

Sailing vessel Triumphant

**Location Porto Santo (Near Madeira)
33 degree North, 16 Degrees West**

Date 15th October 2004

Update No. 1

Dear All

It seems a long time since Sheila and I finished work at the end of April 2004 and I thought an update of what we have been up to is long overdue. For those of you who have already had brief updates, I apologise if this is repetition.

The plan

The plan was to finish work at the end of April 04, Shelia to spend June getting the house ready to rent and making the courtesy flags that are required for each different country we are planning to visit. John would spend more time working on getting the boat ready and painting the inside of it before we moved our belongings (and ourselves) on board. We had planned to have everything ready leave our home port in Essex in July in order to have the best chance of good weather across Biscay and to have time to spend exploring the Ria's (rivers) of NW Spain which we missed on the last trip

The rough time table we had set ourselves was as follows:

- 1) May – Move out of the house and work on the boat. Also assisting my mother in selling and moving her out of her house in London to re-locate in Essex
- 2) June – Move on board, launch the boat, have a shake down cruise and fix any snags
- 3) July – Leave Essex and get round the UK coast to Falmouth as quickly as possible and wait for a good weather window to cross Biscay to NW Spain
- 4) August – Spend the month exploring NW Spain
- 5) September – Cruising Northern Portugal
- 6) October – Madeira and Porto Santo (relaxing and painting)
- 7) November – the Canaries to get ready for the Atlantic crossing

- 8) December – Cross to Barbados , hopefully in time for Christmas, taking advantage of the Trade winds

What actually happened.

May 2004

Sheila

Sheila concentrates on getting the house cleared, packing and getting the house ready to rent (we had committed to move out by the end of May) and making flags.

John

John goes down to Essex where the boat was still out of the water, (he is able to stay with his mother in her cottage at Paglesham, 5 miles away).

The outstanding work to get completed covered before we can launch the boat and set off falls into the following categories:

- Working with the Electrician to finish off the re-wiring of the various new bits we were having added for the trip
- Getting the wood work completed by the Shipwright
- Getting the metal work completed by the Welder
- Get the engine serviced by the Mechanic
- Minor rigging work to be completed by the Rigger before we went afloat (having completely re-rigged the boat the previous summer)
- The remainder: Putting the inside of the boat back together, general painting , maintenance, stocking up and moving on board will be done by ourselves.

John gets down to the boat to meet the new welder (Eric), we think there is about a week's work made up of lots of bits and pieces. John writes long lists of all the bits that need doing by the various craftsmen.

John clears the boat of all gear not needed and takes it back to the cottage (when his mother is not looking) and starts cleaning the paint and rust out of the bilges, very hard dirty work, then disaster, whilst working under the sink in the galley, J manages to put a chisel through the hull, under the water line. The steel here is meant to be 4 mm thick but has corroded away to nothing. This is an old thin steel plate, it was probably dangerously thin when we crossed the Atlantic last time. (Ignorance is bliss!).

This is a major set back and is essential to the safety of the boat, it also means that other work on the boat will have to slow down or stop until it is resolved. So, following Eric's advice, we strip as much paint as we can off the bottom of the boat (by hand, with an angle grinder) and get a specialist surveyor (Hardeal) in to do a Non Destructive Test (NDT) [basically testing the thickness of the steel] of the bottom of the boat around the hole.

The results showed that we needed to cut out 3 areas of the bottom of the boat on one side and replace the steel plate. The biggest plate will be about 7 ft x 4 ft. As welding will be required, any furniture inside around this area has to be removed to ensure that it does not catch fire. Sheila is very depressed as, instead of putting the boat back together, we are having to pull further bits apart.

To ensure that we do not have any more hidden problems we are advised to have the bottom of the boat grit blasted back to bare steel and the whole area undergo NDT. Grit blasting is a very messy business and most boat yards are reluctant to allow you to do it as the grit is corrosive, goes every where and a lot of their customers complain. To combat this we had to get a specialist scaffolding company to "sheet-up" the area where we were working.

Other activities going on alongside this,

- Various evening sessions in London with people who want to say good bye
- Overseeing sealed bids in London to find out who to sell Mothers house to
- Move my mother and ourselves from London to Essex
- Simplify finances and set up new banking arrangements for overseas travel
- Complete the hand over of the our house to the new tenants
- Try and find insurance for the boat for the trip (we were quoted £3,500 per year by our existing insurers and they demanded that we had a minimum of 3 crew for Ocean crossings)

May Summary

Very hard work, lots of running around to and fro from London and Essex. 1 step forward, 3 backwards.

June 2004

We have moved out of Stanmore and are now living with my Mother at Paglesham. Rent has been agreed to the tune of taking my mother out

for a meal once a week and keeping her in wine. For this, not only do we get accommodation, but an evening meal and packed lunch.

All the gear that we have brought from London is scattered around her cottage waiting for the boat to be ready so that we can load it on board.

We are working 10 hour days, 7 days a week (who said retirement was cushy). Also this is hard physical work which 7 years working in an office has not prepared us for. Quite a few of the people who are working on the boat with us are the same crew as the first time in 1997. The catch phrase seems to be "I am getting too ***** old for this" as you uncoil yourself from a very uncomfortable position you have spent the last hour in order to reach what you are trying to work on.

The holes in the bottom are a major set back so, after deep thought and re-planning, we decide to get one of the local boat yards involved to help us make up the time and get us back on track. (Thank God for the redundancy money!). We engage Goodbourne Developments to undertake the electrical work (Ron), the wood work (Ant) and the painting of the hull (Paul a.k.a. Swampy + dog Ollie who had her own chair in the tea room!).

Whilst this is going on we are having the hull grit blasted, the NDT survey completed and Eric is repairing the affected areas. Sods law dictated that the badly rusted areas were under big bits of furniture like the shower, fridge, galley and water tanks so various bits of internal furniture had to be cut away or totally removed – more work to put them back afterwards.

The good news was that nothing caught fire during the welding process, a very nerve racking experience watching the metal go red hot and hoping the paint and wood does not catch fire and we ended up with a new shower which is a great improvement on the old one.

Eric is very good for us as not only is he cracking on with the metal bits, he is on parade every day at 08:00, (we had to try and beat him on site) provides coffee and biscuits, loads of practical advice, the odd joke and motivates us to get stuck in. We also get the opportunity to meet various members of his family (two sons and a grandson all of whom are welders) who are drafted in to help when required. Eric presents us with a chipping hammer which is very effective at removing rust and exposing thin steel (and will be locked up at sea).

After 6 weeks' solid work, Eric finishes the repairs to the boat and the also the original bits we wanted done. Thanks Eric, without you we would not have made it. We also learnt a vast amount about steel and metal working from him.

Before we re-painted the bottom we asked the NDT Surveyor to come back and re-survey the bottom of the boat to confirm that we have done all we can to make the boat safe and write a final a report.

Once the final Grit blast takes place it is essential to paint the bare steel before it has a chance to rust. So a team was assembled to roller on the special (expensive) 2 part epoxy protective paint as quickly as possible.

Other events happening alongside include my sister (a GP) delivering the updated medical chest for the trip (complete with instructions in words I can relate to. (Diarrhoea treatment - Shits take 2 a day, Big shits, double the dose) and a lesson in how to give local anaesthetics and suturing (stitching) cuts. The patient is a green banana, which I am reliably informed has similar skin properties to humans (the patent survived but when a strange yellow colour).

The hunt for insurance continues, it appears that although there are many brokers offering to a service, only about 3 underwriters provide the insurance. I would hesitate to suggest a cartel but the responses were remarkably similar. The big problem appears to be that we are only going to be 2 handed, the age and lack of value of the boat (we never understood that one!) and some areas we want to cruise.

Having completed the sealed bid process for my mothers house, the buyer eventually decides to try and 'move the goal posts' on the conditions of sale so we have to start the pre-exchange process from scratch with another buyer (luckily the new buyer is still in the running).

June Summary

– Bloody hard work – 7 days a week but we are moving forward but still not able to live on board.

July 2004

We must launch this month if possible to allow us time to get to Falmouth and pick our weather across Biscay. The good news is that

we can see a light at the end of the tunnel (other people look at the boat and say we are mad and will not be ready until next year). The remaining work is mainly finishing off and cosmetics – i.e. painting etc. We will not have time for a shake down cruise so will have to rely on fixing things as we go and finishing non-critical bits along the way.

Lots going on at once. The scaffolding and grit blasting sheeting is removed and we start to look like a boat at last. We are now addressing the jobs that we should have been doing in May like

- Gas cooker service and gas system check
- Re-Plumbing – water tanks and shower
- Engine serviced and run for the first time in 15 months
- Life raft fitted
- Steering and winches re fitted
- New anchor and chain fitted, Sheila spent a long time painting the anchor chain every 5 metres so we will know how much we have put out when at anchor
- Duogen generator fitted – to produce electricity from water and wind
- Solar panels fitted
- Hull painted and bottom anti-fouled – new boat name fitted
- Final rigging completed and new mooring ropes made up

And in amongst this, lots of running around buying bits and parts

We also managed to get the insurance resolved. We decided to get an Insurance survey done even though the insurance is not yet sorted. We hoped that even if we cannot find Insurance in the UK, this survey may allow us to get insurance elsewhere. Another reason is that the boat has to be out of the water to be surveyed so it makes sense to do this before we launch to save costs.

The surveyor spent about 3 hours looking over the boat and coupled with the NDT and welding work and other refit work undertaken, we obtained a large glowing report with a few minor items to resolve – most of which were already on the list.

At long last we have the insurance sorted for 1 year (£1,000 pa). There are some restrictions as to where they will cover us (e.g. Cuba not covered) but are happy with the survey NDT survey and re-fit. We will have to see what happens next year. Not unreasonably, some countries and/or marinas insist on seeing insurance when you enter their harbour.

So, at long last on 28th July, we make the decision to launch – ready or not. It's always a nerve racking time, especially when there has been a great deal of work done to the hull below the water line. Launch day arrives and, with only 2 minor, non critical, leaks in the new exhaust pipe and the echo sounder hull fitting, we motor onto the Marina at Essex Marina, Wallasea Island.

Once afloat we have a new work list aimed at getting us living on board and ready to leave. We have to hire a large van to be able to pick up and carry the large quantity of gear on board.

Mark, the landlord of the Plough and Sail, the local pub, takes us to his cash & carry and watches as we spend £770 on various cases of "essentials", Coffee, Bog rolls, Peanut butter, Marmite, Fray Bentos pies, curry sauces, tinned vegetables, baked beans, soaps to name but a few. All of the above had to be unloaded from the van into a very dodgy trolley and wheeled over the sea wall down to the boat and stowed away. The boat slowly sinks about 2 inches lower into the water at the end of all this.

The next loads covers mattresses, bedding clothes and other miscellaneous gear, at long last freeing up space in my mothers cottage.

We also have to motor across the river to Burnham Marina, to have the new Radar and wind instrument commissioned and have the compass swung (corrected for the magnetic effect of a steel boat). Our first voyage! We spent a few hours making slow circles around in the river under the guidance of the experts, much to the amusement of those on shore.

Whilst this was going on we discovered our echo sounder was very reluctant to work in depths greater than 8 metres below the boat and that the electric auto pilot was not working (essential as we sail short handed) – more expense and more things to fix before we could leave.

On the last Saturday of July, our good friends Colin & Judy put on a farewell party at their house in Rochford – Essex, we invited only a small number of friends from London due to accommodation and space issues along with other friends we know from Essex. Judy & Colin put on an amazing and unforgettable evening. Thanks C & J.

Sunday is a day of rest and recovery.

July Summary

- Another very hard (and expensive month) but we are now afloat and can think about heading south very soon, probably only 1 month behind schedule

August 2004

Back to work after recovering from the party. Outstanding things to do before we can leave include, finishing stowing all the gear somewhere, moving on board, getting the new auto pilot fitted , getting the SSB (Long range radio transmitter) fitted and commissioned, selling the car (£350), putting the sails back on.

We also decided to buy 2 new fold up bicycles (much to the amusement in the shop as I lost my mobile phone whilst we were looking at the bikes and eventually found it (by phoning it) in one of the large boxes the bikes were packed in.

Departure

Having sold the car and given the rental van back we had no more excuses to put off leaving so at 15:00 on 14th August, after a final breakfast in the Marina bar, we set off from Wallasea bound for Ramsgate

Wallasea to Ramsgate – 14/8/04 Approx 45 miles

Very hot and wind on the nose so we had to motor across the Thames Estuary, parts of which were very bumpy.

Snag list includes

- Echo sounder still playing up (the Thames estuary is not the place to be guessing the depth of water)
- The new Radar stopped working after 4 hours!
- The engine does not appear to be charging the batteries fully.
- Boat trim - J is convinced that we are overloaded in the front of the boat so we will have to either re-stow gear or get rid of some things before we go too far.

We also forgot to block the hole where the anchor chain goes through the deck so water found its way down below. We are still rusty after being ashore for over a year.

Arrived Ramsgate @ 00:30 the following morning and tied up in the outer harbour, had a well earned Scotch, got the late night shipping forecast and went to bed. Passage time - 9 hours 30 minutes.

Ramsgate – Eastbourne – 15/8/04 – Approx 60 miles

Up early and caught the 05:30 shipping forecast, wind still on the nose but do-able under engine.

Leave Ramsgate @ 08:05, I see from the log that 09:40 we are off Deal and S is listening to the Archers on Long wave radio, another lumpy and bumpy passage motoring into the waves.

Arrive Eastbourne Marina 20:30, ashore to check out the Yacht club, lots have changed since we were here last, lots of building going on around the marina and a new shopping complex. Facilities are still very good but not especially cheap at £25.00 per night.

The following morning, on the phone early to try and get the Radar sorted by a local Ray Marine dealer, nobody is available to look at it until the following day so we spent the day shopping for food, drying out the bilges (where we store food), rationalising the weight in the front of the boat, eventually having to move some anchor chain aft, throwing away a spare anchor, some tools and other heavy items that did not pass the "we cannot live without" test – time will tell. Net result about 70 kilos lighter and the bow 2 inches higher on the water.

17th July - the men arrive early to look at the Radar, after a trip up the mast, the problem is diagnosed as a lanyard getting caught in the scanner. Solution, move the lanyard and all is ok again.

The next few days the weather turned against us, gales and strong wind in the Channel from the wrong direction so we stay put safe in the marina. Sheila has cracked a tooth so off to the dentist who advised that the tooth needs to come out and we should do this when we plan to be somewhere for 2 weeks.

J spends the time fiddling with the engine, had to change the diesel fuel filter as we have contamination in the fuel tanks, work on the engine charging system. Conclusion is that the new alternator may be duff and the spare one is not much better so we send both off to be tested and repaired locally. One passes all tests and is refitted, the other requires parts so we will try and get them to fix it and send it onto us.

Had a good meal in the yacht club - £20 for 2 people (fillet steak and fisherman's pie). Fill up with water.

Eastbourne to Weymouth – 21/8/04 – approx 100 miles

Weather easing off of at last – still not wonderful so off the marina berth @ 08:30 and lock out 08:45. Manage to bash the stern gantry on the marina on the way out, no major damage.

Our plan is to go around the outside of the Isle of Wight to avoid the crowds and high costs of their marinas and to try, for once, to get the tide with us past the IOW as this is where the strongest tides are. Another lumpy and bumpy passage under engine, especially around Beachy Head. We managed to get one sail up for a while to steady us and to help the engine.

As the passage was over 12 hours we have started working watches – 3 hours on and 3 hours off. The new 6 inch sprung mattresses are very comfortable – a bit like a water bed in rough weather, a great improvement.

Water in the fore cabin again, Big Ted (Sheila's Very large Teddy bear) gets a wet head) did we not shut the hatch properly?

Arrived in Weymouth @ 13:08 on 22/8/04 and rafted up alongside a boat from the Blackwater called Milton Lady. The tide strategy clearly worked as we made the passage in 4 hours less than on previous trips. We had a meal in a pub on the harbour front then an early night

Forecast for the following days is not good for going west so after having to move to let boats out heading east, we attack the snag list which now contains jobs like, drying out the bilges, putting some of the running rigging back in place, engine maintenance, buying parts and navigation books and charts. Try to change the car radio in the aft cabin to improve Radio 4 reception for S.

Weather moderating so we pay the harbour - £64.80 for 4 nights and start planning the next leg. We would like to go straight through to Falmouth but have the option of stopping in Dartmouth (a very pretty place but very expensive)

Weymouth to Dartmouth or Falmouth – 26/8/04

Under way @09:30, motor sailing with the mainsail up. Another lumpy, bumpy and wet motor into the wind and waves again. More water in the fore cabin. In order to maintain speed, we up the revs on the engine (goes faster but even bumpier). We suspect the fore hatch itself is leaking due to the amount of water that has been coming over the bow. Not pleasant out here so we decide to put into Dartmouth.

We arrive there @ 20:30, just as it is getting dark and discover it is regatta week with Sir Galahad (navy supply ship) moored right off the town and a fireworks display about to start. The harbour is full of boats of all sizes drifting around. Eventually, @ 21:30, we raft up at a marina just up river alongside a very posh Royal Yacht Squadron Yacht – bet they ask us to move in the morning!

The next day we wake up to very heavy rain. The marina is in the middle of no-where. We check and dry out the bilges again, lots of water there, salt water up front from the hatch, fresh water aft from the galley. Conclusion: we need to fit a new forehatch ASAP and water is leaking from the galley area. Temporary solution for the hatch is to tape heavy plastic around the outside of the hatch, we will not be able to open it but it should stop the leaks.

The weather for 28/8 look OK (not wonderful) so we pay the marina for 2 nights - £53.40 – (No electricity or water available) after having had to move off and tie alongside a fishing boat. (This is what I dislike Dartmouth – you pay through the nose but get no service!!!)

Dartmouth to Falmouth – 28/8/04 – Approx 60 miles (John's Birthday)

After having caught the 05:30 forecast we cast off @ 06:30, very heavy dew and I can see naff all out the wheel shelter windows going out of the harbour. Managed to avoid hitting Sir Galahad.

07:30 off the Skerries - Up engine revs to maintain speed and open birthday presents from my mother. Another passage under motor but the weather is much more pleasant – Sun !!!

17:30 arrive in Falmouth – fuel gauge reading empty. At long last we are in position to wait for a weather window.

My mother has been staying here for about a week and a bit to see us off so we open a bottle of champagne to celebrate our arrival and J's

birthday, ashore to meet Baa in the Pub then off to the Chinese to get a take away then collapse early to bed.

Following day, Sunday – well earned rest, after the Archers, ashore to pick up our post from the yacht club, had an average pastie, inspected Baa's lodgings – very nice and a very good meal courtesy of Baa to celebrate J's birthday (Lobster).

As Falmouth is the last UK port we intend to be in for a long time lots of things to do before we can leave. We are also watching the weather carefully.

Massive to-do list before we go, Priority 1 items on the list include:

- Find out why the Duogen water/wind generator not working (Answer dodgy crimping on one of the cables)
- Full engine check including changing the diesel filters again. (The filters are still dirty but less clogged than last time). We have put a lot of anti bacteria solution in the tank and hope this will solve the problem gradually
- Fill up with water and diesel (last chance for duty free diesel for a while)
- Buy Euros and final sort out of finances
- Buy and fit new fore hatch (able to buy one but no time to fit, temporary solution will have to do)
- Try and sort out Ray marine electronics – why does the auto pilot keep going down? (answer, disconnect the clever bits)
- Get cards for the mobile phone and send to my sister to enable her to top it up for us (texts messages only from now on)
- Find dentist for Sheila (postponed as they cannot fit us in)
- Keep very close eye on the weather for a good slot
- Double check that all rigging shackles are tight and will not come un done (we have lost 1 already)
- Mark up EPIRB (emergency positioning Rescue beacon) with ships number
- Full rigging and deck check and stow all gear down below for sea

The above does not include the bits we never got done before we left Essex! - This list includes things like:

- Do Tax return before end of September (no escape from the tax man but hopefully a rebate!)
- Silicon minor internal and external leaks
- Wire in the new alternator boost charger

- Painting
- Fit new echo sounder
- Minor rigging adjustments and enhancements
- Find out where the spare alternator has got to
- Find a home for the vacuum cleaner

Falmouth is not that busy, if we had been a few weeks earlier, the harbour would have been full of boats heading south waiting for the weather, we only spot a couple of boats heading our way.

August Summary

- We are afloat and at the right place to cross Biscay (even though we are a month behind the plan). Most key boat systems are working and the snag list is slowly getting shorter.

September 2004

Falmouth, attack the "to do" list, spend time with my mother before she returns to Essex and watch the weather.

To get a better understanding of the weather, we decided to try the "phone a weather man" option, although expensive, you get to have a 1-1 conversation with an expert and a 5 day forecast and can ask for explanations – very good (lesson learnt, have you daily passage plan available before you phone them so that you can walk them through where you expect to be at the end of each day).

Weather looks good for 2/9 so we have a final shower, pay the marina (5 days - £95.00), Do our navigation passage plan and work out best time to leave is 15:00 to get the tide past the Lizard and down past Ushant.

Falmouth to La Coruna 2/9/2004 – approx 440 miles

We expect this leg to take about 4 or 5 days at our normal average speed. The longest leg of our trip so far with the greater possibility of strong winds in Biscay at this time of year. Crew a little bit apprehensive. This is J's 7th trip across Biscay – will our luck last?

15:00- 2/9/04 - Leave Falmouth after fuelling up, 371 litres - £126 - 0.33p per litre (we resist the temptation to fill up the cans on the deck as well - further 180 litres as I think we are still over loaded a bit.)

As usual very little wind and on the nose but the sun is out. Under engine and autopilot. We send out text messages to everyone letting them know we are at last leaving and receive a number of texts and phone calls back before we lose the signal on the mobile. No more mobile phones, text only from now on, quite a strange (but not unpleasant) thought.

(Anyone not into sailing can skim the next bit)

16:48 -2/9/04 - Now south of the UK, change course to Waypoint 48 offshore of La Coruna – 382 miles to go. We are back on working 3 hours watches.

02:48 - 3/9/04 - Sails up and engine off, the wind vane self steering (Hydrovane - AKA Del) is in charge and the DuoGen is working in water mode. 12 – 15 knots of wind on the beam, 5 knots boat speed under sail. THE FIRST SAIL SO FAR since we left Essex.

07:00 3/9/04 – wind and boat speed has dropped so engine back on. DuoGen works ok but would be even more effective with greater boat speed

15:00 3/9/04 – End of Day 1 – first full day at sea- 133.5 mile achieved, 259 miles to next way point

17:04 3/9/04 – first dolphin sighted, flat calm, motor on through the night, altering course once to avoid fishing boats. Forecast still good, NW 4 – 5. Lots of big ships going north and south. The course we have chosen seems to put us in the middle of ships going north and south, a bit like travelling down the centre reservation of a dual carriage way. Spoke to one ship that picked us up on their radar @ 9 miles, very comforting they can see us. Still not into the watch keeping sleep pattern of 3 hours, on 3 hours off yet but it will come. Supper – pasties from Falmouth, salad and fresh fruit salad

11:30 3/9/04 – Engine off and under sail – wind from the stern, full main and poled out Genoa. First decent sail this trip with any breeze

15:00 3/9/04 – end of day 2 – 149 miles achieved, 207 miles to go to next way point, still under sail and cracking along, 6.5 – 7.5 knots. (Crew says it is bumpy and noisy in the aft cabin whilst she is trying to sleep). Slight concern over a Low developing in Trafalgar moving to NW Spain, will have to keep an eye on it. DuoGen is producing the

goods in water mode – producing 6- 8 amps @ 6 knots, running ships electrics over night and the fridge providing we average 6 knots

18:30 3/9/04 – still cracking along under sail, 1 reef in main for the night for safety (and comfort) Speed down to 6.2 knots but less rolling. Forecast still good.

22:45 3/9/04 – still cracking along but we can see lightning and thunder ahead , so put 3 reefs in main and roll in some Genoa, (still doing 5.7 knots but much more comfortable), alter course to try and avoid the storm. Used PMR's (Personal short range radios - like Walki Talkies which were a leaving present from Sheila's firm) in anger for the first time whilst working on the deck in the dark – Works well and reduces stress of shouting and not being able to hear.

01:00 4/9/04 – We can see the thunder and lightning very clearly on the Radar, although we altered course earlier, we will not avoid it. Very heavy rain, (but not wind thankfully), Watch keeper's now in full oil skins and hatches closed and hatch boards in to keep the rain out. We shut off all the electronics in case of a lightning strike. Biggest problem recorded in the log – Sheila's lighter has got wet. Once clear of the squall the wind settles down again.

08:00 4/9/04 – Wind has changed so drop sails and engine on again

10:45 4/9/04 – arrive at waypoint – alter course to offshore mark of entrance to la Coruna 51 miles away.

12:00 4/9/04 – Time for a re-think of the navigational plan. We need to average 7 knots to arrive before dark, will be very uncomfortable under engine and burn a lot of fuel. We do not want to enter La Coruna in the dark unless we have to, so we take in some sail, triple reef main (reefing eye does not engage on mast reefing hook with the new mast gate in place) and deep reefed Genoa, turn off the engine and start tacking slowly backwards and forwards @ 3.5 - 4.5 knots towards waypoint.

15:00 4/9/04 – end of day 3 – 113.8 miles achieved. 40 miles to next way point

20:00 4/9/04 – more rain and more dolphins,

03:30 5/9/04 - After having tacked backwards and forwards to stay in position, engine back on and start approach to La Coruna – motor

sailing. Visibility ahead poor, less than 1 mile. Have to alter round the front of a fishing boat that puts on a rotating yellow light at his stern to warn us of his presence.]

09:14 4/9/04 – Visibility clears a bit as we enter the port. Arrive at La Coruna and pick up a mooring. The echo sounder is not working otherwise we would have dropped anchor.

Passage Summary

We are in Spain and are across Biscay, although a bit late in the season. A good passage taking 3.75 days. Average speed of 4.8 knots, 53 hours motoring but also a lot of it under sail only. No major breakages, our passage skills area still rusty but coming back. Lots of bits and pieces on the 'to do' list to from the passage to improve on when we have time.

In hindsight, we could have pushed onto Bayona (another 12 hours south) instead of slowing down overnight as it is a much nicer place.

We have breakfast, a rest, pump up the dinghy and row ashore at 17:00, have quick beer in the yacht club then walk into the city. The wild cats living on the rocks of the sea wall are still there and the Spanish have built a new marina right next to city, which probably explains why the yacht club looks empty and a bit run down. We discover that everything seems to be shut until 20:00. We eventually find a restaurant open and had a massive mixed fish platter each (prawns, langoustines, squid, hake, malutha and smoked salmon) with a mixed salad and bottle of wine - 80€ (£57.00), well over budget but a special treat. By the time we leave the restaurant at 21:00, the streets are buzzing.

The following morning, after a slow start, I dig out the log of the last passage, we are about 19 days later than before so we decide the exploring the Ria's of NW Spain will have to wait for another time and we need to keep pushing south as quickly as we can.

We go ashore to do some shopping, return to the boat and have a massive breakfast of all the bits of food that were about to go out of date. We meet the crew off an English Yacht "Gypsy Trader". They are stuck here as they had a diesel leak on their generator and have been caught pumping out bilge water with diesel in it into the harbour. They have been fined 2,000€ (£1,429) and cannot leave until the fine is

paid. They eventually manage to persuade their insurance company to pay the fine. Still thundery, with lightning and rain.

We catch up on our e-mails, internet banking and address the jobs to be done before we can leave.

Jobs include changing the fuel filter again (much less muck in it), engine check, rig up a propeller a shaft brake (to stop it turning under sail to save noise and wear), check the bilges, sort out the fridge, check the DuoGen bolts, fill up with fuel, charge up the phone and PMR batteries and do the passage plan for the next passage. As we do not have time to see the Ria's we will go straight to Bayona (near Vigo)

La Coruna to Bayona - 09/9/04 - Approx 100 miles

14:00 - 09/09/04 - After picking up fuel from the fuel dock (208 litres @ £0.56p per litre) we motor off out of the harbour bound for Bayona, the plan is to travel overnight and arrive between midday or late afternoon the next day.

What wind there is, is on the nose and with rain showers. We amuse ourselves during the afternoon by trying to sort out the new echo sounder so that we can anchor more easily (you need to know what depth of water you are in to work out how much anchor chain is required)

We bought a new echo sounder before we left Essex but to fit it properly, the boat needs to be out of the water as the transducer is fitted through the hull, below the water line. This would have incurred extra expense (£400) and taken up time.

The plan is to make up a pole to attach the transducer to and either hangs it over the side or if possible, poke it down one of the large (3.5") cockpit drains. If this works, then when we next come out of the water, hopefully in June 2005 (in the south of the Caribbean during the hurricane season) we can fit the transducer in its proper place.

After much digging through the spares and a few false starts, we attach the transducer to a piece of rubber pipe and attach this to a stainless steel tube with jubilee clips. This just fits down the drain hole and is secured by rope to the boat to stop it dropping out. IT WORKS!!!!

00:00 – 10/09/04 - Very thick fog off Cabo Torinana, less than 1 mile visibility. 1 hour later, it improves to about 2 miles. Also very cold, Crew wearing sweat shirts, jeans, socks, fleeces and oilskins at night.

12:45 - 10/9/04 - Arrive on Bayona and drop anchor in 8 metres of water. Whole passage under motor. Visibility was mainly poor most of the way until we entered the harbour (same thing happened last time!). The note in the log reads "Thank god for Radar, poor viz. and motored all the way with rain and fog – just like the Wallet and nearly as cold"

Bayona is quite busy; they have a Rolex sailing regatta on. The harbour has quite a few boats at anchor, mainly Dutch and Scandinavians, The Brits are in the marina.

We pump up the dingy, attach the outboard as we were a fair way out and motor ashore. We manage to "blag" our way into the very posh yacht club past the security and have a beer, then left before we push our luck any further. We have a wander around town. The Harbour front is full of expensive tourist shops but one road in from the harbour front is where the old Bayona starts, very pretty and quaint. Find a Guinness bar that serves pints of lager for 2.50€ (£1.78).

The following day ashore to shop then back to the boat to attack the "to do" list. Today's job is to fit the new fore hatch. Hopefully not too big a deal as we have bought exactly the same model as before. This proves not to be the case. After some trouble and removing some wood from the cabin ceiling we manage to get the old hatch off.

The new hatch will not fit the hole without distorting the hatch so we end up having to cut about 2mm of steel off the hatch opening with a hacksaw to get it to fit. 2 -3 hours later we are able to fit the hatch. It is now getting dark so we have to finish bolting down the hatch in the dark using torches before the silicon goes off. (Sheila had the bright idea of fitting the hatch opening forward to improve air circulation in the tropics and it works well)

Whilst this is going on, Gypsy Trader has arrived from La Coruna having at last been allowed to leave having got their fine sorted out. They invite us on board for wine, which we gratefully accept after slaving over the hatch, then back on board for supper.

The following day, after a slow start, we fit the new echo sounder in the dashboard and various other jobs, put all the tools away and go

ashore in the afternoon. We manage to "blag" our way into the Yacht club again (just) as it was prize giving evening, have a shower, and then go back into the town for Paella, salad and wine 40€ (£28.50)

The next day, we could put it off no longer; J must do his tax return. A Whitstable Oyster smack called Ibis built in 1888 arrived over night. We go ashore to post off the tax return and meet the crew of Ibis on the quay (Helen, Luke and Spike). They are based in Falmouth and are heading for the Algarve. We invite them over for wine in the evening and a good evening was had by all.

We decide that we will try and go direct to Cascais, near Lisbon, in Portugal next as most of the ports in between are harbours where we will have to pay for a berth and this will give us a good shove south to catch up time.

Bayona to Cascais - 14/9/04 - Approx 220 miles

Ashore in the morning to shop and check the weather and then back to the boat to do the passage plan. Ibis has already left under sail bound for Cascais as well.

12:30 - 14/9/04 - Engine start and weight anchor, motor out of Bayona to sea.

14:15 - 14/9/04 - Sails up, wind, behind us and engine off. Del is steering for us, Duogen in the water and shaft brake is on. Sailing at 4.8 knots. Lots of lobster pots around.

20:00 - 14/9/04 - Cracking sail up to now, crashing along, averaging high 6's, however, the wind has come up, forecast is NW 5-6, so we put in 1 then 2 reefs for the night and roll in a bit of Genoa. Steering a bit low on the track to try and minimise the rolling so we can sleep when off watch. Another cold night.

14:00 -15/9/04 - end of day 1 - 135 miles achieved, 90% under sail, rolling quite well under main and poled out Genoa, waves ok but occasionally a rogue one at right angles to the wave train to get you wet if you are not looking. Caught up and passed Ibis. They are under very deep reefed main and small jib. Spoke to them on the VHF, I think they had a rough night out there as they are very close to the water and it would have been quite wet.

04:40 – 16/9/04 - We have come down the coast on one tack but will need to gybe to go into the Rio Tejo as, if we continue on this track, we will be in the shipping lanes and will go past Cascais so we roll the Genoa and, as the wind had dropped, attempt to gybe using the wind vane self steering (could not use the engine to assist as we still had the shaft brake on). Not sure exactly what happened in the dark, but we think the self steering got jammed and so the boat gybed back (J got a crack on the head in the process). The boat would not answer the helm and ended up stopped/hove to going gently towards the shipping lanes about 1/2 mile away.

Whilst we were hove to, we must have made stern way and the DuoGen mounting yoke broke. We managed to lash the DuoGen onto the boat, and free up the self steering and got back under way and on course.

A number of lessons learnt here:

- Should have gybed earlier before we were close to the shipping lanes
- If near shipping lanes, ensure you can use the engine, take off the shaft brake.
- In light airs get the DuoGen in first before you gybe and gybe using the main ships rudder, not the self steering
- If the DuoGen is in the raised position, it fouls the self steering vane.

05:40 - 16/9/04 - Wind has dropped so we start the engine.

06:30 – 16/9/04 – Arrived Cascais and anchored in the harbour. The new marina which they were just starting to build in 1997 is finished and open. Ibis has already arrived, they must have slipped past us inshore whilst we were having fun next to the shipping lanes.

Passage Summary

Passage achieved mostly under sail at reasonable speeds in 2 ³/₄ days. Apart from the gybing incident, no major problems, DuoGen produced enough electricity to run the boat until the wind dropped.

We had a few hours sleep, phoned DuoGen on the mobile (very expensive) to order the parts we had broken, after a few returned calls, we agreed on parts required. DuoGen very helpful. We went ashore, had a beer in an Irish pub - 1 pint of Lager 4€ £2.86 (Cascais is as expensive as last time – a major tourist resort) and have a meal

ashore, Piri-Piri chicken – 5€, Sardines - 5€, fish cakes, mixed salad and a bottle of wine in Dom Manolas, everything very reasonable except the fish cakes @ 1€ each.

Following morning, we receive a text from Duogen, parts have been despatched to the marina @ Cascais cost £266.00. We go ashore and check in with the Maritime police, pay the Portuguese buoying and light dues, then take our washing ashore to the supermarket (Jumbo) where they have a launderette service. On returning to the dingy we discover that the front compartment seem to have lost air. We manage to borrow a pump from a British boat doing the ARC in the marina and pump it up again (seems to have sorted the problem probably something stuck in the valve). The Marina is very expensive @ 40€ per night (£28), the anchorage is free so we stay put.

18/9/04 - Saturday - ashore to pick up washing, there are a number of boats anchored here from USA, UK and Europe, some heading south the Algarve, others heading towards the Caribbean.. Spoke to Nick and daughter Nia from UK boat from Southwold called "Song in the Wind". They are doing the ARC, he also has an SSB which he has not transmitted from yet so we arranged a schedule to test both sets. He also had some Weather Fax software which I was able to load onto my PC, just need to make up a cable.

19/9/04 – Sunday. Decided to see if I could fit the Sterling advanced alternator regulator. The instructions being ambiguous, we decide to ring them before we fit it just in case, and before we do any damage. In the evening, ashore to phone Baa, after having spent 2€ getting the BT free phone number for reverse charge calls, then have a meal out (again we must stop this) prawns in garlic and a pizza.

The following day (Monday), ashore to see if our post had arrived (yes, posted in London Friday, cost 0.45€ to pick up poste restante) buy the bits for weatherfax cable and soldered it up, We now have weather fax working onboard by connecting the SSB to the lap top. Another toy for John to play with. Checked for e-mails, phoned Sterling and checked to see if Duogen bits had arrived (no). Gypsy Trader arrived and anchored off the beach.

Tuesday. 21/9/04. Duogen bits have arrived so set to dismantling the old yoke. Decided to move it aft slightly to get it nearer the water and maybe more clearance on the self steering. Long day, hard at it. Evening meal - Chicken curry on board. Up at 08:00 following day to carry on with the Duogen. Trick is to repair it without dropping the

whole thing over the side into the harbour. Job finished @ 17:30 another long day but good job done. Domestic Batteries do not seem to be holding their charge. Job for tomorrow.

23/9/04 - Thursday. Another work day, spend a lot of time on boat electrics, the Specific gravity on the batteries are down (except for the middle one), wire in Sterling unit and run engine to charge but not very satisfactory, cannot get the volts up and they fell away over night. Need to get the bottom of this! Ashore for a quick shop and buy ½ a cooked Piri-Piri chicken and salad from the supermarket

Following day, we have been here a week now, whilst still pursuing the electrics, discover the ATU (Automatic Tuning Unit for the transmitting aerial) for the SSB was not grounded, very annoying as we paid a "specialist" (name and shame R & J Electronics) a wad to commission this. Charged the batteries again using the engine, still not much joy. Start thinking about leaving and checking the weather, getting ready for sea.

25/6/04 – Saturday. We were going to leave for Porto Santo, 30 miles north of Madeira (4 – 5 days away) today but decided to chill out and take it easy instead.

Following day, the wind has gone to the south, roughly the direction we want to go, so we stay put.

Still concerned about the batteries. It appears that one of the three new ones we bought before we left is US. One cell has no specific gravity and although it charges up quickly, almost immediately it falls to 10.9 volts. It is not easy to follow a warranty claim abroad. Went ashore to enquire about new batteries, all very expensive and none in stock - will take 2 days at least so J takes the suspect battery out of the domestic bank. We should be able to run on 2 if we can get them charged up.

28/9/04 – Tuesday. Decide to leave today so we got the anchor up, 3 boats here have had fouled anchors (old fishing boat anchors, wrecks and pieced of pipe) so we were relieved when it came up ok, motored over to the fuel dock and filled up with water and fuel. Whilst we were doing this, very thick fog came down, (100 yards viz) so we waited at the dock for about an hour to see if it would clear, it did very slightly, then went back on anchor. Discovered new expensive (£80) fog horn no longer working (Anyone going near TCS in Southend please have a word with them for me).

Cascais to Porto Santo - 29/9/04 - Approx 490 miles

Batteries held up over night, bright sunshine and very little wind, forecast has light winds in the right direction. We decide to go for it. Navigation plan very simple, get off shore and aim direct for the island.

Last time we did this trip we were determined to sail as much as possible as we had motored most of the way to Portugal. In very light winds the voyage took just over 5 days. We will try to avoid motoring this time as well, if the wind holds

10:25 - 29/9/04. - Engine start, Weighed anchor and motored out into the entrance of the Rio Tejo.

11:25 - 29/9/04 – Clear of River Tejo, alter course to Porto Santo waypoint, distance to run - 470.1 miles

12:04 - 29/9/04 – Good sailing breeze (12 – 14 knots) on the beam, so engine off, up with Mizzen, Genoa and full main, Wind vane self steering on, shaft brake on and DuoGen in water mode. Fishing line streamed and making 5 knots under sail on the right direction.

19:30 – 29/9/04 – After supper, dropped mizzen for the night, as the wind is still light, we left the rest up, Sheila to bed. Very strange sounds off the VHF, short bursts of music and extracts from an American female evangelist. A nearly full moon made an appearance @ 20:10, very bright and lots of stars

04:26 – 30/9/04 - Averaged 5 – 5.5 knots through the night under sail, Wind remains light but has changed slightly (N – NNE) so sailing 20° high on the required course, however, this should give us good clearance on the sea mountains ahead (sea bed rises from over 1,000 metres depth to 20 metres – must be old volcanoes), will change sails and get back on course once it gets light. A bit rolly but still averaging just under 5 knots. A bit chilly at night, crew wearing, shorts, socks and sweatshirts.

07:35- 30/9/04 – On deck at watch change over to rig spinnaker pole, wind now astern and get back on course, then J to bed.

10:25-30/9/04 – end of day 1 – 118.11 miles achieved, average 4.92 knots, 358 miles to run. Days run all under sail except for first 2

hours, Duogen has produced enough electricity to keep the batteries charged (last time we had to run the engine every night for 2-3 hours to keep the batteries up) - Fridge and Navigation lights are the main culprits.

11:15 - 30/9/04 - J pulls in fishing gear as we have not caught a thing. We lost our original gear crossing the Atlantic last time and bought new gear in Barbados and have never caught anything on this set up. J puts on new hook, new squid lure, extra weights and re-streams line.

14:30 - 30/9/04 - Fish on fishing line!!!! From a distance the colours are amazing, bright turquoise, with a big yellow fin. We eventually land the fish on the Foredeck, it is a 3 foot Dorado, (also know as Mahi Mahi or Dolphin fish - no relation). J thinks it is pretty dead so gives it a bash on then head with a hammer to make sure. It is not! We eventually sort this out with not a little blood on the deck and carved off 4 large, skinned, fillets and 2 steaks or cutlets. This still leaves about 1/3 of the fish but it will not last so we have to throw it back. We have later heard you can salt Dorado so may try this next time - a bit like fish jerky or biltong?

Out with the fish cook books, S discovers we not have all the ingredients but makes up a marinade with lemons, garlic and white wine and puts it in the fridge.

18:40 - 30/9/04 - supper- Griddled fish fillets, new potatoes (fresh), broad beans (tinned), marinade spot on, (even S enjoyed it as she is not a great lover of really fresh fish) and the rest of the white wine. Still light wind (8-10 knots) but in the right direction.

1/10/04 - 03:45 - Engine on for 2 hours for charging, out of gear. Still sailing but wind light

10:25 - 1/10/04 - end of day 2 - 114.2 miles achieved, average of 4.76 knots, 243.7 miles to run, very pleasant sailing, a touch of rain this morning

20:08 - 1/10/04 - After supper, griddled fish, fresh salad, bread and tartare sauce- as the wind has been gently coming back we take in a reef for the night

10:25 - 2/10/04 - end of day 3 - 125.9 miles achieved, average of 5.25 knots, 117.87 miles to run. Shook reef out for the day.

Uneventful night and morning, winds has been up and down over night, quite roly but have made good boat speed - all under sail again. S tried sleeping in the saloon using one of the new bunk extentions (THANK YOU ANT!!) instead of the aft cabin, seems to be more comfortable with the rolling.

19:00 – 2/10/04 – Getting close, 75 miles to go, should sight land tomorrow morning. Light winds all day, more or less on track, will have to gybe sometime before we reach Porto Santo or we will miss it. Supper is Dorado tikka marsala and some of Bal and Narinda's Chutney, very nice as fish is quite firm, end of fresh fish. No reefs in tonight as winds very light. Just getting by with the Duogen charging the batteries (4 amps) by turning the fridge off overnight, it really needs better boat speed (greater than 5.5 knots) to be 100% effective.

07:30 – 3/10/04 – Land Ho! S spotted the top of the island as the sun comes up, 20 miles out. Island is quite high and the lower part hidden by not very good visibility and cloud.

08:30 – 3/10/04 – Gybe over, now on broad reach to clear eastern end of the Island, winds light.

10:25 - 4/10/04 – end of day 4 – 112 miles achieved, average 4.66 knots, 5.8 miles to way point, sailing down eastern side of the Island, can see a few very small villages. The Northern side is very mountainous and rugged with no habitation.

12:00 – 4/10/04 – Illa da Cima abeam. (south eastern end of the Island), Duogen in, Del disengaged, gybed to lay a course for the harbour but now in the wind shadow of the Island so Genoa in and engine on.

12:40 - 4/10/04 – arrived at Porto Santo and anchored in the harbour in 7 metres of water.

Passage Summary

Passage took 4 days 2 hours, 1 day quicker than last time and all under sail, very pleasant sailing. Wind very rarely above 15 knots, average speed 4.8 knots which is quite respectable for a 30 year old, overloaded steel boat, sailing two handed, (we are not racing). Engine hours 4 in total. 1700 miles logged on the GPS since we left Essex. We are back on schedule.

We intend to stay here for a week or two as it is one of our favourite places, very laid back and not expensive, so I will end this news letter here.

The current plan for the next few months is as follows:

- Stay in Porto Santo until about 17/10/04 then go to Madeira
- Meet Hogan and Birgitta in Funchal on Madeira on 27/10/04. They are staying in a hotel for a week.
- November, work our way through the Canaries down to La Gomera and prepare for the Atlantic crossing - 2,400 miles
- End November, leave Canaries for Barbados

If anyone has any comments, feedback on the above, please drop us an e-mail and I will reply when we are in port.

Bye for now from Triumphant and her crew

John & Sheila Quilliam

Summary of gear performance so far - (Cruising is the art of on-going maintenance)

Woodwork

Very successful (Thanks Ant now we have to paint it!) Lots of small and medium jobs done here , aimed at

- a) Making life more comfortable and safer (Headboards for the beds, berth extensions in the saloon, proper fiddles in the galley, additional stowage for foods etc.)
- b) Making good the furniture after the welding. The new shower area is a great improvement

Electrics & electronics

- **Battery Re wiring** – Things are now much simpler and tidier, still some snags on the charging system but to be expected with 5 different charging systems and no shake down cruise. A few doggy crimp terminals which are being addressed as we find them
- **Radar** – excellent after the first glitch, has a maximum range of 24 miles. Much better resolution and picture compared to the previous one and it also acts as a very good navigation repeater in the cockpit.
- **Wind directions and wind speed instrument** – Works fine but will not talk to the auto pilot via Sea Talk so we do not have the option of using an electric auto pilot sailing to the wind direction (Not a major problem as we have a wind vane system as well, needs a dealer to sort it out)
- **Echo sounder** – New one works well at up to 150 metres, just need to understand the buttons, transducer needs to be fitted in the hull
- **Auto Pilot** – Now it is disconnected from the Wind instrument it works well, have not explored all the new options available yet
- **GPS** – The new GPS is WAAS enabled. I set the set up to pick up WASS signals if they were available. Coming down the Portuguese coast, I noticed it was in WASS mode and got some very strange results which went away when I reset the set to Standard GPS mode.
- **See Me Active Radar reflector** – Detects other vessels using Radar and returns a better signal so that they see you. Also acts as an early warning device at sea as if it detects a Radar (up to about 14 miles away) it sounds a buzzer
- **SSB** – suffered from bad commissioning, still has not been proved that we can transmit, receiver side is fine. Weatherfax also working well

- **Fridge** - Major consumer of electricity, working fine but can throw a wobbly when the batteries get to 13 volts when it tries to go into fast freeze mode, ok if you watch for it
- **Fog Horn** – see text above, used only once when we installed it

Engine – so far so good, only issue has been dirty fuel tanks which I hope we are slowly sorting out and a slight exhaust leak. Fuel and oil consumption fine.

Batteries and Battery charging (Sheila most un- favourite subject at the moment)

Cruising boats rely heavily on their batteries and charging system to provide electricity without having to connect up to the mains electricity. Typical usage per day in the region of 180 – 200 amps

Engine Battery charging - On going puzzle. Since the re-wire, the engine has never managed to get the batteries up to 14 volts. Also one of the new batteries failed after 2 months with a bad cell. It has had to be replaced

At the time of writing, current theory is that the **Pro Mariner Split Charge Diode (SCD)** is faulty as all other components have been checked/tested/replaced. Without the SCD in the circuit the engine charges the batteries fine, (but currently only one at a time). I will fit a new one in Madeira and see what happens. Associated puzzle is that the engine charge is still not showing on the amp meter even with the SCD out of the circuit.

Sterling Advanced Alternator regulator, (designed to speed up battery charging) just fitted so time will tell, seems to be doing its job. When the SCD issue is resolved this will confirm if it is working correctly.

Sterling 12 to 230 volt Invertor – Has proved very useful as long as you run the engine if you are using power tools

Solar panels work well, the maximum we have seen from them so far is 4.5 amps, you need to check if they are shaded, makes a big difference

DuoGen works well in water and wind mode, it does what the manufactures say it should. It has proved it can run the boats electrics if you are going fast enough. Some installation problems and one user mistake see above (down to us). Company has proved very helpful in

sorting us out. Some of the brackets and bolts look a bit light but we will have to see how it holds up on the Atlantic crossing. Still need to resolve how to get it to clear the wind vane self steering when it is in its up position

Sterling Mains 50 amp battery charger. Good piece of kit. Only complaint is that one of the lights is the wrong colour.

Welding & metal work

All working here thanks to Eric, New shower a great improvement. Now down to us to keep the rust at bay

Painting

Lots to be done here by us, on going job

Wind vane self steering

The Hydrovane Wind vane self steering. Del continues to do his usual excellent job, It uses no electricity, as soon as we are under sail, on it comes and does the job. Occasionally needs a helping hand if you get a gust on the beam. We rarely have to hand steer the boat

Rigging and sails

No problems here, Mast jammers are magic, make life must easier. Minor bits to sort out like the mast gate and I will have to do a major rig check before we cross the Atlantic. (Thanks David)

Misc

- Bicycles. - We bought two 6 speed fold up bikes before we left, they are much better made than our previous ones, in the right place they are very useful
- 6 inch sprung mattresses- Expensive but worth the money, very comfortable
- Gas water heater – Our old one did not pass the Corgi man. The new one works well
- Opening window in the wheel shelter – excellent, it is like having air conditioning in the cockpit on a hot day, previously it was like a green house
- Fore hatch – opening forward works well, we have not yet had any significant seas over the fore deck to confirm we have fitted it correctly and it is watertight.
- Plastimo brass marine padlocks – Normally sold by most chandlers in a pack of 5. Work well until they get wet. Well done Plastimo!!!