

Shooze Cruise – Going West! by Carolyn Howden

I am sure you will have heard of a booze cruise but will not be so familiar with a shooze cruise! Our West Solent mini-cruise week was one of highs and lows - mostly highs, especially as we were lucky enough to have chosen one of the best weeks of 2015 weather-wise, after a wet start.

Sunday 28 June – Outward bound – depart Lymington 07.45, through Hurst narrows 08.50. SW 3-4. Hengistbury Head 11.30. Arrive Poole entrance 15.45. Arrive Marina 16.15.

In high spirits nine Shrimpers set off from Lymington, destination Poole Harbour Yacht Haven Marina. After the shower in the afternoon our spirits lowered. The wind strengthened and from Bournemouth Pier onwards the voyage became tiring and challenging. But that evening we dined at an Italian restaurant just opposite the Marina and by bed time we were a merry bunch again.

Monday 29 June – Dawned sunny – light breeze.

Relaxing day sailing around Poole Harbour, rafting up for lunch on board. On our first day in the harbour we pottered around to the ominously named Blood Alley, where we were able to throw ourselves overboard in order to cool the blood! Some people ventured ashore to explore Brownsea Island.

Our berths were directly opposite a Tesco Metro - a highlight in itself, especially for them because we seemed to be continually spending vast amounts of money! During one of these excursions I made an amazing discovery. Right next door was a huge shoe shop. There was a sale on! After some time, I cat-walked down the pontoon extolling the virtues of my new shoes! This was a definite high moment. (It is quite amazing how new shoes have a strange effect on people)!!

Tuesday 30 June – Wind E.

An unfortunate low moment came when we realised that the wind had conspired to turn around and blow from the east. This scuppered our plans to sail round past Swanage to Chapman's Pool, followed by a night an anchor in Studland Bay. However, our brilliant Poole hosts conjured up a great plan and invited us all to the Royal Motor YC for drinks and supper on their terrace. We spent the day pottering in the harbour and then returned to the Marina. In order to raise our spirits after the disappointment of not getting to Chapman's Pool, some of us ventured once more to the shoe shop... Of course we were required to wear new shoes for our visit to the RMYC!

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We tried to book a white limo to take us in style. However the ride in the black cab proved to be just as exciting in its own way! We spent a lovely evening watching the sunset and our hosts very kindly drove us back to our little ships.

Wednesday 1 July – Light breeze. Temp 28C.

Sailed up the Wareham Channel to Redclyffe Yacht Club. Arrived 13.30. Berthed three abreast on Club pontoon.

A low moment followed when our Avon dinghy decided to attach itself to a passing Shrimper and wrap its painter around the prop. The skipper, in true nautical style, went overboard, knife between teeth, and freed the offending rope. He was upset about soaking his new shorts and drenching his mobile. (Useful hint – place your wet mobile in a box of rice overnight and you will find that it will come to life once more)! After a stroll along the river bank to Wareham and fish and chips or another Italian, we wandered back to Redclyffe. An utterly unexpected high moment as the sound of music wafted over to us. The local Shrimper folk put on an impromptu ukulele sing along for us!



The Shrimper Ukulele Band



"I bet Mary Berry never had to cook like this!"

Thursday 2 July – Overcast and hot.

Motored back down the river. Returned to the Marina, and found it necessary to take another look in the shoe shop! Afternoon tea at Banana Wharf. Invited all Shrimpers to drinks aboard *Tarrock* and enjoyed a curry with the skipper and mate of *Joan*.

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Friday 3 July – Departed Marina 07.30. E 3-4.

Beautiful morning. One last look at the shoes and then motored down harbour against the tide taking the Looe Channel to Hengistbury Head. Arrived Christchurch entrance at 1300 and motored up The Run with some trepidation. A very large dredger took up most of the channel.

We arrived earlier than expected at Christchurch Sailing Club and, having acquired a total of twelve Shrimpers along the way, caused quite a commotion as we tried to moor up! I think the holiday-makers were greatly entertained.



The Run, Mudeford

Carole at CSC cooked us a lovely meal. During the night there was the most dramatic thunderstorm. We were pleased we had a wooden mast!

Saturday 4 July – Departed CSC at 0820. Had to wait for enough water in order to cross the bar. Took 30 mins to get to The Run. Very rough SW 3-4. Departed Christchurch bar 0910 heading for North Head buoy off Milford on Sea. A quartering sea, doing approx. 6 knots over the ground! Arrive North Head 10.40. Very rough through Hurst narrows. Arrived Lymington 11.20.

Lastly I have to tell you that during the course of our Poole cruise, between us we managed to purchase eleven pairs of shoes!!

Carolyn Howden - *Tarrocks* (479)

