

Lumina through the North West Passage

Landfall in Greenland

Post 3

It was just as well that we had not tried to find the "gap" in the floating ice tongue that we had been looking at on the ice charts because as we started to close on the coast we could see a band of ice across in front of us. This turned out to be our elusive tongue of old ice, that had continued

its move up the coast with the current. Fortunately, by turning to the North we could follow it and come round the end to once again point towards the coast. It is interesting although when you think



Safely moored in the harbour at Paamiut.

Go by the blue boat, they said, its not going anywhere as the engine is out being repaired.

We met the owners friend the next day and apparently a skin fitting had failed letting water flood the engine room and it nearly sank.

Amy said I looked old!

Bloody hell, we have been at sea for 14 days, crossed an ocean against the wind, It's the skippers birthday and he can look old and tired if he wants!

about it, its not that surprising that ice and icebergs follow the current and whilst influenced, are not generally affected by the wind. This is of course because 90% of it is underwater. The other interesting fact about icebergs is that they are supposed to turn as they go due to the Coriolis effect (same as water going down the plug hole), however once you start looking into it as I just did just now, it's such a subject that many people appear to have had a good time at sponsors expense doing research on the subject! I am not sure how all this relates to the brash ice that one finds out at sea which has come all the way round Cape Farewell from the East coast. Despite having travelled literally a thousand miles or so, it seems to stay together rather than dispersing over a wide area. This is useful as it can



then be shown on an ice chart and we can easily navigate the clear water.

In this area, there is both the sea ice that has come from the East coast and icebergs of varying sizes that are coming from the glaciers up the fjords we are crossing. The sea ice here is 10-15 miles off the coast whereas the icebergs and bits of them are all around the coast. A bit like errant

Next day the skipper is looking a bit more lively and Tony's bottle of bubbly seems to help too!

teenagers, they are in all the places you don't want them, blocking channels you want to go through and coming into anchorages. Here they just float around with the tide making a nuisance of themselves until they break down further, end up beached on the shore or get blown back out to sea. You get used to waking up in the night to a gentle banging on the hull and see a piece of ice floating past. So far these have not caused any great hassle, as they gently



Carol in the entrance lobby of the ancient house

side by.

As we neared the coast the wind dropped and the sun came out. In the distance were snow capped mountains and it was my birthday. One of the best birthdays ever, we had nearly reached our destination and a cake made by Amy and secreted on the boat appeared together with candles and a bottle from Tony was cracked open.

Anyway, we were here, Greenland, This is IT! So we had crossed our first ocean, everyone had spent longer at sea than ever

before, done the longest passage and had our first touse with ice. After a good sleep, we had what is probably the most anticipated Full English breakfast in history. Its planning had taken a fortnight and it was a breakfast to remember and be savoured.

The first anchorage had quite a bit of ice floating around in a constantly changing juggle, we went ashore for an explore and to try and find an abandoned settlement we could not see from the boat. After walking across a small isthmus to have a look into the big fjord next door and a bay jammed with ice we came across the remains on our side. There was nothing in the pilot book about the settlement. It could have been an ancient Norse

settlement, from the viking era, but as the climate got colder around the 15th century these people died out to be replaced by the Greenlanders. There were a number of walls, although being close to the beach part of the settlement had been eroded away. One house was better preserved than the rest, with the entrance tunnel with a store room on one side, and the main living room on the other side. The other interesting feature was that of the whole area that we walked, here was the only place with decent deep soil, either because they had chosen to dwell there or they



had built the soil up with seaweed etc to grow crops. Either way it was very noticeably different to the rest of the vegetation in the area. There were also some graves a little further away, from people from the settlement perhaps, but an indicator of hard times as obviously there was little ability to dig deep in the frozen ground. These were similar to those we had seen in Svalbard last year, but there they were from whalers and sealers as there were not native peoples in that area.

Got to look after the Gin and Tonic ice

were deserted and well kept, holiday or summer homes but unfortunately no one to ask. A pretty desolate place with only passing icebergs for company, although at least the scene would be ever changing. On the way back to the dinghy we collected some really massive mussels from what must be the cleanest water in the world

The second day dawned windy with the boat tugging on the anchor from side to side, however having been on anchor in storms before we had full confidence in it and sure enough we never budged an inch. At least the batteries

After a couple of nights we left the first anchorage to move about 15 miles up the coast to an inlet with a village called Narssalik. We moored in a sheltered inlet just past the village and the next day took the dinghy to shore and made the short walk across to it. All the houses

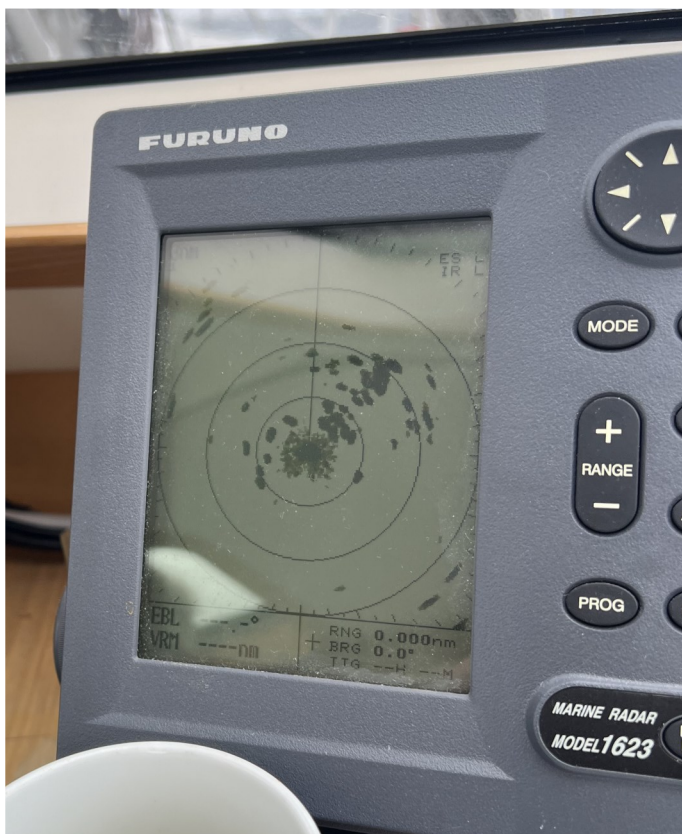
Climbing in fishermans wellies is not that easy, well that's my excuse





were well charged by the wind turbine although those in the back cabin maybe didn't appreciate its noise and vibration. Later in the day Ben and Indie went and collected some more mussels
In the evening we had gone for another run ashore and the young climbers attacked a small crag whilst the old lags climbed up to look at our future route for tomorrow.

Unfortunately the scene was not looking too good, as whilst spectacular there was noticeably more ice around and the inside passage through islands to our next destination looked completely chocked with ice.



We have decided that icebergs in anchorages and around where you want to go are a ***A rather busy plot on the radar with a little more ice than one would like!***

bit like sinister beings from Dr Who. You never see them move but turn away or sleep for the night and they creep up on you.

Sure enough when we lifted the anchor at 5am there was some heavy ice that had made its way into the entrance to our anchorage and stretched as far as the eye could see. Surely it must just be local? But as we twisted and turned between the small

bergs and bergy bits—anything from the size of a house or larger to that of a suitcase, none of which would be a good idea to hit at any speed. After an hour and a half or so of this we eventually came to the open sea some miles from our anchorage. With lots of ice visible further out at sea, and what we had come through nearer the coast we set a course northward to Paamiut only to have to make detours and slow down to negotiate patches of ice. Luckily the forecasted wind would not materialise until later, but we had to hope that the entrance to Paamiut was clear when

we got there or we would have to find somewhere else to hide. It seems that the ice we had seen out at sea some days ago as we were trying to make land had now made its way north and we were right in it. Luckily the last few miles were ice free as was the entrance to the harbour and we slipped in, past the burnt out wreck of the Greenland Star, which famous Bob had told us about. With a few hand signals from a large trawler on one of the docks, we headed on to a space on the fuel berth. We would need to fill up before we left so now as a good a time as ever. I went up to the office and the lady there was quite happy to sell me diesel provided I had Mastercard but that was about as far as her English went so we were transferred to her son on the phone who explained that we could raft up next to the blue fishing boat that would not be going anywhere. It also turned out that the lady, Mette Petersen came from Upernavik which would be our final stop in Greenland in a couple of months before heading for Baffin Island. So with instructions to say hello there for her we pulled the hose over and took on 460 litres of diesel. This equates to about 50% of our capacity, so on this part of the trip we still had a good safety margin, and can confidently motor continuously for about 10—12 days if necessary giving about a 1000 mile range.

With a tank full of diesel and the rain pouring down a day relaxing was called for and the diesel heater kept us nice and cosy. Hopefully the weather will clear up and maybe tomorrow we will explore this small town.

So, for those who entered the competition last week the answer was of course that she was sitting on the wrong side of the boat—the genoa sheet that she was pulling was the side not being used. With the boat heeling as it was the sail was on the other side of the boat.

First one to answer was..... Linda Westoby! And she wins the first prize of a days sailing in Greenland. (just let us know when you are arriving...)

Thanks to all who replied, there is more sailing knowledge out there than I thought!

Good night from a very wet and chilly Paamiut

And here is some map links:

[**Paamiut, where we are now**](#)

[**The anchorage at Narsalik**](#)

[**Danish Ice charts**](#)

[**Lumina website with tracker and old blogs**](#)