



TELLTALE AUGUST 2017

If you have any tales to tell, photos to share or equipment to advertise in subsequent issues of Telltale please get in touch, it would be greatly appreciated.

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~DATES FOR YOUR DIARY~

Tuesday 15th August

Souters Lass Dinner Cruise

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Saturday 19th August

LYC Regatta & BBQ

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Weekend 26th/27th August

O.S.C. Dinghy Regatta

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Weekend 9th/10th September

Challenger Traveller Series

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~Message from the Commodore~

The James Craig



The boat on mooring number 10 is an exact replica of the famous James Caird, the boat in which Ernest Shackleton made the extraordinary trip from the ice of Elephant Island to South Georgia in order to save his crew.

The two pictures were taken during the recent filming for a documentary of the Shackleton story. The film crew were based onboard Ian Dewars catamaran and the filming was done in adverse weather to the south of Corran.

For the full incredible story check out the book "South".

Rigging the foresail on the JC, a bit different to the James Caird.



The James Caird under full sail.

Scottish Islands Peaks Race 2017

LYC was represented in this year's Scottish Islands Peaks Race; Jon Gay took part in a team along with Jasmin Paris, Liz Barker, Nigel Holl and skipper Gordon Callander. This is an adventure race for teams of sailors and hill runners, held annually on and around the most beautiful parts of Bonny Scotland. The Race starts in Oban with a short hill run, then a sail to Salen on Mull, run over Ben More, sail to Craighouse on Jura, run the Paps, sail to Arran, run Goat Fell, then sail to Troon.



Our boat was called Reeve, a very well sorted Rustler 36. Nigel and Gordon have done the race nearly ten times, Jasmin is current British Hill Running Champion and Liz is an experienced Ultra runner and international rower. We experienced all sorts of wind and tidal conditions. Liz's rowing skills (allowed in the race) came in handy getting out of Oban bay, we benefited by catching a zephyr that kept us with some of the top boats. There was reasonable breeze until rounding the south of Mull. At the tidal gate of Sound of Luing the fleet compressed in calm conditions; we decided to head west of Jura to get the tide through the Sound of Islay. Here the race tracker showed us in 4th position.



We dropped several places getting round the corner to Craighouse but it was a worthwhile gamble. With 25 knot head winds we just caught the tide round the Mull of Kintyre; boats a few minutes behind us were forced to wait for the next tide. We were competitive on the hills; views from the tops were amazing. The team did well finishing third in the 'all round category' (10 person/ hills) in about 57 hours. We were well up for the type of boat. But it is more about finishing. It was an exhausting race and it was good to catch up on sleep.



<http://www.scottishislandspkarsrace.com/>

Jon Gay & Photos by Liz Barker

Junior Training



A fun weekend of sailing in some blustery conditions saw four new members complete their RYA Level 1. Many thanks to all who helped make the weekend a success.



Photos courtesy of Stephanie James

~The Barra Bucket List 2016 Part 2 ~

Isle of Barra Castlebay

Kisimul Castle in Castle bay Barra remains an iconic sight on its rock in the bay. This was where the Mcneil set up his enterprise to avoid entertaining the tourists in 1039 and run a piracy operation for the rest. There are visitor moorings in Castlebay and we were relieved to be on schedule for our bucket boys with a day to spare.



A trip to the Barra Coop for fresh supplies and a shower at the swimming pool started the sunny day before a trundle round the island on the service bus. Barra remains a delightful Hebridean time warp against the now trendy Stornoway. The tribal rivalry between the islands is Hebridean legend. We did try and source Stornoway black pudding for a rerun of the blind tasting competition which ran in 2014 on Dons Sottise in Stornoway harbour. You may be able to buy Stornoway Black Pudding in Fortenum and Masons, London – but Barra? Well no, it come from Lewis!

We were entertained on the bus by a local character whose family had built many of the houses we passed and gave us a running commentary. The scenery with beaches, rocky inlets and white croft houses with red roofs is understandably iconic in the coffee table photo books.

We returned to Castlebay and did the tour of the Clan McNeil Kisimul Castle on its rocky island. It is certainly very impressive in location and views. Iain had been up to see his medical student protégé from 2 decades past who has become the doctor on Barra. He returned to the boat with a huge bag of razor clams!



Fortunately, we had the combined skill of Peter as a Lewis man expert on fishing for them and Michael our MasterChef



The next morning was crew change Saturday with Iain and Peter catching the early Calmac boat to Oban. The Barra people have been grumbling about the “Lord of the Isles” and size restrictions for years. Very kindly Calmac have commissioned a brand-new ferry for the Ullapool to Stornoway run. The “Loch Seaforth” was made in Germany and is very quiet and fast with hybrid technology.

Poor old Barra got their Calmac upgrade as well with a bigger ferry. “The Isle of Lewis “which is the caste off from the Stornoway route! Truth be told, this is a bit of a humiliation for all those McNeils returning to their gene pool on Barra on the “Isle of Lewis”!



However, maybe all that McNeil piracy of old means they don't mind which ship they take over when capturing ships from Kisimul Castle.

The next part of the crew change was the bucket list. Alan and Colin were arriving on the flight from Glasgow. So, another trundle on the bus to Traig Mhor with the tide out. It is unique and very, very spectacular. No wonder it is on the travel bucket list of so many!

Mike and I wait in the arrivals lounge of Barra International quietly having a bowl of soup when in comes a film crew from ITV! Robson Green and *Tales from the Coast* had been working their way South down the Hebridean chain and this was their day of final filming and departure. The programme was screened a few weeks ago, and captures the essence very well.

There is a whole section in *Tales from the Coast* on how the airport functions with tides, cockle shellers and landing a scheduled flight.

The Blue De Havilland Twin Otter is the only modern plane capable of the flight and landing. Colin and Alan emerge jubilant from the plane waving to the adoring crowd like DJT emerging from Airforce One, unaware that they would be “in the can” for Robson Greens bucket programme. On the TV programme, we even see them collecting their bags from the famous Barra International bus shelter baggage reclaim system.



We continue clockwise around Barra again and gain Castle bay. The scene looked a bit like a James Bond film as the dinghy was waiting and we whisked them out to Don Sottise waiting in the bay. Like the airport requiring a low tide we had to make a swift departure to capture the same tide heading North next.

Colin and Alan are “old hands” on Dons Sottise and were quickly setting sails and storing bags.

A following wind, tide and genoa gave good progress to South Uist and Lochboisdale Harbour again.

Lochboisdale Harbour

A textbook entrance onto a pontoon, if I may say, was planned and executed with a cross wind. Safely secure and preparing the lasagne below, I was shaken with a bump 10 minutes later! A large yacht with a haughty crew from the Bullingdon club arrived at speed, failed to secure a stern rope and T boned us! Our brand new Honwave dinghy on the davits saved the day, but we discovered later the oars were damaged. The helm disappeared below and completely ignored the crisis! Not even a word of apology or concern from anyone!

Canna and Sanday

The next morning was the crossing of the Sea of the Hebrides to Canna. We had an excellent sail under genoa. Canna even laid on a welcome party with a pair of golden eagles soaring over the cliffs.

We found a mooring on Canna in time to explore the island and have the famous rabbit stew in Canna Café.



Back to the mooring and another plan is hatched to find the puffins on Sanday. The book said dusk on the cliff for the main colony. Colin and I rowed ashore to the sound scape of a seal family with a mother calling her pup. We walk to the converted church on Sanday, now a cultural centre and head for the sea cliffs about 30 minutes' walk away. We follow the long dry stone dyke for navigation in the falling light and find a magnificent bay teeming with sea birds calling, but no puffins! Slightly silly really; Colin and I share a grandson and we would not advise such a risky trip to him in years to come in one of the remotest parts of the UK, climbing rocks in failing light! Our rescue plan was the Canna Coastguard team and the Stornoway Helicopter if we were not back on board by midnight. The puffin colony we judged was another 30 minutes away, but risked pressing the rescue plan button on channel 16! Thus, we behaved like sensible grandparents and took a convenient fix on the guesthouse lights and followed the dry stain dyke past fields and fields of splendid orchids.



James Douglas

In the final instalment we follow the gentlemen of Dons Sottise as they travel to Mull.