

## 'Zippy' Hunter Horizon 23 - Clayton Grove & Adona El-Murr

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Limekilns to Whitby (385 nm) 11-23 July 2023

### Background

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We bought Zippy in December 2020 and spent 18 months refitting her in Banff before moving her to the Forth Cruising Club in 2022. Clay had sailing experience but Adona had never sailed and FCC has been a wonderfully supportive and inspiring community for us to embark on a steep learning curve together. Last year we went as far as Lindisfarne and gave ourselves one week to get there. This year we cruised to Lindisfarne in two days and went as far Whitby! Now we have sailed Zippy over 1,091 nautical miles, we have fine-tuned how we negotiate and deepened our cooperation and trust in each other - sharing the sailing experience has definitely strengthened our teamwork and enriched our marriage.

### Logbook

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#### Monday, 10 July 2023: Aberdeen to Limekilns by car

Departure: 18:00 BST | Arrival: 20:30 BST | Distance: 116 miles | Duration: 2:30 hrs

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*We arrived at in Limekilns as the downpour started. Comically crouched in the 6 ft pram dingy under an ineffective umbrella, we rowed out to Zippy (and our wet weather gear), giggles getting louder as we got soggy. We got her to the pontoon, rigged a washing line and blasted the heater before turning in... hoping for a break in the rain to bring our supplies aboard in the morning before departure.*

#### Tuesday, 11 July 2023: Limekilns to Eyemouth by boat

08:15 - 20:45 BST | Distance Run: 61 nm | Duration: 12:30 hrs | Average Speed: 4.9 kts  
Overcast with 9-26 kts SW-W winds.

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*We were on a broad reach most of the way, sometimes with under a reefed main and jib, a satisfying 5 knot speed most of the way and the inevitable joy of the weather being better than expected. We had both reefs in the main sail by mid afternoon as 25 knot SW-W winds gave us 6 knots of speed and a spike in excitement past North Berwick. We feel confident and happy having again done this leg in one sail.*

#### Wednesday, 12 July 2023: Eyemouth to Lindisfarne by boat

09:20 - 13:45 BST | Distance Run: 21 nm | Duration: 06:25 hrs | Average Speed: 3.4 kts  
Overcast with a slight sea. 9-15 kts W winds.

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*Captain Clayton bought Zippy her first fishing rod before we departed. An overcast pleasant sail with Clay easily catching our supper before we entered the anchorage, heralded by a dozen seals poking their head out the water sensing the 4 mackerel onboard. Then the rain chased the dingy to shore, quickly catching us so that we left a trail of water wandering around the museum in our salopettes! It was immensely satisfying watching tourists take pictures of Zippy in the idyllic anchorage. We have gotten here in two days rather than last year's cautious seven - it is a gratifying to note the growing confidence we have in our seamanship, the boat and each other. At about 22:00 Clay saying 'We have a big problem' woke Adona up. Wind over tide had caused the anchor rope to, surprise, wrap around the keel. We sorted it once, we sorted it twice, we rescued a runaway dingy with the boat hook when it excitedly*

*bounced off the cleat amidst the action. Clay set up an 'anchor angel' and we checked it until the tide turned; problem solved.*

**Thursday, 13 July 2023: Lindisfarne to Blyth by boat**

06:45 - 13:45 BST | Distance Run: 37.1 nm | Duration: 09:00 hrs | Average Speed: 4.1kts  
Partially sunny but cold and becoming overcast. 10-20kts W-SW winds.

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*We left before the tide change to avoid mishap and Clay went to bed when we cleared the bay. Adona had a magical morning in the cool sunlight – Bamburgh Castle, the Farne Islands, Dunstanburgh Castle visible with incredible clarity and no sign of other humans. 'There was an unforgettable moment when I realised what I had learnt without consciously learning it.' Still there was room for a couple of whoopsies: Clay throwing the colander overboard with the carrot peel and us perfectly executing a 'colander overboard drill' under sail rescuing it from a watery grave; and a toilet regurgitation requiring an arduous sanitation mission. We had a reef in by the time we reached Royal Northumberland Yacht Club (RNYC) Blyth, just ahead of the forecasted storm. We celebrated with a drink in the yacht club bar (it really is a bar on a boat), much needed showers, and an early night.*

**Friday, 14 July 2023: Blyth to Newcastle upon Tyne to Blyth by bus**

08:30 - 15:30 BST | Distance Run: 0 nm | Duration: 00:00 hrs | Average Speed: NA kts  
Partial cloud and mild showers.

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*We had a day being tourist in Newcastle upon Tyne, with the highlights being the Grainger Market (a world tour of amazing food and... cherry season - we have gorged ourselves on sweet rounds of sunshine swinging by the river promenade), epically located Wetherspoons (Quayside was beautiful), and a trip to the Discovery Museum (the first steam turbine boat 'Turbina', and an incredible model of industry on the Tyne in 1929). Adona is reminded of everything she learnt about the industrial revolution in school.*

**Saturday, 15 July 2023: Blyth to Town Centre to Blyth by foot**

12:00 - 16:00 BST | Distance Run: 0 nm | Duration: 00:00 hrs | Average Speed: NA kts  
Windy and pouring with rain on the way home.

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*We read about a 'Heritage Centre' attached the Boathouse Cafe, alas we wandered a harbour side maze to find a fenced off shed as the storm hit. Rain. So much rain. Lunch and shelter in an old movie theater turned Wetherspoons and then a search to replenish our cherry supply in a brief tease of sunshine. Walking back, the road to the harbour became a torrential river and us sodden travelers (the dinghy would have been useful).*

**Sunday, 16 July 2023: Blyth to Stevenson Railway Museum to Blyth by bus**

08:35 - 16:00 BST | Distance Run: 0 nm | Duration: 00:00 hrs | Average Speed: NA kts  
Weather: Sunny with partial cloud and very cold.

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*While we may have missed the Hartlepool Tall Ship Regatta but we are just in time for the Steam Regatta at the Stevenson Railway Museum. We collected swan feathers strewn across a pond bank. Steam train rides, cream tea, museum, steam engine repair workshop tours, marching bands, and a collection of Britain's railway enthusiasts made for a delightful - and colourful - day. It is great to see the*

youth volunteers learning from the seasoned elders and fascinating to be reminded how the coal industry has shaped this part of the coast and the country.

### **Monday, 17 July 2023: Blyth to Whitby by boat**

04:10 - 16:00 BST | Distance Run: 56.6 nm | Duration: 12:10 hrs | Average Speed: 4.7 kts  
Weather: Cold partially cloudy with the occasional shower with gusty 8-20 kts W winds.

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*This is the day! The storm has past and our final destination awaits. We had an early morning out and Clay went to bed (note wife is also liberal with her napping). New Adona milestones, the tillerpilot goes on and off with more grace and less profanity and she is now apprenticed to the art of sail trimming - a far cry from this time last year when the topping lift was mistaken for the jib sheet much to the displeasure of Clay's head. We have been enjoying the play of being goosewinged. Arriving in Whitby and having the bridge open for us as the sole boat was extraordinary (Zippy having red carpet treatment!). This is the biggest harbour we have been in to date and Whitby is full of tourists. We had a fish and chip dinner with a fish as big as our heads and icecream – it is warm and finally feels like summer!*

### **Tuesday, 18 July 2023: Whitby exploration by foot and an unexpected sail**

08:00 - 16:00 BST | Distance Run: <2 nm | Duration: 01:30 hrs | Average Speed: NA kts  
Weather: Lumpy sea with 15 kts N and heavy rain.

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*The town is full of interesting places. We had a lovely breakfast and climbed up to the old priory, in our enjoyment of the view and being outside in the warm, we forgot to visit the church! We swung by the Captain Cook museum and Adona discovered the meaning of 'jet black'. BJ joined us and we went out for a quick sail and caught a mackerel supper before making it back for the last bridge opening. Lovely night of camaraderie, fresh food, drink and of course an icecream and go on the 2p machines!*

### **Wednesday, 19 July 2023: Whitby to Hartlepool by boat**

06:45 - 15:45 BST | Distance Run: 36.5 nm | Duration: 09:00 hrs | Average Speed: 4.1 kts  
Weather: Misty with cloud clearing to sun, cool becoming warm, 4-15 kts NW winds.

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*With an early goodbye to BJ, probably the last we see him before he leaves to Oz, we headed out. At 12 noon the GPS stopped working, Clay reckons he banged it with his elbow fishing yesterday and dislodged the waterproof seal. He took it a part, dried and reassembled it (my clever man) and it seems to be working fine. We stopped off Saltscar in a calm mirror of sea to catch some fish by the cardinal boy with a cheery bell. Catching some mackerel for bait, Clay caught a cod within about 30 seconds... followed by a whiting and a dab (both returned). It's such a pleasure to watch him fish, he is serene and relaxed while focused and is enjoying himself prodigiously.*

### **Thursday, 20 July, 2023: Hartlepool exploration on foot**

10:00 – 14:00 BST | Distance Run: 0 nm | Duration: 00:00 hrs | Average Speed: NA kts

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*We went to the National Museum of the Royal Navy, if not that informative of the Royal Navy itself, the 'old quay' motif was fun and interesting. It is more of a Napoleonic War museum, although apparently a big expansion is coming. The HMS Trincomalee was impressive and reminded us of the Unicorn in Dundee (turned out to be the same frigate design). We went for a local lunch and got supplies and extra*

*petrol for the epic voyage we have planned tomorrow.*

**Friday, 21 July 2023 – Saturday, 22 July 2023: Hartlepool to Anstruther by boat.**

08:20 - 14:30 + 1 day BST | Distance Run: 125 nm | Duration: 30:00 hrs | Average Speed: 4.2 kts

Weather: Cloudy/ cool to sunny/ warm, moderate sea becoming slight. 3-12 kts NNW-N-NE-SE winds.

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*There is a short weather window with the right conditions to get us back to the Forth. This is going to be our longest sail to date but the GPS has finally kaaked it (to be resurrected at home). We had to motor into the wind for four hours, it went off passing Amble just before dinner – a welcome relief. We started our shifts after 19:30, Captain did the stretch past the Farne Islands and #1 past Berwick, Captain to St Abb's Head. It was incredible past the Farnes to watch the lighthouse and observe the sectored lights, the excitement was palpable – as was the vigilance without our GPS! By 11:30 am on Saturday the Forth was approaching, we past to the east of the Isle of May to get a good look at and do some recon for a future trip. We reach familiar Anstruther, marked/marred by black crab pots within inches of the leading line, we see the boats on the pontoon start to float as we enter. Our milestone of 30 hours and 125 nm has done something to our psyche, we are already planning next years trip!*

**Sunday, 23 July 2023: Anstruther to... Anstruther by boat**

20:15 - 21:15 BST | Distance Run: 5.9 nm | Duration: 1:00 hrs | Average Speed: 5.9 kts

Weather: Cloudy and cool with heavy swell (1.8m occ. breaking), 10-15kts NE wind.

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*We had planned to leave this morning but the gust are up to 28 knots and we know exiting Anstruther harbour can be rocky and roly – of the three times #1 has been seasick, twice were here. We decide to do another overnight sail and depart on the evening tide. We dedicate the day to recharging our batteries, Adona writes and goes for a walk and coffee. Clayton visits the fisheries museum. We leave at 20:15, there is an easterly swell of 2 meters and we could not clear Ellie Ness. We edged our way back to Anstruther precariously. We commit ourselves to two tenets; check the swell as well as the wind, and avoid Anstruther unless necessary.*

**Monday, 24 July 2023: Anstruther to Limekilns by boat**

06:45 - 19:00 BST | Distance Run: 40 nm | Duration: 11:45 hrs | Average Speed: 3.5 kts

Weather: Sunny becoming cloudy, cool, slight sea with residual swell. 4-8kts NE-N-NW winds.

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*We made careful observations before departing Anstruther, again amazed at the changing sea. We have to motor sail to Inchkeith and anchor for lunch in order to make Limekilns for the tide. The seals are noisy and the pups adorable. The birds have fledged and its delightful to see the baby guillemots on the water with their parents, and comical passing pairs of puffins – the parent flying away and leaving the juvenile flapping ferociously but unable to lift itself. There is enough wind to tack the whole way home. We see the HMS Prince of Wales aircraft carrier anchored outside Rosyth and know we have a rare opportunity to get up close and personal, we go right in when there is no response to our VHF inquiry on the exclusion zone. Captain dips the ensign hoping for a response but summising it must only be reciprocated when the carrier is under sail. Within minutes we are intercepted by a police boat telling us we have breached the 250 m exclusion zone! Limekilns is a welcome sighs and Adona takes us in. We are 385 nm more experienced sailors, immensely gratified to share the cruising life with each other.*