

# The First Voyage of Lumina – post 1

## Sailing to Svalbard

Lumina is a Boreal 47 built in 2018 and we are the second owners having bought it in the spring of this year. I never intended to be buying another boat but having looked at this particular marque several times before but always they are for sale in foreign parts and are rare on the market as well, maybe one a year. Then Lumina popped up and having vowed that if one turned up on the British market I should have a go at it, we put in an offer and a couple of months later took ownership of her in Lymington.



Now the Berthon Boat company has one of the premier marinas in the country with teams of people who can do anything you could possibly want to your boat from a complete rebuild to a valet and polish. As you can imagine I felt perfectly at home there, so, as soon as we could, we escaped to deliver Lumina home to our mooring at Rudders Boatyard in Milford Haven. It was a cold and bumpy ride at times but we made it back in just over a week. The English Channel in February is not a busy place for yachts so I suppose it wasn't such a surprise when out of the blue one day we got called by a Coastguard helicopter asking if they could drop someone onboard for a training exercise. This was duly accomplished, and we welcomed him on board as our very first visitor and a very exciting thing to happen and a privilege to get first hand experience of a helicopter winching operation without the drama of your boat sinking or a medical emergency!



Our first visitor came by air

So now its early May and we are off on the big trip to Svalbard, or Spitzbergen in old money.

After several trips round Lidl in Pembroke Dock to and being warned of their policy of maximum number of the same item that you can buy, we loaded the ship and set off from our mooring at Rudders Boat Yard for the traditional pint at the Griffin Inn at Dale. After a quiet night on anchor in Dale, we headed out of Milford Haven into the swell and chop left over from the previous days weather but once through Jack Sound between Skomer Island and the mainland we had the wind in the right angle to sail. Powering our way across St Brides Bay to Ramsey Sound which we hit at full flow and were literally blasted out northwards hitting our speed record to date of 12.7 knots.

After Ramsey sound we set course for Wicklow in Ireland. Unfortunately, as we neared the Irish coast the wind died and we had to motor the last few miles into the harbour. The yacht club were just finishing their mid-week racing and so, with their bar open, there was only one place to go for a pint.



Paintings on the harbour wall in Wicklow

I was due on a nursery just North of Dublin to do a little job so the following day we motored the 40 or so miles up to the Howth Yacht Club for a couple of nights. With a successful day under my belt on the nursery we once again headed north. With no wind and thick fog we slowly motored through the gloom with our eyes glued to the plotter that showed us ships with AIS (Automatic Identification System) – this transmits their position and ours and it shows it on the chart on the screen. If they are considered a collision risk it will calculate either where you will hit them or the closest the two vessels will come. We also have Radar but unfortunately on this boat it is an old model that does not link with the electronic chart as it did on Acheron, so the display looks a bit like what you would see in the movies and is a lot more difficult to see.

Well, fog eventually cleared and after about 16hrs of motoring we were nearly at Larne in Northern Ireland and pulled into a quiet bay to anchor and wait for the tide north again. The tides through the North Channel between Northern Ireland and Scotland run fiercely, not

quite the same as the Bristol Channel but not worth motoring against unless you really have to, so after a few hours sleep we were off again. There is a TSS (traffic Separation Scheme) in the North Channel which is like a dual carriageway for big ships. If we cross we are supposed to do it a right angles but we were able to just clip the corner so it didn't affect our course. These are usually found in pinch points like the Dover Straight where big ship traffic is heavy and it is important that they don't crash, however today it was very quiet.



The wind was favourable so we were mostly able to sail across to Craighouse on the Isle of Jura, although the last couple of hours needed to be motor sailed so that we could get close enough to the wind to reach our destination. We picked up a mooring buoy in Craighouse Bay and later went to the Jura Hotel, next to the distillery for a pint.

It was great to be back in familiar waters and with Oban our next port of call we had a great sail all the way. The pontoons in Oban were very quiet but now have to go on the outside one which is reserved for larger vessels. With a sense of my new found importance we went to pay and of course had to pay for the privilege of those extra couple of metres!





If ever you are in Oban there is one place you have to visit

So not a lot to report from the first week but stick with it, many adventures to come but hopefully not too adventurous!

Tim and Carol