

Two men sharing a Cornish Shrimper 19 for a weekend in the Solent works perfectly well but sharing for 12 days in a foreign country and constantly on the move is a different matter. Two weeks worth of kit x 2 and associated supplies leaves little cabin space. So when I agreed for the editor of *The Shrimper*, Jeff Osment, to join me Mike Everett on *Alice Rose* (417), as crew for ISW 2024 in The Netherlands, expedition grade planning would be required

I needn't have worried as Jeff had already planned to find small B&Bs or campsites next to the various marinas that the fleet would be visiting, and as a last resort he would bring the cockpit tent from his Shrimper 19 *Natalie* and stow it in the stern locker of *Alice Rose* along with his pop up tent and airbed. This left one side of the boat for 2 sets of kit and the other for my bunk.

Suitably provisioned we set off for Harwich on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June meeting up in the ferry terminal vehicle park with Karen Macey *Camaron* (940) and Paul and Annie Musgrove *Dilly* (21/102), the last 3 Shrimpers to cross over to Holland on the 0900 ferry the following morning.



*Alice Rose boarding at Harwich and 'Twee mannen' Mike Everett and Jeff Osment*

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June found *Alice Rose* safely loaded onto the car deck in line with *Camaron* and *Dilly* for the 7 hour crossing to the Hook of Holland. Here it was agreed everyone would use the EU temporary import form that Paul had required in France. Unfortunately Dutch customs had never heard of it and after an hour in the red lane they made up some numbers, stamped the forms, and let us go. This delay put us into the ISW launching marina at Naarden Yachthaven around 2100 with the gates locked. So it was a night in our boats in the car park for everyone, except Jeff, who booked into his first Dutch B&B complete with four poster bed, spa bath and breakfast served in his room by a lady in a silk jumpsuit.

### Day 1 - 5<sup>th</sup> June - Naarden to Muiden

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June was the first official day of ISW 2024 but *Amigo*, *Sparrow* and *Bluejay* were already in Holland after sailing all the way from Chichester in unison. Shrimpers from The Netherlands SOA had also convened at Muiden where the rest of the fleet joined them after *Dilly*, *Camaron* and *Alice Rose* slipped in at Naarden. Muiden is just 3 miles northwest of Naarden and with the wind on the nose it was a sunny motor sail all the way to the KNZ&RV Yacht Club although as late afternoon arrivals we needed to quickly make up fore and aft shorelines and required a few attempts at reversing between the poles. *Alice Rose* is a 1990 Mk 1 Shrimper 19 and 31 years separated her from our Dutch neighbours *Babbels* (21/104), owned by Eric and Trinet Tigelaar who had already sailed over 150 km from Lauwersoog on the north coast of Friesland to join the rally.



Trinet and Mike helping Guillemette (554) to tie up and Dilly moored up opposite Muiden Castle





### Day 2 - 6<sup>th</sup> June - Pampus Island

Beyond the dyke protecting the town and just a stone's throw from the marina Jeff had found a 5 star AirBnB for 2 nights complete with fluffy dressing gowns, a coffee maker and many other luxury items missing on *Alice Rose*. As it was a free day there was time for a stroll around the town and a leisurely continental breakfast at a local bakery before a short sail out to Pampus Island, part of a fortification system protecting the approaches to Amsterdam. About half the fleet chose to take a spin around the island before mooring in the small harbour for coffee and cake in the café. Then it was a short hop back to Muiden to scrub up for the 'Welcome Dinner' at the Royal Netherlands Yacht Club.



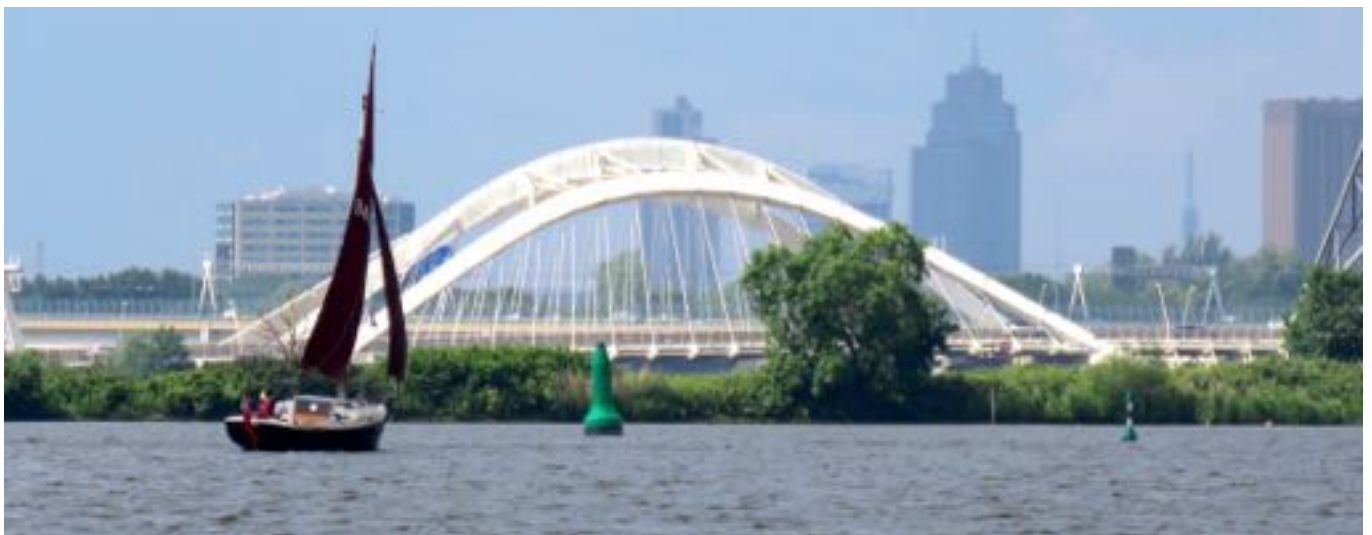
*The ISW 2024 'Welcome Dinner' and Marina de Kanter, welcoming the 14 crews*

Hosted by ISW Netherlands organiser and incoming Hon. Secretary Marina de Kanter *Waterman* (570), we were treated to a 3 course meal fit for a King (or Queen) and an amusing story about the origin of the SOA Netherlands pennant which you needed to be in the room to appreciate. And with plenty of Dutch lager on tap, if this was a taste of things to come – roll on ISW 2024.



### Day 3 - 7<sup>th</sup> June - Muiden to Amsterdam

After the bakery breakfast, it was time to set off for the short passage to Amsterdam by heading across to the north side of the IJmeer to take the small ships channel into the city. With barges the size of skyscrapers on their side running up and down the main channel this was sound advice. We passed Pampus Island again and gathered off Durgerdam, a pretty little red roofed town east of Amsterdam. There was still plenty of water to tack to the Schellingwouder Bridge, which was the point to down sails. From the bridge it was a short motor into the main lock, which easily took all 15 Shrimpers and a large Sea Scout training yacht, which caused a bit of fendering chaos. Out of the lock and *Noorderlicht (504)* sailed by Jan and Annet, led the way to Sixhaven Marina, a little oasis opposite Amsterdam station and a 5 minute ferry ride into the heart of Amsterdam. As a one time resident I treated Karen and Jeff to a whistle stop tour of the city by foot and tram, and the compulsory drinks in the sun by a canal.



*Camaron tacking towards Amsterdam and Sixhaven marina opposite the city centre*





### Day 4 - 8<sup>th</sup> June - Amsterdam to Edam

After a peaceful night in the cockpit tent for Jeff we retraced our route back into the IJmeer. At the morning briefing we were told that a planned stop at Marken Island would be impossible given the strong wind forecast so it was a 15 mile leg directly to Edam. We enjoyed a fast goose winged run to the lighthouse at Marken but once around the headland we encountered the 20 – 25 knot wind and short chop that we faced most days. With only one reef *Alice Rose* flew ahead allowing Jeff to photograph boats on our inside who more sensibly had two reefs.



*Marken lighthouse, Bluejay on a close reach off Vollendam and the moorings at Edam*



Although very breezy, the sun was still shining as we reached the narrow entrance channel into Edam and tied up along the canal bank next to the campsite. Perfectly placed for Jeff to get out his tent before the rain arrived. Edam is a tourist town famous for its cheese factory and museum but as it was a Saturday nothing was open and is best visited on a Wednesday market day.

### Day 5 - 9<sup>th</sup> June - Edam to Hoorn

The original plan was to sail across the Markermeer to Lelystad but with the wind forecast to stay in the NW most days, getting back would be a problem. So we continued our brisk close hauled sail a further 8 miles up the old Zuiderzee to the city of Hoorn, where Jan Suurmond, our second in command, had charmed the harbourmaster for 15 mooring spaces as he had done at Sixhaven and Edam.

Hoorn is named after the shape of its harbour, which is dominated by the 16th-century Hoofdtoren tower. After taking down our sails in the shelter of the outer harbour, we formed an impressive line of boats on the park side of the inner harbour. Jeff had not factored Hoorn into his B&B plan but by the time we arrived his wife had found him a waterside hotel, with a panoramic view and breakfast included for just 90 Euros. Hoorn is the start of a circular steam railway and boat journey to Enkhuizen and Medemblik, known as *'The Golden Age'* experience. Hoping for a ride on a steam train, once again we had arrived on the one day when it didn't run in the afternoon. More lagers in the town square!



*Hooftoren Tower, Hoorn,*



*Jan, Annet & Keetje with Harry Breuking on Noorderlicht (504)*



*The ISW fleet tied up line astern in Hoorn*



### Day 6 - 10<sup>th</sup> June - Hoorn to Enkhuizen

It was a very wet morning briefing as Marina confidently predicted that with a brisk south-easterly we just had enough time to sail the 12 miles to Enkhuizen before the wind turned to the northwest and the weather got really bad. *Alice Rose* still only had one reef in as we sailed out of Hoorn, but once around De Nek headland it was clear that photography was out of the question. The south-easterly soon built up a vicious chop with some large waves crashing over the boat.



*The wet morning briefing at Hoorn*



*The Naviduct - photo courtesy Rijkswaterstaat*



*Into the IJsselmeer at Enkhuizen*



*Boat & Breakfast and fan heaters*

It was a fast and furious sail to Enkhuizen where a sodden fleet of Shrimpers gratefully transited the massive Naviduct, a navigable aqueduct and lock which links the Markermeer to the IJsselmeer. We limped into the huge Compagnieshaven marina looking like drowned rats and drying out was going to be a challenge. However Jeff was back on his B&B schedule and this time it was a boat and breakfast, an old 50ft motor cruiser with plenty of room for two wet sailors. More to the point it had fan heaters and a long upper bridge house for drying our clothes. Let's just say I did not take much persuading to jump ship!

### Day 7 - 11<sup>th</sup> June - Enkhuizen at leisure

The sun came out much to the relief of the crews who stayed on their boats and the Shrimpers were flying their wet clothes from every boom and furler. A perfect day at leisure for exploring the Zuiderzee Open Air Museum and learning about the 1914 great flood which forced the building of the Afsluitdijk and the creation of the 1000 sq km lake now known as the IJsselmeer.

### Day 8 - 12<sup>th</sup> June - Enkhuizen to Marker Wadden

As we were a day ahead of schedule a favourable wind forecast gave us the opportunity to sail south east back into the Markermeer and visit Marker Wadden, a man made archipelago of low sandy islands which is now a nature reserve. It would mean retracing the 8 mile journey back to Enkhuizen the following day and then onwards to our final destination of Medemblik. Half the fleet voted to go; so 7 boats set off on a brisk reach and covered the 8 miles in rapid time.



Marker Wadden was formed by dredging lake sediment and containing it in rings of sand dykes. It was teeming with nesting Avocets, Wagtails, Spoonbills and Terns but very exposed so Jeff erected the cockpit tent with extra ties in case the wind got up in the night – which it did! The café closed early so I dipped into expedition supplies and conceived ‘Nasi Goreng – Shrimper Style’, which Jeff renamed *Eggs Everett* - avec du vin of course!



### Day 9 -13<sup>th</sup> June - Marker Island to Medemblik

After a chilly night and despite having to retrace our 8 mile journey to Enkhuizen, to go back through the lock and out into the IJsselmeer for the final 12 miles to Medemblik, this was probably the best sailing day. It was only the last few miles of the 20 mile journey when the inevitable northwest wind and heavy chop tried to push us away from our destination.

Medemblik is another historic city and one of the main regatta centres in Holland, where we rejoined the other half of the fleet. There would be no more sailing but one more quirky B&B ashore for Jeff - a 16<sup>th</sup> Century house with a man's hand inside the chimney breast – despite being good at everything, the Dutch have a great sense of humour. And it was no surprise that Marina had organised a perfect end of rally dinner at a harbour side restaurant where presentations were made, the food was mouth watering, and the beer and wine flowed freely. *'Proost'* as they say in Holland and well done to Marina, Jan and all.



*Amigo and Camaron beating towards Medemblik and Karen Macey presenting an engraved bowl to Marina de Kanter on behalf of the SOA and the assembled ISW fleet*

