



JOCK HAMILTON'S TRANSATLANTIC ADVENTURE 2021

Compiled by Graeme Hogg

This presentation records Jock Hamilton's participation in a single-handed yacht race across the Atlantic in the early summer of 2021.

It begins by providing some background to yachting in the Kyles of Bute and to Jock's own family connection with single handed yachting.

The main section sets out the almost daily blogs Jock sent back by satellite phone while he participated in the race, offering a blow-by-blow account of his experiences.



Sailing has been a feature of the Kyles of Bute for over 100 years, especially around Tighnabruaich. These are yachts racing around 1904.



These early yachts must have presented a majestic sight amid the wonderful local scenery.



The first half of the 20th Century was the era of classic yacht racing. Many local men would spend their summers as skipper or crew aboard some of the big, famous yachts of the time. One notable Kyles family was the Curries. Peter Senior and his three sons, Peter (Pat), Archie (Chester) and Duncan (Bunks) all worked aboard many of the most well known and successful yachts of those days.



Peter Senior began his career in the late 19th Century. He is pictured second from the left in the back row above while working as mate on *Marjorie*, owned by the Coats family.

He would go on to work on *Meteor II*, pictured left, which was owned by Kaiser Wilhelm II, and which had been designed and built on the Clyde and raced in the UK and in Germany.

He married a Portavadie girl in 1906 and moved to the area around that time.



Peter's eldest son, also Peter, but known as Pat, began his sailing career towards the end of the 1920s and was particularly associated with yachts designed and built by the Fifes of Fairlie.

The yacht above is *Altair*, one of Fife's most striking creations, which was built for Wm. Runciman in 1931. Now restored, she is still afloat and based in sunnier climes. Pat is pictured in the mid 1930s aboard her, seated on the right of the front row.

Other notable yachts he crewed on or skippered included *Cluaran*, *Falcon*, *Madrigal* and *Madrigal II*.



By contrast with his older brother, Archie, known as Chester, was associated mostly with yachts designed and built by C E Nicholson, with whom he is seen here aboard the 12 metre *Trivia*, on which he was captain just before and after World War II.

The J Class yacht above is *Endeavour (I)*, on which Chester sailed as crew in 1936. It had competed, unsuccessfully, for the America's Cup in 1934 and was an entrant again in 1937.

He also crewed on *Lulworth*, *Oriana*, and *Candida*, among others.





The third Currie brother was Duncan, known as Bunks. The brothers' paths crossed, almost inevitably, over the years. The middle picture shows Duncan aboard *Altair*, on which he worked alongside Peter.

The yacht on the left is another J Class, *Velsheda*, on which Duncan worked in 1936. She was an extremely successful yacht, but never competed for the America's Cup. He also crewed aboard *Susanne*, *Lilias (ex Cambria)* and *Thendara*.

He followed Chester to *Endeavour* in 1937 and crossed the Atlantic to enter the America's Cup, but she did not make the final, being outperformed by *Endeavour II*. The picture above shows *Endeavour's* crew and Duncan can be seen on the extreme left.

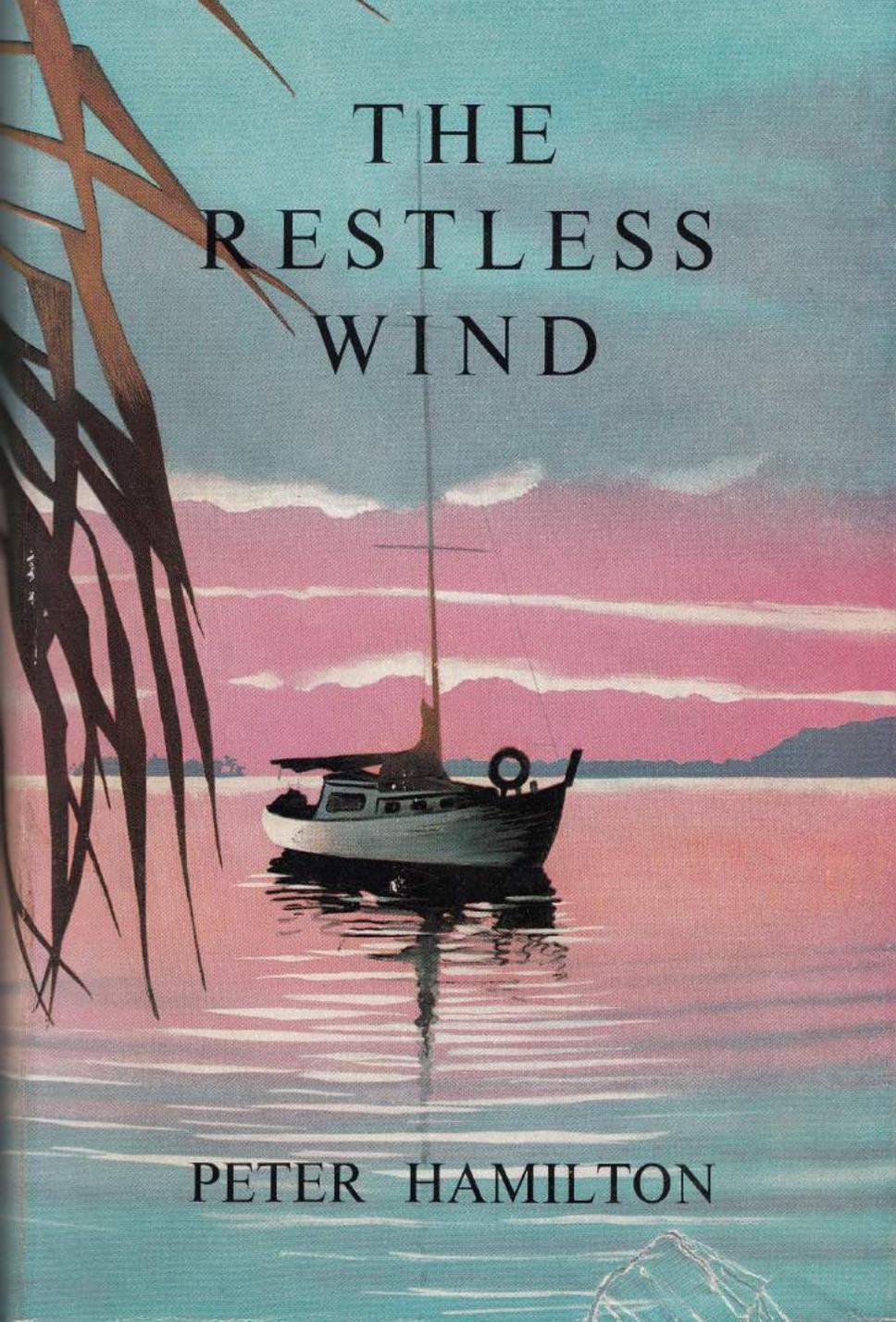
He was hailed as a hero on the return voyage, where an extremely violent storm was encountered and he, as mast-headman, had to scale the 100 foot mast in dangerous conditions. He enjoyed the experience, which a newspaper reported was not surprising, as "he came from a place that breeds the finest yachtsmen in the world".



In the post-war period, sailing dinghies came more to the fore, making sailing more affordable to a wider range of participants. Here we see a dinghy race taking place in the early 1960s.



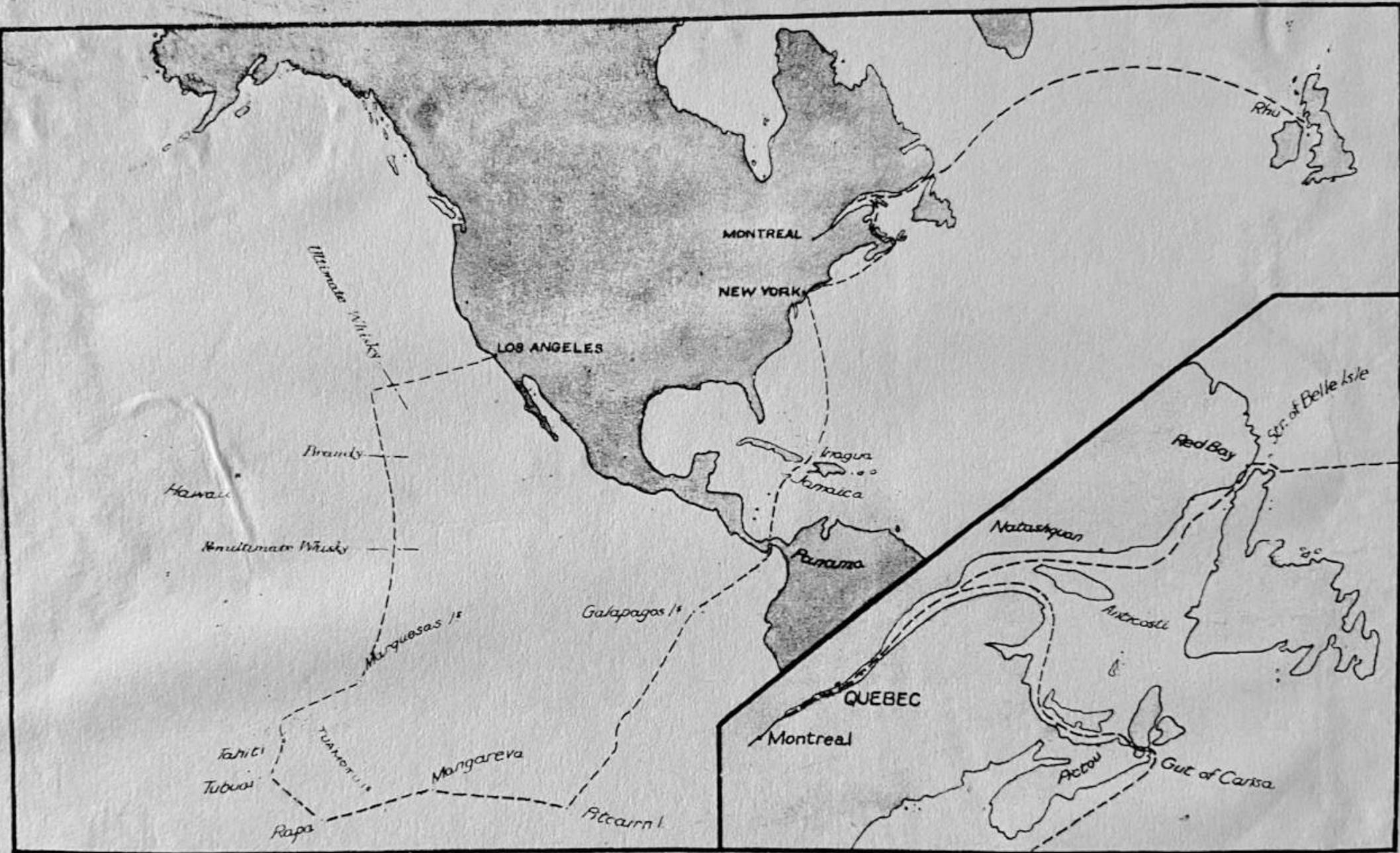
These days the boats have increased in size again. There is more cruising and local racing tends to be over longer courses.



THE RESTLESS WIND

PETER HAMILTON

- Jock's 2021 transatlantic trip echoes that undertaken by his father, Peter, in 1956.
- That trip was from Rhu to the St. Lawrence in a wooden Vertue yacht, *Salmo*, which had no engine, no radio and was only 25 feet in length.
- It is described, in breezy style, in a book, *The Restless Wind*, published in 1961 and now hard to find.
- Once Peter had reached Canada, not without some exciting times on the way, including sailing through Hurricane Betsy, coping with a fire on board, encountering an iceberg and 60-foot, playful whales, he came back to the UK to marry Jill.
- The rest of the book describes their extended honeymoon, which took place aboard *Salmo* and consisted of further voyages, via the Canadian and US coasts, through the Caribbean and the Panama Canal to the Pacific and its islands, finishing in Los Angeles.
- They later settled in Tighnabruaich, in the house that Jock still lives in today.



This map shows the voyages undertaken initially by Peter and then by Peter and Jill.

The voyage of the Salmo. (C. J. de C. Scott)



Photo by] [Montreal Star

WAITING FOR A BREEZE TO TAKE ME AWAY FROM RIMOUSKI

Illustrations from the book showing Peter en route to Canada and Peter and Jill preparing to set off from Montreal.



Photo by]

['Canada Wide', Montreal

HONEYMOON COUPLE



Two more illustrations showing *Salmo* setting off from Montreal and the disconcerting sight of an ice floe off the Canadian coast.

The second voyage was also eventful. Peter and Jill had to contend with a dangerous ice field near the mouth of the St Lawrence and the inevitable storms, but also made some wonderful visits in the USA, Caribbean and Pacific Islands, including the Galapagos, Pitcairn and Tahiti, where Jill became pregnant. As a result, the adventure was curtailed and they sailed back to Los Angeles and sold *Salmo* to fund their return to the UK..

Throughout, including Peter's solo trip up the St Lawrence, they encountered the kindness of strangers, where they would receive help and hospitality from almost everyone they met.



Photo by ['Canada Wide' Montreal

DINNER TIME : THE CABIN WITH ALL STORES EMBARKED



ALONGSIDE AT PAPEETE

“ You didn't come here in that thing, did you ? ”

Final book illustrations showing life on board and berthed in Papeete in Tahiti, where Peter and Jill spent Christmas 1957 and saw in 1958.



Jock's father, Peter, was a retired Royal Naval Commander and his last command was a frigate. Jock's career took a different path. He is a master mariner in the Merchant Navy and his most recent ship, *Pacific Vanguard*, is pictured above. He shares with his father a keen sense of adventure, which has led him to participate in this Nostar race across the Atlantic. He is following a not dissimilar course, but plans to make landfall in Rhode Island USA.



Jock with *Freya*, nearly ready to leave. A rather smaller vessel than the kind on which he spends his working life and a full eight feet longer than the one in which his father crossed the Atlantic all those years ago.



Jock leaving Tighnabruaich on 27 April on *Freya* for the race start at Plymouth



Some of the competitors meet up before the race. Left to right: Bobby and Charlene (*A J Wanderlust*), Adrian Gray (former event organiser) and Jock.



They're off! Jock crosses the starting line at the Western Breakwater at Plymouth on 9 May. Sadly, just over two weeks into the race on 24 May and half-way across the Atlantic, *Freya* was dismantled and Jock had to retire from the race. He limped back to Tighnabruaich, but continued with his blogs.

Jock's Blogs

- 20 April 2021
- I had been intending to sail across the Atlantic in my boat last year, 2020, because I thought it might be fun and would certainly be an interesting thing to do.
- My father, Peter, sailed it single handed in the mid fifties when it was more unusual and of course this also influenced my inclination to go. Peter was more pioneering than I and had a far smaller boat from which he removed the engine as an unnecessary waste of space. He would, probably, be horrified at all the modern stuff I am carrying; he wouldn't even take a radio partly because, he said, 'knowing where you are takes some fun out of it' (with a radio an accurate time signal can be used to synchronise the chronometer thus making calculation of Longitude as accurate as one's sextant skills) but partly too because he didn't like music in any case and liked to keep things as simple as possible. This has not turned out to be a shared philosophy, I have multiple GPS, Iridium sat phone, radar engine, mp3, AIS, Navtex, Radio, PV panels, as well as an engine.
- I needed a plan for timings and whilst thinking about the trip, a couple of years ago, my cousin Rory was just back from the Azores And Back (AZAB) race and suggested I went as part of the Ostar in 2020. With the socialising, and camaraderie of the race this seemed like a good idea so I put my name down and it had the benefit of specific dates to work towards.
- I've done a fair amount of preparation, a lot needed in any case with ensuring that the sails and rig is up to it along with a fair amount of investment in safety equipment to comply with the World Sailing Regulations, a requirement of the race. As a single handed race some of this doesn't make sense: lifebuoys with lights, drogues, danbuoys and AIS transponders are unlikely to be helpful but complying with something for the club was understandable, at least while they were still intending to run it.
- Anyway with one thing and another (See other blogette) I'm now leaving on May 9th 2021 from Plymouth along with some others.



Jock's Blogs

- 20 April 2021(continued)
- I will be doing a blog on occasions from mid ocean and Graham and Jennifer Smart have very kindly offered to keep updating this on the website as I can only send and receive emails whilst offshore through Iridium Satellites which aren't capable of handling much data or or accessing the internet.
- I'm doing it entirely for my own benefit at my own cost and for fun. It's been suggested to me that I do it for a charity and I'm not comfortable with this - I don't necessarily think that some people, doing things for charity, are actually doing this but just doing something that they want to do anyway and deferring costs by getting other people to pay for it with any surplus going to the charity.
- I am however very happy to support a worthwhile local charity and have chosen Cowal Hospice Trust, a place that has been of benefit to many from Cowal, not least Jill, my mother.
- If anyone feels the urge to make a donation to charity on account of my voyage then please donate to the Cowal Hospice Trust, I will make a donation to kick things off. If you wish to mention NOSTAR (see other blogette) in the donation then please do. Donations can be directly via internet, by Cheque to Cowal Hospice Trust, Bank of Scotland, 78 Argyll Street, Dunoon, PA23 7NE
- Sort Code is 80/13/46 Account Number 00252725, donations can also be handed into the Hospice charity shop, re opening the week of the 25th April.



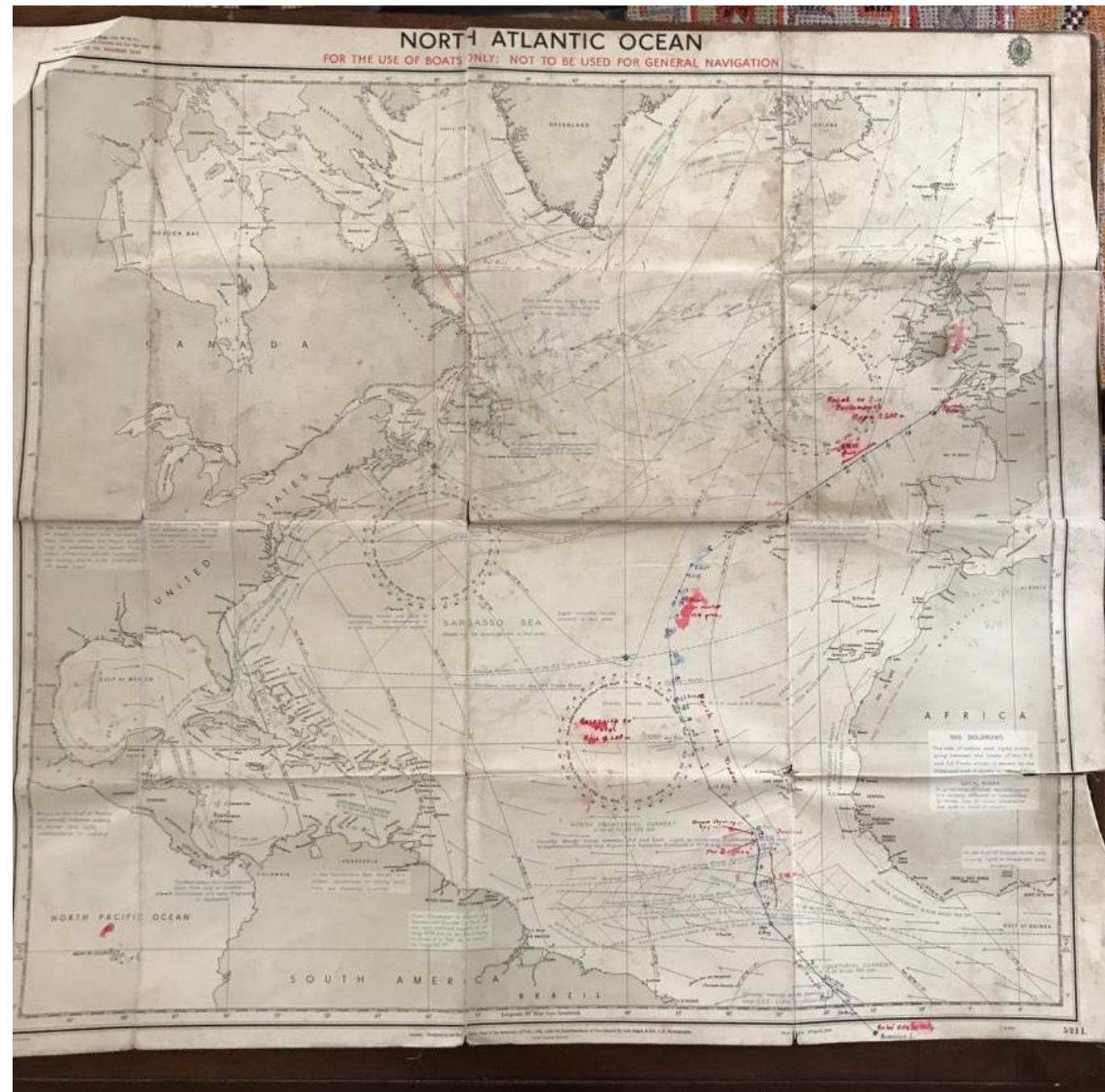
Jock's Blogs

- 27 April 2021
- **First Day at Sea**
- Well, that's me set off, well, hopefully as far as Plymouth in any case. I left at 1000 to a departure committee on the pier which was great, it felt like I was setting off on a big voyage rather than just a short coastal trip but it is *Freya's* last sight of the village before we head off across the Atlantic. I'll be back next week for a second vaccination and some bits and pieces.
- I had the assymetric (spinnakery sail without an added pole) up for the sail down the W Kyle and initially there was little wind but around Carry it picked up and we picked up speed to 6 knots and left a couple of motor sailing boats in our wake which was most satisfactory. Around Inchmarnock it became gusty and we rounded up a few times having run out of rudder so I turned down wind and brought it down. Having then unrolled the genoa completely we were still overpowered with the wind picking up from the NE, (an excellent direction for us) so we took a reef in the main swiftly followed by another and some rolls in the Genoa after which I changed from the autopilot to the windvane. We're now passing Arran.
- So far I've forgotten: mince from the freezer which had been going to be dinner for tonight and tomorrow and I've brought my car keys which I don't need, doubtless I'll remember more things that I've forgotten once we get further into the trip.
- Now, later, we've had a good run all day mostly doing around 7 knots, currently sitting at just over 10 with some favourable tide. I have a selection of cakes from thoughtful wellwishers, I had a slice of some fruit cake from Sheena with my cup of tea. Because mince was going to be problematic without any mince I had macaroni cheese for dinner, very good and warming, it's not too warm down below. I've had not that much sun but will leave the fridge on tonight to see if the batteries can manage a day of little in the way of charge from the PV panels, they should be able to. Strong winds forecast for tonight, I just shook out and then took in again a reef.



Jock's Blogs

- 28 April 2021
- Graham Smart
- **High Tech VR Tracking**
- Jock and Katharine's Dad, Peter, used this chart to track his Atlantic crossings nearly 70 years ago. Using the latest technology and emerging 3-D virtual reality techniques, I have positioned Jock as a rubber pig. The plan is to push him down to Plymouth and across the Atlantic. When all are underway we'll hopefully include the other entrants. If anyone can supply something more visible (and less irreverent) for marking the boats, I'll do a system upgrade to include them.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 April 2021
- **Good Progress!**
- Day 2. Thursday morning is much nicer. Yesterday was good for progress but bad for expletives. Monday night I was up every hour to have a lookout and tend the sails, the wind picked up to a Force 6 and with 2 reefs we were rounding up quite a bit, I thought I'd see how we were on only the genoa (this because I'd neglected to put in the third reefing line when putting in the second reef so had to drop the sail in any case) and we were fine and much more comfortable, still making hull speed so the latter part of the night was under only the genoa. The sea was quite big and on the port quarter so we were pitching and rolling quite heavily, hence the expletives. I've not found my sea legs yet. Down below sleeping it was quite cold, I was in all my clothes and two sleeping bags to stay warm, starting the night with one bag was not sufficient, mind you it is a summer sleeping bag. I think I need to pick up some long johns having not thought I'd need them, once I've trousers on and two pair of oilskins it's not enough to keep my legs warm when just sitting.
- In the morning I put the main up with 2 reefs and then poled out the genoa on the port side which is quite effective as the mainsail gets in the way of the genoa downwind from around 130 to 180 degrees and the genoa is a much bigger sail.
- We made good progress through the day but it was very uncomfortable with the motion and lack of sea legs.
- I had some porridge made with sea water for breakfast and it's a bit too salty so I'll go 50/50 in future (I had macaroni cheese on Tuesday evening with the pasta cooked in seawater which was fine), porridge and tea for breakfast, I've not felt like a coffee yet, soup from a tin for lunch in one of the fantastic mugs that Blondie gave to Daddy when he bought Salmo, they're 60s nylon jobs and have a broad base and hold about a pint and a half so a full tin of soup in one is only about half full which is ideal when it's bouncy. Yesterday involved some gybeing to avoid or hit the appropriate traffic separation scheme lanes but we're now clear to Land's end and I'll likely take the inshore passage there. I've not had a telephone signal since Tuesday evening although, somehow, a text message from Brian appeared on my phone mid morning, I don't understand how, as the phone was on aeroplane mode (which it needs to be for talking to the satellite phone) and I had no signal in any case. It's possible that it came in on Tuesday and I missed it but the thing says 1003 today. (Looking at it again it still says 1003 today so that maybe explains it).
- Last night was much more peaceful with no sail changes and just one gybe at dawn after we'd come through the traffic scheme in St David's channel and we're now in some sunshine with cumulus clouds over around the 3/8ths of the sky and the batteries charging nicely.



Jock's Blogs

- 29 April 2021 (continued)
- I didn't start the engine on departure and haven't run it at all yet, the batteries and charging panels are coping nicely with the load including the fridge. The first day was largely cloudy but there was a break in the clouds in the late afternoon and the batteries quite quickly came up to nearly full again.
- Yesterday I had a fright, a tug had just passed heading North and I smelled a funny smell. Initially I thought it had come from the tug but thought I'd better investigate it, I went down below and it seemed stronger, and possibly smelled like hot electrics, this had me worried, I thought it might be the batteries but lifting the engine cover all smelled sweetly in there, I was about to turn all the electrics off when I noticed that the gas was on minimum under the kettle but had blown out. I turned this off and the smell quickly disappeared. Hopefully that was it but the stove has a cut out so that if there's no heat it should cut out in any case and there's also a gas alarm which should sound before it becomes noticeable nasally. In any event we've had no problems or funny smells since.
- I'm going to stop now and get a forecast and send this. I don't think I'll get a phone signal till lands end and that'll be in the middle of the night but I need to book a hire car for Monday, stupidly I'd left it in case I made poor progress and didn't make it to Plymouth in time. I'm wondering whether Guido on *Hannah of Cowes* has left Gibraltar yet he had put in for repairs to a fraying halyard and I thought he'd be leaving after the weekend, but he hadn't the last time I'd seen.
- Slainte all
- Jock.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 April 2021
- **Approaching the Start**
- Day 3 - Yesterday was far pleasanter, we had sun and smaller seas. I was goosewinged from 0800 and under almost all plain sail except that I'd a couple of rolls in the genny just to prevent chafe on the pulpit. At 1030, with the wind fairly steady at about 12 knots I set the assymmetric spinnaker which gave us another knot or so. It's still cold but far nicer in the sun, no radio signal so I listened to some 'Du Glas' (Lucy's band) on Spotify.
- Having tidied up a little, really, a little, I started reading Ma's diary that she wrote for the 'Weekend' magazine as a substantial part of their income when they were sailing Salmo, shamefully I'd not read it before. It's fascinating and although I know the story it gives a different perspective to the story. I also have the Restless Wind, to keep me company when we set off across the Atlantic. I possibly spent too much time reading yesterday as I'm just leaving Pitcairn with them a the moment. It also highlights Daddy's minimalist sailing style and some of the advantages disadvantages of it. One line I liked was 'going through the locks Salmo ended up about 10 feet below the lock wall, Peter found this no problem, he just leaped at the shrouds, monkey like, and slid down them to the deck.'
- By 1500 there wasn't enough wind to keep the assymmetric flying so I stowed it and started the engine. We'd been maintaining about 5 knots in the lighter winds but this dropped below 3 and as I'm not racing I couldn't be bothered to keep trying to keep her going and also want to avoid any damage to anything as much as possible.
- In the middle of the afternoon a tweet disturbed my reading. A swallow had flown into the cabin, quiet and controlled he flew up to the loo, turned around and flew out again. I have brought a bird book with me, as homework for Beagle Cruises, so can confidently say it was a swallow and not a heron. Going up on deck some time later three swallows were sitting on the pushpit, they then flew into the cabin, sat on my hammock (a small one I've made for potatoes onions veggies etc) and surveyed the area. I believe that they were thinking that this was an acceptable roost. I chased them out before they made any mess. They aren't bad at flying, it's not a big cabin and it's moving around a bit but they had no problems manoeuvring turning or landing, I don't think I could manage it. Anyway after that I closed the hatch.
- Dinner included fried eggs, the olive oil has gone through the cloudy stage to a jelly like stage, I had to squeeze the bottle to get some dollops out of it.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 April 2021 (continued)
- I picked up a phone signal around 2100 and have now booked a car for travel North on Monday. It looks like Guido is still in Gibraltar* although the last time he was transmitting was on the 24th, I'm hoping, possibly optimistically, that he's left and not been transmitting on AIS.
- It's now 30th, I'm around the Lizard, there's still very little wind so I'm still motoring and due into Plymouth early this afternoon. I've a berth booked from Sunday but hope it'll be available, I told them I may be a little earlier if the trip went well.
- Not much has gone wrong, I'm going to buy some extra rope for the self steering as it's chafing on the turning blocks, it's not surprising, it works hard and there's a fair bit of strain on the lines. It's the same set of lines I've had on it since buying *Freya* so it's doing ok, I think that they are braided so I'll try to get the same again as some braid on braid that I had on *Stearnan* was looking about done after sailing to the Faroes. (Braid being rope which is plaited up all the way across it's diameter whereas braid on braid has a braided core with braided cover or sheath, braid is particularly difficult to splice but splicing's not needed in this case.)
- *Editor's note: Looks like Guido and *Hannah of Cowes* have left Gibraltar and are off Lisbon.
- (Jock returned to Tighnabruaich at this point to finalise arrangements.)



Jock's Blogs

- 8 May 2021
- **Coiled Springs!**
- Graham Smart
- So Jock has his springs coiled and the unofficial NOSTAR is set to get underway tomorrow, Sunday 9th May 2021 at 12:00. The start line is from the West end of Plymouth Sound Breakwater to the Queen's Ground Port Buoy.
- Weather at the start is looking lively with strong South-Westerly winds and with heavy shipping, Jock will have limited blogging opportunity for the first few days.
- *Freya's* AIS transponder has been playing up and has replaced with a new unit at the last minute. This means that while they will still be visible to other ships, marrinetraffic.com may lose them for a while. The predictwind satellite tracker will still update every hour.
- Entrants are:
- Jock Hamilton *Freya Wauquiez* Gladiateur 33
- Ertan Beskardes *Lazy Otter* Rustler 36 (pictured)
- Guido Cantini *Hannah of Cowes* Vancouver 34
- Charlene Howard *AJ Wanderlust* Jeanneau 45
- Good luck and fair winds all!



Jock's Blogs

- 9 May 2021
- **... and they're off!**
- Graham Smart
- A flying start from Jock in full view of his Tighnabruaich neighbour on RFA *Wave Knight* - who wasn't looking!
- The route takes the boats to the East of the Eddystone Lighthouse and then to the finish at Castle Hill Lighthouse, Newport, RI.
- No news from Jock yet although *AJ Wanderlust*, who are sailing two handed, have managed a couple blogs - please click *AJ Wanderlust* button above to see their Yellow Brick tracker and blog. *Lazy Otter* can also be tracked but I don't think *Hannah of Cowes* has a tracker so can only be followed on Marinetrffic or VesselFinder until out of range. Guido on *Hannah* has said he will send blogs so we should be able to update their position.
- Hope all goes well as the fleet heads into their first night at sea.



Jock's Blogs

The image shows a screenshot of the MarineTraffic website's live map interface. The top navigation bar includes the MarineTraffic logo, 'Live Map', 'Explore', 'Community', and 'Pricing' menus, along with a search bar. The map displays a coastal area with a vessel named 'FREYA [GB]' highlighted in red. A tooltip for this vessel shows its speed as 5.2 kn and heading as 243 degrees, with a position received 2 minutes ago. Other vessels are visible as small icons in various colors (pink, cyan). The interface includes a left sidebar with navigation tools, a right sidebar with coordinates (N50°20'09.93, W004°09'41.86) and zoom controls, and a bottom section with a scale bar (300m/500ft) and map data attribution.

MarineTraffic

Live Map Explore Community Pricing

Search MarineTraffic

N50°20'09.93
W004°09'41.86
(50.3361, -004.1616)

FREYA [GB] at 5.2 kn / 243°
Position received: 2 minutes ago

241K

Google

300 m
500 ft

Map data ©2021 Google Terms of Use Report a map error Leaflet

Jock's Blogs

- 11 May 2021

- **Good if somewhat Queasy Start**

- Good morning everyone,

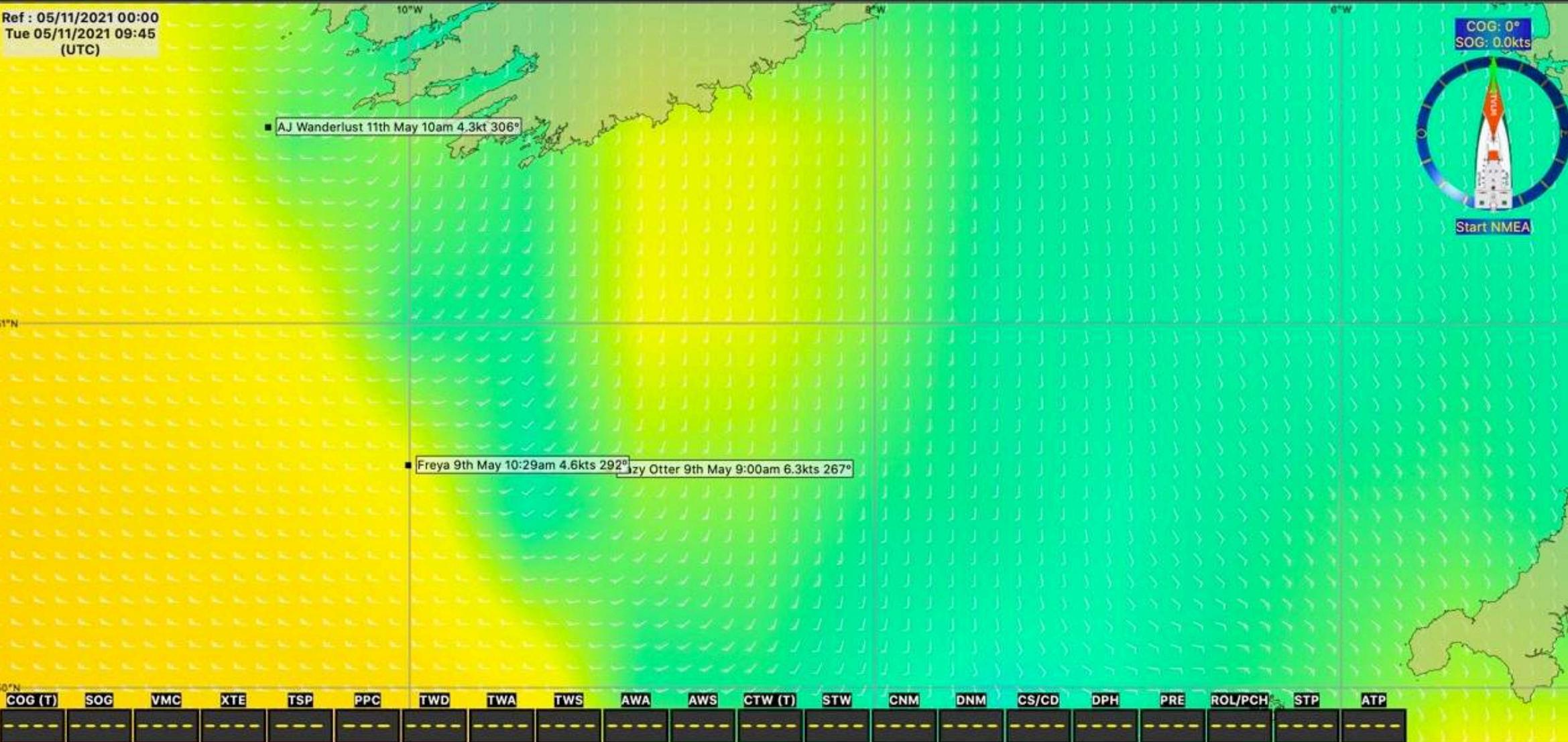
- Sorry not to have been in touch for a bit. I was sick and not feeling up to it, it was a bit calmer this morning so I've been getting on with some jobs and now that I came to do this, the wind's veering and picking up a bit.
- Anyway, I left the dock at 1000 on Sunday, passing a ketch which had just sunk on its berth, and picked up a buoy, on my third attempt. A photographer, a contact of Charlene's took some photos and by 1120 when no one else had set off I slipped the buoy and headed towards the main channel, once there I put up the main with one reef and then some headsail and stopped the engine. *Hannah* appeared following me then *Lazy Otter* and *AJ Wanderlust*. I headed towards the upwind end of the line (the start was between the W end of the breakwater and a red buoy), and crossed it at about 1200, the others were all some way behind, I'd put out full genoa and we beat to the Eddystone Rock which we have to leave to starboard. I maintained then increased my lead, *Lazy Otter* overtook *AJ Wanderlust* at one point and *Hannah* disappeared off on starboard tack ahead but down wind of the others, I tacked 3 times and past the rock at about 1515 with no one else in sight, freed off, too much in fact and had to harden up again, the wind was SWly around 14 kts with a 3m sea. Visibility not great with some slight mist. I stayed on that tack all afternoon, eating a potato I'd cooked in the morning then bringing it back up about an hour later.
- At dusk *AJ Wanderlust* overtook me some miles to the North. Overnight the wind veered and I was slow to notice and harden up so ended up ducking inside the Scillies once clear of the traffic separation scheme.
- Wet bouncy and sick overnight. Not a nice day. Guido, Ertan and I spoke at about 0900 and I gave Ertan some weather as he's not getting it on the satellite. A gale warning came in for Fastnet. I ended up with 3 reefs in the main and the smaller staysail set. This was a mistake, I'd thought it was the larger one but wasn't thinking clearly, as the wind was still picking up I left it but in the afternoon with the wind back to about 22 kts it was a bit small but I wasn't feeling up to all the work of changing it. I brought it down at around sunset and went back to the genoa with 2 reefs in it. I managed a tin of soup for dinner and it stayed put, Hurrah! It's quite wet down below, a lot of water comes down the hatch after a wave passes over the deck, also, disappointingly, some comes through the vents. This is odd, I'd blanked off the vent heads and put corks in the drains so there shouldn't be much water getting into the vent box and the inlet to the cabin is quite well raised so I don't understand how this is working, I wondered if I'd missed drain holes on the forward face but I hadn't. Overnight it was quite bangy at times as we came off waves and a fishing boat passed quite close.
- Cheers
- Jock
- Positions for the three yachts with satellite trackers.

qtVlm 64 bits 5.10-1 (meltemus) slot1: gfs_NOAA-2021051100.grb (from 05/11/2021 00:00 to 05/16/2021 00:00)

Navigation toolbar with icons for O, R, M, V, C, A.I.S., zoom, and other functions. Includes a 'Reckoning' section set to 60 mins and a 1h timer.

Notification icons: bell, warning, target, and lifebuoy.

Ref : 05/11/2021 00:00
Tue 05/11/2021 09:45
(UTC)



COG (T)	SOG	VMC	XTE	TSP	PPC	TWD	TWA	TWS	AWA	AWS	CTW (T)	STW	CNM	DNM	CS/CD	DPH	PRE	ROL/PCH	STP	ATP
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Jock's Blogs

- 12 May 2021
- **Prop Knows Best**
- Good Morning All,
- Day 3 - Tuesday 11th dawned brighter, well certainly in my imagination, I felt much better and a little hungry. Having sorted the sails out by hoisting more I came below and made some tea which I then took up to the cockpit and enjoyed, with the exception of occasionally burning my nose on it. This is odd, I've not had it before, the mug I use for tea is a cheap insulated one as one might buy at a petrol station with a narrow base and a lid. The narrow base isn't ideal but the handle is good for hooking onto the chart table or winch handle stowage, depending upon location. Anyway when tipping it up at my mouth to get the tea, my nose hits the lid before the tea hits my mouth, and I kept burning it. I'm possibly slightly sunburned so my nose may be more sensitive than normal. Once I'd drained the dregs of my tea I came back down below and got the weather forecast on my iPad and then updated the log and blog. I then made bacon with scrambled eggs for breakfast which was most enjoyable and welcome; as my mother's not here to tell me any different I eat most things straight out of the saucepan as it's easier when washing up is so difficult with the motion. The sea is down this morning but yesterday it was still fairly big, around 3 -4 metres and it makes the motion aboard very jerky and uncomfortable.
- During the day a bird, possibly a sparrow, with his wife, arrived and took up residence in the cockpit. To start with I was a bit irritated at them being in the way when I had to adjust sheets, steering or sails but they seemed quite content to get out of the way and come back again once I'd finished. They were with me for a few hours and I was starting to enjoy their company, particularly as they showed no interest in going down below, but after a short sleep in the afternoon they had left when I came back on deck. A couple of small poos were all they left, I hope that they found their way back to Ireland or wherever they were heading. A fulmar also enjoyed showing off his aeronautical skills by hovering off the port quarter and doing kind of vertical circles in time with us and the waves, at the bottom of the circle he'd dip his feet into the water and add speed to his flying by running in the water for a few steps. I don't know what he was doing or why but he did it for some time which was fascinating. I've seen several fulmars and gannets and one guillemot so far, or at least I think it was a guillemot.
- I'd rigged the larger staysail on deck ready to go next time it's too blowy for the genoa; in the afternoon the wind picked back up to around 20-23 knots, with 2 reefs in the main and genoa she was fine but a little over-pressed at times. The wind is coming from the SW, exactly the direction I'm trying to go so it's frustrating not being able to sail at closer than about 50 degrees to where I'm trying to get to. I took in the third reef at dusk and we actually increased speed, we're only doing about 4 knots at the moment which is disappointing, I'm hoping to average 5 knots and it's not looking likely at the moment. The weather is supposed to be better for a couple of days then get worse again, I'd expected bad weather tomorrow but that's now looking less likely. The day's run to Noon yesterday was 125 miles but this is logged miles, or distance travelled, so when we zig and zag it means that some of it isn't actually in a useful direction.
- I had prawn risotto for dinner, a bit risky as I'd bought the prawns reduced in Lidl on Friday. When Ertan and I ended up going to Rockfish with Robbie and Charlene from *Wanderlust* I thought I'd better cook these before they went off, which I did on Friday evening, but had ignored them since. I did wonder if it was sensible eating them still, but seem to have got away without poisoning myself, I hate throwing things away.



Jock's Blogs

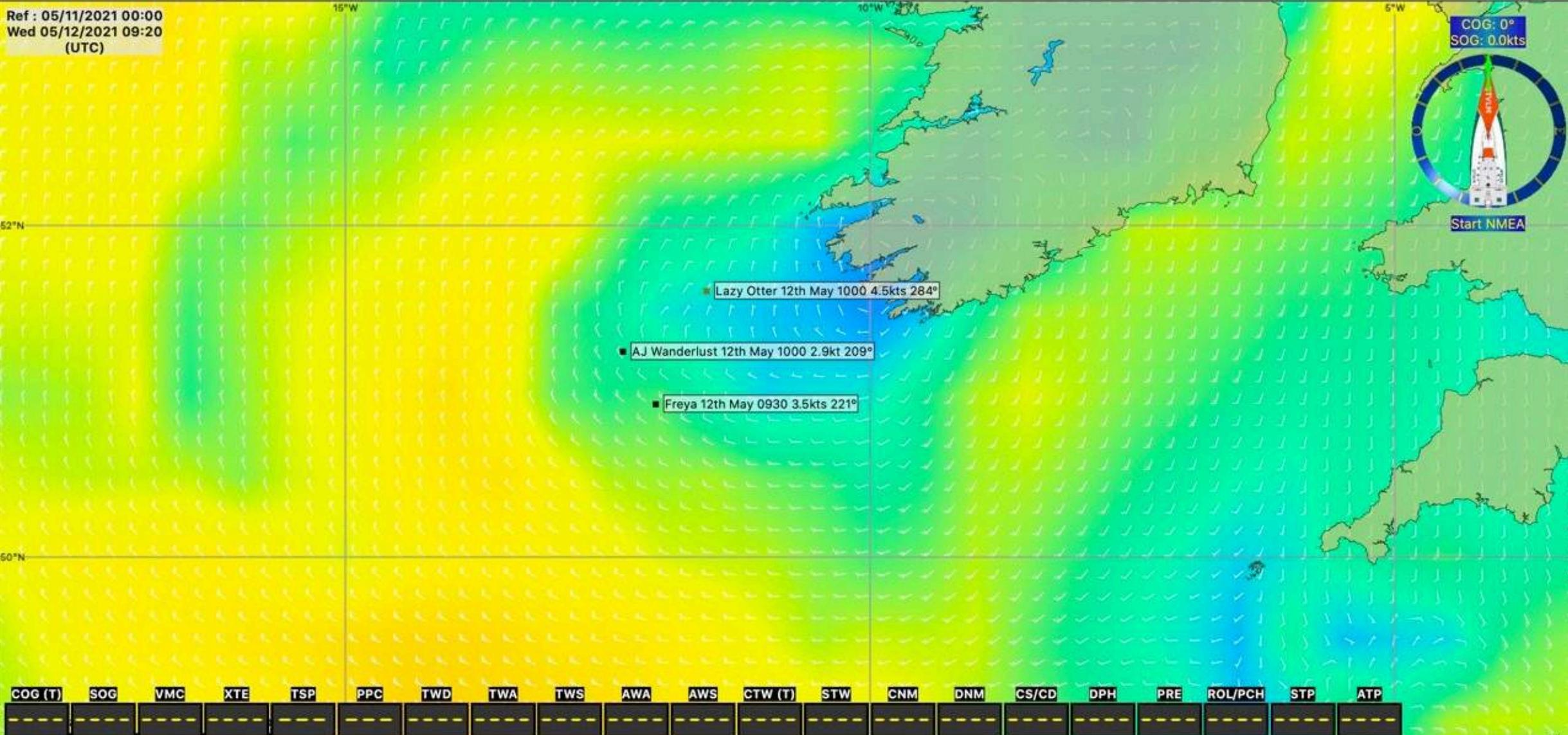
- 12 May 2021 (continued)
- Just before midnight we tacked inadvertently, then gybed before I'd managed to struggle into my oilskins and wellies (going up on deck without oilskins last night would have guaranteed a drenching and I've not too many spare clothes) when I made it up and started sorting things out - disaster, the wind vane from the self steering gear was missing! The self steering itself was jammed hard over as well. I'm not sure what happened, it's likely that a wave hit it but why, if that happened, it didn't break the vane rather than cause it to come adrift I'm not sure. Prop, at the boatyard had suggested that I should tie it on, I had thought about it but in my mind the risk was from me dropping it when fitting or removing it, not for it to go missing in action when it should have been securely clamped to the structure. Stupid of me, always listen to Prop! Anyway I switched to autopilot for the night and started the engine to charge the batteries for an hour because the autopilot uses electricity, a valuable commodity aboard.
- This morning, day 4, I woke up going North, not ideal so tacked and put up full sail as the wind was down below 10 knots. Having thought about rigging my spare wind vane, which Prop had made me but is quite a bit heavier than the original, I had a plan of action in mind and carried it through before breakfast. It involved adding lead weight to the counterbalance of the vane which I've wrapped around the weight and held in place with jubilee clips, and tied on as a back up! The vane is now running the watch again and I've fitted a lanyard to it now so that it shouldn't go missing again. I had bought some fearfully expensive dyneema rope coated with anti-chafe sleeve which apparently was made with a ground-up mixture of the stig and diamonds, the nice chap at the rigger shop thought that it would be ideal and last for ages. It is only 8mm diameter and costs 15 pounds a metre. I fitted it in Plymouth before departure and it's worn out already, given that my ordinary rope has seen me all the way around Ireland, down to Cornwall and back and then again down to Cornwall I'm not that impressed. In any event I've end for ended it for now, I have a complete spare in the dyneema but think I'll go back to the ordinary rope next time.
- The wind is now very light and we're only making just over 3 knots, however it's a lovely day, I'm re reading *The Restless Wind*, a book my father wrote when he went sailing in the 50s with my mother and he's also now well into a solo Atlantic crossing so I feel as though he's keeping me company.



qtVlm 64 bits 5.10-1 (meltemus) slot1: gfs_NOAA-2021051100.grb (from 05/11/2021 00:00 to 05/16/2021 00:00)

Navigation toolbar with icons for O, R, M, V, C, A.I.S., and various map controls. Includes a 'Reckoning' section set to 60 mins and a 1h time interval selector.

Ref : 05/11/2021 00:00
 Wed 05/12/2021 09:20
 (UTC)



COG (T)	SOG	VMC	XTE	TSP	PPC	TWD	TWA	TWS	AWA	AWS	CTW (T)	STW	CNM	DNM	CS/CD	DPH	PRE	ROL/PCH	STP	ATP
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Jock's Blogs

- 13 May 2021
- A disappointing 98 miles for the 24 hours and much of it not in the right direction, at noon. However a much, much pleasanter day overall, my fitting of Prop's wind vane went according to plan and it is working well, the sun was out, we sailed OK, around 2-3 knots in 5-7 knots of breeze most of the day, it's not rough but there's still a swell of 2 ish metres which slops the sails around and slows us so we aren't going nearly as fast as we would in the Kyles with the same wind speed. In the mid afternoon the wind died to around 5 knots and we struggled to keep going, I tried hand steering but it didn't make much difference, I wondered about bearing off to the South to bring the wind more onto the beam / quarter and trying the assymetric but wasn't convinced enough about it to try it and as it happened, by about 1700 the wind filled in and we started to pick up speed to 4+ knots, soon increasing to about a 10 knot wind from the North and we were up to 5-6 knots boat speed.
- I had a pleasant afternoon enjoying the sun, changing underclothes, reading and pottering about.
- Jobs still on the list include a different way of holding my PV panels, (which are attached to my top guard rails at the cockpit to convert sunshine into battery charging energy,) in the horizontal position. I had them set up using rods which were attached to the bottom so that I could swing them from the vertical position to the horizontal and hold them up with the rods stuck into the toe rail. That had been working fine but I lost one after I'd not noticed that a wave had caught the panel and knocked one Rod off the toe rail, it must subsequently have unscrewed and fallen off. Since then two have become fairly bent, presumably by the panel being knocked by a wave, I've straightened them but don't think that the system is as good as I'd like. I also need to stow them earlier as the weather picks up because that appears to be when the damage is being caused, in the vertical position however they catch very little electricity.
- Reading Daddy's book, the Restless Wind, they are now in Rapa and I'm enjoying it all over again and more impressed with their seamanship and 'can do' attitude than I remember having been before.
- Today is supposed to be a reasonably good day with winds from the North veering Westerly at supper time and I think I'll head North at that stage to try to avoid the worst of a blow coming in tomorrow for the weekend.
- Right the next forecast is due in in a couple of minutes so that's all for now.
- Thanks to every one for all their good wishes, I see a lot of messages on watts app, messenger, text and e mail that I didn't have a chance to read and respond to around Sunday, sorry, they are all read and much appreciated.
- Slainte
- Jock



Jock's Blogs

- 14 May 2021
- **Questions Questions ...**
- The pupils of Tighnabruaich Primary School have been following Jock and asking questions, the TDDT Heritage Centre has set up a slide show featuring Jock's voyage and the papers want to know who's shirts he wears ...
- Good Morning all,
- Thanks to Tighnabruaich Primary School for being in touch, they have a few questions for me which I'll answer below.
- When did you first sail a boat?
- Have you seen any wildlife in the Atlantic?
- What position in the race are you?
- How do you entertain yourself?
- Do you get lonely?
- What are your meals like each day?
- Have you ever been sailing in a really bad storm?
- I first sailed as a child with my father in around 1969 when I was about 9 years old on a sailing holiday in Kent on a small yacht. There was a sailing club at the school that I went to but we couldn't join it until we were about 11 or 12 I think , but I joined as soon as I could, I loved sailing as a child, it gave me a sense of freedom and responsibility.
- I've not seen much other than birds, there was a pair of sparrows aboard for a few hours on the second day, there have been plenty of fulmars, gannets and guillemots, I'm surprised that I've seen no dolphins as yet, I've heard them, they make two kinds of noises; a puff when they come up to breathe and a clicking noise when chattering to each other, I've heard a few puffs but not subsequently seen them. Incidentally the third night out was beautifully clear and the stars, when seen from a boat, are magnificent. The difference from seeing them from ashore is that there is no light at all anywhere so the sky is black and the stars shine much more brightly, the other difference is that from a boat the whole horizon is clear so the whole of the sky can be seen.

Jock's Blogs

- 14 May 2021 (continued)
- It looks like I'm first in the race at the moment. AJ Wanderlust a 45 ft boat seems to be to the NE of me and Lazy Otter a 36 ft boat (I'm 33 ft long) is to my East, we're racing pretty much to the West. The fourth boat seems to have had a problem and sailed back to Plymouth, we've not heard from her as to what the problem is or whether she will start again but she would be a long way behind if she started again.
- If I'm not doing jobs on the boat like changing the sail area to suit the wind or looking at weather and planning routes or cooking I read and or listen to music. I have a selection on my phone, current favourite is an album by Richard Stilgoe and Peter Skellern called Who Plays Wins, it's both musical and funny.
- I've not been lonely yet, but it's nice to hear from home.
- My breakfast is often porridge, for lunch I usually have a sandwich and pork pie. On my first two days out I was being sea sick and didn't eat much other than cold boiled potatoes which I'd cooked prior to leaving harbour, they don't taste too foul on the way back up again and are easy to eat, not requiring any preparation. I have a fridge which I've stocked with meat and cheese and hope I'll be able to eat fresh for a couple of weeks at least, after that it'll be down to salami which I'm hoping will keep without refrigeration for meat and the remains of my vegetables until that all runs out and I'm down to tins. I obviously have plenty of rice, flour, oats and so on, foods that keep without refrigeration. For evening meals so far I've cooked twice and made enough for two nights, the first meal was a shrimp ('though the supermarket calls them prawns) risotto with lots of vegetables in it, the second batch which I'll finish tonight is a creamy chicken, pepper, ginger casserole kind of thing with potatoes in it. I try to do dishes that can mostly be done in one big pot as it's easier to manage when the boat is moving around.
- I've not been sailing in a really bad storm in a small boat like this, on the way to the Faroe Islands in my previous boat, a similar sort of size, I had a force 9 Gale which was quite frightening, it was my first time at sea on my own on a small boat, I hope I wouldn't find it so frightening now. A force 9, on the beaufort scale is one below a Storm which is 10, 11 being severe storm and 12 being hurricane force. I work on ships for a living and have been in a couple of Force 12's in the North Sea, again, it's quite frightening.
- OK class, some questions for you! -
- How much water does the average person in the UK get through in a day? (Not just for drinking but for everything).
- How much water do you think that I am carrying?

Jock's Blogs

- 14 May 2021

- **Questions Questions ...**

- Well, it's Friday morning and the wind picked up overnight I'm down to a small area of genoa and 3 reefs in the main, I may take the main down to make things more comfortable as we are creaming along in any case with the wind on the port quarter. There is a bit of a gale coming through and I'm trying to get North of the worst of it so I'm sailing NW, I may end up in VHF range of AJ Wanderlust later as she's to the North I'll try to call her at around lunch time. This weather is set to continue for a couple of days, I'll probably turn back to the SW tomorrow afternoon. I'm having to charge the battery because for a time last night before the wind picked up there wasn't enough to make the self steering work properly so I had the autopilot on.....
- I've just stowed the main sail, we're still doing 6 knots under a little bit of genoa and the steering is happier because it's a better balance of sail and direction.
- I've had to batten down the hatch completely because it's pouring with rain and with the wind astern it all comes into the cabin making conditions below very wet and miserable, the down side is that if I want to go on deck in a hurry not only do I have to struggle into my oilskins I also have to remove one hatch board and then pull my leg up over the remaining one because I'm no longer sufficiently bendy to manage it with only leg power.
- I'm off on deck again now to reduce the sail further but will send this now so it's in time for the school.

Jock's Blogs

- 15 May 2021
- **Ready... Steady... Steady... Cook!**
- If things go well there may be a picture attached of Prop's windvane and the lead I've wrapped around the weight at the bottom as a counterbalance. The Photo was taken two days ago and nothing like a reflection of today's weather which is a lot windier and with bigger seas. However it's not too bad. I've just put up the main again with 3 reefs and we're close reaching on the port tack to the NW looking for better weather as a low passes South of us.
- I must take more pictures, even if I can't send them it's good to have them, I just tend not to think about it. Even with a couple of meals with the other competitors before we left, everyone else got their cameras out and I didn't.
- Major stuff up, I forgot to buy any garlic, I must start making lists, how could I forget garlic, disaster! I found some ginger which I'd brought from home and needed eating, it went in the chicken last night which was very good. I'm looking forward to it again tonight, I did it in the pressure cooker which is a brilliant thing on a boat, it's big and cuts down the cooking time a lot which saves gas. I have four bottles of gas which I hope will last me all the way there and back because I believe that they use propane in the states and I'm not sure if I'll be able to get the appropriate jets for my cooker.
- Speaking of cooking, the fridge on the boat looks like a small domestic fridge as opposed to most boats where the fridge is built in and accessed from the top. On mine it's absolutely fine on the port tack because it leans away from the door. On the Starboard tack when I try to open it I have to keep catching stuff that slides out, on a day when we're sailing enthusiastically it's a real pain and best to plan not to use it, to tack or use a lull in the wind to get out the things needed, this happened yesterday, the wind died for a bit so as I was getting cheese, ham and tomatoes out I also pulled out the chicken for dinner so I didn't have to do it whilst it was in the 'spill everything all over the deck' position. Everything on a boat is a compromise, it's easier to find stuff than in a top loading fridge and has the advantage of a small ice compartment where I've frozen some meat to hopefully see me into the third week, and is also good for ice for G and Ts, but it's major disadvantage is access on the starboard tack.



Jock's Blogs

- 15 May 2021 (continued)
- Breakfast yesterday was not as intended, I knew that I had some mushrooms in the fridge which needed eating so I thought I'd have mushrooms in a white sauce on toast. However when I looked at the mushrooms they were looking OK but a bit too slimy and soft for me to feel happy cooking them so I'm afraid I consigned them to the deep and had a sort of Spanish omelette instead. I'd kind of lost them, I had thought I had some from home but they were buried under other stuff in the fridge and I hadn't found them so assumed that I must have left them behind, then came across them whilst finding ham yesterday.
- Chris asked about routeing and I forgot to mention it in my email to him but I had intended to try to follow approximately a great circle route which is the shortest distance and is a straight line on a globe but looks like a gentle curve on a mercator chart, however Ertan has a book on the OSTAR and most winners have gone on the approximate Rhumb Line which is a straight line on a mercator chart. I thought about it and decided that coming down through the grand banks, which is where the great circle goes, may be unpleasant because of the cold, fog and ice so I've plotted a great circle to about 500 miles short of our finish at Newport from where I'll take a rhumb line, I'm hoping that this may work. The others seem to be on a similar route, mind you a lot of our direction is dictated by the wind in any case. He'd just read Chichester's book and was wondering if Blondie Hasler had written about the Ostar which I don't think that he has, however it is covered in Ewan Southby Tailyour's book about Blondie.
- Well that's noon, we've done over a thousand miles but, sadly still have 2306 to go, day's run was 116. Nothing terrible but I'd have hoped to be further on than this by now. Particularly as I've no garlic left.





Experimental post

Mon Apr 26 2021

Sitting in the house, thinking about food shopping and which clothes to take, have...

Wind Speed: 22 knots
Wind Direction: 44° true
Pressure: 1019 hPa
Latitude: 55° 19.881n
Longitude: 45° 52.734w

Sun 16/May 11:29 GMT
50° 20.876 N 23° 20.213 W
Course: 214° true, 4.8 kts

Jock's Position 16 May



Jock's Blogs

- 16 May 2021
- **Vegetables Upgraded to Business Class**
- A peaceful night last night which was thoroughly enjoyed.
- Yesterday was fine, wind wise but there was still a big sea running, about 4-5 metres in height although the wavelength is far longer than it would be around the coast so it probably sounds worse in a blog than it actually was. It was, still, very uncomfortable and poor *Freya* is thrown around quite a lot and me too. Because I had to use the autopilot for some time yesterday whilst removing and refitting the stops on the wind vane I also had to run the engine for a couple of hours to boost the batteries. Shortly after starting it there was an alarm so I stopped it again and checked the water and oil, the water was a bit low so I topped that up but I think that the problem was that the sea water supply to the galley sink comes off the seawater inlet to the engine in between the filter and the seawater engine pump. There is a stop cock for the galley which is supposed to be closed if the engine is running otherwise it's possible that the engine pump sucks air instead of sea water, this was open which I think is what the problem was. Normally once I've started the engine I look to see that there's a good discharge of cooling water but at the moment as we're trundling along quite fast in a poor sea the sea is above the discharge so I can't see it.
- I had an email from *AJ Wanderlust* yesterday, she has gone further North to try to keep out of the weather yesterday she was a good few miles NNE of us, she should be a much faster boat but, I think, needs better weather to achieve good speeds, she was doing 8 knots last night a speed I can never achieve.
- After some sail changes yesterday we settled on 3 reefs in the main and half a genoa, the wind was, and still is Northerly about 15 knots which is a good sailing wind. A heavy rain shower is going through at the moment, if I was short of water I should be collecting some from the sails but I've used so little yet it's not worthwhile. Hopefully the rain isn't a front going through, signifying a wind shift, I don't think that it is.



Jock's Blogs

- 16 May 2021 (continued)
- The hammock for my vegetables is working well now. I couldn't rig it fore and aft as I would have liked as I couldn't find anywhere to put it like that, so rigged it athwartships between the mast and the tie rods for the chain plates (where the shrouds are attached to). It should have been obvious that this wasn't going to be satisfactory as it was because every time we pitch or hit a wave the hammock swings wildly fore and aft. Last Sunday, just after leaving, it was obvious I needed to rig some damping system to it which ended up being a couple of sail ties rigged fore and aft which stop it from swinging much. I had chucked some raspberries, tomatoes and cake into it as a handy place to put them just before leaving. They all had a strong sense of wishing to escape and worked their way down the pile of potatoes, onions, neaps, cabbage and so on, some made it out but I think it was a bit of pyrrhic escape in that they were eventually squished through the mesh of the hammock by weight of neaps atop them. I keep finding bits of raspberry now in unexpected places.
- Not last night but the one before, after a particularly violent heave, half of the books came out of the bookshelf on the port side and were thrown across the cabin to the starboard settee berth. I wasn't expecting that as there's a good ledge to hold them in.



Jock's Blogs

- 17 May 2021
- **Retrospective Forecasting**
- Picture is last night's sunset. Not very inspiring but I've discovered that small pictures can be sent, I'm hoping to get more interesting ones, please bear with me.
- It's a beautiful morning this morning - day 9, clear blue sky but not much wind, there's a new system coming our way, hopefully it'll not be too horrible, due around Wednesday.
- Yesterday we put the clocks back an hour to GMT (I can't stand this UTC nonsense, one of the few things I don't blame Tony Blair for, I think it's the French not liking GMT because it reminds them of Trafalgar).
- I had various sail options up and down yesterday, but there wasn't enough wind for the Staysail on it's own and it doesn't work well in addition to the genoa. I saw, or think I may have because it didn't hang around, a common Tern.
- The batteries don't seem as good as before, they're only just managing to see us through the night now from a fullish charge whereas before it was not an issue as long as I didn't run the autopilot. It may be that they have not been getting fully charged, we'll see today because it's looking like horizon to horizon sunshine.



Jock's Blogs

- 17 May 2021 (continued)
- Computers and Jock. They're like cats, they know it's me and start to do irritating things. My forecasting program had been working fine. Now it's decided to accept the parameters I've asked it to provide, spend the half hour or whatever downloading something and then give me yesterday's forecast instead of a new one. Urghhh! I was a bit worried last night, I hadn't noticed that the forecast that had come in hadn't been updated, Ertan on *Lazy Otter* was worried about the low that's coming in and I said it didn't look too bad, then in the middle of the night after I'd been up tending the sails I noticed that the forecast said it was 18 hours old when it should only have been 6. Re downloading a few times it eventually condescended to give me the up to date one and it then looked like the gale coming up was going to be more playful than I'd indicated to Ertan, luckily the advice I'd given him on routeing was still the same. I've re read all the instructions on the thing but don't think that I've done anything wrong. It's a real pain having to download the weather several times before getting what I want although now at least I think I'm more aware of when it's not given me a new one.
- I lost an onion whilst cooking. I'd put two on the galley top, the boat took a roll/heave and they flew onto the sole. I found one straight away as it was rolling around, the other one had completely disappeared. I spent some time looking for it then thought I'd just get another but that seemed stupid. Turned out it seemed to have a bit of a penchant for crazy golf, it'd rolled across the sole, bounced up a ledge, hit a sloping deck piece under the chart table jumped up into the air and popped into a small cubby hole.
- I think *AJ* are now ahead of us, well further West in any case, they are a lot further North so may not actually be closer to Newport but probably are, they certainly ought to be, however I'm hopeful that conditions may favour me later, I think they aren't so good to windward, also they were ahead before and I ended up back ahead of them, possibly in the bad weather although I'm keen not to overpress poor Freya as I'm very keen to avoid failures as much as possible.



Jock's Blogs

- 18 May 2021
- **Guido's Back!**
- Morning All,
- Yesterday was wonderful. Well not particularly for distance, we only made 99 miles to Noon, but just because it was sunny and the sea was down and the winds light.
- I had been going to spoil myself and have bacon and eggs for breakfast but decided to keep the bacon because it'll last for ages still so ended up with porridge again. I had a bit of a wash up in the cockpit, face, neck, behind the ears, armpits, unmentionables, feet etc. and put on clean clothes which was great and most invigorating. I've decided not to shave this week, I've never had a beard before and am wondering; a) can I actually grow one and b) will it look awful. I'll maybe send a photo before I shave it off depending on how it looks.
- Good news this morning from Guido; he turned back when his self steering vane was smashed and then his autopilot also failed, anyway it looks like he's replaced or repaired them and set out again on the chase, last night he was 49 42n and 4 41W heading to the South of a low sweeping in from the West and feeling a bit depressed that he's over a week behind us and likely to miss us in the US. Fair winds and Bon Voyage to Guido!!
- I made a nice Moroccan lamb mince dish last night, or should have done but think that I ended up using pork mince instead of lamb, it was delicious in any case but I suspect that it wouldn't have gone down that well with the average Moroccan where pork's not normally on the menu.



Jock's Blogs

- 18 May 2021 (continued)
- The wind had picked up by yesterday evening to about 15 knots and overnight there were a couple of thunderstorms with the first one bringing 35 knots of wind, I was in the process of pulling in the third reef when the wind came and it was all a bit exciting for a wee while, I finished the reef without much hassle, left the tidying up for the time being and rolled up the genoa 3/4 until it past. Having waited a bit afterwards and wondered, I ended up going back to 2 reefs and 3/4 genoa again, only to repeat the whole process again in about an hour. Anyway all fine still.
- This morning I wanted to tack but with the inner forestay rigged I need to furl the genoa, or at least nearly furl it, before tacking and by the time I'd done that we were going so slowly she wasn't going to come around so I ended up gybing round instead (ie turning downwind and putting the stern through the wind instead of the bow), I suspect this may become a normal tactic as it's not the first time I've had to do it.
- Replies to Comments
- Thanks Phil and Sarah, Patrick, Nancy, Lyd, Rob, Colin and Mandy, Jane and Colin for welcome comments on the blog. Graham kindly forwards them to me. Rob, on principle I hate bottled water and try not to touch the stuff, I carry a case just as an emergency, I take whichever water comes from any hose. Colin I'm hopeless with names and can't place Ron from Lanzarote although I'm sure I ought to be able to, but will look forward to reading your stuff when I have an internet connection. I had a pleasant few months in Thailand / Malaysia / Indonesia on *Blue Leopard* several years ago.
- Jock



Jock's Blogs

- 19 May 2021
- **The Big Breakfast**
- Morning, Sorry a bit late this morning.
- Yesterday was fine, mostly sunny but winds from the West which is the direction we're trying to go, we tacked a few times heading NW or SW doing 4 and a bit knots mostly, there was a bit of a sea running which slowed us down and makes life a bit more awkward, but all in all not a bad day at all and the batteries were fully charged by my solar panels. Lovely sunset last night, the astute amongst you may realise my stern shouldn't be facing the sunset, we'd gone off course on the wind vane without my noticing, not a good racing technique, Pete (Currie) would not approve we were heading East albeit only at about half a knot. Shortly after sunset the wind fell to below 5 knots and with the sea / swell the sails were banging around and not achieving anything, this was in accordance with the forecast, I rolled up the genoa and lashed the boom amidships hoping to sleep for a couple of hours until the wind filled in but couldn't. I had a beer, that went down fine. Read for a bit. Then thought I'd try hand steering to see if I could get her moving. I wrapped up warm, 4 pairs of trousers and 4 different tops, hat (KOBSC hat) and fishing gloves and went up to the cockpit, she was, serendipitously pointing in about the right direction with about 4 knots of wind and when I set the sails she started to move and as she did the apparent wind increased. I hand steered for a short time, but she seemed to be quite happy so put the autopilot on and dozed in the cockpit. As she continued quite happily, doing about a knot and a half to the West I went below, still dressed in all my finery, and lay down on the Starboard settee berth ready for a quick 'jack in the box' egress should my presence be required in the cockpit.



Jock's Blogs

- 19 May 2021 (continued)
- As it turned out all seemed fine for ages, I went up for a look around once and decided she seemed things were fine, the batteries were coping with the autopilot because very little input was required in the light airs so I went to bed properly in the quarter berth, my normal bed at sea.
- Waking up this morning the wind had increased to about 10 knots and come to the South East and shortly it backed to the East so I goosewinged the genoa, with the spinnaker pole holding the genoa out to port and the mainsail held out to starboard with the wind and a preventer to stop it swinging over in case an accidental gybe occurred.
- As everything looked settled I thought I'd treat myself to a cooked breakfast and had a glass of milk too as we still have a couple of litres of fresh which won't last for much longer. I had a delicious breakfast of scrambled egg with bacon on toast and milky coffee. I also took the opportunity to have a poo whilst things were calm, it's far pleasanter than trying to hold on as the boat bounces around and one's trousers are tying ones legs together. Having washed up, the wind was increasing and the sea picking up from astern which makes us yaw around quite a bit. On one cycle of yawing we gybed, this shouldn't really have mattered as the preventer held the boom on the starboard side, and we gybed back again pretty quickly. Unfortunately there was enough force in it to break off the fitting for the Kicker which is a device to hold the boom down. I've now made temporary repairs with some rope but it means that the rod no longer is able to also hold the boom up which shouldn't matter unless I lose my topping lift which is a rope from the masthead which also holds up the boom. Looking at the fitting, probably an original, there wasn't much metal holding it together it had already corroded most of the way through.



Jock's Blogs

- 19 May 2021 (continued)
- The wind's now shifted to the NE and I've gybed, put two reefs in the main and a similar number of rolls in the genoa and we're rolling along at about 6 and a half knots just North of West.
- If you are following the other boats then *AJ Wanderlust* is to the North and East of me, they have gone North to try to be above the depressions as they come through and hopefully have fewer headwinds. I had an e mail from the crewman today, Bobby, apparently it's cold up there, they're not so far from Greenland and will shortly be coming to the grand banks of Newfoundland where the Labrador current comes down from the Arctic which mixes with the Gulf stream off coming up from the Tropics causing fog. They seem to be trying to head south again now but are in an area of light winds. Hopefully they'll remain in them for a bit so I can get ahead!



Jock's Blogs

- 20 May 2021
- **Red Sky at Night, Shepherd's Pie Delight**
- Well we made a good speed most of yesterday but the wind headed us in the night, I hardened up into it and of course it then freed off again when I was asleep so would have been better of not having bothered in the first place. We're doing around 7 kts to the SW at the moment, this seems to be the direction needed according to the forecast. I've 2 reefs in the main and the No1 staysail set.
- I've invested, or rather I had to buy for the official race, an iridium 'phone package, it is actually very useful. It works off satellites and means both that I can stay in touch and that I can get weather forecasts.



Jock's Blogs

- 20 May 2021 (continued)
- The weather forecasting package I'm using seemed fearfully complicated to me to set up, but then I am a bit of a dunderhead when it comes to computers and things. Anyway, twice a day at around 0710 and 1910 GMT I choose a patch of the ocean, the one that I'm in normally, and download a weather forecast for the area. The package has a cunning feature in it where you can tell it what kind of speeds the boat does in different wind strengths and angles and it then works out the best route to take. So far it's been pretty good I think; I've not had any horrible weather and I'm not convinced that *AJ Wanderlust* have made striking gains by heading way up to the North and they still have to come South again which I believe that they are now doing. They are using the same weather package but you can also choose different routes and settings within it like optimising for speed or comfort etc.
- I had a notion for Shepherd's Pie last night as opposed to just mince and tatties and although it was quite difficult to assemble owing to the boat jerking around so much and the galley being tilted towards me at about 25 degrees I managed and thoroughly enjoyed it, I'll have the remains tonight and I split half the mince before making the pie which will either become bolognese or curry depending upon how I feel at the weekend.



Jock's Blogs

- 21 May 2021
- **Foiled Again!**
- I notice this morning that the foil on my furler is separating half way up the forestay. This happened before halfway around Ireland. A couple of small screws had come out, I replaced them last season but they'd come out again. I suspected that I'd failed to put Loctite on them and that had been the problem. They weren't easy to get hold of again but I got them from Harken eventually and replaced them again ensuring that I'd put Loctite on them this time but they've obviously come out again. I think I need to replace the plate into which they screw but don't have one, in any event It's not a job for doing solo at sea. The forecast is showing winds down to 15 knots at lunch time at which point I'll let the sheet go and wiggle the halyard up and down and hope that the two parts come together again, as they did before, in any event I now need to nurse the Genoa, possibly only using it either full or not at all so as not to strain the foil. Boring.
- Yesterday we had good wind direction and strength but it's really uncomfortable the way the boat moves. It looks like Ertan has caught me up again, he's around about the same Longitude I think, he's further North, *AJ Wanderlust* is around the same latitude as Ertan but far further West, she's miles in the lead now, at least 24 hours ahead of me I think.
- Had a new bird this morning, after some perusal of my wildlife book, (thanks Jean) I think it's a Storm Petrel, I hope it's doesn't know something that I don't. There seem to be several types but I'll need to see it again to try to distinguish it and possibly won't because I'm not so good at distinguishing little features, they all look similar to me.



Jock's Blogs

- 21 May 2021 (continued)
- I've been reading a quadrology (??) of cowboy books by Larry McMurtry, one of them, 'Lonesome Dove' won a Booker Prize and I'd read that before, Jennifer kindly gave me them, two prior to Lonesome Dove and one post. I've read the first two now and am saving the 4th for later. I can recommend them, very good.
- A tin of beer had burst in my cold locker, opposite my fridge and where I'd been keeping things that didn't fit in the fridge, a bit of a nuisance as the smell lingers, a little bilge water had got in and probably there was sufficient seawater to rust through the can quite quickly, there were a few more but as I'm not really enjoying them at the moment anyway I thought they were best poured away before more of them burst. I spent some time mopping up and clearing the locker, there was room in the fridge for most of it, I also came across a punnet of tomatoes that I'd forgotten I had so am planning a tomato olive and feta salad for lunch for a change, not a salad Sarah and Jessica would approve of, their idea of a salad is plain green leaves. Yuck. In my opinion lettuce etc is primarily a means of conveying a delicious salad dressing to one's mouth.
- Wondering about making a rice pudding with arborio rice on the stove, It's the only short rice I have and I have milk that will go off before I drink it so think I ought to do something with it, sadly I've no vanilla which I think would cheer it up but I do have raisins from Florida, thanks Julie.



Jock's Blogs

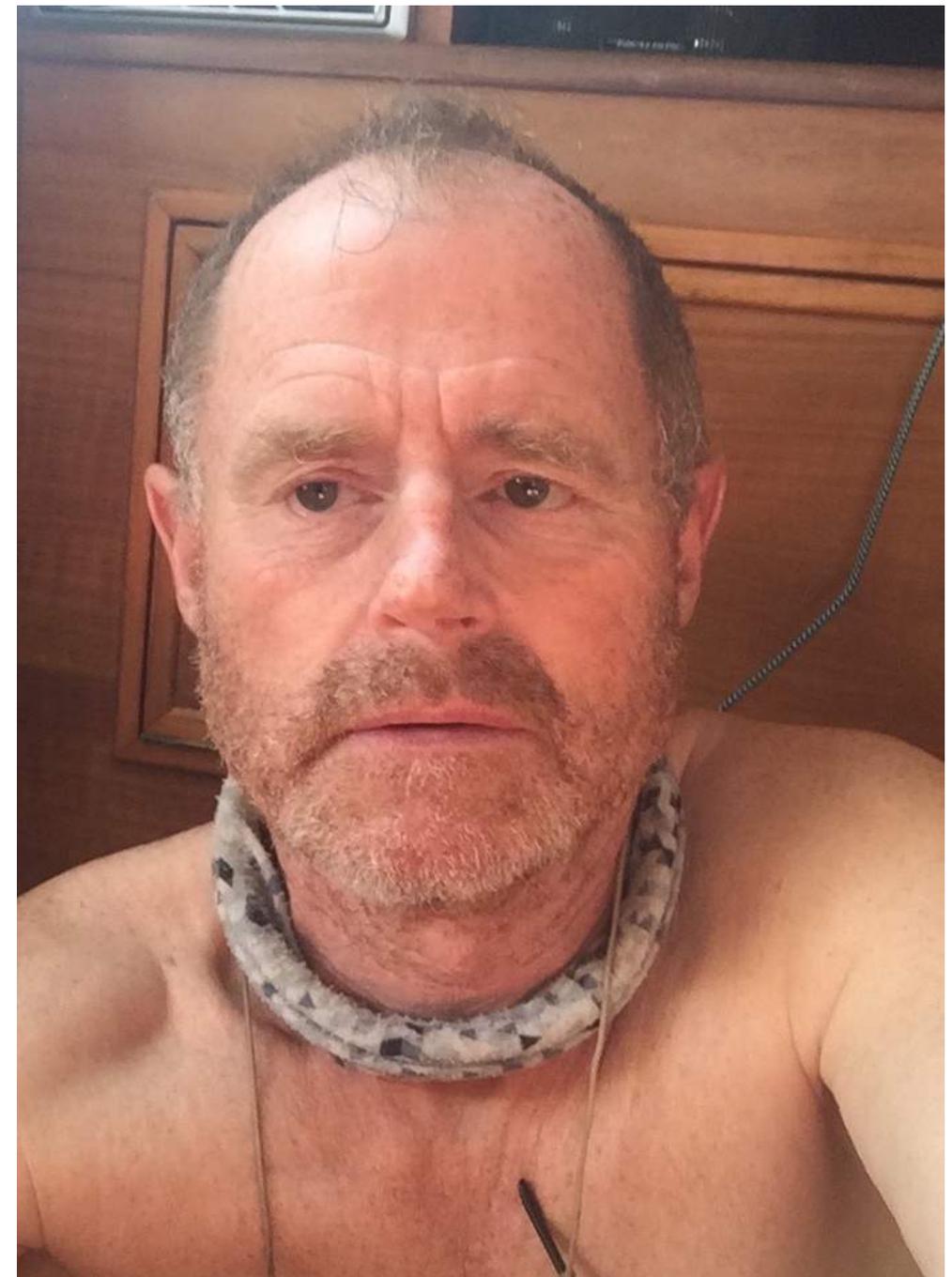
- 22 May 2021

- **Miserable, Wet and Uncomfortable**

- A windy morning, I spent the night with just the staysail up but we didn't make as good an angle or speed as we should have, on the plus side it was a more comfortable night. I've put the main back up with 3 reefs in it and we are jerking along again a little faster and a little closer to the wind, it all helps, the wind is Westerly about 23 knots at the moment with about 3-4m sea so it's pretty miserable, wet and uncomfortable.
- Just after I'd written my blog yesterday I turned downwind which took the wind out of the genoa as it was sheltered by the main. By lowering and hoisting the genoa a little the two parts of the foil came together again which was very pleasing, it means that there's no damage up there other than the missing screws. I have a plan for a calm day to lower the sail and remove the splice on the halyard which is preventing me from getting good tension on the luff, I replaced the halyards with thicker ones with additional anti chafing sleeves and the diameter of the whole thing at the splice seems to be too much to go past a fitting at the top of the mast. If I pull the splice out and whip the end I can tie the halyard to the sail fitting and the rope should then pass without difficulty through the fittings allowing me to get a little luff tension. I'm not sure if the slack luff is contributing to the foils wanting to separate but it's quite possible. An additional benefit of a knot at the masthead is that if the halyard starts to chafe on the top fitting I can pull a bit more rope through the sail before tying a new knot so that the chafe is in a different area.
- The tiller lines from the self steering, I end for ended the port one, the outer cover of the rope, the super tuff non wearing bit has worn through and the line is now running on the core dyneema, I'll have to keep an eye on it and replace it when it is worn. Hopefully I'll get a few more days from it.
- My tomato, pepper and cheese salad was good, I forgot the olives but it wasn't missing them particularly.
- The rice pudding worked but stuck to the saucepan causing some extra work washing up. I ended up just having the rice pudding for dinner, the spag bol will probably be for tonight. It was too uncomfortable to contemplate having the pans on the go at the same time (pasta, sauce, pud).

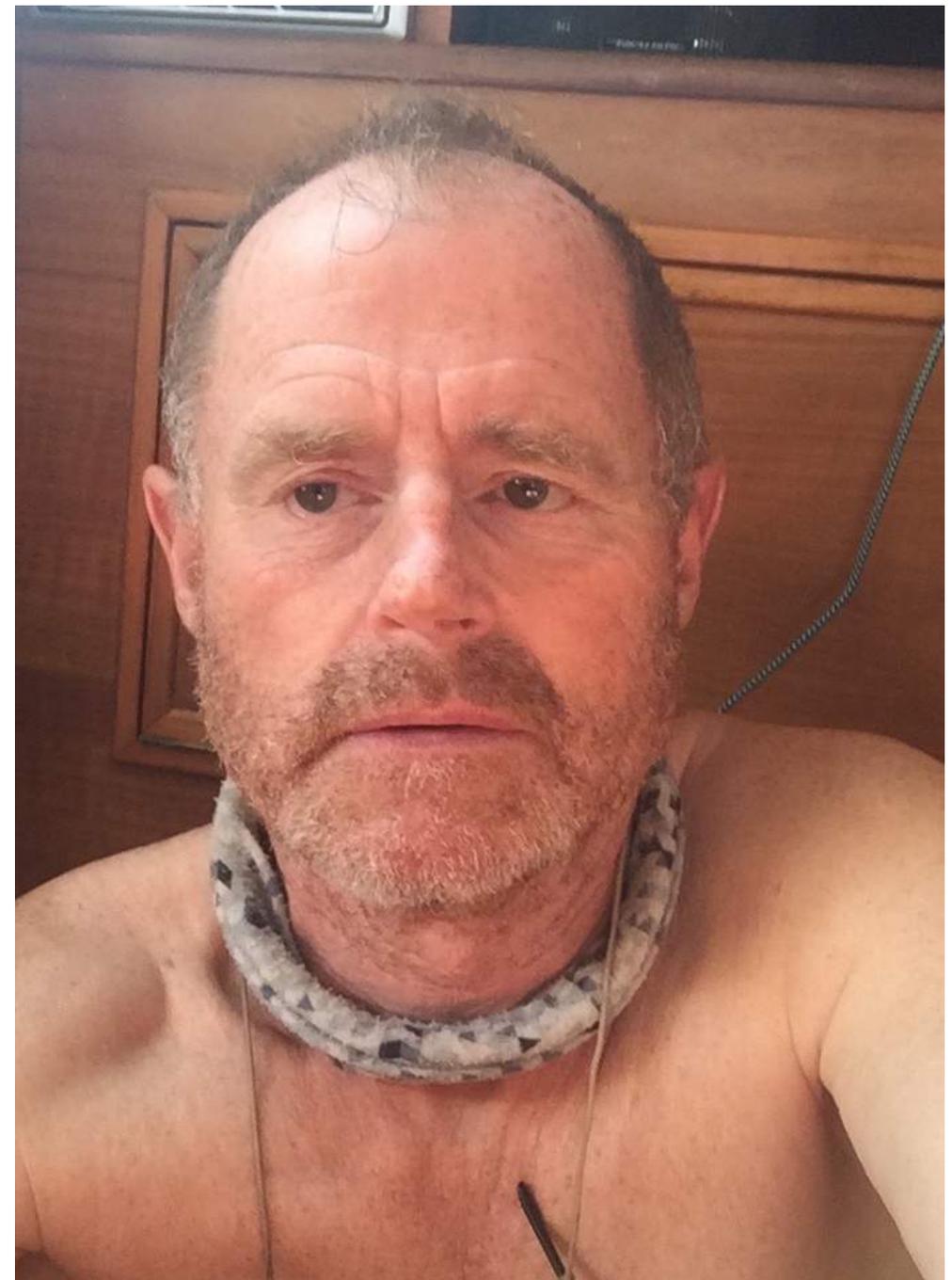
Jock's Blogs

- 23 May 2021
- **The Naked Atlantic Chef**
- It's a sunny morning and the wind's down to 16 knots, weh hey! Still on the nose 'though so we're still ploughing into it. I've removed my thermal top as it's getting warmer too, up to 15 degrees according to the forecast, although it would appear that there's a cold front going through tomorrow and the temperature will plunge back to 8 degrees.
- Boring day yesterday, the birds all disappeared. I'm not sure if this was because Mike was questioning whether they really are Fulmars and giving me some tips on recognition or whether there was some other reason, but whatever I've seen no wildlife for 24 hours now. We spent yesterday in fairly strong winds from the West so beating into it all day, I tacked just before lunch so that the fridge was facing down hill and I could open it to get out cheese, ham and tomatoes without swearing too much. I also took the precaution of removing the mince for dinner in the late afternoon before tacking back onto starboard.
- Lydia thinks I should be writing a cookery book of mid Atlantic Recipes but I'm not sure it would have wide appeal. Here's a recipe from last night:
- Penne Bolognese. Remove your mince base (which you will have thoughtfully prepared in advance when making too much mince for the Shepherds Pie), from the fridge, this is best done on the port tack. Decant it into the pressure cooker. Add a tin of chopped tomatoes. Take a saucepan from the sink, wipe it down with a bit of kitchen paper to remove excess porridge. Add sea water, about a cup full. Start to boil it. Decide that the pan is really too small, so decant it into a bigger one. Spill some hot water onto your foot (optional). Whilst the water is heating up again open the 'dry goods' locker and find that the pasta is right at the back take out oats and cous cous tupperware boxes. Put them on the cushion whilst removing pasta. Retrieve the cous cous and oats from across the cabin where they have been thrown by the boat's motion. Re stow. When the water is boiling open penne pasta tupperware box, wonder what would be a good measure, decide that a couple of handfuls is probably about right. Add one handful, as the boat leaps over a wave, watch as the lid from the saucepan sails past the chopping board against which you thought you had wedged it securely, onto the deck, curse a little, find that you can't keep your balance yourself, slide across the boat spilling about 30 pieces of pasta as you go, curse a bit more.



Jock's Blogs

- 23 May 2021 (continued)
- Regain your composure, wonder if the pasta mixed with dust, water, hair etc would still be OK. Decide probably not, add another handful to the sauce pan, stir, put the lid back on. Clean up the pasta, chuck out of the hatch. Heat up the sauce in the pressure cooker. When pasta is done, drain, add a few spoonfuls of sauce. Take a spoon, wedge yourself into the chart table, balance the downhill half of a pan on a book to keep it more level. Hold on and eat.
- From what I can tell the other boats have instant meals, tins, packets and so on, I prefer to cook as much as possible because, as I enjoy food, the cooking is part of the fun. I've kept the fridge running so far all the way and it hasn't been that difficult to keep the batteries topped up. I reckon I'll get through most of this week on the remains of the bolognese sauce, a packet of polish sausages with a long shelf life and two packets, one of mince one of sausages that I put in the freezer compartment of the fridge. After that it'll be tins, fish if I can catch any, and salami which I've got in the forepeak and should keep for ages. I've enough onions, potatoes, cabbage, neaps and butternut to keep me going too.
- I had scrambled eggs and bacon on toast this morning in celebration of it's being Sunday and that the weather is relatively benign. I've only had coffee a few times since we left, I find if it's at all rough I just don't feel like it, and it's the same with alcohol, I'm happier with a nice cup of tea. Speaking of which I do enjoy nice tea, currently I'm on Lapsang souchong from Booths, a Northern kind of up market Marks and Sparks, Cathy introduced me to their teas and they are both really good and not at all expensive. I prefer leaf tea to bags but am happy drinking anything.
- If it settles down some more I may have a wash and a shave too, I've decided that I don't like my protobeard, it's too straggly and a bit grey so may shave it off, so a photo may be attached as previously intimated. I think you'll all agree it looks more Andy Murray than Captain Bird's Eye' so not worth saving.



Jock's Blogs

- 24 May 2021
- **Half-Way to America!**
- Well yesterday was lovely. The wind was around 12 to 15 knots most of the day, the sun was out, I had a good wash, shave and change of clothes, I spoke sister to Katharine on the sat phone down in Vizvar on the Hungarian / Croatian border.
- The wind was from the West initially and we were going SW on the Starboard tack, we tacked for lunch so I could get cheese and the last of the tomatoes from the fridge, on the port tack the wind came around to the South and we headed WNW, to take some North in anticipation of winds today.
- On the wildlife I saw another storm petrel and a frigate bird. I was seeing what I thought were bits of plastic or polystyrene on the surface of the water but they were all very similarly shaped, I think that they were the sails of Portuguese Men of War.
- Mike's now happy that they were Fulmars that I was seeing but has thrown a question... Could the Black Backed Gull have been a Black Browed Albatross? Of course I now don't know, they both appear possible as the Black Backed Gull is sometimes pelagic and the Black Browed Albatross sometimes visits this part of the world, which was news to me as I'd thought that Albatrosses were exclusive to the southern Hemisphere, but apparently not. In any event I suspect it was a gull because it seemed a bit bigger than the Fulmars but not a lot whereas an Albatross is huge in comparison. BBG or BBA, the burning question of the hour.



Jock's Blogs

24 May 2021 (continued)

- By dusk yesterday the wind had increased to 20 knots, we had 2 reefs in the main and genoa and were bowling along at about 6 and three quarter knots. By midnight the wind was up to about 23 and she was a bit overpressed so I put the third reef in and changed to the No1 staysail and we were still chuntering along at the same speed but with less heel. We hit couple of big waves in the night, or they hit us, one with a big bang had us heeled right over and a lot of the books jumped out of the port bookshelf again and flew into the starboard settee berth along with a butternut squash from the hammock.
- This morning is grey and wet, we've had several heavy showers, I nearly shook out some reef but as I was about to a squall hit, I think we're passing through a warm front so will wait until it settles. The forecast has us having 15 knot winds today but going up to 30 knots tonight before falling away again, to hopefully a settled few days.
- We've about 30 miles to go to half way in the distance to Newport, so should pass that sometime this afternoon if all goes well, it's a milestone I've been looking forward to for ages now, hopefully the second half will be smoother and easier than the first, but if it's no worse then I'll be quite happy.



Tracking **SV_Freya** Boat Speed **3.0 kts**
Last Updated 24 May 2021, 21:02 (GMT)
44 18.209n 39 17.352w 3.0 kts 39.7°

Experimental post +
Mon Apr 26 2021
Sitting in the house, thinking about food shopping and which clothes to take, have...

Mon 24/May 21:02 GMT
44° 18.209 N 39° 17.352 W
Course: 40° true, 3.0 kts

Jock's Position 24 May

Jock's Blogs

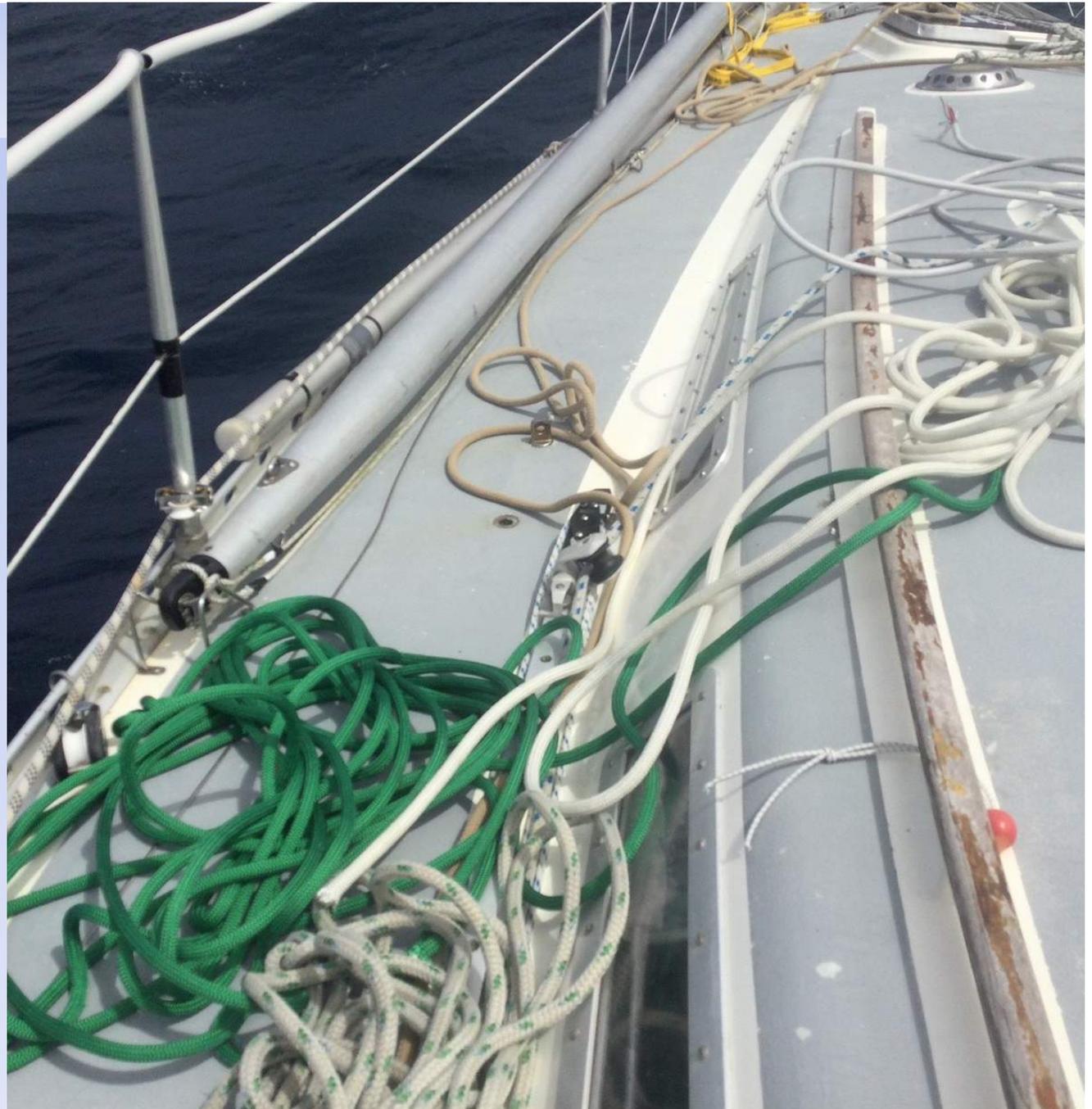
- 24 May 2021
- **Freya retiring, hurt**
- I'm sad to say that *Freya* and myself are retiring from the NOSTAR.
- At around 1400 this afternoon, just as we'd passed the half-way distance to Newport, I was going up on deck and there was a bit of a bang and the mast fell over the starboard side.
- I had a fairly hectic half hour or so salvaging the boom and some ropes and letting the rigging go so that the mast wouldn't cause further damage.
- The port lower shroud deck fitting had failed, The tie rod in the cabin looks fine still, there is a break in the steel half way through the deck. I'm not quite sure why the cap shroud couldn't hold the mast temporarily but maybe the shock load caused a failure of the cap shroud somewhere, in any event it didn't.



Jock's Blogs

24 May 2021 (continued)

- I am perfectly safe, there's no damage to the boat other than one of my deck stanchions is broken.
- I'm 600 miles from St Johns and about 1400 from Home. The weather and currents are more favourable for going home and so my plan is to try to make it home. Currently I'm blowing downwind with the vane steering me and we're doing about 2 and a half knots towards Tighnabruaich.
- There's a bit of a blow coming on tonight along with some seas so I'm not going to try to rig my jury rig at the moment until the weather is calmer and I've had more of a chance to think about how to do it. I took the precaution of bringing a laser sail and mast with me which I'm hoping will keep me moving in the right direction once rigged. I also have the spinnaker pole and boom and a selection of sails still aboard for jury rigging.



Jock's Blogs

- 25 May 2021

- **Homeward Bound**

- Well, yesterday changed my plans somewhat. It had been an average night, we'd been heading WNW under No 1 staysail and 3 reefs in the main doing about 6 knots in about 25 knots of wind. By 1100 the wind had dropped below 20 knots and we had set the genoa with 2 reefs and shaken out one reef on the main, we were going along at about 5 knots. Midday came and went. At about 1300 with rising wind I set No 1 Staysail and furled the genoa again, I had been watching the log because we were close to the half way distance between Plymouth and Newport. At 1400 we passed the half way mark, sometime after this, I forget how long, 5 to 20 minutes I think, I was going up on deck to have a look around and wondering whether to put in the third reef in the main as the wind was now back up to around 23 knots. As I was getting into the cockpit there was a bit of a bang from the port side and I saw the mast come down over the starboard side into the water.
- Thoughts went through my head: 'that's that then, I'm a long way from anywhere, do I abandon, is there any other damage.' Meanwhile I go on deck to see what needs to be done to cut the rig away. (There is no way of re setting a mast at sea and whilst it is attached to the boat it is banging away and liable to cause damage to the boat.) The Boom was still on the starboard side of the deck, the mast had broken a stanchion and the mast foot was above the rails on the starboard side. Going forward I noticed that the port lower shroud, deck fitting had come away. We were rolling around a bit but there wasn't much happening in the way of banging or further damage. I thought I might have time to salvage the boom and thought I'd try to as it might come in useful. The tack of the sail was secured by a small line, cutting that was easy, the clew and the reefing points were attached with ropes, these I cut too. The boom fitting to the mast was a pin secured by a split pin and this came out without much trouble along with a similar arrangement on the kicker. I thought that I'd now released the boom from the rig so started releasing the pins holding the stays to the boat. The forestay and port cap shroud came out easily, the back stay was attached to a hydraulic tensioner and I thought I'd better try to save that so spent a bit of extra time undoing some wires so that I could undo the bottlescrew attachment although not having my glasses on it was difficult to see to grip the wire to untwist it. Going back to the starboard side where the mast was there were some coils of halyard on the mast within my reach which I removed and cut free, in case they might come in handy. The mast was now attached only by the two starboard shrouds. One has a bit of plastic drain pipe over it to help the sail around it when tacking, this was covering the deck fitting. I thought I'd try and do them both pretty much together so went below to get the hacksaw and bolt cutters to try to get rid of the plastic pipe, It turned out that I didn't need them as I managed to push the plastic pipe away from the deck fitting whilst the boat was rolling (because when it rolled to port it pulled the mast up a bit from the sea and when it rolled to starboard the boat roll was quicker than the mast's moving back down again). I pulled out the small pins and then, with the roll of the boat pushed out the big attachment pins and helped the mast over the rail so it wouldn't take that with it. The mast and rig then disappeared into the depths.

Jock's Blogs

- 25 May 2021 (continued)
- Time for a cup of tea. I made one and emailed Graham telling him the situation, and saying there was no longer any need to order spares from harken for the foil! Assessing my situation I realised I was perfectly safe in a seaworthy and undamaged boat but without mast. Looking at the chart it was about 650 miles to Nova Scotia and about 1500 miles to Scotia itself, however Canada is upwind and current whereas home is downwind and current. I decided I would try and head home. I had brought a dinghy mast with me as a spare along with a sail for it and had, in my mind, a means of rigging it. Meanwhile the wind was 25 knots from the SW and we were rolling around too much to make work on deck comfortable, the forecast also had stronger winds for the next 24 hours so I didn't want to rig anything until the weather had improved. I had a look at the broken fitting, or what was left of it anyway but there isn't much to see. I put some sikaflex in the hole in the deck to, hopefully, stop water coming through it.
- At this point I thought we could maybe just try turning our tails to the weather and see if she would steer herself, I took the tiller and tried to turn downwind and slowly, slowly, she came around. Once heading around NE I put the autopilot on. This seemed to hold the course well so I then set up the windvane and this too seemed to work. We were blowing. NE at about 3 knots.
- I phoned Katharine to let her know the situation and then Graham.
- It's now 0830 GMT on the 25th, I had to get up a couple of times in the night to help her back on course but we've made 55 miles so far back towards home.
- Food wise, I've plenty, water too. I've used a bit of fuel running the engine to top up the batteries and I can't really afford to do that anymore so I've turned off the fridge and some electronics to cut down the load so that, hopefully, the solar panels can now keep up with the charging. What this means however is that I've some bacon, mince, a sausage casserole and some polish sausage along with a fine selection of cheeses which probably won't last much longer so it may be some days of plenty followed by leaner times.
- It's still blowing hard and the odd wave is still hitting us quite hard, and I don't think I'll get a chance to rig anything today jury rig wise but I can mentally and possibly physically prepare a little.
- Now it's time for some breakfast. I think I'll have a bacon sarnie.

Jock's Blogs

- 26 May 2021
- ***Freya Progressing Slowly and Lazy Otter Heading for The Azores***
- We trundled SE yesterday, down wind, there was a big sea and wind. The wind has now backed and we're heading more in the right direction again but pretty slowly.
- I've been working on deck.
- I spoke to Ertan earlier on the VHF, he was close at the time, he was knocked down 3 times yesterday in the wind and sea and his steering gear has been washed away, he's heading for Flores in the Azores to make repairs and sort things out.
- I have had the lower half of the dinghy mast (it's in two halves which slide together) secured vertically but the top of it is too high to reach so it has to come down to put the top half in and it's quite tricky to get vertical. I was about to try putting it all together with the sail but am not convinced that it's going to be practical which is a pity because it's a much taller rig than if I use the boom and or spinnaker pole. The forecast is for more wind later and it's picking up at the moment, I don't want to wreck what I have with a blow coming on.



Jock's Blogs

- 26 May 2021 (continued)
- When I tried, the sail was trying to fill, whilst still horizontal above the cockpit, I can't roll it around the mast, or rather I can't twist the mast because of the lashings I have to hold it upright. As I've a fair bit of ocean to cover I need to rig something that I can change with the changing wind without too much hassle. I'm thinking about it again but suspect I'll end up using the boom as a mast and try to get the storm tri and storm jib rigged on it, these I should be able to get up and down as the wind changes without needing to dance on deck so much and the sails are more robust, the laser sail won't withstand much.
- More later.



Jock's Blogs

- 26 May 2021 (later)
- Well, not sure we'll still be able to point to 30 degrees apparent, but we do at least have some propulsion now. We're heading in the right direction; the speed is disappointing but there's not so much wind either although it's due to pick up tonight. I've worked right through since about 0630 with only the pause for the earlier e mail, a cup of tea and weather downloading. Just had the last of the bacon with some eggs and toast. , it's 1700 and I was as hungry as a cyclist.
- Putting the Trisail (the storm sail which would normally replace the mainsail) up was initially a waste of time because it's not cut as a foresail and looked like a bag of washing, which is why it's ended up, upside down, it's not one of my mistakes like I've made with the spinnaker in the past!
- I'm fairly pleased with the boom as a mast, all of the stays, apart from the two backstays are doubled, so I can move the chafing point. There wasn't room to put the backstay on to the alloy fitting on the end of the boom so that is secured above 3 sliders all, hopefully, secure, with a clove hitch.



Jock's Blogs

- 26 May 2021 (later, continued)
- I've put in split backstays because I'm wondering about a gunter set up for the next sail. The other sail which I have which is small is the storm jib but it's much longer in the luff than the boom, 5.60 as opposed to 3.40 I'm still thinking about whether I can try to rig that, even in lighter winds, I think I may be able to, I have a plan but don't want to damage anything that I've already got up and running.
- It's been not too windy a day since about 1000 but the motion without the mast is quite fast and very uncomfortable, I've been swearing a bit too much but no one much else to be offended by it.
- A pair of Common Terns came by for a bit this afternoon. They're quite attractive.
- Now something you can help me with. The things that I've been seeing which I had thought were Portuguese Men of War, aren't. I think that they're some kind of egg / spawn. They are about the size of a balloon a few days after it was initially blown up, pretty transparent but with a mauve tinge to them. They look as if they've been blown up. They float, obviously on the surface and have three or four parallel marks on them at a squinty kind of an angle. They are shaped a bit like the Glasgow Transport Museum, sort of curved on top but not hemispherical, more like a slice from a rugby ball along its longer axis. Anyway, I can't google it so maybe someone knows what they are.



Jock's Blogs

- 27 May 2021
- **Fine Tuning the Rig**
- Morning All,
- A relatively peaceful night although I couldn't stop worrying about the new mast coming down, don't know why because when I was on deck setting it up I wasn't worried and all the lines are way stronger than needed for the small forces involved, I guess it's just human nature to worry. I did manage to think of a couple of minor improvements and made them this morning, moving the port and starboard stays aft a bit so that the back stays are not really needed.
- On raising the mast, the trickiest part of yesterday, I had to have the port and starboard stays roughly in line with the heel of the mast and relatively tight before trying to raise the mast to stop it swinging around to port and starboard as the mast came up. I also had to guess how much back stay to have loose to ensure I got it up far enough to control it but not too loose either in case of losing control. As it turned out I was a little conservative with my estimates, so the mast only came up to about 30 degrees from the horizontal, which was fine but only just. This was because, bearing in mind Katharine's worries about me doing something stupid and falling overboard, I had put a harness on and attached myself to the handrail on the coachroof. Having got the mast to 30 degrees which I'd done with the jib halyard, to be, with one end made fast up forward and me pulling on the other, (I had to keep my foot on the mast foot to keep it in position rather than sliding forward as I pulled the halyard) I then wanted to put it on the anchor windlass to hold it and to tension it a little more before loosening off some backstay and raising it further. I had to hold quite a bit of tension on the rope as I wiggled myself on my bottom up forward to the windlass, having nearly got to a position where I could transfer the rope to the windlass, my safety line came tight. I pulled it as hard as possible and just managed to get a couple of inches which allowed me to put the rope on the windlass and tighten it up but it was quite close and I'd have been annoyed if I'd lost it all just because of the safety line.
- This morning I gybed onto the starboard gybe and we're now making about 065 degrees and still about 3 to 3.5 knots. The wind is 20 knots or so and due to be 25 to 30 later so I'll not try to add any more sail at the moment.
- Meantime I'm reading, thinking through food and menus etc. I'm ashamed to say that I threw out some mince. It was a couple of weeks past it's use by date, but I'd put it in the ice cube compartment of the fridge, so it had nearly frozen but not quite. I had thought it was beef mince and had it been I'd probably been happy judging it on looks feel and smell, unfortunately it was turkey mince and I'm not so familiar with turkey and worried that it might have similar propensities for food poisoning as chicken, so I waved goodbye to my potential curry and dumped it. I've a polish smoked sausage casserole in the pressure cooker but after that no fresh meat. I do have a couple of big salamis and plenty of tins of stuff so am not going to go hungry.

Jock's Blogs

- 27 May 2021 (continued)
- I saw a ship yesterday, a car carrier, crossing my bow, it hadn't come up on the chart plotter which is connected to my AIS. This is annoying, my AIS is new, I replaced it on the Saturday before we sailed, in fact it interrupted a lovely lunch that Nancy, Lucy and Tessa had brought up because I needed to get it going before leaving, but it's always seemed to be a bit hit and miss on displaying information or rather transmitting it on the network so that I can see it on the chart plotter, iPad etc. I can see it on the unit itself but that is hidden under my bunk (the previous one had no display it was just a black box and relied on chart plotters and so on to display its information). I think it's a job to put on the list to move it up to the chart table where it's easier to see. I found in Plymouth that if it wasn't displaying then turning it off and on again re set it and it then did display again but it's easy in Plymouth to know when it's displaying because there are hundreds of targets, out here there are virtually none.
- News of other competitors:
- All crews ok but heavy weather has been taking its toll on the yachts.
- Ertan is currently heading for Flores in the Azores to make repairs after *Lazy Otter* was knocked down three times in high winds and big seas. Ertan has lost self-steering gear and spray hood.
- *AJ Wanderlust* has a torn main sail, broken inner forestay and ingress of water when heading upwind. Charlene and Bobby are heading downwind until a break in the weather allows them to make repairs.
- No news from Guido recently but hopefully *Hannah of Cowes* is making good progress after the strong headwinds experienced after their restart.

Tracking SV_Freya Boat Speed 4.3 kts
Last Updated 28 May 2021, 15:03 (GMT)
46 00.936n 33 09.271w 4.3 kts 54.5°

Experimental post
Mon Apr 26 2021
Sitting in the house, thinking about food shopping and which clothes to take, have...

Fri 28/May 15:03 GMT
46° 00.936 N 33° 09.271 W
Course: 55° true, 4.3 kts

Jock's Position 28 May

Jock's Blogs

- 28 May 2021
- **Not Strictly Comfortable**
- Yesterday was relatively quiet, I got the weather forecast in the morning and as I could see that it was going to get windy overnight didn't even think about trying to add more sail and it was, in any case, still quite rough so working on deck would be challenging. Well, that's not quite true because I was thinking about how to add more sail, but not about actually adding it.
- I read quite a bit and have now finished the 4-book series by Larry McMurtry about Texas of yore, quite long books but very good. Thanks Jennifer.
- I sewed a loop of sail tie onto the slider for the boom, I think that I'll need this when I try to add the storm jib to the rig.
- I had a splendid meal last night. I'll run through the cabbage recipe in a minute, but I'd made a casserole from some polish smoked sausages a couple of days ago. I didn't eat it the day before yesterday because, having worked all day on the rig, I wanted something quickly and had bacon and eggs on toast, thinking I'd have the casserole later but didn't. Anyway, I felt like some potatoes with the casserole and having had them just boiled up in a casserole a few times in the past thought I'd do something different so parboiled them in smallish pieces and then fried them. Great, a bit of crunch! I've a fair bit of cabbage because it keeps so well and have taken to a lazy way of cooking it, I chop it up small, put a small squirt of seawater in the pan with a big dollop of butter and put it on the stove with the lid on 'til it boils then remove the lid and let the water boil off and it then fries for a minute in the remaining butter. It comes out fine and is very trouble free. The casserole was surprisingly good I'd expected it to be a bit bland but not a bit of it, a good smoky flavour through it. I can't remember the name of the polish sausage but may be buying more when I'm home again.



Jock's Blogs

- 28 May 2021 (continued)
- Before dusk I did a round on deck, tightening up a couple of the stays on the mast and decided to leave the sail up overnight as we seemed quite comfortable.
- From midnight through till about 0500 the sea obviously picked up a fair bit and we were knocked around more than was strictly comfortable, we weren't knocked right down as such, but several times must have had waves break around us and throw us into uncomfortable Attitudes. By 0500 the sail kept flapping, it can't fill with the wind dead astern, and it seemed to be backing more than it had been so I brought her a little more upwind, so the wind was more on our quarter. She's still like that now but of course it means that the sea is now less on the stern so is more likely to hit us awkwardly, I suspect that for poor weather in the future, particularly if it's the right direction, I'm better off getting rid of the sail overnight. The forecast says the weather is supposed to fall away today.
- I sleep in the port quarter berth, that is on the port side aft, and with the seas coming from the port quarter hear the various sounds that the sea can make, there's a kind of trickling / flowing sound which is similar to a river flowing fast over shallow water, I'm not sure what this is, it comes occasionally and doesn't seem to warn of anything alarming. It's probably a wave breaking in the vicinity but not actually right on us. Then there's the crash of a breaking wave which is hitting us, or is about to, which is much more sinister and normally is the prelude to a bit of a bang and some violent motion. When nothing much is happening or about to then there's a kind of chuckle as the water rushes past coming and going with the waves and this is quite a comforting noise, speaking as it does of good progress.
- Anyway, I believe it's the Scottish Series starting today, I hope it goes well, and all the best to everyone taking part, there's also a muster along the Clyde in support of the Lifeboats on Monday, I believe, and all the best and well done to anyone participating in that.



Jock's Blogs

- 29 May 2021
- **Keyb0ArbD bRoKe^**
- To anyone who thinks I've not replied to an email, or who thinks that they have sent me an e mail, there is an anomaly in the email system. If you press 'reply' to one that I have sent you, then it puts the wrong e mail address in the address bar. It uses my Gmail address, which won't work. You have to make sure that the address is the iridium one, not the Gmail one. It may be, but I'm not sure, that if you press 'reply all' then it will use both.
- Good luck to *Spirit of May* at the Scottish Series.
- I finished my fresh milk yesterday, it didn't do badly, I bought it on the Saturday before we sailed so nearly 3 weeks ago, and the fridge has been off for the last few days. I'm now onto UHT.



Jock's Blogs

- 29 May 2021 (continued)
- More good news - I found my torch which I thought I'd lost the day I set up my jury rig. (Actually, I also thought that I'd lost it the day the rig went but then it turned up, rolling around on deck later in the afternoon), this time it turned up inside my oilskin trousers where it had been hiding between them and my boots. It's a mini Maglite which, along with a multitool, I keep on my belt nearly all the time.
- We made good progress yesterday, 108 miles logged noon to noon, the previous 2 days had been 70 with 67 on the first day after the dismasting.
- A quiet day yesterday, the wind was from the SW, and we were mostly doing around 4 knots, today's run to noon won't be as good as yesterday's, but we are going in the right direction and all is still well.
- I seem to have lost my keyboard this morning, I guess too much sea water has splashed onto it so this is being typed one finger at a time which is a bore, I'll try giving it a fresh water wash and dry out but suspect that it's going to be difficult to dry.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 May 2021
- **Closer to Ireland than North America**
- Well, a good start to the day - my keyboard has responded well to a wash and dry and is working again and the wind's on the beam so I put up my 'main' (aka storm jib) sail and our speed went from 2.5 to 4 knots. Splendid. I need to sort some better lacing for the yard but will do that when it next comes down.
- Photos: 1 Tiroler Grosz. 2 Jury rig with main and jib.
- A few other things, this morning we're closer to Ireland than to Newfoundland for the first time. Our day's run yesterday was 82 miles. A few people are wanting to 'do things' to help, it's difficult to think of anything useful but I thought this might be a good time to mention again that I'm hoping that we may be able to raise some money for the Cowal Hospice, so if anyone is enjoying these blogs, wants to and can afford it, a donation (any amount) to them would be most gratefully received, details are on one of the first one or two blog posts on this site from before I started the run down the Irish Sea.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 May 2021 (continued)
- The Tiroler Grosli was a recipe Katharine kindly sent, me, I've not made it before: fry in bacon or salami fat, (or in my case with some added oil because my salami isn't fatty enough); onions, potatoes, cabbage and bacon (or lardons or salami,) with lots of pepper, when deliciously yummy and slightly crisp on the outside, put on a plate with a fried egg on top.
- It's actually best eaten with a Grosse Bier after hard morning's skiing in the Austrian mountains but also good mid Atlantic.
- I had a few questions from the Kilmodan School but stupidly can't access them whilst typing an email so will write another blogette once I've finished this one and answer them there.
- We are back in Fulmar territory, I wondered what the difference was, I looked to see if the sea temperature had dropped significantly but it hasn't, although it has come down a bit. There was also a Common Tern close to us this morning, beautiful birds!
- A couple of times last night an alarm sounded, I couldn't think what it was, but it is an alarm to say that there is a ship in the area. One of the things that we had to fit for the Club that was organising the original race was a 'Radar Target Enhancer' an electronic gizmo that makes our 'blip' on a radar screen look bigger than we really are, this is because fibreglass boats don't reflect radar waves well, so we often disappear into the clutter of the sea waves. Anyway, on the gizmo is an on off button and an alarm on off button, I'd had the alarm off and must have switched it on, so it was alarming to say that it was seeing radar transmissions. It's actually quite useful, I had a look at the AIS (automatic Identification system - another little device that commercial shipping all has which transmits name, course speed and position to other boats in the area) which showed he was passing well clear astern.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 May 2021 (continued)
- The sea is still quite confused and lumpy but is coming down a bit. Ertan should be due into Horta tonight, he's not going to Flores because they don't allow anyone to leave the boat because of Covid, so he wouldn't be able to get much help with his repairs only top up with food, fuel and water. Guido is in good, favourable winds and so was *AJ Wanderlust*, last time that I heard in any case. Let's hope the weather stays helpful to us all.
- Kids questions - done while you were still racing
- 1. Do you prefer sailing alone or with someone else?
- 2. Have you seen any seagulls? (From Rupert aged 5)
- 3. How do you get internet?
- 4. Do you wash your clothes?
- 5. Do you get bored?
- 6. How much food did you take and how did you work out how much you needed?
- 1. I prefer to do the passages, in other words the bits between somewhere and somewhere else by myself, I find it really satisfying, and I don't have to worry about someone else or what he or she is thinking of decisions that I am making. However, normally with sailing, when you get somewhere you potter around the place that you have sailed to and go to different sites and villages and restaurants and so on and for this it's more fun with somebody else as well.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 May 2021 (continued)
- 2. Good question Rupert because I had always thought that Seagulls were land based birds, despite their name. Obviously when leaving Plymouth and close to the Dorset Cornish coast there were lots of seagulls. Since being offshore, I hadn't expected to see any seagulls but on two occasions I am sure that I saw Black Backed Gulls, probably the 'greater' one. Looking in my bird book I see that many gulls can in fact be semi 'pelagic' in other words they can spend time at sea rather than only staying at the coast or inland. It is also possible that what I saw was not a Black Backed Gull at all but a Black Browed Albatross and again it was news to me that Albatrosses might come to the Northern Hemisphere, I thought that they stayed in the Southern Hemisphere, but apparently not always. If I see one again, I now know to look at the tail; the Black Backed Gull has an all-white tail and the Albatross has a dark end to its tail. I've seen other sea birds that aren't gulls: Storm Petrels, which are relatively small dark birds that look a bit like a swallow, Fulmars which look a bit like gulls but aren't, sooty shearwaters which are dark on top and also a bit gull like, and common Terns which are very white underneath with a black top to their head.
- 3. I can't get internet. I have a satellite telephone called an Iridium phone which works to make telephone calls and can transmit and receive digital information but very slowly. I had to set up a new email address to use this because it filters e mails that are big, because they have attachments, and either deletes them or allows me to download them but it's very expensive, a one Mb picture for instance takes about an hour to download because the data transfer is so slow, it would cost about a hundred dollars to download. I also have a weather forecasting app on my iPad and this is designed to work with the sat phone so I can get weather forecasts and emails but no internet.
- 4. I haven't done yet! I change once a week, if I run out, I may have to try but I don't have a lot of fresh water to wash in, I'm using about 2 litres a day. As I get closer to home, I should have built up a buffer of water because I'm using less than I might have done so may wash a few things then.



Jock's Blogs

- 30 May 2021 (continued)
- 5. Not really, I have plenty of books and music downloaded, I enjoy eating and cooking and planning what I will eat. I also enjoy writing these blogs and getting messages and emails. There is still quite a lot to do with keeping the boat sailing and shipshape.
- 6. Another good question. What I should probably have done is made a menu plan and worked out how much of everything I needed and had lists. What I actually did was go to Lidl and buy 12 cans of beans, 12 cans of tomatoes, 12 cans of soup, 12 cans of stew or similar, 12 litres of uht milk, 6 packets of butter, 6 jars of pesto and lots of dry goods which keep well like rice, flour, cous cous, pasta and so on, before I left the village, plus a few impulse buys like tins of fruit and evaporated milk. Then I took lots of cans and jars from my larder in the house and any food that I'd not eaten which was still in the fridge. Whilst in Plymouth I went shopping most days and topped up my vegetable 'hammock' with long lasting vegetables like onions, cabbage, neaps, butternut squash and potatoes. In a locker opposite my Galley or kitchen, I put some less well keeping vegetables like leeks, broccoli, peppers, and mushrooms and I filled the small fridge that I had with mince, chicken, cheese, sausages and pork pies. I also bought two big salamis which should keep without refrigeration, they are in a locker forward but with the sea on the outside to keep them coolish. I also have what I call a 'naughty locker' which is full of biscuits, chocolates, peanuts, crisps and so on. A friend who had been in Florida gave me four boxes of raisins which are proving good both as snacks and ingredients for food.
- I suppose I worked out roughly that I could eat fresh meat etc for about 2 to three weeks and then start on tins and so on. I bought extra rice, oats and pasta in case I ran out of everything else I'd still have carbs to keep me alive. I'm actually eating quite well at the moment, I've a loaf of bread in the oven rising because it's too cold in the cabin, it's the first time I've tried making bread on here although I make it a lot at home.
- I think that that's it, so a question for you:
- If sailing across the Atlantic at about the Latitude of Scotland, should it be easier going West, Scotland to America or East, America to Scotland, and why?



Jock's Blogs

- 31 May 2021
- **The Bakerman is Baking Bread**
- The wind is in the North West so we have it forward of the beam at the moment so are only managing 2.5 knots in about 15 knots of wind which is disappointing, but we have been very lucky up to now so nothing to complain about.
- We made 84 miles to noon yesterday. We've now done more than 500 miles without a mast and less than 1000 miles to go to Campbeltown which is where I'm doing my distances to. I may or may not stop at Campbeltown depending on how things are when we get there, there's currently an area of light winds due in about a week but as a week is a long time in prediction terms it may not actually materialise. I have fuel which I've not used much of so far but need to keep some for the coastal areas in case of adverse winds and exposed coast lines so don't want to blow it all getting somewhere and then finding myself needing that which I've already used.
- We had a ship pass in the night. The AIS alarm went off so I had a look and it was a ship on the bow due to pass within half a mile in 15 minutes. She was visible fine to starboard. I put my side lights on (the only lights I have left, they are normally my steaming lights and I've not changed the bulb to an LED so it uses a lot of energy), we altered course about 15 degrees to starboard, I'm not sure whether she did or didn't alter too as she should have but we passed at about a quarter of a mile apart which is fine but much closer than one normally gets to other vessels mid ocean. I was doing 3 knots and she 14 so my alteration would have been commensurately feeble.



Jock's Blogs

- 31 May 2021 (continued)
- Yesterday, having set up the 'main' sail and done some blogging I made some bread. I wasn't anticipating any problems but hadn't really thought it through. I had trouble getting the consistency of the dough right, it was too wet initially but with judicious additions of flour it came good. I was mixing it in the pressure cooker, the biggest container that I have, and aluminium is a lot stickier for dough than is my normal china mixing bowl at home. Having made the dough I then wanted it to rise and realised that the cabin temperature was too cold (I know it doesn't need to be that warm, but it does if you want the bread for lunch!) so put the oven onto minimum. I don't have a loaf tin so put it in a round baking dish, put a tea towel over it and put it in the bottom of the oven. I think that this is too warm, in any event instead of rising it spread out to fill the baking tray, and when I thought that it had expanded (I can't say risen because it didn't) enough I took it out to take the tea towel off. The tea towel had stuck to the top of the dough so when I pulled it off quite a lot of the dough came too and what remained started sinking in the cold air. Normally I'd want to put it into a hot oven but of course the oven had been on minimum and the cabin temperature and draught were not agreeing with the dough, so I put it back in the oven and turned the oven to maximum. This is not according to Elizabeth David's recommendations. I managed to scrape off the tea towel, using a knife, around about a bread roll's worth of dough so put this on another baking tray and covered it with a tea towel and put it on top of the oven for a bit. Once it had rested for about 10 minutes, I don't think it had really risen, I popped this in the oven too. In any event it all came out fine, and tasted great, a huge improvement on sliced bread which had the additional encumbrance of being 3 weeks old. I had the bread roll with a big dollop of butter just before lunch. There is something magical about the smell of baking bread, it is such an evocative and delicious smell it cheers the whole day. I had the last of my 'honey roast, wafer thin' ham with lunch which was tasting a bit musty but I disguised this with mayonnaise and it needed eating.



Jock's Blogs

- 1 June 2021
- **Lip-stick**
- A bit late with this today, sorry. Image: Baldy sewing.
- Doing my final rounds last night, I noticed a patch on the jib which has been wearing on the pulpit. I used a sail tie to keep it clear last night and this morning pulled it down, gave it a fresh water rinse, wiped it down and left it in cockpit to dry in the breeze / sun. Meanwhile I cut out a patch of sticky backed sail repair material. When I judged the sail to be dry, I carefully put the patch over the damaged area on the foot (as is) of the sail (it would have been the leach had it been set as intended - Sorry Lyd,) folding it over so it was on both sides of the sail. I remember using similar sticky stuff on Blue Leopard on a sail and having peeled the backing off needed both hands to make the sail flat again, I stuck the sail repair cloth to my lip temporarily to keep it out of the way, smoothed the sail took the cloth from my lip, and the thing tore a chunk off my lip. That's the sort of stickiness one wants on these occasions. Unfortunately, it looks like the stuff I was using today had been covered in the kind of glue that is used on post it notes, it didn't want to stick at all. It's possible it wasn't as dry as I'd thought, in any event I made it as good as I could and then ran a double layer of stitches all around the edge before re setting it. I'm hopeful that it'll do the job, particularly if I'm careful and don't allow it to rub on the pulpit again. If not, I have more sail repair material from a different source, maybe it's stickier.



Jock's Blogs

- 1 June 2021 (continued)
- Yesterday we ran with both sails up all day, a couple of times the wind came a bit aft and the jib didn't want to fly because of turbulence from the main but as it was only mini squalls passing through, I lived with it until the clouds / squalls had passed. We had a comfortable night and were still doing 3 knots this morning. With the sail down for repairs we were down to 2+ knots but are back up to 3+ again now that I've re-set it.
- Macaroni cheese with tinned peas for dinner last night and leftovers for lunch today on some toast. Curried Neap again tonight and, if the weather is conducive, tomorrow a new recipe from Katharine involving the oven, it's a Hungarian dish. I'll add some paprika which isn't in the recipe but feels like it should be.
- Numbers: We did 63 miles noon to noon yesterday and yesterday noon to today we did 79. We have 907 miles to run to Campbeltown with another 30 to home. Wind is still WxN and we're still running with both sails up.



Jock's Blogs

- 2 June 2021
- **Starter for Ten, Main course for One**
- Having repaired the sail and re set it we had a peaceful afternoon pottering North East at about 3 knots, Noon to noon yesterday was 79 miles.
- I had curried neap for dinner yesterday, a vegetarian meal, I feel the Julie's approval. I've not tried currying swede before, but it actually works very well, you'd hardly know it was only swede, well I put some red cabbage through it too. The only thing that I find with it is that it sticks a bit to the bottom of the pressure cooker but not badly and it comes off easily enough with enthusiastic stirring with a wooden spoon.
- Katharine sent me a recipe for Butternut curry which I may try to do tomorrow but don't have many of the ingredients, I'm hoping I have a tin of coconut milk, I believe I do but need to rummage around in my locker full of tins to see. Some tins I wrote in black marker on the lid what they were in case the labels came off, others I didn't, it'll be one without marker on it. If I don't have any then I don't think even the basics of the recipe will be worth trying to adapt but we'll see. In fact, hang on a minute, I'm sure you're all keen to learn so I'll have a look now.....
- Sadly, no, I have evaporated milk but no coconut milk, I suspect that Katharine's recipe may not work as well as hoped, well not that one anyway I'm going to attempt a Hungarian dish tonight which I think should work.
- Having looked through my tins stash I really need to go on a longer voyage I've loads of them, tins of soup, ravioli, beans, chilli, tomatoes etc. Also, a couple of tins of fruit salad and evaporated milk.
- Katharine was asking a few questions yesterday things like what do I now wish I'd brought with me, I'd said to her nothing much other than more music, I didn't download enough, but lentils and tins of coconut milk could be added to the list.

Jock's Blogs

- 2 June 2021 (continued)
- Here's her list of questions:
 - 1. Given all the bumpy seas you have endured, how have you managed to keep fresh eggs unbroken.
 - 2. Do you manage to sleep at night, or are you just napping, working, napping, all the time.
 - 3. Do you keep a strict 'watch' whereby you regularly check everything on deck at regular intervals through the night.
 - 4. Apart from garlic, is there anything else that you wish you had brought with you, other than a spare mast!
 - 5. What are you most looking forward to when you get home. What do you miss?
 - 6. Has the boat's handling been as you expected (bar the loss of the mast).
- Answers:
 - 1. They are in egg boxes, 2 one jammed in with milk in a locker and the other in a locker which opens from the top and has stuff piled up in it with the eggs sort of secure in that, they can't fall down.
 - 2. I'm sleeping more now that we're not racing, well longer at a time that is. With the current sail set up there's less need to alter sail area. For the last couple of nights, I've slept through apart from having to get up for pee. When I was racing, I'd be up more, not so much because of racing because we'd keep needing to put up more or reduce sail or change course a little. That was a pain because we were nearly always going into the weather, so it was wet on deck necessitating oilskins prior to emerging from the cabin.
 - 3. No, just if things feel or sound wrong.
 - 4. Garlic, more music, possibly podcasts but I've never downloaded any, lentils, coconut milk.
 - 5. A bath, company, a home that's not moving around jerkily all the time necessitating holding on all the time. A fire.
 - 6. *Freya's* handling has been great, she's very strong, (well, apart from the deck fitting which broke when the mast came down!) I found when sailing with the proper mast that reefing early was good, it didn't slow us down, sometimes it increased speeds. At 20 knots true wind speed three reefs and the No1 staysail was more than enough to make good speed.

Jock's Blogs

2 June 2021 (continued)

- My repair of the Navtex worked, I'm now getting navigational warnings and weather on it, which is good, it's more useful around the UK actually as the shipping forecast comes through on it along with the coastal forecasts which means I don't have to remember to write it down off the radio. I'm not sure if I'm particularly useless but I often find, listening to the forecast, that I tune in, get the beginning then zone out as it goes through Viking, Forties, Cromarty etc. I often find I then zone in again at around Bailey and find that I've completely missed the one that I was supposed to be listening for. Very annoying. Luckily the coastguard around the UK transmits it every three hours along with updates on new gale warnings so it's difficult to be completely ignorant of the met office's more alarming prognostications.
- Well, it's almost time for a cup of coffee and slice of cake. Thanks for the cake at the moment going, I think, to Patrick and Sally, a fruity, malty loaf. Very good.



Jock's Blogs

- 3 June 2021
- **Plodding On ...**
- We spent most of yesterday with the wind just abaft the beam, by about. 1500 I stowed the mainsail and we carried on running on only the jib. Mostly at around 3 knots. The 24-hour run to Noon yesterday was 81 and at that time we had 827 miles to Campbelltown.
- Recipe from Katharine: (See Picture)
- 'Actually, if you have an oven - something else that is delicious is called Rakott Krumppli, and it is similar to Tiroler Grostl but needs an oven – $\frac{3}{4}$ cook the potatoes, hard boil some eggs, salami chunklets, slice onion. Fry the onions and salami chunklets to get some grease out of the salami, and maybe add some oil to give the dish some nice salami-tasting oil for the next bit. In an oven dish, you slice the potatoes and layer them with onion and salami, then layer of potato, then eggs and then again etc. Add lots of pepper and salt and then cover with UHT milk – Hungarians use the telfol (sour cream, yoghurt stuff) but I think the milk should work too. Pour the salami grease over the top of everything and then put in the oven to bubble away and to finish the potato cooking. Should be quite yummy too. Hope it works with milt too, should do, as dauphinoise potatoes use milk, I think? Anyway, just an idea, but don't feel you have to do it to please me! I am sure your salami needs to be treasured, but it will make the rest flavourful, I am sure.'



Jock's Blogs

- 3 June 2021 (continued)
- I pretty much followed the above instructions, but my salami doesn't seem very fatty, I added some chorizo which was. I cooked the potatoes 3/4 in milk thinking it might like the starch and put sprinkled paprika and butter on top. It came out a little burned at the edges but really good, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Better than the Tiroler Grostl even though it didn't have a delicious fried egg on top.
- I tried to move the shrouds around a little yesterday so that the rubbing point at the top of the mast was moved but can't with the mast up and it's a bit of a palaver raising it so having noted that the equivalent bit at the bottom was not wearing decided to leave it as be for the moment. The fixing point at the bottom is a biggish shackle on the toe rail because the toe rail itself is quite sharp, and I used the shackle to reduce wear, at the top it's through an alloy fitting which isn't sharp but has a smaller radius than the shackle. I will probably plan to lower the mast before we close the coast for an inspection and to change things if needed.
- Plodding on.





Experimental post

Mon Apr 26 2021

Sitting in the house, thinking about food shopping and which clothes to take, have...

Fri 4/Jun 16:20 GMT
51° 44.341 N 22° 40.946 W
Course: 52° true, 3.9 kts

Jock's Position 4 June 2021

Jock's Blogs

- 4 June 2021

- **Pilot Whale Escort**

- I re set the Main yesterday at 1130 as the wind was more in the WNW again. Setting fine.
- 71 miles to Noon Yesterday, hopefully we'll be better today. Nothing to complain about but having mostly had bigger numbers it's a little disappointing.
- I learned yesterday that from ordering to delivery of a mast is in the order of 4 months, so it looks like I'll not be sailing again on *Freya* with a full rig this year. I'd not intended to launch her next year but will probably have to fit and trial the mast. Hey Ho!
- At lunch time, great excitement. I'd put the toast on and looked out of the hatch to see a Squadron of Pilot Whales following us, I got my 'phone and spent some time taking pictures of them. They are dark, have a squared off head and biggish dorsal fin with a bit of a curve to it. Of course, this meant that my toast burned and I had to cut a sliver of burned bit off from one side of it, luckily, I'd taken the precaution of making the slices quite chunky so that this was possible. I see from Jean's wildlife book that they weigh up to about 3.5 tonnes (whales not toast) which was a surprise because they are obviously much bigger than dolphins but don't appear all that much bigger. In any case it was hard to estimate numbers but probably 20 or 30 or so of them. I took loads of pictures most of which didn't come out, or did but without whales in them, they don't seem to spend much time surfacing but it was good to see them. These are the first cetaceans I've seen this trip which I'm really surprised about because sailing around home waters I see porpoises and dolphins quite a lot. The best 'photo is attached, there are two pilot whales in it one either side of the self-steering gear. But you do have to search quite diligently.



Jock's Blogs

- 4 June 2021 (continued)
- I was up in the night at about 0400 bearing away because our course had come around to 020 which is too Northerly. Once done, the apparent wind would have been at about port 130, at this point the jib won't fill and for a change, and because it was easier and I was feeling lazy, I stowed the jib instead of the main. We're still running on just the main and it seems to work quite well, I've gybed now too and the main is more stable and doesn't collapse which the jib occasionally does. I suspect that running downwind, just the main may be better. Will see.
- There was a lot of luminescence in the water last night too, always nice to watch - micro-organisms that glow in the dark when disturbed, they were glowing nicely from the disturbed water around the rudder. It leaves a trail of slowly disappearing glow astern. Something that is magical is when there is a lot of luminescence and a pod of dolphins decide to play in the bow wave you see the dolphins, but the trails also show up really well like a miniature fireworks display. I've not seen this happy conjunction this trip but am still hoping to.
- Boring dinner last night, penne pesto. If I'd had garlic, I'd have made some garlic bread, as it was my only accompaniment was shaved parmesan.
- I've not heard from the others for ages, suspect that they've 'replied' to my email so it's defaulted to my gmail account which seems to be a stupid set up. Another anomaly of my email system is that if I look in the sent mailbox I can see the emails I've sent with the first line of what I've written but if I open one from the sent box it shows me the email to which I've replied and not my reply itself. Annoying. Ertan was in Horta in the Azores and *AJ Wanderlust* was about 500 miles short of Newport last I heard, I'll try again today to get positions, hopefully Guido is having better weather and making good progress Westwards.



Jock's Blogs

- 5 June 2021
- **Roly Poly**
- Yesterday afternoon was quite grey and wet, not rain but some drizzle although it brightened up at the end. We got a little charge into the batteries from the solar panels and it turned out to be ample for the night.
- The sun is out this morning and batteries charging well already so I've put the fridge on again, it's only really got cheese, chorizo, pate, milk, butter and salami in it but it might as well be on as off when I've plenty of power.
- The swell has been up a little for the last 24 hours or so and our rolling is horrible. We roll very quickly, sometimes fairly far over and she seems to give a little flick at the end to make it as uncomfortable as possible. It is because there is no mast or sail ~ we have, oddly, too much stability which makes us roll more quickly. It makes cooking particularly difficult.
- I had a spicy Butternut dish last night, sort of a recipe from Katharine but with many ingredients swapped about, in basis it was supposed to have roasted butternut and sweet potato covered with a sauce of various spices, almonds, coconut milk, onions and ginger. I had the ginger but the almonds became peanuts, the coconut milk became evaporated milk and tomato puree the spices specified were substituted with curry powder and cardamoms (which I did bring), however it was still quite tasty and I was good and left some for tonight rather than making a greedy guts of myself and scoffing the lot which is what normally happens.



Jock's Blogs

5 June 2021 (continued)

- The keyboard wasn't working this morning, I don't quite know what it was that cheered it up, I'd changed the batteries a couple of times, turned the iPad off and on, re synced it and re connected it a couple of times whilst it was still sulking, then it started to work again. Hopefully it'll carry on working until I get home. In fact, thinking about it, it'd be nice to keep working after I get home because my laptop at home has started sulking too and isn't sending e mails, just coming up with stupid messages and questions which I don't understand. It's a few years old so probably has a bug in it to become more and more irritating in the hope that I'll buy a new one.
- Distance run yesterday was 82 miles with 73 miles made good towards home, not sure why there was such a difference although when I woke up yesterday morning we were headed ESE instead of ENE so that might have had something to do with it! Currently we've 500 miles or slightly less to go to my next waypoint at Tory Island off NW Ireland and it's 104 miles from there to Campbeltown so home is starting to feel closer.
- No new wildlife to report I'm afraid and the Fulmars, although still around, aren't nearly as numerous as they had been on the way out.



Jock's Blogs

- 6 June 2021
- **More Sail Repairs**
- I finished my bread this morning having fried eggs on toast to make a change from Porridge. Very nice. I had another bit of toast with cheese and some plum Chutney (thanks Mandy, I think) because I forgot to bring any marmalade. That's another thing along with the garlic and more music which I should have remembered to bring. The sea is up again and we've a bit of a blow forecast for this afternoon / evening it's up at about 20 knots at the moment. I'm not going to try to make bread today, it's too bouncy, it's hard to even put the kettle on at the moment, I have a few packets of partially baked bread so will do one for lunch with my soup.
- I'm just back in the cabin from having stowed the main and put up the jib, we've lost half a knot but I don't want to stress the rig. The main puts quite a bit of torsion on the mast and the alloy gooseneck fitting which is now being used as a mast step I'm keen to preserve, it's not designed to take much torsional stress.
- I tried putting up the jib in addition to the main at dawn having altered course a couple of times in the night with the wind now in the south, but it was backing and filling and not too happy, so I doused it again.



Jock's Blogs

- 6 June 2021 (continued)
- Last night looking around the rig etc. I noticed that my repair to the jib is taking wear, I don't understand why because it doesn't appear to be rubbing on anything, I've been tying a sail tie to the tack to centralise it within the pulpit to keep it clear of rubbing. In any event I took the sail down below and cut out a much bigger patch of sail repair sticky cloth and put this on, the glue on this batch seems a lot better as does the weight of the material, it came as a freebie with my new North 3dl sail (now consigned to the deep, unfortunately, with the mast) so should be fairly high quality, fingers crossed it holds for a bit longer than the last repair.
- We did a good turn yesterday of 98 miles run and 91 of distance made good. Hopefully today will be better as we were doing more than 4 knots and sometimes over 5 yesterday, we're down to 3.5 now but there's only a few hours of the run to noon left in any case and we've done 99 miles already. 490 miles to Campbeltown now, ticking along.
- We've been visited by another bird, I think it was a Herald Petrel, but the bird book thinks it's only found here accidentally, it may have been a sooty shearwater, but it looked smaller, darker and different to me.
- Hoping for some dolphins when we get into home waters, I'm missing them having still not seen one this trip which is I think quite unusual.



Jock's Blogs

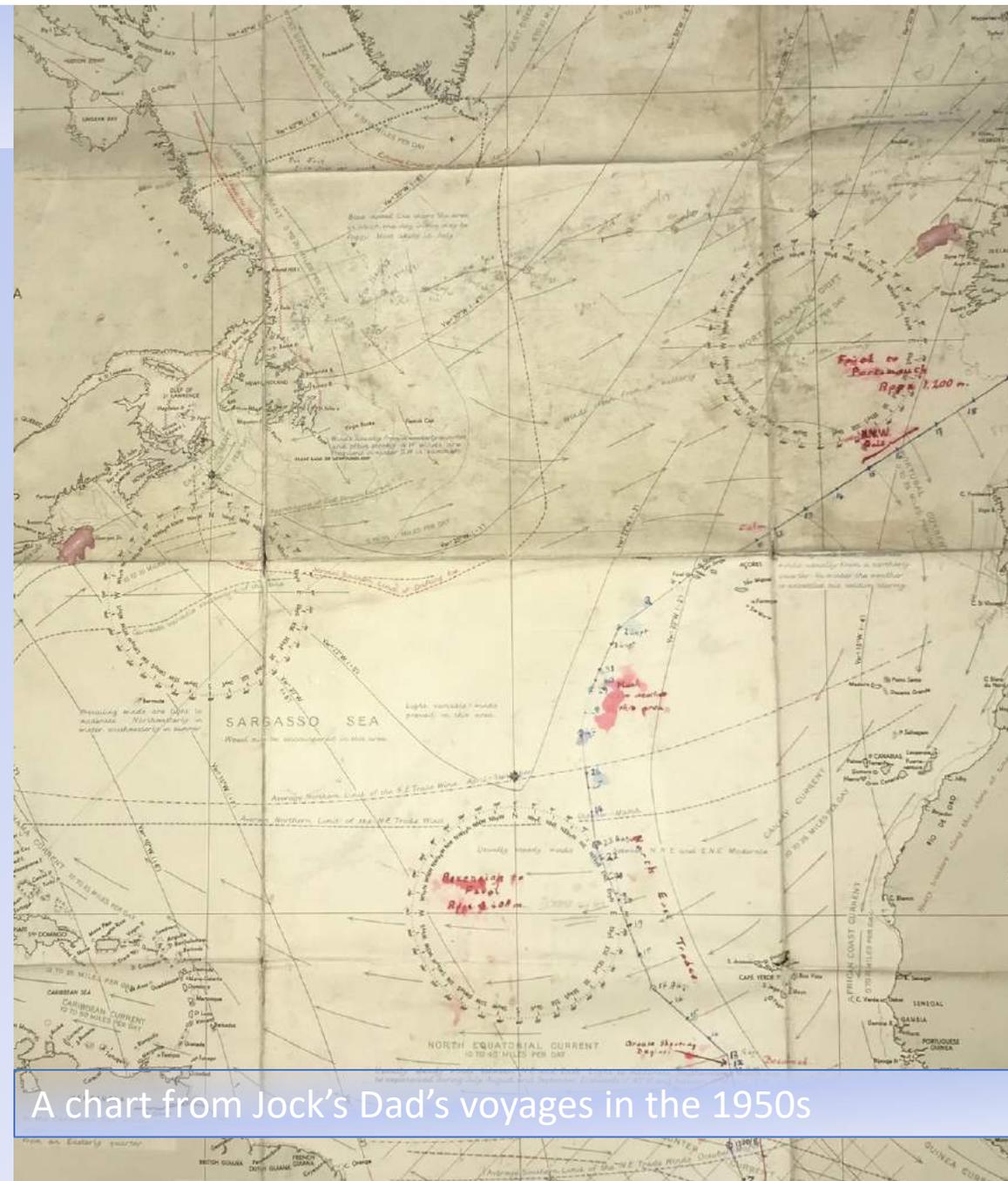
- 7 June 2021

- **Good but Very Uncomfortable Progress**

- A very uncomfortable day yesterday with wind and sea building from the South with swell from West South West. I'd lowered the Main at dawn and we continued all day and night with just the jib and wind on the starboard beam. We were moving along mostly at around 4 knots but rolling wildly and being slapped with breaking waves quite often. The forecast blow of 30 knots arrived, pretty much as advertised in the early evening but we seemed to be coping with it fine so held course and kept the jib up. Hopefully the waves will die away a bit today. The wind's already down to 12 ish knots.
- I was reduced to eating tins, Yesterday, I had a tin of soup for lunch with a couple of rolls (part baked petit pain) and cooked some butternut and threw in a tin of steak for dinner. It was fine but uninspiring, a bit like forces 'Rat Packs'.
- The numbers were good yesterday we logged 108 miles noon to noon. We've currently 425 miles to go to Campbeltown. My weather forecasts show mostly Sly winds for the next few days with nothing too exciting so let's hope that that it is accurate. I get the new one in about 20 minutes, they come in at 0715 and 1915 GMT daily.
- It was very cloudy yesterday, the PV panels were hardly harvesting any amps, we had maybe one or two amps for about 6 hours, but it wasn't really enough to bring the batteries up significantly, however we still managed through the night, I'm hoping that we'll get a lot more today, there are patches of blue around and the clouds look less thick. Will see, If I don't get much I may have to start the engine for a short time, which'll be the first time since we turned back that I'll have needed to.

Jock's Blogs

- 8 June 2021
- **JPS Tech Issues (Jock Proximity Syndrome)**
- A frustrating morning. I woke up at about 0600 to find we were heading NW with the sails unhappy. I got up and brought her back to about 060 but the wind was now SE, so we were pretty much close hauled, not being able to point very high with the jury rig. The wind was only about 10 knots and we were only making about 2.3 knots. Looking at my chart plotter to see how long we'd been going in the wrong direction indicated it had been around an hour. The weather is overcast with smur - dreich.
- I made a cup of tea and tried to exchange emails. I'd been unable to last night. The program on the iPad has an icon you press and it then tries to exchange emails, once you've pressed it it tells you a couple of useless things like communicating, communication protocol is maxwell, and then it delays for a bit. Then it says 'Dialling' and around 324 milliseconds prior to this the satellite drops the connection, it's as if it is waiting for the program to decide to dial and, just as it decides, it drops the connection



A chart from Jock's Dad's voyages in the 1950s

Jock's Blogs

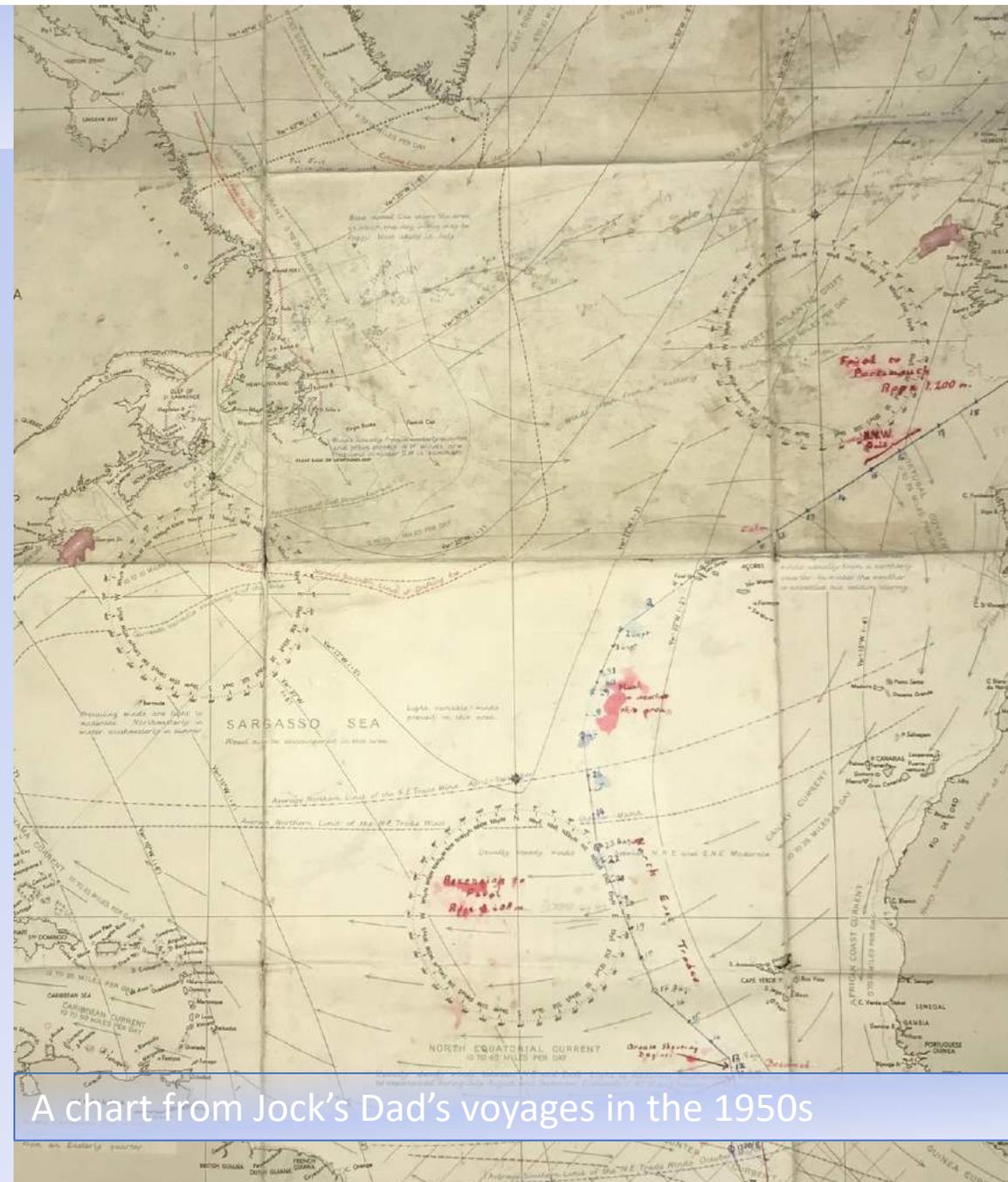
- 8 June 2021 (continued)
- It does this on occasions, in the past I've tried shutting the program down, shutting the iPad down, shutting the iridium network down etc and on re starting I've decided that none of these actually help, it's just a question of trying again. Normally now I try 10 times and then give up and try again later. What's particularly annoying is that even when it is misbehaving like this, if I want to download weather it generally works, so the system itself is ok. To be fair it sometimes needs a couple of attempts at the weather but mostly it works fine first time. Anyway, this morning it just wasn't having it. I've tried dozens of times now it's just not working. Whether it's the weather I'm not sure, sometimes I wonder if it's the rolling, the weather or just 'jock proximity syndrome' and think it's probably the latter. Whilst this was on going, I thought I'd transfer a beautiful picture of my bread from my telephone to my iPad. Normally I just 'air drop' it. This morning both iPad and telephone refuse to believe that the other is switched on, or in the vicinity. Dozens of times. B.....! I've tried turning Bluetooth on and off, the machines themselves off and on, nothing.
- I thought it would be better to give up with technology for a bit and make some breakfast. I spoiled myself as we've plenty of eggs still and made some fried potatoes, scrambled egg and toast. That at least was lovely. Coming back to the tech stuff, it's all still misbehaving. I think I just need a teenager to try, then it would work fine, but there are few in the area.



A chart from Jock's Dad's voyages in the 1950s

Jock's Blogs

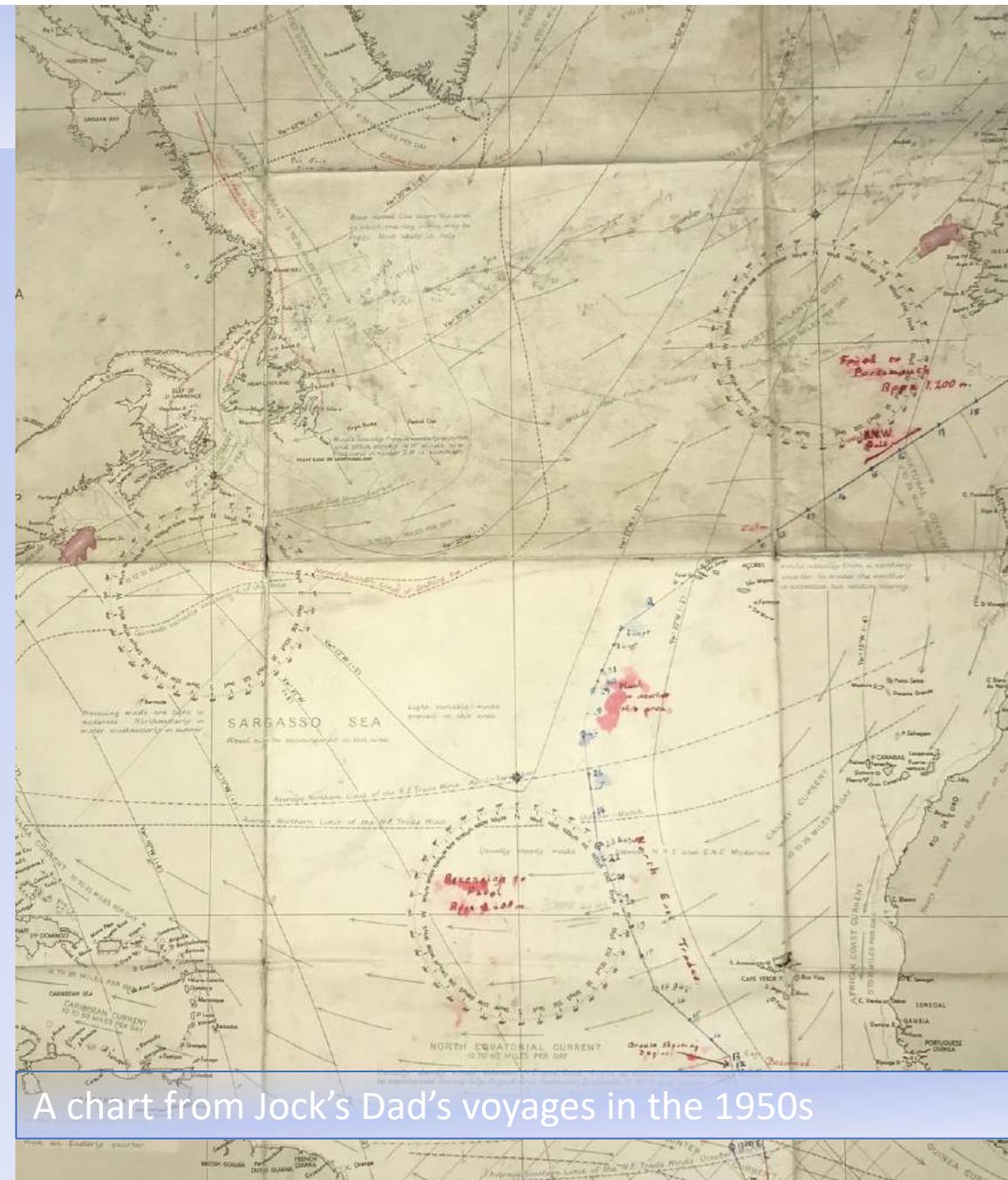
- 8 June 2021 (continued)
- Anyway, yesterday we did 80 miles over the ground with 69 coming off our distance to go, currently we're 347 miles to Campbeltown. I'm only using Campbeltown as a waypoint at the moment in case I pop in there for fuel but suspect I'll not need to, it's about another 32 miles to the Kyles from there.
- Meantime the wind has veered a little and we're now up to 3.5 knots again maybe I'll try the sat connection again too.
- I made bread yesterday and it was much more successful than last time. I need to bring a loaf tin on the boat, the quiche dishes don't make for a satisfactory shape. A photo may or may not be attached depending on whether the apple or iridium technology decides to start working again first.
- I had a surprisingly good risotto for dinner (chorizo and salami with the ubiquitous butternut) and even left some for today with some mandarin oranges and evaporated milk for pudding.



A chart from Jock's Dad's voyages in the 1950s

Jock's Blogs

- 8 June 2021 (continued)
- As the wind went astern last night, I brought the jib into the cabin and sewed up the patch I'd put on where it was starting to come adrift, hopefully that'll keep us going for a few days now.
- I also tried putting a fishing line out, I'd bought some lures in Plymouth so put a couple of fresh ones, imitation sand eels, on along with a couple of spinners and tuby feather type hooks. Nothing biting so far.
-
- Sorry - no picture of Jock's misshapen bread arrived.
- In other news, Charlene and Bobby on *AJ Wanderlust* should get to the finish line in Rhode Island late tonight or early tomorrow EST - well done both! Ertan on *Lazy Otter* has moved from Horta to Ponta Delgada in the Azores to continue repairs. Guido on *Hannah of Cowes* is on a southerly route about halfway across. Ertan and Guido are very jealous of *AJ Wanderlust*!
- If Jock can maintain his speed and direction, he could arrive back in Tighnabruaich this weekend. Obviously, there's still a long way to go but once in sight of land, *Freya* should be able to be tracked on AIS sites like marinetraffic.com.



A chart from Jock's Dad's voyages in the 1950s

Jock's Blogs

- 9 June 2021
- **Gas Alarm and Time for a Wash**
- Well, it's a month since we set off and I've spent equal amounts of time going Out and Back now. Yesterday's numbers: 78 miles covered and 333 to go to Campbeltown. Getting closer, the forecast, so far has nothing horrible between now and then. I'm hoping to get to Inishtrahull Friday evening and be across the North Channel Saturday morning but that'll only happen if we carry on making good time without problems.
- We had a cloudy day again yesterday and I got little charge into the batteries so ended up running the engine for an hour to put some charge back in again to see us through the night. It's foggy again this morning but the cloud seems less thick, hopefully we'll harvest more energy today.
- After I'd had dinner (leftover risotto) I was making a cup of tea and the carbon monoxide alarm went off, which is a new one for me. I opened the hatch a bit and noticed that the gas had gone out on the stove. The alarm kept going off even after I'd wafted it a bit with hands and blown on to it and re set it. Anyway, it looked like the gas bottle had run out, - 1 month on the same bottle, so I changed the bottle and by that time the alarm had stopped being annoying. I'm not quite sure why the alarm went off, I'm assuming it was to do with the gas but don't understand it, the stove often blows itself out at the moment because the rocking of the boat is enough to do that, but the gas then cuts off because there's no heat on the sensor, and this doesn't set off the alarm, carbon monoxide normally comes from combustion but I had the hatch half open whilst the other day, when I was making bread, I had the oven on for ages and the hatch closed to rise the dough and had no problems.



Jock's Blogs

- 9 June 2021 (continued)
- I thought I might have caught a fish yesterday afternoon; the line had come to the surface and I could see something on the end. I got all dolled up in my oilskins, had a bucket to hand and brought the line in. It proved to be a plastic bag and the weight had disappeared, a bit of a disappointment.
- Last night was quiet.
- I had porridge for breakfast this morning then was busy on deck for a couple of hours: I lowered the sails for a check and then lowered the mast to check the rigging at the top - I had thought I could pull some through from the bottom to change the chafe point but that proved impossible so, before we close the coast, I thought it prudent to have a look. It's actually all fine, no signs of wear in any case. Putting the mast back up was fine, always a bit awkward and I had to reposition the foot onto its position because it didn't locate as I hauled it vertically. Once I'd got her under way again I taped up the radar cable which has been a source of a leak in the cabin, water has been coming down inside the cable, it's one of those thick ones with lots of wires inside and a plaited screen around them all to keep the stray wiggles in. I put amalgamating tape and then gorilla tape on top of it, hopefully it'll hold for a couple of days. Once that was done, I moved the anchor cable back to the locker, I had stowed it down below in the bilge in the cabin once we'd cleared Ireland outbound because it's better to have the weight low down than high up and on the bow from a sailing point of view. Now that I may need it, I want it back on the bow. I've put the anchor back in the locker because I'm using the bow roller as an attachment for the forestay and it's working quite well at the moment.
- Well, I think this is the calmest it's going to be for a couple of days so I'm going to spoil myself and have a wash and a change, the wind's due to pick up from the South this afternoon. Hopefully we'll increase speed a bit then although current speed of 3+ knots is nothing to complain of.



Jock's Blogs

- 9 June 2021 (continued)
- *AJ Wanderlust* is close to finishing, you'll all probably have a better idea than I do but last night she was crossing the Nantucket Shoals, in fog and hoping to get to Newport before the wind dies, I hope that they managed it because it's a busy bit of water and being becalmed in fog there won't be much fun.

- *AJ Wanderlust* is nearly across the line - this is from their latest blog:
- Wednesday 9 June at 9:50 am British Time
- *AJ Wanderlust* is 30 miles from the finish at Castel Hill. It is 4:50 am Eastern Standard Time in the USA. An overcast and cloudy morning with light rain showers. *AJ Wanderlust* presently south of NoMan's Island and Martha's Vineyard. Imminent bear away to a course of 313 magnetic for the final leg home!!!



Jock's Latest Blog

- 10 June 2021
- **Duck and Grouse**
- I felt a lot fresher after a wash, shave and change of clothes late yesterday morning. Our speed picked up through the afternoon as the wind increased 'til we were doing 4+ knots. By 2100 with 25 knots forecast for later I was a bit worried about the yard which becomes quite bowed in stronger winds so took the main down. We went from 4+ knots to 2.5 which was disappointing but after some trimming of the course and sail were back up at about 3 knots. It meant that I could sleep without worrying about the rig. This morning we're doing mostly 3+ knots and I'll put the main up again this afternoon once the wind's died down a little.
- The numbers for yesterday were: 78 miles logged and 76 made good, with 257 left to go to Campbeltown or 280 home.
- The sea is up again and so it's noisy again with breaking waves hitting us occasionally, less so than last night now but back to being uncomfortable. When working on deck I find myself shouting at the elements when they throw the boat over on her ear, I shout 'go away' (possibly marginally less politely) but have found I've been hurting my ears with the volume I manage to achieve, particularly if the hood is up on my oilskins. It doesn't help but makes me feel better.
- I had a tin of 'Confit de Canard' last night, a present from Hungary, I vaguely remember Katharine telling me what it actually was. I'd forgotten this and had thought that it would be a duck leg casserole. I did boiled potatoes and cabbage with it. On opening the tin, it was difficult to empty into the saucepan being, as it was, thick white fat and some meat. This is entirely what it is, thick white duck fat and duck legs. It was fine but there was a saucepan full of duck fat left at the end and with the deteriorating conditions I didn't want to risk it's going all over the cabin so ended up dumping it over the side. Had I remembered what Katharine had told me about it I'd probably have been more creative with it and fried the potatoes in the duck fat or something, and I'd have been prepared to save the fat for future use in something.
- Well, if things go well, I should be picking up a phone signal tomorrow. I've had the Irish coastguard almost coming through on the VHF which I'm surprised about because my aerial is now on the cabin top so very low and VHF Radio is line of sight so I'd imagine my range would not be that great, I suppose that they have their aerial up a mountain somewhere which will help.
- Hoping things continue without drama. It looks like Ertan in *Lazy Otter* is heading back to Europe, I've not heard from him, he keeps his other boat in Spain and lives in Bournemouth which is where I suspect he'll head to.

N55°14'35.22
W006°32'48.04
(55.2431, -006.5467)

FREYA [GB] at 5.6 kn / 93°
Position received: **3 minutes ago**

Jock's Position (1645 11/06/21)



Jock's Blogs

- 11 June 2021
- **Bloody Land Ahoy!**
- Abeam Tory Island 0400, so reads the log. I was up a few times in the night to try to avoid bumping into Ireland some bits of it that have been carelessly scattered around. The AIS alarm was going off for ages for a buoy but it's not appearing on the chart plotter which is boring. Not much traffic around. I have a phone signal and have been reading many emails which the stupid system sent to my gmail account instead of the Iridium one. Thanks, everyone.
- The wind is still quite strong from the West. I'd intended to be motoring along here but as we're doing 4.5 knots it seems a bit pointless, still running under jib only with wind above 20 knots. I'm having to gybe because the jib won't set with the wind more than about 165 degrees from the bow, currently we're heading for rocks South of Malin Head having passed the gloriously named Bloody Foreland just before Tory Island.
- It's a lot more comfortable now, the big sea from the SW is disappearing although there is a swell from the West still coming in it's on the quarter so not nearly so upsetting for poor *Freya*.



Jock's Blogs

- 11 June 2021 (continued)
- Thanks to everyone for welcomes to home waters.
- Yesterday's numbers: 86 miles run and 85 made good.
- Today's numbers to Noon 110 miles run with 109 made good, but with the benefit of some engine for a couple of hours.
- I'm currently motorsailing at 6.5 knots just past Malin Head but the tide's about to start pushing against me, I'll head into the shore to maybe miss some of the worst of it and possibly pick up an eddy south of Rathlin tonight. The tide turns in my favour at 1841 by which time I'm hoping to be within striking distance of the North Channel, in which case I should be in Kilbrannan sound late this evening in time to potter up to the village for an arrival in the morning around 1030. If I don't make the tide tonight at the North Channel, then it'll be late afternoon. I'll need to be at Rathlin latest 2200 for a morning arrival, which, currently I think should be doable.
- I'm being serenaded by Ireland's finest DJs; it makes a change from the music I've been listening to but am hoping to get Radio 4 shortly which will be a welcome return to normal. I prefer to catch up with modern music on desert island discs.



Jock's Home!

- At just after 1100 on 12 June, Jock made *Freya* secure to her mooring in front of his house, marking the end of his Transatlantic Adventure.
- Having just passed half-way across the Atlantic on 24 May, Jock had lost his mast overboard owing to the failure of one of his stays. He was able to salvage the boom and, using it and a mast from a Laser dinghy which he had stowed on board as a precaution, he was able to create a jury rig with the Laser sail and another small sail to propel him back across the Atlantic to Tighnabruaich and home.
- He used his engine only for the last part of the voyage along the North Irish coast and beyond. With the benefit of prevailing winds and currents, Jock's return trip did not take much longer than the outward leg. His exploits are a tribute to his ingenuity and resourcefulness and we are all delighted he is back with us, but share his disappointment at the way things went.
- A flotilla of boats of various shapes and sizes put out to welcome Jock home. Here are some photographs of the event, culminating with one of *Freya* at rest, being passed by *Waverley* on sea-trials in the afternoon.



Jock's Homecoming



Jock's Homecoming



Jock's Homecoming



Jock's Homecoming





JOCK HAMILTON'S TRANSATLANTIC ADVENTURE 2021

The End