

2023 Cruising in Company

By Geoff Hilditch - Yacht Aslan & Cruising Captain RWYC

The first cruise of the season was held over the early May Bank Holiday weekend when 5 boats spent the Friday night anchored off Moelfre, the Saturday night anchored off Cemaes Bay and the Sunday night on moorings off Menai Bridge. There wasn't a lot of wind for the 2 passages to Cemaes Bay but a solid 20-25kn Southerly on Sunday gave the boats a splendid sail back around Point Lynas, across to Puffin Sound and up to Menai Bridge.



The highlight of the season was the wonderful 4 week cruise, longer for some of the boats, starting in the 3rd week of May when 10 boats from the Club sailed in company down to Baltimore, Cape Clear Island and around the Fastnet Rock in what was really the only decent spell of prolonged good weather all season – a full report was featured in the Summer Bulletin.



The next cruise was held over the extended late August Bank Holiday weekend with the destination this time being Douglas on the Isle of Man. 7 boats sailed on Weds 23rd August in fairly miserable conditions from Caernarfon to Moelfre. We enjoyed a cracking beat to Moelfre once through Puffin Sound in a fresh SW'ly breeze touching 18-20kn. By the time we were at anchor the rain had stopped so most crews met ashore for a beer or two in the Kinmel Arms.



We set off for Douglas at 0630 on the Thursday morning to motor sail most of the way over – the wind was forecast to back W and then SW by late morning but remained stubbornly very light from the NW until mid afternoon before backing and gradually increasing to 15kn from the SW which, at least, gave a good final hour or two of the passage under full sail.

The HM at Douglas berthed us on the long pontoon outside his office which is handier for both the marina facilities and the various pubs and restaurants on the quay. 2 other RW boats, Why Knot & Rowain, were already in Douglas and Liquid Asett arrived on Friday afternoon to join in the fun which included a really good Thai meal when 17 sat down to eat in the Full Moon restaurant near the harbour. A couple of the RWYC Boats returned to Wales on Saturday but the rest ended up staying in Douglas until Monday morning enjoying the motor bike racing plus various trips out by bus, steam train and electric trams over the long weekend.



The wind for the passage back was NW'ly 3-4 gradually backing and falling light by late afternoon but allowing most of the passage to be made under sail.

Unfortunately, the next rally, planned for 21st to 26th September, to Aberdyfi fell victim to the strong winds and rain that became a feature of the second half of September (not to mention most of July & August too!) as did the shorter “replacement” trip to Conwy and around the island in the first week of October.