

Well Hi there Ship MATES, time to update everyone on progress of the good ship 'Theo's Future.'

'Happy and Sad' at Padstow....

Happy, in that we raised £190 at the Padstow sailing club instant raffle (complete with coffee and cakes for two from Rick Stein's cafe!). Sad, because it was time to say goodbye to my dear friend Pat Clarke, who had crewed magnificently all the way from Weymouth, some 245nm. Thank you Pat! But, I was to be joined by another dear friend and fellow 'Trans-At Bunny', Oscar Nowak, and it was a delight to see his fine features on the quayside.

Oscar wasted no time in settling in and we were soon under way. Off the wind (hooray hooray!!) towards our destination - Lundy. Conditions again not in our favour (windy nose!) so we ended up in Historic Bude, on Cornwall's picturesque North Coast. Only one shot at getting in on the surf, no problems for this little surf bunny! And suddenly all was calm as we were tied up against the sea lock wall. Quite by chance, a friend of a friend, Will and Helen Shingler, who run a B & B establishment in Bude, The Grosvenor, highly recommended, took us under their wing and before long Mike was fast asleep in the bath.....

Next, lashings of Bacon, and Egg Sarnies, lots of good advice and help - what a wonderful family and what a delightful and historic place Bude is.

Off next day to Lundy where we were met by a platoon of seals basking on the rocks beneath the lighthouse - how good is that????!!

Having successfully moored we went in search of the castle, only to find it occupied by 3 families on holiday - who befriended us immediately with scones, cream and jam - cool huh?!

By way of thanking them, we invited them all for a cocktail party on the yacht, which we parked almost on the beach - amazingly the final total onboard reached 22 (18 more than we were licensed to carry!) - 15 children, 7 adults. There were RNLI pressies for the children and the parents produced the remains of their chicken curry which was sent back down the hill for us by runner. Thanks for that. Next morning they had more in store for us - brunch and a shower. Oscar and I yomped the length of the island (3 miles) in search of Puffins, all in vain as they had gone to sea. The Landmark Trust have done a fantastic job at maintaining such a thoroughly beautiful island.

Off next morning to S Wales - where Tenby was substituted for Swansea 'cos that's the way the wind was blowing... Oscar spent the whole day on the helm and complained of a sore arm. aaahhh, clearly a candidate for some Commando training! Tenby is a delightful Victorian seaside resort complete with statue of Prince Albert. But the highlight was the arrival of my little sister Mary. We put TF on the sand in the little fishing harbour and just managed to grab a Doner Kebab before the whole place closed for the night. Next morning a brisk walk on the beach, ended in a very serious sea shanty session in the bandstand which resonated and was a joy to perform.

Off to sea inevitably, but we had hardly left the quayside when Mary was struck in the back by what turned out to be a fishing weight plus baited hook and line... no

idea where it came from (presumably the casteeer had scarpered) and we were lucky that Mary wasn't seriously hurt. After a very long day with big waves, one of which nearly came into the cockpit from behind, we arrived in Dale at the entrance to the Milford Haven estuary, too late for pub grub but the sailing club welcomed us with open arms, and three portions of shepherd's pie and we were 'anyones'. The tent awning proved its worth as we were rained on by Welsh rain. This did not dampen our spirits. We had several donations over the gunwhale, and a number of children wanted to give some of their pocket money to help Theo. Just an amazing gesture by the children of Dale.

Off up river to Neyland Yacht club where I was interviewed by Pembroke Radio. Our hosts were Jeff and Sarah Browning. Jeff who had 20 years Charter Skipper experience in the Caribbean and his lovely wife could not have been kinder, and even offered to collect Daisy Wylam from the station. Neyland yacht club pushed out the boat and another mega successful instant draw raised over £200. Thank you also Commodore for your generous donation from Club Funds. Alas, it was time to part company with my little sister.

And so ends our third week at sea, a quarter of the way there now, and nearly 400nm under our belts.

Fair Winds to one and all,