

## Fowey Rally

The first SW branch rally of the season was to Fowey. Some six boats made up the fleet which assembled on Friday evening and started the entertainment with a traditional pontoon party followed by an informal meal ashore.

We were not able to join the rally until Saturday and thought we were going to miss the afternoon activities. However, a decent breeze from the south, aided by Ellen Marvel's clean bottom (just been launched) meant that we made the 22 miles from Plymouth against the tide in just over 3.5 hours. One advantage of arriving late was that there were many hands waiting to help us tie up alongside in



*The Motley Crew*

time for lunch. A further boat joined us a little while later, swelling the fleet to 8.

A logistic cunning plan allowed a dozen of us, using just two dinghies to get ashore at the ferry landing at Boddinick on the East bank of the Fowey river as we set off for the pleasant afternoon

walk along the banks of the river down to Polruan.

Despite the keen breeze, it was a warm day out of the wind so it was a welcome sight to see the pub at the Polruan ferry landing where those of us who had taken the short route slaked our thirst whilst waiting for the hardy souls who had taken the long route. The short ferry ride saw us back at Fowey where the second part of the cunning plan came to the fore as we had left one dinghy at the Fowey

side, complete with lifejackets stored in the RNLI lockers.



*Pont Pill*

Once back on the pontoon it was time to clean up before drinks aboard Oronsay and then ashore for a meal at the Haveners restaurant on the quayside.

Carl Stansfield joined us at the dinner. Carl had been our port officer at the previous rally to Fowey in 2015, but had resigned after selling his boat. However, he had willingly stepped forward to organise

the rally and our many thanks to him for doing this. His local knowledge helped tremendously. Arriving back at the pontoon after the dinner, Maui IV was very much down on her marks as many of us piled aboard for a small libation hosted by our new captain, Tony Wildig and his wife Margaret. Although there were many stalwarts of the SW at the rally, there were several new faces and this enabled us to get to know our new friends in the association.

Sunday dawned with heavy cloud and rain. Whilst some took a run ashore, many of the rally opted to remain in the dry of their boats and the planned guided walk around Fowey was cancelled. As evening approached, Tony and Margaret's hospitality aboard Maui IV was again welcome for some pre-dinner drinks. For those who do not know Maui IV, it was the biggest boat in the assembled fleet at 44 ft and so makes a splendid entertainment platform!

Monday dawned again with rain threatening and high winds and unwelcome seas in the offing. However, for many it was time to head for home so the Moody rally flag was struck and one by one we edged out of the harbour. The wind, by this time had veered to the west and the sea had gone down so although it was wet, it was an otherwise pleasant sail back to Plymouth for most. For one, however, there was more drama to come as Oronsay suffered an engine failure and needed some assistance to make her berth.

So the first rally of 2017, organised by the new committee was successfully completed. Join the next, by now almost routine rally to Guernsey in June where hopefully there will be less rain.