



Watermouth Yacht Club

Berrynarbor, Ilfracombe, North Devon, EX34 9SJ

51° 13' N 004° 05' W

AHOY



Newsletter December 2015

Commodore's Column

Dear friends,

The end of 2015 is here and has caught most of by surprise no doubt! Personally I have found this year has been rather dismal predominantly because of the weather. I didn't think the summer was particularly 'summery', although when the weather was nice, it was really nice? But did it only seem really nice because the weather on either side was wet, windy and chilly?

I haven't been able to spend time at Watermouth Harbour this year but when I was there I found it so much quieter than I expected. Not just the boating fraternity but visitors generally. There did not seem to be the numbers of campers, walkers or car drivers that we have seen in other years. Where have they gone? Are they going to come back?

Our club has survived another year and remains viable. Whilst the Committee work to maintain the fabric of the building at minimal costs to the club, and whilst we organise and host events it is your support which provides the income which allows us to continue. However, what is missing are the occasions which centre around boating activities. The fishing competitions were poorly supported this year, do we push the boat out (sorry for the pun) and advertise the dates across a wider regional area? As you will read in an article later in this Ahoy, the plight of the club cruises will be highlighted. Do we attempt to host some training courses?, minimum numbers are needed for these.

As always if you have any ideas they are warmly received but remember ideas must be accompanied by commitment.

Shorter this time, the Commodore's Column is leaving space for some excellent contributions from some of you members.

With my best wishes to you all especially at this time of the year when we wish peace to everyone!
Have a happy Christmas and best wishes for 2016.

Moira

Treasurer's Report

Moorings vacated, boats neatly parked, yes it's winter again and it seems far too soon this year! I am pleased to say that despite one-off roof repair costs this year, the club's financial health continues to improve. Costs associated with the roofing repair have been contained and I must express my thanks to Simon for his careful organisation throughout.

Year-end figures are not available at the time of writing but we look to be on track to finish 2015 approximately £2.5K ahead, bringing our cash reserve to around £11K. Audited figures for 2015 will be available early in the new year.

Of course none of this would be possible without the sustained hard work of committee colleagues, who make my job so much easier. A big thank you is well deserved.

May I take this opportunity to wish all members, their families and friends, a very enjoyable Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all again when the days are a little longer.

Steve Barron

Club Maintenance

There is not much to mention on the maintenance front apart from wrapping up the furniture for the winter as I have been too busy at home to do anything recently. The roof has been repaired and seems to be watertight again and I hope that I have managed to stop the leaks over the window. Time will tell.

Sue and I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing you at the club next year.

Simon Kemp

Membership

Welcome to new members:

1. John Carter who has re-joined having bought Bamburian an Albin who is now renamed "Sea Bird", John has been doing a lot of work on her over the summer.
2. Mike Moser with "Bon Avenvre" a Myra Plast,
3. William Strawbridge with "Miss Elaine V US" a Jeaneau Merry Fisher 655,
4. Edward Biggs and his wife who now own "Marie Blair" a MacWester 26, Edward has also been doing a lot of work on Mary Blair
5. Toby Cridland with "Solway Dog" a Sea Dog.
6. Dave Arnold whose boat is "Perteus" which is a Newbridge Navigator

Looking forward to seeing you all in and around the harbour over the next season and in the club.

May Richard and I take this opportunity of wishing you all Seasons greetings and a good 2016 sailing, hopefully with fair weather and kind winds.

Carol, Membership Secretary

AMiTY's voyage to her new home

Well, AMiTy made it to her new 'scrape' down in Portsmouth. For those who want to know she had an amazing 5 day cruise from Watermouth with the 1st leg being the new owners 'shake down'!

I was rather nervous of this as she is a bit of a handful for anyone, but as total newbies to her, the new crew picked it up immediately, talk about fast learners! Whatever was said/shown/pushed/pulled/laid out/put away/oiled/pumped/turned/navigated etc. etc. they got it and remembered it 1st time.

We got to Padstow in very good time as planned and had lots of time to play out in the bays and get some close manoeuvring practice (essential with a big twin screw that hates the rudder under 5 knots), fairly sure Port Isaac were a bit concerned we would come in and cause mayhem but we just kept backing out as nervous twitches could be seen on the fishermen's faces.

Tying off for the first time ended up being text book, I could not have been prouder. It was time to say goodbye and give the old girl a big smacker on the engine room roof... this was going to be emotional. Jay

was there to pick me up and after a huge pasty to get my senses back, we waved our final wave and left her to show the newbies what she could do.

The next leg was simply herculean by any standards and proved the continuous maintenance paid off. This was to see AMiTy pass round Land's End, and then the Lizard, to get up to Falmouth!!

A proper 14hr passage in seas that could only be described as interesting..... they even got a well done from the Land's End look out, praise indeed after a beam to beam short 20' long 4' swell (47' boat through a 20' swell is a bit like being a submarine 50% of the time!).

After bunkering up (another text book manoeuvre by the newbies according to the fuel barge owner) they were away to Salcombe, another 12 hour passage across the bay past Plymouth, they are nothing if not serious!! Eventful seas again saw them at one point hitting two tides at odds and dropping from 9 knots to a worrying 2.5 at full revs for an hour, apparently this turned out to be the longest mile over ground ever recorded. A beautiful and quiet night on a swinging mooring gave a good chance to gather some wits before the next slightly less epic leg.

Off to Poole across Lyme Bay gave them their smoothest passage, an opportunity to actually enjoy the process! They were guided into a pontoon berth at Poole between two huge gin palaces... alarm bells began to ring when a very smart Harbour Master in full uniform came to meet them, this was going to cost £55 for the night! Time to pose on deck then, they had no gin, but beer cans soon began to pile up on the deck table and they made the most of being a proper 'stink pot' between two roses (an old dream I had about doing something similar in Monte Carlo sprang to mind).

Last leg! Off to a quiet muddy creek round the back of Portsmouth via Cowes for another bunkering, again interesting seas.... A consequence of the geology around there means there is often 4 tides a day (lots of rebounding off the Isle of Wight apparently), this particular day had a F5-6 with another 4-5' swell, confused water was the only description. A brief bit of local knowledge passed on by the newbies is to get your fuel from Cowes not Portsmouth, although there is no sense in it, it's cheaper on the island despite having to import it by lorry.... Go figure?

So that was it, AMiTy is now gently settled on soft mud for 8 hrs a day. The ever present maintenance has begun, they're positively spoiling her with hand scrapers and sanding to complete this year's painting schedule, but now she has a whole family who are keen to get stuck in and keep her to the manor to which she had become accustomed to (or hopefully better!).

We will miss that beautiful boat very much, but not the hard work. I have thrown out my old Hockney T-shirts (could have sold them for a fortune) and beginning to get our floating home up to scratch after long years of having serious competition with AMiTy.

Please, if you can, put a pound in the RNLI tin next time you see one and remember that hulking brute that used to live at Watermouth, she'll thank you for it and so will we all.

We still have BamBam our RIB at Watermouth and will still be coming down for long weekends and holidays, just not as often and with no car full of new paint tins. So, see you around and may the wind be at your back, happy cruising.

All the best, Chris

The Confessional



Nothing to share this time, so either we have all been very good or maybe we are too shy to share ?

***Come on, you know you will feel better if you get that mishap off your chest
Please send to geofpierc@tiscali.co.uk***

Watermouth Club Cruise June 2015 - A Report From All The Participants

The tide had about an hour to go before high water, so we were in good time and with full sail set were just able to set St. Govan's Head. The wind was F5 from the west so we were making a good speed and if we held this course would arrive at the Head just after slack water. Hopefully by this time the range at Castlemartin would have finished and there would be no night firing. The wind gods were benevolent and St. Govan's Head was rounded with only a gentle counter tide. It was then possible to ease the sail with slightly slacker sheet and just losing 1.2 knots to the tide by the time Linney Head was rounded. Watermouth Yacht Club Cruise was able to moor on the free pontoon at Dale, one boat, Anastasia, one crew, Alistair.

After a good sleep the wind had veered slightly but was still fresh. Every year I like to go and see the puffins on Skomer. This is partly to see the puffins, but I also love going through Jack Sound. It is the narrow gap between Skomer and the mainland. The tide gushes through it, there is a dog leg of rocks in it, but it is not too bad as there is a clear transit from a rock awash and the edge of Skokholm and then another turn is made near another rock. If you identify the rocks correctly you either struggle through at one or two knots or as I did race through at twelve to fourteen knots. Anastasia had a good washing part way through when we met a standing wave but were then spewed out into St. Brides Bay. There were six large tankers anchored long term in the bay awaiting instructions.

From here it was just half a mile to North Haven where the puffins raft up. There were lots of puffins and as I got closer to the bay hundreds of them. They were flying in classically with bills full of small fish heading for their burrows or flying off to catch more fish. Others were in the water in large groups or rafts. Sadly they would move away when you approach. I only had my phone, no camera and telephoto lens and the pics were not very good. The other sad thing was that the bay was totally exposed to the wind and not safe nor was it comfortable to anchor. Anastasia was headed back to Jack Sound for a return to the comfort of Dale. There was a small hiccup as I misidentified the wrong rock before entering the sound but we are not talking about that as the correction was made just in time and again I raced through the sound.

The next morning was an early start with a fresh wind again but this time the north westerly was a following breeze. After rounding St. Gowan's Head Manorbier range became active and the patrol boat came shooting up after me. Fortunately they said that if I could hold my current course and speed I would just get through before they started. Some boats that were behind were not so lucky and had to go further off shore. It was then inside Caldy and into Tenby, a very friendly little harbour. Later I was joined there by three Ilfracombe yachts that had also had a good sail from Milford Haven.

I was planning on returning the next day but had a text from Rod on Astramare saying he was going to Lundy so I changed my plans and as soon as I floated pointed towards Lundy. The wind gods had changed and brought calm seas and very little wind. It was the iron horse but the sun was shining. All was well until about three miles off when I stopped the engine quickly because the oil alarm was sounding. There was just enough wind to ghost into the Lundy anchorage. There I discovered the bilge was full of oil. With Rod's help I filled a bucket with oil using a sponge but could not see where it had come from. I had some oil but not enough to fill the engine. Another boat moored nearby was so kind and gave me some oil and would not accept anything for it, comradeship of the sea. We changed the oil filter but still did not know what was wrong and did not really want to run the engine. We went ashore and climbed up to the pub to think. After this we went to the south west corner of the island to see the Anthony Gormley statue, his other work was the Angel of the North.



The next morning at six o'clock saw us both pulling up our anchors. The plan was for Astramare to tow me out and hopefully pick up a breeze, then tow me into Watermouth and this is how it happened. A few

dolphins played alongside to cheer us along. So the Watermouth Club Cruise that started with one boat ended in company and relief.

Alistair Bell, Anastasia

Result for Caption Competition No 4



Julia Field

The old super glue joke had worked again

Richard Annear

These twenty year old flares are completely useless - it'll never go off now, here let me show you....

Peter Slade

There's nothing wrong with my divining rod mate!! The sea is definitely in this direction

John Culley

Even Keith's is bigger than that

And the winner, selected by Steve, (without knowing names), is **Peter Slade**

Well done Peter, don't forget this entitles you to a free drink at the Club

Caption competition No 5

Sorry Keith, it's you again



I've run out of pics for future captions so can anyone provide one or two for the next Ahoy ?

Rouselle's Autumn Cruise 2015

It was Monday 12th of October when David Lines and I set sail from Watermouth bound for Padstow. High water that day was 0630hrs and we should have left at 0530, however it was so dark we couldn't see the bows so to avoid hitting the odd vessel on the way out we were unable to leave until 0700hrs. The land forecast that day was fair with an easterly wind of 9mph. We were off Bull point when we received the coastal forecast of N to NE 4/5 increasing 6 later (12-24hrs). After a quick discussion we decided that we didn't want to roll down wind all the way to Padstow and so we changed course.

Plan B was to sail to Milford Haven which at that point was slightly closer and we would be on a reach all the way. Being a little late in leaving meant that our course would be a little further West than usual so that when the tide changed off The Haven, we should be sufficiently far West that we could gradually steer North and take the flood into The Haven. All went well for the first couple of hours and then the wind died and so we had to motor sail. It was a lovely autumn day, blue skies and a slight sea with nothing in sight anywhere. The engine was purring away as we had to keep up around six knots to be on track for the flood tide. We had the odd puff of wind from the North but nothing to assist us in our further passage to the west. We were looking forward to sailing with the tide up to Neyland Marina and having a meal in the restaurant before spending the night outside on the visitors berth. The following day we would take the tide up to Blackpool Mill arriving hopefully before it got too dark.

Low tide at Milford was about 1220 hours and at that time we were 6 miles SW of Linney Head. We had hoped to be due west of there at that time but as we weren't we had to plug about a knot or so of tide as we headed north. The wind and sea were now beginning to pipe up again and it was right on the nose, due north. In the next hour we made four miles over the ground but were still not due west of Linney Head. The flood tide was beginning to be felt as we bashed our way through the seas and head wind and the horizon ahead was getting decidedly darker as if we were in for an early night. We had lunch in the cockpit after we had raised the canopy to keep the spray out. Tomato rolls that David had made and sticky buns were washed down with lots of tea. I wasn't taking any particular notice of what was going on outside whilst we were eating but when I did so I was alarmed by the fact that we were unable to see land either north or east of us and that the sea was black and wild ahead with very steep breaking seas coming towards us. At 1415 hrs we were hit by the southern edge of violent weather with the wind screaming in the rigging. The front of the vertical breaking waves were about seven feet high and jet black. There was water everywhere and we were stopped dead in our tracks. We tried to veer one way and then the other to lessen the impact but we could not make any headway at all. We estimated the wind at F6+ and Rouselle was being chucked all over the place. I thought it was a squall but after 30 minutes we realised that this weather was getting worse and not better and that we were in for a rough time.

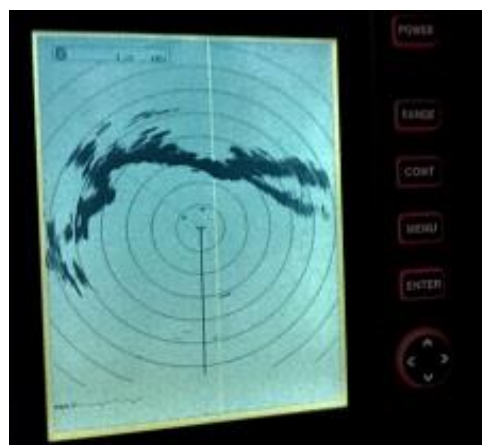
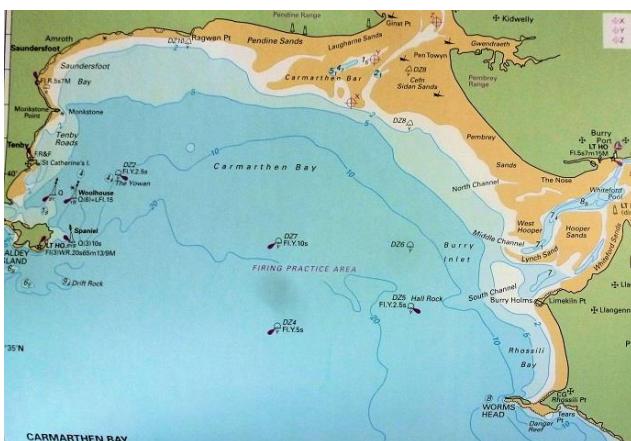
It was obvious that we were not going to get into The Haven against that lot and reluctantly Plan C was put in place. We turned to starboard and set sail for Caldey Island. At first we had a very small amount of foresail and mizzen and the wind was being spilled out of the mainsail. We tried to heave to, to reef the main but she took up the angle of a battering ram which was extremely wet, so then we lay ahull whilst David crawled up on deck and reefed the main. I hadn't realised this but David in all the years we have been sailing together had never reefed this mainsail before. I had always done it. Wrongly, I had probably taken the view that it was easier to do it myself than to show someone else how to. Anyway he did the best he could under the circumstances. We sailed on straight through the Gowan shoals as the sea was just as rough everywhere else as it was there and we were trying to sail ENE against this wind and sea. It was about that time that the engine failed. There is still obviously grit in the tank which had found its way into the fuel system, through all the violent motion even though I had re-sited the take off point three inches off the bottom of the tank. We were about halfway through the shoals when Castlemartin Tank Range called us. As I didn't reply they dispatched a Range Safety vessel to come and have a chat. I usually co-operate with these guys but under those circumstances I was going to maintain our rite of passage and gain every bit of northing that we could get. They were having great difficulty in manoeuvring near us so and eventually they called through a loud-hailer and asked us to go further south which I refused explaining why and so they made their way back to

their buoy off The Gowan Head. Several years ago I overheard a conversation between the skipper of a yacht sailing straight through the range and the range control who were complaining that they had to cease firing until he had passed through and that their squaddies would miss out on their training by doing so. The reply was `Just think how much money they were saving by not firing those expensive shells and littering up the seabed, which I thought that was a good reply.

As we'd lost our engine we were unable to gain sufficient northing in the conditions to get into the lee of Caldey Island and so we headed for Burry Port which is north of Rossili Point or Worms Head in the Gower Peninsula. We were also slowly losing the daylight as we got deeper into Carmarthen Bay and we realised that it would be dark before we could get in anywhere or anchor for the night. The wind and sea was still force 6+ N.N.E. but we were making slight headway by using the heavily reefed jib, mainsail and the mizzen to drive her to windward. I thought that if we could get some shelter from the sand banks ahead of us I would be able to change the fuel filter and drain the water separator which was below the bottom of the engine and that meant standing on my head to reach it. Then we could use the engine to take us to the northwest towards The Towy Estuary. Once in that vicinity it would be totally dark and I would use the radar and lay a course to get us into Saundersfoot Harbour. That was plan D.

The sea did drop a little when we were near the entrance to Burry Port and I did manage to change the fuel filter etc., get the engine running again which was a relief. By then it was totally dark with no moon and I switched on the Radar to see exactly where we were in relation to everywhere else and to plan our next move. We tacked through the wind and headed NNW towards the Manobier Range. By using the engine we were able to drive her through the seas and yes, gradually the sea went down in height and we knew then that even if we couldn't get into Saundersfoot, we could at least anchor close to the northern shore for the night.

By looking at the photos you can see on the top left hand side the wide curve of Saundersfoot Bay.



Our position is at the centre of the rings and everything on the screen is north up. On the Top Left you can see that the screen range is set at 6 miles and that the distance between the rings is one nautical mile. Going back to the centre you will see that there is a mark, approximately one ring north of our position. We didn't know at that stage whether it was a buoy or a boat. Likewise on the left there is another mark which we didn't know what it was but if these move, then we will know that they are not buoys as they don't move (or they shouldn't do). You can see that we are just over two nautical miles from the land ahead of us. You can also see there are two areas of land shaped like a V on its side. The nearest land is the exposed edge of Pendine Sands and the one beyond it is the land of the Manobier range. Now going back to the centre again you will see a faint line going from the centre of the screen, away to the north west of the bay. I put that line there as that was our course to the Harbour. All we had to do was to sail down this line, taking a course between the two marks so we didn't hit them whatever they were and we would arrive at the harbour. The Radar signals were our eyes. Outside we could not see anything at all except the loom of our masthead tricolour light and a few intermittent lights ashore. Later we learnt the mark on our left was an unlit range marker buoy and the one ahead was a fellow fishing from an unlit yacht. When we were about a mile from

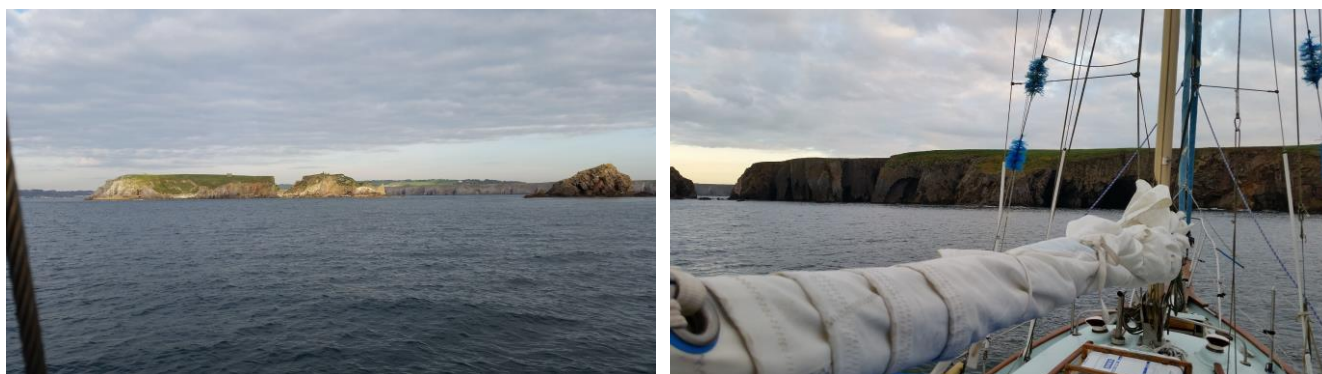
the harbour we tried to find the intermittent red light marking the harbour entrance. Unfortunately the entrance was next to a car park and there were several red lights but by the careful studying of these lights David was able to establish where the entrance was. The directions for entry at night were to enter between two hours either side of high water and to approach coming from the South, however we were approaching from the East two and a half hours after high water but we managed to see the entrance with the aid of our searchlight and one of the two unlit buoys, a red port hand buoy. By steering north and then east we entered the harbour. Our echo sounder showed that we had a foot under the keel so we turned to starboard and rafted up alongside a moored yacht. It was a wonderful feeling to be inside and out of the wind and sea and we celebrated by having a nice hot cup of tea. The log showed that we had travelled 109 miles since our earlier departure from Watermouth and most of that was with the aid of a Spring tide.



The next morning we moved over to the quay and tied up against a ladder in the wall. The weather was gorgeous, very warm with clear blue skies and no wind at all. We had a word with the very friendly harbour master and found that visitors fees were only ten pounds a night and if we wanted anything at all such as weather charts, they would be provided free of charge. Showers could be obtained at the yacht club on the quay. We had advice of the best places to eat and drink and we set off to wander around the village. Saundersfoot had increased in size since my last visit 25 years before. Tesco's were there and several shops, pubs, restaurants and fish and chip outlets. David had a pit stop in a local pub and learnt that we were the first visitors to the harbour in 4 years!

We had decided to go to Saundersfoot as it was sheltered in a northerly whereas there was no shelter in a north or north east wind at Tenby and nothing on the north side of Caldey Island either. It's a very welcoming area and everyone was smiling and happy. The harbour has four visitors' buoys in a prime level position together with space for three vessels against the North harbour wall. The harbour itself was a real suntrap and it was as warm there as on a summers day. We stayed another day there to savour the delights of the area but we had to be back in Watermouth on Friday as David had a commitment with a pheasant shoot on the Saturday. As the weather was set fair all week we decided to cross the channel on the Thursday and hoped that there would be sufficient wind to enable us to sail all the way.

To shorten the return journey we sailed from Saundersfoot to Sand Top Bay on the SW side of Caldey Island on the Wednesday evening. The wind was still in the northeast so we could gain some shelter in the lee of



the rocky headland on the west side of the bay.

We had seen no other yachts at all on our mini cruise and that night was no exception. As the darkness fell all we could hear was the Atlantic swells pounding into the west facing caves. We knew the time of high water and by noting the depth of water on our arrival and again one hour later we were able to establish, by using the twelfth's rule, the depth of water at low tide. As that gave us only four feet under our keel we re-anchored in a slightly deeper spot so that we could be assured of a peaceful night. On a previous cruise I had calculated that the tidal range on a spring tide at Tenby was 22 feet and that was the same as our calculations on this night.

I sleep in the aft cabin of Rouselle and the following morning I was awakened at around 8am by David with a cup of hot tea. What a marvellous fellow he is and what a wonderful way to wake up. The sun was shining and the sea was blue, well greyish blue, and the gentle wind gave us promise of a good day ahead. We had a goodly breakfast and were reluctant to leave such a peaceful spot but at around 1000hours we raised the anchor, backed the foresail and sailed away in the direction of Bull Point on the last two hours of the ebb tide. It was interesting to note that on this occasion David and I worked out a course, independently, to arrive at Watermouth after a 6 to 7 hour passage. He did it the correct way as taught by the RYA on a Yacht master's course and I did it my way which is a simplified practical way which is basically self-taught. We had both taken account of the wind direction which was given as north easterly F3-4 and we both arrived at exactly the same direction, namely 140 degrees.

I had recently bought a Samsung diggery-do (Smartphone) chosen because of its very high quality camera lens, it is waterproof and all the instant weather forecasts for anywhere, land or sea and all the other information from around the world are at your fingertips. All the photos were taken on this trip with the diggery-do and my poor Nikons remained in their bag.

We'd been sailing for about one and a half hours when we were surrounded by hundreds of Dolphins. Not that that was unusual but what was unusual was the vast numbers of young Dolphin's swimming alongside their mothers. I have never seen so many young Dolphins before and that was a very welcome sight. These animals are so human in their way and they love human company and will actively seek us out, and swim all around the boat watching our every movement. I know there are steps afield to try and understand their squeaks and other noises and it will be a huge step forward when we can understand and even communicate with them in some way.



That large group or super pod of dolphins gradually left us as they were all travelling northwards and unfortunately they took the wind with them. As you can see from the above photo the sea went totally flat and we had to motor all the way back to Watermouth. However to compensate for the lack of wind, the sky

remained cloudless and the sun shone all the way down to the sunset which was at 1817 hours. We hadn't quite reached Watermouth by the time it got dark but we knew where the entrance was. However we were in for a surprise for as we came up to the entrance in total darkness with no moon or other heavenly bodies to give us light; the entrance had melded into the background and I had to really look for known rocks before we could safely enter. When someway inside the entrance we picked up the minute glow of the leading lights but you had to know where they were before you could see them. We crept up the harbour without hitting anything and picked up our buoy just inside the breakwater.

The following day Keith craned Rouselle out as I have to get the grit out of the fuel tanks and that may mean removing the engine before I can remove the tanks. If that is the only way, Keith will lift out the engine and I will take it to Beta Marine in Gloucestershire in my trailer and let them give it the once over before I put it back.

We had enjoyed a marvellous mini cruise in an unexpectedly fine period of weather after a disappointing summer and we look forward to many more cruises in the future.

Brian Jones

It is with great sadness I tell you of the loss of two club members in recent months.

Dave West - Bembridge Rover

Dave was a long time member of both Watermouth and Ilfracombe Yacht Clubs and was a familiar figure seen aboard and around his beloved Bembridge Rover. He was often seen in and around the harbour and in the club with partner Dell. Although in recent years he has not enjoyed the best of health, he had been seen most recently, cycling, swimming and even horse riding on occasions! He still had ambitions to sail his yacht in and around the Bristol Channel.



Dave Little - Coquet

Dave was also a long time member of Watermouth Yacht Club and of Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua Club.

Being an Exmoor man, he had so many tales to tell and enthralling memories of living on the moor as a child. Most of us remember Dave for the work he completed to return Coquet to a seaworthy condition and indeed took around Land's End and across to the French Canals. I think Dave Little was someone who had absolutely no idea the fascination his life experiences, the people he had met and the anecdotal stories he sometimes told held for the rest of us.



With both gentlemen passing suddenly and unexpectedly, our heartfelt condolences go out to both Dell (King) and Pauline (Little).

Moirra