

# Storrar Marine Newsletter

September 2008

Apparently all famous writers suffer from it, also some not so famous (like me) writers block! Having sat staring at the computer screen for an hour there was only one thing for it, small coffee & a very large glass of port, or two. That's better, thanks Jen, here we go..... Well our long weekend 'mini break' late July helping (or was it hindering) Peter & Sue' take their yacht Schuuper thru the Caledonian Canal, was brill! **However** the trip did start badly what with the train taking us to Inverness on the Friday & only an hour from our destination 'losing an engine' as the guard told us, How do you lose an engine, does it fall off, run away, get kidnapped or just disappear into thin air. **Then** finally got to the boat which was moored in the marina at Muirtown, Peter & his elder brother had sailed it up from Amble two weeks ago. Dropped our bags & ran to the Clachnaharry pub, Apparently phone call earlier that week had established food available till ten, however what they omitted to say was that orders had to be in by nine & as it was ten past nine & even thou we had 'lost an engine' no way Jose. Followed a team debate, boys won, we went down the 'other' menu (what else could we do). My evening meal consisted as far as I could remember of six different pints of real ale, four pkts of crisps, one of pork scratching & a pepperoni. Sat morning feeling a little bilious, must have been the pepperoni! Got up at seven for an early start and guess what, the road bridge before the first loch does not open till the rush hour is over. Rush hour on a Saturday? They say things happen in three's!

Fabulous scenery, glorious sail down Loch Ness, 'stumbled on Thierry & Evelyn in Loch Lochy, charming French couple who had worked for us earlier in the year (they were on route to join the whisky cruise) Quote of the canal came from Mrs L who when asked by a Japanese tourist what she was doing during our ascent at Fort Augustus replied 'not sure but according to the skipper, what ever I'm doing, I'm doing it badly'!

**PS** the prawn sarnies on Oban pier are to die for, the hot smoked salmon ones too & guess what being over sixty does have at least one compensation, paid only £14-95 train fare Oban to Glasgow then down to Newcastle, no lost engine either!



## WAYNE'S WHEELIE BAG

We take great pride stocking in depth, foul weather gear, casual clothing & of course accessories from all well know & respected manufacturers, inc Musto, Henri Lloyd & Gill. By stocking these and other well known brands 'returns' tend to be few and far between. However the other week customer Wayne Dodwell brought in a Gill Rolling Jumbo bag looking worse for wear. Wayne who flies all over the world servicing cranes located on ships, oilrigs, docks etc uses this bag to carry his gear. Including hard hat, riggers safety boots, overalls, gloves & a few changes of clothing. After a flight from Panama to Huston he discovered that the semi rigid plastic base containing the wheel assembly in the bottom of the bag had split. Having to wait some six hours for his 'lift' to materialise he e-mailed Gill in the UK, explained what had happened saying also that he thought it had possibly been crushed in transit. Send it back to us once in the UK was the response he got from customer services, use our free post service, well he brought it into the chandlery explained what had happened; we then sent the bag off not expecting a positive outcome however by the end of the week a new bag had turned up. WELL done Gill. Incidentally Wayne did tell us that he was not holding out much hope as he was convinced it was NOT a warranty issue.

## A LITTLE DRIP

Had a customer in early August complaining of water in his fuel, had found some in his water separator trap, thought it may have come thru when he filled his tank up he told me. He had another water 'issue' three weeks later just two days after a bout of heavy rain so he bought his fuel filler cap into



the chandlery wondered whether I could get a new rubber O ring for it. Before we went down the O ring route (truth was I didn't have the correct size) I attached a piece of the hose to the filler & started to pour water down. Cap leaking like a sieve, incidentally the boat was only four years old!

## BAIRN ROUND BRITAIN

During our trip thru the canal we 'befriended' a charming young student Alasdair Boden who was sailing round Britain in his 19ft yacht Selkie. As can be seen from the picture of Schuuper during her descent into Corpach Sea Loch he always seemed to make a beeline for us at each lock. I wonder if it was the lure of bacon sarnies, cups of tea, the cold beer(s) or the ice cream. A month later I read in our Sunday paper that he had finally completed his 2000 mile voyage & amongst his many adventures had survived a near sinking off the Welsh Coast. Apparently he is the youngest man to sail solo round Britain, sadly he has put his boat up for sale as he cannot afford the upkeep. Also transiting the canal was another South Coast sailor making his way round Britain, he was at times sailing single handed, his J boat can just be seen astern of Schuuper. As we descended Neptune's staircase the sound of bagpipes could be heard from inside his cabin, we think it was a recording, but will never know!

## DROWNING RAT

Thanks to Terry Moody skipper & builder of Vicky JO IV & his crew having a singular lack of success when out fishing on the weekend of the Sunderland Airshow the two occupants of the Drowning Rat a sixteen foot powerboat lived to tell the tale! Terry & crew had been wreck fishing some twelve miles out from the river Tyne with nothing to show for their efforts, one of the lads suggested late in the afternoon that perhaps they should try their luck in the vicinity of the mine buoy near St Mary's lighthouse. After half an hour without a bite & the fog even thicker they decided to call it a day. With radar operating & visibility of only 20mtrs he made what turned out later to be a life saving decision, namely have one crew member on the bows, another on the flybridge to keep a careful watch for lobster pots. About three quarters of a mile off the North pier one of the two lookouts heard a noise, possibly shouting which the crew thought may be coming from the beach or the pier. Stopped engines & heard someone calling for help fairly close by, suddenly out of the fog they spotted two men with no lifejackets on clinging to a fuel can. As the Vicky Jo has high top sides, Terry decided to launch the rubber dinghy to retrieve the men & get them back first to his newly built swim platform (pic shows Terry standing on it) and then up onto the deck. When they reached the men, who had been in the water for almost three hours after their boat sank off Sunderland, they had great difficulty in getting them into the tender.

One of the men was in such a bad way he had to be lashed to the dinghy before they made their way back to Terry's motor cruiser. As the 'Drowning Rat' had already been reported overdue, the Tynemouth lifeboat which had been already launched & had been searching the area South of the piers & up towards Roker (apparently the crew of the 'Drowning Rat' had been on a 'half hour trip out' to watch the air show) took the two men off the Vicky Jo. Realising their condition was life threatening, core temperature was way down, the lifeboat crew made the decision to call up the chopper and get them air lifted to hospital. With the visibility being so bad the helicopter crew had to use thermal imaging to locate the lifeboat. The story does have a happy ending; they survived. Well done to Terry & his crew, the Tynemouth lifeboat crew and the aircrew from RAF Boulmer.



## UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

'SO is it the case that some fifteen years ago you diversified into industrial sewing & rigging as a means of keeping the cash flowing thru the **winter** months?'

'Yes it's true'

'Well how come your team ended up 'down south' in the middle of the fitting out season at Plymouth University?'

It's a long story, but over a year & a half ago we were contacted by the architects who had designed the Durham & Gosforth indoor cricket academies. They had been impressed with the two projects we had completed on time & on budget for their clients. A series of fabric blinds held in tension with rigging wire, the effect was to stop direct sunlight falling on the indoor bowling pitches, would we be interested in working with the contractors tasked with building the new university building at Plymouth, similar theme keeping direct sunlight from 'overheating', students on the floors below. Yes we said, on one condition & that is we are off site before the end of Feb, before the sh\*\* hits the fan. i.e. start of the season.

Well end of Feb came and went. Richie our rigger extraordinaire had to drop everything & fly back to the UK & thank goodness we had a spare set of hands in Thierry our French 'gofor.' As for the sail loft crew, well done, a superb set of 'sails' computer designed & laser cut for accuracy & of course sewn with skill!

Our sail loft crew & riggers are without a doubt a very talented crowd, should you be planning this autumn a re rig, replacement rigging or interested in new sails, perhaps a new spray hood please give us a call we have a healthy order book, but are always looking for work. Guess what, we do prefer not to travel too far!



## FLASH THE CASH

Don't forget if you are off to the Southampton show later this month & you are tempted to buy a high value item like a bow thruster, maybe a windlass, new winches, perhaps a furling system at the Show before you flash the cash/write the cheque or punch in the pin give us a call. Nine times out of ten we can match or better that 'Boat Show offer' you don't have to transport it back and remember, we are local & not 'here today, gone when the show goes' We value your repeat business, should you need any help in setting up your gear we can offer first class advice and in the unlikely event of a problem occurring we will fight your corner! If its electronics and you are down at the show for the first few days & after a

plotter, perhaps a fish finder, maybe a radar? Staff Member Phil is representing the Marine Store on the Garmin stand (no G26) on Fri 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> Then jumps ship to the SM electronics stand (no G098) on the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Alternatively give Andy a bell on the usual number (0191 2661037) or by calling in to the Marine Store.



## Aunty Foulin's problem corner

**Dear Aunty Foulin,**

Last autumn my boyfriend told me that some of the best days on the water can be found in the close season, trouble is I don't mind the daytime but come the late afternoon when we are tied up (the boat that is, in case you wondered) I would like a little bit of home comfort.

**Dear Freezin Freda,**

Why don't you give that handsome & polite young man Andy at the Marine Store a ring, he could help you choose the correct Eberspacher heating system to suit your boat & budget. Should your man not be of a practical nature he could arrange for the Marine Store to install it.

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