



## AHOY - The Newsletter of the Watermouth Yacht Club

Berrynarbor, Ilfracombe, North Devon, EX34 9SJ  
51° 13' N 04° 05' W

March 2013

Not quite the scene at Watermouth Cove - See article by John Culley



And The anchor-chains his music made  
wind in shrouds and running-gear;

*The Master Mariner. George Sterling*

### Commodore's Column

This will be the last occasion that I have the privilege of writing this column; as at the AGM on 30th March I am passing my Flag onto our new Commodore.

I shall keep it short for two reasons, firstly, thus so far as my thanks to all our members for their support and assistance is concerned at this stage I shall merely express my deep felt gratitude and thanks, as at the AGM, I hope to have the opportunity of expressing this in person.

Secondly because our Editor wants me to, and has a number of articles already and I want to take this opportunity of mentioning something which does not immediately concern the club, but on which I feel very strongly. I am quite prepared for anyone to disagree and tell me I am wrong and I stress this is my personal opinion. A little while ago, I read an article which I considered was very disparaging of the Royal Navy. For me, it is and always has been the best. The author of the article seemed to base his findings on the lack of ships. I think this is incorrect, what is important is the calibre of the seamen who man the ships and examples abound from Drake to more recent times; for example if in doubt, read "Gunboat Command" by Anthony Hitchens and "Beyond Endurance" by Nicholas Barker. I rest my case.

I usually finish with a joke. This time it is one a little longer than usual, sorry Editor.

At a recent NATO meeting three admirals were conferring and discussing the nature of courage. They could not agree.

"I vill show you vat is ze nature of courage", expostulated the German Admiral, summoning one of his seamen to him.

"You see zat 10 metre flag pole over zere? I vish you to climb to ze top, salute, and jump off!"

The German sailor immediately obeyed, ran to the flagpole, climbed swiftly up, saluted smartly and jumped down.

"That is very impressive", said the American Admiral, but let me now show you what we have come to regard as courage in the history of the United States Navy. Summoning an American sailor, he said.

"You see that 20 metre flagpole? I want you to climb to the top of that flagpole, salute twice and jump off".

At the double the American sailor carried out the command, climbed to the top, saluted and jumped off.

"Well, gentlemen, that was a jolly impressive show", said the British Admiral, but I shall now show you the nature of courage as we understand it in the Royal Navy.

Calling to a rating. He told him: "I want you to climb to the top, salute three times and jump off".

"What, me, sir"? responded the rating in a tone of incredulity, "You must be bloody daft, Sir!"

"There, gentlemen", said the British Admiral "we have the true nature of courage".

*John Annear*

## **Easter Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March**

**Boat Race + lunch**

**Lunch served at 1.00 p.m.**

**Race starts at 2.00 p.m.**

### **The Rules**

- 1: All vessels must carry a cargo the length of the course.**
- 2: Maximum overall length of the vessel must not exceed 25 cms (10 ins).**
- 3: No mechanical power is permitted.**
- 4: All entrants must sign in at the clubhouse.**
- 5: All children under the age of 12 years must be accompanied by a responsible adult.**



Prizes for winners and runners up, and for the best dressed vessel.

Contact Moira for details 01271 865001 / [allsford388@btinternet.com](mailto:allsford388@btinternet.com)

## **Spring Carverys at the Clubhouse**



Sundays 12.45 – 1.15 p.m.

31<sup>st</sup> March (Easter)

14<sup>th</sup> April

28<sup>th</sup> April

12<sup>th</sup> May

Two courses of genuinely home cooked food £9.50 p.p.

Contact Moira for details 01271 865001 / [allsford388@btinternet.com](mailto:allsford388@btinternet.com)



**Sea Safety Advice : take up this offer of an informal chat about safety at sea.**

There is no pass or fail.

This is not a check up on whatever equipment or facilities you have on your boat, just for you to consider the options.

Life jacket checks – free advice on how to make sure your lifejacket is up to the job. Don't wait until you or a loved one depends upon it to find out it will fail.

Please give me a ring or email, Moira on 01271 865001 / [allsford388@btinternet.com](mailto:allsford388@btinternet.com)

## Club Cruises 2013

There are 4 weekends with High Water at a suitable time for a weekend cruise so pencil these in your diary. Destinations and start times to be agreed depending on weather conditions and consensus of who wants to go where. See club Notice Board for more details.

	<u>HW</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>HW</u>	<u>M</u>
Sat July 13	09:48	8.3	Sat 10 <sup>th</sup> Aug	08:51	8.8
Sat 27 <sup>th</sup> July	10:05	8.9	Sat 24 <sup>th</sup> Aug	08:59	9.4

## Copperas Challenge

We didn't hold a single race in 2012 due to the 'rotten' weather throughout last summer so I'm hoping it will be better this year and we can have at least a couple of races.

It's not serious racing - just a chance to get a few boats on the water, at the same time, going in the same direction. If you are interested or have any queries, please call Geof on 01271 864100 or speak to Keith at the harbor. Note, the best 3 or 4 results will count towards the trophy so no need to sail every race.

Here are the Start times and 'float' & 'dry' times for my boat, Chaser, (2<sup>nd</sup> row behind breakwater & 1M draft), as a guide to available time and ensure we can complete the course and get back on our moorings before the water disappears!

See you on the water.

	<u>Float</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>HW</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Dry</u>
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup> April	14:42	15:15	16:08	7.8	17:34
Sat 1 <sup>st</sup> June	11:20	12:00	12:43	7.7	14:03
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> June	09:30	10:48	10:48	7.6	12:07
Sat 22 <sup>th</sup> June	15:58	16:30	17:56	9.0	19:54
Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> June	09:34	10:15	11:17	8.3	12:59
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup> July	16:15	17:00	17:56	8.1	19:36
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup> July	14:58	15:30	16:42	8.3	18:26

## Bareboat charter in the British Virgin Islands January 2013

This January six members of the Watermouth Yacht Club were fortunate to have the opportunity to enjoy a bareboat charter in The British Virgin Islands. Starting off as a surprise celebration of our esteemed Harbour master's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, this charter was a sequel to one undertaken in September from Rhodes when we explored the Dodecanese islands of Greece/Turkey.

However this latest adventure had an added dimension as through the auspices of Trevor an arrangement was in place for him to write up the story of our travels for publication in "Sailing Today" magazine. Whilst at the present time, he is recovering from an operation on his hand to correct what he will, with a grin, tell you he suffers from VD. No it is not that VD. I'm certain if you have time he will furnish you with the full Nordic explanation aided and abetted by our other WYC Nordic descendant Steve Baron.



The party consisted of Keith and Moira Allsford, Trevor and Jane Richards, and John and Wendy Culley. The complex arrangements were of course handled by Moira. So on a cold January day a long trip from North Devon up the M5 to pick up John and Wendy at Clevedon en-route to London Gatwick and a stopover at a "Travel Lodge before continuing to Gatwick for an early flight. We boarded the seemingly enormous Virgin Atlantic 747 and were eventually off on the long haul across the pond to Antigua.. On landing at the "V.C. Bird International Airport" we immediately knew we were now in the Caribbean because we were blasted by

Calypso music and handed fruit cocktails, which does quickly put you into a Caribbean mood, however this was quickly distilled when we immediately encountered the local red tape and bureaucracy. As we were taking a connecting flight onto another island we found we were in the wrong queue and were escorted through the airport to join another queue where we were of course sent back to join our original queue (at the end of course) for an endless wait to be seen by a non-existent person at a mostly unmanned desk. Somewhere in this confusion we lost Trevor and Jane for about an hour. However eventually we were all together in the departure lounge trying not to trip over the thread torn carpeting, and duly joined our next flight aboard a small propeller driven plane onward to Beef Island, Tortola. The In-flight magazine of LIAT Airways is not suitable reading for any passengers of a nervous disposition, as the Chairman's introduction reads **"It is very difficult running a cash strapped airline"**

Landed successfully at Beef Island and took a booked minibus taxi to Nanny Cay Marina Tortola, where our boat "Trade Secret" a Bavaria Cruiser 45 awaited us.

We were all extremely jet lagged and tired so decided to remain at the Marina where we were introduced to the boat by the "Horizon" staff and attended the requisite chart briefing whilst others went off to collect provisions for the boat. We dined that evening at "Peglegs" beach bar/restaurant, and the following morning set off across the *Sir Francis Drake Channel* to *Norman Island* (which is where "Treasure Island" is based on) Moored at *Kelly's Cove* thence by dinghy (Rib with 15hp) to "*The Caves*" which are a deservedly well-known snorkeling venue off *Norman Island* reputed to be where the pirates hid the treasure.

Well we certainly found treasure as snorkelling there was literally like being in a tropical fish aquarium, with numerous varieties and large shoals of very exotic fish and corals. We are now all very enthusiastic snorkelers and Moira in particular was quite ecstatic at the experience of being close up to truly exotic and colourful fish and their locale.



Next day we departed the mooring and passing both *Peter Island* and *Salt Island* made for *Cooper Island* where we moored overnight. *Cooper Island* we found to be disappointing.

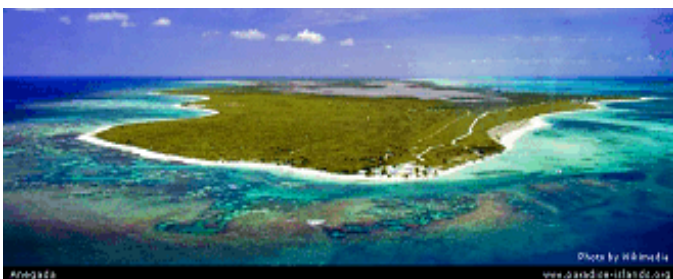
Next day we were off further up the Francis Drake Channel to one of the main islands *Virgin Gorda*, where we berthed at the Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour which is at *Spanish Town*. We explored around this township and whilst searching for the remains of an early cemetery (we never found) we came across a large and really beautiful private resort of "*Little Dix Bay*" (yes it is spelt that way). Now bearing in mind that January- although their Winter time is in fact their high season, and yet this resort and others appeared quite devoid of visitors, and really quite the best bay/beach one could dream of, we had all to ourselves. We dined ashore that evening at the marina bar/restaurant and I must confess greatly overloaded my plate.

An early start to ensure we were able to pick up one of the provided moorings at "*The Baths*" This dramatic area, is truly described as a geological wonder comprised of awe-inspiring granite boulders, which form sheltered sea pools on the beach's edge. a superb and protected area of outstanding beauty at the southern end of *Virgin Gorda* where we moored then dinghied ashore and walked the nature trail and swam/snorkelled.

Then on to the far end of *Virgin Gorda* to pick up a mooring in *Virgin Gorda Sound* at "*Bitter End*" yacht club (actually an exclusive private resort with individual bungalows dotted around the hillside. All very nice but rather expensive.) Here we stayed overnight and in the evening dinghied across to another small island "*Saba Rock*" where we dined whilst watching large Barracuda fish in the underwater floodlit sea. (Yes it is another world) Moira, Wendy and Jane found a mountain trail to explore and I attempted to keep up with them for a while but found stepping up the boulder strewn path in sandals too difficult so returned to help Keith and Trevor support the local bar economy. However on retracing my steps down the trail I met a local man who warned me to "mind the snake" that I had not seen and was about to step on. It was pretty long but thin and later found out the locals call it a Garden Snake but in reality it was I think a Garter snake and is harmless. But I'm still glad I did not step on it. Next morning we dinghied across to "*Gun Creek*" where we were able to restock supplies considerably cheaper than at "*Bitter End*" at the local Buck's store.

For these early days we had experienced NE winds generally at 25-30knts, and now the forecast was for lessening winds, backing to NW. This gave us a promised weather window to visit the outlying coral island *Anegada*.

We enjoyed a cracking close reaching sail surfing at 10knts. (It's on a video) out toward *Anegada*. And en route we passed close to Richard Branson's "*Necker Island*" and could see the burnt out remains of his house destroyed in a fire the previous month (Dec 2012) and from which his mother was apparently rescued by Kate Winslett.



*Anegada* is somewhere we particularly wished to visit and "Sailing Today" magazine had particularly requested we included it in our itinerary if possible. For most bareboat charterers it is "off limits" as the companies like to be sure of your capabilities and to ensure they have back up available in that extended area, but we were permitted to visit as long as we informed the company beforehand. Lying about 20 miles to the North East of the main islands it was named *Anegada* or the "Drowned Land" by the Spanish, *Anegada* is the only coral island in the Virgin Islands' volcanic chain. Measuring 11 miles by three, its highest point is just 28 feet above sea level meaning it remains out of sight until quite close. The approach across the coral reef in crystal clear water is spectacular and the pilot book advised this should be done with the sun high so you can see through the water. Even so keeping an eye on the echo sounder when you have a bulb keel hanging 1.73 m, (5 ft 8") beneath the boat and often just 75mm (3") clearance is quite an experience (luckily little swell). *Anegada*, so glad we went there. What a fantastic place, beaches & reefs, striking coral reefs surround the island, including the Eastern Caribbean's third largest continuous reef, *Horseshoe Reef*. Secluded sandy beaches protected by the sheltering reef we moored off "*Nelson's Treasure*" at *Setting Pt.* and dined ashore at the beachside Pam's Kitchen. We hired a Pick Up and explored across the island (including the inland *Flamingo Salt lakes*) and THE road around island incl. to "*The Settlement*" and to *Cow-wreck bay*, *Jack Bay* and *Loblolly Bay*. (Expensive beer) Saw VERY large (5'0") Iguana run across the road in front of us. Visited Iguana Sanctuary but was closed. Swam and snorkelled off *Nelson's Treasure* and walked to *Pomato Pt.*

*Anegada* is the only coral island in the Virgin Islands' volcanic chain. Measuring 11 miles by three, its highest point is just 28 feet above sea level meaning it remains out of sight until quite close. The approach across the coral reef in crystal clear water is spectacular and the pilot book advised this should be done with the sun high so you can see through the water. Even so keeping an eye on the echo sounder when you have a bulb keel hanging 1.73 m, (5 ft 8") beneath the boat and often just 75mm (3") clearance is quite an experience (luckily little swell). *Anegada*, so glad we went there. What a fantastic place, beaches & reefs, striking coral reefs surround the island, including the Eastern Caribbean's third largest continuous reef, *Horseshoe Reef*. Secluded sandy beaches protected by the sheltering reef we moored off "*Nelson's Treasure*" at *Setting Pt.* and dined ashore at the beachside Pam's Kitchen. We hired a Pick Up and explored across the island (including the inland *Flamingo Salt lakes*) and THE road around island incl. to "*The Settlement*" and to *Cow-wreck bay*, *Jack Bay* and *Loblolly Bay*. (Expensive beer) Saw VERY large (5'0") Iguana run across the road in front of us. Visited Iguana Sanctuary but was closed. Swam and snorkelled off *Nelson's Treasure* and walked to *Pomato Pt.*



Whilst supporting the local bar we met some American live-aboards who had a boat that appeared to be similar to "Spray" (Joshua Slocum's boat), anyway this couple had aboard with them an apparently famous young lady called *Desdemona* (Jack Russell dog) who wears her own designer clothes and sunglasses and had adorned magazine covers. Yes we found it hard to take in but here is the photo showing dog and owner at the bar. We also saw evidence of the wonderful laid back way of life, when *Desdemona's* owner complained that the wooden bar stool he was on was wobbly, the bartender reached behind the bar and handed him a hammer and nails and the guy proceeded to repair his stool. Trevor who at this time was sat next to me also on a bar stool but a metal one wondered if he might be handed an arc welder for his. Returning from *Anegada* we headed for the *Dog Islands (Great Dog, West Dog and George Dog)* which are recommended snorkelling/swimming places, due to the undersea cliffs/reef where we did have a stopover on one of the provided moorings, and duly snorkelled and again saw a variety of exotic fish.



On from there back to Tortola where we planned to stop at *Trellis Bay*, which was a pleasant and quiet bay before they built the airport at Beef Island right upon the beach. The runway actually pokes out into the bay, and the pilot book advises all yachts with masts over 50' high should seek clearance from the control tower prior to entering *Trellis Bay*.

Was our mast above? 50' **YES** Did we get permission? **NO** Does the boat still have a 50' mast? **YES**



We walked the coral strewn white sand beach at *Trellis Bay* and collected various souvenir specimens of fan coral and brain coral and snorkelled the reef at the entrance to the bay.

Next morning we motored out of the bay and across the sound to the picturesque *Marina Cay* island, with its red British P.O. telephone box perched on the wooden quay, where we took on water and some visited the local "*Pussers Co.*" store.

Now en route to the island of *Jost Van Dyke* with a snorkelling stop at *Guana Island - Monkey Pt.* Where we dived and where Moira was passed by a fish larger than herself which we think was either Barracuda or a Tarpon) and Jane lost a valuable watch whilst picking up the mooring but later recovered it by diving. *Clever girl.* Pelicans were diving all around us as we swam. *Jost Van Dyke - Little Harbour* we

dined ashore (Caribbean Barbecue at *Sidney's Love and Peace Bar* where we served our own drinks at the "*Honesty Bar*", delightful meal and bought tee-shirts off the late Sidney's daughter the delightful "*Strawberry*". Moira and Wendy dinghied ashore, to walk the wooded mountain trails. Pelicans again were swooping and diving all around the boat.

*Sandy Cay Island* is a picturesque and protected islet where we moored then swam/snorkelled. Dinghied ashore to explore the *Rockefeller botanical trail*. Saw large numbers of Land Crabs, and lizards in the undergrowth area of the island, and saw (and felt) large numbers of "Fire Ants" that had built large nests in the tree branches and cleverly constructed covered surface tunnels down the tree trunks. Keith managed to somehow negotiate his way around this area barefoot. Snorkeled the coral reef off the glistening white sand beach.

*Cane Garden Bay - Tortola Moored.* Very busy resort due to bussed- in Liner tourists "doing the island". Picturesque buildings, lovely beach bar with live "blues" music, and tourist trap "Rum Distillery" but were dragged off to eat at a beachside burger bar, *poor food and service.* (Never listen to Yanks). Now we needed to round the bottom end of *Tortola* through the *Little Thatch/Thatch Island* passage and closing the island of *St. John* being careful not to cross the invisible line into U.S.A. Virgin Islands waters for which a Visa is required.

*Soper's Hole Marina, Tortola.* Berthed on pontoon. Delightful setting, tucked in behind the small mountain of *Frenchman's Cay*. Dined aboard *Village Cay Marina, Road Town, Tortola*. This is the main port for Tortola and is where the visiting cruise liners deposit their passengers for tours of the island. We found ourselves berthed next to Richard Branson's 105' catamaran "*Necker Belle*" which has a Crows Nest that is entered at Deck Level and then ascends the mast as a lift. Difficulties in berthing due to a cross wind but we missed his boat, thank goodness. Explored the backstreets of Road Town, some old buildings but most were of timber construction and were destroyed by fire following Riots back in 1853, a town-wide fire destroyed nearly every building in Road Town. The fire spread because of angry rioters protested an increase on the cattle tax. Rioters eventually set fire to most of the plantations across the island. We came across one building bearing a plaque entitled "*The Fireproof Building*" as it had survived.



Departing *The Indians* we sailed toward *The Bight*. *Norman Island*. Where we picked up a mooring with much unsolicited advice from nearby American boat, who I think assumed we were all novices on a hired yacht. Keith on the helm was I thought extremely placid and patient. Jane, Moira and John swam out to *Treasure Pt.* accompanied by Keith Trevor and Wendy as support in the rib, and once there we all once again snorkelled with the tropical fish at "*The Caves*" but found no Pirate treasure.

Now it was time to return the boat back to base so we sailed back across the Sir Francis Drake Channel to Nanny Cay Marina where we were required to go the fuel dock

then handover to the "Horizon staff to re berth the boat in her slot which involved reversing all around the marina and I thought was handled very professionally by the staff. (Not sure I could have done it as easy) At pontoon berth overnight and dined ashore at "Peglegs" .

Next morning the long journey home began. Even longer than coming out as this time the small plane operated by LIAT departed *Beef Island* flew to the island of *St. Marten* then onto the island(s) of *St. Kitts /Nevis* before finally reaching *Antigua* for the return Virgin flight home to Gatwick.

It was only on reaching Antigua that we found out just what LIAT actually stands for (*Luggage In Another Town*) when all of us and others were informed that the plane had been too heavy to take off so our luggage had been off-loaded and left behind and would be sent on to the UK on later flights.

That is why you could possibly have seen me on a wet and very cold January morning stood outside Gatwick airport dressed in a tropical tee shirt, shorts and open sandals. But on the plus side as we had no luggage to contend with and therefore no carousels to watch, we were through Gatwick very quickly.

PS. The luggage did successfully follow on and was duly delivered to our homes however sadly we were telephoned by LIAT to report that Wendy's bag had been damaged, and when it duly arrived we could see that really was a bit of an understatement and this is on-going with the help of Nautilus.

A very memorable holiday of a lifetime, with thanks due to Moira for making all the arrangements on our behalf.

**Advice: Should anyone consider doing this then take plenty of dollars, The BVIs are a very expensive area.**

The charter was arranged through **Nautilus Yachting** and the charter was with **Horizon Yacht Charters**.

I have prepared a presentation to be given to the "Bristol Sailors Club at one of their monthly meetings and should be pleased to provide similar at WYC sometime.

The yacht "**Trade Secret**" was a **Bavaria Cruiser 45 with twin wheels and twin rudders**. Lgth 14.27 m, LWL 12.74 m, Beam 4.35 m, Draft, 1.73 m, Sail area 107 sq m, Air Draft 20.75 m, Engine (Volvo-Penta) 53 hp saildrive.

*John Culley*

## Maintenance Report

Spring is here and it is time to put pen to paper. After such a long, cold, wet winter I am sure we are all looking forward to a decent summer.

During the winter I have managed to put down all the loft insulation that we had in stock but we will need to buy some more to complete the job.

Moira made a first class job of framing the photographs and Sue and I have now hung them in the hallway which has made it look much brighter, don't forget that we will need new photographs to judge for next winter.

Apart from the routine jobs there is nothing else to report, Sue and I look forward to seeing you all again soon.

*Simon Kemp*

## Editorial

Happily I have a plethora of articles (two) from Brian Jones one about his new 'Post Boat' a design that used to deliver the post in all weathers in areas NW of Scotland. My apologies to him for not having the space this time.

However I do need a good photo for the front page. Any takers for taking a good dramatic or pretty one of one of the club boats in action?  
My email is [rnmjohnstone@btinternet.com](mailto:rnmjohnstone@btinternet.com)