

Teal's Trip 2017



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The views expressed are purely my own, based on observation at the time.

While the passages undertaken may be of interest, no warranty is given for the pilotage information given, and any skipper attempting a similar passage must rely on his own judgement based on up to date official charts and his assessment of conditions at the time

Graham Rabbitts

August 2017



Preface

The year 2017 was the second full year of our ownership of *Teal*, a 36 foot Hardy motorboat.

After Dairne's stroke in 2012, we had struggled on for a while sailing our beloved Rustler 36 *Ariadne*, in which we had sailed some 36,000 miles since 1995 when she was built, but mainly since my retirement in 2001. It simply wasn't working so with great reluctance, we sold

Ariadne and purchased *Teal*.



Teal



Ariadne

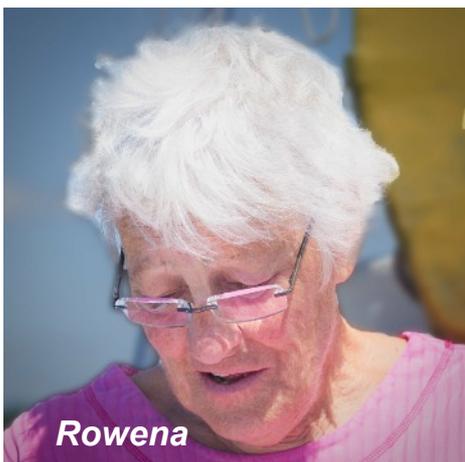
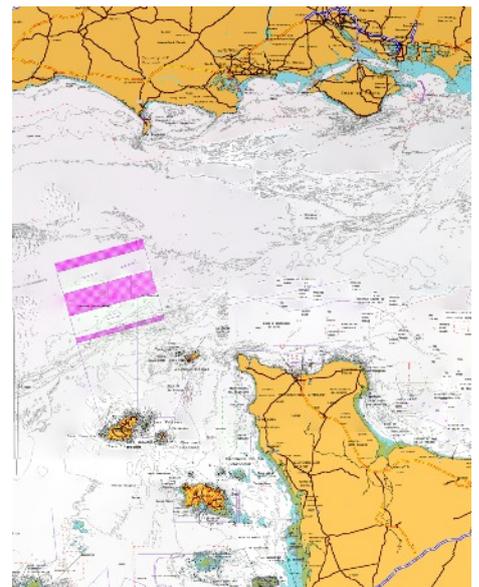
So far, the adventures in *Teal* had been confined to the Solent, so when the Royal Southern Yacht Club announced that it was organizing a cruise in company to the Bay of Saint Malo, we started to think about the possibility of joining them. Dairne's balance and mobility had been severely impaired by the stroke, and her ability to move about the boat when it was moving in anything other than flat calm water had become severely restricted. Could she undertake the passage of several hours across the Channel? We simply did not know but decided that we would give it a try.

There were two precautions we took. The first was to decide that we would not cross the Channel unless the sea conditions were "smooth" or "slight". The second was that we asked a friend Rowena (who had been at college with Dairne) to come with us so that Dairne would

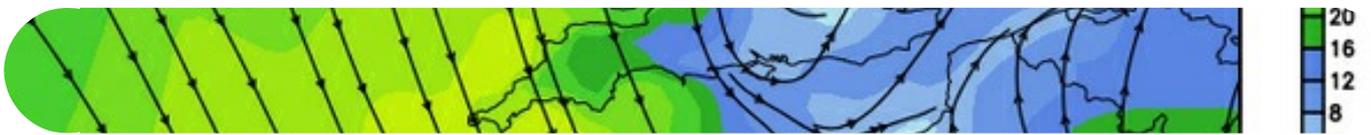
have a companion even at times when I was occupied handling the boat.

With those rules set, the preparations were made and we settled down to watch the weather develop during the latter part of June, with the cruise scheduled to start on the 1st of July. I had also contacted UK Border Agency about the formalities. It was clear that, even though the Channel Islands were outside the EU, Border Agency was relaxed about reporting departures, but did give me a yachtsman's phone number to call on arrival back in the UK. Very simple, and a realistic compromise in the present climate. (See Appendix 1)

With less than a week to go, the outlook was not promising, with moderately strong winds in the Channel producing seas that were "slight" to "moderate" and occasionally "rough" especially towards the French Coast. We were watching a long range forecasts produced by Netweather and the swell forecasts produced by Passage Weather.



Rowena

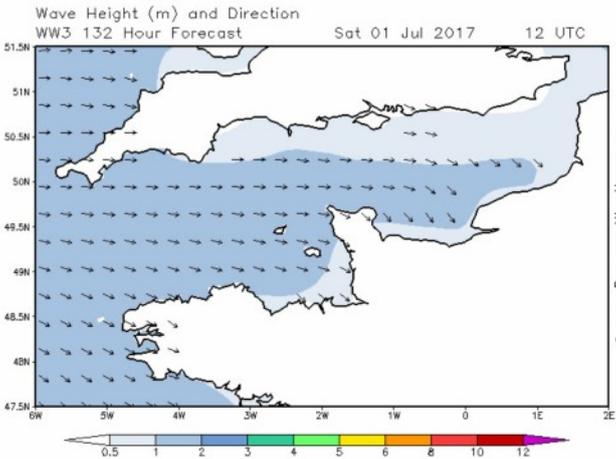


We were beginning to have doubts as to whether we would be able to cross the Channel at all.

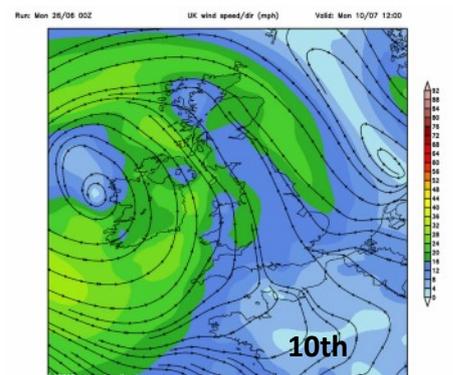
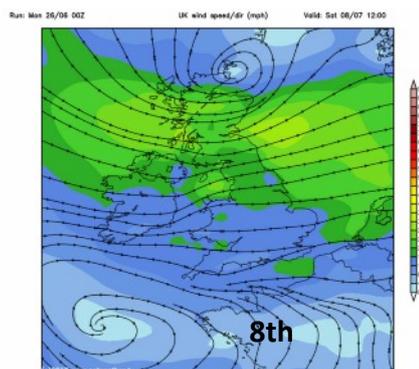
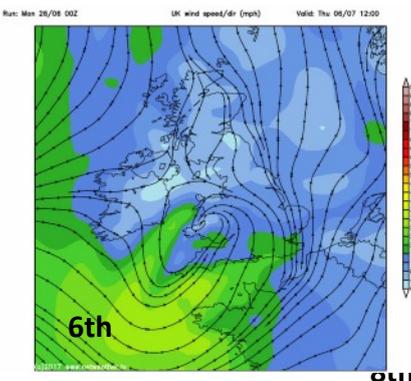
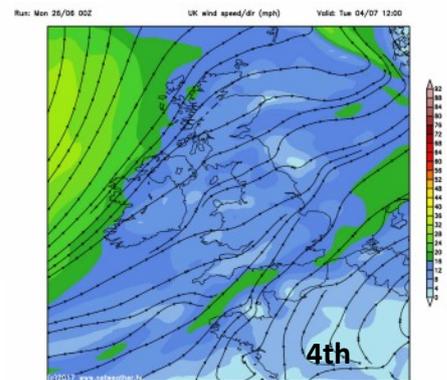
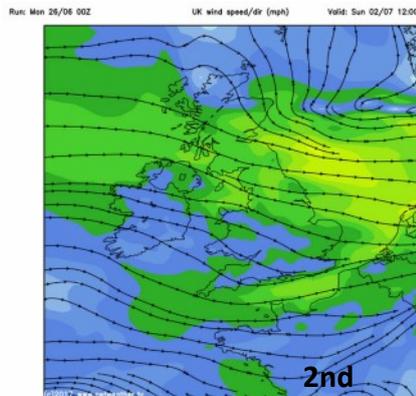
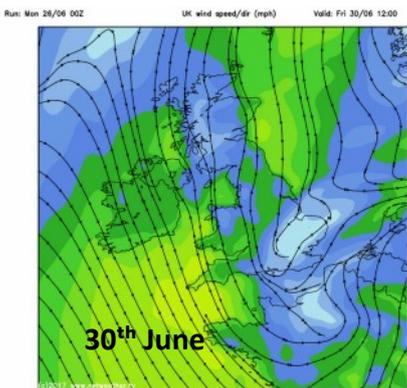
However it looked as though conditions would moderate and settle after the weekend of the 1st and 2nd of July. We might not be able to keep up with the Royal Southern fleet, but we would try to make at least the Channel crossing.

For example, in the Passage Weather chart on the left, the waves on the English side of the Channel would be 1-2 metres ("slight to moderate"), but around the Channel Islands, the waves would be 2-3 metres ("moderate to rough"). The only places where the sea would be "smooth to slight" would be a tiny white fringe to the north of the Isle of Wight (and near Beachy Head).

This made it unlikely we would be able to cross the Channel on Saturday 1st, but we hoped conditions might improve further.



The charts below show the wind patterns we were expecting at the end of June and into early July when we looked ahead from the 27th June





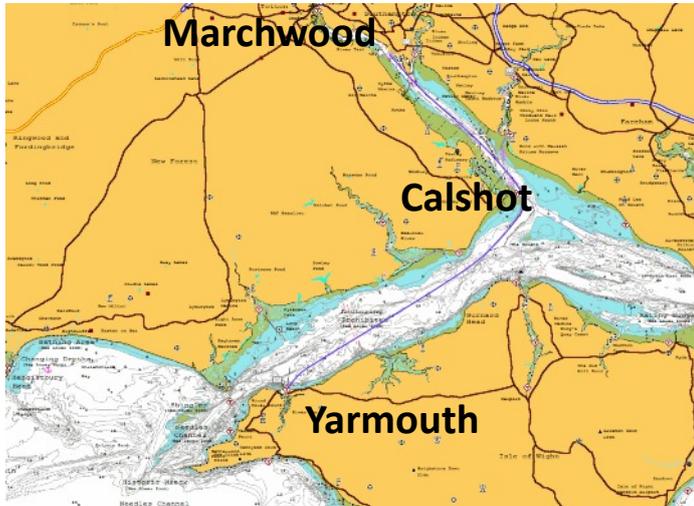
Thurs
29th
June

MYC to Yarmouth

Pat North who was coordinating the cruise for the Royal Southern Yacht Club, announced that she would be going to Yarmouth on Thursday, the 29th of June, and crossing to St. Peter Port on the Friday. We thought we might be able to get to Yarmouth, but were fairly certain that conditions would not be suitable for us to cross on the Friday, or even the Saturday.



During the morning of 29th June, I brought *Teal* alongside, and loaded all except the perishable stores. Then I returned home to collect Dairne and Rowena, our other crew member.



The last perishable stores, including a few pre-prepared meals, were distributed between the two fridges; Dairne's wheelchair was collapsed and stowed in its bag lashed to the taffrail. We were ready to leave by 1445

It was an easy passage down Southampton Water to Calshot. With a strong northerly component in the wind, the passage down the West Solent was quite comfortable.



After 2 hours, we were alongside the fuel berth at Yarmouth topping up our tanks. The weather was cold, and slightly threatening, so we opted to stay on board for supper.

Pat North was already in the harbour, and we spoke by phone. She would depart at first light to get to the Alderney Race as the tide turned favourable. I confirmed that the forecast of NW 4/5 becoming 5/6 with an occasionally moderate swell, especially near Guernsey, meant we would only go to Studland and wait for weather. She wished us luck, and we reciprocated.





Fri
30th
June

Yarmouth to Studland

Friday morning started fairly grey and with a cold northerly wind blowing, ideal for the yachts that were heading towards the Alderney race.

After breakfast, Rowena went for a walk in the village which she had not visited before, and got one or two items of shopping that had been missed.



To go to Studland we would wait for the tide to start to run to the west in mid afternoon. But rather than wait in Yarmouth, which was likely to get busy as the weekend approached, we left at 1150, and trickled over to Keyhaven. The approach is shallow, but the tides were neap and we had been in here many times with *Ariadne* which has a 1.8 metre



draft, compared to *Teal's* modest 1.1 metres.

The yacht on the next buoy tried to leave, but failed to recognise the channel markings and ran aground.



Keyhaven is an attractive Harbour, but fairly exposed, and the salt marsh which protects it is being seriously eroded at an alarming rate.



By 1600 the tide would be starting to run through Hurst Narrows in our favour, so we dropped the buoy and eased out.

Our route took us through the North Channel and then direct to Studland, easing slightly to seaward to try and avoid the fishing floats on Christchurch Ledge that are there to catch the unwary.

We were hoping to be able to cross the Channel the next day, so we anchored in Studland.

A northwest wind is not the best direction for Studland and the boat would be on the move all night. However we were safe and it is always an interesting place to be





Sat
1st
July

Studland to Poole (Goathorn Point)

As usual I was awake in time to listen to the coastguard maritime safety information broadcast at 0730. I use a kind of shorthand based on that recommended by Alan Watts in his excellent weather books.

The shipping forecast read "Thames Dover White; NW 5 to 6 becoming westerly 4 or 5; slight or moderate occasionally rough; good occasionally poor".

Handwritten notes on a piece of paper:

0600 - 0600
→ DW NW 5/6 → W 4/5 S1/M (R) S (P)
SS → CR NW 5/6 → W 4/5 S1/M → SW/S1 Sh → R/Dr G → R/P
W 4/5 → W or 3/4 S1 (Sm) (R/Dr) M (P) → G.

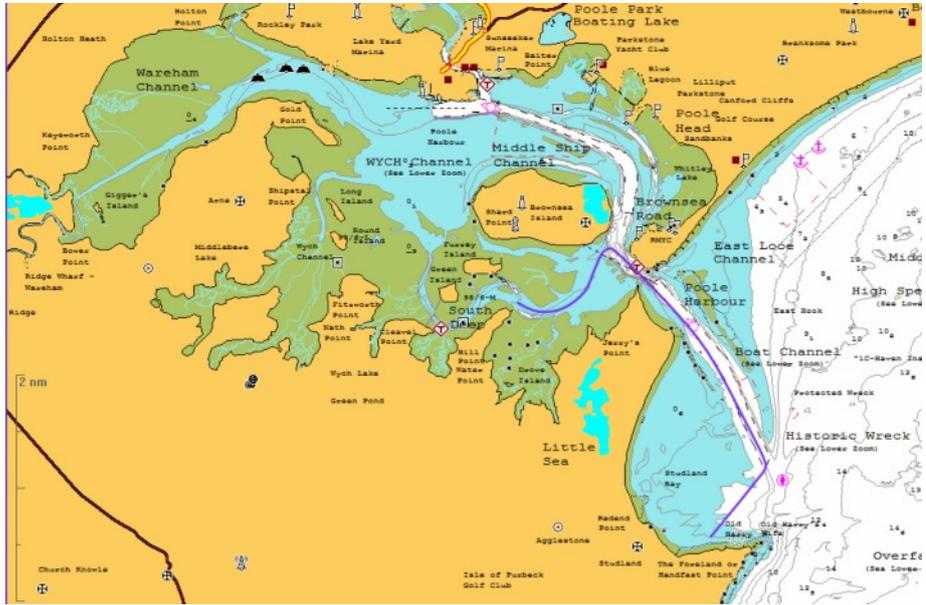
This was not encouraging. Even though the winds would be behind us moderate or occasionally rough seas, particularly as we approached the Channel islands, would not be acceptable.

The inshore waters forecast was a little more promising. It read " Selsey Bill to Lyme Regis; northwest 5 or 6; becoming west 4 or 5; slight to moderate becoming smooth or slight; showers becoming rain or drizzle; good becoming moderate or poor." It looked as though conditions were improving. And the outlook was even better. " West 4 or 5 becoming variable 3 or 4; slight occasionally smooth; occasional rain or drizzle; moderate occasionally poor becoming good". This confirmed an improving situation.



We did not have direct access to the Internet, but I was able to watch the BBC television forecast which clearly indicated that a ridge of high pressure was on the way.

Reluctantly, the decision was taken that we would delay our Channel crossing by a further day. As Studland was slightly uncomfortable we took the decision to move into Poole and go up to Goathorn Point which would be much more sheltered.

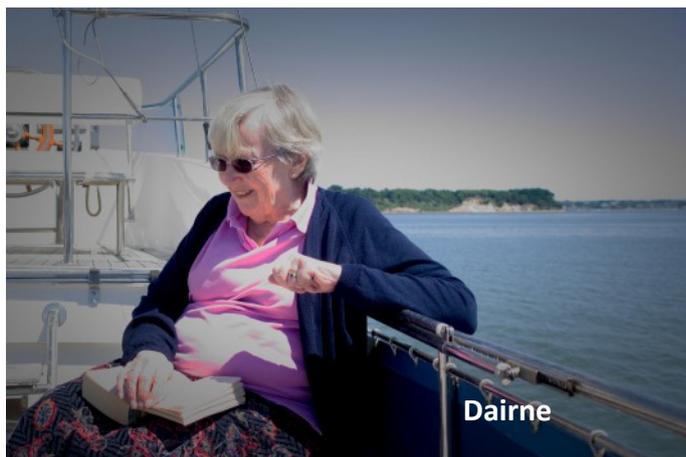


By 0930 we were on our way at a leisurely pace, and anchored at Goathorn Point an hour later.]

Already the weather was improving, the wind was dropping, and the sun was coming out.



We spent a lazy day reading books, watching the occasional film (or the tennis at Wimbledon). It was even warm enough for Dairne to spend some time on the after deck.



Dairne

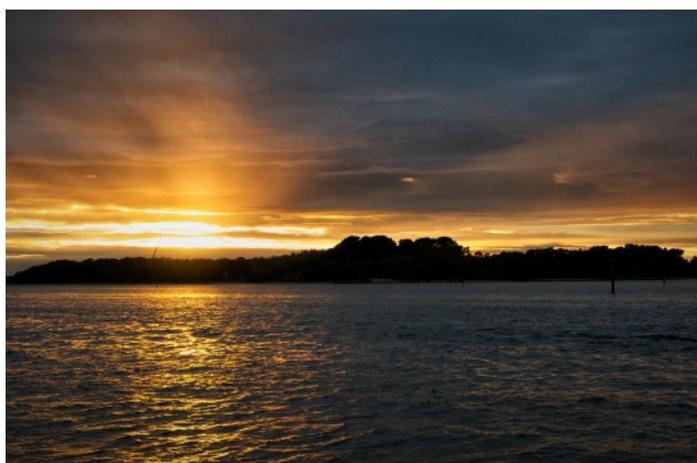


Rowena

Goathorn Point is a pleasant place to be, and fairly quiet except for the occasional the vedette and the supply vessel running to the oil drilling operation on Furzey Island.



That evening we were treated to quite a spectacular sunset

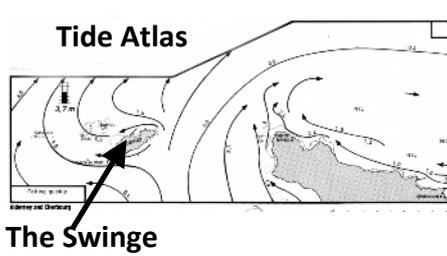




Poole to Guernsey

While the forecast for the 2nd of July showed that conditions were improving, there were signs that it would deteriorate thereafter. The decision on whether or not to cross the Channel was therefore pivotal. I had spent some time during the evening trying to work out the best passage plan.

The critical point when crossing the Channel to Guernsey is the tide around Alderney. Even a quick glance indicated that a very early start would be the best plan, but I didn't fancy rousing the crew at first light so I looked for an alternative.



It would be nearly 7.00 pm before the tide went favourable in the Alderney Race making arrival time in Guernsey much later than I would have liked, so I sought an option that would allow an earlier arrival time. I noticed a detail in my tidal atlas that indicated a possible eddy that would give a favourable tide through the Swinge from about 5.00 PM, and I opted to take advantage of that.

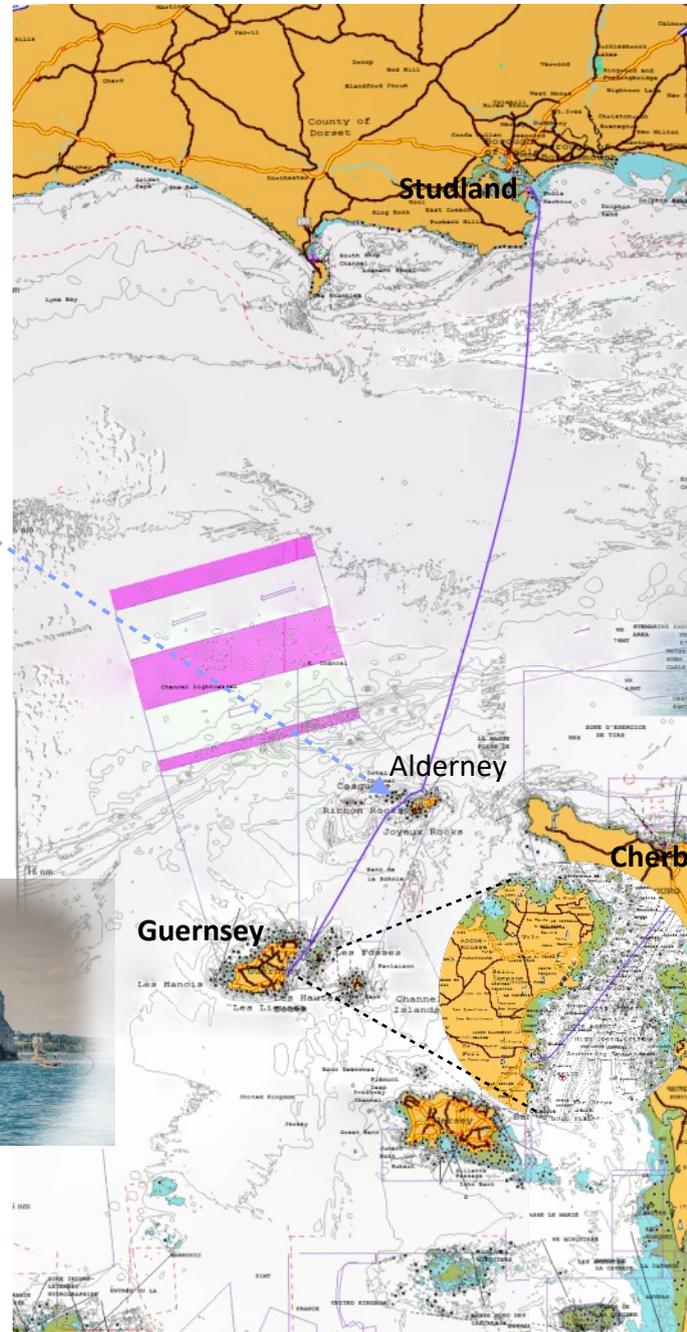
I knew that the tide would be flooding up the Channel during the afternoon and angled slightly against us so I used a passage planning speed of 12 knots. Equally the wind would be slightly against us, but I did not think it would cause too much of a problem.

At 0730 on the 2nd I got the shipping forecast which indicated that in the inshore waters area, the sea would be slight or smooth, though it might be moderate further south near the Channel Islands. The crew agreed with me that we should give it a go and we planned to weigh anchor at 1230.



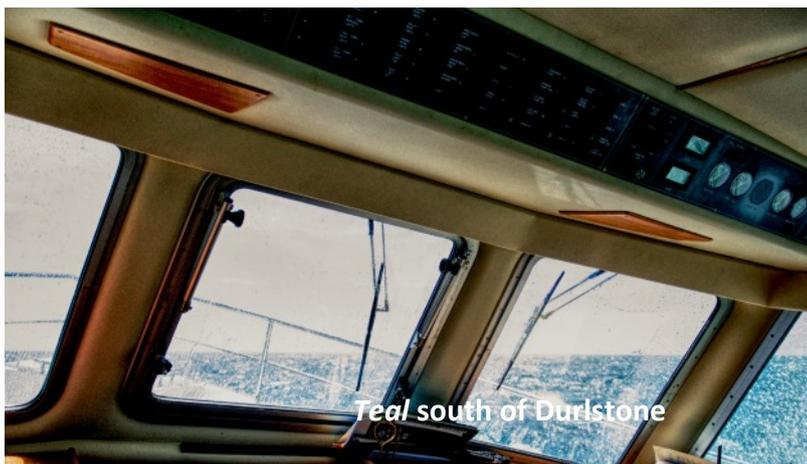
This should get us clear of the Poole channel by 1300 and ready for the cross Channel passage.

At 1230 we eased down the channel and started to speed up as we cleared the Sandbanks ferry. The water was pleasantly smooth as we sped past Old Harry and along the Purbeck coast.

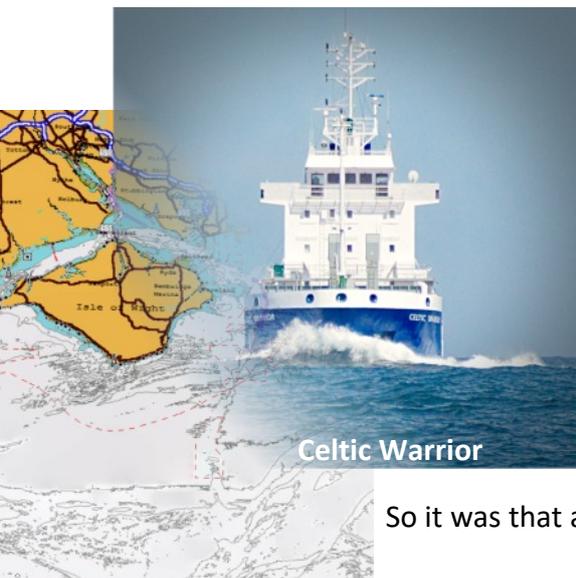




As we eased past Durlstone Point heading south we started to encounter rough water, and for the next hour it was rather like being thrown around inside a washing machine, the motion was so violent. At one point, I asked Dairne whether we should turn back. Her reply was " That would be giving up". I was confident conditions would improve as I decided that what we were experiencing was the tail of the Saint Albans race being brought up Channel by the flooding tide.



Teal south of Durlstone



Celtic Warrior

As expected, after about an hour conditions began to improve, and we were beginning to see commercial shipping appearing on the AIS plot. The AIS picture (below right), not taken on the day of our crossing, shows the typical shipping situation as you cross the Channel. The traffic separation schemes at Ushant, the Casquets, and Dover organize the commercial ships going to and from Europe into two distinct streams, rather like a motorway.



Marine Traffic AIS plot

So it was that after a couple of hours we encountered the west going stream of ships. Being a Sunday there were not too many ships about and we threaded through quite easily.



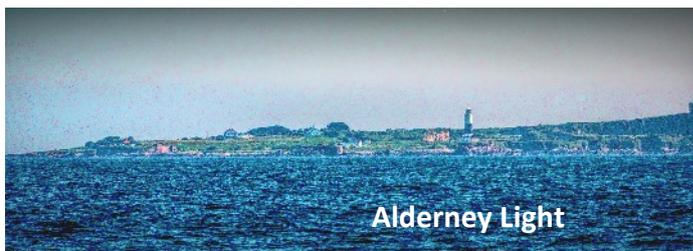
Fokko Ukema

An hour later we encountered the east bound ships and again we were able to pass through quite well.

Alderney was the first landfall we had made in our own boat since 2011, so it was quite a satisfying moment when the smudge of Alderney appeared in the haze ahead.

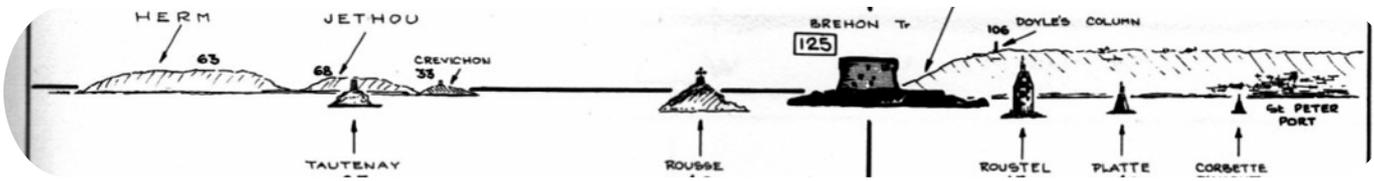


We had been making about 13 knots over the ground, so were slightly early but we pressed on and found the tide in the Swinge was indeed favourable. At times our speed over the ground touched 17 knots as we sped through, and on towards Guernsey



Alderney Light

We had expected the water to get rough again as we cleared the south of Alderney, and indeed it was slightly rougher, though nothing like the waves we had experienced in the first hour of the passage.



To port we could see Grande Amfroque, a useful rock with a tourelle on it that is a convenient transit for many passages going to and from the Russell channels. In the photograph you can see Little Sark behind the rock with the Barclay Brother's mansion clearly visible.



New Roustel

When passage planning in the Channel Islands I often check Malcolm Robson's pilot books for safe transits and views that I will encounter, like the banner above. However the books were written many years ago, and one has to be careful. In this case, the Roustel beacon was destroyed some time ago and has been replaced by a much less elegant structure. Nevertheless the general view helps to make sense of the jumble of marks



that confronts you as you enter the Little Russell channel.

By 1910 we were alongside the cruise ship landing pontoon, to which we had been directed by the Harbour master. This was particularly convenient because it had a walk ashore facility.



Rowena and I went straight to the nearby Guernsey Yacht Club, where the Royal Southern Yacht Club had organized a dinner. We had been so uncertain about our Channel crossing that we had not booked to take part. Rowena and I were made very welcome, and given a glass of wine each. We chatted for a while, and then returned to *Teal* where we had supper on board





Guernsey laydays

The Royal Southern cruise in company was ready to move on to Treguier, and most boats would leave during the 3rd of July. We were not able to do so because, after a long passage during which Dairne could not take certain medication, we have to have a lay day so that she can restore the balance.

We opted to move into the Victoria marina, partly to avoid being rafted out on the outer pontoons, and partly so that the passarelles would be shorter because of the smaller tidal range.



Rowena and I went for a walk around the town, picking up a few essential bits and pieces on way. We also identified a good restaurant for the evening and booked a table.

Dairne needed a restful day, so much of the afternoon was spent watching the tennis at Wimbledon on our little TV

In the evening we took the wheelchair up the passarelle, and trundled Dairne round to an excellent restaurant right by the harbourside called Mora.

Dairne and Rowena shared a generous seafood platter. Then we returned to the boat for the rest of the evening.

It would be the middle of the day before we would be able to get out of the Victoria marina so we could look forward to a lazy morning.



On the morning of the 4th I tried to contact the Royal Southern boats that had remained in Guernsey, but by the time I had walked round to the outside pontoons, I found the boats locked and it was clear that the owners had already gone ashore for the day.



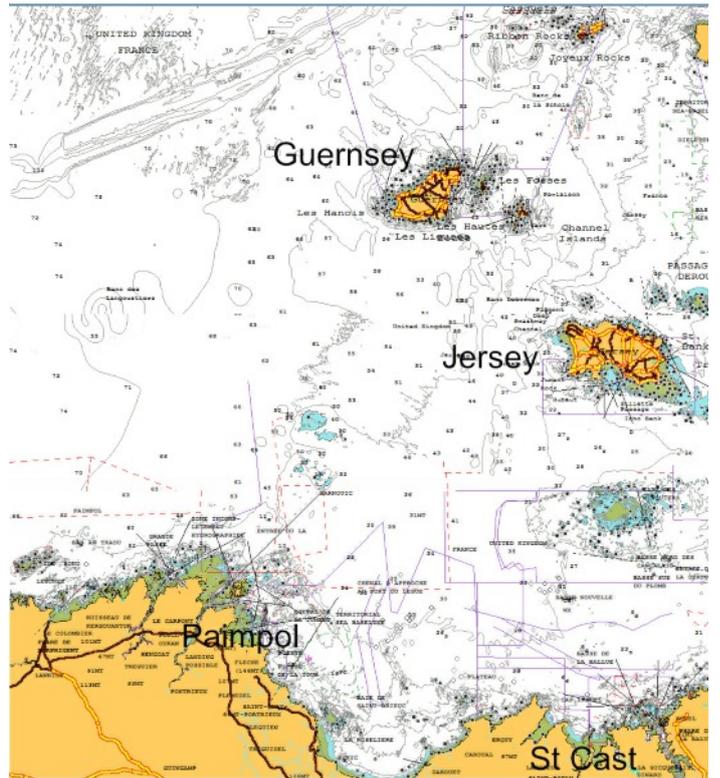
We enjoyed an excellent lunch at the Pier 17 restaurant which was located just at the head of the passarelle near the boat. Shortly after lunch, there was enough water for us to move out and we relocated to the fuel berth and topped up the tanks.

On leaving the fuel berth, we opted to return to the cruise ship pontoon to avoid being trapped on the walk ashore pontoons when we wanted to leave the following morning.



In the meantime I had been doing some passage planning with the idea of joining the Royal Southern cruise at Paimpol. On checking the pilot books, I was reminded that during the one and only visit we had made to the port, we had found the finger pontoons to which we would be moored rather narrow and rather bouncy. That would make it impossible for Dairne to get off the boat. Also, I had been looking ahead at the weather and had come to the conclusion that the present a spell of settled weather would last until the 9th or 10th of July, but was likely to deteriorate thereafter. This implied that we needed to plan the return Channel crossing no later than the 9th of July, with the 10th as a possible reserve.

We thought of going instead to St Cast, which was probably the next destination for the Royal Southern rally, but decided that it would mean 2 fairly long days motoring and would put time pressure on the overall timetable. We therefore opted to go down to Jersey on the following day and try and find our friends Fay and George who had been our neighbours when we had lived there.



Condor ferry arriving St Peter Port

returned to England on the ferry.

While this consideration was going on we heard on the VHF that a yacht was being towed into St. Peter Port with engine trouble, and recognised that *Chatterbox* was one of the Royal Southern fleet. By VHF we contacted her and suggested that she should lay alongside us as this would give good access to the engineering companies..

In due course *Chatterbox* came alongside us and we were happy to renew our friendship with David and Deborah. Sadly the required spares were not available in Guernsey, and the boat was eventually towed into the Victoria marina, and the crew

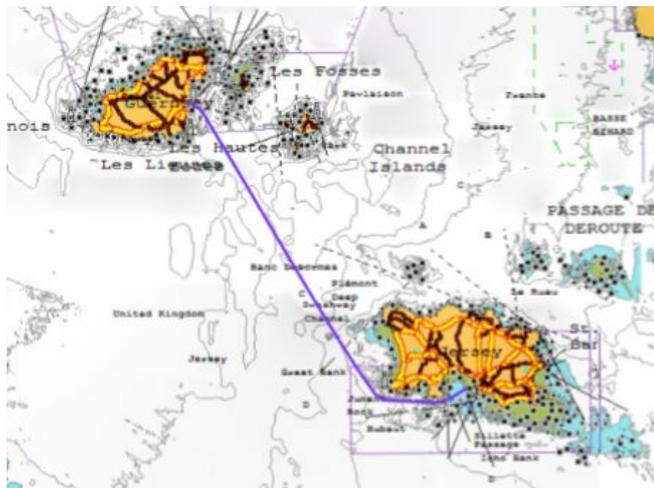
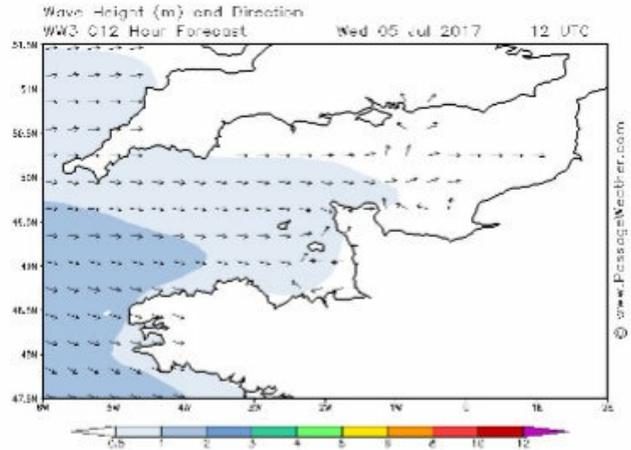
After all the excitement, we settled down for a quiet evening ready for a fairly early start for the following morning.



Guernsey to Jersey

The morning of the 5th of July started very sunny with light winds. Jersey Radio was giving northeast 3 to 4 increasing to 5 in the late afternoon. Crucially the sea would be smooth or slight with no swell. Ideal conditions for a passage. However, Passage Weather indicated that we might encounter a swell from the east as we rounded the south coast of Jersey.

By 1100 we left St. Peter Port and headed down towards Jersey at about 15 knots.



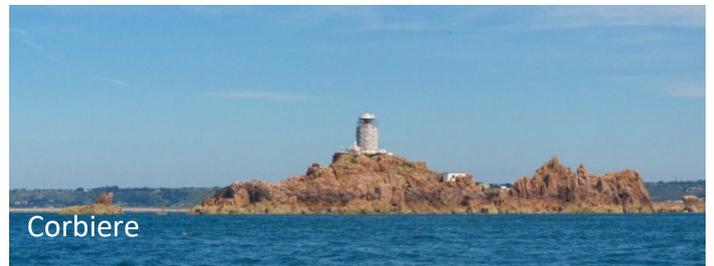
On the way we passed a yacht reaching beautifully in the northeast wind and we were quite envious.



A few minutes later *Teal* suddenly stopped. The engines were still revving quite hard. I quickly worked out what had happened. I had accidentally switched off

the power to the throttle system, and the engines had immediately shifted into neutral, but the throttles had not moved. This was quickly corrected and we were on our way again

Quite quickly we were approaching Jersey, and heading toward the Corbiere lighthouse on the southwest corner.



Eventually we reached the turning point and slowed to go gently along the south coast of Jersey. We had the tide under us but the brisk easterly wind against it was kicking up quite a llop and there was a lot of spray being thrown over the boat. It was not too uncomfortable inside the saloon.



Above & Right: St Brelades
Below: Noirmont Point



Quite soon we were passing St. Brelades Bay.



Eventually we could see the rather ugly property developments that have taken place. Maybe they are trying to match the style of the nearby German fortifications!

Eventually we could see the rather ugly property developments that have taken



German fort



After passing Noirmont point, we headed towards Saint Helier

By 1320 we were alongside the waiting pontoon in Saint Helier. With our shallow draught we were one of the first boats to be invited to go into the marina, and found ourselves a



comfortable Berth right at the head of the marina. That evening, we all went ashore with Dairne in the wheelchair, and we trudged our way round to Saint Helier yacht club where we had a good meal.



Left: Dinner at St Helier Yacht Club



St Helier marina

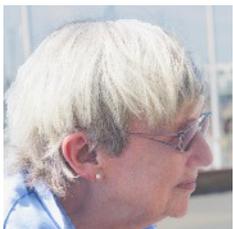


Dairne on the passarelle



The next morning, 6th of July, would be a lay day. Rowena and I went ashore and meandered around the town and found it extremely difficult to buy reasonably priced wines, but in the end we succeeded.

Amazingly the best buy was a case of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc purchased at M&S.



Dairne, Fay and George



We were going to meet George and Fay, our neighbours when we had lived in Jersey, Rowena went off on her own taking the tourist train from Saint Helier marina round the bay to Saint Aubin. Meanwhile, Dairne and I worked our way up the passerelle, and had a really pleasant reunion with George, now 94, and Fay, who does not seem to age. George was one of the few to successfully escape from Jersey during the Occupation. George could not manage the passerelle to get down to the boat,

and Dairne and I did not fancy driving the wheelchair over the gravel drive at their house, so we met in a cafe close to the marina. It had been an active day so we were quite pleased to get back to the boat and relax for the rest of the evening



Teal in St Helier



Jersey to Dielette

The previous evening I had been able to confirm that the period of settled weather would continue. There was nothing ominous in the Atlantic weather chart.

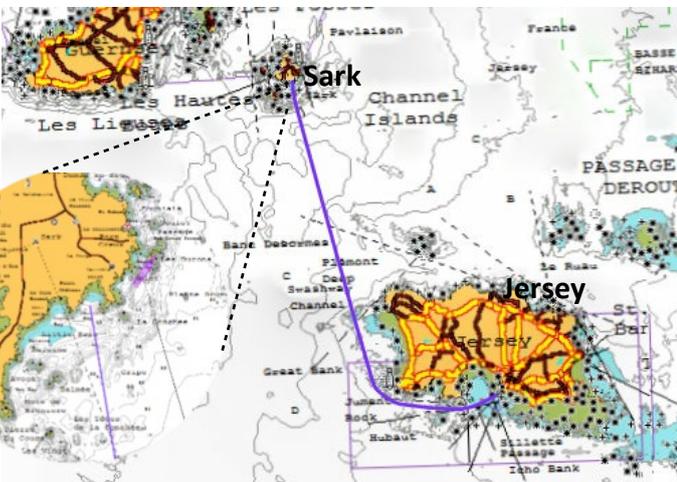
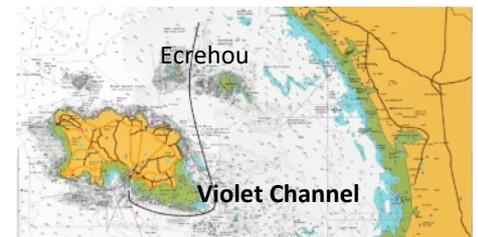
PREVISIONS ZONE COTIERE : CÔTE OUEST COTENTIN
Prévisions actualisées à 11h16

	jeu 6			ven 7			sam 8			dim 9	
	12h	18h	0h	6h	12h	18h	0h	6h	12h	18h	0h
Vent à 10m											
Direction	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘
Vitesse (nœuds)	9	10	13	11	11	10	8	6	14	13	12
Echelle Beaufort	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	4	4
Mer totale											
Hauteur significative (m)	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4
État de la mer	Peu agitée	Peu agitée	Peu agitée	Peu agitée	Ridée ou Belle						
Hauteur max. sur 6h (m)	1.5	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8
Mer du vent											
Hauteur significative (m)	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.3
Houle											
Direction	↘	↘	↘	→	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘
Hauteur significative (m)	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4
Période (s)	7	4	3	4	6	3	5	4	8	5	8



The incredibly useful Meteo France presentation indicated moderate winds for the next few days. More importantly, in the Meteo France forecast, (left), the roughness of the sea is divided into the two components of waves caused by the wind, and the swell, or "houle", that is so characteristic of the French Atlantic and Channel coasts. For the whole forecast period swell and waves looked as though they would not be important.

Our plan was to start the journey northwards, with a stop at Dielette on the Normandy Coast.



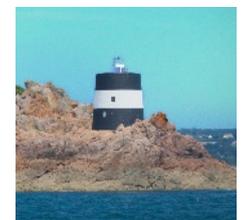
I tried to develop the passage plan that would take us up the east coast of Jersey and past the Ecrehou. It would be an interesting passage, and I had always wanted to do the pilotage through the Violet Channel round the SE corner of Jersey as described by Malcolm Robson in his Channel Islands Pilot. But Dielette is a 1/2 tide marina, and it proved difficult to work out a plan that matched the tide times. I had calculated that the gate into the marina at the Dielette would open at 1622, which was quite civilised. With the predicted west northwesterly wind, it was likely to be



uncomfortable if we had to wait outside Dielette for the gate to open.

In the end I gave up, and took the obvious route of carrying the tide from Saint Helier to Corbiere at the southwest corner of Jersey before proceeding northwards to anchor off Sark where we could wait for the tide into Dielette. It meant an early start, so I planned to wake the crew before seven, then take the boat out of the marina in Saint Helier to the waiting pontoon where we could get organized before moving on.

It was a beautiful morning when we motored gently out of the marina and made fast outside a beautiful Norwegian yacht that was on its way to Spain. After half an hour, we were away again and speeding towards Noirmont Point which we passed at 0742.





Turning towards Corbiere. we had a good push of tide helping us, but as this was in the face of the westerly wind, there was a little chop being kicked up, and the yachts beating towards Corbiere were having quite a bumpy time of it. Motorboats do point very well!



Corbiere

Once we had turned north, the wind and waves were no longer on the bow, so conditions became very



Commodore Goodwill

pleasant. We were overtaken by the Condor RO RO ship, Commodore Goodwill. Although the visibility was excellent there seemed to be a lot of distant haze about.

As we approached Sark, we could see a large cruise ship in the little Russell Channel off St. Peter Port (see banner above). I was quite pleased that we were not in the port when all those passengers came ashore for the day.

By 0942, we entered Derrible Bay on the east side of Sark. It was almost completely calm and threatening to be very hot. There were a couple of boats already in the bay, but they soon left us in splendid isolation, apart from the disturbance caused by the occasional vedette, visitors to the clifftop, and of course, the seabirds.



Above right and left: Derrible Bay

We had a pleasant morning enjoying the surroundings. Rowena braved the hot sunshine for a while, but Dairne and I preferred the shade of the cabin.

After lunch, we weighed anchor at 1445 and sped towards Dielette with the engines running at 2300 revs, giving us about 15 knots. With the light breeze and the tiny wavelets behind us, this was the most comfortable passage we had made so far.



Vedette



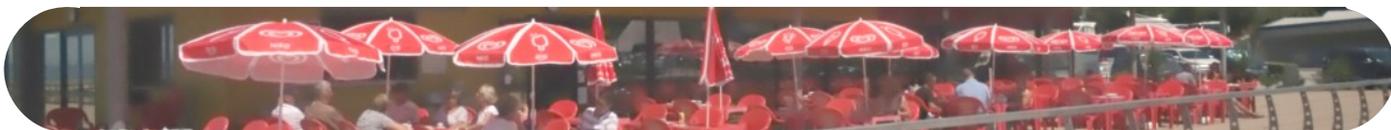
By 1600 we were passing the nuclear power station at Cap de la Hague, and slowing to allow little more time for the gate to open.



Nuclear Power Station

By 1635 we were secured on the pontoon at Dielette.





Teal in Dielette

I was delighted to see Andrew and Tanya Gardener in their boat *Saint Brigid* a few berths along. Andrew is an ex commodore of Marchwood Yacht Club, and Tanya is an accomplished artist.

Unlike the Channel Islands marinas, we had not been met or directed to a berth. We simply picked



St Brigid

the one we liked. So I found my way to the capitainerie where I was able to get a code for 8 hours of free wifi, and details of the free shuttle bus into the village. I had also noticed the bistro that is new since we had last visited the port several years ago. We decided we would go there for a meal.



This meant that Dairne had to get down on to the finger pontoon, which was fortunately quite wide and very stable. She then had to tackle the enormous passarelle while I pushed the wheelchair up it. We then enjoyed the biggest bowl of moules that I had seen since visiting Carteret 30 years earlier.



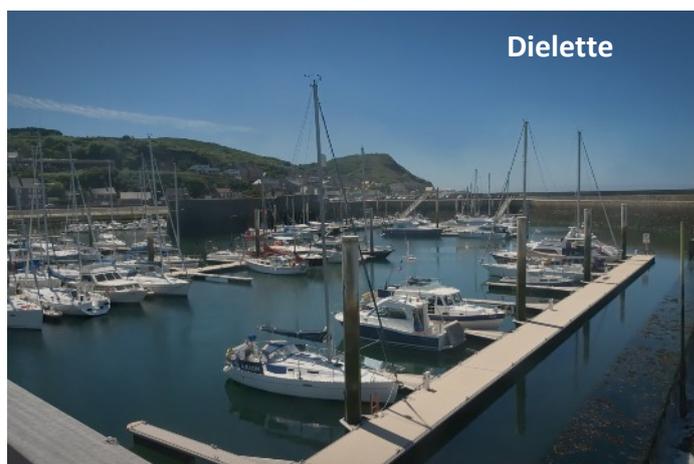
A great meal of Moules!



We arranged with Andrew and Tanya that we would join them on the midmorning shuttle bus into the village.



That night was brilliantly clear with a full Moon. While this can be a beautiful sight, it also indicated that we were very near to spring tides so the currents in the Alderney race would be fierce..



Dielette



Sat
8th
July

Dielette Layday

After breakfast the next morning, I was taking the rubbish to the poubelle (rubbish skip) when I suddenly realized that I had forgotten to change the clocks on board to French time. We were about to miss the bus! I rushed back to the boat. There was no way that we were going to get the wheelchair and Dairne up to the bus in time, but we encouraged Rowena to go as quickly as possible. She was to have a very pleasant morning in the village, partly with Andrew and Tanya.

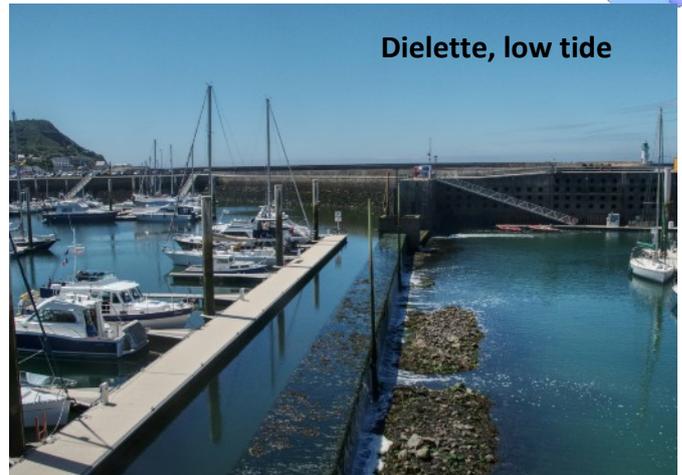
Meanwhile Dairne and I took our time getting to the top of the passarelle.



Our intention was to try and walk to the village.

We quickly realized that the footpaths up the hill to the village were gravel which would be impossible for a wheelchair. Instead we walked along the front quite a long way to see if we could find a restaurant where we could have lunch. The only possible candidate was closed, so we made our way back to the yacht club at the back of the marina where we had enjoyed an excellent meal on our previous visit. We were just about the only visitors, which is a pity because the range and quality available far exceeded the bistro in the marina. Dairne feasted on crevettes and bulots at lunchtime, and I had a plate of giant gambas. We later heard that Rowena had only managed a cheese roll in the village

After lunch we made our way back to the boat, and sheltered from the fierce sun. Rowena returned and later that evening we entertained Andrew and Tanya on board for a glass of wine.



Dielette, low tide



Dielette

PREVISIONS ZONE COTIERE : COTE NORD COTENTIN

Prévisions actualisées à 08h31

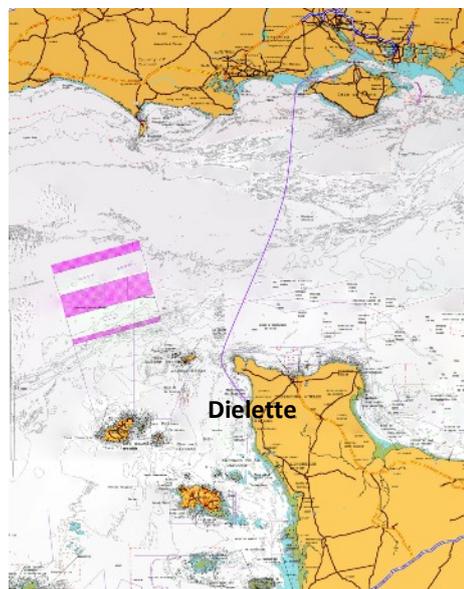
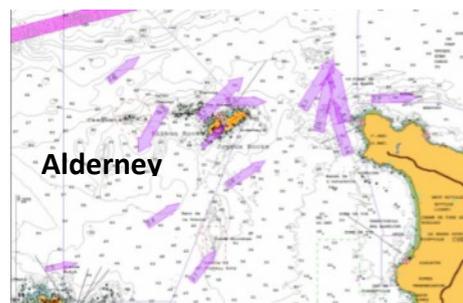
	sam 8		dim 9				lun 10				mar 11
	12h	18h	0h	6h	12h	18h	0h	6h	12h	18h	0h
Vent à 10m											
Direction	ONO	NNO	O	NE	NE	NNO	SO	NO	O	OSO	OSO
Vitesse (nœuds)	6	8	3	7	8	7	7	14	19	21	14
Echelle Beaufort	2	3	1	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	4
Mer totale											
Hauteur significative (m)	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.9	1.1	1.5	1.3
État de la mer	Ridée ou Belle	Peu agitée	Peu agitée	Agitée	Peu agitée						
Hauteur max. sur 6h (m)	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.5	2.0	2.7	2.4
Mer du vent											
Hauteur significative (m)	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.6	1.0	1.5	0.7
Houle											
Direction	↓	↓	↓	→	→	←	←	←	↓	↓	→
Hauteur significative (m)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.0
Période (s)	3	2	2	7	8	3	3	4	3	6	5

Andrew and Tanya intended to go round to Cherbourg on the following morning, while we decided we would attempt the Channel crossing.

The forecast was excellent; Meteo France indicating winds of force three or less and virtually no swell, while the inshore waters forecast for the English Coast suggested very light winds, with a sea state of smooth or slight.

Dielette to Newton, loW

Our passage plan required an early start. This would enable us to go through the Alderney race with lots of favourable tide, and if all went well we would reach the Needles channel as the tide turned against us.



Because of the strong tides on the Cherbourg side of the Alderney race, I set the route about one third of the way across the Race. If the Race was benign then I would be able shape a course closer to the Cherbourg peninsula.

I discovered an interesting program in the Navionics software on the chart plotter. Put in a route, and select a speed and a date, and it would compute the total passage time given a starting time at each hour of the day. (See Appendix 2). This suggested that the best time to leave would be 7.00 PM. However not only would that have given us a very late arrival, it would also mean that we would not be able to see the unmarked fishing floats that proliferate in the Solent area. The gate at Dielette would open at

0630 in the morning, and if we left then our passage time would be nearly as good.



So it was that we woke early to a very sunny, still morning. The engines were started at 0615 and soon we were emerging from the harbour on to a glassy flat sea. We were soon running at 2300 revs giving about 15 knots through the water. Rowena spotted a dolphin running alongside us, and soon there was a pod of four of them keeping up easily with *Teal*. They were not with us for long and I didn't have time, or presence of mind, to reach for the camera.



There were great swirls of water as we went through the Alderney Race, but it was completely flat, so we were able to edge closer to the Cherbourg Peninsula than our planned route.



Our speed over the ground edged rapidly up towards 20 knots. At one point we reached 21 knots.

By 0800, the Needles fairway buoy was 43.5 miles ahead on a bearing on 016 magnetic. As we pushed further north into the Channel towards the shipping lanes, the visibility was strange with a haze so strong that there was no clear horizon. The AIS was therefore extremely useful.

The first ship to emerge from the mist was the Irish ferry Oscar Wilde which was well south of the eastbound lane, clearly heading to Cherbourg. Not long afterwards we were able to identify the ship called Coolwater on the AIS plot (Appendix 3) and realised that she would pass fairly close, but safely.

Soon Coolwater emerged from the haze heading towards us.





There were quite a few yachts heading northwards across the Channel. None had even bothered to try and set sail as there was so little wind. This was definitely a day for a motor boat. It was incredibly calm and we just sped on our way.

When he reached the westbound shipping lane, we had to slow down and alter course to go around the stern of the Beaumare. .

We saw nothing more till we were about 15 miles from the Needles fairway buoy, when we saw the Brittany ferries ship Barfleur heading south.



Beaumare

Shortly after that, at 1010, we could just make out the smudge of St. Catherine's Point on a bearing of 062 magnetic at a range of 16 miles. Next we saw Saint Albans away to the northwest.



Barfleur



Needles and Tennyson Down

Very slowly Tennyson down, above the Needles, appeared out of the haze.



Bridge buoy

By 1105 the Needles fairway buoy he was abeam. The visibility was clearer on his side of the Channel and we were still speeding along over glassy blue water. 10 minutes later the Bridge buoy was abeam and we were heading back into the playpen of the



Solent.



Hurst Castle

Shortly after we passed Hurst point, we began to encounter traffic. The waves from the ferries and other motor boats were the biggest we had seen all day!

We had managed to carry the tide all the way, and it was only just turning as we passed Yarmouth and worked our way up the Solent to Newtown.





(There now seems to be a family of three seals in Newtown.)





Mon
10th
July

Newtown to Marchwood

All that remained was a leisurely start next morning to take the tide up to Cowes where we refuelled, getting back to the Marchwood mooring at 1340.

The distance covered in the cruise was **293.7 miles**.



It was Rowena's birthday, so we celebrated with an end-of-cruise dinner at the Oak at Bank, near Lyndhurst, returning on board for the night before packing up the following day.



Appendix 1: Customs Issues

Before we left England, I had contacted the UK Border Agency.

As we planned to visit the Channel Islands, which are not in the European Union. I wondered whether, in the light of recent concerns regarding immigration, rules had been tightened up.

After searching around the web, I spoke to somebody in the Border Agency. They told me that although there is a form for declaring departure in a yacht from the UK to a non EU country, they were not really very concerned about that. However they were concerned that there should be a report on arrival back in the UK. Fortunately, I suspect as a result of good work by the Royal Yachting Association, there is a telephone number that you can ring once you are back in UK waters (0845 723-1110). If there are no complications, the inward clearance is done over the phone. It is a simple and clear way of proceeding. It is to be hoped that most yachtsmen comply with this request as otherwise more stringent requirements will be put in place. (as I write this I'm hearing on the news about 4 hour customs clearance queues at European airports. We don't want anything like that in sailing world!)

When we got to Guernsey, we were eventually given inward clearance papers by the Harbour staff. All we had to do was fill in the details of crew names, and provide passport numbers, and very limited details of our voyage. The form was then posted in one of the many boxes around the Harbour. Another very simple and effective arrangement. We were visited at one stage by the Guernsey Border Force. Two uniformed officers chatted to us when we were moored alongside a pontoon. They were generally interested in our passage, and asked us to report any unusual sightings. All very polite.

In Jersey, there was no sign of any formalities at all. We did not see customs; we were not given any forms; and we just came and went as we wished. All very casual. We did fly 'Q', the yellow flag for a few hours, but soon took it down.

As we were not going ashore in Sark, but just anchoring in a bay for a few hours, we did not report there.

Dielette was the most casual of all. There was no one to meet us or direct us to a berth. I did put up a yellow flag, but on consulting the boat next to us in the marina, which was based in Alderney, I was advised that the best plan was to do nothing unless approached by the authorities, which is a very rare occurrence.

So the overall situation does look a little bit chaotic, with attitudes differing from place to place, and totally in contrast to the rigorous bureaucracy that one would encounter at an Airport. It is clear that the leisure sailor is given a lot of privilege, so it is up to us to comply with regulations or the privilege will be removed.

Appendix 2: Navionics Navigation Planner passage planning

By accident, I discovered this very useful feature.

Put in a route, a boat speed and a departure date, and the software will work out the total passage time for each possible hour of departure during that day. Great for motor boats, where the skipper can easily choose a boat speed. It would not work for yachts where you would need to take account of the polar diagram of boat speed v wind speed v wind angle. But good enough for me!

Route properties

Route/plan details Optimum plan (Best time to leave taking into account tides) Display

General

Route name DieletteSolent

Route Active No of legs 4 Total route distance 76.51 Nm

Setup

Start date 9 7 2017 Vessel speed to use 12 knots

Status COMPLETE

Tidal data OK

Set to current date Calculate plan

Best	Time	Elapsed time	Arrival time
	0:00	07 hours 20 mins	07:20 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	1:00	07 hours 15 mins	08:15 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	2:00	07 hours 03 mins	09:03 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	3:00	06 hours 42 mins	09:42 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	4:00	06 hours 27 mins	10:27 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	5:00	06 hours 02 mins	11:02 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	6:00	05 hours 45 mins	11:45 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	7:00	05 hours 54 mins	12:54 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	8:00	05 hours 57 mins	13:57 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	9:00	06 hours 13 mins	15:13 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	10:00	06 hours 22 mins	16:22 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	11:00	06 hours 41 mins	17:41 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	12:00	07 hours 02 mins	19:02 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	13:00	07 hours 13 mins	20:13 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	14:00	07 hours 06 mins	21:06 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	15:00	06 hours 44 mins	21:44 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	16:00	06 hours 32 mins	22:32 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	17:00	06 hours 08 mins	23:08 Sunday, July 09, 2017
	18:00	05 hours 50 mins	23:50 Sunday, July 09, 2017
****	19:00	05 hours 38 mins	00:38 Monday, July 10, 2017
	20:00	05 hours 56 mins	01:56 Monday, July 10, 2017
	21:00	06 hours 07 mins	03:07 Monday, July 10, 2017
	22:00	06 hours 16 mins	04:16 Monday, July 10, 2017
	23:00	06 hours 39 mins	05:39 Monday, July 10, 2017

Copy to clipboard

Use selected plan

Appendix 3: The AIS Plot

AIS (Automatic Identification of Ships) has progressed enormously. All vessels over 150ft have to carry an AIS transmitter (with some exceptions), and most smaller craft voluntarily fit and use the equipment, Initially developed for use with VHF radio, it has become so useful to shipowners that most commercial ships report by satellite when out of VHF range. An initiative by University of Athens has gathered all this worldwide information together and it is publicly available at <https://www.marinetraffic.com/>

On *Teal*, we have a “multifunction” chart plotter, which is able to overlay the AIS information on the chart. Click on a target, and you get a lot of information about the ship including its name, course speed, a calculated “Closest Point of Approach” (CPA), as shown on the picture below. You also see the MMSI number which is rather like a telephone number. Key this into your VHF and it will switch the VHF on the ship’s bridge to the working channel you have chosen, and alert the watch officer. This means you can speak direct to that ship if there are matters of concern.

