

**Wild Again,
Cruise to the Channel islands 2006.**

As always, the cruise started from the moorings, the date, the 31st May, the time 14.00hrs, we set out for Arklow and as always, the wind was on the nose. We arrived at 20.15 hrs to find the marina full, so it was the harbour for the night!

We set out for the Isles of Scilly at 04.30 hrs, on the 1st June, the wind was SW 4 and we were able to motor sail all the way to Green Bay and arrived on June 2nd at 06.30 hrs. We anchored for the day, caught up on our sleep and then explored Bryar for a few hours, then lay at anchor overnight, before moving over to St Mary's, we were able to lie to the wall, only to find they increased their charges for the wall.

Ships log 159. Gps log 172. Date 3-6-06

We only stayed one night and set out at 08.40 hrs for Helford, leaving via the Crowbar, a rather dodgy passage at the best of times, but it would shorten the passage to Lands End and as the seas were smooth with a threat of fog, we said we would go for it.

We were only an hour out and the fog closed in on the Scillies.

We were able to cross the shipping lanes off Lands End without any problems and headed into the Helford River arriving at 18.30 hrs and picked up a visitors mooring.

Ships log 249. Gps log 370. Date 4-6-06.

We only stayed one night and left at 07.45 hrs the next morning, no one came looking for money, which pleased us no end, we set out on a passage for the Fowey River, again the sea state was good and we made good time, arriving at Fowey at 12.45 hrs.

Ships log 279 Gps log 395. Date 5-6-06.

We found out that Denis and Olive were on holiday nearby and we met up with them for a drink. Both Fowey and the Helford River are well worth exploring, but as the weather was ok, we pressed on again, for Salcombe.

As usual, the wind went on the nose once again and we took a bit of a pasting crossing Plymouth Sound. We still made good speed and arrived in Salcombe at 15.45 hrs.

The entrance is blocked by a bar and can only be crossed 2hrs either side of high water, providing that the wind is offshore and the leading marks must be followed, there is no room for error. Salcombe is another beautiful cruising area and we could have had a really good holiday there.

Ships log 310. Gps log 395. Date 5-6-06.

But, we had to take full advantage of the weather and once again we set out on the very next day, heading for Dartmouth, leaving Salcombe at 12.00 hrs and arriving in Dartmouth at 15.00 hrs. We landed at Kingswear marina and this was the first marina that we availed of since we left Arklow. When we arrived we called the marina and were given very confusing directions, so we found an empty berth and headed for the office to find out where we should berth. It transpired that another marina [a very expensive one] was attempting to poach customers.

Dartmouth is beautiful and once again we would like to have stayed longer, but once again we only stayed for the night. We were only one leg away from the Channel Islands.

Ships log 327 Gps log 448. Date 7-6-06.

So away we went at 04.30 hrs on the 8th, to cross the English Channel for Guernsey. We arrived in very bad visibility, in a force 5, with wind **over** a 3 knot tide and big seas; we could barely make out Fougere lighthouse as we rounded it for our approach. To make matters worse a ship came out of the heat haze right behind us and both of us trying to get through the same narrow passage He came so close I could have wrote my name on her starboard side and then to add insult to injury, he then drops his anchor about a half mile ahead of us?

We could barely make out the harbour entrance; the mist had turned into a heavy heat haze, but we managed to get in safely into St Peterport marina and at 16.00 hrs on the 8th of June after nine days on the move we started a three day shore leave!

Ships log 400 Gps log 519. Date 9-6-06.

- 2 -

In the month of June you can get the fourth night free, but only if you ask for it! It's hidden in the small print?

Guernsey is a great place to visit and there are lots to see even though the island is very small and it has a very good bus service to all parts of the island.

We went over to the Island of Herm for one of the days, you can walk around the island an hour, but it's still worth visiting!

We left Guernsey on the 12th via the little Russel Channel and went around Sark and continued on over to Dillete in Normandy, arriving there in the early afternoon.

We had to lie to anchor for a couple of hours due to the fact that most harbours on this coastline have tidal sills on them.

We had arrived half way up springs, which means that on the first hour it rises one metre, second hour it rises another two and on the third hour it rises another three metres, a total of six metres in three hours!

Ships log? Gps log? Date 12-6-06

We stayed in Dillete till the 15th, during that time we took time out to visit Cherbourg and spent a day wandering around the town; [it's not a great place to visit,] The marina is great and the waiting pontoons inside the harbour can accommodate very large yachts, the only fly in the ointment is that there are no shops in the immediate area and you must walk uphill for 4km just to get bread, otherwise, it's one of the safest marinas in the area.

We decided to set out for Alderney, we never fancied doing the Alderney Race, but as it was there to do, we had to give it a go!

- 3 -

Alderney.

To visit Alderney two things are vital. One is a good set of eyeballs and the other is radar, the reason is very simple, you will not believe one without the other? Forget about the chart plotter or

use it with extreme caution! and definitely do not have it connected to the auto helm, as it would be extremely dangerous.

The tide swings through the underwater channels and can create huge eddies, which can swing 3 to 4 knots sideways and then flow at up to 8 knots over the reefs and rocks, causing huge overfalls!

Having said all that? We arrived safely in Alderney harbour and picked up a visitors mooring and then got a water taxi ashore. Alderney is tiny and we were able to walk most of it in one day, the island is very quaint and the town is charming. There is a big campaign to get people to come and live permanently on the island, and when you look around it appears that most of the people are of an older age group and of those we saw there were a number of eccentrics, it was all very charming.

Ships log? Gps Log. Date 15-6-06.

We checked with the harbour office about the Alderney Race and were given the best and safest time to enter it. We followed the information to the letter but when we entered the race it was impossible to achieve our original track that we made going up into Alderney harbour, its hard to believe that even at slack water we had 3 knots across our track.

We left Alderney at 13.45hrs, headed for Cartaret in Normandy and arriving in the marina at 21.15hrs.

Ships log 469nm and Gps log 597.3nm. Date 16-6-06.

The marina is situated between two towns, both are beautiful and the people very friendly, we decided to stay in Cartaret for three days, before heading for Gorey in Jersey.

- 4-

We left Cartaret at 7-30hrs on the 19th and headed for Jersey.

It is just a 30nm journey, but with f 5 on the nose the seas were short and lumpy and when we least needed it we ended up with a lobster pot on our rudder, lucky it wasn't the propeller, we eventuality got ourselves clear and arrived at Gorey in Jersey at 15-00hrs. We were delighted to

find that it has been down graded i.e., no one to collect money! Free electricity, free showers and water on tap, happy days!!

Ships log? Gps log? Date 19-6-06.

Because there were no charges, we used Gorey as a base to see the island. There is a great bus service and the bus stop was right beside the boat. We stayed for four days and then moved on around to St Helier, We used the Violet channel, we passed through many unmarked rocks on the way, as you can imagine, the passage is considered to be dangerous [even the locals don't like using this channel] You must have the tides and the wind in your favour, but it makes for a great short cut.

We arrived in St Helier at 09-30hrs on the 23-06-06 having departed Gorey at 07-30hrs.

Ships log 449. Gps log 627.

We stayed in St Helier until the 26-06-06 and having availed of their bonded stores we departed for the Iles Chausey via the channel at the Minqueries.

This was an interesting passage down through the reefs, sometimes travelling at 8 knots. The water rises in this area up to 15 metres at springs and we were now in springs, the pilot books warn of the cardinal marks on the pier heads, the piers are 3 metres underwater at high water springs. There is no time to try to remember your cardinal marks because in a space of 200m there are 8 cardinal marks and all different, depending on your approach! You must be absolutely sure of your compass heading before entry.

We were able to pick up fore and aft moorings in the Pool and it turned out that these were free, happy days again. There were few visitors, except for the vendettas, who were bringing in day trippers to the piers.

Ships log 521. Gps log 652. Date 26-6-06.

- 5 -

The next day at low water the place looked like a lunar landscape with two piers attached to a large rock and a walkway to the shore. The place was beautiful, lots of beaches and plenty of walks; we stayed for 4 days and then set out for Grandville which is situated in Normandy.

We left Iles Chausey at 08-30 hrs on the 30-6-06 and arrived in Grandville at 10-30 hrs on the same day. Each place we visited was nicer than the last place and Grandville was no exception. The people are so friendly, no rip offs, beautiful beaches, well worth a visit again, we stayed until the 3rd of July.

We departed Grandville for St Malo on 3-07-06 at 10-15 hrs; once again we used the tides to our advantage and were able to use a drying passage through the rocks on the eastern approach to St Malo and this shortened our journey in by 7 nm, we arrived in Bas Sablon marina St Malo at 14-15 hrs, where upon we found that the Tall Ships were in St Malo for the weekend! It was another bonus for us.

We stayed in St Malo till the 7th and went up through the Barrage into the river Raunce. This is a lovely cruising ground and you could spend a week mooching about and there are lots of visitor's moorings in the Raunce. We watched the finals of the world cup in St Suliac in a tiny bar that could barely hold 20 people, but they fitted at least a hundred people into the room? The atmosphere can be imagined, **"and then they lost"**. We beat a hasty retreat back to the boat.

We stayed in the river Raunce for 4 days and then we planned to set out through the Barrage and headed for St Quay Portrieux.

At 07-00hrs on the 11th we decided to delay our exit from the Raunce, due to bad weather and poor visibility. By 09-00hrs everything changed, we were in the middle of a low pressure system and we knew it would not last long, so we decided to take a chance and crossed through several reefs {shortcuts} to get to St Quay Portreaux, which is an all tide marina.

- 6 -

Unfortunately there was no mention of the fact that at low water springs which is [minus 15 metres] that it was very dangerous from the east, that there is little or no water through the channels on its eastern approach until just outside the marina, you only get one guess at our time of arrival!!!

We crawled past cardinal marks perched on top of small hills; we were glued to our echo sounder until we arrived at the marina, scraping in with a half a metre under the keels, time 14-45hrs.

Ships log 603, Gps log 738. Date 11-7-06.

Portreaux is beautiful and is very reasonable and the people and staff great. As soon as we logged in, they hoisted the Tricolour.

All the cliff walks are paved and fenced and kept spotless, we stayed there until the 13th July and due to an oncoming change in the weather we decided to leave for Lezardeaux. Bastille Day was the 14th and we thought it would be nice to be tucked in to Lezardeaux for the celebrations.

Because of the strong winds that were forecast, we again decided to take a few short cuts through some dangerous reefs which are just below Ile de Breteval. This would save us several miles and meant that we would be able to carry the tides right up the river to the marina.

Lezardeaux,

We had a great time in Lezardeaux, The people were great, they only spoke mainly Breton and there was a small village atmosphere about the place, they made us very welcome indeed. There are lots of beautiful walks around Lezardeaux but the area is very hilly, you need to be fit to enjoy the area.

Ships log 622 Gps log 558. Date 13-7-06.

- 7 -

We received a lot of information about the area from people we met and decided to visit Ile de Breteval which is only seven miles out to sea; this island has its own micro climate and grows bananas, figs and dates, has no cars and the only way to get there is on your own boat or use one of the visiting vedettes, who carry huge numbers of day trippers.

Unfortunately it is very iffy for yachts mainly because of the strong cross and reverse flows of the currents in the area; these can and do, run at over 6k, so you need a good reliable engine. Tides in this part of the world flow at their strongest at **high and low water**, so when you plan to creep in somewhere, you are at most risk? We eventually, after much anxiety and loads of revs and hoping that the local knowledge was interpreted correctly, arrived in a beautiful drying anchorage called La Corderie, which is almost in the middle of the island.

As in most of France, when you use your anchor there is no charge and this made our visit here all the more pleasurable. We stayed for four relaxing days, waiting for the tides that would suit a passage west.

Ships log 628 Gps log 764. Date 16-7-06.

We were sorry to leave Brehat, but everything was right for the passage to Trebuerden. Because the passage was longer than the tidal gate, we decided once again to try and shorten our trip by cutting it fine and taking inside passages.

This was not without its problems, sometimes the tide would tear along with you and sometimes it would swing around against you, but all in all we managed two hours at 9 knots surfing through Sept Iles and around towards the entrance to Morlaix.

From now on we had to slow down; we kept cutting back the revs but to no avail, the tide had us and just pulled us along and our speed was eleven knots over the ground. At this point a very fast racing yacht kept shooting across our path; we were moving very fast and had difficulty establishing our path through the rocks and small islands.

- 8 -

It would seem that this yacht had the same problem and was staying with us, crossing over our bow and stern. In one of these manoeuvres he almost hit a small trawler on his blind side, which was on our starboard side and it was only then that he decided that it was best to keep clear.

We gave the trawler plenty of room and by doing this he saw our flag and waved to us, came around onto our course, wagged his stern and when we started after him he would wag his stern to indicate a change of course and brought us into places that would give you the willies, unfortunately the other yacht tried to follow us and almost clipped the trawler and just missed some underwater rocks, the trawler increased his speed and we followed him through all the rocks and he brought us right up to the marina entrance, he shot forward and we both entered at speed and were only in the marina when the lights on the sill turned red.

Just like all the other places we visited Trebuerden was a delight, the area is full of pink granite and the sunsets made it glow. the beaches are fabulous and have diving boards set into the seabed 100 metres offshore, plenty of life guards, I saw them blow a whistle and were totally ignored by this adult, they got on the radio, called in a boat, brought him ashore and removed him and his belongings from the beach and all the way to the roadside.

The only downside to Trebuerden is their beautiful supermarket, when you ask where it is, everyone points towards the sky, the supermarket is about two miles up a one in four hill and there are no taxis.

All the area around Trebuerden is sheltered behind islands and this makes for lots of beautiful beaches and lots of safe anchorages, we will definitely go back again if we get the chance.

Ships log 660 Gps log 795. Date 18-7-06.

- 9 -

Departed Trebuerden for Roscoff on the 24th July, we were not long out when the fog set in, so there was no going back to Trebuerden, we had the tide with us and it was only a six hour passage, the tides were very strong and there were lots of rocks about, so great care needed when you are on the approach to Roscoff.

We opted for the old harbour of Roscoff. This can only be entered safely two hours either side of high water, Reeds says only two hrs before high water?? We followed the leading marks in, these marks bring you through a very narrow channel and you can see the unmarked rocks on either side.

We only had two metres under us all the way into the inner harbour, we lay to the seaward wall and we were visited almost immediately by the harbour master, he was delighted to have visitors and he gave us all the info we needed to find our way around the town.

The town is built around the harbour, the buildings appear to be very old and are very pretty, the nice thing about Roscoff is that you can see everything in a few hours and it's only a short walk to revisit any place of interest.

Ships log 677. Gps log 811. Date 24-7-06.

We took the ferry to Ile the Batz and liked what we saw, we plan to revisit there in our own boat on one of our future passages.

While planning our next leg to L, Aberwrac, h, we realised that we could leave Roscoff for the Scillys and save 40nm, all this by just adding 15nm to our passage length from Roscoff to the Scillys instead of going from L, Aberwrac, h to the Scillys.

- 10 -

This set our thoughts on the infamous passage through the channel that is between Roscoff and Ile the Batz, this is a very twisting passage and the tides run really fast, but by using this passage you can cover **18nm in two hours** which is a great asset when on a long passage.

On the 24th at 05-30hrs we left Roscoff harbour and picked up visitors moorings just outside, then waited there until 08-30hrs, when we would get the full ebb of the tide down the channel.

Our passage across was uneventful except for the fact that we were going too fast, the tide lee bowed us all the way and got us there two hours before dawn. We had planned to arrive at daybreak, so we had to sit and wait until first light and then made our way into St Mary's; we were delighted to find Fougere on the ladder in front of us.

We only stayed one night in St Mary's and then moved up to Green Bay and anchored there for the night, the plan was to leave in the early morning and head for Padstow, in Cornwall.

Ships log 789 Gps log 929. Date 25-7-06.

06-00hrs on the 27th we departed Green bay for Padstow.

Our passage from Green Bay to Padstow went quite well, we had rain for about an hour, then sunshine and the company of basking sharks for the rest of the trip, our biggest problem was to

slow down and keep our average speed at 6k, otherwise we would arrive too early for the opening of the gate.

As we were passing Doom Bar I contacted Padstow, checked for a berth and arrived just as the gate opened, not bad timing after a 12hr passage!

We love Padstow! So when we saw the forecast we knew that we would be there for at least six days, and that suited us just grand.

Ships log 859, Gps log1001. Date 27-7-06.

- 11 -

The weather kept us in Padstow for eight days, so by this time we were fit and ready to hit the “road” and head out for Arklow.

We set out at 11-45hrs on the 4th August for Arklow, the seas were flat and the visibility good, which was just as well, because the shipping lanes at the Smalls Separation zone were very busy and they were taking no prisoners.

We were forced to alter our course [and plans] several times. Other than that, everything went very well and we arrived in Arklow in brilliant sunshine and got a nice berth on the outside pontoon, Fougere arrived in a couple of hours after us and we all headed for the town for real Guinness and big steaks.

Ships log 1006, Gps log 1148 passage time 25hrs.

We only stayed the night in Arklow and set out for the moorings at 13-30hrs on the afternoon of the 6th August and arrived back on our mooring at 19-15hrs, safe and sound! We had ten great weeks away, but it was great to be back!

Ships log 1069, Gps log 1186. Date 6-8-06.

Wild Again 2006.

John and Sheila.

