Liverpool Yacht Club Cruising Report 2016

Introduction
By: Dave Hardy

This year the club cruising report includes fewer individual entries than in recent years. However what is lost in the number of participants it makes up for in the variety and quality of the writing, and in the addition of web based reports.

Close to home Clive Mcgovern and crew on Jamily headed for the Scottish Islands picking up and depositing crew on the Irish and Scottish coast. Mutineers on Loch Fyne were pacified and the voyage continued inland via the Crinan canal. The crew then continued with visits to enjoy the produce of the many distilleries of the Inner Hebrides before returning south to the Mersey. All in generally good weather and favourable winds.

Meanwhile Paul Brereton and crew, sailing boats owned by the civil service sailing association, brought Ynot up from Plymouth via the Scilly Isles, they spent much of the journey beating into the wind to reach Holyhead for another crew to take over. Later in the season he completed a cruise on the French coast in Freya. In the West part of the Mediterranean, Liz and Alistair Soane set off to complete seasonal maintenance on Azur which is moored on the Costa Brava. Maintenance complete they set of to enjoy cruising on what must seem to them to be their local coastline. Adventure was added to their leisurely return from Barcelona when it was all hands on deck to deal with strong winds.

In the Eastern Mediterranean Alan Sullivan made good use of the Cruising Association crewing service to complete two long cruises plus a short visit to the West coast. His first cruise from Greece to the Balearic Islands included a fast passage of the renowned Straits of Messina. Later in the season he joined multihull ‘WhyNotJ’ for a return trip from Istanbul to Greece completed with good use of the engine.

Further North Dave and Jeanette Hardy continue their quest to become honorary Scandinavians following yet another Scandinavian summer in Norway Denmark Sweden and Finland. Most of the period was spent in the Swedish Archipelago weaving their way up narrow channels between islands and enjoying the novel (for them) experience of mooring ‘bow too’ with mooring lines tied to trees and bolts fixed to the rocks. Other novel or unusual experiences where find self-service saunas on remote islands and a narrow channel between towering rock walls that burst out right into the middle of Stockholm.

Web based reports by L.Y.C. members

Many cruises were completed by club members other than those appearing here. Some go unreported whilst others are illustrated by publications on web based platforms and are referenced here.
Chris Jacks’ completed his circumnavigation of Britain in good time between May 21st and June 20th 2016. This should stand him in good stead for his attempt at the 2018 Golden Globe Race, a solo circumnavigation of the world. Further information of his 2016 passage can be found on his Facebook page Chris Jacks Jacks Adventures at:
https://www.facebook.com/chrisjacksadventures/
And in the Yachting and Boat World report at:

Grand Slam Mike Croxall
Closer to home Grand Salm with Mike Croxall and crew recorded their Irish Sea Passage on You tube at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxZw4eYncnY

Free Spirit Dave and Jeanette Hardy
Whilst Dave and Jeanette Hardy illustrate the passage and music of their Baltic venture at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbHkcb9ktUs
United Kingdom
Jamly     Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 40

Scottish, Northern Ireland and Irish Sea Coast
Distance  638 Nautical Miles
Skipper:  Clive McGovern. Onboard from from 10th June to 1st July =22 days
Crew were:
Jennifer McGovern 13th June to 29th June = 17 days
Denise McKinney 10th June to 16th June = 7 days
Andrew Shields 26th June to 1st July = 6 days

Sailed from Liverpool on the 10th June and arrived back to Liverpool on the 1st July
taking in Laxey (IOM) , Bangor N Ireland, Campbeltown, Portavadie, Troon, Port
Bannatyne, East Loch Tarbet, Ardrishaig, Through Crinan canal stopping at
Cairnbarn and Crinan, Tayvallich, Port Ellen (Islay),Campbeltown, Glenarm N.
Ireland, Bangor N.Ireland, Peel (IOM) and  Laxey (IOM).
This was a great trip which was to have been a complete month away but as is the
inconvenience of work I was stuck out at sea on a vessel towing a rig from Nigeria to
Malaga in Spain which prolonged our shift for two extra weeks! Such is life.
Anyway, as a result of this, I sailed out from Liverpool later than expected with
Denise McKinney joining me for the first part of the trip. We sailed to Laxey then
Bangor, Northern Ireland where we picked up Jennifer who had finished work and
got the overnight ferry to join us.
From there we had hoped to sail first thing but there was a fog blanket covering us
so we waited until 10 am when the fog appeared to be lifting so we nosed out of the
harbour and decided to give it a go and headed across the North Channel to
Cambeltown where we spent a very windy night rafted up to a large catamaran.
From there we headed up to Portavadie in Loch Fyne which is a fine marina with a
hotel, Gym and spa complex complete with outside infinity pool. A mutiny was
narrowly avoided the following day when the two women on the boat suggesting that
it would be “nice to stay there a bit” and I needed to sail but the intention was to
crack the Crinan Canal this trip so we pressed on to Troon where Denise headed
home and Jennifer and I set off to sail around the beautiful “Kyles of Bute” to Port
Bannatyne for a night. From there we sailed to East Loch Tarbet to meet up with
friends of ours, Nigel and Beverley on “Ocean Banquet”.

The following day was spent beating up to Ardrishaig in the pouring rain to enter the Ardrishaig basin ready for the Crinan Locks the following day. The idea was for ourselves and Ocean banquet to travel through the locks together so we could assist each other but that wasn’t to be as the boats were too big to fit in one lock so sadly we had to split up. We were blessed with great weather for the couple of days transiting the Canal which comes into its own with all the colours in the hills lit up by the sun.
Upon leaving Crinan we headed south and our friends headed North up to Mull. We arrived at Port Ellen in wall to wall rain which was probably the worst we saw all trip but this soon abated and the sun came out again by the time we had tied up. The following day it was a hike to the distilleries of Lagavulin, Laphroaig and Ardbeg for a wee taste, a couple of bottles for the boat and a meander back!

Next day was a trip back across to Campbeltown catching the tide for a fast transit across the foot of the Mull of Kintyre to Pick up Jennifers’ Brother, Andrew, who was to join us and eventually sail “Jamily” back to Liverpool with me. All the time I was conscious of a weather front heading our way across the Atlantic so with that in mind we started to head South again and a good sail was had to get us to Glenarm in Northern Ireland. This is a really picturesque looking village and we had a long walk up in the hills at the back of the marina there to stretch the legs.
Bangor marina was the next port of call where we said goodbye to Jennifer. Andrew and I sailed to Peel for a night alongside then an exhilarating sail around the bottom of the island to first Port st Mary but that looked like an exposed anchorage so we sailed further North back up to Laxey and picked up a visitors mooring for the night so we could get an early start back to Liverpool the following morning.

The trip back to Liverpool ended up being the best sail so far on a beam reach in winds gusting up to 32 Knots. We ended up back in Liverpool with a torn Genoa, the sacrificial strip well sacrificed and far too early for the lock so ended up waiting round for a while before getting in on the first lock.

**Ynot of Liverpool, Beneteau Oceanis 37**

West Coast of England and Wales
Distance 300 Nautical Miles.
Paul Brereton, Martin Strohmaier, Keith Pemberton, Erica Wardrope, David Wardrope
28May-4Jun16

Plymouth to Holyhead via Isles of Scilly – 7 days

We made passage from Plymouth to Holyhead in virtually unbroken sunshine/moonshine but all upwind. The strong winds on the nose gave us a good excuse to take an enjoyable break in the Isles of Scilly and wait for the forecast favourable change in wind direction. But by the time we had to leave we were beating into force 5-6 across the Celtic Sea and then a more comfortable force 0-2 up the Irish Sea. Ynot continued north to spend the summer cruising the Hebrides crewed by successive charter crews of civil and public servants – members of 5KSC. In the low season Ynot completes a mix of weekend cruises to Anglesey, Taster Sails and Venture Class racing with LYC.
French Coast
Freyja of Orwell, Najad 380
Distance 120 Nautical miles
Paul Brereton, Martin Strohmaier, Martin Hugo, Brian Smith, Miriam Finnigan
9-19Aug16
Pornichet to Vannes via Ile d’Yeu - 10 days
We boarded Freyja in Pornichet and pottered south to the Isle d’Yeu to pick up where we left off on our exploration of the French west coast starting in Bilbao a couple of years ago. The tides were good for a day of sailing followed by two nights in port giving a day ashore to explore. Notable were our bike rides to circumnavigate Ile d’Yeo and to explore the Cote Sauvage and the megaliths of Carnac from Port Hooligan. Freyja is available to charter by crews of civil and public servants.

West Mediterranean
Azur 2016
Alistair and Liz Soane and friends
The boat is still in Empuriabrava, North West Costa Brava- so not a very adventurous change over the past year but a really enjoyable one.
The marina at Estartit from a viewpoint reached by a stiff climb. The islands are the Islas Medes, a spectacular wild life sanctuary which and we often sail around.

February
Brittany Ferries, Portsmouth to St Malo. This is the annual antifouling trip so we take it with us by car(cheaper than Spain). Stay in an apartment overlooking our mooring in the marina- empty when we arrive as we have arranged for the capitania to take the boat to the yard, a short distance within the marina. Great! Pressure washing is done and a very nice English couple who work there are poised to help with the antifouling hull and propellor and polishing the hull.
More importantly Lewis helped with the retro fitting of an external bow thruster which, after advice, we bought at the London Boat Show. All done in a few days so able to have a relaxing sail in the Bay of Roses, palm trees on shore and snow on distant mountains. Manoeuvring in crowded marinas is now much less stressful.
April
A quick week back to Empuriabrava. Nice warm weather but problems! The batteries keep charging and the fridge floor is full of canal water. Alastair solves the latter. It takes us till the next trip to realise that we need to replace all three batteries rather than the one we started with. Nevertheless we had some quite brisk local sails with friends’ grand daughter. 41/2 month old baby Boe had her first taste of the sea.

June
Back to Spain again for a longer cruise to Barcelona, about 100 miles. Again plus friends with stop offs en route every 15 to 30 miles. Benign weather and good sailing. A highlight was an amazing dinner in Palamos for 19 euros which even now the palmy exchange rates of last summer no longer apply will still be somewhere to return to. We met our nemesis there, however and had to buy two more batteries. All was well thereafter.

The old port, Port Vel in Barcelona has now been converted into a super yacht harbour. Even so there is still space for small craft among the billionaire yachts with the on deck helicopters, various toys and an assemblage of crew whose very palatial facilities we shared.

For the return journey we were joined by two other friends. As it turned out they were friends indeed. A very powerful Tramuntama blew up and it took the four of us plus a marinero at Arenys 30 miles north to tie up in the marina. Even the bow thruster
which was such a help getting into cramped moorings couldn't compete. Fortunately over the next few days the wind moderated and we were back home again in Empuriabrava.

August
Family time: daughter, husband and children, 14 and 11 come for the annual visit. Usually we sail to a local cala to swim but this summer there was a plague of jellyfish so plan B. There are lots of land based activities locally, including riding. We also spent a couple of nights in L'Escala, just along the bay, home to the Graeco Roman remains of Empuries. Week 2 joined by yet more friends. Very hot, surprisingly even more so than the previous week. Short sail to L'Estartit.

November
Back for a week r & r. Flew to Nice. No winter flights to Girona, our nearest airport so a change from Barcelona which is nearer. Still warm enough to be comfortable at night aboard and a good sailing wind.

What more can you ask?

East Mediterranean

Zingara" Moody 34 with Stuart Thomas (Owner)
Alan Sullivan (L.Y.C.)
Prévéza in Greece to Port Colom in Mallorca via Italy, Sicily, Sardinia and the Baleriaces.

Greece to Baleriaces

May 14 - May 29 2016
I met Stuart through the Cruising Association as he wanted help to take his yacht from Prévéza in Ionia to Spain. We had met up a couple of times to sort out itinerary and timing and I agreed to sail with him until the end of May.
Prévéza across the Ionion Sea to Crotone in Italy (191 nms)
We made a good passage the first day, but the wind was blowing us further North than we had planned so we motor-sailed for some of the time.

By the time we reached Italy the following night it proved to be long and wearysome passage, but with the southerly winds blowing us off our original course, we had made very good progress. The night sail in a strong swell made life interesting.

Crotone to Le Castella (18nms)
We set off South towards the heel of Italy but have to put in to beautiful resort of Le Castella for repairs to the battery which was playing up. We stayed two nights, partly because there was so little Chandlery.

Le Castella to Roccella Ionica (47nms)
We made a good day sail to Roccella Ionica, which is a wonderful new marina but extremely underused. It was here that I realized how bad the Italian economy has become, as the only chandlery available was to purchase secondhand materials from the local scrap/boatyard!

Roccella Ionica to Messina Straits and Milazzo (90nms)
We made up wonderful and very interesting passage to the Messina Straights to Sicily. It important to get your tides and timings correct, - especially as tidal charts are still based on high water Gibraltar, 1000 miles away!

Milazzo to Capo d’Orlando (26 nms)
We were delayed in getting fuel the following day so made a short passage to this marina which is still under construction. We anchored off overnight peacefully.

Capo d’Orlando to Palermo (71nms)
This was a heavy day sailing in overcast conditions to the harbour (poor facilities) at Palermo. The town itself is vibrant and with the beautiful architecture which is well worth a visit. Palermo was having a 24 hour ‘Beatle-fest’ concert with dancing and every Beatle song being played!

Palermo to Capo Vito (36nms)
We made another day sail to Capo Vito, which is the launching point to take us across the Tyrenien Sea from Sicily to Sardinia.

Capo Vito in Sicily into the Tyrrhenian Sea to Sardinia (185nms)
This is a long passage with a heavy overnight watch, when the wind was not in our favour, and we were having to use the motor whenever the passage became difficult. We had to change our plan and put into Villasimius for fuel.

Villasimius to Calasetta on St Antioco (69nms)
We sailed along the southern tip of Sardinia to an island off the South West Coast, which became the launching Port for our passage towards Menorca.

Sardinia to Menorca in the Belemics (178nms)
This was another two-day passage with overnight watches where the wind was a little more favourable when it appeared! With 50 miles to go, we switched on the engine and headed for Mahón in Menorca.

Mahón to Port Colom on Mallorca (63nms)
We make good passage due to the favourable wind between the islands and reached Port Colom in 12 hours. It was here that I had to leave Zingara as I had already committing myself to sailing in the Western Isles.

I thoroughly enjoyed the journey from Italy to Mallorca, with several long overnight passages, interspersed with day sailing. The Messenia Straits lived up to expectation when we recorded 12 Kts with the flood! *1000nms recorded.*

Preveza is mainly Hardstandi

The Bubbling Straits of Messina
Zingara in Villasimius in Sardinia

La Catella in Italy
Istanbul, The Dardanelles and the Aegean to Lavrion, Athens

28 September 2016
This cruise was arranged by Peter to take his Catamaran back from Istanbul to Athens, through the Cruising Association website.
This was the shortened Planned Passage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silivri</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>(22.6 nm in 6h 30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoskoy</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canakkale Bogazi</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bozcaada</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siri</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andros</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavrion</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>(53.4nm in 12h)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thursday: Istanbul Marina to Silivri
A good start in fine weather with surprisingly little activity on the water.

Friday: Silivri to Murefte:
Light winds meant we had to use each engine alternatively. The sea was full of
jellyfish, but we were frequently visited by dolphins.

Saturday: Murefte to Canakkale: (55nm in 11 hours)
The bonus was that the light NE winds were sufficient to allow the engines to be turned off as we were able to put out both the Genniker and the Jib, goose-winged. Late in the afternoon, we were stopped by the coast guards, who boarded us to check our papers and crew. Peter had not put the papers in order, so we were cautioned.

Sunday and Monday: Canakkale to Ormos Kastri on Evia (Greece) (168.3nm in 34 hours)
We used one engine as there was a bit of a lift with the sails until late the next morning, when we had to drop the jib again 0500hrs and use both engines 0600hrs. I had a good watch of three hours from 0230 hours, but I was amazed that there was so much traffic going from Greece to The Dardanelles.

Monday was flat calm and both engines were used to help us make progress in the non-existent winds. The swim at the end of the day made it all worthwhile.

Tuesday Kastri to Lavrion near Athens (31nm in 7 hours)
The wind was absent again and although we had our Genniker out for most of the way, it did not really assist our passage.
I had a very enjoyable cruise from Istanbul and the Sea of Marmara, through the Dardanelles, across the Aegean to Athens. The highlights were to be able to cruise goose-winged through the Dardanelles without the motor. The swim in the bay at Kastri topped off a pleasant cruise which was a little marred by

A: being on a tight schedule with light winds and
B: the motor on the go for most of the cruise.
This would be our 4th journey across the North Sea. Previous journeys have taken us as far north as the Lofoten Islands and into the many magical fjords of Norway. My son’s wedding brought us back home in 2015 so we sailed around Ireland in June 2015, celebrated a lovely wedding in July and then sailed ‘Free Spirit’ over to the Hardanger Fjord in Norway in August ready for our adventure south in 2016.
2016

Norway and Sweden

May, 23rd, we flew to Bergen and a two hour bus ride delivered us to Norheimsund and onto our boat. Quickly taking the cover off and getting everything back in order below, we settled in with the electric blanket heating up the cabin cushions for a cosy night.

Of course it’s not all as easy as that !!! Next on the list was re-rigging, sails, check engine, etc. and anti-fouling which meant sailing across the harbour to the local marina and being lifted out. Dave had already booked our slot. Lots of shopping and last minute jobs were done.

June 2nd  Norheimsund to Rosendal.. distance– 25.5 nm

Now we were ready to go !! We said our goodbye’s to everyone and set off for
Looking back to Rosendal below the mountain in centre top with its magnificent waterfall.

In the Sound passing Hagesund with lots of traffic. Holding your breath as the bridge slide by overhead!

Going south there is more commercial traffic in the Inner Lead, waters protected by the islands.

The weather is warm and sunny with a light wind.

We hugged the coast of Karmoy and into Skudneshaven, one of our favourite places and our very first landfall in Norway in 2012. We arrived to find it full of festivity with a fair and open air evening concert in the park!
The pontoons are right in the middle of the town. Across from the boat is the main square and shops.

It is a beautiful old town with typical wooden houses and narrow roads and bridges. There are also lovely beaches within walking and cycling distance.

Great facilities at the end of the pontoon and inexpensive!

On we sailed, past Kvittsoy and into the small island of Rott

Left; Rott harbour. Only one inhabitant left all other houses are summer homes now.

In Norway the only problem to avoid are rocks but as these are well marked its fairly safe as the waters are almost bottomless in places and no tides to speak of!!

However, as we sailed south the depths became shallower and on this leg of our journey we were out in open water with no sheltering islands.

It was a hard sail with 15/20knots of wind on the nose which brought up a big sea until we made our way into Egersund. We were followed by Rock and Roll, a boat from Arisaig, glad to be following us as we wound our way into narrow intricate channel to the marina!
We explored round the corner by sailing up the fjord into Flekkefjord for 9nms, a lovely town with wooden houses around the harbour.

Next port of call was Kirkham (opposite) which was very picturesque and we explored its island of Hidre on another hot, hot day with our bikes.

View from the hilltop with the maze of German fortifications.

Pontoons are middle, to left of church.

We came across this tree decorated with crocheted flowers. There were lots of others in the town!!

We were amazed to find ‘Solas’ from Burntisland alongside. Gordon and crew were VIP’s as Flekkefjord is twinned with Burntisland. This was their first trip to Norway. I don’t think it will be their last! We also were invited to listen the Flekkefjord male Voice choir who were going to sing at the Edinburgh Festival. It’s a small world!!

Leaving Kristiansand we crept along the Blindleia (Blind Lead) a very narrow corridor thro’ islands and small ports, under bridges (make sure you know the height of your mast! This takes us in shelter, along the coast to Lingor which is going to be our crossing point over the Skaggerak to Sweden.
Above; route thro’ the Blindleia Right; Lingor, streets of water. Houses built for boats! We found an empty pontoon for the night and set off for Sweden early next morning.

Now our Swedish adventure had begun!

June 19th we arrived in Grebbestad marina after a crossing of 72nms in windy conditions but a good sail with 2 reefs. Bad weather was forecast so we sat it out with good company. For a few days
Leaving Grebbistad we entered the Hamburgsund and then the Sote Canal which weaved once more in and out of islands. But now the depths were getting heart-stoppingly shallow and it is imperative to keep to the marks.

Hamburgsund Warning of cable ferry ahead!
The Sote canal Swing Bridge it only opens when the keeper hears your signal 2 short and 1 long hoot!! We called him up to make sure and got a lovely wave as we past thro’!!

So our journey sailed on. We stopped at a few marina’s on the way and had to use the Swedish system of Y booms, stern buoys and boom pontoons. All require to approach the pontoon bow on. So we began to devise our partner work. Dave had the job of getting off the boat with the lines, This required gymnastic strength to get over the bow rail and land on the pontoon, whilst I stopped the boat and went forward to take the lines back on board. With the stern buoys..that required attaching a line to the buoy as you went forward onto the pontoon. So Dave would get the line on the buoy, hand it to me and get forward to do the bow ,whilst I let out the line and stopped the boat as he called out the distance to go to the pontoon 1 Piece of cake !! When it worked....Fun and games !
We stopped by Smogen, Gulholman, Marstrand and then Styrso Bratten an island near Gothenburg at Midsummer weekend. The Scandinavians celebrate Midsummer in a big way with bonfires and parties and dancing round a maypole! Below right.

This sign above speaks for itself!

Next stop was Falkenburg, one of our favourite places with a friendly sailing club and free use of bikes with unusual brakes...you had to pedal backwards to stop!! We waited here for good wind to take us across the Kattegat to Denmark to visit Helsingor and Copenhagen.
Crossing the Kattegat. A good but choppy sail reaching the marina at Helsingor and Kronberg Castle.

Kronberg is the home of Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Elsinore and Prince of Denmark! The whole town relies on the Hamlet tourist attraction. Next was Copenhagen. We stayed in Hellerup, a few miles to the north and took the bus.

Of course we did the usual attractions!

The main harbour is in the background.

There are a few marina’s here but very busy and expensive. Some ask you to be away by 12.00 so that the next batch of boats can get in!!

Then it was back across the Oresund to Malmo, Sweden, and on thro’ the Fasterbo Canal which is a shortcut onto the south coast to Ystad. We battled a headwind under the amazing bridge linking Denmark and Sweden and were in time for the 10.00 opening of the swing bridge thro’ the canal with lots of other boats.
The south coast is quite exposed and we had a good but bumpy sail to Ystad, then we rounded the headland to head north into more sheltered water out of the strong westerly wind up to Ahus and Karlshamn a lovely small fishing harbour and marina with an amazing restaurant with a fresh fish menu!

One of our ports of call on the east coast was Karlskrona with its fantastic Maritime Museum. On the way is the Haslo swing bridge which opens every hour on the hour so we had been led to believe....We arrived just on 1500 hours but it didn’t open!! We called up the bridge keeper who advised ‘yes, it did open etc. etc. BUT it has to be requested’ Dave said could it open at 1600 ?? The Keeper,’ You haven’t requested it ‘ Dave, ‘Can we request the bridge to open please ??’ ‘Yes, no problem’ said the Bridge Keeper !!! and so we arrived in Karlskrona!
The rest of the journey took us into some good marinas and beautiful natural harbours such as Kristianopel, Kalmar, Monsteras and Figeholms.

Figeholms is a small but popular sailing club and we arrived as it was celebrating its 80th birthday with music, BBQ and packed out pontoons!! We squeezed into a tight corner using our newly acquired buoy hook, very pleased with ourselves that we managed this manoeuvre quite well! Again, lots of people willing to help when needed.

From there we went on to our first wild, natural anchorage of Store Shipholman, hearts in our mouths as we wove in and out of the shallow channels between islands and rocks.

We intended to anchor but we arrived to find that a sailing club had built a pontoon and it was pretty full with no space to drop our anchor because their stern anchors were in the way. Oh dear! We turned to leave just as there was a whistle from shore and a shout to join them on the pontoon.
above; the sailing club pontoon. right; the toilet and rubbish bins. A donation in asked for. We found many of the islands were organised like this. All had many small paths thro’ the woods and BBQ areas. Because the islands are so close to towns and the mainland everyone makes for them at the weekend. They are very social places but get quite full in the month of July. It also pays to be early to get a good mooring e.g. 1400 at the latest, even in marinas!

We eventually felt quite comfortable mooring on the rocks although we always regarded it as a challenge and were thrilled to bits when we were successfully tied up!

We sailed on up to Stockholm thro’ the narrow channels and had a marvellous time exploring the city by bike.

The Canal leading into the heart of Stockholm.  Boats in the canal raised to protect them from the wash.
All Swedes take swimming seriously and Dave was no exception. They even hang thermometers over the side of their boats to test the temperature. Children spend their time splishing and sploshing all day long. The waters of the Baltic are not very salty, even dogs drink the water!

Armadas and popular wild anchorages.
Sent out to play!!

Right; glad of boats ahead to show the way thro’ the rocks !.

We visited Gallno,Ronholmn, Horso, Ringson and many others .We made many friends of various nationalities to keep in touch with and hope to meet some of them again next season.
Storon. Swedish Cruising Club brygge
Complete with sauna, the round wooden hut on the raft on the right.

Above; cutting and chopping wood for the sauna!!
Another beautiful island with a 5 hour walk thro’ the woods to the nearest shop !. We were captive here for 2 days whilst strong winds and gale warnings blew from the south. Great company of people, children and dogs!

Above left; typical woodland.

Above right; herds of deer roaming Ringson.

Left; bridge linking islands on our way to the shop.
Above; One of our more adventurous moorings! Dave had to abseil off after jumping onto the steep rock to attach our ropes to the ring!!
Evenings were always calm with a beautiful light and sunsets.

We ventured as far as the Aland Islands which are Finish and then made our way back south to Navekvarn where we had decided to leave the boat for the winter.

Nkvekvarn is a small sailing club marina with good winter storage and friendly locals with quite a few British boats as members. Lovely islands surround it and lots of walks in the nature reserve. It is a few nms. south of Oxelosund the nearest town.
Nervous moments as Free Spirit is towed up to the yard for winter. We are keeping her outside as we have a cover for her but there is cold and heated storage available in the sheds. Also handy is the hostel (white building) right next to the yard with its own kitchen, lounge etc.