

## GCCC Summer Cruise 2015 - Channel Islands

Five boats (Kik, Troika, One and All, Emmalyn and Shibumi) left Portsmouth between 0400 and 0500 on Saturday June 6th bound for Cherbourg. All had a great sail with wind W 15 to 20 kts and a spring tide. Clive with Quickstep left Yarmouth on Sunday morning. He had to motor sail with wind light from NE, but arrived in time for pontoon drinks (with canapés thanks to Jane Barbour) and dinner in the yacht club on Sunday evening.



Not surprisingly, with 25kt NE forecast until Thursday, Alderney was off the itinerary on Monday. Braye would have been very uncomfortable. Instead the fleet set off from Cherbourg early Monday afternoon bound for Guernsey, aiming to catch the back eddy to arrive at the Alderney race as the tide turned south.



All went well until Cap de la Hague when the wind turned light but the tide was still weak. All boats resorted to motor sailing in the end although One and All carried her light weather headsail to good effect south of Alderney and Quickstep managed to get to the Little Russell using his asymmetric before starting his engine. All

boats arrived within an hour of each other.



We had "booked" the outside walk ashore pontoons and after some confusion about the existence of this booking, and some interesting manoeuvring by the longer keeled members of the fleet, we were all rafted up.

But it was a rather uncomfortable night in the east-facing harbour, with boats pitching up and down and warps snatching. It could have been worse, we could have been in Alderney!

On Tuesday, when the cill opened we all moved into the Victoria marina, after some warping around of a few boats. Jayne arrived by plane to join Emmalyn. Then for the next three days crews enjoyed the delights of Guernsey using variously bicycles, buses and boats (ferries) to visit different parts of the island and its attractions. One party visited Herm by ferry and reported finding a welcoming beer festival. At least one other party followed the next day. Several crews patronised various restaurants and bars as well as the fishmonger on the quay (spider crabs to die for according to one boat). On Wednesday evening the Commodore hosted a pontoon party (with more

delicious canapés from Jane) and we then all walked to the Guernsey Yacht Club where we enjoyed dinner and their spectacular view across the harbour entrance.



Throughout the time in Guernsey the weather was sunny but the wind was strong and north easterly, and rather cold for June. Mountain Warehouse by the harbour had a timely sale so did rather well by some crews. On Thursday afternoon four boats left the Marina to moor in the harbour and so avoid an early start the following morning. Thursday evening saw thunder, lightning and torrential rain, just in time for drinks on the pontoon! All 16 piled onto Kik to shelter. But by then the wind had eased off.

Friday morning was still air, with poor vis and lots of rain. Quickstep and Emmalyn left the Marina in the small hours and Emmalyn motored to Sark for breakfast. The rest of us set off for Jersey at a more reasonable time, but it was the donkey all the way. At one point we had the Condor fast ferry chasing us out of the murk at 34kts whilst a French cat ferry was approaching in the opposite direction, moving sideways at 23kts according to the AIS on One and All, to add some interest to an otherwise dull trip. It was reported that Troika saw a dolphin but corroboration was sadly lacking. Eventually everyone safely berthed in St Helier marina for more rain, although it cleared up by late evening.

Saturday turned into a beautiful sunny day. Leon and Jane hired a scooter and were seen at various places around the island. A crew change on One and All went smoothly with the Commodore departing on the morning flight to be replaced by David Gallagher who arrived just in time for dinner. Everyone convened at St Helier Yacht Club in the evening for drinks on the terrace overlooking the harbour, followed by a fine meal. They did us proud, in spite of being very busy that evening.



Sunday was an early start to get over the cill. Quickstep and Shibumi hung around whilst the rest punched tide through the Violet Channel around to the east coast picking up buoys for lunch at Gorey (Troika), or inside St Catherine's breakwater (Kik, Emmalyn and One and All). Next stop Cateret which turned out to be a very nice sail, past the Iles de Chausey and with the wind improving in strength and direction as the afternoon progressed. All boats arrived early evening, just before the top of the tide - careful planning by our ever efficient cruise director Gareth as there had been some doubts about repair work on the cill gate, but at high water there is clearance over the adjoining sea wall (allegedly!). But arriving when we did that didn't need to be put to the test and the fleet all enjoyed a quiet night in the very comfortable marina.

Monday was another fine day and with no sailing plans crews went their own various ways, exploring the town, replenishing stores or otherwise enjoying being in France



again. In the evening crews met at the Carteret Yacht Club and were welcomed by a flag officer M. Remy Lepoittevin and the Harbourmaster. Yacht Club burgees were exchanged with due ceremony and crews enjoyed pre-dinner drinks in the very friendly bar before enjoying a convivial barbecue supper on the quayside. And Jane excelled herself with canapés fashioned in the form of Shibumi!

Tuesday required a relatively early start close to high water at 0807 for the short sail to Dielette. On the approach to Dielette Troika was escorted by a large school of dolphins playing around their boat and this time Alison took the photos to prove it!



Having safely negotiated the small nuclear power station and a large fleet of small dinghies crewed by small children (under the watchful eyes of a couple of RIBs) the Guildford fleet all arrived in time to enter the inner basin and find comfortable berths on the visitor pontoons. Dielette whilst a pleasant marina has little to offer besides. Some crews walked or biked into Flammanville, but didn't find very much more there.



However later in the afternoon Clive on Quickstep hosted one of his now legendary teas, with home made cakes, much enjoyed by all. In the evening the crews re-assembled at the L'Escale restaurant and confirmed its reputation for some of the best Moules frites ever experienced, and they just kept coming.....

instead on Wednesday morning, bound for Alderney. Most started under motor but were soon able to hoist sails and beat across the race to eventually round the northern tip of Alderney to reach Braye by midday. Plenty of visitor buoys were available. Crews quickly tidied up and called up Mainbrayce to take them ashore for the afternoon. Some explored St Annes whilst others ventured further afield (by foot or bicycle) to see the island, including the magnificent Gannet rock off the south-west coast. Crews met at Alderney Yacht Club for a drink before going their own ways for dinner. This was the last evening the whole fleet would be together.



That night the rain came in and by Thursday morning it was very murky with visibility no more than a few hundred metres, at times. Kik and One and All departed early bound for Cherbourg, albeit barely in sight of each other until the visibility improved. Troika left soon afterwards bound for Yarmouth. They had a fine sail by all accounts reaching Yarmouth early evening. Kik and One and All experienced quite unpleasant sea conditions to the north of the Race but arrived in Cherbourg before midday, being cheered by the sight of a

dolphin in the Grande Rade. A quiet afternoon ensued before drinks on Kik and a delightful meal ashore.

One and All set sail on Friday morning bound for Gosport. They spent the morning somewhat headed by the Northerly set in the wind. However it backed westerly in the afternoon increasing in strength to provide fine sailing from then until arrival in time for dinner. Kik departed on Saturday and made a fast passage under motor back to Gosport. Meanwhile Quickstep, Emmalyn and Shibumi had all stayed an extra day in Alderney enjoying the sunshine before making their respective trips back across channel from there on Saturday.



In concluding this report the writer on behalf of all participants in the GCCC Summer Cruise 2015 would like to acknowledge and thank Gareth and Isabelle for their leadership and the time and effort they spent on its planning and organisation.