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2024 NEWSLETTER



OUR LATEST NEWS AND STORIES
FROM THE GREEK ISLANDS

Hi again everyone,

Welcome to our annual newsletter!

It's hard to believe we've reached 48 years of writing them. In the middle of the UK winter, it certainly reminds us how much of a privilege it has been to be able to spend so much time sailing about in the sunny Greek Islands.

We've clearly been having far too much fun over the years. Catching up with friends, enjoying meals outside, and lunchtime dips in the sea, is living the dream.

After the challenges of Covid, the gods shone down on us in 2023! The weather was glorious pretty much from start to finish, and we finally managed to enjoy a full season of sailing.

We seem to be the only company specialising in Flotilla Sailing on our own yachts these days, which may be why many of you have booked so early for 2024.

There is something very special about sailing slowly around the Greek islands. It is fascinating how all the issues that preoccupy our minds at home seem to vanish when we are there.

We hope you enjoy our retrospective on another great year, with lots of news from Greece, London and beyond. Many children of our early flotilla sailors are now our lead crew in Greece.

Thanks to everyone who has given us their support during the year. Hopefully this will bring back some happy memories - we look forward to catching up with you in 2024.

Cheers,

*Barrie + Heidi Neilson
& the Sailing Holidays Team.*

Congratulations to everyone who achieved their Day Skipper or ICC (International Certificate of Competence) during 2023. In sailing, we never stop learning, and all experience is good.



OUR GREEK TEAM 6



BOAT SHOWS 4



FAMILY FUN IN THE SARONIC 25



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BRITISH PASSPORT HOLDERS, DON'T FORGET:

Due to Brexit, travel to Europe has become more complicated:

Your passport is now only valid for 5 or 10 years from the DATE OF ISSUE (check your Date of Issue) and must be less than 5 or 10 years old on the day you enter Europe. Don't forget children's passports are only valid for 5 years.

It must also be valid for at least 3 months from the date of your return.

Winter is a good time to check and, if necessary, renew your passport. You can check the most up-to-date passport detail requirements on the government website.

www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/greece/entry-requirements

This is your own responsibility

BOAT SHOW NEWS



A LOOK FORWARD TO OUR 2024 BOAT SHOWS!

RYA DINGHY SHOW

FARNBOROUGH

24TH - 25TH FEBRUARY 2024

www.rya.org.uk/dinghy-show

It's always a pleasure to take a few days away from the office to meet sailors new and old.

As ever, we were busy this year exhibiting at boat shows, and it was great to see so many familiar faces.

Our first show of the year was at the end of February with the **RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show** in Farnborough, and we'll be there again in 2024.

There was a great turn out and many people booked their 2023 holidays there and then.

In quieter moments (although they were few and far between) the team enjoyed watching the private jets coming and going and guessing who might be on board.

Rumour has it Elton John was around at that time!

The dinghy show is a fun day out for keen or novice sailors - one of our favourite activities was the radio-controlled sailing yacht racing. Things got a little competitive amongst the team!

We look forward to seeing you for more fun and games next February!



MARK, ELLEN & CHARLIE AT THE 2023 RYA DINGHY SHOW

YACHT CHARTER & LUXURY CRUISE EXHIBITION

WESTMINSTER, LONDON

15TH - 16TH NOVEMBER 2024

We will be attending this exhibition for the first time. It is scheduled to be at RHS Lindley Hall, Westminster, London.

SOUTH COAST BOAT SHOW

SOUTHAMPTON

19TH - 21ST APRIL 2024

In April we headed down to Southampton again for the **South Coast Boat Show**, where we were lucky enough to have glorious sunshine all weekend. It is a smaller show than some of the others, but has a fantastic location being right down by the yachts in the Ocean Village Marina.

This was the second year and there was a great buzz around the yachts and interest for sailing holidays, so we hope to see this show go from strength to strength.



ELLEN, IVAN & CHARLIE AT THE 2023 SOUTH COAST BOAT SHOW



SOUTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW

MAYFLOWER PARK/TOWN QUAY, SOUTHAMPTON

13TH TO 22ND SEPTEMBER 2024 www.southamptonboatshow.com

In September we were back in our usual spot for our main event - The **Southampton Boat Show**. This show is always a highlight of the season. It was fantastic to see so many familiar faces (you know who you are!), catching up and helping us all plan for the year ahead.

Southampton also provides a great opportunity to meet younger sailors, and we hope that some of those who we spoke to will be seen out on the water with our Lead Crews in Greece.

Most of our office team had a few days on the stand and we were amazed how many people were booking their next sailing holiday.

It was nice to have our ex-lead crew and marketer, Bex, with us on the stand for the second weekend, as well as catching up with ex-lead crew members throughout the show.

One speaker on the stage attracted many people including Sue from Manchester.



"It was an absolute pleasure to listen to and meet Captain Sandy Yawn from the hit series *Below Deck Mediterranean*.

Captain Sandy went from being a teenager, with drug and alcohol issues and DUIs, to being one of the most respected sea captains in the boating world. And she broke through the proverbial 'glass ceiling' to achieve the highest status in the maritime industry where women at the helm are rare.

An enlightening and entertaining recounting of her experiences from near fatal accidents on land, to pirates and fires at sea which give the canvas from which she offers her wisdom to help us chart our own course." - Sue.

"You just have to make the decision, believe, execute, and it will happen."

"Put the work in."

"Take some time to make a difference, to offer a stranger a few words of advice or encouragement. Even the smallest gestures show you care."

"Each storm teaches something."



Our Greek Island Flotilla Teams

• 2023 •



VASSIA - PETE, ELLIE AND SAM



KIRKI - LIV, GEORGE AND EMILY



LOUTRAKI - TIM, HOLLIE AND BARNSEY



ELPIDA - BENJ, AOIFE AND JOSH

Our Lead Crews

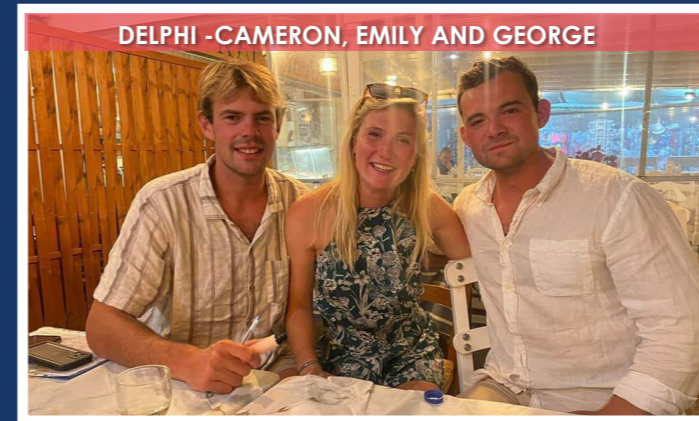
These young people make all the difference!



ATHINA - GEORGE, ELIDH AND JIMMY



KALAMAS - LOTTIE, JACK AND CHARLOTTE



DELPHI - CAMERON, EMILY AND GEORGE



SIROCCO - TOM, IZZY AND CHARLIE



KAMARA - JAMIE, LIV AND ALEKS



DESSA - ELLIOT, IMOGEN AND DARRAGH



KEFALOS - FLO, SOPHIE AND RORY



THREE OF OUR RYA TEAM, LAURA, PETE AND WILL

TRAINERS JOE AND SLAV WERE OUT TRAINING!

PAST FLOTILLA CREWS AND THEIR FAMILIES

LEAD CREW KAT AND MICK FROM 2007 RETURN WITH FAMILY

THREE GENERATIONS IN PARGA IN 2023



Before their holiday in 2022 the following email arrived from Kat: "Mick and I were lead crew on Helen back in 2007 and ever since we've dreamt of coming back and bringing our kids on flotilla!"

We're 40 next year and have been planning for this for the last 10 years. We are going to bring our families and friends along with us so we're hoping the world can sort itself out and this dream can become a reality!

We are wanting to walk down memory lane and do a North to South Whole Ionian Flotilla, can't wait to be back in Greece after all these years!"

After the holiday: "We had the most incredible time thank you!! Our crew was amazing and we managed to see a few old friendly faces which made the trip extra special!"

We started our flotilla in Nidri on Mick's 40th so a few drinks by the pool kept him happy but the icing on the cake was bumping into Big Mick there so that made my Mick's birthday extra special!



KAT SAYS 'KALIMERA' TO YIANNA WHO STILL RUNS THE FAMILY CAFE, A SIVOTA BAY FAVOURITE



MICK, KAT AND VINCE IN 2007



DANICA AND TONY - WHOLE IONIAN FLOTILLA

Three generations, ex-lead crew Danica and Tony return to the Ionian to show his parents and 6 year old twin boys Dylan and Zac what they used to do. Danica skippered in Greece with us for several years.

It is a funny old world, as when Barrie and Heidi went to New Zealand a few years ago, they went to collect a hire car from Christchurch airport, and who should be sitting behind the counter, but Danica. They had a good old chat and later went to visit her at their home.

The children have come along since and it is great to see them having their first taste of the fantastic swimming off the back of mum and dad's boat.



NICOLE, TONY & DANICA IN 2011



2016 FLOTILLA HOSTESS JESS RETURNS WITH FRIENDS

2016 lead crew, New Zealander Jess, catches up with Barrie whilst relaxing at the Iris Premium Hotel.

Jess, now living in the UK, and friend Vanessa did their Day Skipper Practical with us in 2022. This year they took a bareboat charter with us out of Corfu in June because our flotilla yachts were fully booked.

Vanessa's mother, Phillipa, flew in from New Zealand and enjoyed her first sailing experience on a flotilla yacht in the South Ionian in October.



VANESSA AND JESS ON AN EARLIER FLOTILLA WITH ELLEN IN 2020



TWO OF OUR TEAMSTERS WHO HAVE MOVED ON TO GREAT THINGS

By chance, we ran into old friend Stokey Woodall at the Yachting Monthly Christmas party, hence the jumpers! Stokey has enjoyed an incredible sailing career in the Atlantic, Red Sea, Mediterranean and Baltic. He is a renowned traditional ocean navigator specialising in celestial and common-sense aspects of navigation.

A few years ago, he penned a book of his experiences called "Who the hell is Stokey Woodall". If you would like to read about his adventures, it is available on books.apple.com.

He is currently tracking various Atlantic and Global rowing and sailing events including the Atlantic Rowing Challenge and Maiden's voyage around the world on the Global Yacht Race. He showed exactly where the boats were on his phone!

ACE OF BLADES

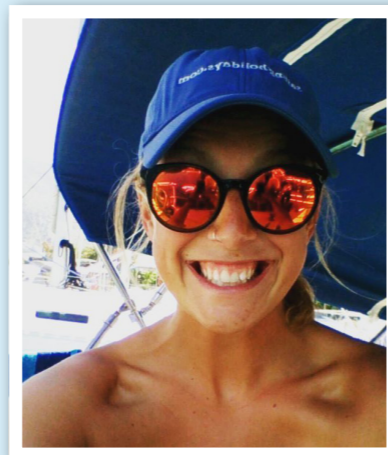
Kit Windsor, flotilla skipper from 2016 - is about to row the Atlantic with 3 other women on a Rannoch R45 ocean rowing boat called "SS1". In December 2023 they will be rowing 3,000 miles across the Atlantic with three other women, as part of the World's Toughest Row – The Atlantic Challenge.

They will depart from La Gomera in the Canary Islands and head to English Harbour in Antigua, hoping to arrive in less than 40 days. The four of them are undertaking this challenge in aid of three charities: **Macmillan Cancer, the Outward Bound Trust and Prostate Cymru.**

Heading out into the vast Atlantic Ocean in an 8 metre by 2 metre boat, rowing two hours on and two hours off throughout the duration of the crossing, is not something most people would be keen to take on.



I've always been pretty adventurous but this challenge will take the biscuit. I feel like my family have sometimes questioned where I came from! After university, I bobbed around the Ionian Sea for a couple of years working as a skipper, which was incredible and fuelled my need to be surrounded by water."



KIT IN HER GREEK ISLAND DAYS

"I am so excited to be involved in Ace of Blades and to be taking part in the Atlantic Challenge. It's been on my bucket list for years and I remember having a conversation with my dad and saying "I'm going to do it". His response was, "Maybe when you're 30!" – well, here I am!



KIT AND ELLEN IN 2016

THREE GENERATIONS ON FLOTILLA TO SKIPPER OF 'MAIDEN ON THE GLOBAL YACHT RACE



Heather first came on a flotilla sailing holiday with her parents and grandparents in 2005.

Sailing is in Heather Thomas' blood, coming from a long line of mariners. Growing up in Otley, West Yorkshire, the sea was not close by, so Heather began her journey dinghy sailing at the local lake, Otley Sailing Club, encouraged by her father.

The Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation gave Heather her first taste of ocean sailing, with a bursary to compete in the Pacific Leg of the 2015/16 Clipper Round the World Race.

Maiden has been a big inspiration to Heather throughout her sailing career, so to sail on her is a dream come true. Whilst on the Maiden programme she gained her RYA Yachtmaster Offshore (commercially endorsed).

She loves inspiring young girls to dream big, a value that was instilled in her by her parents, who continue to be her biggest supporters.



"I'm pretty tired, I'm not going to lie. The last 24 hours have been pretty tricky navigation-wise so I've been up for the last 24 hours as there was so much going on. To be honest the Southern Ocean was a bit tame.

A lot of the girls were a bit disappointed about how tame it was. So hopefully we can give them a bit more next time.

The Tasman Sea was the roughest part. But I'm very happy to be here. New Zealand feels like home to me."

If you would like to see where they are go to:

<https://oceangloberace.com/livetracker/>



NEW ZEALAND WINE MAKERS ADRIAN, JO AND FAMILY SAILING IN GREECE FOR A CHANGE

Every year we have many kiwis come all the way to Greece for their flotilla sailing holiday fix. Of course, if Barrie is in the area, he tries to touch base with them to reminisce about their "home patch". Due to the distance involved, they tend to come every second year rather than annually. Covid threw a spanner in their travel plans for a couple of years, but they were back for 2023.



One group that we ran into had escaped from their vineyard in the Marlborough Sounds at the top end of the South Island. Their vineyard is called "Four Hawk Day" (no idea why?) and they produce a really nice Sauvignon Blanc.

They had already been to Crete, following Adrian's father's experiences during the Second World War, when he was quite badly wounded. He was in the same unit as New Zealand's double Victoria Cross winner Charles Upham.

Crete is very special to New Zealanders as it was their young men who were sent to defend the island from Adolph Hitler and his mates. The family certainly made the best of their trip to the northern hemisphere.

THIS GROUP OF KIWIS ON THE BOATS IN OCTOBER WERE CERTAINLY EASY TO SPOT



Over the years many people have had special shirts made for their crew on the holiday. Rick's group produced the best shirts we have seen in many a year with the silver fern of New Zealand emblazoned across the back and King Neptune (Poseidon to the Greek people) across the front. Barrie and Mike could not resist a photograph with a fellow Kiwi.

Rick took the theme to a bit of an extreme when he got dressed up to go through the Lefkas Canal. This was his second holiday this year, coming all the way from New Zealand.

OUR FLOTILLA EXPERIENCES "OCHI DAY" IN KASSIOPI AT THE END OF OCTOBER



Barrie returns to Kassiope after only sporadic visits in the last forty years or so!

It really is a small world sometimes. I was standing in Athens airport a few years ago and had a tap on my shoulder from a tall young Greek chap. He said "Hello Barrie, I haven't seen you for years!" I was mystified until he proclaimed "It's me, Costa from Kassiope - we used to dance together!"

The penny dropped - the Costa I knew was a child of about four foot tall and now he was six foot six! In the very early days of flotillas, and even before asphalt roads, after the meal and lots of lubricant, the entertainment was always Greek dancing, long into the night. Entire local families would join in.

We also came to know Philipos who ran a cocktail bar and now runs hire boats, Angelos whose Dad had the Supermarket, and Vassilis who ran a small bar and taverna on the waterfront.

When we turned up with a flotilla at the end of October, it felt like we had never been away, although the road was now asphalted! Not any wider however!

Vassilis' daughter had spent time in Athens training to be a Chef. She has created a fabulous restaurant, overlooking the waterfront. It was great to see Vassillis and they put on a fantastic evening for us. This was an 'October half term flotilla' so there were 22 young children between the ages of 1 and 12. Hostess Emily had them doing all sorts of games and the evening never had a dull moment. Vassillis and I sat and observed from the 'old fellas corner'!

I had some great memories from Kassiope and this was no less of a memory. In the morning, we awoke to the local brass band and a couple of hundred young locals parading in memory of "Ochi Day" during the Second World War, when Greece said "no, you can't come in" to Benito Mussolini. The result was the loss of 25% of the Greek population, so it is a date not to be forgotten.

It was another beautiful October day so we squeezed in a final swim in an idyllic bay before sailing back to Gouvia marina, having reminded ourselves of what wonderful experiences all the flotillas are, no matter how old (or young) you might be!



AMY'S WEDDING

Central Otago, New Zealand

In February, it is midsummer in New Zealand, and that is when our daughter Amy decided to marry her partner, Scott, near Wanaka in the high country of the South Island.

Amy grew up immersed in the world of flotilla sailing in the Greek Islands, so it was no surprise that she developed a wanderlust. What was a surprise however, was that she met and married a chap from Barrie's home patch in the South Island of New Zealand!

Many of our regular flotilla sailing gang will have met Amy out on the water over the decades and I'm sure will wish her well.

Amy and Scott have made a beautiful home for themselves in Cromwell, about a 40 minute drive from better known Queenstown. Cromwell lies on beautiful Lake Dunstan, which was formed when the Clutha River was dammed to generate electricity.



At one stage, now health guru, Amy decided to take us swimming in the Clutha river, and as it is glacier fed, brass monkeys come to mind. Entering was done very gingerly, but eventually even this old fella managed to swim upstream before clambering out into 25 degree sunshine.

Oddly enough, we did not rush back into the ice cold river and waited until we were back in Greece for our next swimming adventure!



This area of New Zealand is hot in the summer and freezing in the winter. It seems to be developing extremely fast as a population overflow from Queenstown.

The wedding took place on a hillside facing three amazingly rugged mountain ranges that looked stacked on top of each other into the far distance. The celebrant made a great effort, and it was a glorious day of far too much of everything into the wee hours.

It was a reminder of the gloriously clear air and open spaces around that area that we had always taken for granted as children. We had no concept of the global tourism to come, not to mention the vast vineyards that have appeared since then. The assembled throng certainly made a dent in the wine supply of the area.



Whilst down that way, we managed to squeeze in a school reunion in Barrie's home town Dunedin, where we met with friends he hadn't seen for many years.

We also attended the annual 'Burt Munro motorcycle race weekend'. (A result of the wonderful film that starred Anthony Hopkins called 'The World's Fastest Indian'). Again, we were able to touch base with Barrie's old friends and sporting rivals.

Dunedin and Invercargill are both 100 miles or so from Cromwell so great trips down memory lane in the sun while Britain froze!

Amy's friends and ex-lead crew from 2010, Rebecca and Nik, flew in all the way from the Turks and Caicos Islands for the event with their little girls Amelia and Ivy. Nik is of course a Kiwi, so the Brits in attendance were heavily outnumbered.



NIK AND REBECCA

We spent a few days in rainswept Auckland en route, where we stayed with original company accountant Mark and his wife Christine. They met on a share a yacht holiday way back in the mid 1990's.

We reluctantly boarded the plane for our return journey to London and slept in recovery mode nearly all the way back!

All was well when we returned, and the old nose went back to the grindstone! At least it was getting warmer, and soon we would be back in Greece!

If you would like to see what Amy is doing now here are her websites: amysfitnessandnutrition.co.nz and centralmarketing.co.nz

An interesting memory from William and Jodie:

"Dear Barrie and Heidi, your mention of Amy reminded me of our sailing holiday in Dalmatia, when Amy acted as hostie, before her journey to NZ in 2017.

I had foolishly brushed past a bush which left lots of minute thorns in my shoulder, too tiny for my wife to see. Amy kindly perched on the edge of the cockpit and extracted them with tweezers. In memory of this successful 'prickle-ectomy', she presented me with a miniature cactus at the farewell dinner. She might like to know that the cactus is still going strong and is now 13 inches tall, which is a nice memento of both her and the holiday.

You might also perhaps be amused to learn that one of the in-cruise quiz questions was "How many bikinis does Amy have with her?" Nobody guessed a high enough number!

I wonder whether Amy remembers. Anyway, we wish her all the very best in her married life.

Your loyal customers, William and Jodie"

BARRIE & HEIDI

MIKE AND SOPHIA GET HITCHED



By all accounts a fabulous day in the September sunshine

Mike and Sophia were lead crew back in 2013 and have kept in touch with lots of their fellow lead crews. Many were guests at the wedding at West Anstey in the Exmoor National Park.

Left to right: crew "known names" are: Charlie, Jake, Niamh, Sausage, Patch, Cookie, Josh, Wurley, George, Fay, Mike, Sophia, Mick, Hannah, Rosie, Basil, Aneel, Ralph, Stav, Ruth, Holly, JD and Bex.

It was quite a reunion!



Mike scrubs up alright!

NATASHA AND MARC ALSO TIE THE KNOT



2014 - those were the days!



Natasha first came sailing in Greece in the 1990's with her mother, Lorraine, and Barrie's great friend, rigger Allan Barwell (who wrote the RYA book of rigging). They had a great week on the 27ft UFO Pocket Rocket.

After a few years in the teaching profession Natasha joined Sailing Holidays in 2014 as a hostie in the Saronic.

She was with skipper Marc and engineer Junior. Before joining Sailing Holidays Marc had a career as an architect,

Living on a Maxi lead boat for a season is certainly a good relationship test. After one season on the water they were shore-based and have been together ever since.

They enjoyed a quiet wedding with close family and friends in a hotel garden in Bosham, close to their home in Chichester.

Marc is currently specialising in fine woodwork for high end properties all around Europe. He is also busy restoring a classic wooden yacht in his spare time.

2013 FLOTILLA SKIPPER AL RECENTLY WROTE TO US WITH THE FOLLOWING...

Growing up in the North of England I spent every weekend of the summer out on the cold lakes of the Lake District, learning how to sail – and more importantly, how not to fall out!

As soon as I finished school I moved down to the south of England to begin building the miles and experience needed to complete my commercial yacht licence. At 18 I was the youngest person at the time to hold the RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Offshore.

From there I hopped on a plane to Greece, where I lead flotillas of 12 boats around the islands.

After a few years I became an instructor for the RYA teaching Day Skipper courses to groups and families. For the last 4 years I have been working as a captain of a 70ft charter catamaran with my partner Harriet (chef), running week-long all inclusive charters between the Caribbean and Mediterranean.



Al (top) and Simon aka Cactus (left) as part of the 2013 Sailing Holidays Team Photograph.

I chartered a boat out of Lefkas this summer, which was the first time I have had a holiday on a boat - it was everything we had hoped for and great to see some old faces after so long! I booked through Ivan in the office and he sorted me a great boat out of Lefkas marina!

There are a few of us ex-Sailing Holidays crew down here in Auckland now which is great!

I met Marcus when I moved to New Zealand in 2020 as he was running a company called Yachtshare.

We got chatting and I jumped on board to expand their sailing school which was initially just for their own clients. We re-branded to Yacht Training and got certified by the IYT (similar to RYA) which has enabled us to offer internationally recognised training courses such as the ICC which as you know, is the basic pre-requisite for chartering a boat all around the world.



Al in office mode!

Not long after I started, I managed to get Simon (Cactus) involved also with training. Having worked with him training with Sailing Holidays, he was a great fit. He has now gone on to being the Yachtshare fleet manager and still does some training for me every now and again!

We have a fleet of 8 boats that we use for training including the Beneteau 323 and 331!

www.yachttraining.co.nz

Harriet and I are planning another trip to Greece next summer so hopefully catch you out there!

Al met New Zealander Harriet during his last season in Greece, which might have something to do with him now being settled there.



Marcus, Mhiani and their children



Auckland sailing is not quite as warm as the Greek Islands for Simon!

GENERATIONS OF FLOTILLA SAILORS

JOHN AND JEAN'S MEMORIES

"Greetings from 2 Rock Bay! Back in the North where we started 30 years ago - and after a week on the boat we are feeling thoroughly human again - wonderful. Quite a lot of changes out here but still the same magic."

Elliott, Imogen and Darragh are a lovely lead crew and have been exceptionally sensitive as Jean hurt her knee just before we came out so they have really tried to make things as easy as they can. They are an exceptional crew.

It was lovely to up catch with GB in Sivota - another brilliant skipper we first met in the Sporades in 2016."

(Their favourite photo of granddaughter Sophia, who sailed with them in 2017).



BACK TO BASIC ENTERTAINMENT - NOT A MOBILE PHONE TO BE SEEN

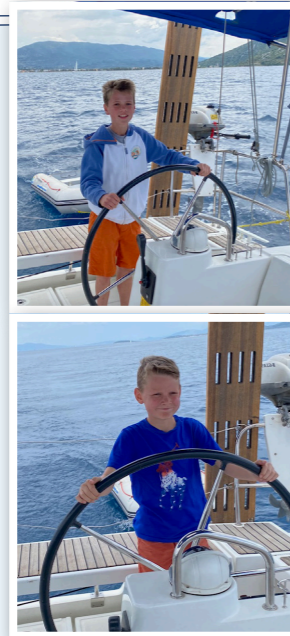
Heidi keeps a few flotilla children amused with a couple of bits of string whilst their parents are watching the rugby in the local taverna in Sivota (Ireland -v- New Zealand).

RUTH AND RAYFORD WITH 3 GENERATIONS

"We're just home from a wonderful two weeks on Faidra doing a North-South with Elliot, Matt and Imogen. A great crew!

I thought that you would like to see the photo of all the three generations of the 'Kitchen family' on the one boat. Ruth and myself, Thomas (our eldest) and his wife Rachel and their two boys Ezra 11 and Ethan 8.

Everybody enjoyed the experience of being on board. Thomas was last out in the Ionian several years ago, and it was really surprising how much he remembered! The boys also loved helping with all the tasks on board."



PHOTOS FROM MIKE AND KATE - WHOLE IONIAN FLOTILLA



The younger generation may wish to see no evil, hear no evil, or speak no evil, but they are clearly not in brass monkey temperature!



RICHARD WITH 3 GENERATIONS

Richard with Louie, Esther and Simon.

Archie missed out on the family photo in Greece as he was "camera shy" but we are sure he will not mind being included in our newsletter.

Their 2024 holiday is already booked and Archie is checking out his new snorkeling equipment.

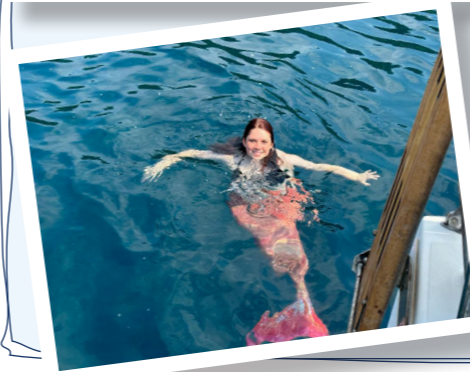


WILLIAM BRINGS 3 GENERATIONS ON A SOUTH IONIAN FLOTILLA

"The children all hugely enjoyed swimming etc and I hope that they have the lasting conviction that sailing holidays are fun.



From my perspective, '3 generations' sailing is a bit special, because there is in practice a limited period for which it is feasible: when the grandchildren are old enough to enjoy it safely and grandparents are still up for it.



I remain hopeful that I shall be able to take sailing my younger son and his family, but those grandchildren are only aged 4 and 7 at present."

EVIDENCE THAT MERMAIDS REALLY DO EXIST IN GREECE!



TONY AND MAGGIE BRING A DIFFERENT 3 GENERATIONS

After bringing their son David and family for the October half term week in 2022, Tony and Maggie thought it only fair to bring their other son Peter with his wife Sandra and their three boys.

Whilst they sailed in the North Ionian other son David and his wife were sailing on flotilla with the South Ionian introducing another family to their passion.



Sentiments from our sailors...

From: Tim and Judith - Whole Ionian Flotilla



Some of you will recognise Angie, in the middle, from the Blue Coast taverna in Mourtos. Left to right: Pennie, Judith, Tim and Alan.

"Dear Heidi

It was a pleasure to meet you and Barrie on our recent flotilla holiday with your firm on a north to south adventure.

We tried to transfer this photo phone to phone when we met in Sivota but failed

miserably. Angie spoke very warmly about you and Barrie and Sailing Holidays.

Angie's mum, Sandy, was out with her grandchildren. As I said, Sivota Mourtos is where we took a boat out from the very first time in the 1990's and we were out, this evening, on a nostalgia trip. Angie was a lovely host to us for the evening. We enjoyed getting together with Angie and it was good to see Mourtos again, we have such fond memories of it. The place has changed though, as all places do, and I can't see us making another nostalgia visit. We had a great holiday, thank you, take care both of you and maybe see you again one day.

All the best, Tim and Judith"

From: Leadboat Dessa - Gene and Marion's wedding

As a crew we never felt more honoured than being asked to put together a wedding ceremony for Marion and Gene! They're an absolutely beautiful couple who, after years of friendship, found their way together.

With the help of their friends, they tied the knot on the view point above Spartachori! With the sun setting over the Ionian behind them, our skipper Elliot officiated the ceremony and they read vows that brought a tear to everyone's eye!

The whole flotilla celebrated with champagne and cake and felt very special to be a part of such a lovely evening. We wish them all the best! - Dessa crew

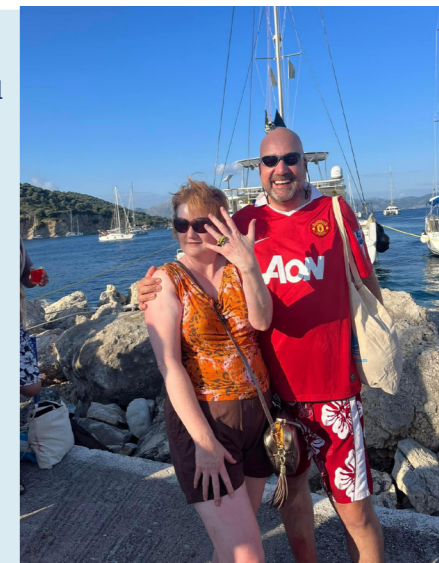


From: Leadboat Vassia - Joe and April get engaged

It was a quiet evening in Kastos and while everyone was enjoying the evening sun over a G&T, April and Joe snuck off to the other side of the quay. We all turned around and saw Joe on one knee asking April to marry him! She said YES!!

We all asked to see the engagement ring and very fittingly Joe had made a custom ring from rope! We all celebrated over the sunset. We wish them a very happy future together.

Ellie, Sam and Pete - Lead Crew Vassia



From: Toby - Skippered Charter on Paxos Flotilla in August

"I just wanted to drop you a note thank you SO SO much for the introduction to sailingholidays.com

We had THE most amazing time. Never have we had a holiday so exciting and enjoyable. The children loved it, even the wife wants to take up sailing now and is booking her ICC. I am saving up to do my Day Skipper, hopefully in Greece with Sailing Holidays.

I was hoping you would pass on my sincere thanks to your friend Barrie and share with him my feedback below, in particular about the lead crew.

As you know, for all of us it was our very first sailing holiday, the children had never spent more than a few minutes under sail, my first day sailing being the most sailing I'd done as skipper in my life all added together, and my wife's longest time on a sailing boat being the time it took her to unpack.

The lead crew on Athina that week (not her usual crew I don't think, as they were covering for holidays) were Skipper Rory, Engo Jimmy and Hostie Daisy. They were AMAZING, the customer service and professionalism, whilst being a whole load of fun to boot, is like I have never experienced before. Nothing was too much trouble and the children are still talking about them daily even 3 weeks later.

Rory was always calm and collected and with such good advice and knowledge for us, a true leader of the flotilla. Jimmy fixed anything that went wrong as instantly as humanly possible e.g. my little self inflicted prop wrap situation he fixed in minutes jumping in the rib and diving in whilst halfway through his breakfast. Daisy was the font of all knowledge for great food and activities for us all. They made us all feel so safe and welcome it was all like we were part of one big family for the week.

I am sure Barrie has hundreds of staff pass through his business but if he gets the chance to pass on my thanks personally to those three it would be really appreciated, it wouldn't have been the holiday it was without them. So a HUGE thank you."

OUR LEAD CREWS

How did they join us?

"I started working for Sailing Holidays in March 2016 and can't quite believe I'll be coming into my 9th year ... time flies when you're having fun!

Where it all started - I grew up in Ireland and when I was 10 my parents decided to buy a boat in Spain to live on full time! We enjoyed 4 years travelling all over the Med on their 45ft Columbia Ketch. From then on, I have loved being on boats and the sea.

We returned to the UK where I completed my GCSE's and A levels, and my plan was to head off to university however, after much thought, I decided that uni wasn't for me.

I knew I wanted to get out there and be on the sea. When I turned 21, I applied for Sailing Holidays. Before I knew it I was in Greece and making Lead Boat Zephy my new home!

After 2 amazing years as a flotilla hostie, one year as a Shore-based hostie and having gained my Day Skipper along the way, I knew I wasn't done with flotilla.

In 2019 I was back out there but this time as Skipper with my engineer Callum and hostie Lottie on Lead Boat Helen. We had a great season, met some amazing people and I learned a lot while skippering. This was my last year on flotilla and at the end of 2019 I took over the Head Hostie position.

I'm now based in the Corfu office and manage all the flotilla and shore-based hosties when they arrive on Corfu, passing on all the knowledge I've learned along the way.

I'm really enjoying this role and have been lucky to have such a lovely team to work with!

See you in Greece!" Niamh



OUR TEAM OF GIRLS ENJOY A GET-TOGETHER AT THE END OF THE SEASON HAVING MADE LASTING FRIENDSHIPS DURING THE SUMMER

THIS COULD BE YOU

Join our team for 2024



ONE OF OUR LEAD YACHTS UNDER WAY

We are currently recruiting for flotilla engineers, skippers, and hosts as well as shore-based staff for summer 2024.

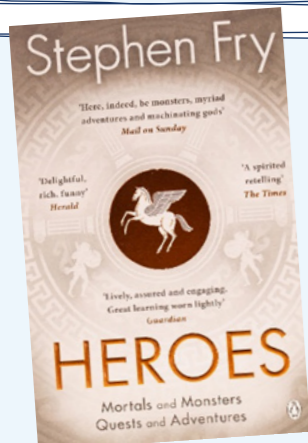
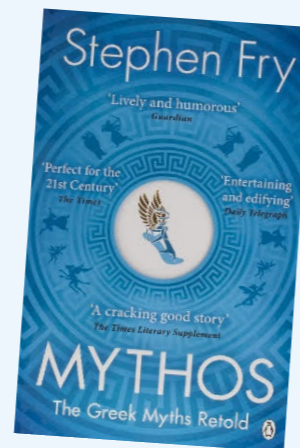
If you would like to apply for a position, simply go to our website or email us at work@sailingholidays.com

Ellen's Recommended Greek books - part 2!

MYTHOS - STEPHEN FRY

'Mythos' is the first book in Fry's trilogy and starts with Chaos, from which the universe and everything in it is borne, according to Greek mythology. It's the perfect introduction to some of the most popular myths, and I couldn't help but hear Stephen's inimitable voice in my head as I read it. Each 'character' has their own

chapter and Fry briefly, but expertly, tells their story. Did you know that the word 'echo' comes from the myth of Echo the nymph, who is punished by Hera for gossiping – her punishment is that she can no longer speak, except to repeat the very last thing said to her, hence our use of the word today. Fascinating stuff!



HEROES - STEPHEN FRY

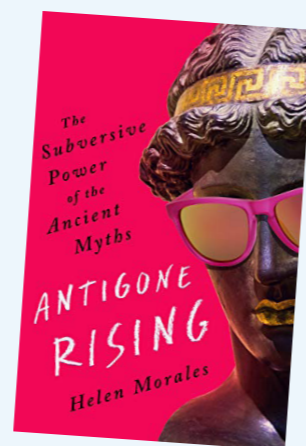
The second volume in the Trilogy, 'Heroes' focusses on the trials and tribulations of the most popular mortal heroes of Greek myth. We learn about the adventures of Heracles, Theseus and Jason, and the tragic

stories of Oedipus and Orpheus (and Eurydice!). Similarly to 'Mythos', each character has their own chapter and as it's written with Fry's unmistakable humour and charm, it's an unputdownable read.

ANTIGONE RISING - HELEN MORALES

This is one of my favourites so far. Rather than a simple re-telling of myths or re-positioning of protagonists within them, this book discusses the power of the myths themselves and how they have shaped the way we live our lives today. Morales talks about how ancient myths have often been 'misread' in a way that resists progressive agendas, and it sheds light on

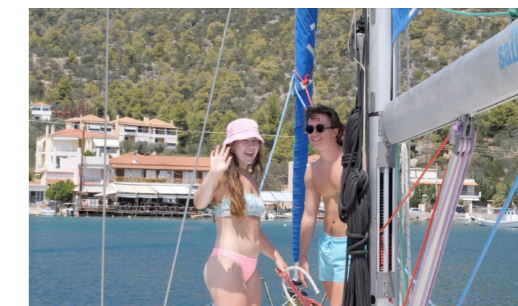
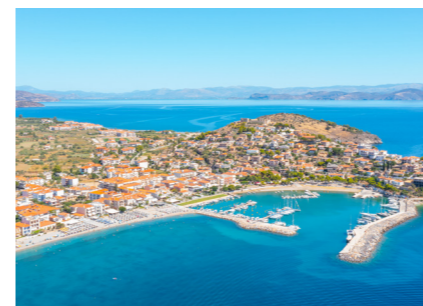
how deep-rooted cultural and societal norms were borne from these myths. It's hard to change perceptions when they have been ingrained in us since time began! But there is hope yet. This was a real eye-opener and I would recommend highly to anyone ready to cast a critical eye on some of the backward ways of the world these days...



Even more books that I'd recommend:

- BLADES OF BRONZE SERIES: 'ARGO', 'JASON' AND 'HADES' - MARK KNOWLES
- 'ITHAKA' AND 'HOUSE OF ODYSSEUS' - CLAIRE NORTH
- 'ELEKTRA' - JENNIFER SAINT
- 'THE SHADOW OF PERSEUS' - CLAIRE HEYWOOD
- 'CLYTEMNESTRA' - CONSTANZA CASATI

Family fun in the Argolic Gulf and Saronic Islands in August



"I cannot think of a better family holiday .

Once bitten forever smitten! We discovered SH when we spotted a last minute break with them fourteen years ago and we haven't looked back.



As family holidays go I really can't think of a more fun way to spend time together

Fresh air, breathtaking scenery, great sailing and the chance to go

to beautiful places you can't access by land....

Team that up with the great social side of being part of a flotilla and the amazing support you get from the lead crew and it really is hard to beat.

Greece is beautiful and when you're sailing you get to see so much more than when you rent a villa.

Every day is different and there is a wonderful mix of bustling towns and quiet bay stops. You have quality family time on your own boat, enjoying relaxed lunches and swimming in idyllic places.

Then when you come in to port you can join in with all the fun a flotilla has to offer . There's no pressure, it's at your pace but it is great fun having that ready made social life.

It's perfect for younger children, teens and extended grown up families.

Ours were 5 and 7 when we did our first trips and they still wanted to come this year aged 19 and 21!

Over the years we have been on all the routes (several times) and without exception every trip with Sailing Holidays has been a joy. We've met some amazing people and had a lot of laughs.

The Ionian is beautiful and winds are more gentle, ideal when you first start out and don't want anything too challenging.

But if you're keen sailors and want slightly stronger and more consistent wind, the Saronics is an amazing sailing area.



As well as amazing sailing there this summer we also had great fun at all the events laid on by the lead crew. These included a great punch party on a remote beach and Greek dancing was also a highlight.

There is a great sense of fun among all the crews and we had so many laughs taking part in the beach olympics.

Everything is made so much easier by having a lead crew.

Dave, Pippa, Sophie and Harvey"



Jodie tells how she finally gained her Day Skipper



JODIE SAILING JAGUAR 27 NEREUS IN 2006

It takes some longer to get around to doing their Day Skipper Practical than others.

From: "Jodie and Kerrin"

"It was at a NZ connections event in London, early 2002, when we were first introduced to the idea of not needing to own a boat to go on a sailing holiday.

Well-travelled, with diving, wake-boarding and snowboarding within our activity holiday history, my partner and I were instantly curious to find out more. So, with Barrie's words still in our ears and the experience of boating weekends on the river Thames, plus a well-read dinghy-sailing guidebook in our pocket, we signed up and started looking forward to our first ocean adventure. Little did we know it would change our lives.

Our first two-week sailing holiday was in the North Ionian on a Jaguar 27 called Thassos. From day one when we learnt 'the ropes' with our Sailing Holidays engineer, to day thirteen when we sat down to enjoy a final meal with our new sailing best-friends-forever, our minds were blown with delight. It might have been the variety of experiences we packed into each day, or the generous hospitality of Greece and her people.

Or maybe it was the subtle but sensory changes in the weather that we learnt to master to keep the air in our sails, or the ingenious Barrie & Heidi sailing holiday format. One thing we knew for certain. Sailing was under our skin.



In association with Corfu Sea School

Previously known for not going anywhere twice, to our surprise, we had been well and truly bitten by the sailing-bug. We then moved from one sailing holiday to another for the next twenty years! The destination of our holidays played out to the beat of Zorba the Greek.... North, South and Whole Ionian, Croatia! Saronic, Sporades! And boat names too many to remember. Each holiday with its own memories, new set of friends and sailing stories... oh, the stories.

But this summer was different. This summer, we decided to become fully qualified Day Skippers!

The time felt right and who to do the training with was never a question. After all, the cool Southern England coastline or the warm blue waters around Corfu with the dream team, which would you choose? But it still felt daunting as we embarked on the online theory part of the course.

Although there was a lot to learn, we needn't have worried. From passage planning to tidal streams, every module on the course was clearly communicated and simple to understand. We memorised the new, absorbed the familiar, and took joy from newly solved mysteries. "Aaaah, so that's what it's called" or "That explains that time when...".

It was surprising how much we'd picked up either instinctively on the sea, or via late-night story-sharing with fellow sailors over the years.

And once the theory was passed, we were ready for the practical!

RYA Review continued.....



We arrived in Platara on a beautifully warm, early June afternoon and were shown to the RYA training vessel.

Knowing there would be other students on board, we were curious and slightly apprehensive as to how it would all work out. But we were lucky. From the outset, we recognised that both of our in-training Day Skipper and Competent Crew companions had similar interests and sense of humour, which made for good chemistry.

Very quickly, we fell into a pleasant work/holiday routine. Morning tutorials, engine-checks, boat-handling practice. Lunch. Afternoon tutorials, Q&A's, and mooring practice. All with a bit of dolphin-spotting, swimming, scenic lunch spots, lashings of laughter and even a little bit of taverna tuition thrown in! And did we all pass? You guessed it. We all passed!

Whether you're looking to take your sailing experiences to the next level, or just wanting the right excuse to jump right in and book your first, we couldn't recommend the Sailing Holidays RYA training courses more highly!



We still produce our printed brochure and calendar!

However, we no longer do a mass mailout as it is too expensive and not environmentally friendly.

If you would like the printed version of our brochure and A3 double sided calendar please email us at:

brochure@sailingholidays.com

So all is not lost for us dinosaurs. We still like to see what day it is without turning on a computer.



OUR SHORE BASED VILLA MEANDROS, SIVOTA, LEFKAS



For those of you who fancy a week or two ashore in relative luxury, we offer 12 weeks of the summer from the end of June.

This is a fabulous place to relax in air conditioned splendour. It is only a ten minute walk to Sivota village and all its wonderful tavernas. There you can simply watch all the boats coming and going over some cold refreshments.



Early morning sunrise from Villa Meandros looking out over the pool and Sivota Bay. The reflection of the sky in the pool was incredible. No two mornings are the same.



This photograph was taken from the pool side in the afternoon as yachts make their way into the harbour for the night. It's a hard view to beat!

BAREBOAT SAILING HOLIDAYS

**Our Yacht
Charter
Division**

Make the most of the great early booking discounts on offer - if you fancy a bareboat or skippered charter for 2024, have a chat with the team on:
020 8438 1133



BAREBOAT SAILING AND SKIPPED CHARTER
GREECE CROATIA TURKEY SPAIN ITALY

Bareboat Sailing Holidays

Our Yacht Charter Division is where we act as agents for the best charter companies in the most popular sailing locations around the Mediterranean.

This gives you the freedom to choose the yacht which suits you. We are happy to discuss all aspects of charters and regions to help you find that perfect sailing experience.

Our Yacht Charter programme consists of three categories.

BAREBOAT CHARTER

For those wishing to truly get away from it all.

This allows qualified sailors the freedom to charter larger yachts than the flotillas offer, sail catamarans, and sail in areas where our flotillas don't go.

For those who have the skills to sail independently, bareboat charters can expand your horizons.

Mediterranean sailing is continually evolving, and we develop with it. The key is our knowledge of the core aspects of travel and sailing. We specialise in merging these two ingredients through our infrastructure in the UK.

SKIPPERED YACHT CHARTER

For those new to sailing or simply wishing for a more relaxing holiday.

This is a great option for those wishing to put their feet up a little more and have someone to skipper and moor the yacht for them.

It is also popular for those wishing to gain some valuable experience with a qualified skipper to show you the ropes.

Skippered charter provides the extra comfort of having someone to make sure you get the most out of an area you may not know well.

This tends to be on larger yachts with a separate cabin for the skipper.

LUXURY CREWED CHARTER

(Skipper and hostess on board)

For those looking to be catered for.

Luxury crewed yacht charter is the ultimate form of a relaxed sailing holiday. With a crew to look after you, and with breakfast and lunch provided, you can make the most of every minute.

The skipper will take care of every aspect of the sailing and will ensure to get you to the best places (including hidden gems) in comfort. The host/hostess will make sure that all of your holiday needs are provided for – from provisioning the yacht, restaurant and day-trip recommendations, to serving meals on board, and making sure everything is kept ship-shape.

We include this service for those who wish to branch out on their own, sail larger yachts or catamarans, or wish to sail in other regions.

All our Bareboat Sailing Holidays have financial protection through ABTOT.



Call us on: **020 8438 1133** or visit our website: **sailingholidays.com**

or email us on: **yachtcharter@sailingholidays.com**



YET MORE BRITISH TRAVEL AWARDS SUCCESS!

THE ONLY TRAVEL AWARDS VOTED FOR BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC!



We were thrilled to receive two Silver accreditations at this year's British Travel Awards:

'Best Travel Company to Hellenic Europe'

'Best Travel Company for Family Holidays'

Unfortunately, holidays to see Santa Claus, perhaps predictably, pipped us to the post for the Gold Award for Family Holidays. Once again, a huge thanks to all of you who took the time to vote for us.

✉ Sales@sailingholidays.com

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