



## Less is More this Year

July 2019

Crew: Lynda

---

---

It had been a busy year with all sorts of stuff going on so sailing unfortunately had taken a back seat but the first two weeks of July were firmly booked for a sailing holiday, but where should we go?

No real progress was made until we were about to leave and heard the weather forecast; a long period of high pressure with light winds and lots of sun. Having done too much motoring in the past we decided to take it easy and only go as far as Weymouth but stop off at all the places we usually past by in other years. We hoped that by being less ambitious, with shorter trips, we'd have time to sail even if it was only at a speed of a few knots; the 5 Knot rule would not apply!



Just to get us in the mood for a holiday the first night was the annual Hog Roast at Royal Clarence Marina. Jacuzzi Jazz played throughout the evening, they're excellent so a good night was had by all; it was good to meet some of the other berth holders.

On the following night there was a Sea Shanty evening at Hardway Sailing Club which we couldn't miss either so we had all day to explore Aldi and Waitrose in Gosport and get well and truly stocked up for the weeks ahead.

Unfortunately we fell into bad company at the sailing club, there were quite a few of the Spinnaker Lodge folk there and with bar prices as they are there there's no excuse not to be indulgent. It must have been good, we ended up being one of the last to leave.



The following day, Sunday, was sunny with a pleasant force 3 gusting 4 forecast from the West. Not ideal as it was a beat but a good sail with a fair tide. We had quite a leisurely beat to windward across to Cowes where it livened up as we went through Cowes Roads. From there onwards it blew up to steady five then a six, rather more exciting. Lively Levante performed magnificently, with a reef in the main and on in the headsail we were fine up to 25 knots going to windward like a trojan. Peter Sanders had done a

great job building the Genoa, well reefed, it looked like a real aerofoil, not a sack of potatoes. The only challenge was that it was rather crowded with lots of crossing situations to add to the excitement. Whilst the skipper enjoyed the sailing the crew were much concerned about other boats, their heading and whether they would observe the Colregs.

Arriving in good time at Lymington we heard the sounds of a brass band so set off for the Bath Road gardens and the bandstand where we found the New Forest Brass Band playing; just what was needed to calm down after a rather exciting sail.

Our first lay day in Lymington was relaxation personified, a few walks, a bit of window shopping, a few drinks and a very pleasant meal on board to round the day off.

Tuesday was also bright and sunny but only 4-8 knots of wind and that was from the north east which was not ideal for a passage to Poole. It was time to use the iron sail to head out along the Needles Channel where we hoped we'd catch the best of the west going tide that was steadily building.



We managed to put the sails up for an hour or so but it was hardly worth it so we consoled ourselves with a nice salad for lunch whilst we made out way across the Bay. Naturally the Ferry wanted to cross just as we arrived off Sandbanks but that's sailing

for you. The harbour seemed strange until we realised that so many berths had disappeared but we were soon moored up at the Town Quay Marina where we hoped to have a quiet night.

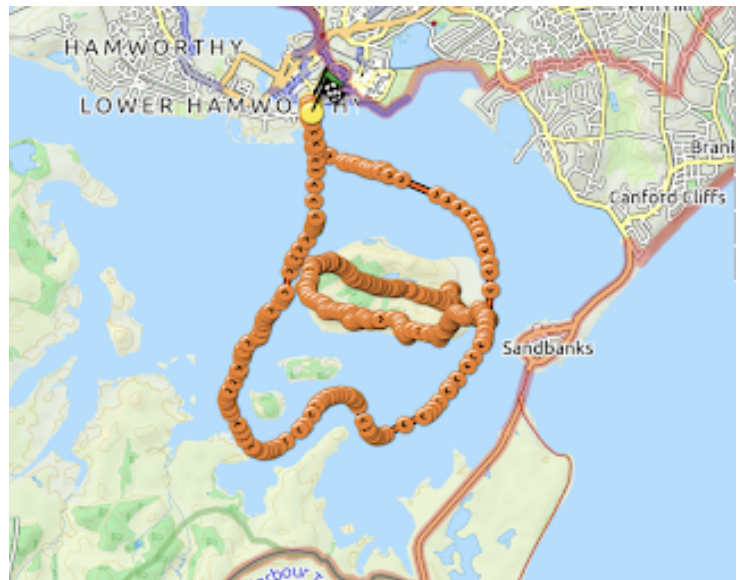


It was not to be the case, we didn't know it but there was a major motor bike even going on which added some colour but also a lot of noise to our stay until it packed up, fortunately quite early on in the evening. We kept away from the pubs, which were heaving, staying on board to eat out in the cockpit, just as the fuss died down.

Another fine day followed and wishing to stretch our legs a bit we couldn't miss a trip to Brownsea Island which would include a ride around South Deep and the islands to the west of the harbour. We had intended to spend a night either at Studland or South Deep ourselves but without an alternator that would charge the batteries we thought we'd only go after a shore side charge rather than a lengthy passage; unfortunately that was not to be.

The Island was as attractive as ever, even if a bit busy with day trippers. It was pleasant to walk in the shade of the trees rather than out in the open. No red squirrels this time but we did get very close up to some deer, clearly they have nothing to worry about from people.

The Tripping boat wound it's way through South Deep to Goathorn Point were the best anchorage lies, then on past Furzey with it's oil facilities, past Green Island and up to the western end of Brownsea Island which is a popular lunch stop for local boats of all types. Later examination of the charts showed that there's plenty of water at high tide even if you draw 1.7m; this is a trip not to be missed on a future date.



Tides were west going for much of the day all week so we could have civilised start times like 10am, so much better than getting up at the crack of dawn. Thursday the 4th July offered much the same weather as other days, light to moderate winds from the east, our luck was holding.



It was a splendid sail from the harbour entrance to Anvil Point making a a minimum of 5 knots beam reaching. Naturally as the wind went aft on heading west we slowed down a bit but managed to keep going until the wind picked up just after midday. The ranges were only active inshore so after contacting range control we found had to stay below 50 degrees 33.5 minutes to stay out of trouble, better than leaving the whole range to the north.

At the 3pm fix time, whilst I was taking a note of where we were, a screen flashed and I first thought the Navtext was on the blink, then everything was playing up, I then realised that the batteries were nearly flat! We'd had the fridge and autohelm on for five hours taking up to 10 amps, which should have been alright. Clearly the domestic battery bank was knackered. Everything was switched off, hand held VHF taken up top where we continued navigating by sight which was not difficult in the bright

sunshine. Realising we could catch the 4pm bridge we switched the engine on (which did start to some relief) and got to Weymouth with five minutes to spare.

A lay day was called for but after a trip around the chandleries it was clear that battery replacement was going to have to wait, they had some but not the right sized ones in stock. Weymouth is a lovely place to stop with it's beach, harbour and so many interesting buildings; we mooched about enjoying the ambiance of a seaside classic. There's the Punch and Judy show, the sand sculptures but what tops the bill for Lynda are the donkeys. With an excellent berth in the marina, out came the cockpit seats, table and tent closely followed by a bottle of wine and dinner al fresco.



Although there's plenty to do locally there's more to see further afield and now refreshed by our lay day we decided to stay a while and make the most of it. Determined to get the most out of our bus passes we then set off on series of trips of increasing length, first to Portland on the open bus which seemed appropriate given the sunny weather we were having.

The Bill at Portland brings many memories of inshore and offshore transits so it was interesting to clamber over the rocks we'd seen so often whilst other yachts were passing by close inshore. The light house was open so we went to the top and received a badge for our efforts, very timely too as it was all about to change with a major re-engineering job in a few months time. Apparently the existing lens and light together with its mercury bath was to be stripped out and replaced by a static LED lantern that didn't have to move, required less maintenance and was safer to operate. How they were going to get several tons of optics and all that mercury out was anyones guess.

The next day's trip was to Abbotsbury to visit the only swannery in the country. It dated from the time when a local monastery ruled the area well before the dissolution; apparently the monks diet was piscatorial and to make it a bit more interesting they considered cygnets to be fish because of thier webbed feet. In reality not much had been required to raise the swans as they looked after themselves pretty well, just a helping hand to keep predators away. What was much more interesting was one of the very few duck decoys leading off a pond just behind the swannery, both pipes and screens were in good condition making it easy to see how it worked. The bus back was dead on time increasing our confidence in this mode of travel.



Yet another bright sunny day appeared on Monday and flushed with success of the two previous trips we set off to see what Lyme Regis was like even though it was quite a distance away and necessitated a change at Bridport. The trip got off to a bad start with the driver (who was wearing a union jacket) seemed to be working to rule and got us to Bridport half an hour late missing our connection. When we eventually got there, Lyme Regis was heaving, and although pretty, was not a good place to be in high season; we resolved to see it again in winter. We

also resolved not to attempt bus journeys more than an hour too. That said an enforced detour through Dorchester on the way back due to timetable problems was fortuitous, it's a rather pleasant place to spend an hour or two.

All good things have to come to an end eventually, our time in Weymouth was over, and on Tuesday the 9th we headed back across the bay to Poole. The forecast was sunny, with a light south easterly. The tide was due to turn at 11am so we passed under the bridge at 10am and said goodbye to the harbour.

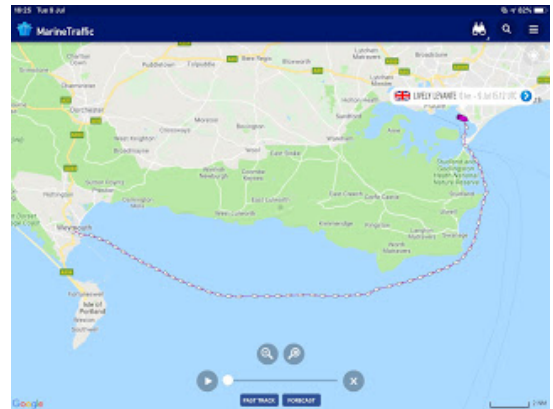
After a short motor into the wind we could head west along the 33.5 minute line with the sails up and the tide building steadily. After a couple of hours we could see Durdle Door abeam and knew only too well that we were in the range area with the sound of a major battle going on amongst the hills to the north. The Brrrrup Brrrrup would have been machine guns whilst the Tump, Tump, Tump must have been something heavier. What ever it was they were firing they were having a grand old time at the taxpayers expense.



Arriving at the DZ buoy at the end of the range we were not ideally placed to avoid the overfalls off St Albans Head but it was neaps so we thought we'd head inshore and chance it. Very soon a threatening white line of breakers appeared ahead, closer offshore. We hastened inshore to get through the inshore passage which was close by but the turbulence offered no breaks and we were soon tossed about like clothes in a tumbler dryer. We were not alone, three other yachts approached us coming the other way and several more following offshore; the sea dished out the same treatment without favouritism.

Fortunately it was short-lived as the tide whisked us past and the sun was shining; although uncomfortable, nothing broke just a few loose things scattered all over the cabin sole.

The remainder of the sail was really rather pleasant especially as we past Anvil Point resplendent in the bright sunlight. The wind had turned south so after clearing Peveril Ledge we headed across Swanage Bay and past the Old Harry Rocks goose winged, just for a change. By 3:30 we were moored safely at Salterns Marina, we couldn't have endured another night at the Quay!



This marina on the north side of the Harbour at Lilliput has fond memories for us as it was where we first started our keelboat sailing in a Sadler 25. Not a great deal has changed apart from some over development close by, there are still some quaint features although much of the area where we used to moor is laid over to jet skiers and only a few yachts survive amongst the motor boats.



The hotel/clubhouse of the Poole Harbour Yacht Club is now only a hotel which is very much past its prime although still capable of serving a very pleasant diner if you're prepared to afford it. There's little evidence left of the PHYC but a blue plaque has appeared to make the use of the facilities as the Marine Terminal for flying boat services to Africa and America during the war when they were displaced from Southampton. The harbour had been a major centre for flying boats especially to the west south of Parkstone where I can remember seeing flying boats moored from Sandbanks as a child.

On this holiday lay days mean bus trips so the next day it was off to Swanage via Sandbanks on the 50 followed by a number 60. Naturally they don't link up well but there's a cafe by the ferry and it's nice to stroll around to see the Haven Hotel. Once in Swanage we wasted little time in finding a sea side table on the pier for lunch, such a

shame everything had to be deep fried including the squid but the rose washed the taste away quite effectively.

Needing to walk it off we headed for Peveril Ledge where we went in to see the National Coast-watch chaps trying to look busy keeping watch. Not surprisingly they didn't have much on, apparently they get a call on channel 65 about once a watch and something significant happens only about once a year. Nevertheless, we thanked them, it's reassuring to know that in this age of automation there are still pairs of eyes keeping watch.



The following day we wanted to return via Yarmouth but the harbour was, as usual, busy with rallies and they couldn't be sure of electricity so we booked in to Lymington Yacht Haven. The weather forecast was, again, ideal; south easterly veering south westerly 6 increasing to 12 knots. It proved to be spot on, on clearing the harbour we sailed well first on a close reach, then a beam reach and finally a broad reach all the way to North channel where we entered the Solent at 9

knots speed over the ground. The wind vane had been engaged all the way and gave an exemplary performance only needing to be adjusted as the wind changed direction. Not only does it save power but the absence of any sound makes sailing so much more enjoyable; it may be a bit complicated but it's a natural, low tech way to sail.





Last night away from home and after a wander around to make sure the pubs were still well stocked we had a leisurely meal in the cockpit; another one of Tesco's excellent meals out for £10; can't be beat if you're not feeling like working too hard.

High water had steadily moved forward and the east going tide would not appear until after 1pm, a perfect excuse to have a leisurely all day breakfast at the Haven which is past of the marina complex. The wind had dropped off and was coming from the

North West so sailing was a tad frustrating, especially at first but we persevered as there was plenty of time not planning to return home until the next day. There were a few bright patches when we managed to get up to 5 knots for a few minutes but most of it was a drift run conditions that did not suit the wind vane so we had buzz buzz to accompany us. Off Stokes bay it finally give up so we turned the banger on and motored in accompanied by HMS Kent and her attendant fleet of tugs; all rather busy for a while.



Once tidied up it was off to Hardway SC to reface of what had been a very pleasant holiday. We may not have been able to stop off at some of the more interesting places due to battery problems but less proved out to be more. Shorter journeys meant more sailing!