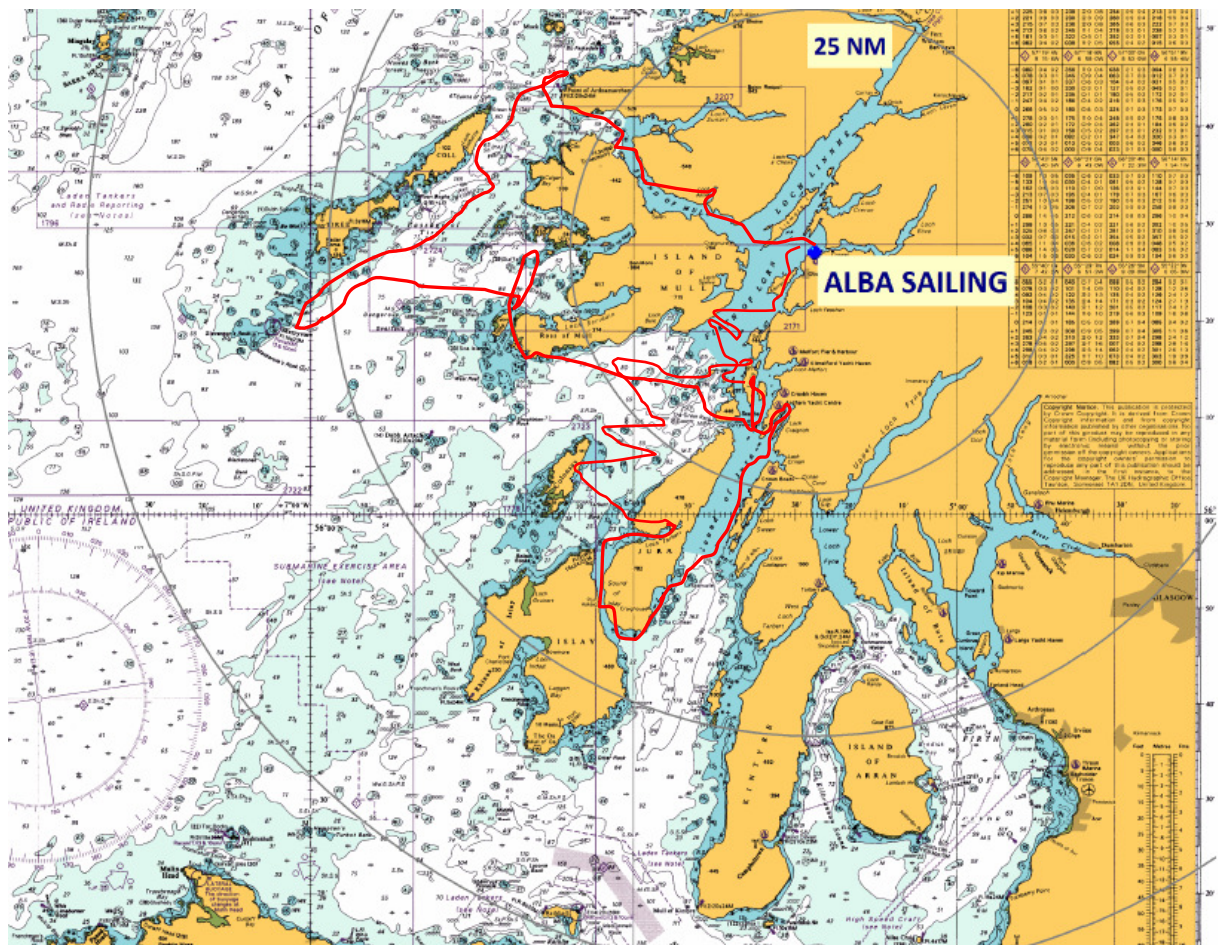


Log

True Blue of Hamble

Saints & Spirits Cruise

1st to 8th June 2012



Extract from UKHO Chart "Scotland West Coast"

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Introduction

The Idea

In his youth my father had read and been captivated by Dr R B Carslaw's account of sailing the western isles during the 1920s and 30s with his large and growing family. "Leaves from Rowan's Logs" was oft referred to as much for its descriptions of place as its wonderfully caustic observations on the trials and tribulations of sailing with growing children. As a result of Dad's captivation, I was introduced to the west of Scotland as a small child. First camping, using canoes to explore the lochs, then as the eldest son of a family of five, squeezed into a 20 foot long sailing cruiser for 2-3 weeks at a time. In the 1970s I was told this was not an unusual holiday. The Inner Hebrides infused my soul, and then lay dormant for many years. But, occasionally, a sunset through clouds would stir a memory of the islands.

The Saints: In 1976 National Geographic magazine ran an article about a team led by Tim Severin sailing across the Atlantic in a leather boat similar to the currachs still used on the west coast of Ireland. I, like many of the crew, had read and been hooked by Tim Severin's book. His tale of the research, design, building, and trials of the leather currach being as fascinating as the log of the journey. He described how a stepping stone route from Ireland through the Hebrides, to the Faeroes, Iceland, past Greenland into the ice and eventually to Newfoundland matched the ancient account of the Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis. As time passed I became aware of the voyages of other early Irish Saints through the western isles which paralleled the Irish "Scotti" colonisation of what we now call Scotland. Sailing the western isles in small light weight boats has a very long and inspiring history.

The Spirits: Whisky goes with the Hebrides. The idea of a cruise to visit some of the distilleries of Mull, Islay and Jura quickly captured the imaginations of the crew.

So if excuse be needed, what better than to follow in the wake of the saints and explore the spirits of the Inner Hebrides. A few hints dropped at a significant birthday party were all that was needed to get the crew following the scent.

The Crew

Skipper: Chris Jones

First Mate: Gordon MacKellar

Crew / Chef: Stewart MacKellar

Crew 2: Ian Happs

Not able to sail: Martin

The "Plan"

We chartered a Moody 31 "True Blue of Hamble" from Alba Sailing at Dunstaffnage Marine North of Oban. With Ian & Martin planning to join us part way through the week, the rough plan was to sail the Inner Hebrides. First up the Sound of Mull and if conditions permitted poke our noses round Ardnamuchan, picking up some heather on the way. Then south, through the islands to Iona and on to Islay and Colonsay. We arranged to meet Ian & Martin in Crinan then sail back to Craighouse to visit the Jura Distillery. The remainder of the cruise was to be spent working our way north through the islands up the Sound of Jura and out into the Firth of Lorne back to Dunstaffnage.

As the bard put it "The best laid plans of mice and men gan oft agley" The following log is compiled, edited and expurgated from the deck log and other recollections of the cruise.

The Log

Day 1

Date	Friday 1 June 2012		
From	North Wales	Towards	Dunstaffnage and L Aline

Tides

Dover	HW			Oban			
Port				Port			
HW	10:00 BST	HW	22:24 BST	HW		HW	
				LW		LW	

Weather forecast


Weather Forecast					
Time			Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop					
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis	

Deck Log

Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
06:00	N				Depart Gresford
09:00					Anchored Carlisle for Stores
10:30	N				Dept Carlisle
13:00	NW				Drovers for Lunch
15:10					Arrived Dunstaffnage
					Transfer to True Blue of Hamble
19:00		00.0			
19:15	280	0.3		WSW 1-2	Head for Duart castle
20:20					Turned off Lismore for Sound of Mull
21:20					Glas Eliean to Port
22:15		12.9	12.9	NNE	Anchored L Aline

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>Leg 1: North Wales to Carlisle, early start loading gear for three into the Golf and on the road to get past Thelwall before the morning jam.</p> <p>Carlisle, Skipper took a detour to sort out parental domestics while the Mate and Crew went to Morrison's for victuals. An hour later a large trolley overflowing with stores was being loaded onto the checkout belt, the cashier wondering how we would fit so much stores in a small boat, Mate wondering how we would fit it into an even smaller car. Crew wondering whether he could hold onto the car roof all the way to Oban. We offered to close the windows on his fingers if his grip started to slip. Then the checkout belt broke under the load and the cashier suggested putting some food back. A bit of reorganising and the stores were all squeezed into the Golf, and later repacked around the Crew.</p> <p>Leg 2: Carlisle to Oban, The roads get more open and emptier as we head north over Beattock then close in again as we drop down through Glasgow and over the Erskin Bridge, bringing back childhood memories of the bridge being built and left part complete for a year with drooping ends. Through Dumbarton and out onto the road to the highlands. Stopped at the Drovers to impress the Crew with the collection of stuffed animals including the bear. There we picked up haggis and cheese melts for lunch on the go. Another change of drivers for the road north to Crianlarich then west down towards Oban. Passed by three pink bikers in tutus raising money for "Breast Way Round".</p> <p>Arrived at Dunstaffnage for the hand over of Moody 31 "True Blue of Hamble" from Tim the Engineer. Loaded and stowed the gear and stores. Time for a chill out in the Wide Mouthed Frog with a beer & snacks.</p> <p>Secured for sea, Cast off, reversed out of our berth (always a moment of faith with a strange boat) then motored out into Firth of Lorne. Winds very light and on the nose so motored past our first Stevenson Lighthouse, Eilean Musdile, on the southern tip of Lismore. A lone porpoise played in the overfalls as we headed up the Sound of Mull past Duart Castle (with an enormous coach parked next to it), Craignure, Ardtornish Bay with a couple of yachts at anchor. Crew captivated by the clouds, photographing reflections and the sunset over Ardtornish Castle. Then in the gloaming passed through the narrows to Loch Aline and an anchorage for the night.</p>
15:10	
19:00	
	 <p>1 Sunset Clouds, Sound of Mull</p> <p>A late dinner and a whisky completed the first stage of relaxation from work to cruising mode.</p>

Day 2

Date	Saturday 2 June 2012		
From	L Aline	Towards	Iona

Tides

Dover	HW			Oban			
Port				Port			
HM	10:00	HW	22:24	HM	04:31	HW	17:05
				LW	10:58	LW	23:08

Weather forecast


Time	06:00	Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop				
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
	NE 4/5 Occ 6 in W	Slight / mod	Fair	Good
midnight	E/NE 4-5 inc 6 at times	Slight / mod	Fair	Good

Deck Log

Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
09:20				NW 1	Up Anchor
09:35				NW1-2	Sails up. Motor sail up sound of Mull
11:30					Turn into Tobermory
11:45		22.5	9.4		Picked up mooring THT
14:05				NW 1	Left Tobermory for Sana Bay
14:50		27			Off Ardmore Point
15:16					Sails up, Engine off
15:30	320			NW 3-4	Sails up
16:00	090				Tack off Ardnamurchan Pt
16:30					Closed Sanda Bay
16:40					Anchored
19:15					Depart Sanda bay under sail
19:50					Ardnamurchan light abeam
22:45	250 C	38.4		E 2	Towards Coll, Tiree & Skerry Voe
00:00					Continued Next Page

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>A slow start and gentle breakfast prepared by the Crew before raising the anchor and motoring out though the narrows, back into the Sound of Mull. Bright sunshine, sails up but wind light and on the nose so motor sailed up the Sound of Mull towards Tobermory admiring the scenery and large new holiday homes on the Morvern shore. Picked up an appalling weather forecast for "Jubilee weekend in The South" and the Mate's mum's reassurance we were in for the best weather in the UK.</p> <p>Late morning turned into Tobermory Bay now well supplied with Visitor moorings and pontoons that were but a dream last time I came this way 35 years ago. The distillery was closed due to lack of water and the visitor's centre had closed for lunch so wandered up the brightly painted high street to the Post Office for Tobermory Cat postcards, past posters for "Curry Cruises" and onto Brown's. Brown's is difficult to describe being a miniature general superstore. A shop which stocks everything imaginable from mousetraps to Airfix models, plaster of Paris, to musical instruments and tools to fine whiskys. Bought a bottle of 12 year old Tobermory Whisky, 12v multi socket, fishing lines and that rarest of finds a PP9 battery to run the ancient echo sounder on our Shrimper "Daisy".</p>  <p>2 Tobermory</p> <p>Picked up some pies from the bakery for lunch and wandered back in time for the reopening of the Distillery Shop. Amongst other reminiscences and spirits they sell wooden USBs, which impressed the Mate.</p> <p>In blazing sunshine and very light wind we motored towards Ardnamurchan, past another Stevenson lighthouse on Ardmore point. As we broke out of the Sound of Mull the wind picked up at last so sails up and motor off to sail around Ardnamurchan Point. More porpoises were playing under the cliffs and rafts of guillemots mixed with other sea birds drifted by then scooted out of our way.</p> <p>As we rounded the point we had a clear view past the small isles up the Sound of Sleat round to Barra and past Coll to Tiree.</p>

Time	Notes
	<div data-bbox="327 286 1321 943" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="327 947 735 974">3 Silica sand beach at Sana Bay</p> <p data-bbox="327 1003 1377 1095">We picked our way between the rocks, into Sana Bay, to await the turn of the tide. While waiting we landed on the pristine white silica sand beach and climbed up the hill behind the village past orchids, cotton grass lichen and sheep.</p> <div data-bbox="327 1099 810 1413" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="855 1099 1339 1413" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="327 1417 1310 1473">From the ridge we looked down into the sunken ring dykes forming an 8 mile diameter caldera.</p> <p data-bbox="327 1507 1382 1688">We climbed back over the hill with the view out over the small isles and on to Coll and Tiree. Below us the Waverly passing round Ardnaurchan, inbound from a cruise around the Small Isles. Down past abandoned black houses we came to a tiny green corrugated iron chapel with theatre seats and King James bibles. We chatted on the beach with a group of camper-vaning kite surfers who were cooking their dinner over an open fire with a Dutch Oven and totally un-aware of the caldera.</p> <p data-bbox="327 1722 1362 1812">Quote of the Day: Was that three decades ago? (American kite surfer asking about the formation of the Ardnamurchan ring dykes 400 million years before, and adds weight to our understanding of the American perspective of history)</p>

Time	Notes
	<div data-bbox="328 255 1369 943" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="328 947 1189 976">4 Waverly passing Ardnamurchan, <i>True Blue</i> at anchor in Sana Bay</p> <p data-bbox="328 1008 1394 1128">An evening sail past Ardnamurchan Lighthouse and gently drifting on into the sunset, we couldn't decide where to anchor, so we decided instead to sail on into the night. Past pitch black Coll back lit by the orange twilight, we missing the blue flash and sailed on through the night past Tiree towards the beckoning flash of the Skerryvore light.</p> <div data-bbox="328 1158 1394 1865" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="328 1870 1189 1899">5: Ardnamurchan Lighthouse, Alan Stevenson's Egyptian style light</p>

Day 3

Date	Sunday 3rd June 2012		
From	Ardnamurchan	Towards	Iona

Tides

Dover	HW			Oban			
Port				Port			
HM		HW		HM		HW	
LW		LW		LW		LW	

Weather forecast


Time		Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop	L S England moving to Germany, Low moving into N Ireland			
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caledonia	E/NE4-5 inc 6	Slight – mod	Rain later	Mod - good

Deck Log



Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
00:04					56:34.56 N 06:32.57W
00:30					56:33.47N 06:35.27W
01:40	220 C	45.8		NE 3	Wind shift
02:00	210 C				
02:30	215 T			ENE 4	56:27.4N 6:44.0 W
03:05	223 T			E 5/6	56:24.3N 6:47.0 W
03:30	050 C			NE 5	Reefed & Tacked Change watch
04:30	110 C			NE 5/6	56:24.7N 6:44.6W tacked
07:30					Bore away into Sound of Iona
08:00					Anchored Fionnphort under sail. Engine battery too low to start.
					Slept, Borrowed generator, restarted engine.
11:15					Moved to Martyrs Bay Iona
					Crew leave to visit Iona monastery
16:35		68.2		NE1	Set sail for Staffa
17:20	010 C				Minki Whale 56:23.0N 6:20.0E
17:45	010 C				Staffa, Crew ashore for photos, Skipper circled the Island
18:45	190 C				Depart for Sound of Iona
20:00					Looked into Bulls Hole.
2030					Touched bottom approaching Tinkers Hole
21:00		84.5			Anchored Tinker's Hole
					9 Yachts fill T Hole

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>After midnight the wind increased to F6 and backed NE. At 03:30 we reefed at the change of watch as the Skipper took over from the Mate. The Crew tucked himself deep into the lee berth as, 7 miles from Serryvore light, we close hauled E. Skipper standing watch alone tacked N for an hour before tacking back E away from Tiree towards the faint smudge on the horizon of Iona. Dark mutterings from the Crew at each change of tack were followed later in the day by an apology from the Mate for not pointing out the lee cloths.</p> <p>As the night wore on instruments started to fail, first the auto helm, then the plotter. Despite turning off all unnecessary power, started to get wild readings from the echo sounder. Back up onto the windward rail, tiller extension in hand as twilight turned to half light and the Dutchman's Cap became clearer to windward. Sunrise over Mull, Iona becoming clearer, nearer and dead ahead on 100°. A slight backing of the wind and Skipper was able to keep the ferocious Riedh Eilean group of rocks safely to leeward. But not enough to clear the Eilean Annraidh rocks which guard the north west entrance to the Sound of Iona.</p> <p>Three tacks in quick succession woke the crew as the Skipper worked around Eilean Annraidh rocks before bearing away into the Sound of Iona. The engine could not be started because all the batteries were flat. Considering the options we thought it unwise to anchor off Iona as we would be more likely to get the battery charged on Mull. We anchored under sail off Fionnphort and then slept.</p> <p>The Crew, with less sleep to catch up on than the rest of the crew, arranged to borrow a generator from the dive boat anchored next to us. Restarting the engine with great relief we exchanged working batteries for the remains of the bottle of Tobermory Whisky.</p> <p>Motored over to Iona and landed at Martyrs beach, the scene of a massacre of Irish monks by Viking raiders in the 9th century. As we wandered up through Baile Mor towards the cathedral, we passed the beautifully simple parish church designed by Thomas Telford and built in 1828. This was the first church on Iona after the abandoning of the cathedral in the 16th century.</p> <div data-bbox="453 1296 1251 1823">  </div> <p>6: Iona Parish Church, built in 1828 to a design by Thomas Telford</p>

Time	Notes
	<div data-bbox="360 264 676 730" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="692 259 1340 416" data-label="Text"> <p>Exploring the cathedral the Skipper found the watch tower by the main door to the cathedral with its unusual serrated window and recalled the tale told by a mischievous guide to a 9 year old version of the Skipper.....</p> </div> <div data-bbox="692 443 1356 658" data-label="Text"> <p><i>When the Benedictine monks ran the monastery in the 12th century they used to have a monk on lookout for visitors and raiders. One night the duty monk heard scraping footsteps coming up the stairs and saw the devil coming up the stairs to get him. The only way out was through the window. So the serrations are the groves left by his ribs as he made his escape.</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="692 685 1351 750" data-label="Text"> <p>The present guide had not heard the tale but swapped it for the tale of St Oran, after whom the chapel in the</p> </div> <div data-bbox="343 745 633 781" data-label="Text"> <p>burial ground is named.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="343 777 1353 1025" data-label="Text"> <p><i>St Oran was one of St Columba's followers who accompanied his leader into exile from Ireland. When the monks established the monastery they wanted to dedicate a burial ground but had no body, so Oran volunteered to be buried alive. Three days later Columba wanted to look upon the face of his old friend again, so ordered the monks to dig open the grave. When the lid was removed Oran sat up and started telling the monks how death was not at all the fiery pit of demons he had been told about. On the contrary he found it to be a wonderful place of quiet contemplation. Hearing this heresy Columba was furious and had Oran quickly reburied.</i></p> </div> <div data-bbox="349 1023 1318 1422" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="343 1417 1316 1482" data-label="Text"> <p>7: Dingle Curragh recently arrived on Iona, little changed from the curraghs used by the Irish Monks in the 7th Century</p> </div> <div data-bbox="343 1509 1347 1606" data-label="Text"> <p>The Jubilee spirit was abroad in Baile Mor with posters of the Queen (with a safety pin through her nose) advertising a Jubilee BBQ lunch. By the time we rolled up the food was long gone, eaten within the first hour by more ravenous revellers.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="343 1630 1319 1760" data-label="Text"> <p>Returning to Martyrs Beach the tide was in and the dinghy was missing, a hurried search found the dinghy secured to the pier and dark mutterings from everybody who thought (with 20:20 hindsight) the tide might reach the place we had left the dinghy but didn't like to say. Two strokes of ill "luck", what more could go wrong?</p> </div> <div data-bbox="343 1785 1327 1910" data-label="Text"> <p>We consoled ourselves with Ice Creams, chatted with a boatman and admired the curragh which had just been rowed over from Ireland, as a robed pilgrim and his girlfriend carried a large wooden cross onto the Cal Mac ferry back to Fionnphort. Another day normal for Iona.</p> </div>

Time	Notes
	<p data-bbox="347 262 1355 349">An afternoon cruise out to Staffa after the last tripper boat had returned, was rewarded with the additional joys of a minke whale, puffins, guillemots, eider ducks and porpoises.</p> <p data-bbox="347 412 1355 562">The Mate and Crew landed on Staffa and explored Fingal's cave. With no secure anchorage the Skipper circled the island passing through rafts of puffins, passing close to the SW rocks in 30+m of water. The swell caused huge echoing booms as waves hit the back of the Boat Cave. A group of sea kayakers left heading NE towards Ulva.</p>  <p data-bbox="347 1182 991 1216">8: Staffa with "Fingal's Cave" and the "Boat Cave"</p> <p data-bbox="347 1245 1355 1462">Heading back towards Iona we watched for the whales without luck. We explored the Bulls Hole and found it exposed to the northerly wind so headed south to find our way into Tinker's Hole. Despite lookouts and a very slow speed we touched bottom on our way through the rocks. The echo sounder apparently showed 2m clear depth of water below the keel. With nine yacht's in Tinker's Hole, one anchored in the fairway, space was tight. The Mate redeemed some pride with excellent berthing reversing slowly into a slot with a line ashore to the rocks.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1491 1355 1554">The sunset firing the pink granite brought forth the quote of the evening: "Disney could not have done it better."</p> 

Day 4

Date	Monday 4th June 2012		
From	Tinkers Hole (Iona)	Towards	Ardinamere (Luing)

Tides

Dover	HW			Oban			
Port				Port			
HM	11:42	HW		HM	06:10	HW	18:35
				LW	12:33	LW	00:55

Weather forecast





Time	ISWF 06:66 UTC	Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop	High Iceland, low S UK moving to Germany, Low moving toward Ireland			
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caladonia	N-NE 'coming E 3-4	Smooth - Slight	Fair	Good
Forecast 5/6				
Caladonia	E/SE 4-5	Smooth – Slight	Fair Rain later	Mainly good


Deck Log


[illegible]

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>Quote of the Day: Of the man who dreams in the night you have nothing to fear. BUT beware the man who dreams in the day, for he has the power to make his dreams come true.</p>
09:00	<p>Mate & Crew dived to inspect and photograph the keel. Crew in wetsuit, Mate chose a more traditional approach. The inspection only found some minor paint damage near a previous significant rust filled ding. There were no other signs of damage to the keel. Skipper rechecked the keel bolts, no signs of damage or leakage.</p> <p>Working our way out, inshore of the Torran Rocks, we made passage across the South of Mull in a flat calm. Skipper invested time trying to find the leak in the inflatable dinghy's tubes, without success. Caught the Crew dozing at the helm and reminded him in the old days this was a flogging offence.</p>
13:30	<p>Anchored for lunch by the old landing on Eileach an Naoimh, before exploring St Brendan's monastery established some 20 years before Columba founded Iona. Climbing to the top of the Island we passed the ancient grave reputed to be of Eithne, princess of Leinster, sister of St Brendan, and mother of St Columba. It is easy to see how the Garvelach islands got the Celtic name of Hinba "The Isles of the Sea", being in a commanding position for coastal traffic heading to the Firth of Lorne or out around Mull to the outer Islands. Close enough to the colonising High King's court at Dunadd, yet far enough away to give the monks some of the isolation they craved. The tail of Corrieveckan's flood tide eddies are visible far out into the Firth of Lorne. Close to the monastery are the well preserved and famous semidetached beehive cells.</p>    

Time	Notes
16:15	<p>To head inside the islands for the Sound of Jura we had a choice of Cuan Sound to the North, the Sound of Luìng, The Grey Dogs or the Gulf of Corrieveckan to the South. All of which are tide gates needing either slack water or the start of the ebb. By the time we had finished exploring Eileach an Naoimh and got back on board we had only an hour of flood left so Cuan Sound and the Sound of Luìng were becoming less ideal. Corrieveckan with its fearsome reputation holds a fascination. Conditions were ideal, calm, 5 miles at 5 knots and we would be entering the Gulf on turn of tide. Other yachts were also heading for the mighty maw. Setting all plain sail and motoring we set course. Skipper and Mate in turn read the pilot books, double checking tidal calculations, the Mate recalling as a child climbing over Scarba to look down on the whirlpool at full flood tide force. With millions of tons of water squeezed through the gulf up, over and around the submerged stack close to the Scarba shore creating a fearsome standing wave with eddies shed from each side mixing with the incoming swell of a South Westerly gale, they left a small boy with an awe inspiring image of the power of the sea.</p>
17:30	<p>As we approached, the last disturbances of the flood tide eddies played lazily with the keel. Heading for mid channel we entered, with wide grins and taking photos like Japanese tourists. We turned to take a closer look at the boils of water just starting to build over the submerged stack, as gannets and terns dived for fish. Then out into the Sound of Jura with porpoises playing in the rip. Beware the man who dreams in the day, for he has the power to make his dreams come true.</p>  <p>9: Approaching Corrieveckan at slack water</p> <p>Into the Sound of Shuna the Crew tried fishing but kept catching weed.</p>
19:30	<p>In through the rocks to the anchorage at Ardinamir for the night. After dinner we went for water at Ardinamir Farm. The elderly resident couple confirmed Mrs McLachlan's visitors books had been archived by CCC and they no longer keep a book. The farm and byres are now very different from the spartan farm Mrs McLachlan kept last time I visited in 1978. Now they are well appointed holiday homes.</p>

Time	Notes
21:10	<p data-bbox="347 322 1305 450">We walked over the hill to Cullipool in time to catch sunset from the ridge then in through the village for the lighting of the Jubilee Beacon on the hill above. Fossicking on the beach we found fools gold in amongst the slates and took a couple of stones for the Skipper's youngest daughter.</p>  <p data-bbox="347 1137 1098 1167">10: Sunset over Culliport, Mull, Fladda and the Garvelachs</p>

Day 5

Date	Tuesday 5th June 2012 (Queen's Diamond Jubilee)		
From	Ardinamir	Towards	Elian Mor (MacCormig Islands)

Tides

Dover	HW	12:30	00:54BST				
Port	Oban			Port			
HM	06:56	HW	19:20	HM		HW	
LW	13:19	LW		LW		LW	

Weather forecast


Time	06:00	Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop	Low UK. Unsettled & windy for foreseeable future			
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caledonia	E/NE 3-4 Occ 5 in W	Smooth – slight	Occ rain fair latter	Mod /good
24 hrs +	E/NE 3-4 inc 5-6 later	Slight – Mod	Mainly fair Rain later	Mod / Good

Deck Log

Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
07:58	S	114			Dept Ardinamir
09:15	S				Approaching Dorus Mhor
09:30	E	119		Calm	Through Dorus Mhor
10:45					Moored Ardfarn Clean boat, Showers for whole crew, Lunch at Galley of Lorne, charge camera batteries, sleep.
17:10					Depart Ardfarn
18:30					Arrive Crinan to pick up Ian.
18:50		128	S 2	Slight	Dept Crinan with Ian and stores.
20:15	180		SE2	flat	
20:45	160		SSE2	Slight	Porpoises playing around True Blue. Ferry gliding to MacCormig Islands across ebb tide flowing SSW 4 knots
21:15		136			Anchored Eilean Mor, One other yacht. Holding poor due to lots of kelp.

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
07:58	An early start from Ardinamire to catch the tide gate at Dorus Mhor, we were followed out into the Sound of Shuna by a small fishing boat. The weather was calm with a thin overcast as we passed through the swirls of the Dorus Mhor and the turn to Port up Loch Craignish to Ardfern. The appalling Jubilee weather from the south was moving north.
10:45	Ardfern gave us the chance to refill the water tanks, clean the boat and then the Skipper treated the crew to hot showers. Altruism or self preservation? The sun broke through and we hauled the Crew up the mast to fix a flag halyard to the starboard cross trees. Wandered up the village for lunch & camera battery charging at the Galley of Lorne. Then the postprandial snooze lasted well into the afternoon. A text landing from Crew 2 with his ETA at Crinan woke the slumberous.
17:10	As we departed the main VHF was not being picked up by the Yacht harbour, again the domestic batteries came under suspicion. Fortunately the hand held radios were both working. Motoring to Crinan put some charge back into the domestic battery.
	
	11 Arrival of the Dragon and the rain, Crinan
18:30	Just as we arrived in Crinan to pick up Crew 2 it started to drizzle the rain approaching from the south. Picked up a mooring then a quick buzz around in the tender (successfully repaired at Ardnamire). Two loads, one of stores and kit the
18:50	other for Crew. Kit was roughly stowed. We dropped the mooring and motored off in light rain. Out into the Firth of Lorne and south towards the MacCormig Islands with porpoises and dolphins playing around boat. Approaching the islands we had to ferry glide to cross the ebbing tide.
21:15	Twilight found us pirouetting around the tiny inlet trying to find a suitable spot to anchor without fouling an Alban Vega from Northern Ireland.
	Crew 1 promoted to Chef; - Dinner of hand made burgers with oven roast chips, Granny Happ's jubilee buns, red wine and a nip of whisky rounded off a gently satisfying day.

Day 6

Date	Wednesday 6th June 2012		
From	Eilean Mor (MacCormiag Isles)	Towards	L. Tarbert, Jura

Tides

Dover	HW	13:18	01:42				
Port	Oban			Port			
HM	07:41	HW	20:04	HM		HW	
LW	14:05	LW		LW		LW	

Weather forecast

Time		Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop				
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caledonia	N/NE 3-4	Slight / Mod	Occ rain / fair	good
24 hrs +	N/NE 3-4 inc 5-6	Slight / Mod	Showers rain later	Mod / good

Deck Log


Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
					Explored Eilean Mor, St MacCormiag's cave, chapel / ale house / illicit still SNP Trust visitor's centre (black house).
10:30		136			Dept Eilean Mor
10:45				Var1-2	
10:55	260 c				
12:15	250 c	143		0	Turned for Craighouse.
12:30					Picked up visitor mooring Craighouse Isle of Jura
15:45				0	Dropped mooring
15:50	180 c	144		0	
16:25	250 c			0	Turn towards McArthur's Hd
16:50	290 c	149		0	Turn into Sound of Islay
17:10	340 c	150		0	Black Rock buoy abeam. Flood still running
17:30	350c			0	Port Askaig / Caol Isla distillery abeam
18:00	000 c	154		0	Off Bunahabahn Distillery, photos of wrecked coaster.
18:20	025 c	156		N 2	Sails up: Engine off
18:45				0	Sails down: Engine on
20:05					Anchored inner L Tarbert Jura after close pilotage through islands & reefs

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p data-bbox="347 262 1359 566">After breakfast we landed on Eilean Mor, St MacCormig's Island. MacCormig was reputed to be one of Columba's 12 companions. With a wayward nature and forever seeking his own white martyrdom, in a desert space in the ocean, he became known as "MacCormig of the Sea". Eilean Mor was where he isolated himself as a hermit, using a cave at the south western end of the island as his place of contemplation or Cell. Following the Viking age Reginald Sommerled, First Lord of the Isles, set up a chapel on Eilean Mor as at many other Celtic Christian sites including the monastery and abbey on Iona, and the chapel on Eileach an Naoimh invoking the memory of a golden age of Alba before the Vikings. Eilean Mor is now owned by the Scottish National Party.</p> <div data-bbox="336 566 628 781">  </div> <p data-bbox="651 598 1348 748">We landed just after the strimming gang arrived by RIB. Walking up past the new visitor's centre built in the style of a black house with a turf roof, on to the 14th Century Chapel built by Sommerled First Lord of the Isles, which has also seen use as an illicit distillery and farm house.</p> <p data-bbox="347 810 1054 1146">Over the top of the island past the cross lies MacCormig's Cave. The original entrance has collapsed but a narrow cleft in the roof gives an awkward drop into the cave. The Chef went first then had a struggle getting out again; the Skipper and the Mate could not resist the challenge. Carved into the cave's walls are an ancient cross and a "marigold" dated by archaeologists back to the 8th Century. Imagine an Irish Celtic hermit monk contemplating his god and carving these images. Bridging up out of the cave, the age and experience of the Skipper and Mate matched the youthful vigour of the Chef.</p> <div data-bbox="1082 759 1345 1104">  </div> <p data-bbox="347 1178 1318 1238">Terns, hooded crows, gulls, guillemots, oystercatchers with their haunting whistle, turn stones, curlew and a host of other seabirds flock to the islands.</p> <div data-bbox="466 1265 1240 1778">  </div> <p data-bbox="639 1778 1066 1809">12 McCormig's Cross, Eilean Mor</p>

Time	Notes
10:30	<p data-bbox="352 293 1299 383">Made passage for Jura. Tidal calculations to set a course to steer, ferry gliding across a mirror sea, passing just north of the Skervuile rock and lighthouse. Into Craighouse Bay by the entrance south of Eilean nan Gabhar.</p> <div data-bbox="413 416 1291 994">  </div> <p data-bbox="762 994 943 1025">13 Craighouse</p> <p data-bbox="352 1055 1342 1178">Picked up one of the many spare visitor's moorings, then ashore to pay the mooring fee and for lunch at the Jura Hotel (Haggis Panini or salmon salad). Watching the sea kayakers paddling across the bay towards Corrievreckan, we contemplated the selection on "Jean's Fresh Fish" van as the mobile bank was passing through.</p> <p data-bbox="352 1211 1299 1301">Of course being Jura we could not miss out on the distillery tour and tasting the wonderful array of Jura Whisky. Production was just finishing with the last casks being filled before the summer maintenance shut down.</p> <div data-bbox="352 1364 794 1702">  </div> <div data-bbox="852 1359 1310 1702">  </div>

Time	Notes
15:45	<p data-bbox="347 293 1347 416">Dropping the mooring we headed south on the last of the ebb towards the Sound of Islay, catching the first of the flood off McArthurs head. Too late to call in at Port Askaig (Caol Ila) and Bunnahabhain distilleries for another tour but able to admire the increasingly remote and unspoiled western coast of Jura with its Paps.</p>  <p data-bbox="347 1104 871 1133">14 Paps of Jura from the Sound of Islay</p> <p data-bbox="347 1196 1347 1379">As we approached the northern end of the Sound of Islay the wind started to pick up so sails up and a gentle sail into Loch Tarbert (Jura) in glorious sunshine. Seals bobbed off the rocks as we made our way in through the islands and rocks following Blondie Hasslar's leading marks into the middle loch. Three other boats had already bagged the preferred anchorages, so we tucked in by Eilean Ard to watch red deer grazing on the upper slopes of Clach an Rain.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1411 1347 1503">The chef went skimming off in the tender to go mussel hunting on the drying rocks but was attacked and beaten off by Seagulls. Dinner was Pesto Chicken with pasta, followed by a walk up the hill in the gloaming.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1534 1347 1653">On the last trip back the outboard ran out of fuel. So the Mate and the Chef had the joy of refuelling in the dark, adrift while the stars and planets whirled overhead undimmed by street lights or any other man made distraction and the moon rose over the shoulder of Clach an Rain.</p>

Day 7

Date	Thursday 7th June 2012		
From	Loch Tarbert Jura	Towards	Luinga

Tides

Dover	HW	13:55				
Port	Oban			Port		
HM	08:25	HW	20:49	HM		HW
LW	14:51	LW		LW		LW

Weather forecast


Time	23:10	Gale Warnings	Rockall & Malin GF8 Expected later	
Gen Synop	Deep low SW England moving NW across UK			
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caledonian	E/NE 3-4 inc 5-6	Slight – Mod	Rain later	Mod - good
24 hrs +	NE4-5 Occ 6 backing NW 3-4	Slight – Mod	Occ Showers	Mod / good

Deck Log

Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
09:10		161			Up Anchor
09:40	310	163		NE 2	Engine off Genoa & Breakfast (Bacon Butties & Kippers
10:00					Rubh an t Sailion abeam
10:45	315	165		ENE 2	Main up
11:30	320	166		NE 3	
12:40					Anchored Scalasaig Colonsay, shop (and garage) closed until 14:00 15 L water added to tank
14:00					10l Diesel at £1.71 /l
14:55					Anchor up
15:00					Cleared Scalasaig
15:10	120	170		NE4-5	Sails up beating towards Firth of Lorne
17:05	090	177		NE5	
18:15	350	182		NE5-6	
19:00	340	186		NE 5+	Reefed Main & Genoa
19:55	110	191		NE 6+	Tacked towards Garvelachs
20:10	116	192		NE 7	Second Reef in Main
20:25	116				Domestic Battery failing, losing instruments Started engine
21:00					Eileach an Naoimh anchorage untenable, wind blowing straight through
22:10		199			Anchored Camas a Mhor-Fhir Lunga

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>As we crawled on deck into the morning sun we noticed an old yacht with a wooden pilot house sailing out of the Cumhann Beag narrows from the upper loch and across middle Loch Tarbert. Under an enormous saltire cruising chute it made its way through the Cumhann Mhor narrows and out to sea. We followed under engine through the Cumhann Mhor narrows before raising sail, then breakfasted of bacon butties and kippers as we left Loch Tarbert.</p> <p>A two hour passage brought us to Scarrisaig on Colonsay for diesel. The anchorage at Scarrisaig was exposed, with a swell and uncertain holding the Skipper stayed on board while the crew went for stores and diesel. The war memorial had 16 names from Great War from a very small community. The store was closed until 2pm for lunch so the crew returned for theirs, passing a fishing boat with a large whale vertebrae on board. After lunch a quick trip to the stores for diesel (£1.71 per litre). Harbour dues were paid into the honesty box then off for the Firth of Lorne.</p>  <p>15 Crew Bearing Away, trying to better 7.6 knots</p> <p>As we beat up between Colonsay and Jura towards the Garvelachs wind built to F 6 + gusting 7. The Chef was proud to reach 7.6 knots in 1.5 m swell with spray over bows and with the wind speed peaking at 32 knots.</p> <p>We approached the Garvelachs as the rain set in. There was no shelter to be had on Eileach an Naomh with the wind funnelling straight through the anchorage, so we bore away for Lunga. Tucking into the relative shelter of Camas a Mhor Fhir for the night, the Grey Dogs thundering half a mile to leeward. At deck level we were out of the wind. It was a different story at the mast head.</p> <p>A late dinner of the Mate's Spanish Omelette and a dram. With rain showers cutting the deck we discussed the merits of breathable waterproofs. The Mate mused ruefully on the advantages of a set of waterproofs in which he could breathe, unlike his current set bought 30 years before in his svelte youth.</p> <p>Sleep with the wind howling in the top of the rigging is relative. As the wind rose the snoring eased, and then as the howling in the rigging eased the snoring picked up again. Snoring alternated with wind in the rigging for most of the night.</p>

Day 8

Date	Friday 8th June 2012		
From	Lunga	Towards	Dunstaffnage

Tides

Dover	HW	14:42BST					
Port	Oban			Port			
HM	09:09	HW	21:35	HM		HW	
LW	15:37	LW		LW		LW	

Weather forecast


Time	04:04	Gale Warnings		
Gen Synop				
Area	Wind	Sea	Weather	Vis
Caledonia	N/NE 4-5 Occ 6 at first, backing NW	Slight to Mod	Rain / showers	Mod – good
24 hrs +	WNW 3-4 Occ 5 in S	Slight to Mod	Showers	Good
Malin	N/NW 5-7 occ 8 SW	Mod /Rough	Occ Rain	Mod - Good

Deck Log

Time	Course	Log	Dist	Wind	Notes
08:10					Domestic battery flat, engine battery ok. Engine on
09:00					Anchor up sails up.
09:12					Engine off
09:20	340	200		NE 5	Beating to windward through Islands
11:20	090	209		NE 5	
12:00	030	212		NE 5	Tack
12:30	090	214		NE 5	
12:40	070	214		NE 0	Passed by survey vessel Scotia, Domestic battery flat, instruments failing
12:45					Engine on
13:50		220		NE0-1	Anchored Puilladobhrain
15:00	030	220		NE2-3	Left Puilladobhrain
15:30	030				Entered sound of Kerrera
16:15		226		N 3	Left Oban Bay
17:00		230			Moored Dunstaffnage

Day Summary

Crew			
Hours underway			
Log			

Time	Notes
	<p>By morning the domestic batteries had drained again. Fortunately the engine batteries were ok and we were able to put some charge back into the domestics. After breakfast with high winds overhead we set off beating through the islands, out into the Firth of Lorne. On a beat back from Mull the Mate topped 8.1 knots, much to the disgust of the Chef. Gradually the wind decreasing from F6 to 5 to 3 to 0.</p> <p>For lunch we nipped into Puilladobhrian, then trying to see into Clachan Sound, Skipper on the helm, we gently touched bottom with 2m showing on the depth sounder. So much for the offset. The Mate felt vindicated for his grounding approaching the Tinker's Hole. A quick blast of reverse and we were off. Up through the Sound of Kerrera to dodge the Cal Mac ferries in Oban Bay.</p> <p>Back to Dunstaffnage Bay and dodging the Eider duck we approached our second along side mooring of the cruise. Balancing wind, tide and throttle we got away with a "perfect approach".</p> <p>We were closely followed by a Westerly 41 full of French extreme sports men who, loudly feigning uncertainty and confusion, executed another "perfect mooring" next to us. Visions of a night disturbed by over enthusiastic youth started to form as they proceeded with unloading their cargo of climbing gear, Para-gliders, surf boards, musical instruments (including violins, guitars and a full drum kit) and began carefully checking and sorting it before loading it into their converted fire tender. One of the climbers gracefully bounced up and balanced on a fence to take photos as the tide rose around the wheels of the fire tender. The tide receding inches before doing any damage. The graceful movement was explained when we learned later that this was no ordinary group of youth, but a troupe of acrobats from Circe de Soleil.</p> <p>After clearing the boat, a night off for the Chef with a superb dinner in Wide Mouthed Frog watching the sun set over the Morven shore. It doesn't get much better than that.</p> 

References

Charts

Imray Charts - C64, C65, C66 and C67
Admiralty Symbols and Abbreviations
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Pilots

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Acknowledgements

Photos were all taken by the crew of True Blue.