

Thoughts from the Lymington cruise...Saturday 6th July 2013

Well as a first timer (virgin didn't seem quite so appropriate!!) I was slightly apprehensive at the thought of my first cruise in company. I needn't have worried as Kevin and all the other cruise members were massively supportive and helpful over all aspects of both the preparation and throughout the cruise.

After a worthwhile briefing on Friday evening we were all quite clear on what our plan was and how the trip was expected to unfold. Weather and tide looked quite favourable and Kevin anticipated a bit of tide running against us later on the return leg. So Saturday morning my pal Anthony and myself nourished with a big bowl of porridge set off from Lower Parkstone for Cobbs. Arrived at Cobbs at 7.30 ish with light winds and a beautiful summers day expected. Carried out all the usual checks and MichaelmasD (my 6.7m Aquador) was ready to set off for the planned 8.30 Twin Sails opening. Led by Kevin in a RIB and Paul of Powerboat training in his Targa 32 (our support boat for the cruise and as it turned out photographer "extraordinaire"!!) we all progressed through both bridges quite smoothly.

Its so nice to note that apart from a few stories about basin congestion during the Air show days that "life with the bridges" seems to no longer be a negative issue.

So now that we were all making good progress through the harbour it seemed sensible that the faster boats would go on ahead led by Kevin and Paul acted as "chaperone" to myself and Adam and Gwen in his 8metre Octiva ..Puffin. This worked extremely well for both groups and we made good headway on the out route stopping off at the Needles for some great photo opportunities which Paul managed (expertly as always!!).

We all met in the Berthon marina in Lymington before 11.00 with no problems negotiating the busy channel from the Solent and with Kevin and the early arrivals making the mooring process absolutely easy and stress free!! Timing was important as Anthony, ?and myself were determined to see the third and final rugby test for the Lions (managed eventually after some fast footwork in Lymington ending up with a very warm welcome from the Royal British Legion...big thank you to Chairman Mick and the other members...and a memorable victory for the Lions). When we returned having had an excellent lunch at a local hostelry we found that a very merry time was being enjoyed by all the other cruise participants on board ? (clearly some good pre planning had taken place over the provision of beverage...I've noted that for my next cruise!!)

Sadly it was time to leave for Poole and with Adam and Gwen staying on for a few days (nice planning Adam) it was myself who with Kevin seeing us off set sail with Paul again leading the way. This time we took the inner passage which provided valuable experience on yet another option for future adventures. An excellent crossing and Paul kept a watchful eye on our progress and eventually we cheekily got back to Cobbs quicker as MichaelmasD was able to squeeze under the Twin Sails!!

So reflections....a safe and extremely enjoyable day...confidence boosted and new boating pals made...and the Lions victory what a combination!! Some great photo memories that Paul captured throughout the trip and which have been appreciated by all the family and friends that have seen them. Huge thanks then to Kevin ,Paul and all the participants who made it a happy and memorable day. Here's to the next one!!