

Tall ships cruise-in-company 2015

The first day was a very early start venturing across London to Gatwick, it was an odd experience for a boy from the country. As I arrived I saw three people from Rona walk right past me; I introduced myself to them and we got chatting. I was one of the first to arrive so more and more people kept arriving, it was difficult to remember their names at first. We all checked in and after a few hours of sitting around getting to know each other we finally boarded the plane; it was the first time I had been on a plane in many years so I was reasonably excited. Towards the end of the flight we flew over the most beautiful mountain range, snow covered the land for as far as we could see. We came into land at Alesund airport which was on an island within one of the many fjords. We got into two mini buses to get to the town and we had to go through two giant tunnels due to all the water. We arrived at the boat after an hour on the mini buses, everyone was exhausted but we were still excited to get to the boat and explore the town with everything going on. The next morning we had to be up early because it was the day of the parade of sail, the early start was shortly forgotten as the sun came out and seeing all of the other tall ships surrounded by these mountains was incredible. After the parade of sail was over all of the boats started the 405 nautical mile journey down to Kristiansand.

The next few days were very cold and wet but the scenery is something that I will never forget, being about 20 m out from shore with over 200m of water below us and massive mountains with cloud covered tops either side of us was a slightly surreal feeling. We came into Orsta which was the first of the host ports, it was a nice little town although there was not much there. We moved on the next morning and carried on sailing through the fjords to Meløy. That evening we were invited for a party on Eendracht and Golden Loewe which was a great experience. The next morning it was another early start as it was a big sail to get to Bergen, it was another wet day but it was exciting as it was going to be the first big city that we arrived at on our voyage. We had to do a night sail to make it to Bergen so we arrived at 2am the next morning. It was another early rise but everyone was eager to get up and go out exploring, we spent the day being tourists in Bergen visiting all of the sights even climbed up a massive mountain which had the most amazing views of the city. We left Bergen the next morning at 4am and did a short sail to Leirvik where we stopped for a few hours to explore as much as we could of this beautiful country. We then left Leirvik and headed for Sirevag, we sailed through the night and arrived at 6.45am. The boat was quite for a few hours as everyone tried catching up on as much sleep as possible before the next day. We woke up to the smell of pancakes which was a treat for a crew of 22, we then explored Sirevag for a few hours until we motored around the corner to a bay called south Elgeroya where we anchored and went swimming in the icy cold water. We left that evening then started the big journey to Kristiansand where we finally arrived at about 10am the next morning. That day was then spent cleaning out the boat completely and finding showers and toilets. The next day we hosted a party of our own which went really well and made some friends from lots of different countries. The next day was the crew parade which was so much fun running through the streets with crowds of people watching and cheering. Then that night was the crew party which was great fun as we met up with our friends from the party the day before and had a great time. The next morning was one of the hardest having to be off the boat by 4am to go to the airport, but being with all the amazing people from the boat made it a bit easier.

That was one of the best trips of my life, I made so many new friends for life and met some incredible people. It was an incredible experience and if I could do it next week my answer would be

Dominic Hall

absolutely. Also this trip really helped my sailing as I learned new skills such as helming techniques and new knots which have really helped me improved as a sailor. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of the bursary so thank you very much.