

Hi Shipmates!

Well here we go again with Blog 7 from The Highlands North of Inverness where our dear friends Colin and Carol Gilmour have their wonderful Scottish castle with awesome views across the glen. Thanks so much for all your fabulous support and scrummy supper B&B.

Spent 3 days, 'make and mend' in Corpac at the start of The Caledonian Canal, which included washing all the bunk covers for the second time! But with Pippa's impending arrival no stone was left unturned to eradicate the male smells in favour of sweet odours for Mrs B! She duly turned up on yet another rain soaked night on the Glasgow bus and it was simply wonderful to be together again after 6 long weeks at sea..... Amazingly the night before she arrived, I had been desperate to send you all blog 6 and had happened upon the canal side Moorings Hotel who were able to help. Quite by chance, I bumped into Stewart the owner who had heard my story. Moreover, he declared that as Room 5 had just been cancelled, I was to have it 'on the house' plus a bumper breakfast.....How kind is that! So I quickly installed myself in the bath and promptly fell asleep!!

The canal journey started next morning and Pippa's childhood experience on the River Thames soon came to the fore as we entered the first lock. In actual fact the Caledonian Canal staff couldn't have been more helpful as our little ship was safely guided through lock after lock. But then came Loch Lochy and before we knew where we were, we were facing 26 knots on the nose.....This was nothing new for me and I cannot repeat Pip's reaction to suddenly being out in half a gale! However, with the staysail set, Theo's Future beat gallantly up the loch towards Fort Augusta where we spent a very happy but soggy Scottish night! At least the midges couldn't hack the rain either! Having grabbed a few 'Nessie' bits the next morning plus Pip's statutory cappuccino, we were off across Loch Ness – but where was Nessie? We thought we saw a few ripples but this was unconfirmed so the legend lives on! On up to Inverness where a chilled out second night was spent by a huge swing bridge in the middle of nowhere.....

Crew change tomorrow, where Pip sadly leaves the good ship, Theo's Future, with a full list of B&B guests to attend to..... As luck would have it, Georgina Venzano arrives on the same flight with Dr. Laura escaping from 'nights' the next day.

Almost 1000 miles done and we enter the North Sea on Monday for week 8.....

Fair winds, Skipper Mike