



South Coast Social

Jon and Lynda Spencer organised the Spring Social at Warsash Sailing Club which was well attended by twenty-three members including some intrepid Shadow owners from the Thames, and others from the East. Those attending included: Simon and Jo Bound, John Cade, Tim and Dee Clarke, Peter and Jenny Cosker, Sue Doyle, Pete and Kate Hunt, David and Sue Macgregor, Ian and Tracy Rycroft, Richard and Meryl Saunders, Brian Smith, John and Gillian Walker, and John and Janet Williams.

The Social was preceded by a Committee Meeting, while other members assembled in the upstairs bar and enjoyed the views over the Hamble River and Southampton Water. At this stage, we were joined by Mike Wren and Mary-Ann Paddison, both members at Warsash Sailing Club, who were later providing an illustrated account of their circumnavigation of Great Britain.

Due to another Warsash Club Member celebrating his birthday, the Victoria Shadow Members moved downstairs to the River Room where the Club Caterer and her team provided us with an enjoyable lunch from a simple menu. John Cade did not miss the opportunity to persuade us all to participate in the raffle which helped defray the cost of holding the social.

The talk given on completion of lunch by Mike and Mary-Ann recounted their experiences of sailing their bilge-keel Westerly around Britain over a five-year period during which they visited almost every port and anchorage and provided us with many anecdotes of their adventures. After their talk, they continued to answer questions from our members. It will be of interest that Mike and Mary-Ann are now seriously considering the purchase of a Victoria 34 so that they may extend their adventures further afield but afloat.



Brian Smith talks with Mike Wren and Mary-Ann Paddison after their illustrated talk

After this early season gathering we look forward to the next gathering at Wivenhoe and most especially when we will all come together again for our rally at Limehouse Basin on the Thames. On the South Coast Richard and Meryl Saunders will introduce us to their next rally which will include two

different marinas at either end of the Solent with a cruise in company between. The date of this for your diaries is 12th – 14th May. Fair winds.

New Members

Please welcome Chris Basten and Jayne Evans with their Victoria 34, JUST SO to our association. They recently wrote, "We moved Just So to her berth on Friday.....no incidents but very strange for the first time!!!". JUST SO is berthed in Milford Haven.

Also welcome Duncan Hill with his Victoria 34, BLUE OPAL to the association. BLUE OPAL is berthed in Dun Laoghaire, Ireland and Duncan lives nearby.

News from our Members

Tobias Menke has discovered another German registered Victoria yacht. Here is what he has to say,

"Last year after the finish of the Jester Azores Challenge, I remarked on a picture of a possible Frances 26 flying a German flag in the destination harbour of Praia de Vitoria, Terceira. The yacht was lying alongside the British boat named ELLA TROUT but it was not possible to read the name of the Victoria boat.

Later a video sequence of boats departing provided better images and I discovered the name of the mystery boat was BEAVER, home port Berlin and owned by Olaf Zepp, member of the Potsdamer Yacht Club. It's a Victoria 800. This man sailed the boat with his son in 2015 (I think) to the Azores. Since that time the boat has obviously been berthed there. So – for sure, another German Victoria yacht."

Bill Macmeikan wrote,

"The Newsletter article on sailing in Ireland is particularly interesting as my boat 'Bridjeen', a Victoria 30 is now based in Peel Marina, Isle of Man.

It is ten years since I bought 'Bridjeen' (then 'Fairflight of Hamble') in Minorca. I based her in Santa Teresa Gallura, Sardinia until last year. Last spring I sailed her, in a leisurely fashion, along the coasts of Corsica, Elba, Italy and France to Port St. Louis du Rhone, then trucked her to Fleetwood, then home to the Isle of Man under sail. It was all very enjoyable.

Peel is a useful marina for boats heading from the Welsh coast to the Scottish coast and vice versa, as well as being only about 30nm from the nearest Irish port, Ardglass. It can be quite busy in summer and very crowded around the two week period of the TT bike racing. Because of the flap gate, entry and exit is limited to around two hours on each side of HW. Any members passing this way would be welcome to contact me if any help or advice is needed. The island has many attractions and is well worth a visit.

Keel Modification and Lower Gudgeon Replacement on my Frances 26 Cutter, FRANCES JOSEPHINE by Tobias Menke

My intentions for the keel were:

-) To increase the draft from 1.20m to 1.30m to reduce the rolling behaviour.
-) To have a less rounded sole so the boat might remain level when taking the ground.
-) To mount a keel heel to both prevent ropes becoming jammed in the slot between keel and rudder and also to add extra rudder security.

I put my ideas to Chuck Paine in an e-mail. His positive replies and then seeing his Mark II design gave me the additional impetus to start my own project.

When an opportunity arose to have the boat hung in an old machine hall, I made a start on this project.

For the keel material I just took wooden planks, a lot of epoxy and sheets of fibreglass matting. The application of the fibreglass mats was the most difficult and really required two people working together.



FRANCES JOSEPHINE hanging from strops and steadied by stands in an old machine hall



The photograph on the left shows a small heel. It is made from a piece of hardwood, encapsulated by epoxy and fibreglass mat.

In the middle, I fixed a metal pin for the rudder foot. This provides a fourth fixing for the rudder, in addition to the usual three gudgeon and pintle fixings.

I also extended the rudder surface.



Replacement of an old gudgeon

I had to start this small project during a following winter after the lower gudgeon had loosened over time. I didn't want to buy an expensive bronze fitting, which would have been difficult to fit, so I decided to build a fibreglass version, as used by Westsail double-enders. See www.westsailparts.com for precise details.

I see advantages in having less metal and no need for drilling into the hull, especially as our boat's keel-hull is hollow.

An eventual disadvantage is that dismantling the gudgeon would require its partial destruction.

How they are made



Lower pintle and new gudgeon in place



FRANCES JOSEPHINE in a cradle after the keel modification. The flatter sole of the keel is clearly visible.

Sailing the 'Wild Atlantic Way' Leg 2 – Fenit to Sligo

On Friday 17th June we flew back to Kerry and took a cab via Tesco in Tralee to Fenit. We made sure we were well stocked as shops were about to become few and far between.

Local advice saw us off at 7am for the passage to the Aran Islands, some 60 miles so a long day sail with no practical haven should the weather turn bad, so we had studied that well. The glorious weather of two weeks before had gone and we now had the traditional three climates in one day variety, though we had a fine SW 4-5 whisking us along. The sea was calm but the swell had become noticeable higher and off Loop Head gave a great vantage point of the coast on each peak. The day went well and the 200 metre cliffs of Mohr could be seen to Starboard but not even a peek of the islands. The wind steadied, visibility decreased and the cliffs disappeared. The hours passed and still no sighting of land. We were about 6 miles off when we heard a Pan Pan on the radio. A currach with two men on board had gone missing and observers on the land had reported that the men appeared to become disorientated in the fog – aah! - that was why we couldn't see the islands.



Kilronan Harbour on Inishmore

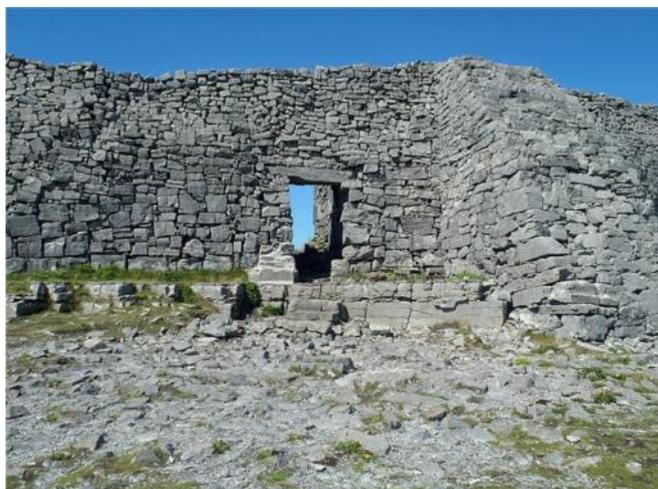
We offered to keep a look out and about half a mile from the entrance to Gregory Sound we finally saw land, i.e. surf breaking on the cliffs.

The Aran lifeboat located the Currach and all ended well. As we entered Kilronan Harbour the lifeboat returned to base – what a lovely reassuring sight. We picked up a yellow buoy near another British Yacht (only two yachts there) and had a well-deserved hot meal. On Sunday a full gale blew all day which prohibited going ashore so we just had to sit it out and look longingly at the landlubbers coming and going to the pub on the shore. We exchanged hand waves to the other moored yacht while emerging to check our lines but apart from that we passed our day studying the sailing directions.

20th June dawned beautiful, sunny with light winds. We inflated the tender and rowed ashore to explore Inishmore. The islanders speak Irish and when we enquired with a driver if we could have a tour of the island in his minibus, he said he was booked, but then had a conversation in Irish with a colleague who agreed to take us, which probably went 'there's these two eejits here who want a tour in the bus all for themselves'. In fact our driver took us directly to Dun Aengus fort and a complete circuit of the island. The spectacular fort on the edge of a vertical sea cliff is 2,700 years old. We had the joy of being at the fort on our own, but as we walked down the track towards the road we were met by a hoard of tourists who had arrived in Kilronan by ferry from the mainland. We finished our tour of the island with a visit to the Lifeboat station. There is a stone memorial to the Chay Blythe and John Ridgeway who were towed by the Lifeboat to Kilronan, in a gale, on 3rd September 1966 having rowed the Atlantic from Cape Cod to Ireland.



Inishmore cliffs from Dun Aengus fort



Dun Aengus Fort



Monument to John Ridgeway and Chay Blyth

The wind was stuck in the SW 4/5 and in the afternoon we had a relatively flat sail in the lee of the Arans to Roundstone.

The mainland coast here is a maze of rocks islands and breakers and there are few navigation marks. It was on the approach to Roundstone that we experienced the warning about electronic chart anomalies as what it was telling us didn't agree with what our eyes were telling us.

Spatial awareness is everything and keeping a good track on the many rocks and underwater reefs by use of Admiralty paper charts as errors of up to 90 metres have been recorded.



Roundstone



Slyne Head

We suffered a very roly poly night before heading towards Clifden via the formidable Slyne Head. Underwater reefs prevail and massive waves suddenly appear over them with name like 'Sunk Bellows' and 'Wild Bellows' you get the picture. There is a navigable channel inside the head, 'Joyces Pass'. This can only be attempted in fine weather but our SW 5 just didn't seem fine enough. In the league of major headlands Slyne is up there with Cape Wrath. Mallard rose on the swells like a proper duck and after what seemed like an age we were surfing North towards Clifden. Let's just say that the entrance to Clifden is exciting with surf waves breaking on reefs but once inside the bay it is totally sheltered. We moored near the sailing club and next morning headed ashore to re-supply.



Approach to Clifden



Garrantly Harbour on Inishturk

It is a short walk to the town which has a small supermarket and many fine restaurants. Alcock & Brown landed on a bog outside the town in June 1919 after the first non-stop trans-Atlantic flight. A hotel in the town is named after them.

Clifden Sailing Club were very hospitable and we were very pleased to meet Nick Kate, the Arctic sailor who admired Mallard and congratulated us on having reached Clifden in such a fine vessel. Nick was to depart for Greenland the following week on his 39ft steel ketch 'Teddy'. Nick advised us to give the yachtie's Inishbofin a miss and to head for Inishturk. The sailing was sheltered from the swell by the chain of reefs and islands and we arrived at Garrantly Harbour to find another yacht. She was at least 100ft and flying the Stars and Stripes. She was at anchor as she was too big for the 15 ton visitors' moorings.



St. John's Fires, Inishturk

The moorings were interesting in that they have several fish boxes attached to the buoy riser to dampen the swell. After supper I poked my head out to see what I thought was a house on fire. On closer inspection it proved to be a bonfire in front of the house and there were two others visible on the island and several on the far distant mainland. The fires are traditional on the eve of the Feast Day of St. John the Baptist.

This was 23rd June and in the morning we emerged from our slumbers to find that the UK had voted to leave the EU. It was a somewhat surreal location to learn the news as we were on the very Western edge of Europe and in the afternoon the island population gathered at the community centre for lunch. It was last day of primary school and its three pupils were presented with a large cake topped with a figurine of each one of them. We were invited to share the cake with tea and coffee.

The American yacht had gone by morning but we were now joined by Festina Lente who we had last seen in Dingle. During the night of 24th we had another gale and the night was spent trying to stop rolling in our bunk, but by morning it had abated and we set towards the uninhabited island of Inishkea North.



Main Road, Inishturk with Clare Island in the background



Rowing back to Mallard, Inishkea North

The wind was now set more NW and we left Clare Island to the East as we beat towards Achill Head. Eventually the wind died and we motored close by the head, shadowed inshore under the mighty cliffs by a small Coast Guard launch. Apparently there are still dodgy dealings taking place on this coastline. We passed between Carrickakin rock and the head, a rare achievement. A helpful breeze came up and we had a run up to our anchorage at Inishkea North. With beautiful sandy beaches and *machair* the Inishkeas North and South are said to resemble the Outer Hebrides.



Clare Island



Achill Head in the distance



Achill Head – The Coastguard launch gives a sense of scale



Village ruins, Inishkea North

The stone wallsteads of the village and the evidence of gardens and walls built by hard labour are a poignant reminder of the frailty of such exposed communities that had once been a source of food and shelter.

We had invested in a Rocna anchor and we had one of our best night's sleep anchored in sand at the mouth of a small bay between two reefs.

The morning 26th June was very misty with heavy rain showers. We wanted to make Broadhaven Bay. Portnafrankagh, being the only alternative anchorage South of Erris Head.

Through the mist we just about spotted Inishglora where the legendary Children of Lir turned from swans to human form and then instantly to dust. There certainly wasn't any dust in the air off Eagle Island. Just heavy showers and massive Atlantic swells. As the Continental shelf is no more than twenty miles away and the sea is 40 metres deep right up to the edge of the cliffs off Eagle Island, there is a research site on this coast for wave energy testing and it would seem to be well sited.

Broad reaching to round Erris Head, as we entered Broadhaven Bay, we had the most extraordinary display by large dolphins. They followed us from the entrance to the bay and played around and under the boat until they gave us a grand finale. Three of them did a crossover flipper impersonation completely out of the water and about 15ft off our stern. Who needs to go to Seaworld?



Eagle Island astern



Broadhaven with 'The Stags' in the distance



A Still from the Dolphin Display, Broadhaven

Next day the 27th was 6 gusting 7 and we stayed put. We were watching the weather from met.ie (Met Éireann the Irish Meteorological Service online) and with strong N-NWs forecast it became apparent that we were not going to make Londonderry never mind Ballycastle by the end of the week before our flight back. We tried Killybegs and they were very helpful in lack of their 2016 marina. They offered to lift us out which seemed unattractive. Eventually we made contact with the Harbour Master at Sligo who said he had loads of room for us on their 60 metre pontoon. We decided to make for there.

As we left the awe inspiring cliffs to the East of Broadhaven Bay, past the Stags into Donegal Bay, we had the W 4/5 on our port quarter and a magic carpet ride on big swells past the distinctive Downpatrick Head to Kilcummin in Killalla Bay where we picked up a yellow buoy. A pub could be seen through the binoculars.



The Stags



Summer weather



60 miles of fun – Donegal Bay

The local council were trying a different type of damper for the swell that consisted of a 30 metre rope from the buoy with doors floating on the surface. You tie up to the end of the rope well away from the buoy. We can assure you that this system does not work!!

We arrived in Sligo on the evening of 30th June after a hard sail in 5-6 and having to adjust to navigating sand banks again. Sligo is 5 miles upstream on the river and we managed to squeeze into our rafted berth just below the bridge at Sligo. We negotiated for six weeks stay and spent the first getting ship shape and victualled.

A South African who had come to Sligo for a surfing holiday and stayed for twenty-two years admired Mallard and commented how few yachts came to Sligo with the comment ‘only the brave come this far’. With us not knowing when we would be able to leave we had a different appraisal.



Visitors mooring Killala Bay with pub in the distance



Entrance to Sligo



Sligo – rafted pontoon below the bridge

To maintain our mission of enjoying the local culture as well as the sailing we saw the great Christy Moore in concert and had superb meals in the Italian Quarter. We heard there was a traditional music festival in Donegal Town, so we had a night there (hotel) and then Saturday night in stroke city, Derry/Londonderry.

The final part of our route to Belfast airport was done on one of Mr Portillo’s favourite coastal railway routes. And then we were back in London and work.

**Norman Crawford and Christine Adamson
‘Mallard’**

Very Important Announcement - There will be a joint rally for Victoria Yachts and Shadow motor cruisers over the weekend of 14th - 17th July to be held in Limehouse Basin, London. For further information, whether you would like to join us by boat or by car or public transport, please contact either Richard Saunders (richard@rnsaunders.plus.com) or Ian Rycroft (ian.rycroft@gmail.com) or visit the VSA website (www.victoriashadow.co.uk).

East Coast Social – 25th March – Nottage Maritime Institute, Wivenhoe

The social was very well attended with East Coast yachtsmen, of course, but also included were South Coast yachtsmen and Shadow motor-cruising members from the Thames. The fine sunny day also brought out many of the locals and there were problems at the Rose and Crown trying to cater for so many with some of our members deciding to forgo lunch, which was a pity.

On moving up the quayside to the Nottage Maritime Institute, we discovered that there were to be four different talks that afternoon being given by volunteers from our own ranks. David Macgregor, our East Coast Regional Organiser, introduced the first speaker who turned out to be Richard Saunders, the South Coast Regional Organiser.

Richard and Meryl have a share in and sail a Victoria 30, WYNN, which is based in Chichester Marina. With the help of a good number of illustrations, we were told of both the layout and size of Chichester Harbour, followed by the areas further west; the east and west Solent, the Isle of Wight and Southampton Water being the principal sailing areas. Richard had all the facts to hand and was a good speaker.



Richard Saunders

The next volunteer to take the floor was Ian Rycroft, our Chairman Motor-Boats. Ian took many of his images with a wide angle lens putting the viewer right in amongst the action and just a bit like watching a film in an IMAX cinema!

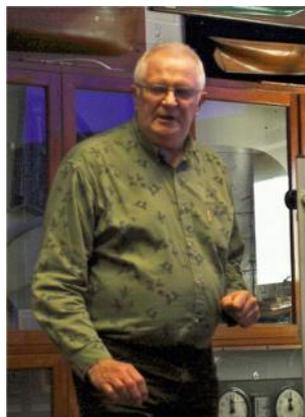
Ian showed us images of Harleyford Marina, where his Shadow 26, WINE DOWN TIME is berthed. The marina is just one part of the impressive Harleyford Estate with its own Manor House. In fact, there is little need to go cruising at all but Henley on Thames is close at hand and all



Ian Rycroft

manner of strange craft may be seen there during the Regatta. Better still, once the Regatta is over you may moor up against their floating barriers in order to attend open air concerts. Ian did not trouble us with too many technical details and hardly mentioned the difficulties of route planning or navigation but stressed that we should enjoy our boating and that the odd glass of wine would not go amiss, from time to time. We were quick to thank Ian for his insight into river cruising aboard the good ship WINE DOWN TIME.

Norman Crawford and Christine Adamson have undertaken some really serious voyages on their Frances 26, MALLARD and you will have read of some of their adventures in Waterlines and the Newsletters, including this current one. Having them speak to us really brought their latest around Ireland voyage, 'Wild Atlantic Way', to life.



Norman Crawford



Christine Adamson

Norman had taken the trouble to bring photographs of the voyage but unfortunately the media on which they were stored was not immediately useable and no computer reader was available. Whilst we should have liked to have seen the photographs, hearing the tales of their numerous adventures first-hand more than made up for the absence of photos. In any case, Norman and Christine had bought a large chart, or map, of Ireland with the track of MALLARD carefully recorded.

Our last talk of the afternoon was by David and Susan Macgregor; well David did the talking and Susan did her best, with a laptop, to keep the images synchronised. We learnt that VICTORIA ROSE started off as CRACKLIN' ROSIE but that was soon corrected. It was David and son, Joe who initially set off for warmer climes of the Mediterranean with Susan joining them a little later. Morocco found greater favour than Gibraltar and the Victoria 30 visited many parts of the Med' before settling on the Ionian Sea in Greece. No photo of David and Susan but they gave us a really good talk.

Chairman, Jon Spencer took this opportunity to present the Best Log Cup to Jonathan Hopper for his log account of his entry in the 'Jester Azores Challenge' aboard his Frances 26, FRANCESCA. Jonathan failed in his attempt to reach the Azores and wisely chose to turn back, as did many others. He sailed his boat safely back to home waters.



Jonathan Hopper

John Cade organised the raffle and we had tea and cakes; chocolate, lemon drizzle and a Victoria sponge, of course. The in-house talks were a really good idea and we all had a great time. Our thanks go to David and Susan Macgregor.