

ALDEBARAN 2013

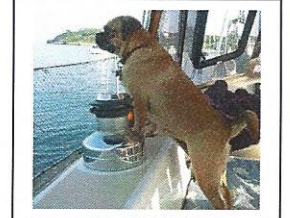
Howth to Howth



The Irish Sea, St Georges Channel and the Celtic Sea

Crew; Pat, Olivia & Coco Murphy

Coco is the newest member of the family >>



(This log is intended as one of information together with our personal experiences.)

Departing Howth on Monday 24th June and returning on Tuesday 20th August having covered 740 miles this was without doubt the most enjoyable and relaxing cruise we had ever undertaken in home waters and as such we would recommend it to all.

Our passage down the Irish coast included our usual overnight in the Commercial Harbour in Arklow where we rafted alongside the catamaran, "Windcat" that services the windmills on the Arklow Bank. From Arklow our "plan" was to sail directly to Carne at Carnsore Point. Having rounded Carnsore on many occasions I have always wanted to anchor off Carne and tick it off my "to do list".

After departing Arklow the following morning at 10.35 we motor sailed south under ideal conditions, except for the lack of wind. However with a good tide under us we had an eta at Carne of 15.15 hours. Alas it took us a further 21.45 hours to reach our planned anchorage due to getting badly tangled in lobster pot tackle about 3 miles north of Rosslare. We immediately stowed our sails and deployed our anchor for fear of being taken by the strong tide which was now running north. Little did we realise at the time that there was no way the tide would have taken us, as we were well and truly anchored by the pots. Despite all our attempts at trying to free ALDEBARAN we had no alternative but to call a "Pan Pan" to Wicklow Head Radio. While we have been involved in co-ordinating a number of emergencies at sea in the past this was the first time that we had to request emergency assistance for ourselves. Within a short while after giving our position, the number aboard and the problem we were informed that the Rosslare Lifeboat was being launched. About 20 minutes later the "**Donald & Barbara Broadhead**" Severn Class 17m lifeboat arrived. On rafting alongside us three of the crew boarded **ALDEBARAN** and eventually managed to cut us free. After securing a tow line we were slowly towed to Rosslare Harbour where we were berthed alongside the Fisherman's Pier.

A member of the lifeboat crew, a qualified diver, took over 15 minutes to cut away the lobster pot gear from the rudder and propeller and reported that there did not appear to be any damage to either. We started the engine and engaging it in forward and reverse seemed to confirm his assumption. The following is the report of the lifeboat's launch on the stations web site;

June 25th. Launched 16.05. A Howth based yacht called for assistance having become entangled in lobster fishing gear east of Raven Point. The yacht having just completed a round the world trip, was towed back to Rosslare Harbour for repairs to the entangled propeller drive. The Lifeboat returned to its pen 18.35. Wind SW 10 knots. Visibility, good. Air temperature 16 degrees. Water temperature 14 degrees.



The Lifeboat alongside ALDEBARAN

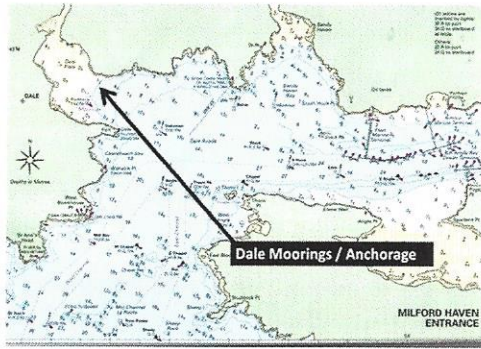


Some of the lobster pot gear removed

The following morning another member of the crew brought us shopping and gave us a tour of the area and of the Lifeboat Station. The whole unfortunate incident turned out to be a very pleasant and memorable overall experience.

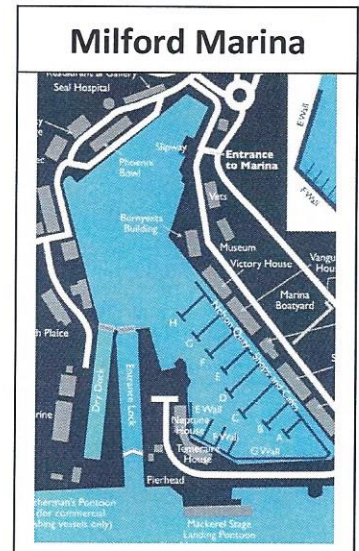
At 11.35 on Wednesday 26th June we bade farewell to Rosslare Harbour and at 12.55 after logging 7.5 miles we eventually reached Carne and anchored in position **52-12.02N and 06-20.66W** in 3.4m at half tide. Going ashore at the pier we had a good walk to the Lobster Pot Pub that did not impress us, past the Caravan Park and over the sand dunes to the beach. With the light offshore westerly breeze the anchorage, under the watchful eye of the Carnsore Wind Farm, was very comfortable and awarded us a good night's sleep.

The crossing of St. Georges Channel began after weighing anchor at 06.25 hours the following morning.



With little or no wind and using 26 litres of diesel in 10 ½ hours having logged 57 ½ miles we picked up a mooring at Dale inside Milford Harbour in position **51-42.23N and 05-09.33W** at 16.55 hours. As is our practice having given a TR to Wicklow Coast Guard Radio prior to leaving Carne we closed it with Milford Haven Coastguard on arrival on Ch. 67.

From Ireland our intention was to visit Milford Haven and so the following morning, having obtained the lock opening time, we motored the 5 miles to the lock entrance and tied up in the Milford Haven Marina at 10.15. This was our first time to visit the Marina. The facilities are excellent with adjacent restaurants and shops, it cost us €41 for our 12.2m. We locked out the following day at 16.45 which meant we had almost two days in Milford for the cost of one night in the Marina, good planning.



On returning to a mooring at Dale we had a very pleasant encounter with a Japanese couple Hiro and Kato Matsuzaki. Aboard their lovely yacht **DRIFTY**. The centre of attraction was the third member of our crew Coco our 21 month old rescued Pugalier (a cross between a Pug and a Cavalier). I of course recommended they visit Howth Yacht Club which they did and presented Commodore Breda Dillon with a Japanese burgee which is now on display in the club.

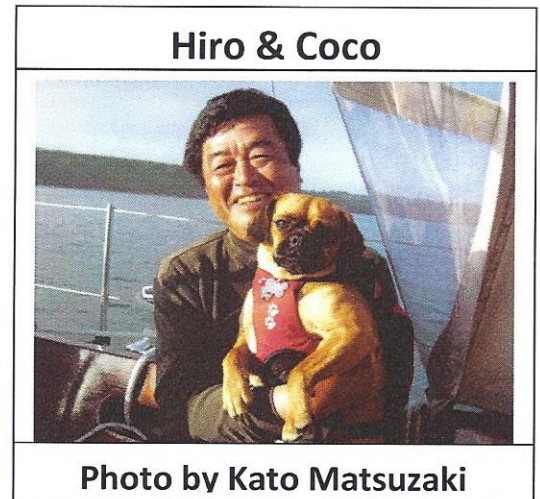


Photo by Kato Matsuzaki

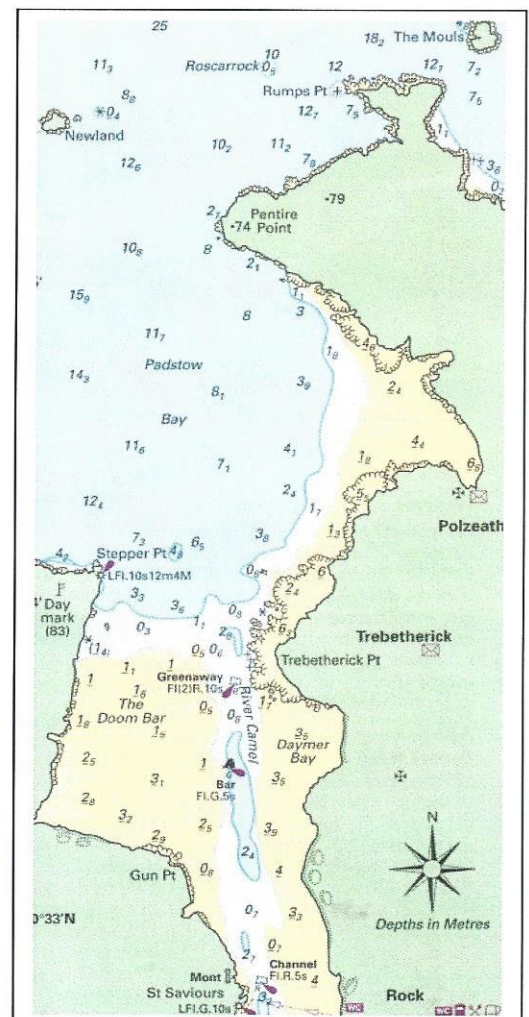
Departing Dale at 06.40 on Sunday 30th June we set a course for the Island of Lundy in the middle of the Bristol Channel a distance of 39 miles. We had a very enjoyable visit to the island a few years previous. With winds in a westerly sector the anchorage in its northeast corner is well protected. From the beach it is a reasonably tough climb to civilisation, including a pub and abandoned lighthouse, at the top.

At 07.30 with a nice 17 knots of wind from the southwest, albeit with a lumpy sea, we altered course for Padstow Bay on Cornwall's North Coast and the entrance to our favourite venue of Padstow. After Lundy, Padstow was to be our destination anyway and so with a good sailing breeze we decided to go direct.

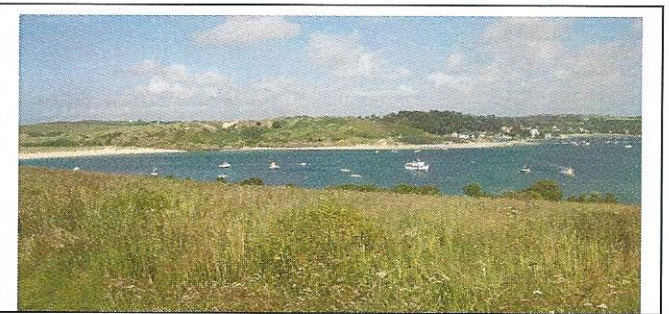
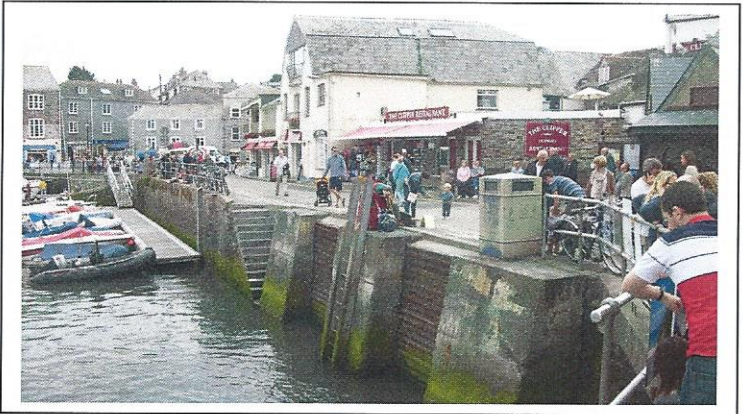
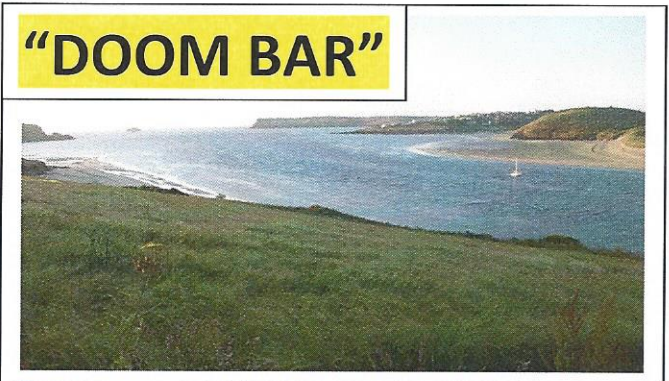
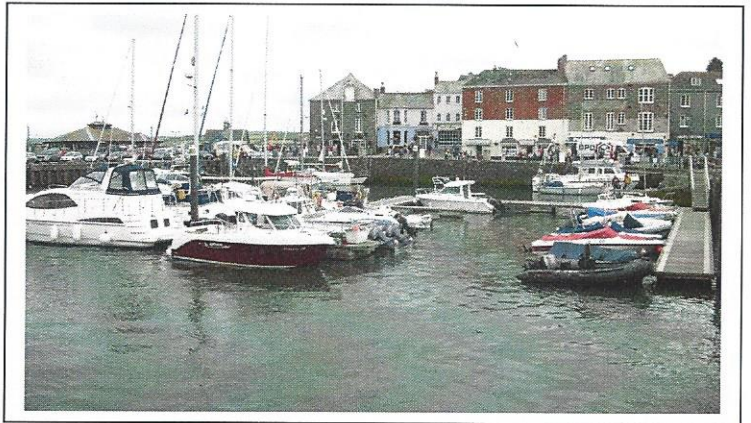
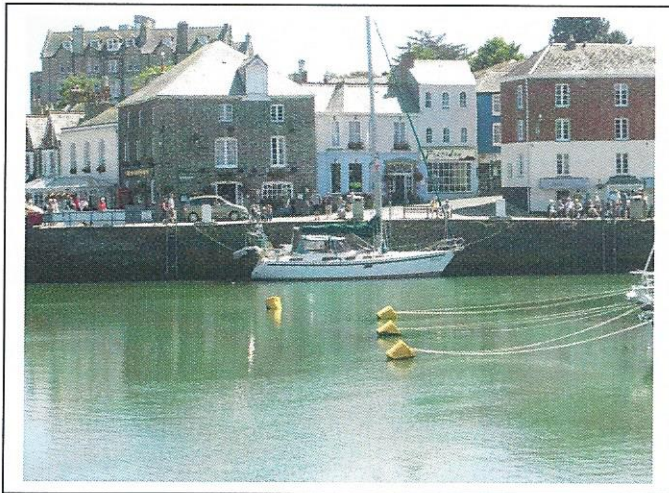
Padstow lies some 50 miles to the NE of Lands' End and is the only completely secure harbour on this stretch of coast. Although there's a minimum of about 0.8m of water in the main channel, don't attempt entry if there's a big ground swell running. The approach to Padstow is dominated in the minds of many sailors by the off-putting named **Doom Bar**; in the right weather conditions, the crossing of it is neither difficult nor dangerous. About three hours before local high water is the ideal time to start your approach. This also means you'll only have a short wait in the Pool before getting into the inner harbour whose tidal gate opens about two hours either side of HW.

Arriving in Padstow Bay at 18.30 we motored around until 19.30, two hours after low water, before proceeding up the channel. Forty five minutes later we picked up a spare mooring in the Pool to await the opening of the gate into the inner harbour. At 22.15 on instructions from the Harbour Master, via VHF, we continued towards the Outer Harbour and into the Inner Harbour where we finally tied to the harbour wall at 22.35 having logged 72.3 miles from Dale. There are pontoons in the harbour and I believe space can be reserved on them by prior arrangement. We prefer the harbour wall as it give you direct contact with the visiting land travelling multitudes.

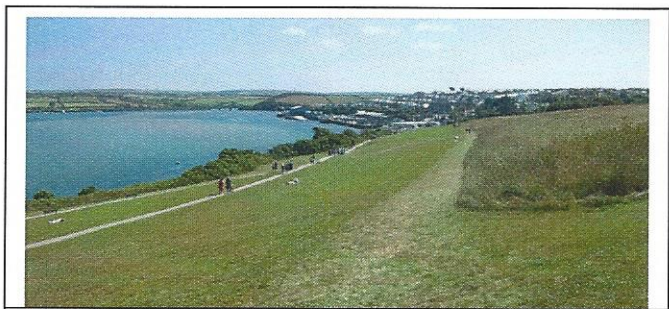
We spent seven very enjoyable and relaxing days here. With a great variety of walks, restaurants, attractions and hospitality we very highly recommend a visit here. The seven nights, including power, cost us £148 (about €175 or €25 per night) For full details of the area you should visit; <http://www.padstow-harbour.co.uk/>.



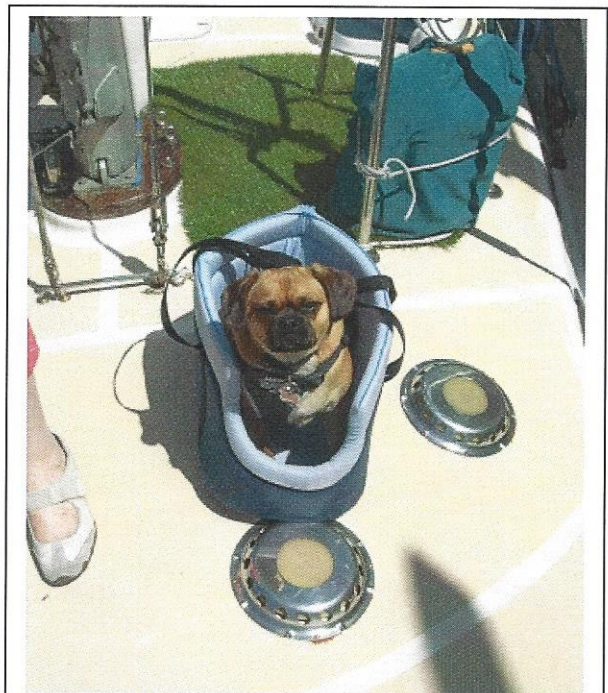
PADSTOW PICS



The waiting "POOL" area



One of the many lovely walks



Coco in her lifting bag

On Sunday 7th July at 06.45 hours we exited Padstow Harbour, crossed Doom Bar and found ourselves on a lovely flat sea and a light 9 knot breeze from the North. Our destination was Glandore in West Cork a rum line distance of about 170 miles. Other than a very heavy fog about 70 miles out that lasted for a further 10 miles the passage was one of the most enjoyable we have had in a long time. We reached the half-way point at 20.10 hours in position **51-05.88N and 06-56.72W** having logged 84.5 miles and with an eta in Glandore of 10.50 the following morning.

The sunset, the lovely clear star studded sky and the magnificent sunrise together with the wind increasing to 12 knots and veering into the NNE was one of those night passages that makes overnight sailing so memorable.

At 10.45 hours we picked up a visitors mooring in Glandore having been assured that they had recently been serviced. Our log read 171.1 miles in 28 hours, an average of 6.1 knots and we used 24 litres of diesel.

The Baltimore / Sherkin ferrv



Next morning we moved to Sherkin Island where we anchored off the pontoon. During our two nights there we walked most of the Island and took the ferry to Baltimore using our free travel pass. Olivia then took the bus to Skibbereen, again using her free pass, and purchased some provisions.

Our next venue was South Harbour on

Clear Island, one of our favourites in West Cork, where we anchored in position **51-26.05N and 09-30.14W**. Ashore at North Harbour we renewed our acquaintance with Helen Cadogan and family. Helen is a niece of Wally McGuirk.



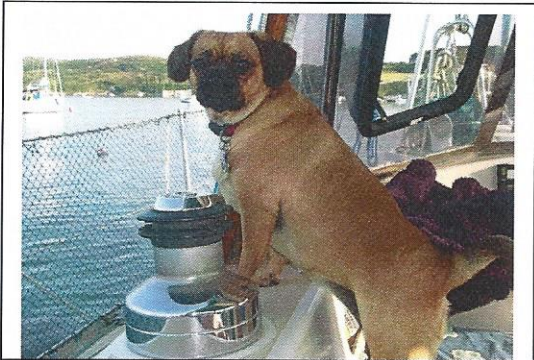
South Harbour

On Friday 12th July we motored the 9.9 miles to Crookhaven and picked up a visitor's mooring where we stayed for two nights during which we again walked a lot. Coco certainly encourages us to take the exercise after which we rest!!



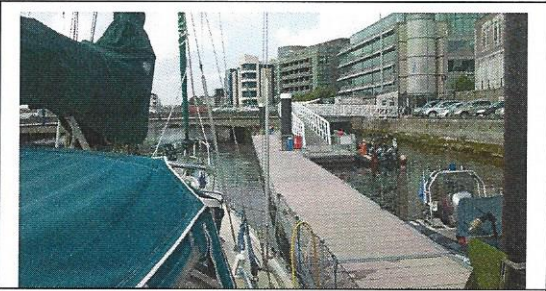
Coco at rest

The 23 miles, on Sunday 14th July, from Crookhaven to Castletownsend through the Gascanane Sound between Sherkin Island and Clear Island was a motoring job. On arrival there was a rowing regatta in progress and we had to await clearance from the course Marshals before being directed to a mooring, reputed to be the best in the anchorage, opposite the Castle grounds. Another exercise session followed with a meal and liquid refreshments in the higher of the two popular hostelries which concluded another great day. The lower hostelry “Mary Ann’s” refused to allow our crew member Coco in, big mistake on their part.



“I would not eat there anyway”

Two nights in Kinsale preceded our 5 day exploration of Cork Harbour with the new pontoons in the centre of the City being our first overnight. The sail or should I say the

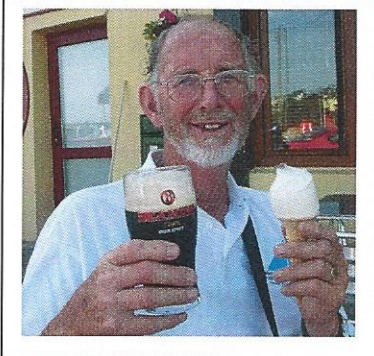


Cork City Marina

motor up the River Lee past Haulbowline, Cobh, Monkstown, Fota Island and Blackrock is a very pleasant 12.5 mile meander in very sheltered waters. The City pontoons are very central and cost, for 12m, €25 which included €5 for power. For portion of the 7 mile return journey down the river to the new marina at Monkstown we

were entertained with rehearsal music in preparation for the Spruce Springfield concert being held later that evening in Pairc ui Chaoimh.

James in the Monkstown Marina gave us a great welcome and he was not shy in telling us about the attractions of the adjacent terrain. At the conclusion of our visit we can only say that James undersold the area. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit. A long walk (dog walk) up behind the Marina to the Golf Club and Castle helped to raise the



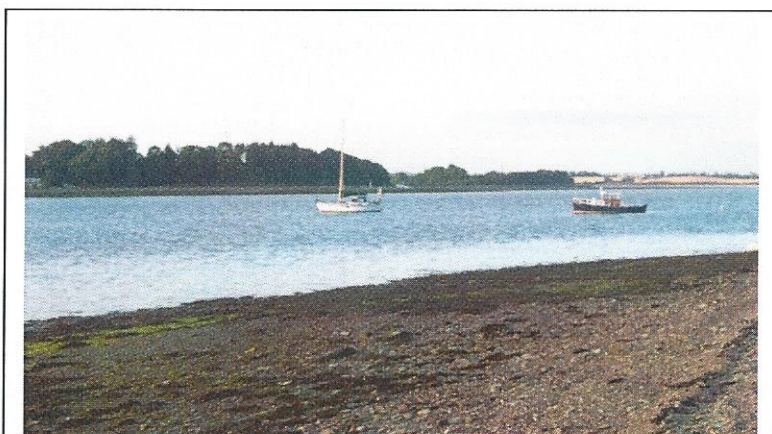
heartbeat. However, on descending to sea level the heartbeats very quickly returned to normal with the aid of refreshments and the accompanying liquid wash-down.



That very attractive place, at least from the sea, Cobh, until now did not have inviting facilities for berthing yachts. The “**Quay’s Restaurant**” have installed a pontoon that is encouraging more yachts to visit the town. The Owner/Manager Noel Owen gave us a warm welcome and explained that there was no charge but that we would be expected to utilise the restaurant. This was not a problem as we had always intended to eat there, the food *etc.* was excellent. While in Cobh Olivia took the ferry to Spike Island. With its varied historical past the later usage being as a correctional facility for youth until the facility was closed in 2004. In 2007 a local task group was set up to re-open Spike as a historical tourist site. It has recently been partly opened to the public with the intention of having the whole site fully opened shortly.



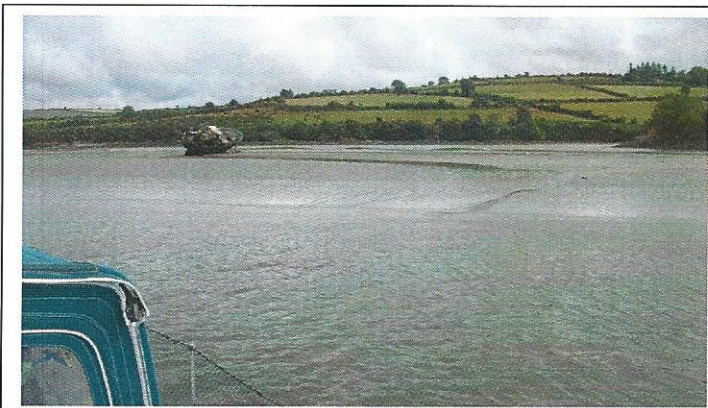
**Olivia on the Spike
Island ferry**



ALDEBARAN at anchor in the lagoon

If you want a **VERY** quiet night you should anchor 5.4 miles from the Quay’s pontoon in position **51-52.87N and 08-12.35W** in the open lagoon North of East Passage. On route ensure you get your tides right as through the passage the tide runs very fast. East Ferry Marina will be passed to port on your way through.

After returning to the Quays Pontoon for a second night we departed Cork Harbour at 06.45hours for Catherine’s Bay on the Waterford River. As with most of our passages, since departing Howth this 66 mile passage was also starved of wind resulting in a lot of diesel being consumed. After almost 12 hours we dropped the hook in Catherine’s Bay in position **52-15.835N and 06-58.72W** in 9.1m at HW Springs. This is one of our favourite anchorages and we have used it on many occasions and in all kinds of weather. Passing the ferry crossing between Ballyhack and East Passage you stay in the channel until the green buoy SW of Buttermilk Point and then it is safe to turn NE into Catherine’s Bay. Looking North from the anchorage the twin chimneys at the Great Island Power Station are the only conspicuous objects breaking the skyline. There is a wrecked fishing boat on the east shore of the Bay. Ashore in the Southeast corner is the townland of Nuke.



The fishing boat wreck



The Power Station

After two nights we rose early and at 06.47, weighed anchor and at 08.00 we were secured on the Waterford City Marina after a short passage of 6.1 miles. This was our base for the next 13 nights during which I travelled to Galway to officiate at the SB20 National Sailing Championships in Galway while Olivia stayed and entertained friends.

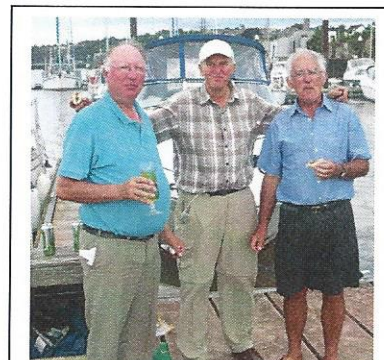
For the past five years we have attended and enjoyed, on every occasion, the Waterford Spraoi Festival held over the August Bank Holiday weekend. With lots of varied free street entertainment and good nightlife culminating with a street carnival parade and a superb firework display on the Sunday night from a barge opposite the Marina we highly recommend the weekend. Our grandchildren have always joined us for the weekend and always look forward to it. Try it sometime; don't take our word for it.

On Tuesday 6th August **ALDEBARAN** led 3 other yachts from Waterford to New Ross. Neither of the three had been to New Ross before, they were **YU-CAN** from Malahide with John and Ann Duggan, **JEMIMA 11** from Howth with Declan and Martha Sherry and finally the English visitors Richard and Liz on **BINGO**. Departing Waterford at 12.00, about 1 ½ hours before LW we arrived at the Barrow Railway Swing Bridge 45 minutes later, as arranged earlier with the Bridge operators. Our timing was to coincide with the last of the ebb at the bridge which meant that we would be stemming the slack water at the end of the ebb on entering the Barrow River. It takes about 2 hours to reach New Ross from the bridge and this timing allowed us carry a good tide for the majority of the two hours and arrive at the marina in New Ross at slackish water. Arriving at 14.40 having logged 13.7 miles from Waterford John Diamond the Marina manager met us as usual, and helped us berth. John is one of the most helpful people you could meet and always gives visitors a warm welcome. The charge is €20 per night with power. The town's two main attractions are the Ros Tapestry Exhibition Centre and the Dunbrody Famine Ship Experience. See http://www.tripadvisor.ie/Attractions-g186641-Activities-New_Ross_County_Wexford.html



Ann, Liz, Martha and Olivia

After two days socialising, walking Coco, and shopping (there is a Lidl directly opposite the marina and an Aldi a short walk), we left the marina at 09.45 in company with **JEMIMA 11** bound for Kilmore Quay. At 11.10, as arranged, we passed



Declan, Richard and John

through the Railway Bridge and at 13.00 hours, after 20.4 miles, we had the Hook Lighthouse abeam. From the Hook we had a great beam reach sail for the remaining 13.7 miles to Kilmore where we arrived at 14.40 and were met as usual by the very helpful marina staff.

ALDEBARAN stayed in Kilmore for 11 days during which our son Shane with his wife Marguerite and daughter Lilyanne came down for a week's holiday. It was great to see that Kilmore Quay has at last lost its title of "**the Port with no Pub**", Keoghs and the Thatched House are back in action. The "Crazy Crab" restaurant is a must while in the area.

On Monday 19th August we departed Kilmore and with our usual overnight in Arklow we arrived back in our berth in Howth at 11.45 on Tuesday 20th August after an absence of 57 days.

IN SUMMARY:

This was without doubt the most enjoyable 8 weeks we have ever had sailing in home waters, let's hope we can repeat it in 2014.

The following are some statistics covering the period.

Miles logged = **740**, Diesel used = **226 litres**, Motored = **104 hours**,

Night passages = **1**, Mooring Buoys = **6**, Anchored = **7**, Private Pontoons = **4**, Harbour Walls = **10**, Marinas = **29**.

Total berthing costs = **€692** or **€12.14** per night.

Total diesel cost = **€250** or **€4,40** per day.