

SAILING

TODAY

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& YACHTING

AUGUST 2024 E5.50

WILD RIDE

Jeanneau's Sun Fast 30 OD

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Heather Thomas on
Ocean Globe glory

IONIAN IDYLL
Finding peace
in Greece

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country with a toddler



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hits warp speed



Tim Good and partner Emmie didn't want to let having a small child get in the way of his sailing dreams. So last summer they boldly set out for the Isles of Scilly to see how they got on

A SCILLY IDEA?



If you recall, Sailing Today had been following our progress since 2017 around Norway and then down through France, Brittany, Galicia, Portugal and the Canary Islands. From there we intended to commit to the lifelong ambition of circumnavigating. However, in July 2020, several things mounted against us whilst stationed in the Canary Islands, ready for the Atlantic crossing. With the first covid lockdown over, new Brexit rules looming and trying for a baby, there were too many unknowns in our lives to commit to the circumnavigation. As such so we decided to sail our SeaStream 43, *Shadowfax*, back to the UK via the Azores. (See “Sailing Today November 2020 - Solo Sailing in an Atlantic Storm!”). On New Years Day 2021 we then discovered Emmie was pregnant and decided to spend the majority of her pregnancy on the boat in the Isles of Scilly (See Sailing Today, June 2022 - ‘A Pregnant Pause’). At the time we wanted to be somewhere with clean air and easy sailing for the majority of her term and Scilly proved to be ideal. With no anchorage charges, access to excellent local provisions, good fishing, calm anchorages and plenty to do, you can easily spend extended periods cruising Scilly. Fast forward to the summer of 2023, and our healthy daughter, Célestine, was 18 months old and ready for her first taste of live aboard



life. *Shadowfax* had been laid up in the yard all that time and needed a good amount of preparations before launch. In addition to the usual pre-launch preparations, a solid check of the rig and systems was in order. I also spent time fitting guardrail netting as well as a few other toddler friendly adjustments. The decision was made to go back to somewhere that we knew well and our daughter could get a taste of sailing in a safe and fun environment. Since we still plan to circumnavigate when she reaches the age of 4, we had to make this experience a positive one. Returning to the Isles of Scilly seemed like an ideal way to introduce her to a world afloat. We need a boat-loving child!”

ABOVE A quiet moment for Emmie and Célestine

BELOW LEFT Enjoying the departure of the Tall Ships Race, Falmouth

BELOW RIGHT Twin pole/headsail rig makes for safe and powerful downwind sailing

PREVIOUS PAGE Tim and Emmie enjoying teaching their daughter Célestine the delights of boating

First steps

Launching the boat at Mylor (Falmouth), and provisioning for a month or two, we hung around for the Tall Ships Race and anchored only a few hundred metres from where they docked. They were meant to return to Falmouth in 2020, and 2021 but both times were postponed due to Covid. The race followed a course from Falmouth to Coruna in Spain, then onward to Portugal’s capital, Lisbon before finishing in Cadiz, Spain. It would have been nice to sail toward Scilly with the Tall Ships but poor weather loomed with a gale forecast on the day they were due to depart so we cast off the day before under ideal downwind conditions. I’d rigged a twin pole, twin yankee headsail setup, which had proved so successful when sailing back from the Azores. The only difference this time is that both poles were attached to the mast rather than attached to one another as a purists ‘Twizzle Rig’. If you Google ‘Twizzle Rig’ then there are advantages in terms of reduced rolling but the setup is more complex. Too much of a faff for just a single day passage. I therefore wanted to try a more simple arrangement where the two whisker poles fixed to the mast on a twin fitting designed specifically for this purpose. It worked fantastically as we cruised towards Scilly with no main and only the two yankees pulling us along. It made for a very safe and easily handled system →





whilst we had a toddler on board. The furling system still worked as usual and you can reduce sail easily without removing the poles. You can even sail approximately 30 degrees either side of dead down wind. If you then need to go onto a reach, you can remove the poles and fly the two sails overlapping easily enough, which we did as we approached Scilly. Célestine did remarkably well and was not fazed by a long passage of around eight hours. A few of her highlights were seeing dolphins, Wolf Rock lighthouse, and the Scillonian ferry passing close by.

Scilly idyll

We arrived around 5pm and settled in to our favourite anchorage in Great Bay, to the north of St Martins, ahead of a gale forecast the next day.

Since we have spent so much time in Scilly we were very comfortable being there in poor conditions, but I can appreciate how many wouldn't be with numerous rocks and occasional poor holding due to kelp / weed. In 2021 we were there for a major storm and it saw numerous vessels drag onto the rocks. Scilly can be safe in all conditions but it is important to have good local knowledge, excellent ground tackle and anchoring technique. We experienced 50kt gusts but the anchor held well. As a precaution I like to drop all headsails when anchoring in over 45kts as it keeps the windage down and leaves the boat in a much more stable position. We also carry an anchor riding sail for the same reason. The following day was a complete spectacle as the skies cleared and

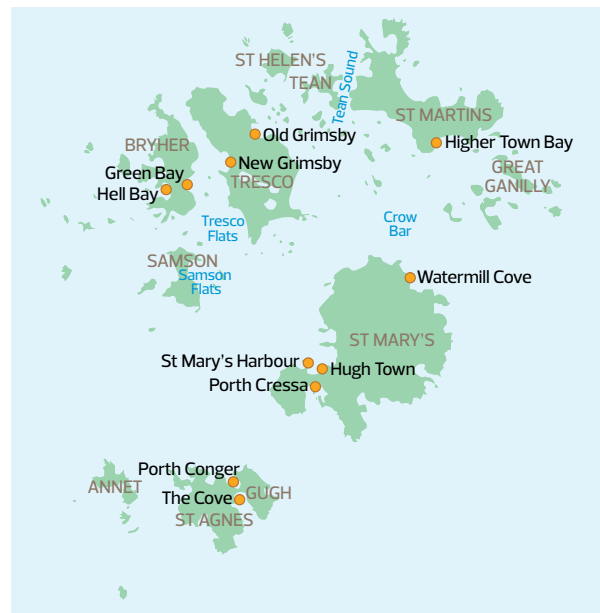
ABOVE LEFT
Mystic setting at anchor

ABOVE RIGHT
Célestine enjoying a spot of beachcombing

BELOW LEFT
Taking it easy on one of the many beaches

BELOW RIGHT
Plenty of time and opportunity for exploring

the majesty of Scilly showed itself. We moved the boat a short way over to Little Bay and took a long walk around the island, concluded by a pub lunch at the Seven Stones. One of the highlights of the trip was the low tide mini festival between the islands of Bryher and Treско which happens on a particularly low spring tides in summer. A local fishing boat dried out with the tide to serve fresh paella. A tractor from Bryher then drove out with a local band on a trailer. Locals and tourists alike would make the pilgrimage, walking between the islands and back again with a bite to eat and a little dance en route during the short period of time that is possible. A few tourists and their dogs left it a little late and the tide rushing back in left them having to swim back, expensive cameras and all.





Célestine, just two years old at this point, was now walking confidently and clearly loved the whole experience. Back in 2021, just prior to setting sail to Scilly, a chance encounter with the well known sailing couple, Judith and David Eastburn, led to us co-writing the book 'Harbours & Anchorages of Scilly'. The book was launched in spring 2022 and was well received by sailors looking to expand their horizons away from the mooring buoys of Hugh Town and Tresco, or discover new anchorages. During this trip, I was keen to get new perspectives using drone photography and discover some different anchorages for the next edition in 2025/26. The book is available on Amazon. If anyone reading this happens to be sailing

through Falmouth and would like myself or David to come aboard and offer some assistance on a first trip to Scilly, we'd be more than happy to oblige as long as tea and biscuits are provided! You can find our contact details in the book.

Child safety onboard

Safety on board with a toddler was a bit of a learning curve and battle. The netting was no doubt very effective and, although not a substitute for a tether or life jacket, certainly made us feel more relaxed. It is however, a really big job to install and get right. Youtube is your friend for that. We tried a life jacket and also a harness and tether. Hard to know which works best but I feel Célestine preferred the harness. Another thing we did to prevent

ABOVE RIGHT
Célestine keeping a lookout

BELOW LEFT
Always a time for learning new things

BELOW RIGHT
Célestine would sit happily between Emmie's legs on the paddleboard

head injuries was use interlocking rubber mat on the cockpit floor. We bought this from ScrewFix and then cut it to shape. This also made a safe place for her to play, away from the winches. We decided the best place for her to sleep was in the bunk room which is amidships. We had some new lee cloths made with fun patterns depicting sea creatures and which stretched the entire length of the bunk so she could neither fall out nor think of going for a walk. We would also try and use our small pressure cooker when cooking anything on the stove top, simply because the lid can be locked down. We generally do this on passage when cooking but with a toddler aboard we took to using it at anchor also. Another top tip is to have some way of making them immobile while anchoring, mooring or any



Cruising – Isles of Scilly



other technical operation is going on. Célestine wouldn't tolerate being down below when interesting things are going on outside so we devised a way to secure a booster high chair to the cockpit. Generally speaking, sleeping was not an issue aboard. The gentle rocking, soporific sound of the water and darkness in a cabin, made for easy naps and bedtime routines! Getting to the shore would ordinarily be done in our inflatable and electric outboard but Célestine had taken a liking to the paddle board. As many of you will know, you don't argue with a toddler! Choose your battles. She would calmly sit between Emmie's legs and watch the world go by, pointing out every crab pot or buoy. A very excited toddler who would shout "Go Go" every time she heard

AIS unit beep before departure.

Scilly is a magical place to sail to particularly with young children. The sailing between anchorages can be done at a snail's pace and still enjoyable. There is little or no swell amongst the islands and plenty to do ashore. Our memories are made up of paddleboarding at dusk in mirrored waters, 'shell cake' birthday cake decorated with shells, blackberry hunting, rock pooling, colourful shell finding, foraging, fishing and hearing the howls of seals in the twilight.

Harbours & Anchorages of Scilly – Available on [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) RRP from £25



ABOVE LEFT
Tim and Célestine with the catch of the day

ABOVE RIGHT
Blackberry shell birthday cake!

RIGHT
Célestine enjoying the fun side of winching

BELOW
Paddleboarding at dusk in mirrored waters is one of the Goods' favourite memories from their trip

