

# Waterlines

The Journal of the  
**Victoria Shadow Association**

*An association of Sail and Motorcraft owners*

*Issue 21, Winter 2002*



This issue of *Waterlines*, number 21, rounds off a sailing season of mixed fortunes. The early part of the year, including both the UK rallies, suffered from unpredictable weather and hence poor attendance, although quite a few South Coast members managed to make it by road to the Portsmouth Gunwharf. The St Vaast rally turned out to be a complete non-starter, with force 6/7 southerlies forecast and in the event, occurring. After mid-year, however we had a generally settled and very sailable summer, and in September ten boats turned up enthusiastically at Lymington. Global warming or whatever, our voyages are clearly more difficult to predict than a few years ago. Another unpredictability has been the future of Victoria Yachts as a boatbuilding company. However I believe we now have to accept that it is very unlikely that any more new boats will be built. An active owners' Association must now be even more valuable for mutual help, sharing of experience, and to maintain the prestige of the Victoria, Frances and Shadow designs.

Editing and production of *Waterlines* was well looked after for over four years by Chris and Julia Wood until the last issue. Since then Olive and I

have volunteered to collect and co-ordinate contributions, with the desktop editing and production process being in the hands of my daughter Georgina. We hope Issue 21 maintains the quality and interest of the past – let us have your comments at the AGM, preferably followed soon after by contributions for the next issue. As well as accounts of members' voyages, we are very anxious, in line with our objectives of mutual assistance and advice, to have details of improvements, 'technical tips' handling and rigging experience, and anything to make our sailing safer and more enjoyable.

Please send your contributions, preferably in electronic form to:

Olive Hathaway - olive@pylewell2.fsnet.co.uk  
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Georgina Hayne - gc.hayne@btinternet.com

Or if using mail by steam or sail, to our addresses as in the members' list

Barrie Marson

## Forthcoming Events

Apart from the AGM, on Sunday November 17, there's only the Boat Show dinner, at our favourite Italian restaurant, on Tuesday January 7th, to remind you about. Olive will be sending out notices and we hope to see those who need to rest weary feet after a day at Earls Court.

## Contents



Rally News	3
<i>Olive Hathaway, Barrie Marson, Ted Moss</i>	
A Trip to Fair Isle from Inverness	6
<i>Simon Fraser</i>	
A Little goes a Long Way	10
<i>Derrick Thorrington</i>	
Can a Lifelong Racer find Happiness with a Blue Water Cruiser?	14
<i>Tony Burrows</i>	
Galley Gourmet	15
<i>Members' recipes</i>	

## Falmouth Rally 2001 by Ted Moss

Sunshine and gentle breezes brought an unusually continental atmosphere to our rally in Falmouth. Three boats assembled in Pendennis Marina – *Mary Hay* (Victoria 30 – Bryan & Mary Smith), *Maine Stream* (Frances 26 – John & Susan Hunt) and *Copper Cream* (Victoria 34 – Ted & Kitty Moss with Dave Probert). All were ‘local’ from Mylor, St Just and Falmouth Yacht Marina but had managed short sails to Helford and up the Fal before arriving at Pendennis. We were particularly pleased to welcome Dave on board *Copper Cream*. He is the association’s co-chairman for Shadow Motorboats and needed to experience the more refined side of sailing following a wild cross-channel ride in *Shikara* (Victoria 26) a few years ago. He did however keep his end up for the “Gin Palace” versus “Rag & Pole” when we had to resort to the ignition key in a dying wind.

The rally was organised by Carl Beardmore,

a crewmember of the Falmouth Lifeboat and Brokerage Manager for FBC Yacht Sales in Falmouth (01326 377305). He had booked dinner at the Warehouse, a short walk from the marina. We were joined by Anne McQuade the owner of *Greylag* (Victoria 26) and Penny, a fisherman’s daughter who, together with Carl, enhanced the nautical credentials of the party.

Good food, good wine and lively conversation flowed freely. Three of us compared adventures in the RAF and two discovered ancestors came from the same obscure Lancashire village. Carl regaled us with tales of rescues on the high seas, especially of damsels in distress and they seemed to bear remarkable resemblance to those mermaids featured on RNLI Christmas cards.

The following morning found us swapping technical details of our boats, fittings and experiences of local suppliers. Carl then took three of us on a private tour of Falmouth’s Severn Class Lifeboat – an impressive and solid craft bristling with electronics and carrying an extensive and cleverly packed first aid kit.

An enjoyable event that we look forward to repeating with, hopefully, a few more boats. Our thanks are to Carl for his organisation in Falmouth and to Mark who made us very welcome at Pendennis Marina.

## 2002 Rallies

Olive Hathaway reports that the rallies for this year so far have been very mixed

### East Coast Social

This is probably the worst example to begin the report. It did not happen because only one person (apart from myself and hosts Pat and Percy Ashton) indicated that they would come. Another member rang after the deadline date but by then I had had to take the decision that we could not ask a speaker to come and talk to just four people. Several members had rung with very good reasons why they could not attend but it was disappointing. Fortunately the sailmaker that I had contacted was very understanding and willing to consider another year if requested. I still went to see Pat and Percy and we had a lovely weekend.

### South Coast Social

Much better. We had 24 members attending. The day started with the Committee meeting to discuss the production of the manual and it is hoped that a first draft for the 26ft boats will be available at the Annual General Meeting. Derrick Thorrington is co-ordinating the production. We have a start with technical details provided by Victoria Yacht Services but these need to be expanded to make the manual a really usable document for the members.

The usual pattern applied with members bringing a variety of buffet goodies and as usual a very pleasant meal was had by all. It was good to see three pairs of new members attending, Mr and Mrs Whitelock, Mr and Mrs Tebble and Mr and Mrs Elliott.

We had a talk from Jeremy White after the meal, when he was able to answer many questions put to him about the use and care of sails.

## Gunwharf Quay Rally - 18 May

A disappointing turnout again with only one boat making it to Portsmouth, (*Symphony* with Dick Walters and John Cade aboard) and nine people attending for the meal. A new member, Mr Kirby, called in and spent some time with us but had not booked in for the meal. Given that this must be the cheapest mooring on the Solent I thought we would get a good response. However, I have to admit that the weather could have put many off, it was cold and windy, and *Symphony* should be congratulated.

Despite the small number we had a good evening, having been allocated a room to ourselves in the Old Custom House.

## St Vaast Rally - 8 June

A total of four boats set out for St Vaast but not one of them made it, understandably as the weather was terrible. The forecast on the Thursday was talking about Force 3-4 and both *Albertine* (Barrie Marson and crew - including me) and *Symphony* (Dick Walters and John Cade) had the same idea of setting off Thursday evening, anchoring off Bembridge and then setting off early on Friday for a day sail to St Vaast. We set off at 5.00 am and it was obvious that the wind was stronger than forecast, and then when hearing the shipping forecast it was talking about Force 6. Barrie was not feeling too well, so a decision was taken to turn round

and head for Yarmouth as there was to be an Old Gaffers Rally there that weekend, and we could salvage something from the trip. Dick radioed that he had anchored in a different place to us and had had a very disturbed night. They had decided

too that the weather was too bad for a channel crossing. Roy Dawkins in *Fecility* set off and turned back as did Mr Kirby in *Fanny*. The Hotel Fuchsias was very understanding about the fact that the booking had to be cancelled.

*Albertine* had a lumpy trip just getting up to Yarmouth in the wet, from above and below. But there was a festive atmosphere in the harbour with all the Old Gaffer boats, music ashore and people dressed up in old world clothes. To make up for missing out on our St. Vaast meal - which sounded very good - we went to Salties the fish restaurant. We expected it to be fully booked with all the boats in harbour but it was very quiet.

Next morning we left and jilled around to see some of the old boats coming out and also to see the training ship *Prince William* which had just arrived. Then we set off towards Poole, again in very indifferent weather but less windy than the Friday. We went on from Poole and anchored in Chapman's Pool for lunch. The sun came out and life looked a little better. We had a good sail back to Poole Harbour. It was decided to try to get into the new marina at Town Quay but this was fully booked, so we had to go to Salterns, at vast expense. It did however give Barrie a chance to mend the genoa furling line and attend to the lights on the bow.

The forecast for Sunday was not good - again - but by leaving early, taking the tide with us and the Force 6 behind us, we made it to Hythe Marina. It rained a lot and when I went ashore to get some milk I was apologising to the sale assistant that I had to take my gloves off to get the change - in June. By this time, although the original plan when going cross channel was to get back on Tuesday, we agreed to call it a day

and make back to Chichester Harbour on the Monday. Again an early start and the wind behind us made for a pleasant sail, with occasional sunshine. But it was blowing force 8 in the gusts and generally Force 6-7, so we were very pleased to be going the right way. Barrie had timed the



trip beautifully to get into the harbour on the last of the ingoing tide so it was not too lumpy, as it can be.

So a pleasant few days but again disappointment that we had not achieved the Rally as planned.

## Shotley Rally - 6 July

As so often happens the East Coast sailors made up for the previous disappointments. At one time we had 9 boats coming and 22 people. On the day we had six boats, with one not able to make it because of family commitments, and 2 whose crew came by road instead.

We had a very enjoyable 'Happy Hour' on *Pippin*, thanks to Margaret and Ray Appleton, and it was good to welcome new members Dr & Mrs Roscoe in *Victoria Vision* to the Rally. 20 people sat down to the meal in the Shipwreck Restaurant and a good time was had by all. Anne Grubb said that she had had to motor most of the way, along the Wallet, because of no wind on the Saturday. But walking along the prom at Felixstowe with my sister-in-law on the Sunday, I don't think the same could be said of the next day when it was its usual grey, dripping windy self.

I am submitting this before the Lymington Rally but we must get an Indian Summer after this awful early summer so I have great expectations of a well-attended Rally there.

## The September Lymington Rally reported by Barrie Marson

This was the Association's best-attended rally ever. Thanks partly to the steady High over the south of England for over two weeks, the forecast was for an ideal weekend. Ten boats turned up - fortunately Olive had booked us all in to two pontoons in the Yacht Haven, which left other visiting boats turned away, but allowed us all to congregate for a pre-meal drink. *Albertine* appeared to settle just a few cm, with 20 people on board. The meal afterwards at the Town Sailing Club was remarkably good value and very enjoyable.

Those attending were *Symphony*, *Jenter*, *Albertine*, *Samphire*, *Cadenza*, *Amourette*, *Yunita*, *Moonfleet*, *Felicity* and *Amorelle*. We were pleased to welcome Mr And Mrs Whitelock on their first rally with us on board *Yunita*. The Solent produced no great spectacles on either day, apart from the blue sky and clouds, but we did have a fine view of the Paddle Steamer *Waverley* after her major refit, steaming at full speed towards the Needles.

The weekend was some consolation for the past two or three abortive cross-channel attempts – perhaps home waters are more reliable?

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## A Trip to Fair Isle from Inverness by Simon Fraser and his crew, Janet.

Last year I wintered *Simoon* my 34 foot Victoria at Caley Marina, on the Caledonian Canal, which is one of the few proper boatyards in the north of Scotland. They run their own fleet of 50 hire boats which cruise up and down Loch Ness and the canal. They usually buy the hulls in from a supplier and fit the boat out for a life of 20 years cruising the Caledonian Canal. Most people who hire their boats have little or no idea about cruising and therefore they have to be built to last. This means that any work undertaken by them is done in a thorough and professional manner.

I left the boat in the water over the winter and had few problems, despite the fact that temperatures dropped to -20 during January. The only difficulty was that the instruments failed. They had initially booted up, but then they locked and had to be sent back to Raymarine to remove the code.

I re-commissioned the boat over Easter. Then during the early May Bank

Holiday we sailed down the Canal into the open sea, having arranged to leave *Simoon* at Longmans Marina, which I call "the woodyard" as the marina is built at the edge of Longmans Quay, an incredibly large woodyard where timber is imported into Scotland. This marina is quite sheltered and has good security. Apart from fresh water and a place to get rid of rubbish, there are no other facilities. Our serious cruise started on Saturday 26 May, the weekend of the Spring Bank Holiday. After a very

enjoyable lunch at our favourite restaurant in Inverness, the River House Restaurant, we caught the afternoon tide from Inverness towards Cromarty, sailing under the enormous bridge over the

Inverness at 15:30 and were anchored safely by 20:50, a journey of just 26 miles. The wind, according to the log, never got above 10 knots. Most of the time it was at 4 or 5 knots. A small

problem occurred as I went to anchor - I put the engine into neutral, then when I wanted to see if the anchor had set, the engine would not engage. Later I stripped the Whitlock control lever on the steering column and discovered that it was quite badly corroded. It took me a little time to fix.

**Sunday 27th May**  
Portmahomack to Wick. The forecast was south westerly 3-4. The north going tide was starting quite early so we left Portmahomack at 05:15. The wind was still incredibly light. By the time we arrived in Wick it had got up to 11 knots, which is not really enough to keep my boat moving.

Wick is a fishing town. Much of the stonework was built by the

Stephenson family who had great difficulty keeping the walls intact as gales washed them away on several occasions. We tied up to the harbour wall, having visited Wick once before. There must be something about Wick because every time we've been there it's been raining. Last time a line squall hit us as we approached. This time, fortunately, the sailing to Wick was pleasant and it was only in the afternoon that the rain came in to make things thoroughly miserable. I had hoped to pick up fuel, but the fuel lorry did not



**Simoon tied up at North Haven pier, Fair Isle**

Solway Firth. The weather was marvellous; the sun was shining; the wind was fair; conditions were ideal and one would never believe we were sailing in Scotland! We drifted and motored with the afternoon tide towards Cromarty. As we had been into Cromarty Firth before we decided to continue on beyond Tarbert Ness and anchor off Portmahomack. I was sailing in a T-shirt until the temperature dropped when the sun went down and I had to put on something a little warmer. We had left

work on Sundays and would only start up at 08.00 on Monday morning. To catch the north going tide to get past the Pentland Firth we had to leave before that. We went to a local garage to buy 40 litres of diesel at normal prices for the north of Scotland, which is something of a shock compared with the duty free red diesel I am used to paying for the boat.

I cannot claim that Wick has any gastronomic delights, though a passable meal is available from Ebenezer's Bar, quite an uninspiring name for what looks like an uninspiring hotel, but on investigation the bar is very pleasant and the staff friendly. On the previous occasion we had been there, they had a special offer where if you drank 3 glasses of Laphroaig you were given a special Laphroaig glass. I am now the proud owner of 4 of these engraved glasses, but I'm not saying how many evenings we spent there!

**Monday 28th May** The Pentland Firth is a notorious stretch of water which runs between the north of Scotland (Mainland) and the Orkneys. On springs the tide can run up to 16 knots, something that is best avoided or taken with great care. As our intention was to sail to the east of the Orkneys, there was no need to go through the Pentland Firth, so I laid a course to the east to take advantage of the north going tide. We left at 07.00 and for the next 5 hours we had a favourable tide. The forecast had been for a westerly 4 or 5, occasionally 6 later, becoming cyclonic for a time, with rain at times, visibility moderate or good, occasionally poor later. The wind started off fresh, at 15 knots, then died away for a while before picking up again, so most of the time we were able to sail. By the early afternoon the wind had increased to 22 knots. We therefore hove to and put in the first reef. The tide was with us most of the way until we rounded Copinsay. Then there was a very strong tide as we entered Deer Sound and anchored in about 5 metres.

Surprise! Surprise! We were not alone. Another boat – French – was also anchored there, which was the first yacht

we had seen since leaving Inverness. As Deer Sound is quite large we were able to anchor on the other side of the Sound about a mile away, but nevertheless could actually see the other boat! Overnight the wind increased. At about 05.00 I was wakened by a strange loud noise on deck.

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*the force 6 had now  
increased ... it was  
blowing continuously  
28 to 30 knots and  
gusting 35*

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Thinking that we must have dragged the anchor and hit something, I leapt up on deck, naked, to discover that the anchor chain had slipped around the cleat, probably only taking up the slack. The force 6 had now increased. It was blowing continuously 28 to 30 knots and gusting 35, so the next day we stayed anchored in Deer Sound. There was no point in going ashore as it was a desolate bay.

**Wednesday 30th May** The forecast was southwest veering west 3 or 4, showers, visibility moderate or good – an ideal forecast for the short passage from Deer Sound to Stromsay. The waters were well protected and the sea was calm, but where was the wind? Less than 4 knots, so we motored northwards. It is essential when sailing in these waters to take advantage of the tide. The northerly tide set as we left at 08.35. The passage was quite short, only 17 miles. By 10.00 we had over 3 knots of current with us. Rounding the north of Stromsay, we passed through Papa Sound and tied-up at the pier in Whitehall Village. The water had been very smooth and we managed to see several seals bobbing along.

Whitehall Village is an old fishing port, which has two large piers. In its heyday in the 1850's, fishing boats would stretch from one pier across the harbour to the

other. It was possible on a Sunday "you could walk across the decks of the boats all the way to Papa Stronsay, the tiny island that shelters Whitehall from the north". I was told that the summer population at that time had been around 5,000 people working in the fishing industry, including coopers, coalmerchants, butchers, bakers, several Italian icecream parlours and a cinema. There were 20 fish curing sheds on the beach. Now there are just one or two boats and a population of a few hundred. A roll-on ferry comes to Whitehall twice a day. On Papa Stronsay the monks are rebuilding the monastery and are regular visitors to Stronsay and give quite a boost to the economy. There is a small shop in Whitehall village, which stocks most things one might need, but by no stretch of the imagination could it be called a supermarket. No diesel at the pier, though. There was a hotel bar but we found it lacked character, being pale and empty.

The helpful Harbour Master arranged for us to hire a car. It was a C Reg, a clapped-out, broken-down vehicle which looked as if it hadn't been cleaned or serviced for years. I was told not to worry when the oil pressure warning light came on but to just ignore it! However, it was a set of wheels with which we could explore Stronsay. Furthermore we could take our fuel cans with us, as we had been told that there was red diesel at a garage in the middle of the island.

**Thursday 31st May** The forecast was southwesterly veering northwesterly for a time, 3 increasing 5 or 6, showers then rain, visibility good becoming moderate. The forecast for the following 24 hours was westerly winds which might become strong for a time over the North Sea during Friday ahead of a frontal system moving southeastwards.

We left Stronsay to sail along Sanday Sound then towards Otterswick on the north of Sanday. As we came into Eday Sound the wind had increased to 20 knots gusting 25 and looked as though it was going to continue increasing. We hove to and put in two reefs. Despite this fact we

were still making 5 knots through the water. As we sailed up through Eday Sound the tide was picking up all the time and our boat speed continued to increase. About half way along we encountered some interesting white water but it didn't last long. Finally we registered our speed as 10.8 knots over the ground. We had 6 knots of current with us to the North Sound. We turned east into Otterswick hoping for a calm anchorage. Unfortunately I had not taken into account that although the bay was almost land-locked and would, under most circumstances, give a very smooth anchorage, the land was extremely low-lying and the bay was not as protected or smooth as we had expected.

From the Rough Guide to the Scottish Islands we had discovered that you could hire a car from Bernie Flett and so had booked ahead whilst in Whitehall village. However we did not fancy motoring ashore to pick up the car in the afternoon as the sea was rather lumpy. I telephoned, and rearranged to collect it the next day.

Friday 1st June. Bernie Flett came with the car to the top of the track leading down to the overgrown slip. He said he had not been at all surprised when he cancelled the previous day as he could see the boat tossing in the bay from his house. When I drove him back to his garage I asked what paperwork he would like me to fill in. He said "Oh! That's alright. Just settle up when you bring the car back". He knew, of course, that we couldn't take it off the island without him knowing as he runs the local minibus/taxi/guided tour and meets the ferry which comes into Loth twice daily.

We had a very interesting tour of the island, visiting the Orkney Angora Farm – I never realised that angora comes from rabbits! - white, fluffy, albino rabbits with bright pink eyes. The rabbits are shorn twice a year then the fur is sent south to be spun into wool which is made into angora jumpers, mittens, socks etc on the premises. Elizabeth Sichel who owns the farm originally came from Kent but settled in the Orkneys some 15-20 years ago.

We returned to the boat for lunch and listened to the local forecast. Gales were expected in the evening and overnight as well as for the next day. We decided to sail round to Kettletoft, which is in the south of Sanday, a sheltered harbour with a good pier at which to tie-up, which we had checked out that morning. We left at 15:00. The sea was a bit rough going past Tofts Ness and passing Start Point on Sanday, which was the first lighthouse to be fitted with a revolving mechanism by one of the Stephensons. It looks rather like a helter skelter.

As we approached Kettletoft we saw another yacht and expected it to tie-up with us at the pier, instead of which it



**Animal encounters in Orkney**

anchored in a bay towards the west of us. We made good progress and tied up snugly at the pier, where I bought three crabs from a local fishing boat "Quo Vadis". The forecast was for northwest gale force winds. Therefore we tied up on the south of the pier. This was fine except that over night as the tide went down, a blade on the wind generator caught against the side and sheered off. It had to be secured, as it was now out of balance and vibrating most alarmingly until I could repair it.

Kettletoft is a very small village, but it does have a hotel with a bar, the only one on the island, and very good general store. We decided to take the morning ferry from Loth to Kirkwall. The owner

of the hotel, who said she was taking her daughter to the ferry next morning offered to give us a lift. At the dock we discovered, that the local school was going to a swimming gala in Kirkwall, with 30 noisy pupils who decided to take the upstairs lounge. We sheltered in the cafeteria on the lower deck. We had been sitting there for about 20 minutes when I said to Janet, "Isn't it about time the boat left?" She replied "Don't be silly, we've already been going for 20 minutes". There wasn't a ripple on my coffee. I couldn't feel the slightest motion, yet a full gale was blowing outside, which says something for the stability of the ferry.

We passed a very interesting Saturday wandering around Kirkwall, visiting the cathedral, museum and the various craft shops in the shopping centre. A very pleasant place to be. We returned to Sanday by ferry in the evening. Bernie Flett's wife was driving the taxi and gave us a lift back to Kettletoft.

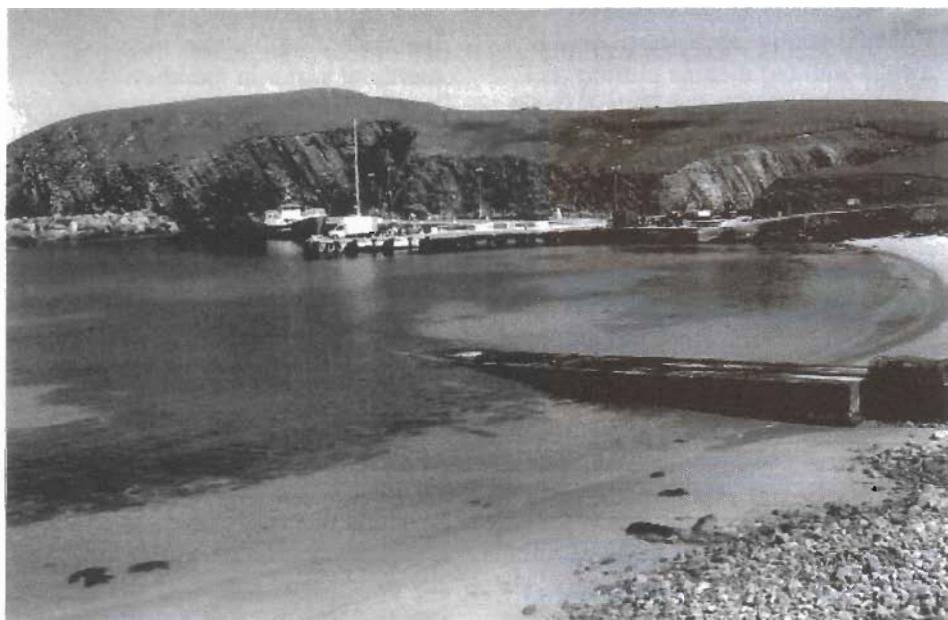
Sunday 3rd June. Having repositioned the blades on the wind generator we considered the forecast which was for northwesterly backing southwesterly 4 or 5, veering west 5 or 6 later, occasional rain, visibility good becoming moderate or poor. A satisfactory forecast for the trip from Kettletoft to Fair Isle, which is famous, as an area in the shipping forecast and for patterned knitted jumpers. It's a small island, some three miles by one, lying mid-way between the Orkneys and Shetlands. After studying the tides it seemed that 11:30 was an ideal time to leave to take advantage of the north going stream, though between the Orkneys and Fair Isle the stream will either run northwesterly or southeasterly and is not particularly strong except around the headlands where there can be a violent roost. The wind blew between 15 and 20 knots. A great sail of 36 miles.

The only truly safe anchorage is at North Haven, where the pier is located. It is approached by lining up the North Haven Stack with the summit of Sheep Craig, a bearing of 199 true. Since the pilot books were written, the gap between the North Haven Stack and the island has

been filled with a breakwater of rough boulders, so now the pier has some protection and shelter from most winds. It is still subject to a swell when the wind is in the northeast.

We arrived and tied-up at 17:20 next door to the Good Shepherd ferry. The pier has no facilities. It soon started to rain. There was a note on the pier that

guillimots, puffins, fulmers, gannets and many other varieties of sea bird. The bonxy or great skewer dive-bombs unsuspecting walkers if there is danger of being too close to its nest. Every inch of cliff has a breeding pair and the bird life was so magnificent I became a "twitcher" and can now recognise one or two birds. At the roll-call in the evening



**Northaven, Fairisle**

visitors were welcome at the Bird Observatory where a meal could be had and the roll-call taken of migratory birds in the evening. Visitors were welcome to join them for a hot drink and cakes which would be served at about 21:00. We went up to the Observatory where the warden was giving an interesting talk on bird life.

Fair Isle has a population of about 70 people, who are friendly and welcoming. There are two lighthouses, both built by Stephenson, one at the north end and one at the south end of the island. There is one shop, two churches, but no pub. Alcoholic refreshment can be obtained from the Bird Observatory if you are having a meal or are prepared to make a donation as they have a Residents Only Licence and being tied-up to the quay does not count as residency. However, where there is a will, there is a way!

Fair Isle is the breeding ground for

I sat silently until they mentioned a pigeon and felt very proud of myself that I had actually seen and recognised one. However, it didn't count as it was a lame racing pigeon which is always around the Observatory. Breeding birds didn't count as well.

The Good Shepherd is the mail boat, based in North Haven and is pulled out of the water on to the slipway whenever the forecast is unfavourable. The Good Shepherd is the main lifeline for the inhabitants of Fair Isle and Mainland Shetlands. (It is very easy to become confused by the name "Mainland" as there is one in Scotland, Orkney and Shetland.) During the summer the ferry runs three times a week and in the winter twice, if weather allows. One person we spoke to had, many years ago, been a student on Mainland when the ferry did not run for six weeks. He remembered

being without pocket money for all those weeks. The shop must have run very short of supplies too. Everybody has several jobs and all help one another. A tremendous feeling of community exists on the island, everybody has time to talk. They have their own wind generator, in fact they have two, so instead of having "Economy 7" for cheap electricity they have the equivalent of "Windy 7". When the wind blows, the electricity is automatically turned on, the houses are heated by electricity so as to use up the surplus. When the wind dies the electricity is turned down and switches over to a generator. The domestic heating is switched off. If you want a Fair Isle jumper, it will be made to order but you will probably have to wait for at least 6 months for it.

We found Fair Isle to be a tranquil, beautiful island and well worth a visit. Nowadays it is possible for anyone to visit Fair Isle, as there are two flights a day 3 days a week, from the Shetlands. After we had been there for several days, what should appear but another yacht, again a French boat, which tied up to the old pier. The sailors were a French couple who had spent the last 3 years on their boat with three young children, the oldest of whom was 8 or 9. They managed to keep up with their education by following correspondence courses. The family were planning to winter in Norway having spent last winter in Ireland and the previous one in Portugal. It turned out to be the same French boat which we had seen in Deer Sound and again anchoring near Kettletoft. This was the only yacht we saw in 10 days.

The weather was warm and sunny and the sea a turquoise colour with white sand almost Caribbean. It was so restful and relaxing that we didn't want to leave but we took with us some delicious fish which we had been given by a local fisherman.

*A Great Experience –  
to be continued . . .*

## A Little Goes a Long Way

*The Log of Derrick Thorrington's 600 mile trip to the Scilly Isles and the Channel Islands last year in his Francis 26 Amorelle won the Cruising Association's Duggan cup. His descriptive account of the trip was published in Sailing Today in August and September. Here, with the kind permission of Sailing Today, are some extracts from these articles, of interest to association members.*

When the alarm went off at 0100 the wind had dropped as forecast and we were soon underway. We passed the East Shambles buoy at 0300 already feeling the effect of the west bound stream. By 1000 there was a good Force 3-4 south-westerly blowing and, well to the south of my rhumb line, I could free off somewhat, kill the engine and do what *Amorelle* and I like best.

The Devon coast came into view and the tide carried us back towards our course. By midday we had reached Dartmouth where we had the small craft pontoon to ourselves - doesn't anyone sail small craft anymore? Not that I'm complaining. Where larger craft were allowed, there were half a dozen yachts rafted together, I caught up on my sleep and by evening I was ready to renew my acquaintance with Dartmouth's many good hosteleries and the fish and chip shop.

When the alarm went off the next day at 0430, the weather had improved as forecast. I took the last of the ebb down to the harbour entrance and picked up the remains of the west setting stream under clear skies with a flattish sea and a light westerly wind. This became fickle round Start Point leaving us wallowing in a steep swell left over from the previous blow, so I motorsailed towards Plymouth. As soon as the catpaws of wind returned, I killed the engine and *Amorelle* and I ghosted happily along, unconcerned by our slow progress and enjoying a quiet day at sea.

Passing yachts sliced through the swells with big diesels purring as I short tacked along the Devon coast arriving inside the breakwater and into Plymouth Sound at 1300.

Next morning was bright, the forecast was promising, but it was Friday 13th. Although I try not to be superstitious, it's hard not to be at sea when a minor snag can snowball into a major incident with such ease. I didn't want to waste the good weather, so I took extra precautions and, with some trepidation, made sail. We tacked into Whitsand Bay to avoid the worst of the easterly setting tide. After an hour the wind fell very light and the engine came to our assistance as I pointed *Amorelle* south west. Off Fowey the wind returned and I dispensed with the engine, but it was variable in direction and I stayed on the helm squeezing the best from each puff. Off Mevagissy the wind died again, the genoa came down and the engine came on. We plodded on, now with a favourable tide, until the wind rose at the Dodman. Back up with the genoa, then the wind died. Genoa down; engine on. This exercise was repeated several times, but then it was Friday 13th. We made St Anthony's Head and Falmouth harbour where a kindly wind allowed us to come in under sail.

I thought Lynne would enjoy Truro so we continued upstream as the rain fell in sheets. It seemed to take an age - doesn't it always in the rain? - before we passed the lock gates and picked the best water up the narrow channel into the town an hour and a

half before high water. There is plenty of water in the channel for boats up to two metres draught, but that means in the channel, low water reveals just how steep and narrow it is. Perhaps it was the day's weather, the generally unhelpful forecast for the next few days or the rather basic sanitary arrangements for visiting yachts (I'd forgotten about them) but whatever the reason, Lynne had had enough of cruising for now. We said our farewells and arranged to meet up later on in the cruise. I took local advice that the best ground for a keelboat was just in front of the Harbourmaster's office and *Amorelle* sat almost bolt upright in two and a half feet of mud. Next morning there was a long wait for the tide and I passed a very entertaining couple of hours with Carl, live-aboard owner of *Mouser*, an eight-metre Catalac which he keeps at Truro and uses for extensive summer cruises.

Next day was beautiful, the air clear, the countryside fresh and the breeze good. I had to use plenty of muscle to extricate the anchor from the deep ooze, but once under way *Amorelle* dug in her bilge and romped off seaward at a good six knots. I laid a course to clear the Manacles, rigged a preventer on the main boom, stowed the staysail and sat back to enjoy the ride.

The peace was soon shattered by a Mayday on the VHF. A fishing boat was sinking two miles away. The coastguard acknowledged the call, the helicopter was scrambled and craft in the area headed for the



**Amorelle takes the ground at Truro**

scene. It appeared that while working pots, a line had caught round the propeller of the outboard turning the stern of the small open craft into the sea when it was quickly overwhelmed and sank. A powerful fishing boat picked the man from the water, apparently unhurt but it was a frightening experience and happened so easily.

We rounded the Lizard at around 1030 and started to feel the long Atlantic swells. With the wind a steady north-west 4-5 and a clear sky, we hardened on to the wind and pulled down a reef to make life more comfortable. As we started the long beat into Mounts Bay I raised the staysail, the easy bit was over, now we had to do some work.

I put in a long board westward before tacking north to make best use of the tide. As the wind dropped I pulled out the reef but eventually we were left with a lumpy wind-over-tide slop and, concerned to make the tidal gate at Penzance, I asked for help from the iron topsail. I soon began to get faint whiffs of exhaust, and below the smell was stronger.

I removed the engine bay cover and got a face full of black muck, the oil filler cap had worked loose allowing the crankcase pressure to blow a fine mist of oil all over the engine and the sides of the compartment. What a bloody mess. *Amorelle's* long keel has many advantages including a nice deep bilge well that holds any drainage. Guess where the plastic filler cap was? I thought about making a temporary wooden bung, but concluded that it would be more productive to find the proper item as *Amorelle* sailed herself towards Penzance. With the aid of a head torch, a long stick and much swearing I finally came out victorious, covered in oil and rather queasy. I checked the sump and found we had lost little oil - fortunate as Yanmars hold little enough to start with. Disaster over, we motorsailed on, passed the breakwater at 1615 and moored alongside a raft of yachts for the night.

The forecast looked good, so I made ready for an early departure. The morning was dull and drizzly but my decision to head for Scilly was

delayed by the fact that the lock gate was shut. One of the hydraulic keeps was jammed and as the tide rose outside, the lock gates were stuck hard against the strops. As the level fell and the cleat still refused to shift, the lockmaster borrowed a forklift truck and heaved the strops around the cleat housing until it released and the gate opened. A flotilla of small craft put to sea at 0800.

Despite the delay we would still be early for the tide to carry us clear of Land's End. As I sailed in a brisk Force 4, the rain set in with a vengeance, visibility closed in and we were soon plunging in a short chop. Pointless to turn back, the gate at Penzance would not be closed and the forecast was for a gradual improvement. I sailed south of the Wolf Rock, eased sheets and headed for St Mary's. The wind became very light and I had to resort to the engine but skies were clear and I sighted the islands at around Midday.

For the newcomer to the Isles of Scilly making passage from rock to rock 'lining up the crack here with the crag there' can seem daunting but the main transits are easily identified. I chose the simplest passage in by way of St Mary Sound. The Pilot says it is possible to anchor inshore of the moorings but there is little space, the rocky shore is only yards away and there was a heavy westerly swell running. I decided to pick up a visitor's mooring.

Next morning was beautiful; calm, sunny and windless. The Harbourmaster in his launch could not have been more friendly and helpful. There were no other small craft and a complete absence of British yachts; visitors were predominately French and Irish. I soon slipped the buoy and was off. After clearing Spanish Ledges I headed south and entered the cove between the Gugh and St Agnes. At low tide the two islands are joined by the bar, a strip of beautiful white sand

# Sailing Stories

which provided wonderful shelter. Soon the bar covered and the rising tide was pushing through at an alarming rate, the anchor cable gurgling and wriggling in a stream of water so clear that I could see the sand four metres down.

I rowed ashore and spent some time taking photographs in the soft evening light before the sun disappeared behind a deep black bank of cloud out in the Atlantic.

Woke early to another glorious day and a visit from a friendly Harbourmaster collecting his dues. I rowed across to Bryher after lunch and from the summit, shared only with birds, bees and butterflies, saw the huge plain of sand and rock exposed at low tide with yesterday's channel quite evident between them. The other side of the island looked down on the aptly named Hell Bay. Rocks everywhere and directly open to the south west. Driven in here on a gale there would surely be no way out. I cast my mind back to the figureheads and my fellow seamen of the past.

It was only my desire to see more of the archipelago that drew me away from this lovely spot. I headed off on the new tide to look for the entrance to St Helen's Pool, there being little to guide you but the distance off the shore of Round Island. I quickly realised that I was being forcefully set into some unfriendly looking rocks poking their snouts through the water. A large alteration in course had me back on track and out of danger but it was a timely reminder of the care needed in these waters.

It may seem that I rowed around the islands in a carefree way but I made a careful study of the tidal stream atlas to ensure that I was always up tide of my destination or at least had a safe shore to land if needed. Also I had perfect weather and negligible chop or swell to contend with. I would be foolish to row around without considering these factors.

I got underway through the islands, rocks and sandbars to Tean Sound and St Martins to lie to a visitor's mooring provided by the low hotel. This particular passage brought home to me the very exacting nature of the transits in these islands and

forecast to go north-easterly overnight. Perfect, straight off the land. I anchored in 10 metres of water and watched the last threads of light recede from the sky leaving the sea black, oily and glasslike disturbed only by the smallest of swells.

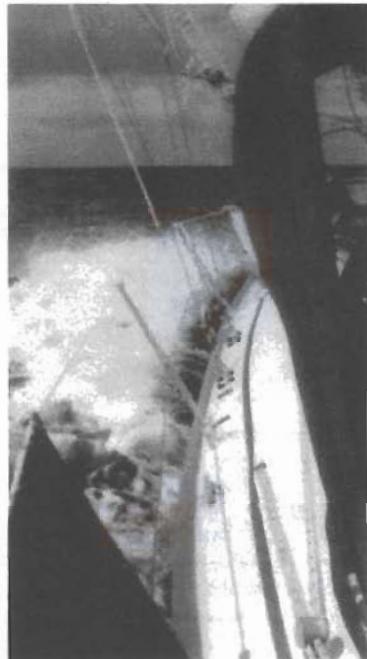
Under full main *Amorelle* was straining at the leash as I powered away south east. I raised the staysail to balance the helm and she settled down nicely, foam cast away from her flare and the teak rubbing strake sending streaks of spray out to port as she dropped into the hollow of each small wavelet. I tied in a reef and sat back in comfort to enjoy the view, a green carpet rolling down to the unforgiving grey cliffs with sunlight highlighting the vegetation growing among the rocks.

As soon as I met the overfalls off the Lizard the wind fell leaving me wallowing and pitching in the short chop. It took a frustratingly long time to pass through the worst of the disturbed water. I battled on with everything set, closehauled and trying to make progress against the very light north east wind. I finally gave up and resorted to the engine again. The occasional cat's paws taunted me but the motor stayed on until I arrived at Fowey to pick up a vacant mooring off Polruari next to *Tambourine*, another Frances bound for Scilly.

just how close you pass to some of the dangers: My advice would be to pay close attention to the Pilots and charts, don't underestimate unpredictable eddies and remember a rising tide will sometimes give you a little margin for error.

On the last of the flood tide I headed for Watermill Cove on St Mary's, prepared for sea and said a reluctant farewell to Scilly. The day was windless and the engine had work to do. I headed slightly east of south in the hope that any sea breeze would give a reasonable slant towards the Cornish coast. No such luck however and I spent a hot, calm afternoon practising sun sights. Among the coastal traffic was RFA *Sir Gallahad*, which we had recently refitted.

Conditions were perfect for a visit to Porth Mellin and a good night's sleep was very appealing. The wind was



Lynne decided to give cruising another try and we arranged to meet at Plymouth that evening. This left me plenty of time to stop for lunch at Polperro. A friendly local advised me to make fast to a fore and aft mooring outside the harbour entrance. It seems that most locals only use one buoy, leaving their boats to swing, blocking most of the narrow channel into the harbour. A large amount of traffic uses this small harbour on a sunny Sunday in summer.

A light sea breeze allowed me to ghost along to Plymouth where I picked up a mooring in the

Cattewater. Two locals advised me to make sure the dinghy was padlocked and not to leave it overnight, the first time I had even considered such an action this cruise. It was good advice. Waiting for Lynne's taxi to arrive I spied two youngsters lift the upturned dinghy to check underneath. There was nothing tempting there; fortunately they weren't interested in the oars.

The sun came out as we left the mooring next morning and with all sail set *Amorelle* gradually won her way against the young flooding tide making the best of the south westerly zephyrs. We were soon heading nicely for Bolt Head and Salcombe where we dropped anchor on the south side of the channel, close to town. We dined in style that evening.

The first signs of light appeared as we made our way along Guernsey's south shore and round St Martin's carrying a fully plug of the tide toward St Peter Port. As we reached the entrance to Victoria Marina the lights turned green and we slipped in and picked up a berth. We slept until midday, then, batteries recharged, set off to show St Peter Port to Lynne. Christies restaurant supplied beautiful food and views over the harbour into the haze that made mysteries of Sark, Herm and Jethou.

The tides allowed a 6am start for Alderney and we were soon being carried forcefully north, the sails adding little to our progress. Being something of a purist I didn't want to use the engine as we had plenty of time to reach our destination and for a while I day-dreamed of the engineless craft of yesteryear, vulnerable to the vagaries of weather and tide. I was rudely awoken from this reverie as we approached the heavy overfalls at the north end of the Little Russel, all drive was shaken from the sails and green water came over the foredeck. Lynne continued to sleep soundly. I persevered under sails alone and, when we emerged

the wind picked up and we continued to Alderney. By the time Lynne was awake, the wind was a good Force 4 on the port quarter. I've always hated the Swinge and decided to go east

place of the genoa. By the time we sighted the southern coast of the Isle of Wight it was drizzling, the sea was full of whitecaps and Lynne's face had gone that familiar Channel grey.



**Sunset at Salcombe**

about and take the back eddy into Braye Harbour. Poor Lynne was laid low by *mal de mer* but by 1100 we were secured to a buoy and mercifully sheltered from the swell.

The next day's forecast indicated a fast trip home, south westerly 4 to 5, increasing to 6 in the afternoon. *Amorelle* and I would love it, Lynne would probably not. I slipped the mooring at 0700 and proceeded under full main and genoa. Once clear of the land we picked up speed and I rigged a preventer and goose winged the genoa on the pole. We left a clean wake and by the time Lynne joined me we were beautifully balanced and thundering along, bow wave roaring down each side, we reached 8.5 knots, a good speed for a heavy displacement, long-keeled cruiser with a waterline length of only 22 feet. We both enjoyed the ride but I decided prudence was the best course and hoisted the staysail in

I tucked her into a seaberth where she quickly fell asleep. We made such good speed that we reached Christchurch too early and had to wait for sufficient water. We ended up having a rather uncomfortable wait anchored off Hengistbury Head until we could cross the bar into our home harbour just in time to join in the annual pig roast at the club.

Tell us about your sailing trip.  
Send contributions, technical  
tips and photos to the  
editorial team.



## Can a lifelong Racer find Happiness with a Blue Water Cruiser?

J A (Tony) Burrows

**I**t was time for a new boat, but which? Searching commenced in the spring of 2000 and it seemed a J-92 would be "just the ticket". I had been racing since childhood and jumped at the chance to compete on a J-92 during Cowes week hosted by the J-Boats importer.

Having a French Amazonian lady, who had recently completed the Global Challenge within a crew of 7, we were ready for almost anything but not the sinkings or the gear damage that was to follow.

My regatta finished on Wednesday when a hurt back was accompanied by concussion from a flying boom. Beware of statements about flying asymmetrical spinnakers from the cockpit with minimal crew. On a dead run down the Solent in a force 7 we had to gybe maybe 20 times. Unlike conventional spinnakers, tacking down wind is considered mandatory with an asymmetrical.

It was time for a change. A blue water cruiser, spray hood and dodgers, hot rum toddy's. RYA Day skipper and Yachtmaster courses - with greying temples and feet of clay, I was ready!

Talking with friends brought forward various options.

Oysterman 16	Too small
Oysterman 22	Unbelievably ugly (just my opinion!)
Smuggler 25	Expensive
Frances 26	I liked this one
Victoria 30	Outside my price range

An enquiry at the Southampton Boat Show pointed me in the direction of Steve Constable, a specialist in Victoria Yachts at Hamble. I looked at several Frances' but it was his statement that he could put me in a Victoria 30 for the price of a Frances 26 that caught my attention.

When I first saw "Victoria of Lymington", I knew why she was slow to sell. It was an executors' sale and a sad sight. Top sides blackened by tree droppings, green slimy teak, black varnish and the main hatch falling apart. The exterior was not impressive but the interior was really very nice and well equipped. The rigging, fittings and electronics were in good order.

Victoria Yachts at Warsash were approached for an estimate to put the boat to rights. It was to be expensive

but, if I could buy right, I would still be ahead of the game.

The Victoria 30 was a Chuck Paine design from the USA where it was known as the Leigh 30. Inspired by the Colin Archer designs from Denmark, he drew a long keel and a canoe stern to allow a fast passage to Tahiti, if necessary.

Following a good survey, the price was agreed and "Victoria of Lymington" proceeded to Warsash for a winter refit. The transparent coating put on the topsides gel coat a decade earlier had turned to a dirty translucent white and this required specialist attention. Steve suggested "Proclean" who power-washed the hull, cleaned the teak, got rid of rust and exhaust stains and removed the transparent coating with chemicals and scrapers without damaging the gel coat. It took 2 men a whole week and cost £700. The result - spectacular! A real transformation with the exception of the duck tape holding the sliding hatch together.

Winter consisted of many trips to the Hamble clutching a "must have" list of 26 items and a "would like list" of 24. I gulped as I signed the cheque but the work of Carl, the young shipwright made everything worthwhile. The new sliding hatch was a thing of beauty. I was uncertain about the In Mast Roller Reefing thinking that a mainsail with no battens would be unsatisfactory. The new mainsail from "Easy Reef" with vertical battens gave a beautiful sail shape and furls without problems.

Mike, the owner of a 60' ferro-cement ketch and Steve were keen to sail the boat from Hamble to Dartmouth with me. We set off in an April force 3 down the West Solent. Guess who had not pumped the bilges? Water in the wet locker was pumped overboard as we tacked towards the Needles. It was now 6 - 7 westerly on the nose.

Several boats under bare poles were trying to motor out of the Solent with little success. We shortened sail and motored leaving them in our wake as we entered Christchurch Bay.

What was that noise from the engine? A howling noise that varied with the revs. Cutlass bearing? A severe

engine problem? Poole was now favourite and Parkstone Yacht Club had a berth. The long range forecast was bad – westerly gales for the next 5 days. We stayed in Poole. Cars were shuttled between Hamble and Poole and I drove Steve and Mike to Dartmouth, as they were to deliver a Victoria 34 back to the Hamble. With a 7+ on their tail, they corkscrewed all the way back in record time. But what of my boat stuck in Poole?

A local engineer had determined that the engine noise was a “singing prop” which was not a major problem and could be rectified when next the boat was hauled out.

Hugh Cullen is a professional Yachtmaster from Kingsbridge. He's the sort of resourceful chap who can fettle a piston out of a baked bean tin. He ran the Diesel Engine Maintenance course that I attended at Bristol City College. I collected Hugh at 0330 from Dartmouth by car and we arrived at Poole to find the marina locked up. We scaled the fence and left on the tide at 0700 aiming to make Dartmouth by midnight, a distance of 84 miles. The wind was a northerly force 4 which gave a beam reach on starboard and by 1050 we were 50 yards off Portland Bill with 2 hours of fair tide left across Lyme Bay. It was a new experience for me with the Victoria 30 knifing through the waves with no pounding unlike racing boats. The 50% ballast handled gusts. The spray hood and dodgers provided comfort. The wind was cold but the soup was hot and I was enjoying the trip with a thoroughbred.

At 1600, Hugh pointed out the day marker on the cliffs at Kingswear and after 15 miles, we moored in the Dart haven Marina at 1900. We'd achieved a 12-hour passage close to 7 knots, the theoretical hull speed. I'd learned a lot from Steve and Hugh and gained a new respect for Blue Water Cruisers. There is more to sailing than banging around the cans for 3 hours.

I've renamed the boat *Phainopepla* (an American blue & white flycatcher bird). Victoria of Lymington of Southampton would have been too much of a mouthful. Now, if I can only master the intricacies of secondary ports and tidal streams, who knows what future voyages have to offer.

Am I happy with a blue water cruiser? Oh yes! It's the best boat I've ever had. Hand built to the highest standards and sails – superbly.

## Easy dishes with tinned fish (for four)

### Salmon Fishcakes

- 350g tinned salmon (Delia says tinned is better than fresh for this!)
- 150g boiled potato, mashed up
- 2 hard boiled eggs
- 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise
- a few chopped olives, gherkins or similar
- salt and pepper and whatever herbs you have

#### For the batter:

- 50g breadcrumbs
- flour
- another egg

Mix it all up - leave for an hour to firm.

Work the mixture into 6 or 8 fishcakes, on a flouy surface.

Meanwhile mix and melt the other egg (beaten), breadcrumbs, some butter and oil in a saucepan  
Dip the fishcakes into the batter mixture and fry in really hot oil and butter

### Kedgeree (in one saucepan if necessary)

- 250 or 350g tinned haddock or tuna
- 350g long grain rice
- 2 or 3 hard boiled eggs
- single cream if available
- a few sultanas, peanuts or chopped prunes
- a little chopped tinned tomato or mushrooms
- just a little curry powder if you want an Indian flavour

Cook the rice. If it's boil in the bag, you can hard boil the eggs at the same time

Put them on one side.

Flake the fish with a fork.

Melt the butter and a little oil in the saucepan.

Put in all the ingredients plus salt, pepper, available herbs, etc; stir.

Put in an oven-proof dish and cook in a moderate oven for 30 mins.

Garnish with a little parsley if you have it.

Serve immediately.

## Galley Gourmet continued

### Popcorn

*The ideal snack when you drop anchor for the evening and invite friends over*

Line the bottom of your pressure cooker with vegetable oil. Heat on the stove until it's hot but not smoking. Tip in a cup full of corn. Give it a shake and put the lid on. Keep on a high flame 'till they're almost all popped then turn off the heat. I like to add 'Maggi' powdered stock rather than salt. Give it shake and serve in a big bowl. More fun than crisps - your guests will love it.

### Pancakes - 'Gallettes'

Cruising in the Med, it's difficult to buy bread which will keep for more than a day or two and it's too hot to bake it on board - a good substitute is *gallettes*: standard pancake method, but using buckwheat flour, eggs, salt and water. In France, buckwheat flour is sold as *farine du sarasin*. They are delicious hot or cold, savoury or sweet, but best of all with maple syrup.

*We hope these recipes and tips will enhance your cruising.  
Further contributions to 'Galley Gourmet' are always welcome*

## Stone Pier Yacht Services - The Victoria Connection

On the 7th March 2002, John Lesh, trading as Stone Pier Yacht Services, acquired the assets, took over the premises and re-employed the staff of Victoria Yacht Services (Warsash) Ltd.

Operating in the yard where Victoria Yachts and Shadow Motor Cruisers were constructed, we continue to employ some members of the workforce responsible for building these fine vessels. We have also inherited a useful database of drawings and specifications that are utilized for the benefit of existing and prospective owners. We endeavour to provide unrivalled personal service of high quality at a reasonable hourly labour rate, which is rendered even more attractive by the discount that we offer to VSA Members. Jon Gale, who is well known to many of you, remains as manager and will be happy to discuss member's individual requirements. We are now entering the winter lay-up period so may I suggest that anyone contemplating a refit this winter, contacts us for a competitive quotation.

We are available by telephone on 01489 885400 or at our web site [www.stonepierys.com](http://www.stonepierys.com) or by e-mail at [info@stonepierys.com](mailto:info@stonepierys.com).

**Words cannot describe what the right accessories will do for your sailing. It has to be experienced.**



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