghy landing at high tide on the beach or on the rocks at Sand Acre Point at lower tides, tying the dinghy to a tree. From there it's possible to walk over the fields into Saltash which takes about 30 minutes or you can go in the dinghy round to Saltash Sailing Club, land there and walk directly into the town.



Being close to a military area it's advisable to set an anchor trip line or buoy as you never know what is on the bottom. There is an old wreck close inshore in the middle of the bay but that doesn't pose a problem as it's fairly close in and is visible from about half tide anyway.

A good alternative to Plymouth Marinas and better than Cawsand in many respects, I quite liked this place and will certainly visit again!



Seaxe is the yacht anchored on the right. This picture is taken from the path over the hill to Saltash. Devonport can be seen in the distance and Jupiter Point is on the far right of the picture on the other side of the river.

Sand Acre bay with Saltash and the Tamar on the far left of the picture. Seaxe appears on the left in this picture.



Phil.

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My trip/trips to the Scilly Isles

A certain number of years ago six men left Malpas Marine early one Saturday morning as the sun was rising. We were going to St Marys on the Scilly Isles. Ken, the captain, had prepared his liveon 1890's Scottish fishing vessel for the voyage. I brought my inflatable dinghy as a life raft as did Johnny. We all bought enough food and drink to last a few days.

Mid afternoon I saw my first sighting of the Scilly Isles as we motored gently into the bay looking for a suitable mooring. We lost the end of the boat hook as we tried to grab hold of a mooring chain but we still managed to moor up. We launched the dinghys and made for the shore and spent a few hours in the pub. After which we returned to the boat for a good night sleep.

Sunday started with a trip ashore for a walk, then lunch and then inevitably a pub crawl, which involved taking a ferry to another small island where the kitty master decided to chat up three grannies using our kitty money - five of us were not impressed. We returned to our boat.

Bright and early on Monday we set off to return to Malpas with a reasonable weather forecast of wind 2-3 and sea calm. Two hours into the trip we had to turn back as we were being thrown around in mountainous seas. We moored up to the wall. One of the crew, Ian, had to go home by helicopter as he had to work the next day.

So having never been to Scilly I had now been there twice in three days!!

The now five of us set off again on Tuesday morning with a similar weather forecast this time although the sea was a bit lumpy. We were in sight of Wolf Rock when the engine died. As the small cargo vessel affectionately known as 'The Grim Reaper' circled us after we had contacted the coastguards with a "Pan Pan" distress signal, we waited for the lifeboat. It soon appeared from the west, not as we hoped from the east. A line was soon attached and we were towed back to St Mary's.

So having been to Scilly twice in three days I had now had been there thrice in four days!!

At this point three further members of the crew Barry, Johnny and Chris had to leave and returned on the Scillonian. Johnny taking his dinghy and booze with him! Ken and I, the only two left, then set about finding what had gone wrong with the engine. Although there were a number of in line fuel filters the one that became fully clogged was attached to the front end of the engine and was totally unknown to Ken but was known to the marine engineer who replaced the filter. We cleaned out a fuel tank and refuelled. A quick engine test and as the sun was setting we slipped out of St Mary's. Weather forecast similar to the day before.

Unfortunately the weather forecast was wrong, we hit mountainous seas again so much so that the galley floor became a sticky mess of cooking oil, rice, sugar and coffee!! The two lorry sized batteries broke loose from their mountings and descended into the bilges with many sparks. It was now pitch black. We turned around and Ken said “Charles you see those two red lights on the mast above the headland keep them on the starboard quarter”. He then disappeared into the bilges to sort out the batteries.

After a while the bottom red light disappeared so I called Ken who said “S..t! There’s a rock near here!”. I looked out of the window in the portside cabin door and saw the top of the rock sliding by! We did a swift 180 and avoided going ashore! We crept round the rock and gained the entrance into St Mary’s, as we reached the wall where the Scillonian berths we touched bottom and the tide was going out fast. Fortunately we leant against the wall and were able to make fast.

So having been to Scilly thrice in four days I had now managed four visits in five days!!

After a few hours kip we moved the boat. Later that morning we cleaned up the mess and went ashore for lunch. In the afternoon I had to leave Scilly by helicopter as I had to be back in Bristol for my Friday morning surgery. Martin very kindly met me at the heliport in Penzance and he brought Barry who went back by helicopter to help Ken and his boat return to Malpas. I am pleased to inform you that the final return journey was uneventful. The sea was calm and they had the benefit of Dolphins in the bow waves - makes you sick don’t it!!

The moral of this story is that if you go to sea in an old fishing boat with masts it’s a good idea to have some sails if the engine stops. If no masts then at least have two engines. If you go to St Marys go to the RNLI station and on the honour board you will see a date and the fact that five souls and the boat “Trustful” were rescued on a Wednesday in September.

I have still to make my fifth visit!!

Charles Sellick

The Winning Picture – Photo Competition 2015 AGM.



Thank you to Dr. Charles Sellick for this picture.

Taken from The Smugglers at sunset.

Well done again Charles!