

Wotan log for distribution 12th June 2007

Wotan was relaunched on Saturday 26th May, in time for a couple of sails in the York River with Bob Hawkins and with the Hayes family. Rod Hayes took me up in his 1946 Cessna 120 around the neighbourhood, which was very exciting.

Alison Garrett arrived on the Tuesday and we gave a goodbye YRYH party on Wotan that evening, to thank all the people who had been so kind and helpful. On Wednesday, Alison, Bob and John Nix, another liveaboard in YRYH sailed Wotan down to Norfolk past the might of the US Navy. Once we had got out of the York River we were able to set the sails and sail past Hampton Roads and up the Elizabeth River. Gary Naigle and Greta Gustavson, who are the Ocean Cruising Club Port Officers for Norfolk, had offered us a berth at their waterside condo on the site of the old Virginia Pilots HQ. We landed on our feet. We were given every assistance and more by Gary and Greta. Alison and I did the provisioning such that when Kevin O'Connell and Jim Hartley arrived over the weekend most of the work had been done. During the weekend a tropical disturbance blew itself out off Cape Hatteras, clearing the way for our departure on Tuesday 5th June as planned. We gave a farewell dinner to thank Gary and Greta at a local restaurant on the Monday night and set off at midday on Tuesday.

The first night out we were hit by a 40 knot squall, while Alison was on watch. This became the precursor of many squalls which Alison seemed to attract on her watches. We dropped the main and were soon on our way under rolled up genoa. We sorted out the mess in the morning, but no long term harm was done. The second night out we encountered US Warship 75 executing flying operations. We were asked to stay clear and were rather excited by targets approaching us on our radar at jet fighter speed, only to see two F16s, or whatever, shooting overhead! On Friday we reached the Gulf Stream and had our best day's run of 163 miles, equivalent to an average of 6.8 knots, mainly thanks to the Gulf Stream. We had a warning from Metworks, who are giving us weather advice, to watch out for a low out to the west of us. We had spotted this, but NOAA, the US equivalent of the Met Office, did not seem to know where it was going. We therefore decided to plot its movements along side ours carefully, to avoid the forecast 35 knot head winds. We put our clocks forward on Saturday at 1100, thus accelerating the arrival of pre-lunch drinks! On Sunday, Alison took her first sextant sight. Her noon sight put us within 2 miles of our position by GPS, which was pretty impressive.

Winds continued to be light until Monday midday when the promised southerly winds caused by the low kicked in. We were shooting along at 6-7 knots in winds gusting up to 30 knots. Unfortunately I managed to lose the rotor for the towed generator, when I relaunched it in the morning. This may leave us somewhat

tight on fuel as we were hoping to use the towed generator Noel as a substitute for the engine for charging the battery. The good news is that the autopilot, having had something of a hissy fit ever since the Virgin Islands, is working beautifully, the only bad news is that we may not have the power to use it. We have been rather lazy and used Nicole, the autopilot most of the time.

It is now Tuesday and we have been at sea for a week. At noon we had 1288 miles to go out of an original 2130 miles, so we have covered 842 miles towards our destination, 120 miles per day or 5 knots, which, given the lack of wind is quite respectable.

With best wishes from all aboard Wotan

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