



Tall Ships Race 2006:

Young Bristol has been able to offer young people the opportunity to crew a sailing boat called Moosk as part of the International Tall Ships Race. This summer a group of five plus Cassie Rudall, the North Somerset MV worker, joined Moosk in Plymouth and during the next week they sailed across to St Malo in France. These are the reports from the crew starting with Josh Ormond who's initial one week on board turned into a two month adventure around Europe....

Josh When I was told about the chance to volunteer to sail in the Tall Ships race, I naturally wanted to, and as there was a last minute space made available I found out I had a place just two days before leaving. The delivery trip to ST Malo was good fun and we had the chance to enjoy the sun on the beach and swim in the sea. They also stopped of at some channel Islands along the way. When I got to France I made it clear that I would like to continue in the races and was fortunate enough to be invited to continue on the boat as a volunteer. After saying goodbye to the departing crew, who were a great bunch of people, I at least had a new crew to look forward to meeting.



During the races, we did everything from cleaning and cooking, not easy on a pitching boat, to setting and taking down the sails, steering and fixing things, which inevitably broke as the boat was being pushed hard in an attempt to win. This involved me having to climb the mast on a few occasions to repair something, usually a blown bulb.

Living on a cramped boat, it is easy to get to know people well and you have some great laughs and enjoy the experience, which could often be challenging with rough, cold and wet weather, yet exciting too with the competitive side to sailing.

After a good, often eventful sail, having contended with engine breakdowns and broken rigging and having sighted hundreds of dolphins along the way, I looked forward to the parties that greeted us in every port. This was the perfect way to round off a voyage and enjoy the festivities with the crew, and others from competing boats.

During the races I gained my competent crew and watch leader qualification. This was after visiting France, Portugal, Spain and Belgium and sailing nearly three thousand miles and all as a volunteer!

The owners of the boat have since asked me to sail again, which I am really looking forward to. I found it an enjoyable and rewarding experience, and would recommend it to anyone.

It is evident that the opportunities offered to young people through Millennium Volunteers, are extremely worthwhile.

Joshua Ormond



Torquay Cup. What Josh has not revealed is that out of the 3000 young people who crewed the Tall Ships over the summer, he won the Torquay Cup which was awarded for the first time to a young trainee crew member for outstanding individual achievement and personal effort. – an amazing achievement! Josh is keen to pursue a career in sailing and Cremyll Sailing and Young Bristol are now seeking the funding to make this opportunity happen.

Lucy When someone tells you ‘ah it’ll be an experience of a lifetime’ you tend to become slightly dubious, everything seems to be an experience of a lifetime these days!! I can however; whole heartedly say that the week I spent onboard Moosk, in the tall ships race was certainly an experience of a lifetime.

When we arrived in Plymouth early on Saturday afternoon we were all a bit quiet and nervous, I knew two of the other volunteers on board from school but as for the rest I could only look forward to getting to know them! We were eager to get on the boat and out to sea, as it was a sweltering afternoon. I must admit I was quite shocked when I saw Moosk, I don’t really remember

what I was expecting to see but she was certainly smaller than anything I could have imagined! We dumped our stuff on board and somehow the girls were convinced by Rob (first mate) and Charlie (who is going to complete the race) that the girls normally like a bit more privacy and therefore go up front. We were well and truly conned! One might say that the sleeping arrangements were cosy!

As the sun set and the rest of England were glued to their T.V. screens watching England's world cup dreams get crushed, we sailed across to Salcombe; I'm not quite sure how I can do justice in describing that journey. The sun shone, the wind blew and the sails billowed, we arrived in Salcombe at dusk and enjoyed a wonderful meal and birthday cake. Rob had organised a surprise birthday cake for our skipper Peter who had the pleasure of spending his birthday in our wonderful company!

Sunday was a long day as we made our way across to Guernsey. We split in two watches which gave us a chance to really get to know the other members of our watch; we decided that our watch would be 'pink watch'. It's quite funny how off course you can get when you're meant to be navigating a straight course! Poor Rob (and Josh) was stuck with Nicola and me on his watch, with my bad cups of tea and Nicola's one liner songs and laughing fits, we actually gave Rob nightmares, obviously in the best possible sense of a nightmare!!

You seem to lose track of time at sea and whilst the days were long and it seems we were out at sea for weeks, overall the time flew by. We spent a couple of wonderful days in Guernsey where we got to know a French boat who would also be sailing to Saint Malo. Our crew had the pleasure of experiencing a meal 'à la Lucy and Nic.' whilst we were in Guernsey, the galley still hasn't fully recovered!!! We left Guernsey early one morning for Ile Chausey a picturesque French channel island which doubled in size at low tide! We spent the afternoon on the island at the beach and in the slightly chilly sea where we met up with the French boat from Guernsey. Nic. and I had been challenging the boys to a rugby game so finally we played; it was girls Vs boys so we quickly trained up Catherine with our limited skill and knowledge. It soon became a big game with the French boat, mixed teams of course (Tall ships is all about international friendship!). That evening still covered in sand we enjoyed a wonderful meal up on deck watching our crew mates learn how to use the small off-board motor on the dinghy.

We left Ile Chausey for Saint Malo, at the time I didn't really realise it because I was excited to get to Saint Malo but that was our last leg, we wouldn't be sailing again. We were pretty exhausted after a long morning sailing and dying for a shower (still covered in sand!!), so when we arrived in Saint Malo to hundreds of people watching it felt amazing. We came in behind a huge Uruguayan ship (I'm sure her fenders were bigger than the girls sleeping quarter!), we certainly felt in the shadows of all these huge ships. Rob and Peter reassured us that people have way more respect for the crews of smaller boats, especially 100 year old small boats!

When we arrived we were quick to tidy the boat up, we scrubbed the decks and put the sails away neatly, we were shown all sorts of fancy ways to coil rope and before long Moosk was 'ship shape and Bristol fashion!!' The following days in Saint Malo were amazing; there was a festival atmosphere the whole time we were there. We watched France get in to the world cup finals in the square of a beautiful old French town, the feeling was amazing! We made friends with the Spanish boat next to us and managed to get ourselves invited on board for lunch one day, their boat was a swanky hotel in comparison to Moosk (still I preferred Moosk's character!). We joined up with the Spanish crew for some of the activities; most ships had a crew at least three times the size of ours! We managed to beat our skipper's old boat at tug-of-war making him very proud of us all!

I remember one night we all got back to the boat quite late and decided to just sit up on deck and chat. We spent the night just laughing with each other, it sounds so clichéd but it really is moments like that which you never forget.

I feel so privileged to have had the opportunity to sail the most beautiful boat, on the 50th anniversary of the Tall Ships race with an amazing crew. I feel privileged that I hoisted the main sail, that I wrote in the log and that I navigated the sea; I feel privileged to have achieved my competent crew award and to have spent a week getting to know some amazing people. I can't wait to get back out on the sea; I think a couple of us are even thinking of going sailing together in the Christmas holidays!

It really was a once in a lifetime experience.

Catherine Sailing across the Channel was an odd experience, certainly very interesting. A week aboard a 100-year-old sailing boat built with 10 beds but with 14 of us on board at times, sleeping in a hammock with no headroom amongst a pile of fenders, waking up damp, and having no shower. And then once in harbour actually being excited upon entering a real washroom block, with showers, hot water, proper toilets...

When travelling on cross-channel ferries I'd always thought that being on a small boat so low in the water, which always looks so dark, would be scary, that you'd just end up imagining all the depth beneath you. But it wasn't like that; on open sea it didn't feel like water, just became aware of the boat and nothing else. It was really strange, sort of like flying. It didn't move like larger boats either; it didn't lurch, just rolled from side to side, or remained leaning at an angle.

At sea my main problem was the sudden wave of motion sickness whenever I tried to go below deck, so that it was impossible, at least for the first few days, to fetch warmer clothing and seasickness tablets whilst travelling, and so I

decided to pack a bag every morning, whilst we were still in harbour, with everything that I thought I'd need for the day.

We spent about fifty hours at sea, and since most of the stuff like setting up the sails and cleaning the boat was done at only either end of the journey, and as our courses were pretty straight, I spent that time sat on deck, where we'd keep a look-out for lobster pots and tie various knots. It was so tiring as well, for some reason, so I'd keep trying to sleep. On open sea that was such a strange feeling, because you could go to sleep for a while, and then wake up and the view would be exactly the same, just sea and the horizon, and you could keep falling asleep and waking up over and over again and still nothing would change, and it seems so eternal you start thinking you're dead. I got some pretty weird dreams too.

Coming into harbour at St Malo was amazing. Ships always seem really exciting, and I've only seen tall ships singly or in pairs before, and here there were absolutely loads of yachts and small boats and then about thirty really big ships, all of them really different and from loads of different countries. Some of the largest ships had crews in uniforms, which made them appear very serious and superior, until the same crews were there at the harbour disco, very obvious since they were still in their white outfits complete with pompom-topped berets.

It was great how there was such a mix of people, even aboard our boat, all taking part in the same thing. The mood often seemed quite heavy; it didn't have the same lightness that you usually get with groups of people like on school trips. I don't know why that was, there was a kind of seriousness about it; maybe it was getting to know people so well in such a short time. It was like some kind of stage of life. It was so peculiar and worthwhile. I'd love to do it again.

Nicola On Saturday 1st of July I met 5 people that I had either never met before or barely knew. These were the people who I would be spending the next week with. We drove down to Plymouth playing 'I spy' to pass the time! The journey seemed to take ages... I'm not sure if that's because we were playing 'I spy' or because of all the excitement and anticipation!

When we got to Plymouth we found the boat and met the skipper the mate and Charlie who was doing the whole race. We set sail to Salcombe almost straight away after a briefing and quick lunch. At first the sailing was quite confusing with all the different ropes and names for the ropes and boat parts but by the end of the week we understood most of it and could (almost) haul the sails by ourselves. When we arrived at Salcombe we ate bangers and mash and sang happy birthday to Peter. We soon settled down into our cramped beds and bunks. Although the beds were small and you couldn't turn over without kicking the person above, they were plenty big enough if you were as tired as we were! There wasn't much time to sleep, we got woken up early by Peter the skipper so we had enough time to eat breakfast, scrub the decks, clean the toilet and the galley and set sail across the channel by 9 o'clock. We sailed to Guernsey which was about 60 miles. It took all day so

Over the week we became more confident and our communication and team working skills improved. It was sad we had to leave after having such an enjoyable week. I didn't want the week to ever end. It was an experience I will remember forever.