

WINTERING IN PORT ROYAL

So... Hmm... Are we “liveaboards” or “Cruisers”? Sometimes I think about that. We’re spending a year at the dock here, as we catch up on finances and two family weddings. Some cruisers travel more than others; most are actually on the low end of the scale, living on board and traveling infrequently. We’re working our way up. The dream is still before us, to cruise even more.

One of our neighbors, “Eclipse”, have had their boat at the dock at Port Royal for two years. But don’t scoff; they left yesterday for Florida! The dream lives on, between cruises.

There are good reasons to be “liveaboards”; i.e. to live at a dock. It’s less stressful; it’s a predictable expense cycle; you can find work to supplement retirement income; and it’s easy to visit family and friends from a fixed base.

You can say the same for living in a cabin in the woods. The excitement of living on a boat is the chance to TRAVEL ! Most cruisers have a mixture of the two; the travel is in episodes, bracketed by stays on a dock.



While underway you have constraints. It isn’t practical to work to supplement your income, so the finances have to be in place. You’re without a car so you pick stops where things are within walking distance. Weather controls your schedule.

But... Hey... life’s an ADVENTURE !
It’s FUN !!!

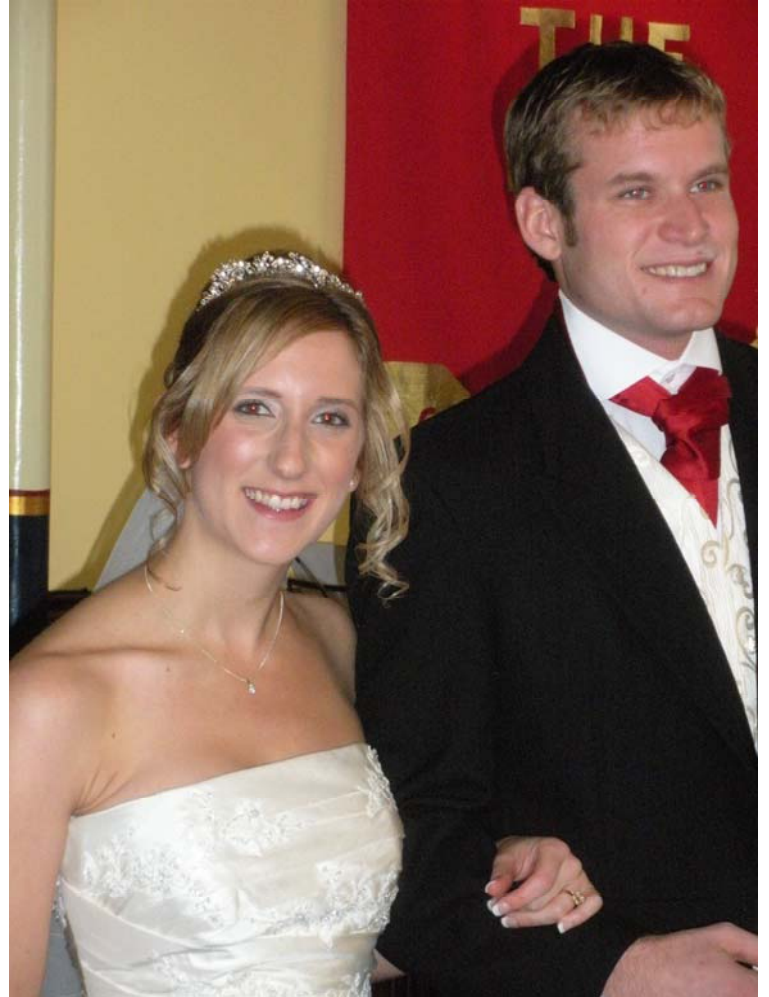
It’s January. One wedding down, and one to go, next May. We’ll be at the dock through the winter.

The family news this season is the WEDDING! Our son Luke was married last month to Emma White, in Cardiff, Wales.

Here's the happy couple, minutes after tying the knot. Luke's wearing a tuxedo with TAILS! Hmm... Thoreau advised to "beware of any enterprise which requires new clothes".

Emma is incredibly beautiful. Is the Miss Universe pageant over with yet? Such a lovely bride!

Congratulations and Best Wishes !



Mary and I arrived a week early, and spent some time sight-seeing before the wedding. It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance, and we tried to take full advantage of it !

Here we are in Piccadilly Circus.

Why is it a Circus? From the Latin word for "circle", where multiple streets meet. Now you know !

And... in no particular order... here's a potpourri of photos from our time in the UK.



The local post office on wheels at Tintern. It's an efficient mobile service for several communities.

By the Tower of London



By the fire in the Red Lion pub, in Lacock.

Matt & Theresa at Stonehenge





Theresa & Matt renewed their vows at Tintern Abbey.

Mary at Cardiff Castle.





Mary & Theresa at Buckingham Palace.

Rapid Roy at the top of Raglan Castle.



Laura & John by the River Taff in Cardiff.



The Proud parents, and
the happy couple.

Jenny & Keven White,

Roy & Mary Stegall,

Emma & Luke Stegall

My personal favorite...

Luke & Emma with the lovely snow covered
scenery at St. Fagans Museum of Welsh Life.



OK... BACK ON THE BOAT.... BACK TO WORK !!!

Mary is back to work PRN (part time) as a Nurse at Beaufort Memorial Hospital. I'm available for the TowBoat, but calls are rare in the winter.

The weather has gone in cycles, with a string of cold days and freezing nights, and occasional days of mild weather. It limits the scope of outside projects. Still, there's always work on a cruising boat.

The ICOM SSB radio wasn't anchored down. I used a table saw and teak wood to make a mount for it. Everything on a sailboat should be bolted down! There, I fixed it!



Projects on the boat go faster with help. Except if "Skipper" helps. Our boat kitty has a special gift for getting involved and investigating EVERYTHING.



When I'm working and I open a storage compartment for tools or parts, "Skipper" is there to help!



Where do you draw the line between "helping" and "in the way" ???
THAT DARN CAT !!!

The anchor rollers on the boat were open. I had bolts that I could use as keepers, but, a better solution is to have bails over the anchor rollers. There's no danger of the line jumping, and I can still ship the anchors. Last week I ordered and installed a set of bails. There, I fixed it!



Why is the CQR tied sideways? It has to be out of the way to give the Bruce a fair lead. The Bruce is the primary anchor and I deploy it first.

I have two heavy anchors on the boat, plus a big windlass to work them. Primary is a 50lb. Bruce, with 275 feet of chain. Secondary is a 45lb CQR, 90 feet of chain and 250' of 5/8" line. In the bottom of the anchor locker are two more hanks of 200' and 250' of 5/8" line, for a total of 500' of rode on each anchor.

Anchoring is something sailors have religious beliefs about. When in doubt, I put out two anchors at 7-to-1 scope. Why? I like to sleep at night! With two heavy anchors, I don't bother with an anchor watch.

Consider Georgia and South Carolina, with eight foot tides. There will always be a strong current, and it will reverse every six hours. At least once during the night (maybe twice) the current will reverse and the boat will pull in the **OPPOSITE DIRECTION!** Gee, that's how you pull the anchor out of the bottom! If there is wind and you're anchored in a creek, there's additional danger. While the boat floats free as the tide turns, it could ground on the lee shore. If it's high tide, you're in trouble!

I place one upstream anchor, and one downstream anchor, both deployed from the bow. As the tide changes, the boat swings to the other anchor which is already set. The boat pivots on the bow, staying in the same spot. This is the reason for the exceptionally long rodes; I let out double the scope on the primary as I deploy the second anchor.

And me? I sleep like a baby. No anchor watch. Even with 8' tides and 2 knot currents.

There's trade-offs in doing this. I spend an extra half hour getting anchored and an extra half hour retrieving the next morning. But, as a cruiser I try never to be in a hurry. (Smile!).

My boat has dragged on one anchor, and I've been aground from the swing of tide change while on one anchor; but I've never a problem with two. Do I always use two? No. In the Florida keys, with an 18" tide, and an overnight forecast of mild conditions, one heavy anchor is enough. It's a judgment call.

Enough about religion. We're at the dock, and will be for some months. There's time for repair and improvement projects. I'll be installing a new autopilot, and doing an update to the Cetol wood finish in the Spring. Meanwhile I dream about how to equip and fit out my boat to sail to Bermuda. Or the Virgin Islands. At heart I'm a CRUISER! I dream of sailing the long distance passages. Some day we will.

Do you feel it? The anticipation? While we're at the dock, we're working and planning.

When Mary and I go out for lunch, we don't talk about the past; we talk about the next cruise!

...Roy & Mary
S/V "Gideon"

