

Mrs Janet E Gauntlett
The Hon, Secretary
James Myatt Trust
Charles House, Gosport Marina
Mumby Road, Gosport
Hants, PO12 1 AH

Abbey Roy

10th August 2017

Dear Mrs Gauntlett,

Report of Voyage to the James Myatt Trust

Further to your kind support of £200 towards my cruise fee allowing me to participate in race two of the Baltic Tall Ships Race on 22/07/17. I would like to sincerely thank you and the James Myatt Trust and I now provide you with some feedback on how this voyage went.

In late June prior to my departure I was contacted by the Island Trust to notify me that the vessel 'MOOSK' that I was sailing on had been taking in too much water and was being sailed back to Southampton. My concerns were soon over when I was found an alternative place aboard a yacht called Thermopylae Clipper. This was a Colvic 60 Clipper which was a 60ft sailing yacht with a crew of 15 people including myself.

On the day of 22nd July 2017 with what seemed like a long anxious yet exciting wait and having flown from Heathrow to Helsinki then travelled by train from the airport to the port of Turku, I finally stepped aboard the yacht. I was quickly met by 5 other members of the crew that had arrived before me including my Skipper called Clive Fisher. They were all very welcoming and I felt at ease with them and my surroundings immediately. Whilst waiting for the arrival of the other crew members, I located myself a bunk and got my kit sorted and then my watch (Port Watch) created dinner. Later that day all other crew arrived and introductions were made. I was amazed with how quickly we all seemed to get along despite some of the language barriers and age gaps (16yrs to late 50's). Amongst the crew there were English, Welsh, Scottish, French, German, Norwegian and Taiwanese. That evening we all communicated excitedly and almost nonstop whilst enjoying a previous race leg closing firework display.

A good night's sleep in new surroundings we awoke the following day and received a brief from the Skipper about safety on board, lifejackets, oil skins, and manning the sheets as well as information about our departure later that afternoon. Leaving the port was an event in itself as people lined the banks waving and cheering us along out into the open seas.

That very night I was at the Helm for 30 minutes sailing on a bearing of 180 degrees south. It took me a while to adjust to the movement of the open seas and the Yacht itself. This was a very magical moment for me to be in trusted with such an important task so early on into the voyage. The views of the sunset were spectacular. After having been relieved of Starboard watch we all rested for a small period of time before going back up at 04:00am.

There were two watches whilst on board the Yacht, a port watch and a starboard watch. Each was made up of seven crew members. In these watches we cooked, cleaned and manned the sheets together. During rest periods it was hard to tell what time of the day it was and sometimes took a while to coordinate myself. This was never an issue to me, just part of the learning experience.

There were many memorable moments throughout my time on board and with the crew and it would be difficult to list them all. I see this as a good thing. One moment though in particular that

stands out in my mind was when one night I was at the helm with wind speeds reaching 22 to 23 knots and I had to throw my weight at the helm when turning the yacht, but it was fun nevertheless. There was also a moment when there was water coming in the hatch at the bow of the yacht. This happened during one of our rest periods and required us to get up, work together and remedy. Another memory was on one of the roughest nights at sea when two of us were shouted at to grab the green rope. The only problem being was that it was pitch black resulting in a fumble for torches before two of us were heaving on the rope to pull it in. One of the best things on board was to see people try to journey through the cabin when on rough seas, a feat in itself. If not careful it was very easy to get bruises! It was situations like this that bonded us all together and gave us many talking points through this journey.

If I was asked my funniest moment it would be when we came into Klaipeda, Lithuania and the Skipper was asked to spell the yachts name 'Thermopylae' to the port authority as they could not understand him despite him repeatedly announcing the name. It made us all laugh. It took me a while to find my 'land legs' once disembarking from the vessel and it felt like I was still swaying. I was relieved to see that the others were all walking as cautiously and as slow as I was.

On the 30/7/17 the day before our final day, I went aboard a fully rigged Royal Navy ship called Shabab Oman II and took the opportunity as it appeared and asked if I could climb the 57.90 m rigging. I was granted permission and I climbed all the way to the top whilst other crew members were unaware of me looking down upon them. Finally I was spotted. After my descent back down, my skipper announced that he was very proud of me but also very happy that I was back down.

On our last day 31/07/17 the crew and I enjoyed and participated in a welcoming parade. Here we met other crews and competitors and together listened to the results of the race. We all clapped, cheered, sang and danced and even wheel-barrowed for the crowds enjoyment. Later that night I departed the crew party with a heavy heart at 12 midnight, a little earlier than the rest of the crew, and made my way back to the airport by coach for a 05:00am flight back home.

Throughout the entire Tall Ships sailing experience I tried and learnt many new skills all of which took me out of my comfort zone. My confidence grew each day and towards the end I was so at ease with everyone and with sailing. This journey, the Yacht, the Sea, its Skipper, its crew and all of its people and the things I saw have given me the appetite to want to sail again and many times more...

Without your kind support this would not have been able to happen and I would like to once again thank the James Myatt Trust for making a dream become a reality. I have learnt so much and have so many memories which I can, and will pass on to others and I hope to inspire them to participate in a sailing experience.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,



Abbey Roy





AT THE HELM



SHABAB OMAN II



ME