

THE NORTH WALES (UK) RALLY, 8th and 9th September 2012

Report by Robin Blain (Rallies Organiser)
Hosted by the Royal Welsh Yacht Club, Caernarfon, Wales
(www.royalwelshyachtclub.org.uk)
and Victoria Dock Marina, Caernarfon Beach
(www.caernarfon-hbr.demon.co.uk)



Caernarfon Castle – the RWYC is in the turret just beyond the scaffolding (Robin Blain)



It was with an encouraging weather forecast that my crew Clay Everington and I set off on the Friday morning from Southampton to drive, with *GIGI* in tow, to Caernarfon in Wales. We arrived some eight hours later in time to launch from the boatyard in Victoria Dock Marina, and moored up for a mug of tea alongside *Badger*, whose owners, Alan & Gloria Parsons, had crossed the Menai Straits from Beaumaris.

Refreshed from our journey, we rose on Saturday to meet eleven JRA members for coffee and biscuits at the RWYC in Caernarfon Castle. This small group of keen sailors took it easy while we waited for the tide to rise sufficiently to allow the sill in the marina entrance to be lowered. This gave *GIGI's* crew time to raise her mast and to assemble her rig in front of an audience.

After this demonstration, Owain Perry arrived from Port Dinorwic (Menai Straits), in his Golden Hind 34 *Jua*. We then arranged our various crews and set off for a pleasant afternoon sail in the Straits, enjoying sunshine and a force 3/4 wind, returning in time for tea.

1900 hours saw everyone in the Yacht Club's bar preparing to tuck into an excellent buffet dinner, after which we were joined by some RWYC members, who wanted to know all about junk rigs.

Sunday dawned with more testing conditions, in other words the mix of showery and sunny spells together with Force 4/5 winds, gusting 6, which has been the norm in the UK this year. This proved too uncomfortable for little *GIGI*, and we had to wait for the mid-afternoon high tide to aid recovery on the very shallow slipway.

So *Badger* and *Jua* set sail with their crew for a vigorous romp up the Straits, and back for tea aboard. Those who had to say their farewells then left for home, while the remainder retired to the Black Boy pub for dinner.



Victoria Dock Marina's new berths in 2012, soon filled, surrounded by restaurants (R. Blain)



Victoria Dock slipway – we launched *GIGI* under this bridge! (Photo Robin Blain)



GIGI feeling vulnerable between large yachts on the marina's old pontoons (Photo: Robin Blain)



Jua and *Badger* rafting up (Photo: Robin Blain)



Organised chaos? (Photo: Robin Blain)



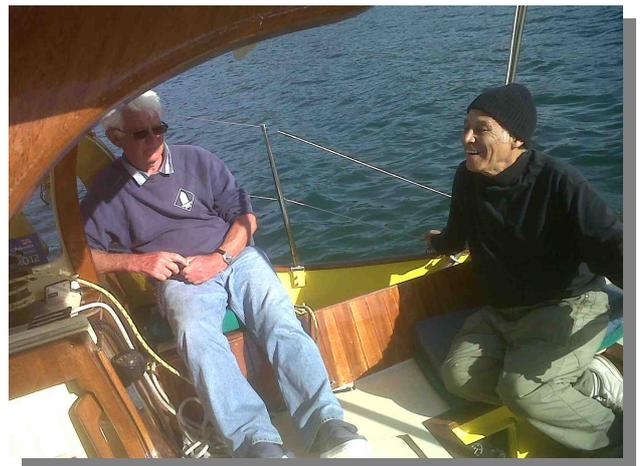
GIGI's crew Iain and Robin Spey relaxing after the Saturday sail (Photo: Robin Blain)



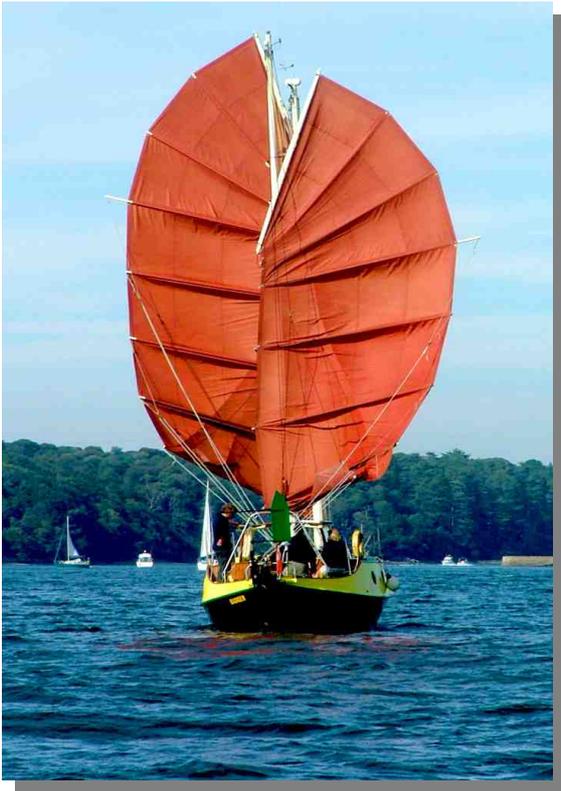
Badger running in the Menai Straits (Photo: Roy Denton)



Helmsman's view through *Badger's* doghouse (Photo: Simon Jones)



Badger's skipper Alan Parsons, with Clay Everington on the helm (Photo: Simon Jones)



Badger showing off her sails (Roy Denton)



Wetting our whistles before dinner, and the sumptuous RWYC buffet (R. Blain)



Saturday - *Jua* leading the way back with *Badger* (Photo: Simon Jones)