

## Macushla Trip to Scotland & Norway - June 2011 Report & Photos by Joe McPeake



Dan O'Donnell, Joe McPeake, Susan Kavanagh

Macushla crewed by Joe McPeake, Susan Kavanagh and Dan O'Donnell **departed Howth on Sunday evening 6th June** at 8.15pm and met strong northerly winds in the Irish Sea with gusts up to 40 knots. This was a baptism as this was the first long trip of the season.

We **called into Bangor**, Belfast Lough to collect some charts from Todds and continued northwards to Corpach near **Fort William** to the entrance of the Caledonian Canal. We arrived there at 9.30am Tuesday morning. Unfortunately with the amount of time taken to register and waiting for yachts to come down the Neptune steps which is a series of 8 loughs. We only made about 10 miles progress in the first day through the canal.

Second day we over-nighted in **Fort Augustus** being Wednesday and on Thursday, we **arrived in Inverness**, refueled, purchased our supplies and headed through the sea lough at 3.30pm in the afternoon.

The plan was to try and head as far north as possible but the winds were hitting us and eventually on passing **Fair Isle** we took a course for Bergen, Norway. We **arrived in Bergen** at 2.30am on Sunday morning.



Macushla



Up the Loughs of the Caledonian Canal



**In a lock on the Caledonian Canal**

Joe McPeake returned to Dublin for a funeral and Susan and Dan O'Donnell continued up the Norwegian coast to **Trodheim** taking the inland route.

Joe McPeake returned on Wednesday evening and having purchased additional supplies **left Trodheim** and headed north.



We continued on a 24 / 7 basis on a rolling 2 hour watch 4 hours off. The weather from Trondheim to Rorvik was very kind and the hours of daylight had now increased to 24 hours. With the wind continuing to be in a northerly direction we motor sailed from Trondheim passing many islands.



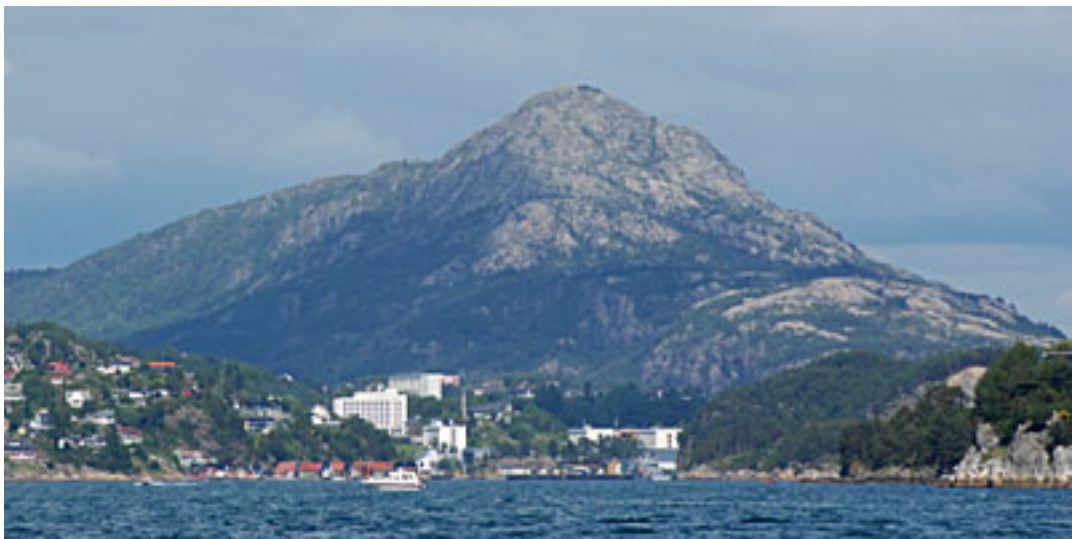
**The building with the big grey door housed U Boats of the 11th flotilla in WW2**

The scenery was exquisite and having passed Rorvik we saw our first sea eagles and from then on we saw further sightings including some spectacular displays near the **islands of Traena**.





The weather was incredibly warm the further we went north. The temperatures was reaching 22 degrees. On ringing Dublin at this time they were telling us that the temperature was only 11 or 12 degrees and pouring rain where we had lovely sunshine, lovely temperatures, flat seas, magnificent scenery, beautiful wildlife.



**Going from Hjellestad to Kristiansund**

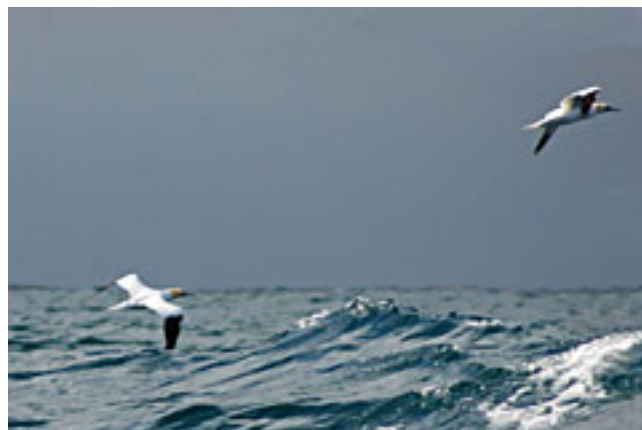
We reached the magical number of 66 degrees 33 minute north on Friday night. At this stage we had picked up a rope on the prop and having stopped and removed a considerable portion we made it into Husoy harbour in the **island of Traena** at 66 degrees 33 degrees north. This was a picturesque fishing port which hosts the monument to the Arctic Circle.



**Arctic Circle Monument in Husoy, in Traena**

Joe McPeake endeavored to get into the water to see if he could remove the remnants of the warp but this proved a feat too cold for his metabolism. We refueled and resupplied on Saturday morning, fished around the island catching so many cold fish and saw spectacular displays of sea eagles with ravens attacking the sea eagles to protect their young and similar attacks on seagulls to ward off the sea eagles.

At 3.00pm we headed south and continued **south for Inverness** with a wind behind us. We did a Formula One pit stop in **Lerwick** arriving in at 12.15pm on Wednesday morning and having refueled we managed to get a couple of drinks in a pub with no name which Dan O'Donnell sourced with his inimitable ability to find public houses.



We **left Lerwick** within the hour and continued to head south. We **arrived back into Inverness** having covered 750 miles in 4.5 days at 6.30am on Thursday morning, On the way south we saw minke whales, Orcas, and quite spectacular attacks by Artic scoolas on ganets in order to force the ganets into the sea and to regurgitate their fish. It was quite spectacular to see these aggressive birds attacking the ganets who, as we all know, are very large birds.

We **departed Inverness** on Friday morning and exited the canal on Sunday morning but unfortunately the issue of the water on the prop meant that we had to find the services of a diver to remove the remnants. We **left Fort William** on Sunday at 5.15pm and **arrived in to Howth on Tuesday 28th June** at 1.30am.

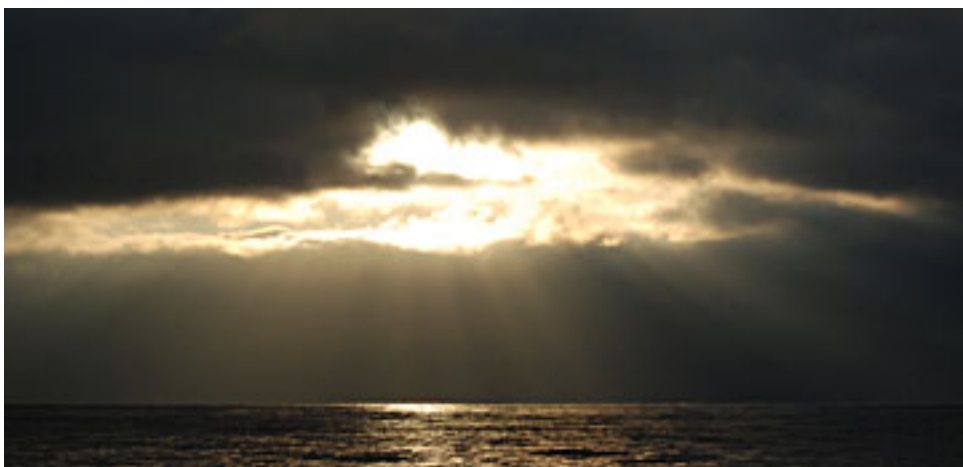
We had a superb trip, brilliant weather and would recommend a visit to this area to anyone as it is unique, spectacular and relatively unchallenging. We would point out that navigation on the Norwegian coast is interesting. For example Rorvik, an island that we stopped at to refuel has over 6,000 rocks around the island, nevertheless, navigation marks and charts are very good in the area.



**Oil Rig**



**Oil Rig Service Ship**



**At sea at night**

**Norwegian Houses**





**A Grass Roof house**

## Some boats we met



**MV Deutschland**

