

## My Covid Summer

Ellen Marvel was launched towards the end of May when marinas began opening up, but it was not until the middle of July before we got our first sail down to Fowey and Falmouth. Whilst in Falmouth I ended up at night clinic in Truro at 3 o'clock in the morning with an allergic reaction rash, which rather put paid to our enjoyment and we returned to Plymouth with our tail between our legs. The next trip to Falmouth had the crew ill and so generated another return to base.

We planned at the end of August to try to get to the Isles of Scilly. The friend we were planning to go with cried off at the last minute. We sailed to Falmouth and all was going well until about 5 miles out when a distinct shift in the engine note and dramatic slowing of the boat saw us limp into Port Pendennis marina. Clearly three for three is making Falmouth not my favourite destination this year. Thinking it to be a gearbox problem we had the boat hauled out and came home on the train. The engineer I had engaged phoned us later that day to tell us it was a failed propeller. I had a new one shipped for it to be fitted the following Thursday when the guy came back from his holiday.

Our previous captain, Tony Wildig offered a couple of crew bunks to take us down to Falmouth and that was fortuitous as when we got there the engineer had decided to extend his holiday and taken part of the drive shaft with him meaning we could not get launched until Monday. Tony kindly offered to host us until Monday and we had a very pleasant couple of days up the Truro river though I did come to realise there is no such thing as a free lunch when I was tasked with adding a second plotter to the cockpit of Maui 4 to complement the one he had below.

After fitting the propeller and launching the boat on Monday we went back up the river where Peter Roberts joined us on the pontoon. We headed back on Tuesday/Wednesday arriving in Plymouth before the first of the storms kicked in.

Our last sail of the season, in the middle of October was an altogether better affair. We sailed East to Salcombe together with a friend who was sailing his Catalina 36. There was a strong northerly breeze and with one reef and rolls in the genoa we had a great sail with Chris (our friend) just besting us as we reached Bolt Head. Coming back the following day was even better. Full sail fair tide and a beam reach all the way. Three hours including all the fiddly bits at each end. The best bit was that Chris only saw the stern of our boat all the way. Who says Moodys are slow!