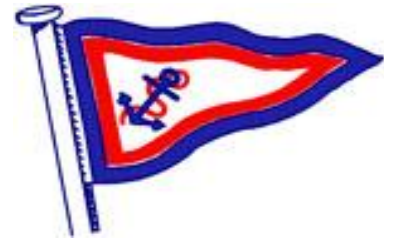


# EAST COAST NEWS



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*East Coast News is the newsletter of the East Coast Yacht Division of the Civil Service Sailing Association*



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**Brian Barnes, long serving Captain, ECYD**

It is with enormous thanks the club now has to say au revoir to Brian Barnes as he steps down from the Captaincy of ECYD after many years as the driving force.

The club originated from the sailing club of the Building Research Establishment at Watford, more years ago than Brian might wish to remember, but he was part of the founding group of enthusiasts and took the club onto greater heights becoming Captain in those early days when organisation was in it's infancy and the first boat was still new in its berth.

Over the years he has been Captain much of the time, alternating twice with Jean Rehill when she gave him a break from the hot seat.

Brian's background in accountancy at the Treasury, and later as Finance director of the War Graves Commission may have helped in deciding the purchase of the yachts on behalf of the CSSC.

He was instrument in boat selection and detailed the layout as needed for club's use. His most recent and last boat selection was "Freyja of Orwell", a first rate, Najad 380 ocean passage maker, which, it is rumoured, nearly broke the bank so it was decided this one would have to last ten years instead of the usual five.

**An old lady . . .**

She is now an old lady rising eighteen, but nobody wants to change her, and she will doubtless answer the call of the club and uphold Brian's foresight for more years to come.

Purchase of this boat entailed a couple of visits to Sweden and collection from the factory when launch day arrived for delivery to Shotley.

No shortage of crew on this trip.

During his tenure Brian made numerous delivery trips across the North Sea and he knows intimately the standing mast route through the Dutch canals, a berth in his crew was always very worthwhile as his knowledge of restaurants and watering holes along the route is second to none.

In his spare time Brian tutored navigation classes at the local education centre for some years until, sadly, the council priced the courses out of most pockets.

Brian did hold a couple of courses for a select few and is ready to help if any small groups want to take advantage of a course under the tutelage of an enthusiastic sailor.

He also ran taster sails in the early days for any budding seafarers on the club boats and acted as mate on later Boat Handling weekends offering navigation help as a bonus.

**Gentle persuasion to join the ECYD**

All these activities came with gentle persuasion to join the ECYD and take part in seetime charters and club activities.

We now have quite a lot of long-standing members who owe their enthusiasm and ability to the grounding received from Brian.

As a coeliac he has always had to be extremely careful about his diet and when in restaurants, sailing around the Baltic, France, Spain etc., he had diet sheets in various languages which were always well received and acted upon with great care and I never saw any misunderstanding by a restaurant which must be an accolade for the translation.

When at home his weekends are taken up with activities at his village church, St. Bartholomew's hidden away in the Chiltern hills, where he is a committee member and churchwarden.

He has been married to Margaret for 50 plus years and they have two sons and three grandchildren, could be future sailors in training perhaps?

He recently became Zoom proficient communicating with both church and ECYD members during lockdown.

Lastly the Club has much to thank Brian for over the years, his enthusiasm and drive has made the club into the great family of friends we now embrace, and I wish him well for a long and happy retirement.

Keep sailing though Brian and enjoy your next trip to the Baltic.

*Vic Crawshaw*



## The 2022 Programme

Freyja spent the 2022 Long Trip based near Oban on the West Coast of Scotland. Those who sailed there enjoyed interesting sailing where tides and currents are every bit as demanding as those around the Channel Islands. Unfortunately, for almost half the period, Freyja sat tied to a pontoon as no members chartered her.

In July's CS-Sailing, there was an article from Steve Strange about their trip.

The crew bringing her back to Ipswich had to leave Freyja in Sunderland. Four experienced sailors joined Freyja in late September to bring Freyja back to Ipswich on a non-stop trip.

With a following wind, Freyja set off from Sunderland, observing wind farms, oil fields, gas fields all well-lit. At about 0230 on our first night, motoring in windless conditions, we bumped an unlit fishing buoy – probably masking a Lobster pot. It took about 5 minutes to realise that we had stopped moving and that we could hardly move the rudder.



*Freyja's return from Inverness was delayed by severe weather in the Moray Firth*

After some time discussing options (we did not want to do anything too adventurous in the dark) we radioed an "All-ships" to warn them of our position and that we were involuntarily attached to the seabottom (some 42m below us!). We repeated this radio call several times and, having not received any acknowledgement from the Coast Guard, we were delighted to be called up by a cargo vessel.

While investigating the problem, one of our crew had slipped in the cockpit and had bruised his back – as well as being in a 'Distress' situation, we also had a potential injured crew member. They relayed our situation to the Humber Coast Guard.

Eventually, the Humber Lifeboat was launched as was the Coast Guard helicopter.



At about 0430, we were relieved to hear the helicopter and communicate the details of our predicament to them. There was discussion about lifting our casualty off Freyja or transferring him to the Lifeboat.

Around 0530, the Humber lifeboat arrived and agreed to give us a tow astern on our reciprocal course. After some 30 minutes of slow astern tow, we still could not move the rudder; we discussed this with the lifeboat, and we agreed to cast off the tow to find out if we were now free of the bottom.

Almost immediately, the rudder was able to move freely, so we checked Freyja's steering by doing circles under power both to port and to starboard, and also proceeding at about 5knots through water.

The Coast Guard helicopter had decided that a casualty airlift would be difficult as Freyja was rolling; the lifeboat also felt that a transfer to the lifeboat would also be an unnecessary risk. It was suggested that we should proceed to Grimsby where our casualty could be transferred to hospital. Had we gone to Grimsby, we would have had to wait until early evening before we could enter the dock and disembarked the casualty; our injured crewman felt that he would deal with the pain using analgesics.

As everything appeared to be OK with Freyja and our crewman was reasonably comfortable, we set a course for Lowestoft. The lifeboat decided to remain with us for about an hour to make sure that we were all right.

The rest of the journey home was uneventful, and we docked in Ipswich at 1630 after some 54 hours of sailing and motoring. We ate and drank well that night.

Our thanks to the RNLI and Humber Lifeboat station for all their help. (Donations have been made to RNLI and we have contacted Humber Lifeboat station to thank them.)



*When Freyja was lifted some weeks later, there was a significant amount of rough rope around the prop shaft – the rope cutter had done its job. There was no damage to the rudder, although the leading edge had had quite a lot of antifoul worn off. The VHF antenna may have had some corrosion which may have affected the range of our transmission; it is being replaced.*



*The Hartlepool lifeboat*





**The 2022 Programme continued**



*leaving Hartlepool at sunrise*



*Arriving Moray Firth at sunset*



*Alongside Fort Augustus*



*The 2022 crew arrives at Inverness*



For 2023, Freyja's Long Trip will take her to the Baltic, starting from Ipswich on 15 May. The Long Trip programme includes several periods when Freyja will have berths available for Sea-time sailors. If the programme shows SEATIME, please contact [crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk). Any skippers on the Long Trip who have space for additional crew, please inform both YachtSec ([yachtsec@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:yachtsec@ecyd.org.uk)) and Crew Bureau ([crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk))

For those members who are not members of a regular crew, sea-time provides opportunities to sail with different Skippers and see different ways of working the yacht. For the early part of the season, from 1 April to 12 May, Freyja will offer Taster sails, Boat Handling courses, some sea-time specifically for RYA YM(Offshore or Coastal) who aspire to become CSSA Approved Skippers, and for Day Skippers and comp crew to gain experience at the same time.

There are also periods available for Charter. CS-Sailing (October 2022) had pictures of previous Baltic trips. Full details of the early season and the Baltic Trip are on the ECYD web-page.

Many of the Baltic charter skippers may have opportunity for additional crew – please contact James Allen at [crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk)

## Assistance Required

**Skippers** for the 2023 should contact the YH to arrange a date for their Familiarisation, ideally sooner rather than later.

**Volunteers:** Those who have already volunteered to assist in General Maintenance will be contacted early in the New Year with details of what needs to be done. The YH will be looking to assign tasks and pencil in dates. The aim is to have no more than three people working on board at any one time. The most concentrated period of activity will be in early March, getting everything back on board, but only after we have had a very deep clean.

## Littleton Sailing Club – where we hold our committee meetings

*If you haven't been to Littleton Sailing Club it's well worth a visit and LSC has close ties with ECYD, mainly because that's where we hold our committee meetings. LSC has a lovely lake where you can go cruising and exploring or you can have a lively race – whichever you prefer. And there is a galley serving tasty food most weekends when there's racing or cruising. On the right you can see how big our lake is – taken while I was sailing my boat!*

Tony Pattison



### Yacht Husband's Calendar 2022/23

Date	Activity
November 22	<b>Sails. Life Raft, Life Jackets &amp; Grab Bag.</b> Away for service, valet & store. <b>Upholstery Pillows and Curtains:</b> Away for clean & store. <b>Dinghy &amp; Outboard.</b> Away to store. <b>Crockery, Pots &amp; Cutlery:</b> Away for clean and store. <b>Companion Way Step:</b> Away for repair and revarnishing.
December 2022	<b>Engine:</b> 1000hr/4yr Engine Service/ <b>Hull:</b> Gelcoat repairs, Antifoul. Polish above waterline. Cutlass bearing replacement, prop repair & replacement anodes. <b>Heads:</b> Cupboard repair. <b>Stanchion</b> Repairs to both gates. <b>Gas:</b> Piping & Alarm Certification.
January 2023	<b>Mast Repairs:</b> Fitting of new spreaders, Furlex repair, replacement VHF aerial, in mast data cable for Radar, reprogramming Mastervolt Charging controller and fit new VHF Speaker Mic.
February 2023	Portlight and hatch repairs aft cabin and saloon. Repair, service and replace clutches as necessary.
February 2023	<b>General Maintenance &amp; Cleaning.</b>
March 2023	<b>Cockpit &amp; Coach roof:</b> Removal of vinyl transfers, deep cut polish and ceramic coat to be applied. Fitting of <b>new Sprayhood and Cockpit cover.</b>
1-5 March 2023	<b>Fitting Out.</b> Returning everything that went off in November.
W/C 6 March 23:	<b>Sea Trial 1:</b> Sail/Motor. Focus on Raymarine setup, MFD connectivity & Radar.
W/C 13 March 23	<b>Sea Trial 2.</b> Sail/Motor: Focus on Sail setting & engine, reviewing work on Sea Trial 1.
W/C 20 March 23	<b>Sea Trial 3.</b> Sail/Motor: Review of 1 & 2, test storm sails, anchoring and outboard operations.
27-31 March 2022	Skipper Familiarisation.
1st April 2023	Start of the 2023 Season

## Yacht Secretary Report – January 2023

*By Mary Reed – Yacht Secretary*

### Charters

Last year I confined myself mainly to the paperwork relating to the Long Trip to Scotland. Skippers on taster sails, boat handling, sea trials etc... received papers from the Yacht Husband, Paul Dunn.

This year things may be different.

### Home Waters Charters

So far I have had only one request for a charter in home waters, from Rob Stephens, for 29<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> May. To be fair there are not many gaps left for charters early in the season as it is mostly blocked out for training opportunities.

Later in the season, after Freyja has returned home from September onwards, there should be more opportunities. This will largely depend upon whether Freyja needs to have work undertaken after the long trip.



## Long Trip

Some deposits have been paid and some not. I have sent emails to those skippers to remind them, hoping that they just forgot. However, Jackie Bignall has come back to me saying that she hasn't paid yet because she is having difficulty, finding crew.

The handover port has changed from Fredericia to Middlefart as it is a better marina and it was mutually agreed between the skippers.

Ian Thomas has reduced his time to 7 days at the end of the season, but as yet has no crew. If that situation continues, then we need to work out how to get Freyja from Middlefart to Rendsburg for the trip home.

The programme now, is as below please check [www.ecyd.org.uk/freyja-2023-sailing-programme/](http://www.ecyd.org.uk/freyja-2023-sailing-programme/) for any updates.

## Freyja 2023 Programme – Early Season Training

Type of Training	Dates on offer	Skipper	Notes	Vacancies
Taster sail 1/2	1 <sup>st</sup> and or 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Mary Reed John Miller	Candidates may sign up for one or two days.	4
Taster sail 3/4	3 <sup>rd</sup> and or 4 <sup>th</sup> April	N	Candidates may sign up for one or two days.	4
Taster sail	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Brian Barnes +1	Candidates may sign up for one or two days.	4
Charter available for Sea Time	7 <sup>th</sup> 8 <sup>th</sup> 9 <sup>th</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup> April	N	<b>Vacant</b>	5
Boat Handling	11 <sup>th</sup> 12 <sup>th</sup> April	N	Practice touch and go and berthing.	4
Taster Sails	13 <sup>th</sup> 14 <sup>th</sup> April	N	Candidates may sign up for one or two days	4
Taster Sails	15 <sup>th</sup> 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Mary Reed John Miller	Candidates may sign up for one or two days	4
Radar Course	17 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> April	Richard Maxwell	Perfect your radar skills whilst stationary	5
Radar course/East Coast Cruise	18 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> April	Richard Maxwell	Perfect your Radar skills on a cruise.	5
Boat Handling	22 <sup>nd</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Brian Barnes Steve McGarry	Practice touch and go and berthing.	4
Skipper development	24 <sup>th</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> April	Mary Reed John Miller	An opportunity for newly qualified skippers and others, to gain experience.	4
Charter	29 <sup>th</sup> April to 5 <sup>th</sup> May		Rob Stephens	Full

## Freyja 2023 Long Trip sailing programme

	Long Trip Dates	Type	From	To	Days	Skipper	Confirmed or pending	
1	15 <sup>th</sup> May – 25 <sup>th</sup> May	Delivery	Ipswich	Rendsburg	10	Nick Bowles	C	
2	25 <sup>th</sup> May – 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Charter	Rendsberg	Travemunde	5	Nick Bowles	C	
3	29 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Charter	Travemunde	Warnemunde	9		<b>Vacant</b>	(See note 1)
4	7 <sup>th</sup> June – 16 <sup>th</sup> June	Charter	Warnemunde	Stralsund	9	Brian Barnes	C	
5	16 <sup>th</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> June	Charter	Stralsund	Ystad	9	Paul Brereton	C	
6	25 <sup>th</sup> June – 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Charter	Ystad	Ystad	9	Steve Strange	C	
7	4 <sup>th</sup> July – 13 <sup>th</sup> July	Charter	Ystad	Malmo	9	Mary Reed	C	
8	13 <sup>th</sup> July – 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Charter	Malmo	Korsor	9	Jeff Herschel	C (1 crew vacancy available)	(See note 1)
9	22 <sup>nd</sup> July – 29 <sup>th</sup> July	Sea time	Korsor	Middelfart	7	Brian Barnes	C (Crew vacancies available)	(See note 2)
10	29 <sup>th</sup> July – 5 <sup>th</sup> August	Sea Time	Middelfart	Middelfart	7	Steve McGarry	C (Crew vacancies available)	(See note 2)
11	5 <sup>th</sup> August – 12 <sup>th</sup> August	Sea Time	Middelfart	Rendsburg	7	Ian Thomas	P (Crew available)	
13	12 <sup>th</sup> August – 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Delivery	Rendsburg	Ipswich	10	Richard Maxwell	P	

Note 1 – Apply to [Yacht Secretary](#) for vacancies

Note 2 – Apply to [crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:crewbureau@ecyd.org.uk) for vacancies





# Freyja is given TLC at Fox's

By Paul Dunn

Early December was not the weather to be spending too much time out and about. After 30 minutes on board my hands were frozen.

I went by to check up on things and found things have progressed, though we are still missing our prop.

I found copy of the Engine Service Schedule on the chart table. Everything ticked off that one might expect. Report on general engine/compartiment condition was "Good".

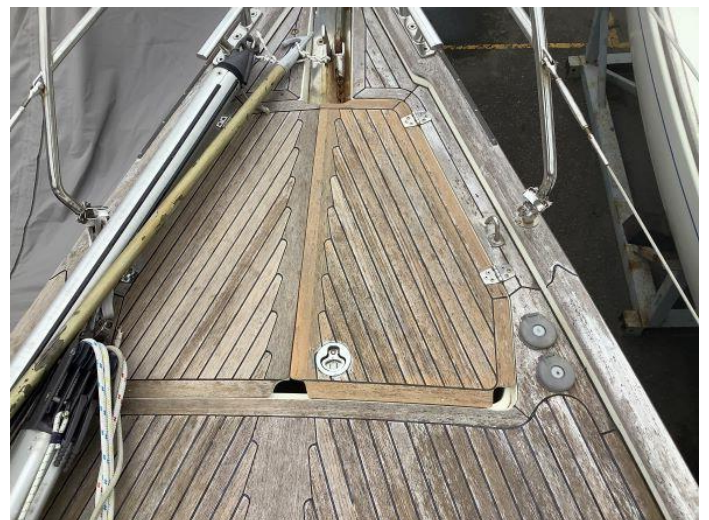
Stanchions on both port and starboard side gates have been fixed, so too are the teak repairs to the starboard lazarette and anchor well hatches.

We weren't connected to shore power, so I got the long black extension cable out of the cockpit locker and hooked us up with their meter which had been left behind.

I visited Fox's Yard again at the beginning of January. I found Freyja tucked up in a very toasty shed. Prop back on, gelcoat repairs and polishing above waterline complete, cupboard doors in the heads have been removed, but not yet replaced. Unfortunately, Mike Laker [Yard Manager] wasn't about to check on whether the galvanic isolator had been fitted or not.

I met up with Richard Maxwell, who has retrieved our ladder and has very kindly offered to both look after our fender boards and deck boat hook.

Both of these needed a little tlc,







*More pictures of Freyja being given TLC at Fox's*

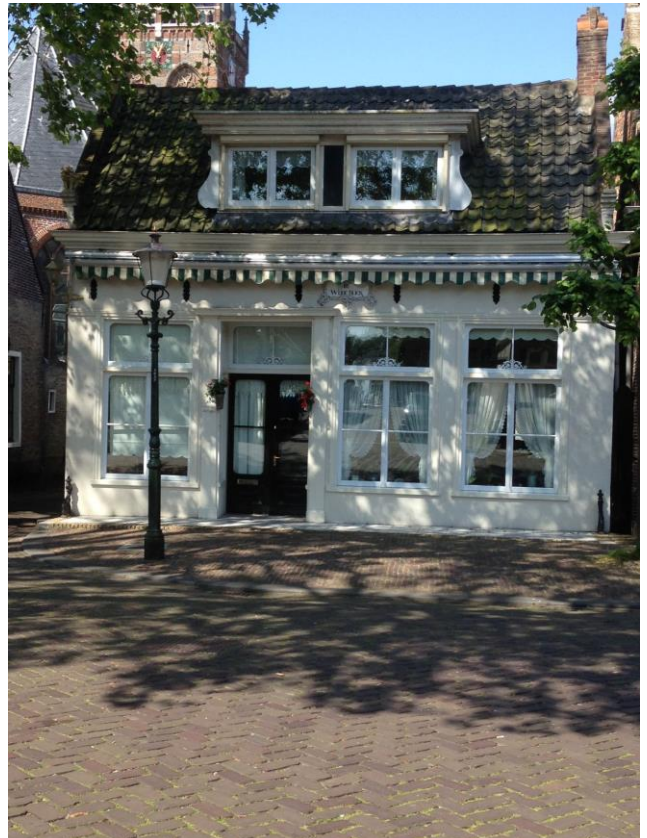




## Cruising the Dutch canals

Here are some pictures from our visit to the Dutch canals - some of which were very narrow!

*By Mary Reed*





## Freyja – a personal memory from September 2022

By Clive Pelerin December 2022

I had been a member of the delivery crew taking Freyja from Ipswich to Corpach at the south-western end of the Caledonian Canal.

Apart from delays caused by works to lock gates, we had an uneventful but most enjoyable passage, even unsuccessfully racing- insurers look away – a Sigma 38 along Loch Ness.

Freyja spent the summer based on the island of Kererra just off the coast from Oban and although I know the place only a little from a family holiday many years ago, I should imagine it is a beautiful cruising area.

Sadly, many slots were not filled and the boat spent a long time idle in the marina.

The return crew left Scotland for Ipswich but for operational reasons Freyja had to be left in Sunderland.

Richard ‘Fall Guy’ Maxwell was charged with assembling a scratch crew at short notice.

Using his enviable powers of persuasion, he half-Nelsoned John Figgures, Jeff Herschel and me for the task.

Jeff travelled to Sunderland a day early and victualled the boat from a local Tesco.



*Racing a Sigma 38 Loch Ness*



*A decent sail up Loch Ness*





The rest of us met at Ipswich and instead of hiring a car we decided to let the train take the strain.

As a long-time London resident from north of the Thames – with free oldies travel – it's easy to forget that going anywhere in or to and from the capital is a doddle. Not so across country, with three changes and four different rail companies, the journey was doomed from the off. And so it was. One company was Trans Pennine and their train failed to turn up at York.

We took different routes onward to Sunderland but arrived at about the same time. There weren't any taxis at the station, so we walked the mile or so, fortunately downhill, to the marina. Jeff, using his hospitality industry skills had booked a table for four at the marina restaurant. Having filled our boots with fine wine and good food, we repaired to the boat and after a few compulsory gins and a little tonic, crashed out ready for an earlyish start on Tuesday 27.

**What could possibly go wrong . . . .**

We took on enough diesel for the return passage and no more because the plan was to pump out and clean the fuel in Ipswich.

As it happens, we underestimated the fuel on board because we were unsure of the fuel tank capacity and consumption.

We decided - democratically instructed by Richard – that a simple four on four off watch of two crew per watch would be fine for two and a half days at sea – we were planning a non-stop passage. Three yacht-masters and a cabin boy, me, what could possibly go wrong?

Plenty as it turned out. I was off watch when, at about 02.30 on Wednesday 28, there was a loud thump and Freyja stopped dead over the ground.



*Skipper Richard doing skippering duties while the crew work hard sampling the Merlot*

We had been doing about 5 knots through the water but with the tide so whatever brought us to a halt must have been a hell of a lobster pot.

**We were held fast . . . . .**

We were held fast with no movement of the steering wheel but the prop shaft turned normally so unlikely that we had a prop wrap.

After an internal check of the hull and fittings to spot any damage or leaks we tried all the usual tricks to get underway, all to no avail. We needed help but at 30M or so offshore, we were too far out to raise the coastguard.

A passing merchant ship relayed out DSC call to and from the coastguard and because one crew member had a suspected back injury, the rescue helicopter and lifeboat were scrambled.

We used all our lights and the chopper arrived shortly after radio contact was established; they circled until the lifeboat arrived at about 05.30. As the sea was rather lumpy, neither rescue service would contemplate an evacuation of the casualty and recommended that he rested below and once we were free, the lifeboat would escort us back to Grimsby for medical assistance.

We rigged a twin bridle to the stern cleats and using the hand-held VHF talked through the release procedure. The lifeboat crew very carefully pulled us astern and after a bout thirty minutes, we were able to turn the wheel.

We let the bridle go and did a couple figures of eight under our own power – wey-hey we were free! We set off for Grimsby with the lifeboat as escort but after an hour or so the casualty felt a lot better and we decided to shape a course for Ipswich.

By this time, we had direct contact with the coastguard, and we let them know our intentions. However, concerned for our safety and requested a call-back every couple of hours.

The casualty recovered sufficiently for the return to Ipswich – the back injury was later diagnosed as a mild soft tissue injury – which was achieved by 16.30 on Thursday 29, fifty six hours after leaving Sunderland.

**Lessons for me:-**

- Ensure that the handheld VHF is working and fully charged before setting off.
- Make sure that the boat's vital statistics, including fuel and water capacities, are ready to hand.
- Ensure that all the crew are familiar with the VHF radio protocol and the operation of the vessel's fixed radio; the operating manuals are on board but it should not be necessary to raid the library to find out what to do, especially under stress.
- It's easier to get assistance 30M offshore than ask for an ambulance to the local hospital.



The photograph of the propeller was taken when the boat was lifted in Ipswich.

We are not certain that the prop wrap occurred at the time of our incident.

I should say that we were never in real danger, just stuck. We were all very grateful for the professional service from the RNLI, helicopter crew and the Humber coastguard. Donations have been made to the RNLI.

*Clive Pelerin December 2022*



*Oops!  
someone  
(not us)  
went the  
wrong  
side of the  
buoy –  
that was  
in France*





## Father's Day, German style, or a Baltic delivery in my heyday

By Vic Crawshaw

Entering the marina on Norderney Island, in the German Frisian group we were subjected to a noise offensive of nuclear proportions, this headbangers paradise was created by loudspeakers blaring out German pop music and drinking songs on practically every boat with parties spilling out onto the pontoons, all hard drinking and hard singing.

The marina was chock a block and we were lucky to find a berth. Why was this? It was Father's Day German Style.

This celebration didn't bode well for our sleep that night so returning from the restaurant before 2200 I was astonished to find silence.

Were they all unconscious? As it hadn't rained they must have been spirited away.

I was in the happy position of helping to deliver Freyja from Shotley to Keil where it was to start the summer season.

The departure had been delayed 24 hours due to a force 8 blowing from the South West.

We left at first light next morning in a F5, half the jib out and doing 7 knots wind absolutely behind us and a quartering sea, by afternoon we were in 30knots and rolling almost gunwale to gunwale arriving at Ijmuiden at 0500 next morning; entry clearance to the canal completed we carried on to our first stop at Enkhuizen in the Markermeer.



Next day was bright and clear so across the IJsselmeer to the lock at Lemmer where the wind picked up to 30kts again, missed the first lock due to an enormous barge getting priority.

Engine revving hard in reverse just to stand still, thank God for bow thruster to make jilling around possible.





Into the canal, a wide and busy waterway going east we were able to open half the genoa and, in flat water, average 7.5 knots plus.

Waterproofs were given a severe test with horizontal rain, arrived in good time at Grouw where the marina was nearly empty. Why is it when you have the choice of fifty plus berths it is so difficult to choose one?

### Man in the water!

Tied up and sitting below with a welcome cup of tea, a casual voice from the cockpit, (Mary sitting outside) "there's a man in the water" What? Does he need help? (said I) "Yes, I think he does", was the casual reply.

With crew member Alan I dashed around to the next pontoon, the far end of course, where he was clinging to the staging underneath, three feet below. Pontoons are high in box moorings.

With a third pair of hands, we eventually managed to get his leg up and rolled him onto the decking.

He had fallen from a small German motor cruiser which was having difficulty parking, no lifebelt thrown over, not really any concern from that quarter.

Twenty minutes later they were still motoring into berths with our dripping swimmer trying to take their lines.

Excitement over, Mary went for a walk to source our restaurant for the evening returning with a bag full of young herring for us all UGH!

Passing this raw delicacy over to David (who now had 6) the way to eat them is to dip them in onions, hold up by the tail and swallow whole, or as much as you can. I am sticking to potato crisps.



The restaurant was, of course, first class.

We were sitting at an excellent table with a splendid view of the Haven when three ladies arrived and sat at the next table for four.

The fourth chair was pulled out, a red silk cushion placed upon it and a small pug ceremoniously deposited thereupon.

It immediately turned its back on its owner and proceeded to stare balefully at me, unblinking and accusing. Funny how guilty feelings begin to swim past one, one's whole life is dissected in seconds, respite only coming during the frequent kissing sessions with its mistress (No, not with me I hasten to add, but the dog)

Continuing through the canals, bridges opening mostly on our approach we reached the outskirts of Groningen where we had to wait to join a convoy as numerous bridges came up in quick succession.

At 1600hrs the first bridge opened, so then onto the next which opened quite quickly and, passing through, we waved thanks to the operator sitting in his box.

We were then bemused to see him rush out jump onto his bicycle and pedal to the next bridge and so on for the next six.

This meant a lot of jilling around as there was no place to tie up and four other boats with us.



By the time we were at the sixth bridge it was his teatime, so that bridge would not open for one hour – would you believe it? We managed to tie up to a lamp post and tree here (warning from Mary watch for any dogs approaching trees with our lines round) eventually passed the remaining three bridges and tied up in a box mooring in the marina at Groningen.

Went for much needed shower in two story oval glass, yes glass, structure on the quayside (well it was opaque-ish, mostly)

Time to check the charts for the following week so shock discovery we had a gap from Helgoland to Cuxhaven so need to buy one.

Chandlery closed on Mondays but opened by the very helpful Hafenmeisterin who only had packs at 90 euros. Needs must as the devil says, so E90 lighter she then warned me that the seas off Norderney and the Elbe Estuary were the most dangerous in the World, don't go if the wind has any North in it. Just what I really wanted to hear.

Next stop Delfzijl (pronounced Delfsisle as in Isle of Wight) and arrival in marina in a very large commercial port.



**Railway bridge closing**



**The glass facilities**

Excellent restaurant for the last night for the crew members changing over here. Food prices and particularly restaurant prices in Holland found to be very high indeed but enjoyed nonetheless and a very good beer called Herzog discovered and enjoyed on board on arrival at each port.

We negotiated 12 locks and 59 lift bridges during the week.



New crew arrived, introductions made, victualling for the next few days completed and charts for the German Frisian Islands broken out.

There is only one route, no plan B, so next day left with the tide at Midday for the island of Borkum which has a large, very run down harbour, and we tied up to a massive concrete jetty putting out long lines to allow for tidal rise and fall only to discover later that it was actually floating.

No facilities but an excellent restaurant and prices half those of Holland so had some salvation.

Left Borkum for Norderney in little wind and arrived early afternoon which was fortuitous as grabbed probably the last mooring. Enough said about Father's Day.

Left Norderney for Helgoland (German spelling) not Heligoland, That was old English. The Island became British when King Cnut of Denmark invaded Britain in 1017 and brought it with him.

It stayed with us until we did a deal with Germany in 1890 swapping it for German East Africa, so we got Zanzibar. (don't think we managed to hold onto that for long though, but the Germans still have Helgoland and changed the sea area to German Bight).

To continue; wind blowing 17/18 knots from the North East, on the nose of course, we managed to sail almost on the course for the first half of the day, but had to motor in the end, arriving about 1900 to find a huge walled harbour with pontoons around the edges with boats rafted out.

We found a shorter raft to join, only 16<sup>th</sup> boat out, soon to have several more outside us, on next raft I counted 26.

And not a shoreline anywhere. And who did it fall to to go ashore? 16 boats of all shapes, types, heights and sizes to negotiate to reach Terra firma.

and pay the Hafenmeister, scaling ladders would have eased some of the mountaineering.

The harbour was jam packed with music, singing and partying – yes, you guessed it, Father's Day. Father's Day is a weekend starting on Thursday and celebrated with extraordinary enthusiasm.

Must let the family know about this! Perhaps a little relieved that the German Bight was not the most dangerous sea in the World,

Not a patch on the North Sea in Thames area during our recent crossing. A 6am start next morning was met with good humour and our extrication from the scrum went with astonishing ease.

### **I clean, you wait!**

Not a breath of wind, under one knot at times, for our 39 mile trip down to Cuxhaven. Good facilities in Cuxhaven, split into two, Loo and showers.

Trouble was Helga, the resident marina putzfrau seemed to spend her life in there cleaning.

Venturing into the loo I was unceremoniously turfed out with stentorian tones "I CLEAN, YOU WAIT" ringing in my ears, door slammed and key crashed home in the lock. Think she was a U boat commander in a previous life. So thought I would try the showers.

We had to buy a plastic card to access everything here, showers, shore power, etc, The card had to be installed in a machine in the shower cubicle for the duration of use, the card was therefore passed down the crew and eventually it came to my turn.

Wonderful hot shower, quickly soaped all over then the money ran out...Ugh; water stopped, not even cold, so flannelled off, got dressed now very sticky, went to office and renewed card, returned to shower as the door slammed, crash went the lock, "I CLEAN, YOU WAIT".

Good sail from here to Brunsbuttal (on the nose of course) and through the lock into the Keil canal. Stopped overnight in marina adjacent to the lock. Dreadful night with big ships, engines thumping literally only twenty yards away as they went into the locks.

Passage through the canal to Rendsburg interesting but uneventful.

Arrived on fuel berth at Rendsburg, looked after very ably by a most helpful Hafenmeisterin who seemed to run everything, the harbour office, the fuel berth, the shop, the club, the café, no limit to her talents, what else might she provide?

We were now directed to a box mooring nearby, I like these moorings which are common in non-tidal areas.

You drive in between two posts, hooking stern lines over each and the bowman tumbles ashore over the stem to secure the bow.

One thing you do not put out are fenders as they can be ripped off passing the posts.

Experience can be a hard teacher, however as we moved off the fuel berth the heavens blackened ominously and a roll of thunder was heard, so prudence being my watchword I shot below and dived into full oilies.

**Rain lashing down . . .**

As we went into the box the cloud burst and rains came lashing down like stair rods turning to hail. The helm and deck crew had the boat in and tied off with Olympian speed and vanished below, I, in waterproofs, tidied up a bit then realised Richard was still standing on the dock having taken the bow ropes ashore.

Hollered at him to get aboard and below, but when the engine had been turned off the boat had sprung back on the stern lines and



he couldn't reach the ladder over the stem. By the time I had readjusted everything and got him aboard he may as well have been in swimming.

Got down below to find the saloon now looking a bit like a Victorian laundry on a Monday morning. I wonder if the next boat could incorporate a mangle in the spec?

Short journey from here, through the final lock at which payment has to be made and into Keil, another lovely box mooring, look for a green disc and pile in.

The disc system in Baltic marinas is good. A red or green disc is hanging in each berth, red keep out, green all yours. Final dinner in Keil, Clean ship next morning and taxi to the airport.

The previous time I traversed the Keil Canal it was mid-March, and snow lay in drifts several feet deep. I had not given a thought to this possibility when agreeing to this delivery but apparently that is normal up there, so it was good to see it all again in 26C, everywhere now green and sunny.

The second week was much kinder weather wise apart from the one thunderstorm.

A thoroughly interesting trip, a lot of motoring unfortunately but the boat was delivered on time despite the adverse elements suffered early on.

Would I do it again? of course.

*Vic Crawshaw*







The ECYD web site: [www.ecyd.org.uk](http://www.ecyd.org.uk)

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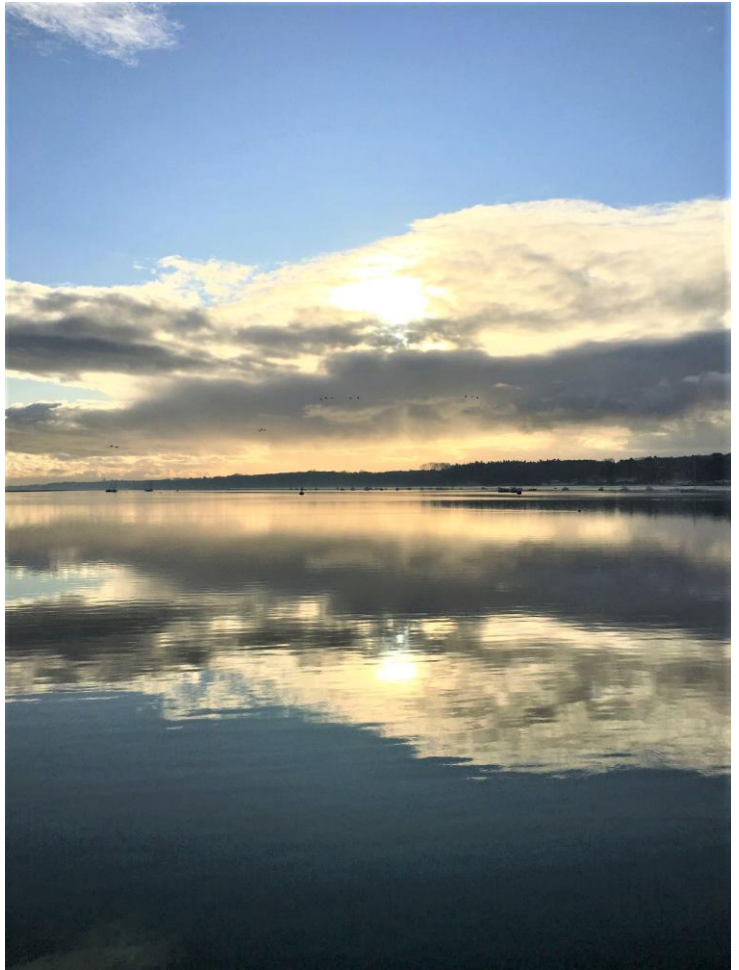


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This lovely picture was taken by Mary Reed during a cruise down the Dutch canals

*Racing up Loch Ness!*

