

Shrimper Week 2010



The West coast of Scotland has always been a challenge for many Shrimper owners. Unknown waters and a wild and rocky coast are not inviting to the lone sailor. Some do not relish the Scottish weather. John Clogg, Ian's crew, told me once that during his schooldays in Scotland it was always raining.

When, during the final dinner of the last Shrimper week on the island of Lyö in Denmark, Ian Fisher revealed that in 2010 the International Week would be held in Scotland many became enthusiastic

After the first announcement the applications started streaming in. 34 boats eventually took part including the Crabber Mk1 "Ruach" owned by the local and former Shrimper sailors David and Penny Hippey and the Crabber 22 "Scalawag" belonging to Claud en Sheila Lanyon who have never missed a Shrimper Week. Four Dutch Shrimpers took part and, together with one German Shrimper, boarded in IJmuiden on Thursday 10th of June for the crossing to Newcastle.

On Friday afternoon, after a journey of 300 Km we arrived at Kip Marina. Many of the participants in the International Week have known one another for years and, taking time to greet all our old friends meant that we were slow in preparing our boat. We were the last to be hoisted into the water by four enthusiastic young Scots who were masters of their trade. Dinner in the Marina restaurant was followed by a quiet night at the pontoon.

The following morning Emilie and I set sail and headed off with a mild southerly wind. It was a beautiful day and the perfect conditions for making acquaintance with the Firth of Clyde.

We reached the Isle of Bute within 3 hours and moored in the old harbour at Rothesay. The harbour is situated directly behind the ferry mooring/berth and the facilities include Victorian toilets, possibly the most beautiful in Britain.

Rothesay was once a very popular Victorian seaside resort thanks to its mild climate and proximity to Glasgow, the town of Rothesay is the capital of Bute. Still a bustling town today, King Robert III granted Rothesay the status of royal burgh and Prince Charles, as eldest son of the current monarch, is the Duke of Rothesay.



That evening the Welcome Briefing supper took place in the Isle of Bute Sailing Club, a modest clubhouse situated a short walk from the harbour. On the way to the clubhouse one passes a modern building; The Pavilion, built in 1938 in a style more Bauhaus than Art Deco, has a famous dance floor and is still in use for parties and functions. Ian Fisher's parents met there long ago and the family have spent many holidays on the island. In his youth Ian learned to sail here and became familiar with the waters. During our stay in Rothesay Ian was visited by his mother, aunt and niece and during drinks aboard the "Black Sheep" 3 generations of Fishers were reunited: Ian, his mother and his son George whom we knew from earlier Shrimper Weeks as "Baby George".

We sailed on Sunday morning, with the Dutch Shrimpers, to the nearby Port Bannatyne where we lunched in the local pub. That evening in Rothesay we caught up with our Italian friends Gianni and Matteo Picchio (Nordica 660), who made the long journey from Italy just to attend four days of Shrimper Week. Both architects, they have refurbished their boat beautifully. We enjoyed the Barolo wine and Illy espresso aboard.

On Monday the whole Group went exploring the Kyles of Bute. At Caladh, a tiny bay behind a rhododendron covered small island we dropped anchor. In the evening we enjoyed a most pleasant barbecue. Later a westerly wind blew up and we sailed back to Rothesay in an hour and a half.



Tuesday was declared racing day. Although I had sworn never again to participate in such an event, after the bowsprit of my stationary boat was destroyed by an unsportsmanlike Englishman during the race in Falmouth in

2006, I joined the crew of "Waterman 570". The race was organized by Robin Whittle (Bumblechugger 124) with the cooperation of the Isle of Bute Sailing Club. There was almost no wind during the first race and John de Kanter and I spent a long time floating aimlessly. Tim and Fiona Lunt (Boniti 1055) proved that a race can be won with their new inboard Shrimper. Victory in the second race, with wind, went to Robin Whittle who was also the overall winner. (Indeed the organizer won his own race!)

On Wednesday we sailed to the bay of Kerrycroy, a hamlet rebuilt in 1803 by the first Marquess of Bute, to visit Mount Stuart, a house that arose at the beginning of the last century on the foundations of an ancient house that was destroyed in 1877 by fire. It is an example of the 19th century Gothic Revival and was built under the direction of the 3rd Marquess of Bute and his architect Sir Robert Rowand Anderson. Like its creator this sandstone palace is profoundly inspired by history, astrology, art and mythology.



After our guided tour we walked through the Gardens back to the picturesque shoreline of Kerrycroy to see "Woodcock 872" belonging to Peter and Penny Smales landing on the beach. With four men we managed to push her back to deeper waters. That evening we enjoyed a fantastic barbecue on the beach and the pier at Kerrycroy where in the old days the Post-Boat ferry used to arrive. There the National Hon. Sec. Trevor Thomas presented the Lady Daphne Seamanship Trophy to Matteo and Gianni who returned to Italy the next day. We decided to stay that night at the anchorage.



After sleeping like tops, we were rudely awakened the next morning by our Shrimper hitting the beach. At first I could move her a few meters but the water was dropping very rapidly. We tried balancing both of us on one side, with the inboard started, giving full throttle and pushing the boat with help of some friends. We also tried with Emilie in the dinghy and the throttle in neutral while

Matteo and Gianni were pulling "Pintail II" with a line but could not bring her back to deeper waters. So we stayed! After just an hour there was already enough water for us to leave Kerrycroy and sail to Millport (Isle of Cumbrae). During our passage we were followed by a porpoise.



Arriving in Millport we found a buoy near a rock with sunbathing seals and made a bike trip around the island. On our sail back to Rothesay with the wind blowing from another quarter I had put one reef in the mainsail, and was surprised at being overhauled half-way by "Black Sheep" with "baby" George at the tiller! Local knowledge or talented seamanship?

The next day was Friday and the last day of our Shrimper Week. We decided to sail again to Port Bannatyne having lunch there in a Russian restaurant. That afternoon a putting competition was organized in Rothesay at the greens near the harbour. Being a golfer with 40 years of experience I was determined to win but, in the end was beaten by Colin Campbell ("Camilla" 767). That evening we all enjoyed the dinner at the Victoria hotel, a fitting end to a fantastic and sunny Shrimper Week in Scotland. Trevor Thomas presented the Roger Dungray Trophy (best Shrimper Week log of last year) to Robin Wearn, Robin Whittle received the Shrimper Challenge Cup and John de Kanter the Plymouth Plate. Harry Breuking announced that next year Shrimper Week will be organized in the Netherlands, in Zeeland. We are looking forward seeing each other there!

All participants had a magnificent Week in Scotland and believe that this was one of the best Shrimper Weeks ever. A week of sunshine and low winds with a mix of scenery, interesting historical places and the famous companionship that unites us Shrimperowners.



Ian and his assistants did a marvelous job!

Ronald Langkemper "Pintail II" 634