

Ashall and Martin Cubbon who were already there, staying in a villa overlooking the sea.

On this trip we had travelled 1,924 NM in 165 hours at an average speed of 11.65 knots and consumed 16,473 litres of MDO. And we arrived at 11.18 on the 5th May 2019.

Majorca Cruising

The first few days in Andratx we just relaxed and tidied up the boat after the voyage. Chris George and Andrew Thompson headed home leaving Henry, Izzy and I waiting for Myra to come out on the 12th May.

It is so nice to be in the sun, and we really enjoyed working on deck and around the hull. Just after Myra comes out, Henry met a girl on one of the other boats. She is the son of the owner so not a bad find! It just goes to show you can cross an ocean but normal life continues unabated!

For the next three months we travel back and forth around Majorca visiting most of the South of the Island as well as Soller in the West and Pollenca in the North. Various friends and family come and go, and it is just a great summer.

On the boat front I decide to build a fuel ‘polisher’ and then put the fuel from all the tanks through it to get any residue out. We once again drain the day tank and give it a further clean before treating all the tanks with Diesel Bug killer. I have also reached the conclusion that we need to do something about the tank gauges so I order new sensors for the day tank and the long range tank. I have also decided to fit a main engine fuel flow system by Maretron which will accurately measure how much fuel is consumed by the engines. This system is super accurate and the way I had it fitted will allow us to draw fuel from either the day, or the long range , tank in case we ever have a blockage or contamination problem again.

On the day we departed Salcombe, the 240v Mastervolt service battery charger failed and this had to be replaced. The company doing this also sorted out the starboard engine alternator which had been playing up and modified this to have a much more accurate external regulator and charging control system. A great improvement in every respect as we can now measure exactly how much power we use overnight on batteries.

As we finish May and enter June the crew and I are catching up on all the jobs we did not complete last winter and new ones that have arisen from our voyage to the Med. However by end of June we have largely finished all the job lists, as well as the shore workers’ jobs.

We have by this time however lost one member of the crew, Henry, to the girl in Andratx and Izzy is due to go home to see her parents and friends on the 30th June. A week earlier, in her stead, Josh joined the boat to take over from Izzy through until October. This sadly did not come to pass and within a month I had to persuade Izzy to come back and crew again for the rest of the season. Luckily, by this time, she had decided that a life on super yachts was what she wanted, and she re-joined on the 4th August raring to go.

We are still in Majorca having just completed a very pleasant week in Pollenca in the North-East of the island. We had a very bumpy ride back down the west coast to Camp de Mar in a strong north easterly gale which we could have done without especially as we passed a marine rescue on our way south. I think the casualty was an elderly man sailing a catamaran with his wife and that he was thrown badly and injured.

The local lifeboat, Salvamento, and a helicopter were involved in his rescue in very rough seas.

On arrival in Camp de Mar, Sam and Ayesha with our grandchildren, Guy and Amaia left for the UK as Isabelle arrived on board. Myra and I spent August in the bay of Palma in various anchorages before spending a week in STP whilst I returned to UK for a couple of days.

After Isabelle’s return to the boat she had indicated that she planned to go on a Competent Crew course when she returned to the UK in the winter. My view was that she was way beyond this qualification and should perhaps focus on obtaining her Yachtmasters Certificate instead which would qualify her to be an Officer of the Watch on yachts up to 200 Tonnes. Having agreed this would be her goal, we set about learning how to navigate and handle Blue Legend over





the two months we had left at sea.

Majorca via Minorca to Sardinia

Towards the end of August Andy Hawkins joined us to steam the boat from Palma to Olbia in Sardinia. We planned to stop for a day or so in Mahon, Minorca en route but in the end only stayed one night.

We depart Palma in a force 4/5 to transit up the East coast of Majorca before crossing to Minorca. As we clear the NE point we ran into heavy rain from the NW which reduces visibility to a quarter mile or so. The intensity of the rain is coupled with strong thunder and lightning as well as a confused sea, so we made the crossing to Minorca entirely on radar.

We proceed into Mahon and anchor close to the town only to be told we cannot anchor inside the inner bay. So we pick up the anchor and proceed into a really remote marina berth on an island more than 2 miles from the town! No real chance of going ashore and we are tired anyway so time just to relax with a drink , and have an early night.

Next morning we wake up early and make the decision to press on to Sardinia as the wind is still behind us and has reduced in strength. We depart Mahon and steam across the Med in good weather to the Bonifacio Straits. It is quite choppy as we approach Sardinia and our original plan of passing through the island passage of Rada dei Fornelli is scrapped and we decide to head for the main entrance to the straits north of Isola Asinara.

We entered the straits at about 0100 and pass through at night. We still have a plan to stop at a port in the north of Sardinia and head for Saint Teresa where we hope to anchor off the port for a day or so. In fact we find that anchoring off the port is not permitted so we proceed to a beautiful little bay just to the West of the town from where we could get a taxi or bus into the centre.

Saint Teresa is a pretty little port with a small marina and fishing fleet. We stayed 24 hours before deciding to proceed onto Olbia - which was our primary destination in Sardinia.

Costa Esmeralda

We travel through the Straits and then south past the national park islands of Spargos and La Maddalena to Olbia in Northeast Sardinia. We planned to cruise this area through September whilst having a number of friends coming and going from the boat.

First off we find that the old commercial wharf in Olbia, Molo Brin, is free for vessels to tie up alongside - although it has no electricity or water. However, as we can generate our own electricity and when at sea can make water, this is an ideal place for us to use as a base whilst exploring this coast.

Having collected a gang of friends included Andrew Corlett and Martin Cubbon, we head out of Olbia towards La Maddalena for a look at these islands. One has to have a pass to enter the waters around the islands - but this is easy to obtain via the internet. Our first stop is La Maddalena town marina which allows us to stop for a couple of nights and explore the island.

Arriving is not easy; the wind has blown up strongly from the west and the entrance to the marina is very exposed and our proposed mooring even more so.

The first attempt of backing in is a disaster with our buoy rope ending up going right around the vessel and it was sliced through by the starboard propeller. Worst still we lose position on the wind and have to abort the whole exercise and retreat back through the entrance into the channel beyond!

However on our second attempt and having quietened down the hysterical mooring master we manage to hold head to sea and reverse into the mooring before putting out any buoy line. Blue Legend is incredibly manoeuvrable and we have no trouble holding her on station once in position. Therefore it is not necessary to have ropes being run out in a rush, much easier to deal with them once in location, certainly in a force 8 gale!

I love La Maddalena, and we come back here several times through September. From this area we move south to the bay north of Porto Cervo so that we can avoid the huge mooring fees that this port charges. From the bay it is an easy cycle, scoot or walk over the hill and down into the town of Porto Cervo.

There is no doubt this is a splendid place to visit with all sorts of things happening from racing yachts through to Dilbar - which is almost the largest yacht in the world (owned by a Ukrainian).

The coast around this part of Sardinia is already becoming a favourite, not least because the weather is more stable and the wind tends not, unlike Majorca, to go around the island and follow you wherever you go!

South of Porto Cervo we find another fabulous spot Cale de Volpi which will also become one of our firm favourites.

During September we do the run up and down the coast three times with various friends and it is always a success. In 2020 we will spend more time in this area after we have been to see the America's Cup boats racing in Cagliari.

By mid-September we have done a deal with the Marina di Olbia to berth Blue Legend over winter in their marina. We give up Molo Brin and move across to the marina immediately adjacent to the airport which is most convenient. In the dying days of September we prepare the vessel for the winter before flying home on the 1st October having had a brilliant and successful year in the Med.

Drydock in Olbia 2019 - 2020

In October from the UK I obtain quotes for four yards in Olbia to carry out some work on the boat, and I finally chose to use Giovanni Zuddas of Servizi Nautici at the SNO dockyard.

The work is mainly on the hull and includes stripping and sealing the teak strakes as well as polishing the hull and re antifouling. Very little work is required on deck or in the engine room beyond testing all 32 hull fittings including the two main engine cooling suction which we have not been able to move since buying the boat.

These however are a surprise as soon as we applied a cooling spray they both moved without difficulty. It is a testament to the quality of the valves and indeed the boat that these opened so easily once persuaded !

Two capstans needed replacing after we tried to dismantle them for a service. As expected as soon as we opened them up they fell to pieces and were very badly corroded. The other two are probably on their way out but as there is one each end we will just operate these until they fail. One windlass also suffered the same fate so this also will be replaced before the 2020 season.

There is some damaged teak on the bow strake and a couple of damaged bits on the stern quarters. All these areas will be stripped out and the teak replaced which will then allow us to completely seal the teak as if it is new all around.

The boat was transferred over to the SNO dock area in late November and hauled out using the 160 tonne lift before being transferred on a powered trailer into their work shed. Calling it a shed is perhaps a little unfair as it contains a number of super yachts including a 170 footer behind us and a 120 footer next to us. It was some shed!

However, it is spotless, dry and indeed fairly warm so we could not have found a better place to carry out the winter work.

Work started in early December. However the yard closes down between the 21st December and 17th January so they have a long Christmas break when nothing gets done. But Giovani completed much of the work before the Xmas shutdown.



SNO Olbia - Drydock 2019 - 2020

After the haul out in November, work started on the hull. The underwater area was water blasted immediately after the vessel was pulled out to ensure the fouling would not have time to harden.

The work on the hull primarily consists of polishing the boot topping and blue topsides to bring back the colour. This was amazingly successful and they are now looking splendid. In addition to this all the hull teak was stripped of varnish in preparation for sealing with an American product, Semco. The damage to the bow from Storm Hannah was cut out and replaced with new teak along with the replacement of some teak aft which was damaged in a minor collision at anchor in Palma Nova earlier in the summer.

Next, attention was turned to the accommodation block which has been polished from stem to stern to bring back its shine. This led us to decide to sand back the deck teak throughout to get the colour back and allow us to seal it with the same product we are using on the hull strakes. This sanding has made a fantastic difference to the teak made possible by the fact the deck is nearly 3/8 inch thick and so has the capacity to be sanded back without risk of exposing the substrate.

On the electrical front the third echo sounder transducer has been replaced with a device that includes both a temperature and speed sensor and acts as a backup to the main sonar system. The forward Echo Sounder remains independent for use when anchoring. The generators have both been serviced, and the main engines will be done as soon as we are back in the water.

On the domestic front, Jack and I found the crew cold shower problem, and this is being fixed. Isabelle would be pleased after a summer of cold showers! All the external seating cushions have been stripped and recovered in a very tasteful Sunbrella grey.

We have sent out a pallet from the UK with a large amount of equipment including new Capstans, Ice maker, Quooker Cube for the galley (Cold and sparkling water tap) as well as service kits for the main engines and more scuba diving equipment. Hopefully this will all arrive later this month in preparation for the relaunch. We also need to pick up a Seabob from Portofino which we bought on Ebay from the owner of Chris Craft boats. It will be a nice little detour for the next trip out: fly via Pisa, hire a car, divert to Portofino and then a ferry from Livorno to Olbia.

January 2020 inspection

Since the last post the team Giovanni and Alessandro have been working on the hull of Blue Legend. The varnish has been removed from both the overboard teak strakes and these then sanded before coating with an American product called Semco. Rather than being a varnish this is a teak sealer designed to maintain the natural colour of the teak whilst repelling water. It should last a few months before we give it an extra coat in June to see us through the season.

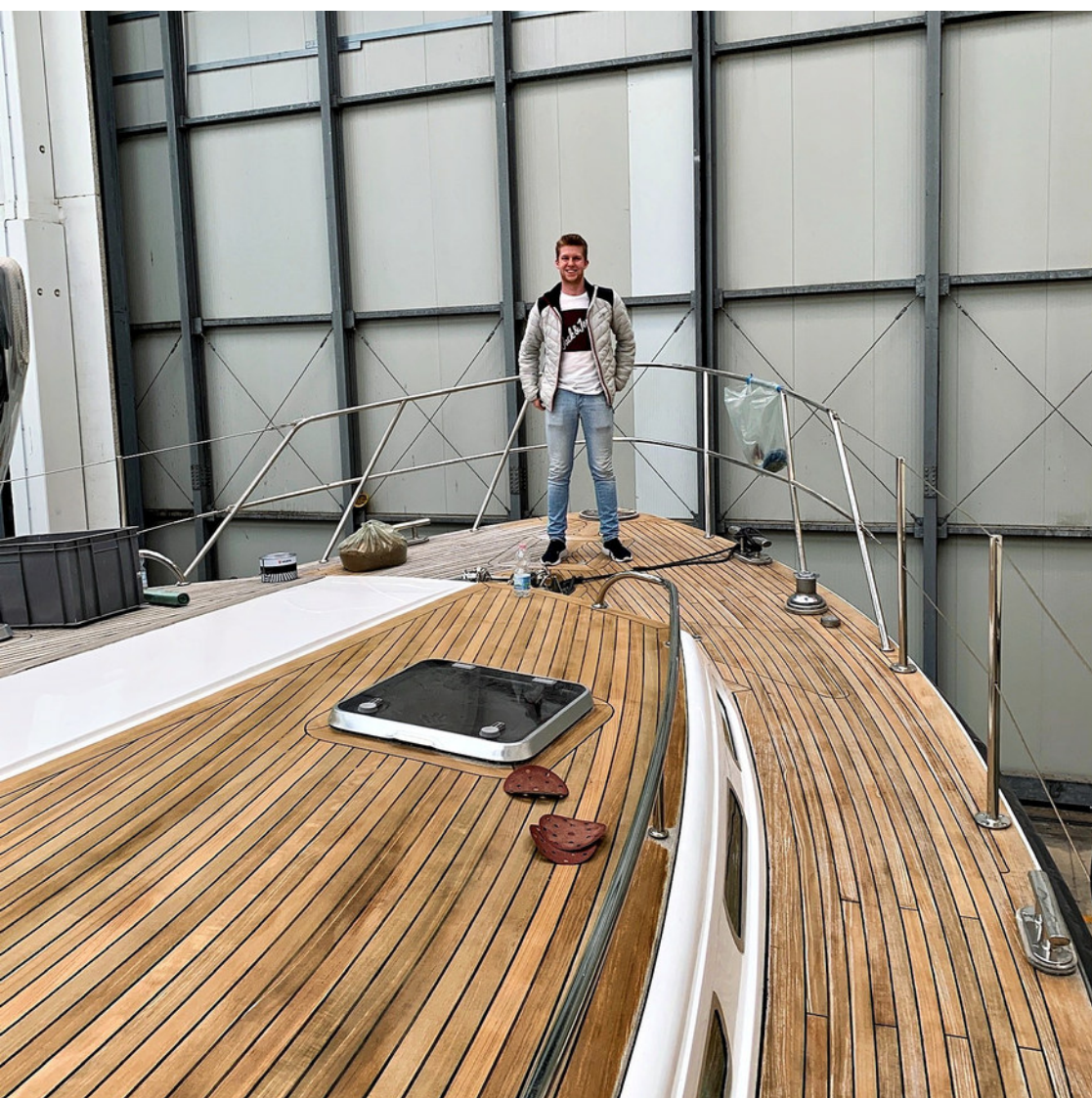
The hull has been polished to a magnificent shine and then treated with a ceramic polymer coating called AGlaze. Again this now has a gleaming appearance.

The damaged sections of teak on the stern and the missing strip of teak from the bow have been replaced and this has further enhanced the outside appearance of the boat.

Last week the first coat of antifouling was applied to the hull but not the Propellers, Rudders, shafts and P brackets, these will be treated with PropSpeed, which is considered to be the best coating on the market.

So we are 90% there with the hull, and just some minor areas to be completed.

The bow is being fitted with a new chain protector at the waterline as the old one had split right up the stem. The new plate is twice the thickness. Currently only the lower half of the anchor housings are sheaved in stainless steel. The metalworker has fabricated two further sections to be fitted to the upper half of the anchor housings where currently the anchor flukes sometimes impact damaging the fibreglass.



During Jack and my visit here we installed a new dual echo sounder/speed sensor in the hull. This now means we have three echo sounders fitted - with one of them capable of sonar. Hopefully this new hull fitting will not leak when we return the boat to the water. Our fingers are very tightly crossed!

Above deck I had no plan to do anything to the teak planking except thoroughly clean it. However Giovanni pointed out that the corking was now raised above the teak and that this tended to lead to problem of water ingress. He suggested and subsequently carried out a light sanding of the corking and decking to bring back the golden colour of the teak. This has now been completed and once again treated with Semco. The result is fabulous and as our teak is so thick, there is plenty left for the future.

The cabin top and external accommodation has also been polished to a high shine. We have not applied AGLaze yet but will probably do so once the boat is back in the water in April.

A long term problem in the aft hot water system was also solved while Jack and I were on board. After much searching we found a faulty pressure equalising valve in the guest heads and removed this to find we had finally found the crux of the problem. However, in my previous search I had cut out the shower mixer in the crew heads and this week I have replaced this and repaired the bulkhead finish.

I have also installed the Cube water cooler to the existing hot water Quooker tap in the galley along with a new ice maker. The water making system has been serviced by the local agent ready for this season - so water wise we should be all set up going forward.

Jack and I set about testing all 32 sea cocks which was easier than I had expected . However, unlike Nathan, I could not fit Jack in the forepeak to check the anchor wash seacocks there. Come back Nathan!

Tenders though have been an issue. I bought a new one in desperation in Palma in August but the damn thing is too high to get in and out of the garage easily. After much hair tearing we have bought a new Zodiac in the UK and this arrived in Olbia last week. Not sure what we are going to do with the near new old one which is just not suitable. I have moved the engine across to the new tender but I will have a spare tender in Olbia until we determine its fate.

Labour is very reasonable here in Sardinia but parts and consumables are very expensive so we shipped out all we need for this season on a pallet from the UK, and will be sorting and stowing this during the coming week.

Lots of other small things going on but I am confident when we leave SNO Dockyard we will be in splendid condition for a year or so.

Covid 19 Pandemic

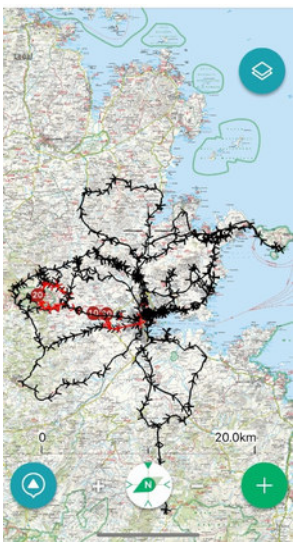
After four days on board Jack and I fly back to the UK leaving Giovanni and Alessandro to continue work on the boat.

During our time away there had been continued mutterings about a virus originating in China and the possible danger it presented to the world. I had been following this story and had in fact been wearing a mask on the flight to and from Olbia.

However, as January turned to February the situation developed further and by the time I left for Italy in late February the world was concerned about the spread to Europe and in particular to northern Italy around the Milan area.

My plan remained unchanged to travel to Pisa on February 27th to pick up the Seabob (Seabob.com) I had bought on eBay from the owner of Chris craft who had a summer house in Portofino.

Having landed in Pisa and driven up the coast to Portofino I picked up the Seabob, stayed in a small hotel overnight and then drove south to Livorno. I had bought a ticket on the ferry to Olbia with the hire car. As I boarded the ferry Covid 19 was rapidly pursuing me south from Milan and reached Pisa only a few days later.



Once in Olbia I set about working on Blue Legend more or less forgetting all about the rapidly worsening situation on the mainland. It was not until a few days after arrival when I was contemplating catching the ferry back to Livorno that the reality hit me.

Italy was about to go into lockdown, Livorno and Pisa were now in the midst of the pandemic and I was more or less stranded on Sardinia. The very weekend I was catching the ferry, Italy announced the lockdown and my options were suddenly very limited.

Initially I thought I would abandon the hire car in Olbia and fly home directly from there. However, Olbia airport had and still was shut after a 3 month programme to lengthen the runway. Indeed it was due to re-open just after lockdown was announced but this was suspended as were all flights from Alghero and passenger ferries from Olbia.

The only means of escape was to drive to Cagliari in the south and try and get on one of the mercy flights back to London via Rome and Milan. I.e. flying directly into the heart of the pandemic !

It was not much of a decision to decide not to fly to the mainland under these circumstances and therefore I considered whether to stay put on the island.

In the interim, my B&B, Carpe Diem, announced it was closing to new visitors. However, the owner, Angelo, informed me that if I was going to stay in Olbia during Lockdown then I could have the B&B floor to myself and stay indefinitely.

This was a Godsend and an incredibly kind gesture by the owners.

After further discussions, more bad news and a chat with Myra I decided to stay put. Sardinia was largely spared the worst of the pandemic and Olbia in particular was only lightly affected primarily due to the airport being shut before the outbreak took root.

The first week of the lockdown everything seemed to continue as normal, with Giovanni and Alessandro working hard on the boat. In addition to the work on the teak decks I decided to go ahead and repair or touch up various bits of white coachwork around the saloon that had been annoying me. This was a great success and the finish has been excellent.

In addition to this we agreed to go ahead and strip the saloon doors and surround, originally to re-coat in varnish but latterly decided we will just use Semco so that it matches the decks and other teak.

After considering various coatings for the propellers, shafts and P bracket I decided we would use a silicon based marine life friendly product called Prospeed. It is more expensive than standard antifouling but considered to be the best product on the market today.

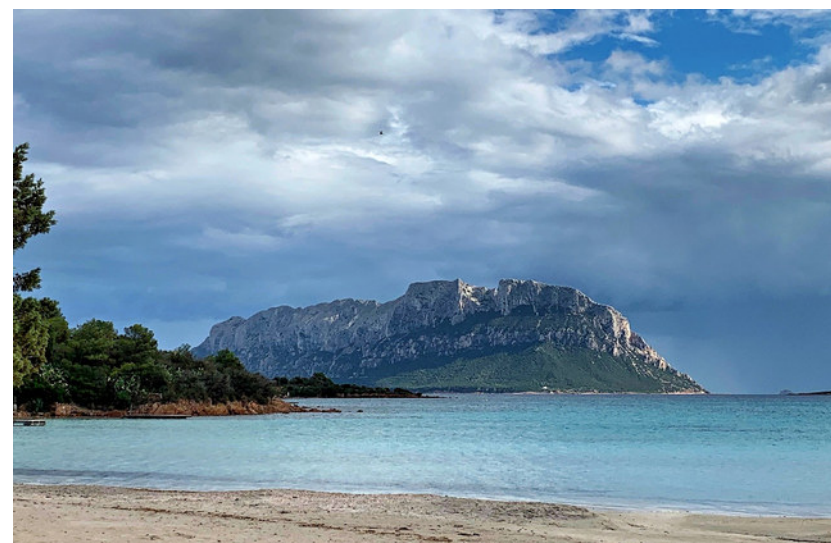
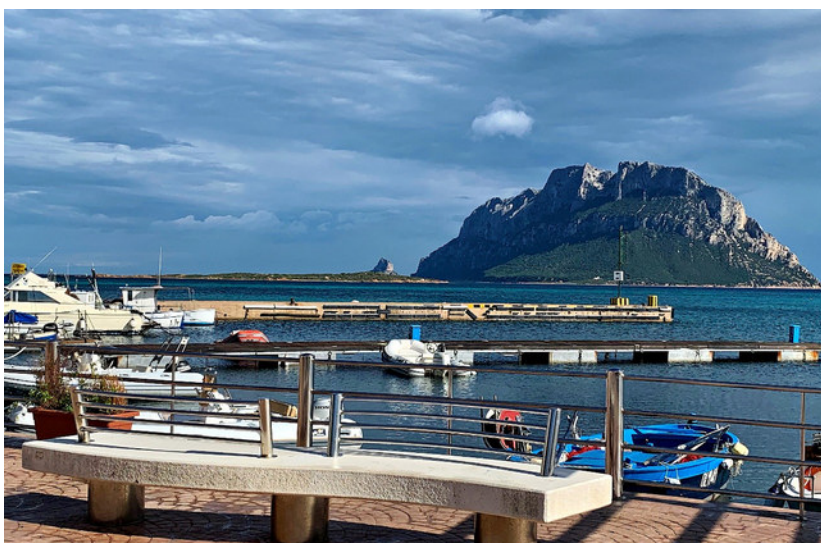
So this additional work continued until the end of the third week of March with me doing a number of jobs below involving under-deck piping for the grey water tanks.

However the following week Covid closed the yard completely, and both the troops and I were sent home. It was a real let down but hey ho — it allowed me to focus on exercise!

For the rest of March right up until mid-April, I took to mountain biking the hills around Olbia on a Mountain E Bike. By the end of the Lockdown I had covered 1,000 kilometres and I don't know how many vertical metres - but quite a few!

Then in the first week of April, out of the blue, I get a call to say that Giovanni and Alessandro can go back to the boat and finish the overside work so that Blue Legend can be launched. I am not allowed to work with them but never mind, the main thing is the final jobs are getting done.

So, immediately after Easter the yard call to say we can launch on the 16th April. Yippee! I am not convinced this will actually happen until the trailer is



placed under the boat and we are towed out into the yard for the final finishing touches. Then the very next day we are transferred to the gantry lift and lowered into the water.

I asked if we could leave the strops on overnight for super caution as I had put a new hull fitting in and was just slightly nervous of a leak. We did this, but the bilges remained totally dry. And on Friday the 17th, I fired up the engines and we moved the boat to a stern to berth within the dockyard complex.

Dry dock was officially complete - although there are a few deck jobs to finish off.

Setting sail once again

A lot has transpired since the last Blue Legend post on the relaunch of the boat at SNO Yachts in Olbia.

The first two weeks of May were taken up with the quarantine of the new crew, Caitlin Ferguson and Jack Durrant. During this time the boat moved back to the Marina di Olbia across the harbour from SNO.

The good thing about being in quarantine on Blue Legend for two weeks was that the crew could get used to the boat as well as learn their knots, practice mooring and indeed, in Caitlin's case, learn how to helm the tender. All of which put us in an excellent position for our return to sea.

However, that was not to be in most of May as we were banned from going to sea until the last week when the Coastguard gave us permission to do day trips to nearby locations. This worked out fantastically as we spent a few days going in and out of Olbia, mooring stern to, anchoring and it gave everyone the chance to helm Blue Legend in and out of port.

During the quarantine I remained in my B&B to ensure that I was not dragged into the quarantine myself. We did manage to work on few things during this time but most of the time the crew were left to their own devices on board.

With my family in the UK and me trapped in Sardinia, my lockdown mate, Paul Kinney, helped to make the whole period of isolation tolerable. We managed to sneak off from time to time to meet in a car park and have coffee.

And it seems likely his boat will be ready to sail any day soon for their return to Antibes. Which is quite a milestone as he arrived in Olbia last September for some brief repairs and due to the weather and then Covid 19 the boat has been here ever since!

On the 1st of June we departed Olbia for a trip north to La Maddalena stopping first in Golfo di Aranci and then steamed up to the marina on Maddalena called Cala di Gaveta.

During this period the Mistral wind has been fairly active and the four days we spent in Maddalena were pretty windy - although very sunny. We used this time to explore the two main islands on our bicycles, and one we rented for Jack. The scenery is sublime here inside the National Park and it was a great start to the season's cruising.

From Maddalena we steamed south again to Cale di Volpe, possibly my favourite spot, thus far, in Sardinia. The weather was perfect for a couple of days, but we noted most restaurants and bars ashore were still shut for the winter. We did cycle to Porto Cervo, but this was all but shut down still. Only coffee was possible and only one superyacht was in the port.

The Mistral started up again and it was very windy on our way back to Olbia. We berthed on the commercial pier, Molo Brin, in the centre of Olbia so that we could sort out some new glasses for me and collect our mail from Angelo and Tiziana in Carpe Diem, my B&B. It was difficult saying goodbye to them after three months living there. I felt like part of their family thanks to their gracious and generous help they gave me during the lockdown months.



Four days alongside Molo Brin is the maximum allowed this year, so we then proceeded back to sea.

The plan was to return to Olbia the following weeks to collect my new glasses and then steam south to Arbatax, Villasimius, Cagliari and ultimately Bizerte in Tunisia for the first week in July where we plan to load fuel.

Life on the ocean waves

The last month or so has flown by as we have been back at sea having a fantastic time on the Sardinian coast. The only fly in the ointment has been a Euro 1,100 fine for taking the tender onto the beach in Golfo Aranci. Needless to say I have not paid this yet as I felt it grossly unfair and had thought we might be off the Italian coastline by September when it is due for payment. However, it now seems likely we will still be here for the autumn and maybe for the winter again. In which case I will be forced to pay up!

There is something about Aranci as, since hiring a car there for one day, I have also not had my deposit of Euro 300 back from the car hire company who said that - in their small print - they can hold onto this for 60 days. I am pissed off, but unbeknown to the guy who owns the company we will be back there now on the 60th day, so he had better refund the damn deposit or there could be a showdown!

There are few, if any, tourists in Sardinia. Even people from the mainland are few and far between. Partly I think as, like Salcombe, the locals would rather they do not come over and risk bugging up the very low number of Covid 19 cases on the island.

We have been into several marinas and many beaches and been the only foreign boat there. We have even managed to get a discount on the normally extortionate rates they charge for being in a marina in July and August. All except Porto Cervo that still wanted Euro 1,200 a night when the town was totally closed, with not even a coffee available. I am sure it got busy later, but in June and early July there were no boats in there at all.

We have travelled south from Olbia, first to Arbatax about halfway to the southern coast and then on to Villasimius on the south-eastern corner of the island. These trips were Caitlin and Jack's first real taste of being at sea and both took to it like ducks to water: all helped by encounters with dolphins and turtles at regular intervals.

The weather was stunning and except for the occasional westerly blows from the Mistral we have had fair seas and calm winds, and no rain since early June.

Arbatax was a lovely little port but the beach we anchored on near Villasimius was so fabulous we stayed there a week before steaming the 22 N.M. to Cagliari. From Cag we went on our first 'ocean' crossing to Bizerte in Tunisia for fuel. We spent a few days there which were great fun, as well as topping up every tank at 42p a litre, a quarter of what the fuel costs across the water in Sardinia!

Back across the 'ocean' we encountered turtles, dolphins, flying fish and even a large stingray when we stopped in Capo di Pula.

During our many anchoring episodes we have been seabobbing every day - visiting different rocks and islands with snorkels, scuba gear and of course our best toy ever the Seabob. This has given everyone so much fun. We just cannot get enough of it.

On returning from Tunisia we have worked our way west to the island of San Pietro and the tiny but gorgeous town of Carloforte. We have been here three days and have taken the opportunity to not only recoat the deck and hull teak with Semco but also had three fabulous lunches in a tiny seafood restaurant hidden in the back streets.

Life in Sardinia is returning to the new normal. We wear masks in shops and restaurants when up from the table, and keep well apart when walking through the streets and on the waterfront. Beaches are fairly normal but there are fewer people on them on any day and groups can keep well apart.

It is safe to fly here now on Alitalia, so we have booked friends and family on Alitalia via Rome. Their planes are very well set up for Covid with 100% air



change every three minutes, and HEPV filters which remove 99.7% of germs, hopefully including Covid!

So, we are here for the strangest summer in history and enjoying an island devoid of German and other northern European tourists. It is bliss. The family arrives later this week, so we are all very excited to finally have some guests on board.

Finally some guests

The problem with writing a blog whilst on an extended holiday is that one never finds the time to do it with so much else going on. Having tried Facebook, Tiktok and Instagram this year I have decided I have done my bit to make Zuckerberg the second richest man on earth, as well as support the Chinese in global dominance and have dumped both Facebook and Tiktok. Yes folks - no more stupid dance videos, or the moans and groans of Facebook.

I have kept Instagram, still helping Zuckerberg, but only so we can post the occasional photo of the boat, crew, passengers or exploits.

So our return from Tunisia saw massive preparations for our only guests thus far this year: my daughter, son in law and grandchildren. This was an immense task involving blow up toys, Lego, bed making and digging out all the gear they had left last year. Cait and Jack finally got everything sorted a couple of days before they arrived.

Coming back from Tunisia we decided to anchor off Cagliari and clear into the EU there through an agent. I am pleased to say it was worth it as there was a lot of paperwork and questions about how long we had been in Tunisia and whether we had been ashore. Not sure why, as Tunisia has had less cases than any EU state both globally or on a per capita basis. Either way we avoided quarantine and were able to sail for Capo di Pula the next morning.

Over the week before the grandchildren arrived we cruised along the south coast of Sardinia to Carloforte on Isola di San Pietro in the southwest corner of the island. This was by way of a recce to find nice beaches and towns to take the family to when they arrived.

Carloforte was particularly beautiful, and we stayed a couple of days here before turning around to go back to Cagliari to pick up the family.

En route to Carloforte we rounded Capo Sperone to be met with a bulk carrier high and dry on the rocks. It actually went through my head that this had just happened as there seemed to be a life raft in the water nearby. After much study we searched for the wreck on the internet and discovered it actually went aground on Christmas Day last year in a 'storm'. Whether the storm was caused by an excess of rum on Christmas Eve or the real thing we cannot be sure, but I have not seen a wreck so fresh or so close in 30 years.

Having timed our arrival back in Portus Karelis, Cagliari, for the day the family arrived, we were all set for them coming on board from the airport. As EasyJet was, at that point, so unreliable they had flown on Alitalia via Rome which I had been a bit concerned would be an ordeal. However they arrived in good order if a bit tired and we sent out for pizzas to feed the throng.

Without going into too much detail, the next sixteen days flew by in a haze of swimming, screaming, eating, playing and every other type of activity that occurs with a six and a four year old on board. Both I and the crew were exhausted by the end of the fortnight, but it had been a wonderful time after so little activity on board for so long. The grandchildren were fantastic and loved being in and on the water. Guy even took to the Seabob, and loved zooming around with dad or granddad alongside.

Amaia, being a cheeky monkey, spent a lot of her time pulling her brothers leg whilst running mum and Cait ragged.

We went back to Carloforte with them as well as Capo di Pula, Capo Malfatano before crossing Cagliari Bay back towards Villasimius and the East coast. From there we headed North to Albatax which everyone loved and after two days alongside there in the marina sped up to Tavolara and Golfo Aranci, the latter their absolute favourite.





I had been planning to return to the UK for a small operation on my leg, but this seemed more and more difficult with Boris slapping quarantines here, there and everywhere, so I opted to have the procedure in Olbia. This meant coming into Olbia and alongside the commercial dock, Molo Brin, for the last two days of the family holiday. They loved the town but after the first day took to the tender to find a beach just outside the entrance to the harbour.

All went well and my leg healed quickly, although I was not allowed to swim for a while which was a pain. I tried once but got a stern rebuke from my wife, daughter and my doctor and nurse, aka Cait!

The family left on the Saturday night and we retired exhausted to have a day off on Sunday. From there we went back out to Golfo Aranci for a week, while I stayed in contact with my doctor.

On the last day the wind blew up more than usual in the afternoon and we decided to reposition to Liscia delle Saline, just outside Olbia. However, halfway across the bay the 24v steering motor stopped and we were left rudderless for a few minutes while I switched to the second 240v pump.

This was a significant problem as the thought of crossing from Sardinia to Naples without a backup steering pump was a major concern. We took the boat back into Olbia risking the Guardia Costiera's wrath so that we could get Alessio, our agent, to help find a repair or replacement centre. It was now Friday, and Italy closes for ten days that evening. After a wasted day establishing that no solution was available locally, I turned to Chris George back in the UK to look for a solution.

On Saturday we are still alongside and while the crew have a day off, I decided I would try to rebuild the motor by gluing the permanent magnets back into the housing, albeit they are worn and damaged. After three hours of reassembly I tested the motor and it worked perfectly. We will only use it as a backup but unless the permanent magnets break loose again I see no reason why it will not last until I can take it home in October and find a new motor.

So I called off the dogs, Alessio and Chris, and I decide we will depart Olbia on Sunday night to arrive in Isola Ponza at 0900 on Monday morning.

Sunday morning we are all pretty relaxed and taking it easy as this will be Cait and Jack's first night-time passage and I want them to be awake and alert. We are just tucking into lunch when the coastguard appears and insists we leave immediately.

Now we could go out and anchor to leave later in the day but opted instead to depart Olbia for Ponza there and then. So away we steam, leaving Olbia behind for six weeks or so. I have been on Sardinia for five and a half months now and the crew for three and a half. I now feel like a local, and probably know parts of it better than many inhabitants!

Bay of Naples

This post is rather late to say the least. I found it quite difficult to work on the Blog in August, partly because of the high temperatures we experienced , and partly due to the fun we were having on Blue Legend!

The night passage to Isola Ponza was a great success with both Jack and Cait enjoying their solo watches. I slept the night on the saloon daybed, and popped up and down as and when they needed a hand. There was actually quite a bit of traffic, both ships and yachts, to keep us all on our toes.

The seas departing Olbia were quite large from the starboard bow for about six hours but diminished as the night went on. We arrived off Ponza at 0500 and had to anchor in the dark, not an issue, and a good end to what had been a busy crossing.

We stayed at anchor in Ponza for a couple of days. The island is small but has a very busy port which we entered a couple of times in the tender.

From here we planned to steam for Ischia on the North side of the Bay of Naples but on route decided to divert to the south side of Capri where we hoped to anchor. We were in for a couple of nasty surprises on arrival in Capri.

Firstly the whole area is volcanic, obvious I know, but what I had not realised is just how hard it would be to find an anchorage in anything other than deep water. This was partly due to the steep drop off from the coast but also due to the area being mobbed with local boats taking up all the shallower anchor pitches.

We attempted to anchor in 35 metres off the south coast of Capri, but it was very uncomfortable due to the swell, and made worse by the high number of small vessels passing at speed.

After a tricky hour we gave up and decided to head for Positano on the Amalfi coast. Before reaching our destination we pulled into Syrenuse Bay and anchored there in 30m of water. However the small boat traffic here was nonstop and we could not get a comfortable spot for the night.

Reckoning that most of the vessels off Capri would leave in the evening we steamed back to the south coast bay and sure enough found a fairly good holding in 25m for the night. This was fine as the number of yacht movements decreased as the evening went on and we finally had a fairly quiet night.

Not so the next morning, after a quick run ashore for coffee, it was obvious we were in for an uncomfortable day at anchor and we decided to depart. The Bay of Naples is already looking like a bit of a nightmare for us. I decided we would head across the Bay to a smaller bay off Pozzuoli and see if we could find an anchorage there.

Another problem we encountered here was the number of restricted or prohibited anchorages. This became more and more of a problem as we navigated around the area. Many ‘good’ sites were restricted to Italian residents and the ones for non-residents were poorer and smaller.

After a disappointing morning looking for anchorages, I decided we would go into Pozzuoli Marina for the night and re-consider options from there. This was the best decision we had made since arriving in the Bay.

We ended up staying in Pozzuoli for 6 days primarily due to a couple of technical problems on board, one caused by my carelessness and a second due to a bank of batteries failing in the engine room. During this period Caitlin decided she wanted to return home and so we bid her a reluctant farewell from the boat after 3 1/2 months of being an integral, and very successful, member of the crew - as well as a great friend to Jack and I.

It is not easy saying farewell to someone you have worked and lived with for so long, and both Jack and I felt a bit deflated for a couple of days which is how we ended up staying in Pozzuoli so long. The marina very kindly gave us a free day after five days, so we took full advantage of this.

To be honest I was really worried about what we were going to do with my grandchildren when they arrived a few days time. Anchoring was out, and marinas were expensive and boring,

We left Pozzuoli to explore Procida and Ischia, the two islands to the West of Naples. We first tried anchoring off Procida, the best spots were all for residents only and overrun with boats. We tried anchoring in the old volcano crater to the west of the Island, but this had nothing going for it and the nearby beach was poor.

By mid-afternoon and several bays later we are beginning to despair of finding a good spot to anchor up, so we left Procida behind us and headed further west to Ischia. The south coast has a peninsular sticking out from it called Saint Angelo and it seemed there was a good shallow anchorage on either side of the peninsular, to the East and West. The predominant wind here is westerly so an anchorage off the town to the East would be ideal.

We arrived early evening and realised this was the best anchorage we had found so far, and one we could use - providing we paid euro 16 a week to the Marine Park authority. Finally we get anchored in a really good and interesting area with plenty of space for the inevitable flotilla of boats which would arrive the next day.

However, although this was acceptable we realise the following morning that it will be very busy in the afternoons and that safe swimming will only be

