



# Cruising

[www.theca.org.uk](http://www.theca.org.uk)

**Tales from lockdown**  
**Crewing in Scotland**  
**Boating blunders**  
**London lecture season**





*A handy feature in CAptain's Mate is adding your name to your flag, right. When the Med Section Secretary is in Suffolk in summer, we know we are in strange times*

## Out of adversity comes opportunity

CA President **Julian Dussek** has found a number of benefits from the Covid-19 crisis, from Zoom talks to app development

Benjamin Franklin is reputed to have said "out of adversity comes opportunity" and this probably applies to the last three months for the Cruising Association. For much of this time we have been in lockdown and unable to attend public gatherings or even visit our boats. Confined to our homes, Zoom has come to our rescue and we have enjoyed a series of eight webinars. Alison Hadley arranged an excellent series of talks and interviews, but instead of being experienced by about 70 members in London they have been seen several hundred people on each occasion and subsequently viewed at a later date by as many more. Viewers have come from as far away as the Cayman Islands, South Africa and Dubai. The broadcasts all seemed effortless but Lucy Gray, our general manager, has been working from home every Tuesday night as studio manager and our lecturers have been very professional in delivering talks tailored to Zoom. All the talks except Jimmy Cornell's are available for viewing via the CA website at [www.theca.org.uk/cruising\\_info/videos](http://www.theca.org.uk/cruising_info/videos)

### Captain's Mate proves invaluable

At the time of writing it appears that the sailing season is returning to a sort of normal though governments can impose lockdowns at a moment's notice. CAptain's Mate should be invaluable with its messaging system enabling members to check up with other cruisers on the situation where they are.

I'm surprised how few people have taken the opportunity to put some form of identification alongside their boat name. It has been a relief to see some of our Caribbean cruisers back home and the ability to contact them by the 'tap to email' facility has been very useful.

Jesse James, the CA HLR for Trinidad, has been supplying a stream of vital

information about the situation there. Covid-19 has really caused chaos with cruising plans but the RAG (Red Amber Green) map produced by RATS (Regulations and Technical Services) is invaluable, with up-to-date information on all the countries in Europe. It's on the website opening page and also on our public page and has produced excellent publicity for the CA.

### What next?

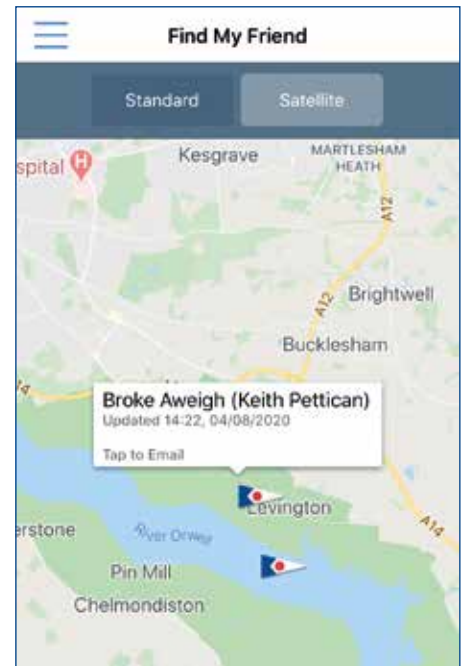
The question is, what next? I am writing this in early August, when I had hoped that the coronavirus would be nearly extinct, but new outbreaks appear to be occurring daily. It is assumed that matters will get worse again in the winter, which means that the number of people able to attend section meetings will be restricted. Perhaps hybrid meetings will be the solution, with a small number being able to attend the lectures but a much larger number viewing online.

The Galley and bar at CA House are now open and thriving, but we do depend for their profitability on the large numbers of people who came to the London meetings.

Another spin-off from this crisis is that



*The bleak entrance to Orikum Marina in Albania, where Aussies Kim & Stephen Kamarudin spent months in lockdown. They were doing the "Schengen shuffle", spending a mandatory 90 days outside the EU, which could become a reality for Brits too*



some sections have held informal meetings where members have been able to discuss problems relating to their areas. It is highly likely that such meetings will continue to occur using Zoom through the winter, in addition of course to the seminars, though these will probably be attended by fewer people. Covid and Zoom have propelled the CA into new territory.

Yet another unexpected bonus from the Covid lockdown is that work which would normally have stopped in the summer sailing season has continued. The Cruising Information Development Group is working hard on brand new CAptain's Mate. Having been beavering away during this period, they are ahead of where they had expected to be.

### Lockdown stories

We received a fascinating collection of stories from Albania, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Denmark, the Caribbean, New Zealand and the Fens and you can





read some on pp 6-8. They all have one thing in common: a lack of bitterness or recrimination against authority. An atmosphere of friendliness from the local people and fellow cruisers is a common theme. I have a particular sympathy for Kim and Stephen Kamarudin who were locked down in Orikum, Albania. We were there a few years ago and there is not much there. That there is a marina at all is bizarre given that it was built when leisure boating for Albanians was illegal. It is the only one in Albania and was very safe as there was a guard with a Kalashnikov at the main gate where there is also one of Hoxha's now disused bunkers.

## Aliens in a foreign land

On December 31 UK citizens will become aliens in the EU, their word, and only be allowed to visit the EU for 90 in any 180 days, whereas EU citizens will be able to visit the UK for six months visa free. In April we were told that this was non-negotiable, but as a result of our campaign and that of the 180-day visa free organisation it appears that negotiations are now possible. Another factor likely to have more impact is the withdrawal of EHIC. This means that we will all have to have private health insurance, which for those of us who are maturing and wanting to spend any significant time in the EU could be

prohibitively expensive. We are trying to arrange a special policy to suit CA members who are almost certainly different from the general public.

It has taken a lot of work but The Galley, bar and cabins are now open in CA House with all the necessary bio-security measures in place. Please do come to London and use them.

The next issue of *Cruising* will be in December. Will we have the usual Christmas festivities, will we have the carol service? Heaven only knows, but I am sure our staff and members will rise to the challenges whatever they might be.



**Moving out of lockdown:** Social distancing is in place at CA House, with restricted numbers and a one way system through the building. Ania is safely protected behind a screen at the bar, tables are spaced and there's room on the terrace, weather permitting



## From the forums

### Change of address for long-term cruising

We are soon to be going off to live aboard, and letting our home. We are looking for ideas on how other sailors have managed change of address (as we won't have one). We are undecided on how to proceed with banks, insurers, HMRC correspondence, credit cards, electoral roll etc so any ideas, or suggestions and notes on positive/successful experiences would be most welcome.

**Paul Simmons**

Almost everything can be done online but there's a niggling dribble

of physical correspondence: junk mail, official correspondence, letters sent in error or forwarded, surprise correspondence from long lost friends, etc. Also, governments and financial businesses don't understand itinerants. Our best solution (by far) was to rely on a trusted relationship. Get all your mail re-directed to them, get them to open everything, assess and categorise it, then deal with it as previously agreed. It surprised me just how much physical mail endured.

**Alan Dowie**

We didn't want to burden parents, kids selfishly kept moving and some post you don't want relatives looking at so we engaged the services of Jackie at New Forest Back Office. She is now our postal address for everything. Jackie

applies common sense to what comes in, scanning obviously important stuff, asking where you want physical stuff like credit cards sending, and do you really want 12 pages of pension statement scanning? All for a modest sum per quarter. [jackie@nfbo.co.uk](mailto:jackie@nfbo.co.uk), 02380 868391

**Ian Moulding**

A close relative works well for us. Another difficult issue is Power of Attorney (I assume you've made a will). PoA is worth arranging just in case something serious happens to you, and you can't manage your affairs temporarily.

**Rachel Chandler**

Join the conversation at [www.theca.org.uk/forum](http://www.theca.org.uk/forum)

# Hanging around in Brixham

Some years ago we decided to take a family cruise during the Summer half term on my old yacht *Cloudburst*. Rather than “do the Solent” yet again, and to avoid a long voyage with the children, my wife and daughters aged 10 and 12 were to drive to Brixham while my heavy crew and I would do an express sail from Chichester.

We had a fast and uneventful sail arriving in Brixham at 0230 and mooring on the Yacht Club pontoon, which is 30 metres from the quay but not connected to it.

As was a tradition with my heavy crew, after a long trip we had a huge fry up and washed it down with copious amounts of Scotch, the new bottle ending up in the trash bin thus ensuring sleep!

We were woken mid morning by shouts of “*Cloudburst!*” to see my family crew standing on the quay in the gentle rain. I threw on some clothes and my heavy weather trousers and jacket and boots. I unleashed the inflatable and dropped it into the water.

I then sat on the pontoon and untied the dinghy, pulling it under my legs, gently lowering myself into it. Halfway down, with my hands behind me on the



pontoon my progress stopped. I could see over my shoulder that my jacket had caught on the horns of a mooring cleat! I could not go down and could not get back up, totally stuck!

The situation was made worse by the hoots of laughter from the quay and the fact I had dropped the dinghy painter in the meantime and it was now floating slowly towards the open sea!

Worse was to come – my jacket began to tear, and I began to drop slowly into the water filling my boots.

Help was now at hand as the shouting had roused my heavies who amid convulsions of mirth pulled me back on to the pontoon. The inflatable was rescued by the Frenchman on the adjacent boat, confirming his impression the English are totally mad.

Graeme Jupp



In the best traditions of the boating press, we are running a new series of Boating Blunders in *Cruising* magazine. We want you to tell us about the silliest mistake you have ever made while sailing... or maybe the silliest you're willing to admit to. The best will be published in each issue of *Cruising*, alongside a cartoon by wonderful marine illustrator Claudia Myatt. The original artwork will be the prize for the winner each quarter.

Send your entries to [editor@theca.org.uk](mailto:editor@theca.org.uk) before November 1 for the December issue with the subject line “Boating blunders”. They should be no more than 300 words.

**CREW:** “I was born in Brittany and sailed as a youngster, but young children, a seasick wife (!) and work kept me away from ‘serious sailing’ for 15 years until 2018, when I went back to the French Atlantic coast and then sailed from Lanzarote to Antigua. I have a much more flexible schedule now. I speak fluent English, French and Spanish, and can express myself in Italian too.”

## Join the Crewing Service

The CA's Crewing Service puts skippers in touch with crew and crew in touch with skippers. Even if you can't go sailing at the moment, why not take time to contact potential crew members? We usually have crewing meetings at CA House during the winter.

There's just a taste of what's on offer in our crew and skipper listings in the quotes here. To read more, go to [www.theca.org.uk/crewing/welcome](http://www.theca.org.uk/crewing/welcome) – or check the Crewing Service forum.



**SKIPPER:** “I plan a leisurely circumnavigation of Ireland in 2021, taking 16 weeks, comprising 8 two week legs from Harwich to Cork, Dingle, Galway, Sligo, Lough Foyle, Carlingford Lough, Cork and home. If you're interested in any leg please contact me asap. If you haven't sailed with me before it would be good to have you on board for a weekend beforehand.”





Poole Harbour is one of the areas under consideration as an HPMA, where anchoring and mooring could be banned

## Anchoring & mooring could be forbidden in highly protected marine areas

The Government has recently published a report on the potential of Highly Protected Marine Areas. Forty percent of England's seas are designated as various types of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) yet the government's Marine Strategy assessment shows that the environment is not in a healthy state. The review, chaired by former Environment and Fisheries Minister Richard Benyon, asks whether areas with higher levels of protection could enable a greater recovery of the marine ecosystem. It comes out strongly in their favour.

UK's current network of MPAs protects discrete habitats and species while allowing sustainable use to continue, but many adverse activities are still permitted. HPMA's would go further by taking a whole site approach and only permitting certain activities within their boundaries including perhaps vessel transit, scuba diving and kayaking. These areas would be highly controlled.

Activities that could have a damaging effect on habitats or wildlife, including fishing, construction and dredging would be banned. The review lists anchoring/mooring among the activities which would not be permitted at all, but it does not define mooring. The review claims the introduction of such areas could lead to a significant biodiversity boost for our seas by giving our marine life the best chance to recover and thrive, and this has been found correct in other countries.

We all want clean and biodiverse seas for our recreation and in broad terms the CA supports this move. However, we need to ensure that recreational boaters' interests are heard. Offshore HPMA's will not be of concern to cruising vessels, but those inshore may affect some of our freedoms. The list of possible locations in the report is extensive and was compiled from suggestions by individual members of the panel. However the panel could not provide a recommended list of locations because of the restrictions of Covid-19.

RATS is analysing the plans for HPMA's in detail, and we plan to publish more details in a future edition of *Cruising*.

To read the report on HPMA's, go to [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) and search for Highly Protected Marine Areas.

## Lights, camera, action...

Nowadays, almost every phone can take video. Not to mention almost every camera. Which is good, because we need some video to spice up the CA's YouTube channel. If you've got a bit of video (even a few seconds) that you've shot and are pleased with, we'd love to see it, raw or edited. We're starting the initiative this month, and we're happy to see anything cruising-related – but we're especially looking for sea creatures seen from a boat. Dolphins, porpoises, whales, flying fish, the kraken or Nessie. Any or all will do. Contact Lucy if you'd like to send in something: [generalmanager@theca.org.uk](mailto:generalmanager@theca.org.uk)



**SMALL PRINT.** You must hold the copyright for the video and you must be happy to allow the CA to use it royalty-free. Any music added must be copyright free and any images included are also copyright free, or you have permission from the owner to use them. Full guidance is on the [CA videos page](#).

### Don't forget The osCA

If you're putting together a video don't forget **The osCA**, sponsored by MS Amlin Boat Insurance. It's one of the CA's log awards given to the best video log entered each year. With such a short cruising season we may be short of entries for 2020, so that's another reason to start filming.

### Podcasts and videos now combined

The CA's videos page is your best route to CA member-only videos, including recordings of most of the very successful summer webinar series. It now also includes all of the podcasts made to professional quality by South West section secretary Trevor Taylor. The two most recent are based on talks given to the SW section before lockdown: the *Mayflower Autonomous Ship* (also featured in June's *Cruising*) and an interview with the Queen's Harbour Master Plymouth.

To find the page on the CA website go to **General info > CA videos**. You'll also find helpful tips on making both videos and podcasts.



# Tales from lockdown



The Covid-19 pandemic saw most of us restricted to our homes from late March 2020 onwards, but a number of intrepid members were aboard their boats. Some live aboard, some had popped out to do a bit of maintenance, and some were in areas where March is the sailing season. Here is a selection of their stories

## Orikum, Albania

G'day from a couple of Aussie cruisers. We bought our Moody 38 CC *Mimpi* (it means "dream" in Malay) in October 2019, sold everything in Perth, Western Australia and started living on board in late November. We stayed in Lefkada, Greece for winter, however the Schengen shuffle meant heading north.

When we arrived at Orikum Marina, near Vlore in Albania, in March 2020 our plan was to spend a month exploring before deciding whether to sail north to Montenegro or south to Greece.

Less than 10 days later, the borders closed. We had been following developments but didn't take it too seriously until receiving an email from the marina director stating the marina was closed, departure prohibited, and local travel limited to weekdays between 5am and 5pm for one hour.

We considered travelling back to Australia but the reasons for staying outweighed going. We had everything we needed aboard our floating home. However, we were the only people living at the marina.

From March to May the weather was still cool, so walking 15 minutes down the road to buy weekly groceries wasn't a big deal. Since then we have borrowed a friend's car to shop. We quickly discovered people pay for everything here with cash, from 120 Leke for a loaf of bread to 42,000 Leke to hire a car (incl deposit) for two weeks.

Orikum Marina is a private Italian-owned marina, with about 50 boats, most of which are motorboats. The front gate is guarded, and port police have an office here. Staff speak limited English and are fluent in Italian. There are adequate toilet



and shower facilities. Staff will organise fuel and have been willing and helpful to assist with our questions and needs.

Initially we spent rainy days reading, watching movies or doing minor boat jobs and repairs. We got a bit sick of each other's and even our own company after a month or so. Daily walks made a difference to our mental health and relationship. Family and friends kept in regular contact plus we figured out how to top up our data online, which made a big difference.

Albanian authorities confirmed that overstaying our 90-day visa would not be a problem – phew, because that deadline came and went in May. Most other people and authorities have simply been curious about how we got here.

### *Did I mention we're the only people living at the marina?*

Any major boat jobs or upgrades weren't possible while in Albania due to the extra costs to import and deliver goods. We found one marine store near Tirana when internal borders re-opened in June and a small operator for limited marine items in Vlore but in general, we were out of luck.

Covid-19 has been inconvenient but it has actually been beneficial for us. Why? We had to slow down; we literally couldn't go anywhere. Sitting still is challenging for us, so this time

has provided valuable learning about ourselves, each other and our boat.

In late June we were allowed back on the water to go day-sailing. With few other boats around it's been perfect for us to learn about our boat, how to sail her, what works and doesn't work and what needs maintenance and/or repair.

Also, since internal borders opened, we have explored more of Albania which has been glorious and unexpected. We have met some really lovely local people, gained insightful knowledge and made some precious friends.

Limited cases have been reported in the Vlore region, but with internal borders open and temperatures rising, people have been flocking to the beach. We are protected here in the marina, but locals are feeling the pressure and uncertainty this pandemic has created.

When the second wave of cases hit Albania's capital in early July just days after borders were opened, Montenegro closed its border to Albania once more. Fingers crossed, the EU re-assessment, due mid-July will see northern borders re-open so we can continue our adventure northward. Until then we are safe and happy on board.

**Kim & Stephen Kamarudin**  
*S/Y *Mimpi**

*Follow Sailing *Mimpi* on YouTube, Facebook or Instagram*

## St Lucia, Caribbean

Tony and I arrived at Pigeon Island, St Lucia, with the ARC+ in December. Then Rodney Bay was packed, but by March our Dufour 39cc was anchored alongside five other boats, with around 30 others stretched across the whole of Rodney Bay

When the virus hit, we found ourselves in a real quandary: should we lay up in St Lucia and fly home while we still could, or stay put and see what happened? After much discussion with family and other yachts on St Lucia, we decided to wait and see, and bolt south at any sign of a hurricane. We had been en route to lay up in Trinidad and fly home early May when the islands started shutting down.

Our vague original plan had been to sail for two seasons in the Caribbean islands with a visit home to see family and for me to return to my job as an occupational therapist for a short while. Our UK home was rented out, and the boat was our home for the duration.

Many hours were spent discussing future options, depending on which countries opened up again, and the risk of hurricanes and boat insurance. We felt we had it sorted with our plans A, B, C and D!

The first two weeks we provisioned the boat well without panic buying. There was no restriction on items at this point but it felt wrong to stockpile when many locals did not have resources to do so. On subsequent trips to the local supermarket in the early days of lockdown, a few people asked for food, and we wished we could have done more than offer a few bucks and a sandwich. Our dinghy was looked after at the dock and the shopping trolley returned by a local chap



trying to earn himself a living; people still have pride and want to work for what little they are given.

We did not want to shop too often, so meals became experiments, some working better than others! We also exchanged recipes and did taster sessions with our yacht neighbours. Mango cake became a firm favourite.

### *On trips to the supermarket a few people asked for food, which made us very uncomfortable*

No walking was permitted unless for shopping, so a regular swim was important to our wellbeing. Staying in daily contact with friends and family at home helped to ease our worries. A typical morning involved chatting with family, reading BBC news and Facebook updates from other yachties spread around the Caribbean Islands. The days passed surprisingly quickly and we read many books!

We became close friends with our neighbouring yachts, often hanging off the back from a fender or in the dinghy for a long chat. Supporting each other and those at home was probably the most important part of lockdown, without it things would have felt very different and very lonely I'm sure. We managed Zoom chats and a family quiz which helped morale enormously.

We are grateful to S/Y *Tiki Tour* for their marvellous organisation and support. They arranged a WhatsApp chat for those at anchor and in the marina. We listened in to an organised Net at 0800 each morning for an update on the Covid crisis and AOB. The marina manager

kept us up to date, the marine police did regular patrols around the anchorage and we found the local people friendly and respectful. Never at any time did we feel threatened or worried about our safety.

Some days were harder than others but we would say to ourselves "Nelson Mandela or Terry Waite", which usually put things into perspective. Basically, no moaning was allowed.

Around the 10-week mark lockdown started to ease slightly, a few restaurants started doing take out, so we treated ourselves to pizza and ice cream, it was calorific but delicious. Most of our neighbouring yachts were like us, feeling restless; the bottoms of the boats were in need of a weekly scrub and the crabs had taken up residence, we needed to sail. We arranged with the marine police for a few of us to sail in convoy to nearby Marigot Bay which was great fun although not far. By this time the curfew was from 5am to 9pm. There were no active cases on the island, so we felt safe enough to socialise at a sensible distance. We did feel like naughty children but it was so necessary to chat normally again. There was still no alcohol on sale so boats were on dregs.

By June a few of our friends had already sailed back to the UK or USA, not something that we felt able to do. We were tired of sitting around at Rodney Bay deliberating over our limited options and missing family. We decided to leave St Lucia for Antigua with the plan of shipping the boat to Southampton by mid-July and then living on her back home with the hope that life will return to normal for everyone soon. Our Caribbean adventure may be over but a new one is beginning.

**Sue Taylor & Tony Rogers**  
*S/Y Mirabella*





Impromptu participating in the Midsummer Sail Regatta after restrictions were eased. Photo: [www.midsummersail.com](http://www.midsummersail.com)

## Rødvig, Denmark

I did not make it back to our usual winter home – Cowes – this year. *Impromptu* spent the winter in Rødvig, Denmark, about an hour's drive south of Copenhagen. When Denmark and Finland locked down, I escaped Finland (where my work is) on the last flight out to Denmark, determined to spend the lockdown, which I expected to last maybe a month, on the boat, so that I could at least get some things done there during a time when I would not be having any face to face meetings anyway.

This was March 15, and unfortunately Denmark had already closed its borders a few days before. I arrived at passport control with boat documents and a letter from the harbourmaster declaring that my boat was in Rødvig. The border guard was astonished that I was trying to get

through the closed border, and the discussion of my case went through two more levels to the head of the border guards at Copenhagen. Their main problem was that although I claimed to use the boat as a residence, I had no legal registration in Denmark. It did not compute in their bureaucratic minds. But they were exceedingly friendly and eventually let me through.

Well, as it turns out, the lockdown lasted almost three months. Rødvig is a lovely place, with lovely walks along the famous Stevns cliffs, but I could not sail. It was pretty crazy living alone on the boat without moving for all those months, unable to travel to my close people and normal life. Lots of Zoom calls was not a solution. Fortunately there was no actual "lockdown" in Denmark – no stay at home orders, no shop closures, no ban on small gatherings, so with a rented car (less than £100 a week for a nice Mini Cooper) I was able to do some things and occasionally go to Copenhagen to see my friends there.

I was busy with my work and didn't get much done on the boat.

Like many people in lockdown I started

to lose track of time and confuse the days. Like many people, the lack of a haircut drove me crazy, and I stood in line for hours when the hairdresser salons reopened at the beginning of May.

I did escape once, in late May, to Tallinn and thence by ferry back to Helsinki, to spend a couple of weeks getting caught up with different things there. Both borders were theoretically closed, but again I managed to talk my way through them. Again the border guards everywhere were very friendly. By the time it was time to return to Denmark I had expected that *this* border would be open, so I had to talk my way through that closed border yet again. The result again was the same.

I would not like to do this again. Crazy times.

By June I was sailing north of Gotska Sandon participating in the Midsummer Sail Regatta. I don't know what this summer's cruise will be like. I had thought to cruise in Sweden, but this may make it difficult to go somewhere else. So I might actually end up right back in Finland and Estonia for a while.

**Cameron Sawyer**  
*S/Y Impromptu*



## Great Ouse, England

We don't have a house, but we do have two boats: *Papagena*, a Dutch-inspired 17m motor boat for winters on the Great Ouse, and *Razzmatazz*, a sporty 9m sailing catamaran for our summers in Greece.

We were on *Papagena*, preparing for our flights to Preveza in Greece, when the lockdown kicked in. If you have to endure a lockdown, it is difficult to imagine a better place than a comfortable motor boat in spring on arguably the nicest mooring on the most beautiful stretch of the Great Ouse, near St Ives. Our mooring

is a cutting off the river with half-a-dozen boats, three of us being liveaboards.

We've woken each morning to a riot of birdsong. We look out across the river with its swans and ducks with their young in tow, to a water meadow and then trees and a church spire on the horizon. We're no experts on birds, but the ones we can see include woodpeckers, herons and a kingfisher.

Every day we have been able legally to cycle through the woods along the river to the nearest supermarket, Waitrose, in St Ives. They have had great difficulty with managing their stock, so we have been overeating roast beef, sole and halibut at half price! We usually miss the asparagus season, but this year we have been able to cycle to a local farm for fresh daily supplies. And this has been supplemented by their strawberries, raspberries and cherries in June.

For exercise we could choose between

walking the meadows, cycling into the low hills on either side of the river valley, and rowing our skiff on the river. Nearly everyone around has been respectful of the rules. The only exceptions have been one or two madcap cyclists who barge though at speed, and latterly groups of youngsters partying by the river, and chucking their empties into the water.

For once, I have managed to finish my winter project – a solid-state anemometer to replace the fickle and now broken Raymarine spinning eggcup machine. Maybe proper liveaboards would regard it as cheating, but I have a shed on shore alongside the boat.

Finally, as the restrictions have eased, we have been able to invite friends and grandchildren for river cruises and picnics on our aft deck, all with proper 2m spacing.

**Tony & Ann Montgomery-Smith**  
*M/Y Papagena*



# CA London lectures: autumn 2020

This season's lectures for the first time will be available to every member with an internet connection... and hopefully also to a select few at CA House. However you attend, topics are the usual fascinating mix, from London shipwrecks to the Lofoten Islands

At present we are hoping that we can run this year's autumn lectures, as we have done in the past, as social events.

We will also **broadcast the Wednesday night talks as webinars** to members unable to attend in person. Should we not be able to use CA House at all, the lectures will still go ahead as webinars only.

All events are open to any member, subject only to restrictions on numbers. At present, social distancing measures mean we can accommodate 24 people in the Assembly Room. Members of CA London section will receive weekly reminders as usual with the booking links. If you are not on the section mailing list, please check the events listings on the CA website.



## Wednesday October 7 Hanson Lecture, Mike Golding

Mike is one of the few yachtsmen to have raced round the world non-stop in both directions. He will tell the inside story of the rescue of Alex Thomson during the Around Alone Race in 2006, a particularly difficult and dangerous situation which took place in the eye of a major storm, 1,000 miles south of Cape Town.

## Bookings

It will be essential to book places in advance given the cap on numbers allowed in CA House. To book any lecture, and to indicate whether you'll be ordering food, go to the CA website > Events and click on **Book Events Online**. Please pay in advance on the website, or by contactless on the door.

If we are unable to hold the event at CA House it will still be broadcast on webinar and prepaid tickets refunded. Webinar links will be published a week in advance of each event. Any problems with the booking system, call or email Jeremy on 0207 537 2828/[reception@theca.org.uk](mailto:reception@theca.org.uk)

## Wednesday October 14

### An Arctic Odyssey with Free Spirit, Dave and Jeanette Hardy

Dave and Jeanette recount the story of three months of fantastic sailing in what is arguably the most spectacular sailing in mainland Europe. Leaving their home port of Liverpool, they sailed the west coast of Scotland, continuing to Shetland, then crossed the North Sea without autopilot, which presented its own challenges. Continuing north they threaded through the intricate inner leads behind mountainous islands and imposing headlands to find secluded anchorages and harbours to rest, re-provision and even refill cooking gas cylinders. Passing north of the Arctic Circle, their ultimate objective was the Lofoten Islands, before returning to overwinter the boat south of Bergen and head home.



## Wednesday October 21

### It Shouldn't Happen to a Cat, by Iain and Penny Kidson

Iain and Penny won the *Yachting World* Family Cruising Trophy in the CA's log competition for their account of this cruise to the Netherlands with their grandsons. They set out for a standard trip. It was not to be. They found themselves in Oostende with a broken transmission which they repaired before going on to the Netherlands. But there was more damage than they thought and they were left engineless in Hellevoetsluis. Getting home produced mechanical and navigational challenges. Lessons were learned! But they made it – with some relief.

## Wednesday October 28

### Shipwrecks of London, by Robert Smith

With so many ships visiting London, it is hardly surprising that



*The MV Royal Iris – a former Mersey ferry – once hosted the Beatles, but is now slowly falling apart near the Thames Barrier*

**Wednesday November 18**  
**Annual General Meeting of the Cruising Association**  
 Starts at 6.30pm.



**Wednesday November 25**  
**Fifty Atlantic Islands, Nick Nottingham**

Having long dreamt of taking his own yacht across oceans, in July 2018 Nick Nottingham set off on an Atlantic Circuit which saw him visit 50 islands over a year. He explored Madeira, the Canaries, the northern Cape Verde islands, the Windwards and Leewards, and returned via the BVIs, Bermuda and the Azores. The presentation describes his voyage and includes several videos, including drone footage. Nick's log won the Lacey Trophy for the best CA member's website or blog.



**Wednesday December 2**  
**A long weekend in the shallow places of the East Coast, James Parnell**

James has had a love of East Coast sailing for the past 25 years. Last year James introduced his crew to the shallow waters written about by author Maurice Griffiths, by sailing their club boat, a Contessa 32, on a cruise of some of the places he wrote about. In this talk James will share some of the highlights and perils of their trip, and take the opportunity to celebrate Maurice Griffiths' work and love of the shallow and remote places. James will also share his favourite haunts and invite attendees to share their own special places and experiences.

**Wednesday December 9**  
**Our annual joint event with the Royal Institute of Navigation**

Webinar talk with Paul Heiney.

**Wednesday December 16**  
**CA carol service and supper**

Traditional carol service at St Anne's Limehouse, followed, we hope, by an informal Christmas supper at CA House. Details and times will be published later along with a booking link.

there have been thousands of shipwrecks in the Thames. This talk tells the story of 12 of those ships, from a Roman cargo ship to a mysterious sinking in the Cold War. Rob will show pictures and maps to accompany the talk, and give you some suggestions of places to visit to find out more about ships like the 17th century ship whose sinking shocked Samuel Pepys, or the ship full of explosives that still sits on the bottom of the Thames Estuary.



**Wednesday November 4**  
**The North West Passage, Past, Present and Future, Steve Brown**

In 2014 Steve Brown and his 60ft aero-rigged schooner *Novara* completed an east to west transit of the North West Passage (NWP) before going on to complete a 33,000-mile circumnavigation of the Americas. In this talk Steve will look at the history of the NWP from the first explorations in the 16th century and the "golden age" of exploration by the British that ultimately led to the first successful transit by the Norwegian, Roald Amundsen. He will also look at the more recent explosion in the number of successful transits, including his own, and discuss the impact of climate change on the Inuit who live in this region.



**Wednesday November 11**  
**The Whitbread Round the World Race, John Bartlett**

John's talk covers how the Whitbread was established, an overview of the first race in 1974 and his personal view as a participant in the last Whitbread in 1989-90. The race progressed into the Volvo Race, then the Ocean Race and, to come, the 2023 Ocean Globe race that offers the non-professional an opportunity to follow the Whitbread route. Crews will compete for the Big Red Trophy named after Sir Peter Blake's *Steinlager 2*, the only yacht ever to win all legs of a Whitbread Race.



# North with Narnia

**June Berridge** won the inaugural Hammett Trophy, awarded to the best log submitted by crew or skippers who have used the CA's Crewing Service. She describes her passage on *Narnia*, Derek Jones's Najad 441

The story begins with an email from Derek in December 2018 detailing his proposed voyage for 2019 and inviting me to contact him if I was interested. Interested? Was !! Derek had got hold of my contact details from my CA crewing profile and although we had not met before, I had never been to Ireland or sailed the West Coast of Scotland, so it was a no brainer.

The whole of the trip was six weeks going from Strangford Lough to the west coast of Scotland and back, with a crew change mid-way. I was part of the first leg and was on board from Strangford Lough to Gairloch. This log covers the middle week. As well as the skipper, on board were David [mate] with John, Jenny and myself as crew.

## May 19 [20 nautical miles]

We slipped Craobh Haven making for Loch Aline and headed northwards passing the isles of Shuna and Torsa towards the narrow passage of Cuan Sound on the northern tip of Luig. Apart from the northern entrance being a tad difficult to spot, the presence of charted rocks along the coast, and the strong tide, the first part is fairly straightforward. It gets a bit trickier when you get to the dog leg where the passage narrows to about 75 yards. The pilot book tells you to identify a perch about 8m inward from the edge of Cleit Rock and pass between this perch and the south end of Seil Island but avoiding the rocks off Seil. Keeps one awake!



We left the sound at Cuan point and continued northwards along the Firth of Lorn to the mouth of Loch Don on the Isle of

Mull where we anchored for lunch and caught sight of a square rigger leaving the Sound of Mull.

Suitably replete we weighed anchor and continued our journey to the beautiful and protected Loch Aline. Making sure we avoided the reef of Bolorkle Point to the east of the entrance we made our way up the loch, past the visitors' pontoons on the west side of the loch near the old silica mine and jetty, and found ourselves a quiet spot to anchor towards the head of the loch in sight of the rather grand Ardtornish House.

## May 20 [12 nautical miles]

As we left the quiet waters of Loch Aline we were met by wind on the nose so it was a short passage under engine up the Sound of Mull towards the lighthouse at Rubha nan Gall on the Isle of Mull. Pass Calve Island, take a turn to port before the lighthouse, and behold the picture postcard town of Tobermory with its brightly coloured buildings. There are sector lights to help by night, but by day just head past the Calmac pier towards the white distillery buildings. There are moorings or pontoon berths available as well as anchorages.



We enjoyed a night tied up on the visitors' pontoon which enabled us to use the laundry facilities and shop, as well as exploring the town without the aid of the dinghy to get ashore. An early evening stroll enabled us to enjoy a very picturesque view looking towards the Sound of Mull.



## May 21 [31 nautical miles]

A good sailing day, fine weather and good wind all the way to Canna, one of the small isles. It could be described as a day of navigation by lighthouse. In the Sound of Mull, we turned to port to pass Rubha nan Gall lighthouse and continued up the sound passing the lighthouse at Point Ardmore on our port side. A feast for the eyes was spotting a traditional gaff-rigged craft in full sail.

Keeping mid channel we exited the Sound of Mull before changing course to starboard to head towards Ardnamurchan Point and then towards Muck, the first of our small isles, in search of a lunch stop. The sea state made the bay at Camas Mor unattractive so we sought shelter in a small bay around the corner where we were undisturbed except for a local fishing boat checking his nets.



Lunch over we headed past Rum and turned to starboard to begin our transit of the Sound of Canna. The fourth lighthouse of the day, on the Isle of Sanday, was on our port side before we followed the buoys into Canna Harbour. A very pretty anchorage that is sheltered except from the east. Although the entrance is fairly straightforward, you do need to be mindful of two drying reefs, avoided by heading to the visitor moorings, or the anchorage, which is in line with the old church (now a private house). However the anchorage reportedly has much kelp and poor holding.



As well as the peaceful harbour and walks there was an abundance of wildlife to be seen, not to mention more classic boats to drool over.



## May 22 [21 nautical miles]

Another brisk day's sail. Having left Canna Harbour we headed in the direction of Soay, keeping the Isle of Rum on our starboard side. Once clear of the north west of Rum we turned to starboard and followed the Rum coastline heading towards the Sound of Sleat towards our destination of Mallaig.

There was a determination by some of the crew to put up the cruising chute. The ladies on board decided it must be a man thing that seemed to us a pretty pointless exercise given there was not long to run before we were due to turn into the Sound of Sleat and it would have to come down. Thus we elected to sit back in the warmth of the cuddy to watch the men do battle with the beast. Determination won, the chute was hoisted and was up for all of about 10 minutes!

The entrance to Mallaig is not difficult but is very busy with ferries and commercial traffic and you must call the harbourmaster before entering or leaving. The entrance is controlled by lights; three reds means a ferry is leaving or entering and no other craft may enter or leave without the harbourmaster's permission. As well as pontoons there are some visitors' moorings in the inner harbour. A night alongside gave us the opportunity to water up and replenish the provisions.

Being the terminus for the Jacobite Line steam train, as well as a hopping point to several of the isles, the town attracts a lot of visitors; hence there is a good choice of restaurants and cafes catering for all tastes and pockets.



While out inspecting the menus our attention was diverted to watching the locals try to extract a lorry that had grounded while trying to drive off a ferry. Oops!

## May 23 [12 nautical miles]

Derek wanted to take those of us new to the West Coast of Scotland to the remotest pub in mainland Britain, the Old Forge in Inverie on the Knoydart Peninsula, which is often called Scotland's last true wilderness as it is accessible only





boat or on foot. Over the years the population suffered under numerous landlords and in 1997 they formed the Knoydart Foundation to enable them to gain control of and self-manage their homeland through a community buy out of the old Knoydart Estate.

As Inverie is only a short run from Mallaig we started the day with a sail in the Sound of Sleat before heading back to enter Loch Nevis, keeping well clear of the rocks on the northern side we headed towards the narrows that mark the entrance to the loch.

A more striking landmark on the north side of the narrows, perched on Rubha Raonuill [Headland of Ranald] is a large statue of a religious figure looking out to sea with arms aloft. This is a statue of the Madonna erected when the peninsula was owned by the Catholic MP, Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, from 1952 to 1972. It is sometimes referred to as the "Plastic Mary", due to it being made of glass reinforced plastic.



Slightly further in the loch itself, perched on a small rock, is a large stone cross. This is the Bogha Don beacon that marks a drying rock and forms a transit with the church to help large vessels safely navigate a rocky ridge. I was struck by the height of the high water mark, denoting a huge tidal range.



Although you can anchor in the bay we chose to get closer in and use one of a handful of buoys laid by the pub and marked with a large V. Not easy to spot until you are quite close to the shore. Having safely tied up, the next task was to don life jackets and begin the exercise of ferrying everyone ashore in the dinghy. With a temperamental outboard motor, this was not necessarily a straightforward run. Oars to the rescue and mind you don't fall in when trying to get out when alongside the slipway.



Dinghy safely moored up, it was time to sample the local brew at the renowned Old Forge, explore Inverie and admire the views before evening meal on board.

## May 24 [28 nautical miles]

We took a last look at the magnificent Munroes of the Knoydart peninsula and headed out through the narrows before turning starboard into Armadale bay and heading north up the Sound of Sleat. We were going to transit the very narrow Kyle Rhea at the head of the sound and pop out at the top into Loch Alsh. Narrow is the key word and related to that is tidal stream, which predictably can be very fierce, in the order of 4.5 knots. In the north-going stream you have to keep a good look-out to avoid being set onto the rocks on the western shore of the narrows. We timed it right and got the push we sought without having to wait in one of the anchorages.

A number of isolated cottages are situated by the side of the channel and looked inviting for a summer retreat.

Having negotiated the narrows, the next things to keep an eye on were the small vehicle ferry that operates during the summer months and the fish farms. Beyond these and about one-third of the way along its course, the channel turns to starboard just before the Kyle Rhea lighthouse on the port side. The remainder of the transit was unremarkable and we exited into Loch Alsh. Keeping clear of the port hand beacon on Sgeir Na Caillich, we changed course to port to head across the loch to Kyle of Lochalsh. En route you get your first sight of the large road bridge to Skye, although on the grey day we were experiencing it didn't look so impressive.

Kyle of Lochalsh is not the easiest place to stop for fuel as it necessitates the use of long lines tied to the top of the jetty and getting ashore by climbing up a long ladder attached to the jetty wall. It was a sufficiently unattractive proposition for the ladies to decide that a shore run for top-up groceries could wait! The man operating the fuel bowser was very chatty and said that we must go to Plockton as there was a gin festival on. Plockton was already our intended destination, but we showed sufficient enthusiasm and thanked him for his idea.



After a rather hasty lunch while tied up alongside we continued our journey, passing under the Skye bridge, past the lighthouse and exited the buoyed channel into the inner sound.



The area is renowned for its wildlife and this collection of sea birds were put up when we passed close to them.

Plockton is a very attractive small town on the southern shore of Loch Carron and is entered either by going mid channel between the white old lighthouse on your starboard side and the port beacon on high stone rocks on your port side; or by going past the high stone rocks and the adjacent Sgeir Golach rocks before steering on a bearing of 065° towards a white beacon on the north shore and leaving the isles of Sgeir a Chinn and Sgeir Bhudie to port. Once you can see the conspicuous Duncaig Castle on the shore, turn towards it on a bearing of 164°. There are mooring buoys and an anchorage in the bay. A group of rocks, marked with lit beacons, lies on the west side of the anchorage. As there is reportedly a lot of kelp we chose to use a mooring buoy and drop the enveloped fee into the box on the shore.

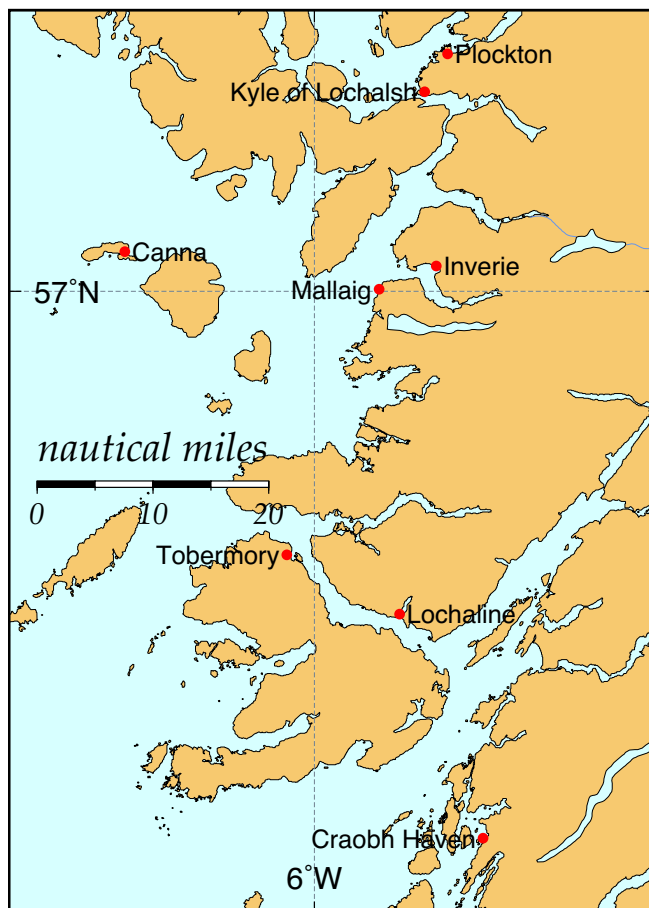
The main street in Plockton runs alongside the loch shore. It is flanked by old houses, shops, cafes and a hotel.



One of the features of the houses that border the loch edge is that they have their front gardens on the opposite side of the road, some of which go right down to the shore line. Many were well laid out and made very private with winding paths and hidden places.

On our shore run we found more of a music festival than a Gin festival, with live artists playing in the outside seating area opposite the hotel. Having seen the menu we decided to dine in the hotel. Although this limited the time available to listen to the live music our taste buds declared it an excellent decision. We still managed to catch the late performance and admire the evening views across the loch.

Our plan was to leave the next day and head for Skye but the weather gods had other ideas. After a lot of "umming and ahing" and consultation of every weather app and forecast available to us, stalwart sailors that we are, we decided to poke our nose out and see if we could motor to Skye.



Suitably clad in waterproofs we slipped the buoy and set off on a very rainy, miserable morning. Apart from the rain, the visibility was very poor and the wind direction made for such an unpleasant time that we only got about 3 miles before we decided that the weather gods had won, so turned around and re-attached ourselves to our buoy.

Three of the crew decided to take the dinghy ashore and head for the local hostelry. Skipper Derek and I preferred the warmth and comfort of Narnia to a cold, wet dinghy ride so got the lunch ready then settled down to await their return.

The weather gods didn't win for too long and next day we set off for Skye, but that's the start of another week and another log!



June, right, with Jenny

June Berridge took up sailing in her 40s. Now, 20+ years later, she is purely a cruising sailor. She has completed passages in UK, European, Mediterranean and Caribbean waters, happy to be a crew member but not a skipper! June is also Rear Commodore and membership secretary for the RNVR Yacht Club to which she has belonged for most of her sailing career.



*A magnificent sunset in the River Ore, Suffolk*

# Unlocked, and very grateful

**Boaters in England were finally allowed to stay on board from July 4. Cathy Brown has appreciated every moment she's been back on the boat**

Coronavirus lockdown has affected the membership of the CA in all sorts of ways. Most drastically hit were the intrepid international voyagers who were actually at sea when the doors closed – and in some cases did not find out about it until they made landfall days or weeks later and found themselves effectively stateless.

By comparison the rest of us had rather less to complain about, although it was extremely frustrating not being able to get to or use a beloved boat, whether kept at home or abroad. No surprise that the moment restrictions were relaxed we all rushed to make the most of the new circumstances – whatever and wherever.

The challenges of keeping a boat abroad were exacerbated by mixed messages – no two countries seemed to agree about what was or wasn't allowed, and there were additional complications including insurance, travel restrictions and disrupted supply chains to contend with.

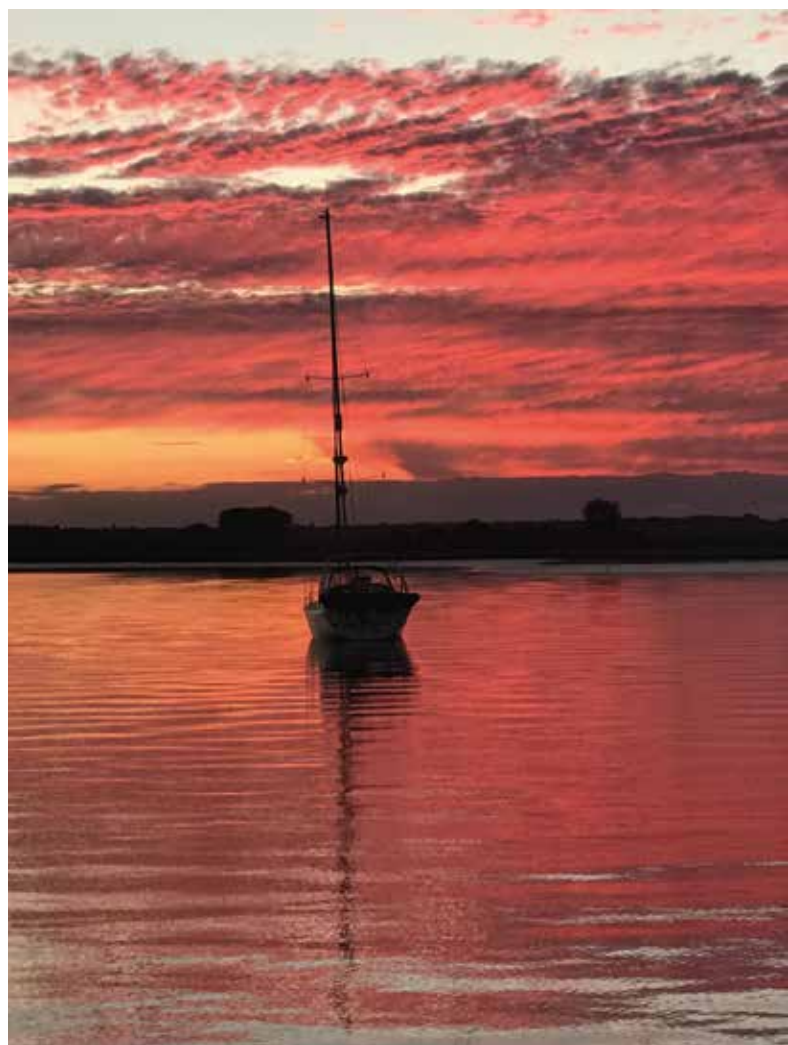
I tried to remember all this and keep a sense of proportion about our own, relatively minor by comparison, aggravation in not being allowed to access a boat actually within cycling reach. Then at last the marina was declared open, and we were permitted to visit the boat for maintenance, or even day trips, but still not allowed to stay on board overnight.

This seemed illogical – we would be putting ourselves and everybody else at no more risk self-isolating at anchor than at home. But of course the rules were designed to accommodate second homes, campsites and motor homes as well as yachts – and the fortunate owners of sleep-aboard leisure craft could hardly expect special treatment.

So we got very excited when we learned that from July 4 – “independence day” – we would finally be allowed the freedom of the water. It wouldn't quite be cruising as normal, with all kinds of restrictions still placed on all those lovely waterside watering holes, and harbour facilities in general, but at last we could self-isolate at anchor, as we had been hoping all along.

Such is sod's law of the sea that, after all the lovely weather experienced during lockdown, the weekend of July 4 was wet and windy, and we decided – along with most of our marina mates – to go nowhere at all.

It all came right the next weekend, with beautiful sunshine and very little wind (ideal for motorboaters, as we now are, less welcome for those with sails). Off we went to our favourite anchorage, Hamford Water in the Walton Backwaters, not



surprised to discover that lots of other people had exactly the same idea. There were about 25 boats there – more than we have seen in recent years, but still not at all crowded. And amazingly, our favourite spot had been left clear by all those who got there before us.

The weekend lived up to all our expectations. We could hardly stop saying: “Wow, isn't this wonderful?” as we revelled in the sea air, the birdlife on the banks, the light on the water, and a stunning sunset.

Being of mature years (like many CA members), we are still cautious about getting involved in shore-side crowds, so for the moment we plan to continue to enjoy life aboard at anchor. The Ore/Alde was the next destination, taking in two more favourite anchorages, with a sight-seeing trip up the river in between. On both days there were spectacular sunsets.

Philosophising over our sundowners we came to the conclusion that, whatever the downsides, there has been one real benefit of the lockdown: it had made us appreciate the small pleasures of cruising, the peace and solitude, the wonderful environment and its magnificent wildlife, even more than before.

**Cathy, a former editor of *Cruising*, is exploring new options with her husband Richard on their motor boat, *Attitude*. In their Arcona 410 *Brave* and her sailing predecessors they raced and cruised from Spain to Sweden and sailed around the UK and Ireland.**

