

Brixham Rally

With a NW f4-5 and the prospect of a veer to NE the following day, Ellen Marvel abandoned the planned overnight sojourn in Salcombe and arrived in Brixham a day early, to be told that one of the rally members was already on the visitors pontoon. It turned out to be, yes, a Moody, but not part of the rally. This pattern was repeated over the weekend when several Moodys tied up alongside the assembled rally fleet, perhaps attracted by the two MOA "battle flags" flying.

One by one on Friday afternoon the rally fleet assembled, sailing in from Dartmouth and Plymouth, with local boats swelling the gathering. An informal drink and dinner at the local pub got the festivities off to a fine start and our port officer, Brendan Jaffa had done a great job of collating local information for those new to Brixham. It was great to see that the "usual suspects" for the SW rallies was augmented by several new faces who rapidly got into the swing of things of getting to know new friends over a drink (or three).

The weather was fine for the weekend apart from a little rain which confined itself to Friday night. Brendan had organised a lunchtime drink on Saturday at the yacht club with its fine view of Torbay. They had set a room aside for us so many stayed for a light lunch whilst others opted to take their midday repast at "Fishstock", the fish food and music festival in aid of the mission to fishermen. Bands, folk groups, shanty men added to the buzz of the festival which also had cookery demonstrations and traditional lobsterpot making as well as an opportunity to visit the beam trawler Barantzee and the Severn Class lifeboat.

On Saturday evening, appetites were sharpened by the short walk up to the Berry Head Hotel, where more spectacular views out towards Lyme Bay were to be seen as the two dozen or so rally members enjoyed their pre-dinner drinks. A fine meal was had, and Captain Eric thanked Brendan for his splendid rally organisation, and also used the opportunity to capture more signatures for the baton relay. The baton was left with Brendan and will hopefully be making its way around Torbay over the next week or so before moving on to the River Exe. If it is in your vicinity please take the opportunity to add your name to the scroll.

The evening went like a flash and it was 2300hrs when crews stumbled back to their boats with many planning a reasonably early start to catch the tide around Start Point the following day.

Those not from Brixham who were sailing home mostly had to resort to the "Iron Topsail" as the winds steadfastly refused to rise beyond a F2 until mid-afternoon. However, that was a trivial downside from a great end of season rally blessed with warm and fine weather and warm and fine company.

The next get-together will be the SW branch AGM in Cardiff in February. As those who have been to these events before will know, it is an AGM but not as you know it! See you there.