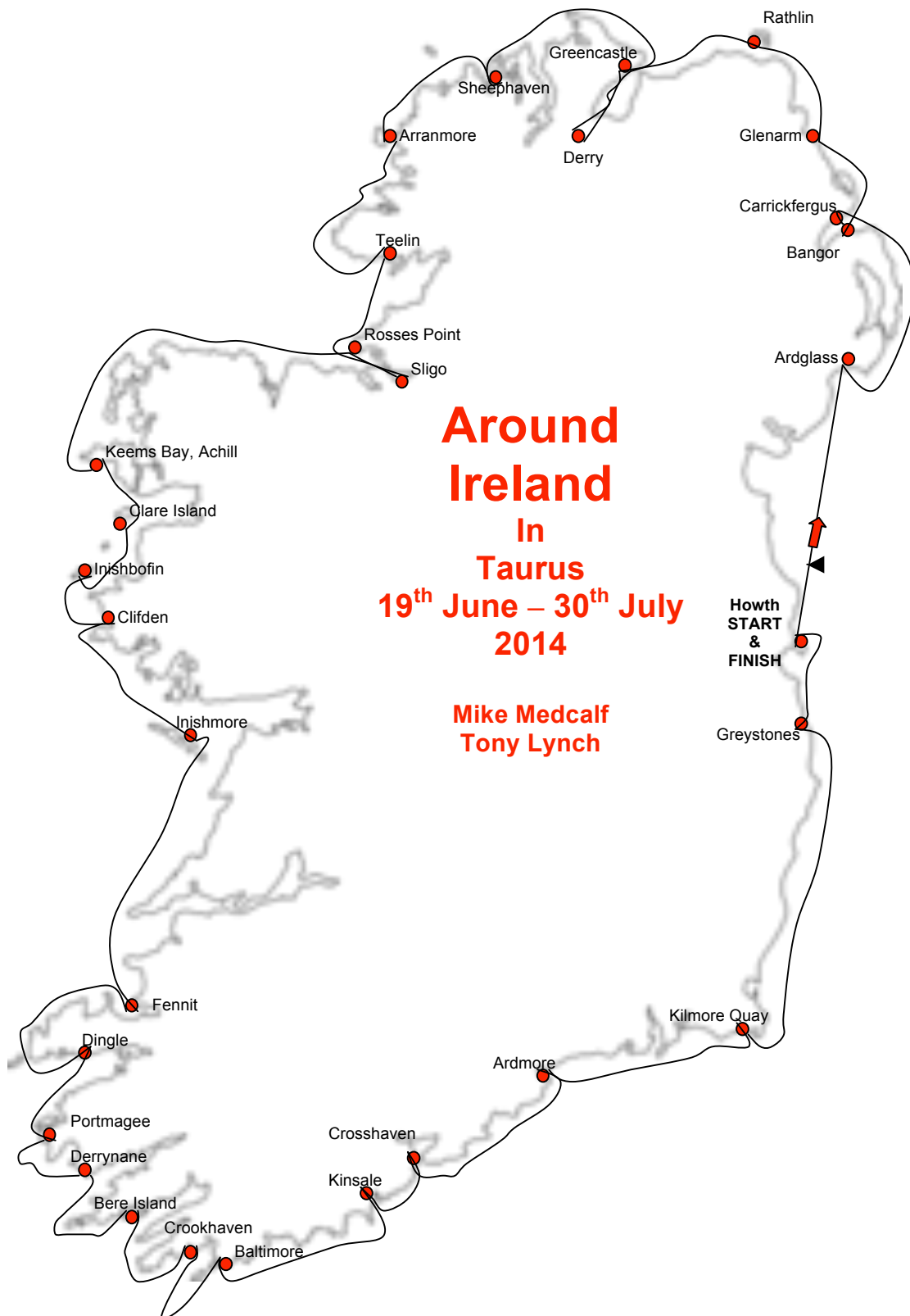


A Trip around the Island!



A journey by boat from Howth to Howth going North about

Our Home



Taurus

Tango Alpha Uniform Romeo Uniform Sierra

Call Sign **EI-JO-7**

Echo India Juliet Oscar Seven

MMSI – 250002121

Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 32i – Built 2008 -

Owner - Mike Medcalf

Length Overall 31'5" – 9.6m

Beam 10'9" - 3.3m

Depth 6'6" - 2m

Preparations and Planning

“A Trip around the Island” is a very common phrase that is heard on most summer days in Howth Harbour as the Island Eye Ferries shout for custom from the piers, it seemed an appropriate title for this booklet as we take the trip one step further and head off for a Trip around the Island of Ireland.

It was back in February 2014 that I started thinking about a major cruise having retired the previous year and had the time to devote to a major trip. The decision was made a lot easier by the Cruising Association of Ireland (CAI) organising their summer cruise to the Derry Maritime Festival and the Clipper race. This cruise was planned for June so it made sense to join them as far as Derry then continue on. This would give an anticlockwise cruise (the recommended direction according to most of the pilot books)

Tony Lynch was up for the cruise so full steam ahead in the preparations.

April was spent sourcing charts and pilot books – The Irish Cruising Club guides to the East & North Coast and the Guide to the South & West Coast are essential books together with their general volume “Cruising Ireland”

Another source of useful information was the 2nd Edition of “Oileain” The Irish Islands guide – although written for kayakers, the information on tides and general history is very useful and interesting.

Nearly £400 of additional charts are required to cover all the coast. The Admiralty Folios only cover the South and East Coast leaving a big gap for Donegal and the West coast. I was very fortunate to be able to borrow a considerable number of charts from Simon Parker Secretary of the CAI. These charts had been used by his son for a record single handed attempt and were all laminated and in great condition. I still spent just under £150 on large scale charts of the West coast to compliment the passage charts. – I do all my passage planning and pilotage the old fashioned way using paper charts, I have two GPS plotters that are used for Lat & Long data and a cross check on Harbour entrances. One plotter is on deck and visible from the helm, this is a stand alone unit i.e. it doesn't talk to any other instruments. The other is down below and is connected to the Radio for DSC purposes and also to the AIS unit and plots the position of other boats that transmit on AIS. The Lat & Long information they provide is plotted hourly onto the charts and confirms the old fashioned Fix and estimated position..

When under way the hatch cover is used as an excellent cockpit chart table with all plotting done from the hatch. – The Mark I Eyeball was also extensively used as a main navigation instrument.

A pilotage folder was started with details of the likely stops and alternative harbours. The trip is now arranged in three legs :-

1. Dublin – Derry
2. Derry – Dingle
3. Dingle – Dublin

Crew changes are being arranged around these ports all easily accessible from Dublin or the UK.

Power for Instruments and Domestic use –

With an increase in Instruments, Heating, iPods, phone charging, Radio's and even electric toothbrush charging, I decide to look at increasing the boats electrical capacity with a view to being self sufficient in power for longer periods.

Options considered being Solar panels or windmill generators. Solar panels are not that efficient for replacing used Amps and I disliked the thought of a large windmill on the boat so looked at other solutions.

A power audit indicated a daily usage of 55Ah and with the engine running for an hour a day we would be able to replace about 30Ah giving a deficit of 25Ah per day.. If we had 4 days with no shore power we would have discharged our batteries by 100Ah, it is recommended that batteries are not discharged by over 50% therefore giving a requirement for 200Ah battery bank.

The current battery bank is only 100Ah – Domestic (Engine battery kept separate) therefore we fitted an additional 100Ah battery to take us up to the required 200Ah bank – this all fitted out of sight under the aft bunk and was a great solution.

Crewing

Tony Lynch on board for the whole Cruise and has cruised extensively on Taurus before, Other crew finalised with Mike Taylor on Leg 1, Graham Perry on Leg 2 and Edel Gilmartin on Leg 3 – this will give three people on board at all times enabling good lookouts and adequate rest time on day passages – no night passages planned – it's a holiday!.

Stores

Early June 2015 - Menus planned and long shelf items purchased and stored according to plans using every available space, indeed I found 12 cans of beer three months after the voyage when cleaning the bilges!

As we are sailing to International waters – Northern Ireland! – we are allowed to ship a Bond and a licence was applied for and received. We became self-sufficient in Gin (Limes, Tonic and ice being the limiting factor) Wine for the first part of the trip also formed part of the Bond.

Colliers of Howth vacuum packed all our meat and together with fresh vegetables we always had enough fresh produce for 5 days – having a fridge was essential for this – also used to make Ice when power was available!

18th June – Taurus transferred from our Boat Club mooring to Howth Marina and loaded up with the Bond, Food and all other items essential for comfort on a voyage.

Mike Taylor arrived at 17:30 and everyone including Hannah G II skipper Robert Kennedy met in the Pier house for Dinner.

Throughout the cruise we used Dover tides and the Admiralty Tidal Atlas for all our pilotage, this was generally done in the evening before departure.

Modifications to Taurus

Although Taurus was bought new a lot of modifications have been made over the last three years. The main items being:-

- *Main Sheet traveller fitted to the cockpit in place of the standard Mediterranean style sheet arrangement on the coach roof. This makes things a lot safer and the sheet can be controlled from the helm. In port the traveller can be removed freeing up the cockpit space.
- *DSC Radio fitted in the saloon along with a remote Mic that is fitted in the cockpit and can be used from the helm.
- *Eberspacher heating fitted. This was fairly easy as the boat if built to accept a unit and not many holes had to be cut to run the ducting.
- *A net across the open stern to prevent loss of equipment etc overboard
- *A grab handle fitted to the stern to make life easier when boarding from a dinghy.
- *Cruising Chute and associated running rigging fitted
- *Tiller Pilot auto helm fitted to make life easier when short handed, generally only used when engine running.
- *A Habitant cockpit enclose was purchased – this gave an extra dry room when in port and was well worth the money. It is very easy and quick to fit.
- *AIS (Automatic Identification System) was fitted over the winter period in anticipation of this major cruise, I fitted a class A transponder so that our position and course would be transmitted to other vessels at sea.
- *A new plotter fitted below deck that will talk to the DSC Radio and the AIS – this shows the position and track of other boats in the area.
- *Adjustable back stay was fitted a few years ago when tweaking the rigging, as was a solid Vang.
- *Moveable Jib Cars fitted to allow jib shape adjustment easily
- *A Cunningham and a flattener fitted to the Main sail to help shape adjustments.

An unbelievable 26 lines are led back to the cockpit that allow for adjustment and No I am not going to name them but they all have names and are in use.

Departure Music We are Sailing – H.M. Royal Marine Band



The Bond arrives

Date Thursday 19th June 2014.
HW Dover 1725
Plan Howth to Ardglass
Mileage 56.5
Engine Hours 8
Arrival Music *The Mountains of Mourne – Davy Arthur and the Fureys*

A leisurely Start at 0900 – 2 hours before local HW giving the full flow of the North going Tide. A northerly wind and a chop didn't help much as we left in company with Hannah G II.

Our course was inside Lambay getting a further lift from the tide, Motor sailed but as we got to Rockabill we were able to sail.

Saw a few boats on passage – all beating up to Ardglass

Tied up in Ardglass at 2030 – we were only able to sail for 3 hours and motor sailed the rest.

Ardglass is a small but busy marina and very helpful staff.

Lots of boats use Ardglass when travelling North or South, Isle of Man is also very accessible from this port – a long day to Ardglass gives a great start to any cruise.

Good dinner of Lambay Fillet Stake from Colliers of Howth



On route to Ardglass

Date Friday 20th June 2014.
HW Dover 1830
Plan Ardglass to Carrickfergus
Mileage 41
Engine Hours 5
Daily Music *Carrickfergus – Malachi Cush*

Up at 0530 for a 0600 start. Local HW is 0530 and ebbs north giving a favourable tide to Belfast Lough.

Had a great sail for the first hour but then we had to tack at the South Rock and head into 20+ knots of wind – Engine on to motor sail to Donagadee sound.

Sailing well across the Lough but now double reefed. Great sunny day giving everyone minor sunburn.

Tied up in Carrickfergus Marina at 1415. – this is a great well maintained Marina with good facilities and a lot of shops nearby – Recommended as a port of call.

Visited the well preserved Castle and the brand new sailing club. The club only opened this week. Balcony has tremendous views across the Lough. Taurus was the first visiting boat to sign the visitor book.
Dinner on board still using fresh beef from Lambay



Carrickfergus Marina

Date Saturday 21st June 2014.
HW Dover 1930
Plan Carrickfergus to Bangor
Mileage 6
Engine Hours ½ Hour
Daily Music *The Girl I left behind – Whitehill Flute Band*

Woke up to a lovely morning in Carrickfergus. Departed at 0910 using just the jib for a very gentle sail across the Lough to our allocated berth in Bangor Marina. We are now officially part of the CAI Cruise – All moored by 1030.

Despite a lot of motor sailing the diesel tank is still 3/4+ full – seems very frugal.

Joined in the Marina by Hannah G II, Astrid, Rhiannon, Tobago, Asile and Arctic Fox. (Tobago also planning to continue around Ireland.)
14 of us went for dinner at a very good recommended Indian restaurant in the City “Bukhara”
Night cap on board for those that do! – Skipper is currently on a dry run and has been for a year.



Pimm's O'Clock in Bangor Marina

Date Sunday 22nd June 2014.
HW Dover 2030
Plan Rest Day
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Star of the County Down – The Wolfe Tones*

Day of rest as it's a Sunday. – 6 other Cruising Association boats arrive throughout the morning. Strong winds in the marina caused some docking problems.

A walk along the prom to "The Jamaica Inn" for an early pint – pub already busy.

We met up with the rest of the Association in the Royal Ulster Yacht Club for Lunch.

A very interesting and old club with substantial memorabilia of Sir Edward Lipton's America's Cup challenges.

Lunch was excellent, served in a lovely room and lasted to 1900! – Unusually there didn't appear to be any members using the club?

Dinner on board was just soup but it was lobster bisque and garlic bread.



Jamaica Inn and its not in Cornwall!

Date Monday 23rd June 2014.
HW Dover 2130
Plan Bangor to Glenarm
Mileage 24
Engine Hours 2
Daily Music *Glenarm Bay – The Irish Rovers*

Left Bangor at 0900 together with Timbaloo and Asile, other travelling a little later.

Shook the reefs out and had a great sail across the Lough to White Head, wind now very fluky, we just managed to keep sailing but had to tack into shore. The Fleet quickly caught up as they motored along.

Sailed close to the coast so as to see the Gobbins – a Victorian Cliff path that has featured on “Coast” it is currently being restored and looks very impressive.

Had to motor from the Isle of Muck to Glenarm where we tied up in the nice small marina, All tied up by 1320.

Dulse (Seaweed harvested at Glenarm) for lunch in the Bridge in with Landlord Stevie who we have met on previous visits to Glenarm

Dinner on board and then joined up with the other cruisers in the village pub for the evening.



Glenarm Marina in the Evening

Date Tuesday 25th June 2014.
HW Dover 1000
Plan Glenarm to Rathlin
Mileage 24
Engine Hours 4
Daily Music *Rathlin Island Boat Song – Barley Bree*

Left at 1000 which is HW Belfast to take advantage of the North going tide and to get slack water at Rathlin Sound

Very light winds and a very glassy sea made sure we had to motor again. Wind pick up a little but on the nose so continued to motor to keep to schedule. Asile was just behind, other boats (some going to Ballycastle) another hour behind

1230 cleared Tor Head close too, very interesting shore between here and Fair Head.

Tied up in Rathlin at 1400. Wind did squall at 20 knots but very calm in Church Bay.

Ran aground on the south side of the pontoon, so moved to the new extension.

A nice walk around the Harbour environment, saw the island cars! Visited the pub and ordered fresh lobster to be cooked for us from the little fish shop After an excellent Lobster and fish dinner joined the rest of the party in the pub.



The Pontoon at Church Bay, Rathlin

Date Wednesday 25th June 2014.
HW Dover 1100
Plan Rathlin to Greencastle
Mileage 29
Engine Hours 5
Daily Music *Greencastle Hornpipe – Brad and Brandon Apple*

A misty morning as we leave at 1100 just as the Ebb starts to flow westwards, motor sailed to Sheep island then took all sail down and motored along the coast with the Ballycastle Yachts just in front and the Rathlin cruisers just behind.

At 1330 we were close in to the Giants Causeway, crowded with people, you can't see much of the causeway from the sea but the outlying rock formations are spectacular with basalt columns. Set course for the Tun's Buoy outside of the Skerries

Strong Tides in the Foyle and tied up in Greencastle at 1600 – facilities are limited to just one pontoon with no services. Ran out of water as we forgot to fill up in Rathlin.

Shopped for essentials and water in the village. Dined out in Kealy's Seafood Bar with all the Association – Paying the Bill got very messy due to the inflexibility of the staff.



Greencastle Pontoon after the storm

Date Thursday 26th June 2014.
HW Dover 1130
Plan Greencastle to Derry
Mileage 17.5
Engine Hours 4
Daily Music *The town I loved so well – Luke Kelly*

A very windy and rough night on the pontoons, not much shelter from the North – none at all really and the trawlers kick up a swell as they leave.

A small lobster was caught in the pot and released. Visited the town again and the maritime museum, very good for such a small town

Left at 1330 and had a jib only sail up the river. Great stretch of water with lots to see. Rolled the jib up at Lishally docks and then into the river proper, controlled by Port radio from here. Met by the berthing master in a rib, who then escorted us to our berth on the long pontoons in the centre of Derry. All tied up and plugged in by 1730 – filled water tanks!

Clippers all in and another 127 yachts all rafted along new pontoons – excellent organisation and a great party atmosphere with a big tented village and market all along the front.



In Derry / Londonderry

Date Friday 27th June 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest day
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Danny Boy (Londonderry air) – Bryn Terfel*

Rest and recuperation day, this was spent milling around the market and the boats. Carole Taylor – Mike's wife arrived at 1530 having flown into Derry International for some R&R

Temporary power sockets caused problems when the sockets dipped into the river at high tide. Welded my sockets together but our on board electrician saved the day for our pontoon

Dinner on Board



Big Boats in Derry

Date Saturday 28th June 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *The sash my father wore – The Loyal Sons of William*

Another day of R&R in Derry – took the guided tour around the walls which I highly recommend.

Museums are also very good especially the Tower museum and the Armada exhibit.

Had Nando's out and then back to the boat for the festival finale and the best firework display I have seen. Taurus perfectly placed as all the action was in the river opposite.

For the Rules of the Road geeks among you this was a rare occasion where you come across a tug displaying lights for a tow and for carrying explosives! – took a while to look that one up in the book!



The City Council claimed responsibility

Date Sunday 29th June 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Back Home in Derry – Christy Moore*

R&R in Derry – getting used to this

The Clipper parade of sail was at noon which drew a great noisy crowd, again we had ringside seats. Once the Clippers had gone with all the supporting boats it was a lot quieter. We moved down the pontoon to the original pontoons by the gateway – a very comfy spot

Chilled out for the rest of the day apart from a quick shop for dinner and planned the next few days – The Cruising Association Boats have all left and we are on our own for the first time.



The Derry Walls and the Town Hall

Date Monday 30th June 2014.
HW Dover 1400
Plan Crew Change – Derry to Greencastle
Mileage 17.5
Engine Hours 4
Daily Music *Farewell to Derry – Anne & Francie Brolly*

Crew Change Day – Mike and Carole up early to get taxi at 0700 to Derry international. Graham due in at 1500 by bus from Dublin.
Major shop at the supermarket and filled up with 43 litres of diesel

Walked to the Bogside to see the murals and the memorials – Derry is very thought provoking and I still think its history is not really known or understood by the mainland UK.

Dinner ashore before we departed down the river with the tide at 2100. Dark at 2300, motored quietly along the river and the Lough - navigating by lights. Some lights are very difficult to see or seem to disappear at odd moments – found out this is due to roosting cormorants!. No wind at all so Greencastle was very sheltered, a complete contrast to our last visit. All settled by 0030 for a quiet night.



Greencastle Pontoon again but on a nice day

Date Tuesday 1st July 2014.
HW Dover 1436
Plan Greencastle to Sheephaven Bay
Mileage 48
Engine Hours 8.5
Daily Music *Deep Sheephaven Bay - Margo*

Had a pleasant morning in Greencastle after a very comfy night (bounced about last time we moored here) – there are plans to extend the pontoons and to add a breakwater – this will make a great difference to Greencastle. Did a little shopping mainly for Milk and Ice – tried unsuccessfully to pay the Harbour Master again.

Cast off at 1330 with a helpful strong tide but what little wind there was is on the nose. Main up as we turned at the fairway buoy but had to motor sail to Malin Head. Passed here at 1700 being pushed through Inishtrahull sound at 8 knots.

Saw Round Ireland racing yachts in the distance tacking against the tide.

Anchored for the night in Sheephaven Bay in a little bay called locally Monks Bay – should be sheltered if the predicted wind starts to blow. Very secluded and pretty bay.



Monks Bay before the storm

Date	Wednesday 2nd July 2014.
HW Dover	1500
Plan	Stormbound – Monks Bay
Mileage	0
Engine Hours	0
Daily Music	<i>Give me Shelter from the Storm – Bob Dylan</i>

Planned to leave for Tory and Cruit at 1300 but a poor forecast with a predicted F7 made the decision to sit out the storm in our pleasant anchorage. A swell did make it around the corner to cause a roll but we were just out of the main swell.

Wind increased and the waves started to dump on the sandy beach preventing a dinghy landing so confined to boat all day – will see what tomorrow brings.



Monks Bay as the swell creeps in

Date	Thursday 3rd July 2014.
HW Dover	1530
Plan	Trip out to see the weather! – Ards Bay
Mileage	32
Engine Hours	5.5
Daily Music	<i>Donegal Danny – Ronnie Drew</i>

Decided to head for Arranmor before the strong winds came. Left at 1030 on Local High Water – double reefed and a great sail down the Bay and around Horn Head and into a big sea – Could beat up to Tory on Port Tack in 25+ knots SW

Tacked just short of Tory as decided it was impractical to get in and set of for Inishbofin – one a three small islands just off the coast – wind now gusting over 30 knots and the Atlantic swell washing the decks and crew – Flag halyard broke and lost club burgees over the side.

Inishbofin and the other isles unsuitable in these conditions so a dead run back to Sheephaven – great sailing despite the weather (the pilot books states that many a yacht has left Sheephaven only to run back to its welcome shelter – how true!)

Tried to enter Ards bay but not quite enough water so anchored in Monks Bay for two hours and then got in over the bar (2.7M) at 1830. this is a wonderful swell free spot alongside parkland and an Abbey. Found a deep spot to anchor in and settled in for the night with one other yacht in the bay An interesting day – 8 miles to Tory – 8 miles to Inishbofin and 8 miles back to Sheephaven.

Ran out of gas tonight after 14 days of heavy use.

Found out that a Nautical Mile is Longer, Wetter and more Expensive than a normal mile!



Ards Bay, well sheltered



Date	Friday 4th July 2014.
HW Dover	1600
Plan	Sheephaven to Arranmore
Mileage	35
Engine Hours	3
Daily Music	<i>Arranmore – Goats don't shave</i>

A lovely sheltered night in Ards Bay with the wind blowing overhead. A good depth at low water but drying sand all around apart from the channel. After a leisurely morning we left at noon into a 20 knot wind on the nose. Took 2 hours to tack out of the Bay into a big swell. Graham had left the forward Hatch slightly open (after checking them) Tony's bed soaked and Saloon, charts etc all covered in sea water from the heavy seas running down the boat.

Sailing well from Horn Head – saw 4 more yachts out at sea.

Great interesting pilotage using the Mark I eyeball as we passed lots of islands and headlands.

At 1900 we picked up a visitors mooring in Arranmor – a bit of a roll but all tired and unaffected by the movement.



Entrance to Arranmore Harbour

Date Saturday 5th July 2014.
HW Dover 1653
Plan Arranmore to Teelin
Mileage 40
Engine Hours 3.5
Daily Music *The Teelin Polkas – Comhaltas*

Moved across to fill up with water alongside the pier. Calm conditions but a strange strong swell that broke the fender board (I guess that's what its for!) At 1020 headed down the south sound, turning and twisting through the rocks – all the leading lines being astern. Good satisfying tricky pilotage (Mark I eyeball again) Out past Rutland Island – named after the Duke of Rutland, my son Robert lives in Rutland! – smallest county in the UK.

Wind picked up and we tacked out to Roannish then tacked out to sea. 20 knots and a heavy swell but sailing well with a double reef (been reefed for days) Had to motor sail as we got to Dawros bay and under all the cliffs to Rathlin O' Birne Island. Now on a lovely flat run under the high sea cliffs and into Teelin Harbour. Well hidden entrance, tied up alongside a fishing boat at the pier by 1930. – Baked Ham dinner settled everyone down after being shaken about all day – The Milk had turned to butter in its own little plastic bottle churn!!

Hugh and Kathleen Tierney came for a visit from their home in Inver. Graham to the pub to charge his phone as boat can't manage three pin chargers at sea!



The Hidden entrance to Teelin

Date Sunday 6th July 2014.
HW Dover 1800
Plan Teelin to Sligo
Mileage 30
Engine Hours 3.5
Daily Music *Orange Maid of Sligo – The Bards*

Up at 0600 for an early start at 0700 – buttery milk not the best thing for that essential early cup of tea. Still carrying a lot of rubbish as unsurprisingly the islands don't want it and there are no facilities in Teelin for disposal.

Sailing well with reefs still in but had to go west of Inishmurray (Famous for its Monastic ruins and for being the only Island to have been torpedoed by the Royal Navy who thought it was a submarine!)

Squally with rain and 20+ knots then sunny and quiet. Took the second reef out but had to tack at the shore and motorsailed till we got around the corner and into the river at our planned time of 1130. This gives us 2 hours of fair tide up the river. Interesting twisting pilotage as we called out directions to the helm, spatial awareness being as important as the charts as we passed the shallows and the islands and up to the Metal Man – (now seen Both – other one at Tramore and supposedly a third at Dalkey but don't know where).

Rafted up in Sligo on the town pontoon at 1300 – Found a bin and we have shore power!!

Sligo has an Italian Quarter and some good restaurants

Two plans for tomorrow

A leave at 0230

B Leave at 1500 and spend night at river entrance

A boat from the Isle of White rafted up to us having crept though the mud against the tide – they are on the way to the Hebrides and using Sligo for crew changes.



Sligo Town Pontoon

Date Monday 7th July 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Sligo to Rosses Point
Mileage 4
Engine Hours 1
Daily Music *Sligo Creek – Al Petteway*

Plan “B” won – so the morning is spent in Sligo filling up with fuel, water and stores from Tesco. Harbour Master drove us back and forth to the Garage for diesel – 22 litres of diesel loaded - €10 per night – he also helped us sort a berth out at Rosses Point if we needed it.

Cast off at 1230 and down the river in the sun – forecast good for the week. Lovely calm trip down the river and picked up a mooring that was heavily encrusted with weed and kelp, underneath all this growth was a new thick bridle and a new chain.

A very calm night not one bit of movement the boat just slowly turning to the tide.

Sandwiches made for our early start.



The Metal Man, Sligo

Date Tuesday 8th July 2014.
HW Dover 2021
Plan Rosses Point to Keem Bay, Achill Island
Mileage 88
Engine Hours 1
Daily Music *Lovely Achill Island – Kevin Prendegast*

A great comfy night in the river and a good forecast for the day so dropped the mooring and away by 0615 to ensure we get over the bar. Sailing straight away with just the one reef, had to tack into shore then long tacks out to sea then we passed inside the Stags and around Benwee Head. A consistent 19 knots of wind moved us swiftly along close to the shore. Fantastic coastal scenery, stacks, cliffs, Islands and Birds. Sailed all the way to Achill and anchored in the twilight in Keems Bay at 2245 hours – 88 miles under sail in 16 hours. Looks like a very pretty bay as we have a late dinner and wait for daylight to see it.

Keems Bay



Benwee Head

Date Wednesday 9th 2014.
HW Dover 2120
Plan Achill Island to Clare Island
Mileage 16.5
Engine Hours 0.5
Daily Music *Clare Island – The Saw Doctors*

After yesterdays record day we had an easy rasher sambo sort of morning watching currachs out fishing in the sun

Away by 1030 and sailed – with full sail! – along the Achill coast and had a look into the sound before heading into Clew Bay with Clare Island very visible.

By noon the weather had closed in and visibility was poor, Graham showed how to steer to a compass bearing!! and all of a sudden there was Clare. We picked up a visitors mooring at 1330. Wind was building but we are in a sheltered spot.

Pumped the dinghy up (for the first time) and went ashore to be a tourist and view Granuaile's Castle (Grace O'Malley)

Regular ferries bring walkers and tourists for day visits

Visited to Island community pub that over looks the only bit of flat land - the GAA pitch – last game was against Coventry!!

Rubbish building up again as the islands don't want it

Nice quite comfy evening on board till someone mentioned Margaret Thatcher – didn't need the heater on then.



Granuaile's Castle

Date	Thursday 10th July 2014.
HW Dover	2215
Plan	Clare Island to Inishbofin – lunch stop
Mileage	18
Engine Hours	2
Daily Music	<i>Inishbofin – Rig the Jig</i>

Up at 0800 and over to the main pier to take on water when the ferry left, back on mooring to cook breakfast.

Drizzle and mist as we left the harbour to motor through the shallows and islands to reach Inishbofin. A testing entrance leads into a wonderful sheltered harbour, picked up a mooring at 1230 – ashore for lunch in the Island Hotel – this is a modern Spa Hotel specializing in weddings – not an island feel at all. Saw our first yachts since Tory Sound.



Cromwells Castle / Barracks, Inishbofin entrance

Date	Thursday 10th 2014.
HW Dover	1800
Plan	Inishbofin to Clifden
Mileage	14
Engine Hours	4.5
Daily Music	<i>Galway Bay – The Clancy Brothers</i>

On route again at 1430 sailing through High Island sound, as we turned for Clifden the wind faded away to nothing.

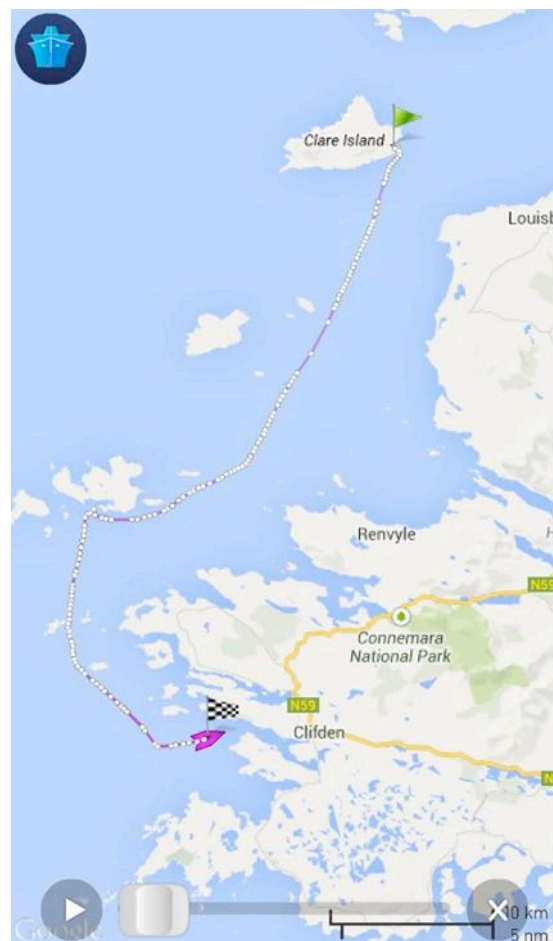
Picked up a visitors mooring off Clifden Sailing Club

Interesting close quarter pilotage with lots of reefs and rocks – we had good visibility which helps.

Saw Dolphins – first ones since Howth. Lambay and Islands Eye seem to have more bird life than the west coast, maybe they are just too spread out over this vast area? – we did hear Corncrakes on Clare Island

Showers available in the Yacht Club and there are Rubbish facilities!

Dinghy painter fairly easy to remove from the outboard propeller!



Date	Friday 11th 2014.
HW Dover	1045
Plan	Clifden to Inishmore
Mileage	41
Engine Hours	4.5
Daily Music	<i>Galway Girl – Malachi Cush</i>

It was very misty as we dropped the mooring at 0700. Light winds.

Had to follow a compass course back through the rocks and reefs all the way to Slyne Head which appeared and disappeared in the mist. We were motoring as what little wind there is was on the nose.

Passing Slyne head (two Lighthouses) we turned to Port and could fill the sails, still motoring as we had to maintain 5 knots on this passage. Still sailing to compass as still misty and there are an awful lot of awful rocks.

By 1300 we had a light wind and the cruising chute came out, we flew along at 6 – 8 knots with only 8 knots of wind – we soon swallowed the miles as Inishmore came into view

Dolphins displayed for us in the Bay

Picked up a visitors mooring in Kilronnan Harbour, we were next to Dave Martin in Rosheen Bawn from Howth

Ashore for Dinner.



Slyne Head during a clear spell

Date	Saturday 12th 2014.
HW Dover	
Plan	Rest Day ashore
Mileage	0
Engine Hours	0
Daily Music	<i>The Leaving of Inishmore - Galahad</i>

Rest Day Ashore

The town doesn't open or come to life until 1000 – this is when the first ferry arrives

Graham and I walked to Dun Aengus via burreens and fantastic field and dry stone wall scenery. The limestone ground is cracked and crazed and hold little water so every small field has a water catching point.

The Worm Hole is a spectacular open pit with tidal surges. Huge storm tossed boulders are thrown up and onto 50 ft cliffs and land 50ft inland.

Dun Aengus a 1000BC fort is spectacular and would be very atmospheric but for the 1500 continental visitors on bikes.

It was wet for most of the day but the evening fine – made a plan for Fenit tomorrow



Non native boulders thrown up by a storm

Date	Sunday 13th 2014.
HW Dover	1220
Plan	Inishmore to Fenit, Tralee Bay
Mileage	60
Engine Hours	4
Daily Music	<i>The Rose of Tralee – Jim McCann</i>

Up at 0630 as Rosheen Bawn left in company with a Malahide Yacht. We departed at 0700 – sailed through Gregory Sound with the tide then the wind went very fickle which together with a lumpy sea made for very difficult sailing. Engine on to maintain speed, We were able to turn it off after an hour. Great sailing in about 12 knots of wind eating up the miles to Loop Head and across the Shannon Estuary – saw four yachts sailing today – more than in the total cruise since leaving Derry.

Squally in the estuary and a fast run up Trallee bay and into Fenit, moored up in a nice marina (first since Glenarm) by 1830 – a tiring but nice day, everyone is burnt!

The inshore lifeboat lives out of the water but in a floating boat house. Rosheen Bawn and the Malahide Yacht still with us.



Loop Head at the entrance to the Shannon

Date Monday 14th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day - Fennit
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Kerry Jubilee – Brendon Moriaty*

Rest day - but did laundry, filled up with 22 litres diesel, filled the water tanks – shopped for essentials in a small shop, repaired spinnaker Halyard, mended the broken Fender Board (just shorter now), sewed the sail bag again and then washed the salt off the boat – crew gone missing!

Did the pilotage for our passage to Dingle tomorrow

Ashore for dinner in the West End Hotel – one of the best sea food dinners I have ever had – highly recommended.

We had ice in the Gin – first for a week



Fennit Marina from Brendan the Navigator

Date	Tuesday 15th 2014.
HW Dover	1445
Plan	Fennit to Dingle
Mileage	44
Engine Hours	6
Daily Music	<i>Dingle Regatta – The Pogues</i>

Left at 0530 together with Rosheen Bawn and Emma Grace (Malahide yacht) on a very clear and sunny morning – motored with the main up. Though the Magharee Sound at 0715 – straight forward at slack water. Great scenery as we passed along this spectacular coast, past lots of headlands and the Seven Sisters till we entered the Blasket sound at 0930. Sailed into Great Blasket Bay to see the ruins of the deserted village. Left the sound at 1030 and were flying along towards Dingle. Dingle entrance is very secluded and hidden from view until you are almost past it. It has a very narrow entrance and is crowded with tourist boats all hounding Fungi the Dolphin who surfaced alongside Taurus, this causes all the tourist boats to race straight at us with no regard for buoyage or Rules of the Road. This causes a bit of difficulty for a first time yacht trying to avoid the rocks in the entrance and find the first navigation mark! Tied up in a very nice marina in the pretty town of Dingle at 1330 – all built on the back of the popular Fungi.



Rosheen Bawn in the Magharee Sound – early

Date	Wednesday 16th 2014.
HW Dover	
Plan	Rest Day
Mileage	0
Engine Hours	0
Daily Music	<i>The Holy Ground – Luke Kelly</i>

Rest Day and Crew Change. Graham on the 1015 bus to Trallee and then Train to Dublin. Edel is doing the reverse journey and hopes to land in Dingle at 1500.

Major shopping day and town tour – lots of Americans looking for their past

Edel does arrive at 1500 having left Howth at 0700

Nice evening out with Dave Martin in a pub with live music from Dublin musicians.



Dolphin boats in the entrance to Dingle

Date Thursday 17th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day - Dingle
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Dingle Bay – Leo McCaffery*

A very sunny rest day in Dingle. Walked along the coastal path to the point and harbour entrance and watched Fungi entertaining the tourists – he has been there 30 years and the door to the sea is always open so I guess he likes the attention – he is missing out on his royalties from the mementoes that fill every gift shop.

Great dinner in a fish restaurant – thunder and rain at 2300 – Dave on board for a nightcap

A 60 metre yacht is in the marina – a bit too big

Was able to buy gas today



Now that's a big Yacht

Date Friday 18th 2014.
HW Dover 1622
Plan Dingle to Portmagee
Mileage 27
Engine Hours 2.5
Daily Music *The Sheep of Portmagee – Lisa Lyons*

Left Dingle marina at 1030 together with Rosheen Bawn accompanied by Fungi who was out at sea away from the tourists for a change.
Sailing well but had to tack across the bay.
Motor sailed the last half of the journey as the wind had died and by 1645 we were on the brand new pontoons in Portmagee, squeezed in with all the Skellig Island Ferries. Rosheen Bawn on a mooring in the sound.
Walked across the bridge to Valentia Island
Portmagee and the surrounding area is very picturesque and worth spending time here but we move on.



Portmagee – Rosheen Bawn on a mooring

Date Saturday 19th 2014.
HW Dover 1717
Plan Portmagee – Skelligs to Derynane
Mileage 27
Engine Hours 5.5
Daily Music *The Kerry Polka – The Pogues*

0900 and we are all away from Portmagee on a very calm morning. Autopilot and engine on for the trip to Skellig – we arrived at 1100 just as the ferry boats started to arrive.

Sailed / Motored very close to and around both of the Skelligs. Great Skellig has monastic ruins and hermitages that can be seen from the sea accessed by many hand hewn steps – altogether very impressive

There are 1000's of puffins bobbing about and skimming the waves. There are also an estimated 300000 breeding pairs of Gannets on Little Skellig making it the largest colony in the world – the noise and smell is unreal as is the terrain of the islands.

Sailed nicely for two hours but the wind died as we reached Derynane. Tricky pilotage into harbour but very cosy, anchored by 1400.

Brief walk ashore and along the beach to a tiny pub.



Skellig Michael and Derynane Harbour

Date Sunday 20th 2014.
HW Dover 1818
Plan Derrynane to Bere Island
Mileage 27
Engine Hours 3.5
Daily Music *The Bere Island Song – Paula K O'Brien*

0700 up and getting ready – calm and sunny, Dave left at 0730 we left after breakfast at just after 0800.

Sailing using the Cruising Chute till we entered Dursey Sound and the wind got flukey. Dursey sound is a short cut that misses out the headland and the tidal race by the Bull, the Cow and the Heifer – all offshore rocks.

Dursey Sound is tidal and needs to be passed with care at the right state of the tide and has the added interest of an overhead cable car in which Residents and sheep have priority over tourists.

Passed by a Bantry Bay Tanker going around the headland at speed and he passed us again the other side of the sound.

The sound itself was at slack water and calm plus we had a cable car passing overhead.

Got the chute up again on the other side and used it as a spinnaker until the wind died in Bantry bay. Passed into Castletown Berehaven and up the sound to Lawrence Cove on Bere Island. This is a lovely small marina in a very sheltered spot with a shop and a pub. A lot of Bere Islanders moved to Howth and keep holiday homes on the island.



Dursey Island Cable Car over Dursey Sound

Date Monday 21st 2014.
HW Dover 1930
Plan Bere Island to Crookhaven
Mileage 24
Engine Hours 4.5
Daily Music *Boys from County Cork – Teresa Duffy*

Leisurely 0800 start for a small breakfast – the bread bought yesterday on the island and in date is completely mouldy so no lunch made!

Filled with diesel at 0930 when the office opened – took 42 litres. Water also topped up

Soon on our way in mist that never cleared all day. Used the plotter to get us around the Mizzen – passed within 300 metres of the most westerly point of Ireland and didn't see it. A very sloppy sail and we felt our way into Crookhaven in thick mist – first time we had to use our plotter to navigate, Mark I eyeball not operating well today.

Picked up the first visitor mooring that we came to at 1400. mist cleared briefly to show us we were along way from the pier, decided not to move but went ashore with the outboard pushing the dinghy

Busy little village, paid our dues, shopped and had dinner all in the same building – O'Sullivan's Pub.

Looks a great safe bay for children and water sports – if only we could see it.



Taurus in the mist at Crookhaven

Date Tuesday 22nd 2014.
HW Dover 0822
Plan Crookhaven – Fastnet to Baltimore
Mileage 26
Engine Hours 3
Daily Music *Kitty from Baltimore – Tom Sweeney*

A late start today as still very foggy but on our way at 1030. Motor sailing as winds light. Sun started to lift the fog and we could see the Fastnet Rock in the distance.

At 12 Noon we rounded the Fastnet in very pleasant weather. Calm and able to go quite close.

Sailed all the way from the rock to Baltimore catching up with Rosheen Bawn at Shelkin where he had been fishing.

Passed Lots Wife at the entrance to Baltimore and picked up a mooring at 1500

Baltimore is a pretty place did some shopping and found Bushe's pub in the sun, the Lifeboat pagers went off and all the staff ran off to join the Lifeboat. After about 10 minutes a young 14year old girl ran up to the pub, slotted behind the bar a asked "whose next?" – normal service resumed.



The Fastnet Rock

Date Wednesday 23rd 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Baltimore to Kinsale
Mileage 45
Engine Hours 8
Daily Music *The Battle of Kinsale – Gregory Harrington*

On our way by 0830, Rosheen Bawn to follow. Really hot today and all the chocolate biscuits melted.

Had to motor sail again as the light wind was on the nose again, some long tacks saw us make decent progress along the coast, passed the Stags and Toeshead. A Minke whale surfaced astern of the boat then disappeared into the distance.

1500 rounded the Old Head of Kinsale

1630 rafted alongside a French boat in Kinsale Marine – lots of chop and banging. Gave this up and moved to Castle Park Marina where we had a choice of berths and are much more comfortable.

Rosheen Bawn in Union Hall.

Walked into town and taxi back



Castle Park Marina, Kinsale

Date Thursday 24th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day - Kinsale
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *Goodbye to Kinsale – Jim Palana*

A well earned rest day in the hot sun. Picnic lunch on the beach and swam!!

Shopped in the town - a very good butchers who vacuum packed all our meat.

Yacht Club for dinner and met a single handed cruiser race from Falmouth who do long legs then socialise heavily – they were leaving for Baltimore in the morning and then a leg to Plymouth – about 14 boats in all.
A very good modern yacht club – good facilities and food.

Did laundry at Castle Park – Marina same cost as Kinsale if you don't mind the attractive walk into town
Rosheen Bawn picked up a mooring off the point.



Castle Park Marina Facilities

Date Friday 25th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Kinsale to Crosshaven, Cork
Mileage 23
Engine Hours 2
Daily Music *The Irish Rover - Ronnie Drew*

Another great sunny morning, on the way by 0900. motored out to the Sovereign and then managed to sail with long tacks out into a slight easterly, just two tacks got us to Cork harbour. Engine on and motored up to the Royal Cork YC Marina and all berthed at 1415.
Shopped in Crosshaven, lunch at Pub and dinner on Board
Sunny all day. Lazer regatta at Royal Cork and we met a few Howth sailors who are doing well in the regatta



Entrance to Crosshaven and the Royal Cork YC

Date Saturday 26th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Crosshaven to Ardmore Bay
Mileage 28
Engine Hours 1
Daily Music *An Ardmore Afternoon – Don Bridges*

Decided to leave at 1115, against the tide but a good north wind to help. By 1230 we are out at sea and sailing well in the sun

Wind is around 12 – 15 knots – Nice

Lunch off Ballycotton but we didn't see the lovely Rachel who has a cooking school here.

Rosheen Bawn caught us up at Rams Head and we both sailed into Ardmore Bay. Luckily the Hotel moorings were full, meaning we didn't have to dine there (couldn't even afford to drink there!)

Anchored in a busy little bay at 1700

Racing speedboats racing around the bay and lots of dinghies.

Ashore but none of the pubs did food – odd considering the huge caravan park next door to the town- the Hotel is very much 4 star with a Michelin restaurant and busy – expensive drinks on the Terrace in the sun were very enjoyable.

Dinner on board cobbled together but very good.



Taurus in the Bay – view from The Cliff Hotel, Ardmore

Date Sunday 27th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Ardmore to Kilmore Quay
Mileage 45
Engine Hours 2.5
Daily Music *Sweet Kilmore Quay - Margo*

Nice quiet night at anchor but on our way at 0930 following Rosheen Bawn out to sea and settled into a steady broad reach eastwards. Wind light to moderate with the engine on in the light spells.

Sailed past Hook Head (famous in the saying “By Hook or by Crook” – it’s a Cromwell saying- so don’t ask)
Gloriously sunny all day with good catering to keep us going
At 1800 we had the engine on to manoeuvre past the Lifeboat with a boat in tow and entered Kilmore, berthed by 1830
Now in Dublin Coast Guard Area.
Had a one hour wait for fish n chips at the harbour – worth the wait

Forecast not good for a trip North.



Hook Head

Date Monday 28th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Rest Day – Kilmore Quay
Mileage 0
Engine Hours 0
Daily Music *The Boys from Wexford – Irish Rebels*

Decided to have a rest day as Kilmore Quay is so nice, shopped and used all the facilities.

Good Chandlers relieved us all of some Money

Kilmore Quay Crab for dinner and a walk up to Kehoe's Pub. This is well worth a visit during the day when it is quiet and all the marine museum artefacts can be looked at closely.

The plan is to be on our way by 0500 so an early night.



Kilmore Quay Marina

Date Tuesday 29th 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Kilmore Quay to Greystones
Mileage 74
Engine Hours 10.5
Daily Music *Greystones – Jean Deeth*

All up at 0430 and on our way at 0450 managed 7knots to Carnsore Point and then turned North.

Motor sailing at 8 knots to make Wicklow Head before 1400 which is a major tidal gate.

1300 at Wicklow Head but tide already starting to run against us and with variable wind our journey slowed right down

Entered Greystones at 1630 after a long day

Dinner that night in Bochelli's – one of our favourite restaurants when we visit Greystones – very much on home territory now. We were joined after dinner by Sailing Guru and author Tom Cunliffe. Great chat and a good laugh.

Back on board to find a burnt fender – for some unknown reason the Eberspacher heater had switched to program and turned itself on and the fender was close to the exhaust – Could have been really serious. Deleted all the program timers so should be OK now.



Wicklow Head – Bray Head in the distance

Date Wednesday 30th July 2014.
HW Dover
Plan Greystones to Howth
Mileage 18
Engine Hours 1
Daily Music *Home from the Sea – Phil Coulter*

Well this is it – the last day. Breakfast at 0900 using up all that remained in the fridge – surprisingly good!

Set off in very little wind but soon picked up in Dublin Bay and should have reefed but didn't. Bailey had its usual slop but we didn't mind.

On the fuel dock to take on 55 litres of fuel then onto our allocated berth for unloading after 1050 Miles

Cream scones to celebrate!



Home from the Sea

Summery

42 days away and visited 31 different ports

- 18 Nights in a Marina
- 9 Nights on a pontoon
- 8 Nights on a Visitor mooring
- 6 Nights at Anchor
- 1 Night Alongside a fishing boat

Engine Hours 124 Hours = 59% motoring or motor sailing (seems to be about average from other boats Logs)

Used 143 litres of Diesel = 1.1 litres per hour – seems frugal to me

Changed Gas twice – so part way through third bottle

Water got scarce once – in Donegal, but was able to keep it topped up after that.

Lots and lots of places we could have visited or stayed longer in

€565 spent on berthing fees

Boat costs approx €110 per day – this included all costs – drinks, food, meals, diesel and berthing fees – this was shared by the crew at €33 per day