

**AQUILA**  
**2014**  
**SUMMER CRUISE**



Cape Wrath  
(Looking east along the northern coast)

## ITINERARY

Day		Date	From	To	nm
1	Monday	12 <sup>th</sup> May	North Berwick	Barcaldine @Loch Creran	
2	Tuesday	13 <sup>th</sup> May	Barcaldine	Tobermory	37
3	Wednesday	14 <sup>th</sup> May	Tobermory	Isle Oronsay	45
4	Thursday	15 <sup>th</sup> May	Isle Oronsay	Kyleakin	12
5	Friday	16 <sup>th</sup> May	Stormbound		
6	Saturday	17 <sup>th</sup> May	Kyleakin	Loch Inver	63
7	Sunday	18 <sup>th</sup> May	Loch Inver	Kinlochbervie	26
8	Monday	19 <sup>th</sup> May	Kinlochbervie	Skullomie in Kyle of Tongue	40
9	Tuesday	20 <sup>th</sup> May	Skullomie	Scrabster	35
10	Wednesday	21 <sup>st</sup> May	Scrabster	Stromness (direct 26)	45
11	Thursday	22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Stormbound		
12	Friday	23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Stormbound		
13	Saturday	24 <sup>th</sup> May	Stromness	St Margaret's Hope	15
14	Sunday	25 <sup>th</sup> May	St Margaret's	Holm Sound	26
15	Monday	26 <sup>th</sup> May	Holm Sound	Wick	38
16	Tuesday	27 <sup>th</sup> May	Wick	Lossiemouth	52
17	Wednesday	28 <sup>th</sup> May	Lossiemouth	Whitehills	26
18	Thursday	29 <sup>th</sup> May	Whitehills	Peterhead	36
19	Friday	30 <sup>th</sup> May	Peterhead	Stonehaven	36
20	Saturday	31 <sup>st</sup> May	Stonehaven	North Berwick	<u>59</u>
<b>Total</b>					<b>566</b>

<p><b>Forecast</b></p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p>	<p>Previously in 2013 we had circled central Scotland by means of the Caledonian, Crinan and Forth Clyde canals and it was decided this year to try and complete a circumnavigation of Scotland by trailing the boat to the west coast and then sail round the north to the Moray Firth where depending on time and weather, we could either haul out or continue on back to North Berwick.</p> <p>To avoid the horrendous currents and difficulties posed by the Pentland Firth, we planned to loop north to Orkney and come back south well to the east of the Pentland Skerries. Although this would allow us to avoid the Pentland Firth tidal races, some of the critical pinch points around Orkney posed similar problems with tidal races or “Roosts”, as the Orcadians call them, of up to 10 knots.</p> <p><b>Lift Out/Debacle Day (Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May)</b></p> <p>Unless you are willing to completely immerse the trailer, the beach at North Berwick is not ideal for hauling out as it is too flat and has a covering of soft sand. With the breakback trailer and trying to only immerse the tyres, we had planned to pull out near high tide at the top of the beach where there is only a thin sand layer on top of rock. However with the mast down, everything ready and two spreader boards beneath the trailer wheels, we were tempted to go for it much earlier in the afternoon. Firstly, in getting the trailer tipped enough to get the bow onto the first roller, the trailer came off the spreader boards, then winching it up the trailer it fouled a temporary wooden baton carrying a pair of guide posts and they had to be quickly dismantled. Eventually winched on and secured, I brought the Club tractor down and a long draw rope was attached – nothing moved!</p> <p>Various combinations of 4 wheel drive vehicles attempted to shift it until it was spotted that somebody, at some stage, had put the handbrake on and never thought to mention this! Completely immersed by then, it was finally pulled out, having created an afternoon’s entertainment for spectators, and we thoroughly hosed the trailer and wheel bearings.</p>
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<p><b>Forecast</b></p> <p>N/NW backing S F2/3 occas. 4 Slight/Moderate Fair Good</p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i></p> <p><i>Motor Sail</i></p> <p><i>Engine hrs</i> 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs</p> <p><b>37 nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 1( Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May)</b></p> <p>I picked the boat up at North Berwick and after collecting Alastair MacIntyre at Longniddry and Ian Kirkpatrick in Edinburgh we headed north to Barcaldine Marine at the head of Loch Creran. We had plenty of space and a nice large slipway where we prepared to raise the mast. With the offer of help from a passing sailor, we rushed this and unluckily trapped an electrical connector between the mast and the tabernacle. So that was our new wind speed indicator u/s for the whole trip. With that sorted out and the mast up, we got the boat in the water without any more mishaps and transferred the heavy stores from the van into the boat and put the van and trailer away in the secure parking area. By then it was about 20.30 and Alastair Mc. heated the precooked evening meal as we moved the boat onto a pontoon for the night.</p> <p>What we didn't realise at the time was that Ian had taken the spare trailer wheel off during launching and it hadn't been put back or put into the van. Ian subsequently remembered this on day 3 and we phoned Barcaldine who kindly retrieved the wheel and left it with our trailer.</p> <p><b>Day 2 (Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May)</b></p> <p>After the stresses of retrieval and launching, our first day of sailing started bright but cool. We waited until the office opened in the hope of sourcing a replacement 6 pin electrical connector. Barcaldine had none, but phoning Dunstaffnage they thought they did. Leaving under engine, a light wind was blowing straight down the loch against us but the tide was with us as we were swept through the narrows and into Loch Linnhe where we set course for Dunstaffnage. On getting there we were told that they hadn't managed to find a connector. Leaving Dunstaffnage heading for Lismore Lighthouse, we still had light winds directly on the nose so continued to motor. Despite the light conditions, it was fairly rough in the tidal streams just south of the lighthouse and later very rough for a while at the south end of the Sound of Mull, between Glas Eileanan and Ardtornish Point. As is normal in the Sound, the wind is funnelled either with you or against you and we continued to motor. Approaching Calve Island at nearly high water, we decided to try the south entrance into Tobermory. Approaching with extreme caution, we were totally misled by the pilot book as it subsequently transpired that the outer marker had recently been destroyed in a storm, and the inner marker is no longer a cylindrical beacon but a pole with a triangular top mark. By the time we realised that something was not right, we had little option but to continue to creep through a ridiculously small gap. Wishing to top up with fuel, we went alongside one of the visitor pontoons rather than taking a mooring.</p>
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Passing Crowlin Islands  
Day 6



Passing Applecross Bay  
Day 6

<p><b>Forecast</b>  Variable F3/4 then  S/SW F4/5  Slight/Moderate  Rain/Drizzle  Moderate/Good</p> <p>SW F5/6 occas 7 in  north  Moderate/Rough  Drizzle  Moderate/Good  Occas Poor</p> <p>+24  SW F5-7 occas 8</p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i>  9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs  <i>Motor Sail</i></p> <p><i>Engine hrs</i>  ½ hr</p> <p><b>45 nm</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i>  1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs  <i>Motor Sail</i></p> <p><i>Engine hrs</i>  1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs</p> <p><b>12 nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 3 (Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May)</b>  In contrast to Tuesday, we had the sails up before we were clear of the anchorage and as soon as we were into the Sound the spinnaker went up. Soon after crossing ahead of a yacht reaching out of Kilchoan, the wind veered and we dropped the spinnaker and started beating. Nearing Ardnamurchan Point the wind and seas increased and we put a reef in. On rounding the point our course of 31<sup>0</sup> was almost directly downwind. With a F5 and turbulent sea conditions, we elected to drop the main and sail downwind under jib alone. When the wind eased slightly we hoisted the unpoled spinnaker, keeping it under control with the barber haulers until a squall came through and, with some difficulty, we quickly dropped the spinnaker. Later we got the double reefed main back up and eventually shook out the reefs. By the time we crossed the route of the Armadale to Mallaig ferry, it was wet with very poor visibility. With the aid of the chart plotter we identified the Isle Oronsay Lighthouse and sailed into Oronsay Bay where after dropping the sails we moored to a visitor's buoy and started cooking the evening meal.</p> <p><b>Day 4 (Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May)</b>  The forecast wasn't great and the north going flow at Kyle Rhea didn't start until 14.12, so we waited on the mooring until we slipped after lunch at 13.20. The initial S/SW F4/5 soon built to F6 and, with quite a large following swell, we headed north under jib alone. Soon after putting the engine on to enter Kyle Rhea we were hit by a horrendous cross wind coming off the hills and rapidly dropped the jib. Motoring up the Kyle, we met and gave room to one of the salmon fisheries supply ships coming down the Kyle against the current. Battered by katabatic squalls as we came out at the north end, we were also almost set down onto a creel marker as we crossed the fierce current. With Friday's forecast for F8 storms we decided not to carry on to our original destination of the Crowlin Islands but to stop instead on the sheltered pontoon at Kyleakin. Pre-warned when we phoned the harbourmaster, with the aid of another berth holder, we rafted up alongside an old motor cruiser. Later that evening the owner turned up and started his engine to charge his batteries and then ignited a smoky wood burning stove which duly fumigated us!</p>
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Loch Inver Marina  
Day 7



Old Man of Stoer  
Day 7



<p><b>Forecast</b>  SW F6-8  decreasing F4/5  Moderate/Rough  Occasional  Rain/Showers  Moderate/Good</p> <p>S/SW F 5/6 decr  F4 at times  Moderate/Rough  Occas Rain  Good/Moderate</p> <p>S becoming  Variable F3/4  occas F5 at first  Mod/Occ Rough  Occ Rain/Shower  Mod/Occ Poor</p>	<p>Storm  Bound</p> <p><i>Sail</i>  7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs  <i>Motor Sail</i>  2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs  <i>Engine hrs</i>  6 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs</p> <p><b>63 nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 5 (Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May)</b>  Going on deck during the night to quieten a slapping halyard, I found “Billy” our insomniac smoky neighbour prowling about and was invited aboard for a dram which I declined or I would have been there for the rest of the night!  As expected, we remained stormbound all day and I charged my phone at the shop where the toilets and showers were. The day was pretty wild, but between downpours, we chatted to a couple of the local yachtsmen and arranged for Ken McLean to come down from his croft near Staffin to visit us later in the day. After a meal with Ken at the local pub, one of the yachtsmen we had been chatting to came and asked if he could move his 32ft Rival from a scrubbing berth against the wall, to berth inside us. We were quite happy to do this as it put him between us and smoky Billie.</p> <p><b>Day 6 (Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May)</b>  We all woke very early and with it calm and bright we were under way by 05.54. After clearing the Skye Bridge we set course up the Inner Sound and hoisted the mainsail, but with barely a F1/2 blowing we kept the engine going. Over the rest of the day we had virtually every sail configuration – reefed main, spinnaker up/down, jib up/down, second reef in main – as the wind varied from its initial F1/2 to a full F5/6.  We made excellent progress up to Gairloch which had been our target for the day, but reaching there by 12.00 we decided to push on and try to recover the day lost when stormbound in Kyleakin. In the afternoon the weather gradually deteriorated and the rain started about 15.20. The cold and wet of the final 3 hours into Loch Inver rather marred what had up until then been an excellent days sailing.  Once in a berth in Loch Inver we erected the boom tent to provide somewhere to hang out wet oilskins. In the wet and windy conditions however we didn’t make a very quick or good job of getting it up and Ian’s kit in particular got further soaked overnight by leaks in the tent.</p> <p><b>Day 7 (Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May)</b>  With little activity around on a Sunday morning, a local boat owner kindly took me into Loch Inver garage for fuel, and a visiting yacht with internet access provided the weather forecast as we could not pick up VHF. Dismantling the boom tent, Ian managed to drop a pole overboard so that was the tent finished for the rest of the trip! Contrary to the forecast, initial conditions were very calm as we motored out past Soyea Island and set a course for Stoer Point and the Old Man of Stoer. From there until we passed Handa Island winds were light, but there was a big swell as we motor sailed with the jib. We elected to go outside the rocks of Dubh Sgeirean before</p>
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Cape Wrath looking back from the north  
Day 8



Target practise on An Garbh-Eilean 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> mile away  
Day 8

<p><b>Forecast</b></p> <p>E F2-5 backing NE Moderate Occas Drizzle Good/Occ Poor</p> <p>+24 hrs E/SE F3-5 Slight/Moderate Occas rain V Good/Good</p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i></p> <p><i>Motor Sail</i> 4 hrs <i>Engine hrs</i> 6 hrs</p> <p><b>26 nm</b></p>	<p>turning for Loch Inchard and Kinlochbervie, but we watched another yacht which was under full sail take the inshore passage and gradually overtake us. Getting into Kinlochbervie we found that Andando, a Rival 36, had taken the last vacant space on the pontoons, but they invited us to berth alongside and to go on board for tea and cake. They had come up from Bristol and were heading for Orkney like us, but then intended heading to Norway.</p> <p><b>Day 8 (Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May)</b> With the forecast for the next few days being reasonable although not ideal, the decision was taken to continue on round Cape Wrath, so we slipped from alongside Andando at 07.45 to get the most of the north bound current. Under motor, as we cleared En an Roin Beag outside Loch Inchard and set a course for the Cape, we saw the only porpoise of the trip. Passing Am Baig we photographed another sea stack Am Bhuachaille. With a course of 21<sup>0</sup> the wind was on the nose but very light. As we approached the cape, the seas became very lumpy and awkward, but we still decided to round inside Duslic Rock. The only problem was that, as we rounded at 11.00, the current was trying to push us towards the rock and we had to point well inshore. The consequence of this only became apparent slightly later as we approached An Garbh-eilean. With no restriction on the right to transit the Cape Wrath Firing Range, live firing should only happen when red flags are displayed ashore and the Range is cleared! With no sign of any red flags onshore or guard boat on the water, we were starting to consider moving out to seaward to clear the Firing Range, when a jet screamed in low overhead and Na Glas Leacan, a small island about 1<sup>1/2</sup> miles ahead of us, exploded in a ball of flame! As a second jet came in and fired, and we turned due north to get the hang out of there, Range Control come on the VHF asking the white hulled yacht to please move north east as quickly as possible as they were <u>about</u> to do some <u>light</u> bombing! On rechecking the small scale print out I had obtained, showing what I thought were the range boundaries, I found that it was actually the impact area boundary we had been approaching. After this excitement we were not too concerned that we now had an easterly current and the wind, which had veered more easterly, directly on the nose. Followed for a while by an Artic Skua, we set course for Whiten Head which we passed about 14.50.</p>
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Skullomie Harbour in Kyle of Tongue  
Day 8



Dounreay  
Day 9





Andando & Aquila in Scrabster (Day 9)



Old Man of Hoy (Day10)

<p><b>Forecast</b>  NE backing NW  F3/4  Moderate  Occas Rain  Moderate/Poor</p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i></p> <p><i>Motor sail</i>  7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs  <i>Engine Hrs</i>  9 hrs  <i>Direct Dist</i>  26 nm</p> <p><b>45nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 10 (Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May)</b></p> <p>With arrival time at Hoy Sound critical and the forecast winds directly on the nose, we allowed an extra hour on our estimated passage time and left under engine at 10.08. Crashing straight into the waves as we cleared Holborn Head, the chart plotter was predicting that we would be late, but we hoisted the jib and started tacking upwind under engine and jib and the predicted arrival time fell back to 16.15, which was tight but acceptable. With heavy rain, moderately large rolling lumpy seas directly out of the north and no land in sight, conditions were not pleasant, but, as we passed halfway, the chart plotter was still predicting a 16.15 arrival at Hoy Sound so we pressed on. Eventually sighting land at Rora Head, we took another tack away and that was when we must have started getting an adverse current under us, as gradually our ETA started slipping back and we realised that either we went into Hoy Sound against the ebb or we stayed out with nowhere to anchor for 6 hours until the flood started again. Pressing on past the Old Man of Hoy, we met the Stromness to Scrabster ferry coming out as we assessed our options. We had used a huge amount of fuel beating into the seas we had encountered and if we stayed out we would have had to conserve what was left and stooze around under sail only. Although the pilot books strongly advised against going in against the ebb, they also said that neap currents were only <math>\frac{1}{3}</math> of spring rates. We had neap conditions and were only about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs late for slack water so we decided to head in for a look. With the wind on the beam since turning into Hoy Mouth, we were surfing down the face of the waves under engine and jib at about 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> knots and before we knew it, we were in the first of the “Roosts” or tidal races of Hoy Sound. The “Roost” was rough, but not unduly so, although we certainly had no option of turning back in it. Following this first “Roost” there was a smooth section before a second “Roost” which was not as severe as the first. Through that and congratulating ourselves on have made it, we started turning for Stromness round the Ness Beacon and realised that, although making 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> to 5 knots through the water, we were going nowhere and were in danger of being swept back into the Sound and its “Roosts”. Hoisting the triple reefed main with difficulty as we couldn’t risk turning head to wind across the current, we managed to get sufficient speed to claw round the point, not helped by the fact that a small tug, which had come through the Sound shortly after us, wanted to round our bow to enter the deep water channel to Stromness. Once clear of the current and looking back up the Sound it was clear that the “Roosts” had noticeably built since we got through. Having then dropped the sails, we motored to the pontoons where we moored by 19.00, cold, wet and tired, but relieved that we hadn’t had to wait outside for a further 6 hours. We then went ashore for a well earned meal at the nearest pub.</p>
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Holm Sound from the Italian Chapel  
Day 11



Italian Chapel  
Day 11



<p><b>Forecast</b> NE F7 Rough Rain Poor</p>	<p><b>Dist. Run</b></p>	<p><b>Day 11 (Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May)</b> Woke to the sound of the wind howling through the rigging and lashing with rain. On looking out, who should be on the pontoon astern of us but Andando. Leaving Scrabster at some time after us, they had soon realised that they would not make it to the tidal gate in time. They diverted to an anchorage on the southern end of Hoy and then had come on up for the first of the flood into Hoy Sound. Both of us being on the exposed outer pontoons, we were getting the worst of the weather so Andando shifted to an inshore berth. We were slightly sheltered by an Elan 37 ahead of us, but when she left we bore the full brunt of the wind and seas. There was no chance of motoring Aquila off the pontoon in these conditions, but with the aid of another berth holder who had a very long rope, we managed to rope her back into a more sheltered position. As it was Orkney Folk Festival week, all the hire cars were already booked. Our only alternative to see some of the island was therefore to book a very expensive guided tour for Friday. We then took the bus into Kirkwall, where after coffee and cake, we explored St Magnus Cathedral, the sights of Kirkwall, and restocked at Tesco before catching the bus back to Stromness.</p>
<p>N/NE F4-6 Rough Occas Rain Moderate/Poor</p>	<p>Storm Bound</p>	<p><b>Day 12 (Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May)</b> The wind had eased but was still strong at times and biting cold. We were up early and first to the washing machines and tumble driers in the ferry terminal. When the ferry came in at 10.30 we were joined on our guided tour by two Americans. The trip took in the Italian Chapel, (where they were just about to film something for the Folk Festival), Skara Brae, The Cliffs of Yesnaby, The Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stennes. Back at the boat, we spent a second evening trying to dry out the boat cushions in front of the small gas fire which I had brought. We were just about to call it a night when Chris and Nicky from Andando arrived back from a folk concert and invited us aboard for a drink. A convivial evening ended about 24.00.</p>
<p>S/ESE F2/3 Smooth/slight Dry Good</p>	<p>Storm Bound</p>	<p><b>Day 13 (Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May)</b> Wanting the flood tide to take us down into Scapa Flow, we spent the morning replenishing our fuel and booze supplies and tried unsuccessfully to get a replacement spare gas cylinder. Ian bought a pair of vivid orange fisherman oilskin trousers as his were no longer waterproof. We strolled round Stromness and obtained a 5 day weather forecast from the harbourmaster before motoring off the pontoons at slack water at 12.35. Although we soon had the main and then jib up, conditions were very light and it was 14.15 before a gentle F2 materialised. It was very pleasant to have a gentle passage on smooth water for a change and we took the chance to swap the VHF aerial to</p>



Skara Brae (Day 12)



Skara Brae (Day 12)



Cliffs of Yesnaby (Day 12)



Aquila in Stromness Marina (Day 12)



St Margaret's Hope (Day 13)



Lothar Rock at South end South Ronaldsay  
Day 14

<p><b>Forecast</b></p> <p>E F4/5 Slight/Moderate Occas rain Moderate/Good Occas Poor</p>	<p><b>Distance Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i> 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs <i>Motor Sail</i> 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs <i>Engine Hrs</i> 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs <b>15 nm</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i> 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs <i>Motor Sail</i> 1/2 hr <i>Engine Hrs</i> 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs <b>26 nm</b></p>	<p>the spare, which we taped to one of the keel raising posts. We got good reception from this, so obviously have a problem with the connections on the masthead aerial. We later had an easy entrance into St Margaret's Hope, where we anchored well clear of the ferry terminal. Later the French yacht which had been moored close to us in Stromness arrived and anchored. Despite the replacement aerial we were still unable to get any VHF reception in St Margaret's .</p> <p><b>Day 14 (Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May)</b> We had three tidal gates to get through today. To reach Hoxa Sound before the tide built, we motored off our anchorage at 11.15 and, once out of the bay, hoisted the double reefed main in a F4 and switched the engine off. About 1/2 hour after we left, the French yacht came out closely followed by the fast ferry to Gill's Bay on the mainland. By 12.30 we were through Hoxa Sound and into Widewall Bay, where we anchored near the head of the bay to wait until it was time to head south to pass Lothar Rock at slack water. The French yacht followed us in and also anchored. After a leisurely lunch we hoisted the main again and sailed off the anchorage. Perhaps because of our experience with critical tidal gates at Hoy, we had sailed too soon and had to backtrack while off Sandwick Bay before finally setting course for Lothar Rock. We arrived there at 15.45, slightly before slack water, and, rounding the point to head east for Old Head, the wind came from directly ahead accompanied by short steep seas. We dropped the main and motored directly into this until round Old Head. We then continued NNE under motor until clear of the third tidal gate at Halcrow Head and its potential race. By then we could see the French yacht following us under sail and we hoisted both sails and got the engine off about 16.30. As the wind moderated we shook the 2 reefs out, but were still passed by the bigger and faster French boat which we followed into Holm Sound where we both dropped anchor close to the Churchill Barrier and the Italian Chapel.</p>
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Sunset over Holm Sound  
Day 14

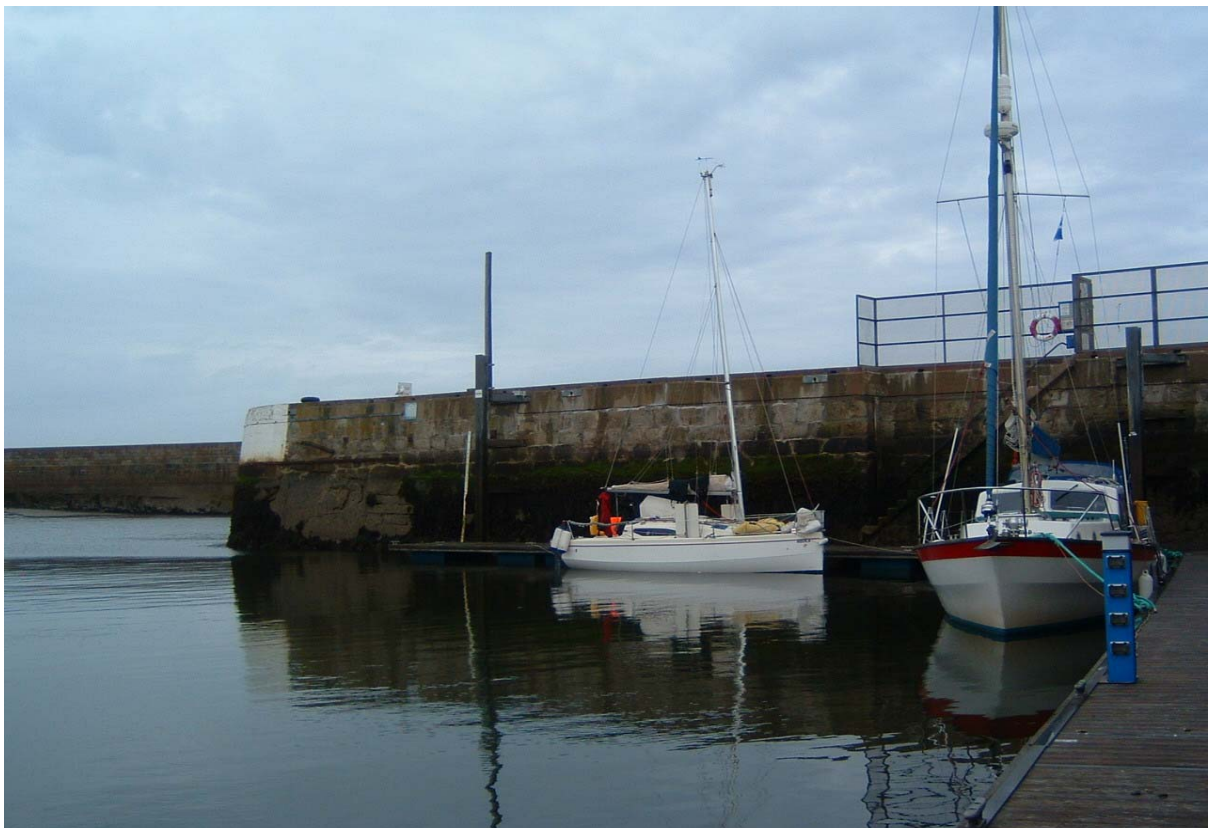


Duncansby Head through the gloom  
Day 15





Wick Harbour  
Day 15



Lossiemouth Harbour (Day 16)



<p><b>Forecast</b> E/SE F4/5 decreasing F3 in Moray Firth Slight/Moderate Fog patch at first Moderate/Good Occ very Poor</p>	<p><b>Distance Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i> 5 hrs <i>Motor Sail</i> 1½ hrs <i>Engine Hrs</i> 5 hrs <b>52 nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 16 (Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> May)</b> Visibility in the harbour was very poor and it was agreed that heading directly for Lossiemouth across the Beatrice Oilfield was not an option. Whether to go at all was the subject of much debate, but with a similar forecast for the following day and the harbourmaster and other locals assuring us that generally such fog was local to Wick and that we would be able to get over the bar and into Helmsdale, we decided to go. We duly slipped our mooring and with very light F1/2 winds motored out by 08.45. Keeping about ½ mile offshore, we tracked the coast southwards with the aid of the chart plotter. About 13.15, and about an hour north of Helmsdale, the fog finally lifted and we decided to alter course from there for Lossiemouth with an ETA of 18.00. Soon after changing course the wind freshened and we set the sails. Some 2 hours later, and halfway to Lossiemouth, the wind strengthened to F5/6 and we pulled in 2 reefs and dropped the jib. In the increasingly rough conditions it was 18.45 before we motored into Lossiemouth and moored to a pontoon. Collecting the toilet key from the Steamboat Inn, we washed the salt away with a pint and returned to the boat to make the evening meal and settle down for the night, pleased that we had risked leaving Wick in the fog this morning.</p>
<p>E/SE F3/4 Slight/Moderate Fair Moderate/Good</p>	<p><i>Sail</i></p> <p><i>Motor Sail</i> 3¼ hrs <i>Engine Hrs</i> 5½ hrs <b>26 nm</b></p>	<p><b>Day 17 (Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May)</b> Shadowed by the harbour walls, we once again had no VHF reception but got the forecast from the harbourmaster when we topped up with fuel and a spare gas cylinder at the nearby garage. There was still some residual swell from yesterday's wind and this built during the day as, contrary to the forecast, the wind increased to F5 and the seas, although not large, became short and steep making for an uncomfortable passage. Motor sailing with only the jib up to help stabilise the boat, we tacked upwind through about 80°. Reaching Whitehills, we motored in and were moored by 14.30. Alastair and Ian took the chance to explore Whitehills while I caught up with writing up the log. Later, as they cooked dinner, the harbourmaster kindly took me into Banff to replenish the fuel we had used today.</p>



Kinnaird Head  
Day 18



Looking back to Rattray Head (Day 18)

<p><b>Forecast</b>  ESE F3  becoming  ENE F3/4 occ F5  becoming F3  later  Moderate/Slight  Fog patches  later  Moderate/Good  occas very poor</p>	<p><b>Distance Run</b></p> <p>Sail</p> <p>Motor Sail  2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs  <i>Engine Hrs</i>  8 hrs  <b>36 m</b></p>	<p><b>Day 18 (Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May)</b></p> <p>Wanting to reach Kinnaird Head as soon as the tide turned south, we left Whitehills at 06.15, motoring directly into the very light easterly and a long rolling swell. Rounding Kinnaird Head at 11.00 we were aware of a 2-3 knot current with us. There was a noticeable tidal race at Cairnbulg Point and, soon afterwards, we hoisted the jib to get an extra 1/2 knot but more to steady the boat. In the fairly benign conditions we aimed for approximately 2 miles off Rattray Head, but soon realised that we were being swept down as quickly as we were progressing seaward. Due to this, we entered the first race closer inshore than we should have, but once through it, thought it safe to set course for Peterhead. Big mistake, as this brought us into the main race, which was quite severe, for a good 15 minutes. Once through this we hoisted the main but continued to motor sail for the rest of the way to Peterhead where we dropped sail and radioed for permission to enter. In and moored by 14.20, the sun came out and, after getting yet more fuel, we spent a pleasant afternoon tidying and drying the boat and ourselves in the sunshine</p>
<p>SE/S variable F3  or less  Increasing F4 at  times  Moderate/Slight  Fog patches at  first</p>		<p><b>Day 19 (Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May)</b></p> <p>It was very foggy at first but it cleared in the marina by 08.20 when we received clearance to exit the harbour. Moving out of the marina round the corner into the harbour, visibility was suddenly 100m at best and we had to quickly get the chart plotter on just to find the harbour exit! Radioing to let Harbour Control know that we had cleared the exit, we set a course of 150°. When overtaken by the Harbour Pilot boat, they radioed our course to Control, but, as we were about to change to 210°, I radioed this correction to them. By 09.30 the sun broke through and we hoisted the sails but needed the engine as well to maintain 4 knots close hauled. By 12.30 the wind had increased and we switched the engine off. Entering Aberdeen Harbour Control Area at 13.45, we put the engine on again and dropped the sails as we sought permission to cross the harbour entrance channel. We were told to wait until a dredger had come out and an oil supply ship came in from the north east. Round Grindle Ness the wind was back to directly ahead and, with wind against tide, the seas were short and steep, making us slam a lot. We were</p>



Rock Arches north of Stonehaven  
Day 19



Bell Rock Lighthouse (Day 20)





Sunset over North Berwick Bay

<p><b>Forecast</b></p>	<p><b>Distance Run</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i></p> <p><i>Motor Sail</i> 13 hrs</p> <p><i>Engine Hrs</i> 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs</p> <p><b>59 nm</b></p> <p><b>Totals for trip</b></p> <p><i>Sail</i> 42<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hrs</p> <p><i>Motor Sail</i> 39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs</p> <p><i>Engine Hrs</i> 88<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hrs</p> <p><b>566 nm</b></p>	<p>On our revised course, we passed within 2 miles of the Bell Rock and reached Fife Ness by 17.20 which was earlier than initially predicted. We then realised that we could actually make it back to North Berwick by 20.50, which would be too late to get into the harbour, but we could lie out on a mooring and go in early the next morning. In due course we tied up to a mooring at 21.00 and, while Alastair prepared a very late meal, Ian and I started dismantling the hatch canopy and preparing the mast for lowering the next morning.</p> <p><b>Day 21 (Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June)</b></p> <p>North Berwick Bay was the worst anchorage of the trip as we rolled all night. After a disturbed night we were all awake and up by 05.00 so we motored into harbour, tied up at the fishermen's steps and dropped the mast. After clearing the gear ashore, we moved onto our berth and made breakfast while waiting for transport.</p>
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