

April/May

Started sailing this month! Up until now it has been lots of refit and maintenance, finding out how different bits and pieces of the boat fit together and how things work but now the sailing season is starting its much more in the moment, responding logically to stressful situations and having fun putting up washing.

At the start of April we had a crew training weekend which included looking at how the previous year had gone and the challenges faced to doing MOB drills and perfecting heaving line throwing. We then had a shake down sail with just crew, we had very squally weather - direct sunshine one moment then horizontal hail the next. We managed to get the mizzen staysail up, lots of canvas with minimal effort and very quick to drop when the wind got up. Had a bit of a blast around then back into Brixham.

I don't think I'll forget the first sail we had in the season in a



hurry. It was just a day cruise with long standing clients of Trinity and it was very rolly in Torbay.

Brixham trawlers like Provident are also made to roll more because fishermen heaved in their nets on the roll. We set off well from Brixham and I managed to lead the staysail hoist but then we had to hoist the mizzen sail. We didn't really want the guests involved in hoisting as she was rocking too much which made it tricky as we only have three deck crew. It was all very exciting! When we hoisted the mizzen, the throat got stuck and being on the leeward side of the sail, I couldn't see much other than sail but could hear Adam (the Skipper) talking me through what was happening. We

managed to find out what had gone wrong and to hoist it again without any problems. It definitely taught me how important it is to calm down, collect your thoughts and then think of a solution when you're in a potentially dangerous or unsafe situation which is essential to sailing.

After the first couple of trips though a routine forms and you get to know how to react to the common problems that you can be faced with day to day. Being constantly aware of your surroundings and reevaluating the situation of the vessel and generally being able to help out at anytime.

Another memorable trip for me was our first trip to France,



beautiful weather and fine wind on the way there, we hoisted the main topsail for the first time and I had to go up the mast to relead it. I also did a pilotage plan into a small French town down a very small twisty river, very good fun! We knew some bad weather was due but the forecast for when it would hit kept jumping around so Adam decided to go back across the channel a little bit earlier. We set off from Guernsey at 4pm expecting to get into Dartmouth around 6am. At first we had very light airs so we put up the mizzen, main and staysail and bimbled out of Guernsey for the first few hours. We were in three hour watches with Adam taking the first watch and Jo (the mate) and I on the second watch. Adam got us up to get the mizzen down and stowed, my first sail drop in some proper wind! We got all the guests crawling because of the swell and to be honest I did my fair share of crawling too! It was an exceptionally dark night and it was lucky both Jo and I knew the boat so well as you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. Needless to say none of us had much/any sleep. The wind was coming from behind us so we were gybing across the channel, something like 6 gybes at one point we did 9 knots under sail. Though my bunk was calling me at the end and it was good to see Dartmouth... what an adventure!

