

Aslan's 2025 Summer Cruise

The great weather throughout April and May came to an abrupt end just before my planned departure date of 31st May and was the start of a run of Southerly winds and unsettled weather meaning a delayed start date of Thursday 5th June and a switch from plan A Baltimore and beyond to plan B the West coast of Scotland via the Isle of Man and the coast of Northern Ireland.

A number of other Royal Welsh boats had set off earlier in May bound for Brittany and a couple of others couldn't leave for a week or two so it was just Okavango and Aslan that set off from Caernarfon as soon as the gate on Victoria Dock opened at 1630 on Thursday 5th June for a night at anchor at Moelfre before sailing over to Port St Mary on the Friday, leaving at 0800 and arriving and berthing on the seasonal pontoon in the outer harbour at 1700 after a good sail across in a WSW F4 breeze and fairly lumpy seas followed by a beer or two in the Albert. I moved Aslan alongside the wall in the inner harbour the next morning to dry out for a bottom scrub and anodes check, returning to the outer harbour on Sunday.



Our next destination was Peel via Calf Sound so we left our berths shortly before 0830 on Monday 9th June with the HW slack period in the Sound, when the flow turns from SE to NW, due at about 0905. It was still quite lumpy on the 3nm or so down past Spanish Head to the Sound after the couple of days of W and NW F5/6 wind over the weekend and we then had a nice sail up to Peel in the SW3-4 breeze where we arrived at 1145 and proceeded into the inner harbour and onto our allotted berths followed by a lazy afternoon and then drinks and nibbles on board Charlotte Grace with hosts Tim & Jane Pilcher who were also in Peel on their way South.

We had a rest day in Peel on Tuesday when Rob & I walked up to Corrins Tower on the hills running S from Peel – a lovely cloudless day with a gentle SW breeze and we ate ashore in the Marine Hotel that evening. We left our berths as soon as the flap gate dropped at 1015 on Wednesday morning bound for Bangor, Co Down via Donagadhee Sound – there was a gentle SE'ly breeze for the first hour or two but never enough to be able to maintain progress and reach the tidal gate at Donagadhee Sound before the stream was due to turn SE shortly before 1700 so both boats motorsailed the whole way. We were approaching the Governor buoy at 1700 with the tide still running with us but by the time Donagadhee harbour was abeam to port we had 2-1/2kn foul tide and the wind had piped up to 20kn in the gusts kicking up a nasty little chop. Once we turned to corner at S Briggs buoy the wind dropped to nearly nothing again and we continued on to Bangor marina where we were on our berths by 1845 after a passage of 46.4nm.

The first real rain of the trip started at lunchtime on Thursday 12th and continued up until mid morning on Friday, luckily stopping shortly before we set off for Glenarm at 1300. I'd been joined by a friend Duncan who'd flown over to Belfast to meet me and sail up to Oban and we had a great sail up to Glenarm in a SSW10-18kn breeze just under Aslan's full genoa – we were on our berths in the marina by 1715 and enjoyed some excellent Guinness and a Chinese take away in the Coast Road Inn where the lovely and very hospitable landlady made us, as usual, feel welcome and at home. Saturday 14th was a truly vile day with constant lashing rain the whole day so we stayed put rather than venturing to sea – needless to say another trip to the Coast Road Inn helped pass the soggy day!

The rain had stopped when we left our berth at the somewhat early hour of 0455 on Sunday morning 15th for the passage up to Church Bay on Rathlin Island on the last of the ebb (LW Belfast being 0831 and slack in Rathlin Sound about 0800) – once again we sailed with just the full genoa in the SW3-4 breeze and the tide fairly rattled us North at around 7.5Kn OG so we soon covered the 15nm up to Fair Head which was abeam at 0730 but the wind had dropped away to nothing so we had to motor the rest of the way – the tides in Rathlin Sound take some figuring out, to say the least! Although we were passing Rue Point at 0815 there was 2-1/2kn foul tide and overfalls and the last 3nm to Church Bay took us an hour and we were on our berths on the pontoons at 0900. Rathlin Island is a delightful spot – like stepping back in time, very friendly and some great walks and bird watching opportunities.





We pressed on for Port Ellen on Islay on Monday 16th, leaving at 1400 to take advantage of the west going eddy up to Bull Point on the last of the flood but there was next to no wind for the 21nm passage over from Bull Point, despite the forecast of a W'ly F4 so it was a case of motoring, occasionally with a bit of assistance from the genoa. As we approached Port Ellen between the Oa and Otter Rock we had a knot or two of foul tide so, as often seems the case, the last few miles seem to take an eternity but we were on our berths in the small marina by 1900 after a passage of 24.6nm. We ate a quick meal on board and then celebrated our arrival in Scotland with a beer or two in the Ardvie Inn. It was wet and windy in the night so we opted for a "rest day" on Tuesday the 17th and, when the rain stopped around lunchtime Rob from Okavango, my mate Duncan & I opted for a walk along the path to the Laphroaig Distillery which turned into a long afternoon!

Okavango decided that they wouldn't continue further North so we bade them farewell on a fairly grey, drizzly and windless Wednesday afternoon and set off at 1430 bound for either Craighouse or Crinan. As it turned out we headed into Loch Sween instead and picked up a mooring off Castle Sween a mile or so inside the entrance for the night at 2050.

The next morning was much brighter and we set off at 0700 bound for Puilladobhain via the Sound of Luing. There was little wind so, apart from a short spell motorsailing past Corryvreckan, it was another day where the engine did most of the work. We dropped anchor towards the head of the inner pool at Puilladobhain at 1215 and, after brunch & 40 winks, rowed ashore and walked over the hill to the pub by the bridge over the Atlantic. The anchorage is a delightful, if fairly busy, spot.



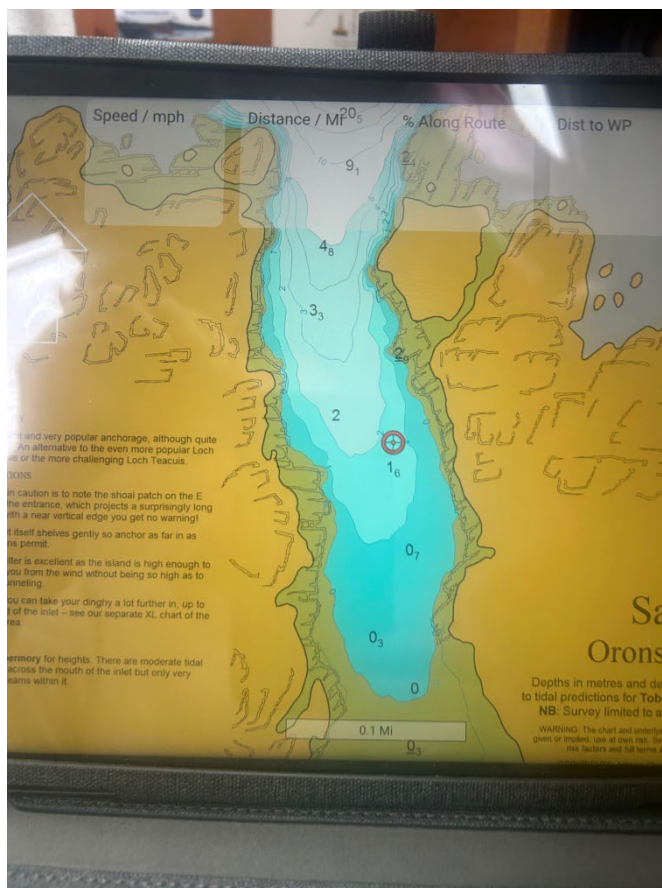
Duncan was jumping ship at Oban to catch an early train on Saturday 21st so we had a gentle sail up to the transit marina at Oban on the Friday afternoon.

Solo again I set off at 0945 on the Saturday morning bound for Tobermory with the N going tide up the Sound of Mull on a pleasant morning with a gentle 8-10kn S'ly breeze meaning Aslan was yet again sailing under just her genoa. I was approaching Tobermory about HW so took the short cut through the Doirlinn narrows, aided by the truly excellent Antares chart, and was on my allotted berth in the small marina at 1500 on a very warm and humid afternoon. Tobermory lived up to it's reputation of a lovely place and the Mishnish Inn was a great spot.



Sunday & Monday 22nd & 23rd were wet and windy so I stayed put in Tobermory with a couple of walks when the rain abated every now and then.

The weather forecast for the next week or more continued to look unsettled with spells of wind and rain so I decided to abandon my plan to round Ardnamurchan Point and head further North so my next short passage was over to the Sailean Mor inlet on the North coast of the island of Oronsay a couple of miles inside Loch Sunart. It was only a 5 or 6nm passage and I wanted to arrive around LW so that I could sneak as far as possible up the inlet as there was a fresh F4-5 W'ly breeze blowing and, despite Antares saying that the anchorage is sheltered in all winds, I wondered if a swell might find its way in. I left Tobermory at 1020 and once again sailed over and into Loch Sunart, passing S of the Stirks, under genoa with a couple of rolls in it and was off the entrance to a deserted and tranquil looking Sailean Mor at 1140, bang on LW. I anchored as far in as I dared and lay to 22M of chain with a bridle snubber estimating the depth would be about 6.5M at HW. This is a beautiful and isolated spot, quite narrow but flat calm despite the waves which could be seen passing the entrance and I was rewarded by seeing otters playing and feeding towards the entrance both in the evening and the following morning – a lovely sight!



I left Sailean Mor at 0700 on Weds 25th June intending to sail to Puilladobhain again with the S going tide down the Sound of Mull, needing to be past Lismore Lighthouse before the tide turned N about 1200. There was a gentle F2-3 SE'ly breeze blowing so, for the first time since the passage from Moelfre to Port St Mary, raised the mainsail and set off down the Sound. By the time I was passing the entrance to Loch Aline the wind had dropped to nearly nothing so

the main was dropped and the genoa furled and I continued on under motor, passing Duart Castle and into the Firth of Lorn at 1215 with the tide slack. Given the conditions I decided to press on and to make a first passage through Cuan Sound and head for an anchorage I'd had recommended in light S'lies at the N end of Shuna. I passed through Easdale Sound, very narrow but a doddle with the Antares chart, and was at the N entrance to Cuan Sound at 1615, about 20 mins before the tide turned S. Initially we had 2kn of foul tide but it was slack as I passed to the N of Cleit Rock (at HW Oban -2 hours) and I was soon anchored in the lovely little bay at the N end of Shuna.

After a quiet night I left at 0945 on Thursday 26th for the passage down to Ardfarn marina to meet up with Pyewacket and Carpe Diem who were sailing up from the Fairy Isles near Tayvallich at the top end of Loch Sween – I needed to pass through the Dorus Mor, where the tide rushes through at up to 7kn apart from the short periods of slack, somewhat like the Swellies, at about 1100 with the last of the SE going tide. The forecast was for F5 SW'ly winds to develop during the morning so I set Aslan's main with 2 reefs and a well rolled genoa for the 6.5nm passage down to Craignish Point and the Dorus Mor – it turned into a cracking sail, hard on the wind on a starboard tack with Aslan racing along and I was into the Dorus Mor just before 1100 with 1kn of tide still under us and the wind steady at about 21kn and then had a good sail up Loch Craignish to Ardfarn where I went alongside the visitor pontoon, as advised by the marina staff, soon after noon. The other 2 RWYC boats arrived just before 1300 and in the evening we walked up the short distance to the Galley of Lorn pub where we sat outside in the sun for a while and then ate inside. By 2300 the rain and wind had arrived and that pattern continued through Friday and Saturday with heavy showers and gusty SW'ly winds – it was calm enough in the marina and the facilities there are excellent with a well stock chandlery (I bought a set of Anchor-right chain markers and laid out Aslan's 55M of 8mm chain on the pontoon to fit them in one of the drier interludes between showers - I'm impressed by them, I fitted 3 every 5M from 10M up to 45M, they're a great improvement over the old cable tie markers!).

The 3 RW boats plus Moonstone, a 52' visitor from the USA whose crew Jay & Elizabeth are good friends of Fi & Chris Jones (Pyewacket) from their ocean cruising days, decided to move N on Sunday afternoon to the anchorage at the S end of Cuan Sound where Antares charts promise good holding and it being out of the fierce tide that rushes past Cleit Rock just a couple of hundred yards away. We left our berths shortly before 1300 so as to be at the Dorus Mor just prior to the tide turning NW at around 1350 that day and enjoyed a pleasant gentle sail from there up to the N of Torsa and the entrance to Cuan Sound. The tide was still running strongly to the N through the Sound past Cleit Rock but, as promised by Antares, we were completely out of the flow in the anchorage where I dropped in 3M with around a meter to fall and 2M to rise – a truly lovely spot where we had drinks and nibbles on board Moonstone (and a full tour of her voluminous interior, huge compared to Aslan!).

The holding is definitely good here in thick, black & smelly mud which clung to Aslan's decks the next morning despite many buckets of water and a lot of rain the next day!



The rain was just starting as we hauled our anchors and set off at 0800 on Monday morning bound, again for me, to Puilladobhain. I again took the slightly shorter route through Easdale Sound while the others sailed west of Easdale Island. We were all safely at anchor by 1000, the rain continued for most of the day and we dismayed to discover that the Tigh An Truish pub is closed on Mondays, but consoled ourselves that it would have been a soggy walk over the hill to it anyway!

By complete contrast Tuesday morning was beautiful, calm and sunny.



This was to be the parting of the ways for Aslan, as I was starting to head South, whereas Pyewacket, Carpe Diem and Moonstone were continuing North so we said our farewells and I left at 1030 bound for Loch Tarbert on the west coast of Jura passing the Garvallechs to starboard and Corryvrechan to port. Initially there was no wind but a pleasant SW 3-4 filled in around lunchtime giving me a great sail down the west coast of Jura under full sail with Sophie the Sea Feather wind vane doing all the work. It had been a long held ambition of mine to spend a night in the inner part of Loch Tarbert through the Cumnaen Mor narrows since first reading about the place in the Clyde to Colonsay pilot book way back in 1992 whilst planning a charter from Rhu the following spring. I was in the outer part of the loch soon after 1700 and I furling sailed and crept in through the Cumnaen Mor using a combination of chart, chart plotter and the wonderful Antares chart and made my way in complete isolation to the anchorage off the bothy on the north side of the inner loch. An hour or two later a motor yacht and another sailing boat came in and anchored over the other side about a mile away. What a wonderful spot – no mobile signal, no radio reception and, apart from the deserted small bothy ashore, no other sign of human life. The next morning I plucked up the courage to stick Aslan's nose through the very narrow Cumnaen Beag to have a look up towards the top pool. It was about an hour before HW but even at neaps there was a fair stream running through the narrow entrance (I guess about 20-30 yards wide) and, even though I had the Antares chart to guide me it was reassuring to see that the first set of transit beacons placed there many years before by the late & great Blondie Hasler were "spot on" the right course!





Excitement over I made my way back out through the Cumnaen Beag and Cumnaen Mor narrows and out of the loch and down the Sound of Islay, enjoying a lovely gentle sail under just Genoa round to Craighouse on the east side of Jura where I picked up a visitor mooring for the night and went ashore in the dingy to the newish pontoon for a walk then a meal and pint or two at the Isle of Jura Hotel – another lovely spot (the ferry to Tayvallich can be seen alongside the pontoon).



The forecast for the next day was rain and F5/6 winds from the SW so I decided to head back up the Sound of Jura for the shelter of Ardfarn marina – the rain and wind were just starting as I dropped the mooring at 0615 and headed for the gap between the 1st & 2nd of the Small Isles and out into the Sound where I unfurled a well reefed genoa and, despite the rain, had a cracking sail up to and into Loch Craignish “tacking” downwind and covering the 30nm in 5 hours and arriving on my berth on the outside of the visitor pontoon by noon with the rain just about stopping, which is more than can be said for the following 3 days when it rained for 72 hours out of 76 and blew up to 35kn on the Friday night! Ardfarn is a good spot to be holed up in though with, as mentioned earlier, good facilities and a well stocked village store and lovely pub a few hundred yards away which is well worth braving the rain for!

The rain finally abated on Sunday morning in time for my departure at noon heading for my next stop, Tayvallich which is 5 or 6 nm up Loch Sween and a passage of about nm. The forecast was for NW4/5 but there was barely a breath of wind as I motored south, with the mainsail set, close in to the mainland shore once past Loch Crinan down towards the island of Danna at the mouth of Loch Sween. As I passed Carsaig Bay I could see yachts to the west sailing and within the space of 5 minutes I had 15kn from the NW, which increased to 20-23kn as I turned into the entrance to Loch Sween leaving Keills & Danna rocks close to port. Once into the loch proper the wind moderated to around 10 -15kn allowing a good sail on a port tack up the loch in calm water. The wind became fluky a mile or so before the entrance into Tayvallich so I dropped sail and finished the passage under motor. The entrance into the horseshoe shaped bay at Tayvallich is very narrow but well marked with beacons as is the reef that’s in the middle of the bay. Luckily I was just able to squeeze Aslan onto the NW side at the end of the newish pontoon with her stern sticking out a couple of feet (the SE side has to be kept clear for the ferry from Craighouse). A great well sheltered spot with the village store & café at the shore end of the pontoon and the public conveniences and Tayvallich Inn about 3 or 4 minutes’ walk in opposite directions. The next day I walked over to Carsaig Bay and also up into Caol Scotnish.



I was up bright and early on Tuesday morning and witnessed a lovely sunrise just before setting off at 0615 for my passage back down Loch Sween and then on to Port Ellen, Islay hopefully with the tide with me most of the way until the final leg into Port Ellen. Despite a reasonable breeze being forecast it proved to be fluky the whole day so the passage was a mixture of some sailing, some motor sailing and some just motoring and I arrived in the marina at 1400 after a passage of 35nm. That evening Sadler 32 "Lunatic" all the way from Amsterdam arrived in the next berth so I invited Niels, Kelly and their 4 year old daughter Phylou on board for a drink and natter and they told me of their passage across the North Sea and then up the East Coast of England and Scotland to the Caledonian Canal & then down from there. Great to see a young family enjoying an adventure together!



My next passage was to be back down to Church Bay, Rathlin Island and my departure time from Port Ellen was determined by the need to be at the west end of Rathlin about an hour before LW Belfast so as to have slack tide and take advantage of the back eddy into Church Bay at that state of the tide. It was a grey and drizzly morning on Islay with a NW F4/5 wind forecast for my noon departure time so I pulled down 1 reef in the main prior to setting off – as soon as I was out in the bay proper and passing Otter Gander cardinal mark the wind was gusting up to 25kn so I pulled down the 2nd reef and furled away 5 or 6 rolls in the genoa and was racing along on a beam reach at 7kn for 20 minutes or so – ahead I saw another yacht approaching on a reciprocal course with no sail set “how very strange, why would you be motoring in conditions like this” I thought – by the time we passed each other I knew the answer as the wind had disappeared just as quickly as it had arrived and was down to 3 or 4 kn and that’s the way it remained for the rest of the passage across to Rathlin where I arrived off the West lighthouse an hour before LW Belfast and that 1-1/2 – 2kn back eddy took me into Church Bay in grand style!

I spent 3 nights in the little marina in Church Bay and enjoyed a couple of walks to the East lighthouse and the Rue Point lighthouse as well as a trip over to Ballycastle on the fast ferry as the wind blew fairly hard from the SE. The forecast gave a slight lull on Saturday before more windy weather from the SE for the North Channel so I decided to leave early on the Saturday morning to be past Rue Point and out of Rathlin Sound before the flood tide started running at around 0730. I set off at 0630 with a reef pulled down in the main to motor sail past Rue Point – as I approached Rue Point the wind was gusting 20kn so I pulled down the 2nd reef and continued out of the Sound on a starboard tack still with the engine helping. By 0800 I was a mile or so to the East of the Sound in quite choppy seas caused by the wind over tide conditions (as the tide had turned literally within the space of 5 minutes from flowing NW to SE) and the wind gusting to 22kn. A few minutes later the seas moderated so I hauled up my lovely new blade jib which I’d set and tested on Aslan’s detachable inner forestay the night before.



I tacked onto port and continued South in grand style fairly hard on the wind on a port tack with Aslan's lee deck getting a good washing from the sea. A hour or so later, as we passed Red Bay, the wind suddenly dropped to 3 or 4kn and that was the pattern for the rest of the day so I dropped the blade jib, shook out the reefs and unfurled the full genoa but soon "gave up" and continued South under main and motor with the tide pushing us South at a grand pace. As I passed Hunter Rock North Cardinal with over an hour and a half to go to HW Belfast I decided to give up my original plan to anchor at Browns Bay near Larne and to press on for Belfast Lough. The tide was just turning as I passed Black Head but the stream was weak and continued that way as I crossed Belfast Lough before anchoring towards the West side of Ballyholme Bay on a lovely warm Saturday afternoon.

I arranged to meet up with Julia & Neil on Starlight 35 "Seba", who had spent a few nights in Bangor marina, at 0745 the following morning and cruise in company with them for a few days in Strangford Lough and then the Isle of Man where they were heading to attend the Festival of the Sea later in July. They were motoring past Ballyholme Bay bang on 0745 and we continued together to and into Donagadhee Sound in very light conditions motor sailing with our mains set – once in the Sound, where the tide was already flowing SE, the wind picked up to about 10kn on the nose from the SE and kicked up a short chop near the Governor buoy – Seba looking like she was about to take off! Not a place to be in strong wind over tide conditions.



Given the fairly light breeze, never exceeding 10/12kn, it was choppy all the way down the Ards Peninsula to the Bar Pladdy buoy at the entrance to the Strangford Narrows where the tide was still in full flood up to and past Portaferry – motorsailing at about 5kn through the water I saw 11kn OG passing Portaferry where a regatta was taking place with, I guess, 50 boats buzzing around so quite a lot to dodge! We originally planned to anchor near one of the islands in the Quoile river but, given the forecast S5-6 overnight, ended up continuing up to Quoile SC where we were welcomed alongside their pontoon for the night.

We left at around 1pm the next morning bound for Ballydorn and the Down Cruising Club pontoon alongside the lightship Petrel which is their clubhouse. The forecast S5-6 turned into a 6-7 and we had a very fast sail up the Lough under well reefed genoa's with the wind touching 30kn on occasions – I was very glad not to be going the other way! Once through the narrow twisting channel into the “pool” where the lightship is situated it was flat calm with little evidence of the wind blowing out in the main body of the Lough. Neil, Julia & I celebrated with a Guinness in the bar on the lightship followed by a very nice meal and more Guinness at “Daft Eddies” on Sketrick Island a couple of hundred yards away.

The next morning Trevor, the Commodore, took us in his car to the fuel station at Killyleagh to fill some jerrycans – no problem he said “it’s only 5 minutes away” – I reckon it was more like 8 miles each way but this sort of hospitality is typical of everywhere in this part of the World!



We stayed a second night and sampled more of Daft Eddies’ Guinness before leaving a couple of hours before local LW on Wednesday morning, motoring South through Ringhaddy Sound, so as

to time our arrival at Portaferry marina around LW slack (about 2 hours after LW Belfast) before the flood starts roaring past and through the marina. The marina is small and basic but usually has visitor berths available and is the only marina I've ever visited where I'm welcomed with a "man hug" from Pdraig the manager – a real character!

Being their first time in the Lough I introduced Neil & Julia to the delights of "Dumigans Bar" just outside the marina – barely room to swing a cat and probably unchanged in 50 years it has Guinness to die for and you're guaranteed a side splitting laugh with the locals – a wonderful spot that's difficult to tear yourself away from!



The next day was fairly windy from the South so we stayed in Portaferry and doing a local walk as well and taking the ferry across the Narrows to Strangford Village with, of course, obligatory visit to Dumigans in the early evening.

The wind eased on Friday so we departed about an hour before LW slack in the Narrows and at the Bar (which occurs 2 hours after LW Belfast) – even though there was only about 6kn of S'ly breeze there were still breaking seas between Bar Pladdy buoy and St Patricks Rock so, once past Angus Rock with it's lighthouse, we turned to starboard and exited the Lough between St Patricks Rock and the mainland where there was much smoother water and continued down the coast for the 5 miles or so to Ardglass marina where we berthed for the night (yet more Guinness and an excellent "chippy tea").

We left shortly after 1000 on Saturday morning bound for Peel, Isle of Man just over 30nm away and, despite the fairly light SE'ly breeze of 6-8 kn had a pleasant sail for the first 20 or so miles before the wind died away forcing us to motor the rest of the way and we were on our berths in the marina soon after 1730 despite a technical problem with the swing footbridge over the entrance causing us and a number of other boats to hang around in the outer harbour for a good 40 minutes or so waiting for it to be fixed.

I spent 2 nights there before departing at 1015 on Monday, leaving Seba to attend the Festival later in the week, bound for Garwick Bay near Laxey on the East side of the island via Calf Sound at LW slack. The passage was a mix of sailing and motor-sailing in the light SW'ly breeze and I picked up one of the 2 visitor moorings in Garwick Bay just after 1700 and enjoyed a quiet night in this pleasant spot before leaving the next morning to head the 6nm down to and into Douglas marina where I'd phoned the HM to book a finger berth.

It blew quite fresh from the NW for the next couple of days so I stayed put in Douglas before sailing down to Port St Mary on Thursday 24th July – the wind was light and fluky down towards Langness but, as often seems the case in NW'lies, it blew up as I approached Dreswick Point close in and was gusting 20kn as I rounded the point so I was glad that I'd pulled down the 1st reef earlier in the trip. The overfalls south of Dreswick Point were just getting going, even though it was only just HW Liverpool, and Aslan's decks got a good washing as I tacked towards Port St Mary where I was able to motor into the inner drying harbour and tie up on the wall on one of the visitor berths. As the tide ebbed away I took to the water to give Aslan's bottom another scrub which had a bit of slime and weed around her stern, rudder & skeg but nowhere else for some reason.



I had a lazy day on Friday followed by a pint in the IOMYC overlooking the outer harbour that evening and then enjoyed a lovely walk around the spectacular coast past the Chasms and Spanish Head and down to Calf Sound and then on to Port Erin on Saturday before moving to a mooring in the outer harbour on Sunday afternoon in readiness for an early departure for Anglesey on Monday morning.

I set off at 0540 on Monday 28th July on the 46nm passage to Moelfre on the East coast of Anglesey, a few miles past Point Lynas, with the forecast of NW4/5 backing and decreasing SW3

later in the day. It was spring tides so I needed to be past Point Lynas by about 30 mins before HW Holyhead (1430) before the ebb started running. There was a good breeze for the first couple of hours and I was sailing on a broad reach just under Genoa with Sophie the wind vane steering but by around 0800 it fell to 6-8kn so the next 30 or so miles were completed under the engine with a little, but not much, help from the Genoa.

About 2nm North of Point Lynas the wind started to build again so off went the motor – at 1400 I was ½ mile off Lynas with 1-1/2kn of fair tide, 15 minutes later with Lynas lighthouse abeam I had 2-1/2kn foul tide, 18kn of wind from the NW against it and a nasty little race forming which, even with the engine back on, I had a 15 minute battle to get through. I was glad I wasn't 30 minutes later as would likely have had to turn and head for Holyhead instead.

Once approaching Dulas Island I was met by friends Simon & Janet on Sadler 29 Kiwi who had sailed out to meet me and welcome me back to home waters. We sailed inshore of Dulas Island and carried on to anchor off Moelfre for the night. As forecast the wind backed round to the SW and moderated so we rowed ashore and had a couple of celebratory beers ashore at the Kinnel Arms.



The next morning we sailed back to Caernarfon via Puffin Sound and the Swellies and Aslan was back on her berth by 1400 where I had my 2nd hug from a marina manager of the trip – this time from Dockmaster Ffion!

A great cruise, 54 days away logging 814.9nm OG with many memorable moments and, as usual, Aslan performing impeccably and looking after me throughout – here's to next year's cruise!

Geoff Hilditch Sadler 29 Aslan