



### News from our members in Greece

David and Susan Macgregor sent a report from Greece after receiving our last Newsletter.

“Good to read of everyone’s adventures. We are currently cruising around the Peloponnese. Wonderful scenery, some beautiful anchorages and much less busy than the Ionian. Also some amazing ancient sites to visit but the steep climbs are hard work in the heat.

Simon and Jo made an earlier start than us. When we last heard from them, they were heading to the Northern Sporades.”

[Editor: David and Susan Macgregor sail a Victoria 30, VICTORIA ROSE, while Simon and Jo sail a Victoria 34, CALADH. Both boats are based in the marina at Messalonghi in the Gulf of Patras. Simon and Jo will have sailed roughly eastwards through the Gulf of Corinth and the Corinth Canal before skirting Athens to enter the Aegean. David and Susan went the other way, anti-clockwise about, and will return via the Corinth Canal towards the end of their cruise.]

### Saying goodbye to JENTER

Jenny and I said goodbye to our Frances 26 Cutter, JENTER, on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> June, when we completed the handover to her new owner, Bob Prichard.



Jenny says goodbye to JENTER at Burnham on Crouch

We had owned JENTER from new and have sailed her for 21 years travelling over 19,000nm aboard her.

Bob had her launched the following day and a few days later sailed her down the Swin and across the Thames Estuary to Conyer Creek Marina, where she is to be based. He said she sailed well with over 6kts indicated at times.

### Off the Shelf and the Jester Challenge

In the March Newsletter, we published an appeal by Simon Fayers to raise funds equally for both the Lizard Lifeboat Station and the Fishermens’ Mission. Simon, aboard his Frances 26, SHEBECA was to accept two separate challenges. The first was to compete in the Jester Challenge to Baltimore, a prerequisite for many sailors about to undertake more serious ocean voyages and the second was to sail to a point off the continental shelf and out of depth soundings; specifically south of 48°N and west of 8°W. Simon’s report follows:

Simon’s single handed offshore sailing challenge  
2015 log

Raising funds for the  
Lizard lifeboat and the Fishermens’ Mission

12<sup>th</sup> June

After much preparation, Shebeca left the Helford at 05.00 for Plymouth for the start of the Jester Challenge to SW Ireland. Heading out against easterlies and rain we arrived at the Tamar sailing club, 2 cables south of the famous Tamar Bridge, completely soaked 10 hours later. There was already a selection of jesters gathered.

The Jester challenge is open to any yacht under 30 foot, sailed single handed and the 260 mile race to Baltimore is seen as a prerequisite for the much more challenging Azores and transatlantic races. The variety of craft taking part ranged from 21 foot micro yachts, to 30 foot heavy wooden gaff cutters. Perhaps the most impressive craft taking part was Rory McDougall’s 21 foot tiki catamaran called “cooking fat”. With only minimalistic accommodation in each hull basically no larger than a coffin, this guy has circumnavigated single handed and with no engine. A few of the other craft taking part also were engineless. This was going to be a learning curve, these guys are hardcore!

13<sup>th</sup> June.

A day spent drying out wet clothing and oilies, stocking up on last minute grub, see the latest forecast, plus the skippers briefing and last dinner, a chance to talk to some of the other skippers.

14<sup>th</sup> June.

We all (41 yachts taking part) headed down river for the start at midday, a line 1nm west of the breakwater. 10 minute and 5 minute guns went off and we are away with absolutely zero wind! Half an hour after the start gun with spinnakers hanging limp, we are all still

drifting on the tide, which will soon push us back up river from whence we came. Then some ripples on the surface and finally a small breeze started to fill in, once clear of Rame Head it soon picked up from the SW and we are away. One of the multihulls cut inside of the Draystone Buoy which had to be left to starboard so he should be disqualified, good he was going too fast. With the wind veering round to west then NW it enabled Shebeca to sail nicely on one tack towards a waypoint on the chart, south of Bishop rock lighthouse off the Isles of Scilly.

20 miles in and I took my first sextant sight between the scattered altostratus clouds. Checking against various land bearings I was about 12 miles out, not bad, but room for improvement. 12 miles on a small yacht out in a large ocean is acceptable when there is no land to hit. Late afternoon and the usual dolphins for company, with her long keel and black antifouling I am convinced they think Shebeca is a small whale. They stayed with us for the next 3 hours, quite a large school with several young ones.

A few other yachts in sight but becoming scattered. By nightfall we were passing 5 miles south of Lizard point having just got there in time for the last of the ebb tide, the wind had picked up a bit more so one reef in the main so as not to put too much strain on the autopilot, which if overworked, consumes too much battery juice which in turn means running the engine more often to recharge, which ultimately means running out of diesel too soon. I have enough diesel on board for 30 hours running only, so I need to plan ahead. Overnight the wind became a bit fluky and variable, so reef in then reef out, genoa up, genoa down. Barometer remained steady so nothing to worry about. I carried on board a loud egg timer which is a great bit of "nautical equipment", set to 10 minutes it enabled me to have cat naps without fear of not waking up. Still inshore it is essential to keep some sort of watch going despite the increasing need for sleep. The phosphorescence in Shebecas wake tonight is fantastic as is the Milky Way above. Oilies stay on throughout and cat naps are taken in the cockpit or down below on the cabin floor when healed over, with sailbags as padding.

15<sup>th</sup> June.

This morning saw us crossing the traffic separation scheme west of the Isles of Scilly and with clear skies at noon I got a good fix with the sextant. Light winds carried us gently about 30 nm west of the islands where they died to nothing. Becalmed for 14 hours and by dusk fog. I could see two other jesters before losing them in the thickening blanket. After 5 hours or so of trying to keep moving, eventually sails came down and we just rolled around in the gentle swell almost completely at one with the surroundings. No

ships had been seen or heard for hours so a few hours shut eye were possible. I was so tired by then and starting to hear voices all about. If a ship had run us down I could not care less.

16<sup>th</sup> June.

04.30am and a small breeze filling in, sails up and away. Autopilot clonking a bit but nothing to worry about, wind had backed round to the west again so having to beat to north of my desired heading. Got a good sun sight at 08.30 but not sure of accuracy as Shebeca now making way against a choppy sea and doing the "working up" calculations down below with the astro navigation tables needs to be achieved in the least possible time! By midday Shebeca was being over powered with the big genoa up so time to shorten sail and take a noon sight. More confident with this fix. By early afternoon the wind was up to a 25 knots from the north and getting colder, then rain. So tired now, that without the egg timer I would certainly fall into a deep sleep and end up anywhere.

17<sup>th</sup> June.

Plodded on overnight, thermometer reading only 4 degrees, visibility down to 100m or so, wind has backed again to the west. Having cat naps down below every hour to stay warm, voices and singing has got louder and now in various languages! Plus there is somebody on the foredeck (rolled up genoa), he is waving to me. By 04.00 closing on Baltimore but we are NE of our heading and still need to round the Fastnet rock (which must be left to starboard) and is 12 miles to the west. So, the sting in the tail is now to beat to windward which took 5 hours, when the finish was so close. Having rounded the Fastnet, it was then a run in and we started to see some of the other jesters. A vacant buoy was picked up at 10.30 immediately followed by 4 hours of the deepest sleep I have ever not experienced, followed later by the compulsory downing of several glasses of the black stuff and a weather update.

18<sup>th</sup> June.

Took a walk around Baltimore, beautiful coastal scenery. It would be easy to spend a season here just cruising around. Back on board, dried out some clothing and reorganised Shebecas interior which looked like a war zone. Got a weather update and with west winds forecast becoming variable again, the decision was taken to get going sooner rather than later. Slipped at 16.30 Barometer steady at 1002mb, wind w/nw force 3 to 4. All good. By 18.00 we were clear of land and the wind had increased to 24 knots (f6). Two reefs in the main now and half a jib. No chance of a position fix with the sextant as complete cloud cover and the swell also meant that a clear horizon was not visible. Anyway heading due south at

a consistent 6 to 7 knots so an accurate EP would have to suffice for now. Early evening and we had dolphins again for company, they seemed to enjoy the conditions, with green water now coming over the foredeck with every other wave I was enjoying it less so but still making good progress.

19<sup>th</sup> June.

At 01.45 and about 50 miles south of Ireland there was a blaze of lights ahead, I guessed a beam trawler but I could not make out with all the deck lights any navigation lights. Looked on the AIS, nothing. As we got closer I tried to raise them on VHF 16, again nothing. Only when ¼ mile off could I just make out a port light, we were heading the wrong side! Quick tack to starboard and a wide berth and onwards. I am sure they had no idea I was there. Damn foreigners. By now the wind had increased further to 28 knots and sea state had become larger, in the gloom I could make out quite substantial breaking crests on top of the swell, then at 03.00 one caught me beam on and I was thrown across the cockpit held tight by the lifeline onto the auto pilot which came off worse with a bent ram. Blast. We continued heading south but with no effective self-steering there would be no rest for me, so reluctantly about 80 miles south, 100nm short of the continental shelf, the decision was made to run with the weather and head for home with about 190nm to go.

20<sup>th</sup> June.

Running off the wind and with a following sea I could lash the tiller with bungies and she would maintain some sort of heading, just every now and again rounding up as she came off a wave. By mid-morning we were once again in fog and that pretty much stayed with us for the next 12 hours past the Isles of Scilly until Lizard Point, but with calmer seas and lighter winds. The last 8 hours were motor sailing as I no longer needed to conserve fuel but did want to keep moving, so tired again by now and the voices were back. Into the Helford by midnight.

Facts and figures.

Total mileage 763 nautical miles. Hours at sea 162.  
30 out of 41 entries completed the jester challenge.

Lessons learnt, I had not expected autopilot failure and indeed if I had not sat on it then there probably would not have been a problem. However they do consume a lot of battery power so an array of solar panels would have been a good idea. A self-steering wind vane connected to the rudder is an even better arrangement. I used to have one of these on a previous yacht and really for any off shore sailing is essential. Extreme tiredness and fatigue is another factor. Talking to some of the other skippers they too heard voices and singing so I am not going mad or alternatively we all are!

Having said all that, it was good to be out there, would I do it again? Yes, with a few modifications as I totally trust Shebeca to get me through it. Thanks to Mike for satellite tracker weather updates, Bernice and Gina for fundraising support and Jo for holding Fort in my absence.

[Editor: When Simon Fayers submitted this log he also mentioned, in a covering note, that BLUEGRASS had successfully completed the Jester Challenge. Our congratulations go out to Simon Fayers sailing aboard SHEBECA and to Guy Willing sailing aboard BLUEGRASS, both being Frances 26 yachts.]

## Ken Capstick and BONNY FLIGHTY

In a recent e-mail, Ken said,

“I have decided to retire from sailing and sell my Victoria 26. After 8 years and about 13,000 miles of single handed sailing I have run out of ambition. She is a wonderful design and has given me much pleasure but it is time to do other things while I still am able. I will continue membership of the Association and look forward to meeting from time to time.”



Ken aboard BONNY FLIGHTY in Sovereign Harbour

[Editor: Although Ken based his Victoria 26 at Pyefleet, Mersea Island on the East Coast, he would wander far and wide each year. We last saw him aboard BONNY FLIGHTY in Sovereign Harbour at Eastbourne on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014. He was returning home after visiting the west coast of Ireland and had also been up the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man and Scotland, if my memory serves correctly. We both left early the following morning with Ken taking a lock out ahead of us. We thought Dover was far enough but Ken was going for Titchmarsh, which would involve him sailing through the night.

BONNY FLIGHTY is to be sold by Westwater Yacht Sales at Walton on the Naze. Try:

<http://www.westwateryachtsales.com/brokerage-boats/?i=2&type=sail> at the bottom of that page.]

## Sue Doyle's message

In response to the photographs of QUE SERA in the last Newsletter, Sue writes,

“As you saw Colin and I met up in Salcombe and at last managed a chat, rather than a wave. I have just got back from my main summer cruise. I only made Padstow, though that was lovely. Here is my picture of Colin raising the anchor and giving it a scrub before heading back to Dartmouth.”



Colin Reid scrubs TUI's anchor in Salcombe

## More Victorias from Colin Reid

“Just back from a great cruise to North Brittany and the Channel Islands. When I was in St Peter Port a few days ago 9 Victoria 34's came in and moored nearby. They were from the Armed Forces and had just raced from Gosport. More Victorias than I have ever seen in one place and very trim they looked. Here are a few pics.

Hope you are having a good summer, Colin”



TROCHUS and JANTHINA



Unreadable, SY...X, VOLUTA, CALLISTA and NERITA



AMORIA and FIMBRIA

## Your Articles and Stories

with or without photographs are always welcome. I am sure you know the form but send anything you have to: [news@victoriashadow.co.uk](mailto:news@victoriashadow.co.uk) or to my personal account [peter@the2coskers.com](mailto:peter@the2coskers.com).

If you still use pen and paper, mail items to:  
The Victoria Shadow Association, 4 The Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3SJ, England.  
I will return any original photographs etc.

If you have anything really special for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of Waterlines for publication early in 2016, please mark it as such.

I will acknowledge everything that is received.