



WAYPOINTS

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Across the Pond:

Krogen 44' *Le Rêve* Makes Dream Crossing of Atlantic Ocean

*In July 2004 Bill and Joanne van Lenthe left their home waters of Lake Huron aboard their Carver 530 Voyager to begin the Great Loop. By the winter of 2005/2006, having made it to the Bahamas, they were truly hooked on the cruising lifestyle and began talking about a boat capable of crossing the Atlantic to Holland where they were born. They traded their Carver for *Le rêve*, a Krogen 44', and after getting to know her and making a few additions to her systems, this past summer Bill and his crew of four including Clyde Honeycutt, Eugene Kohlmetz, Mike Lankes and Bern Norfolk, made the trip "across the pond." Their trip of over 3500 miles across the open ocean thankfully was somewhat uneventful. What follows is an interview with Bill by Kadey-Krogen's Larry Polster regarding preparations, route and what "The Big Ride" (as the *Le rêve* blog called the trip) was really like.*

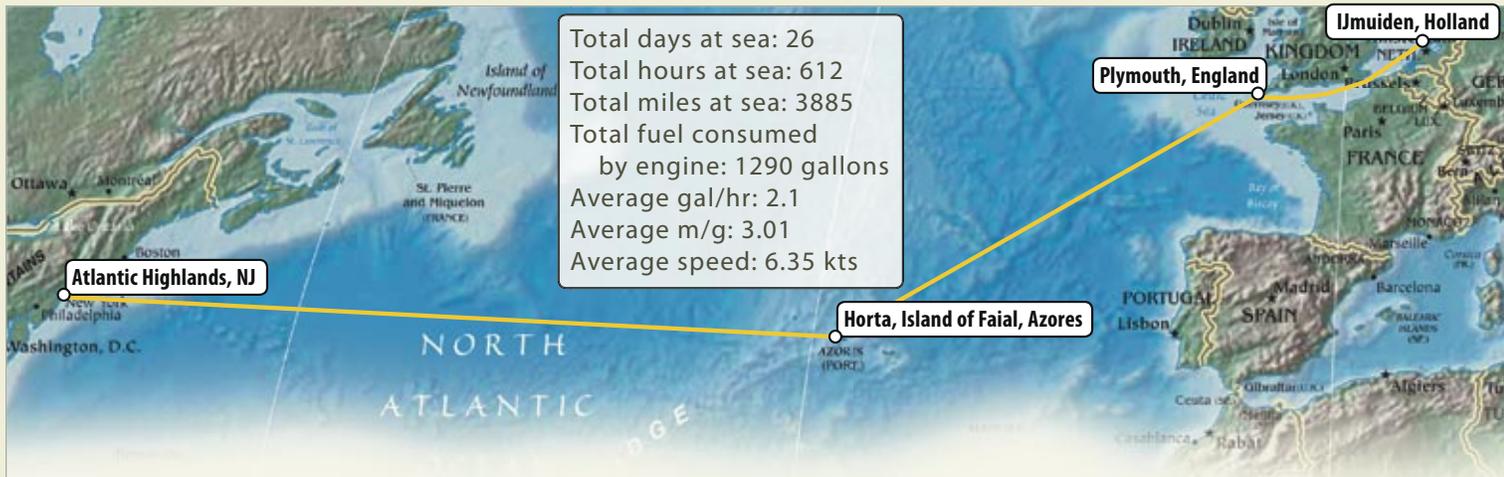
Larry: Most crossings involve a stop in Bermuda so the longest leg of the crossing would be the 1800 miles from Bermuda to the

Azores. Why did you opt to take the 2250 mile run straight to the Azores?

Bill: First of all, most people doing this trip leave from some point in Florida, and Bermuda would be a natural choice. As we had the boat in New York for the winter it would have added approximately 450 miles to the overall trip had we gone to Bermuda first. Knowing we had the range for a straight shot to the Azores,

The yachts that call at Horta traditionally leave a souvenir by painting on the dock. The crew of *Le rêve* marks their visit: (l to r) Bill van Lenthe, Eugene Kohlmetz, Clyde Honeycutt, Mike Lankes and Bern Norfolk.





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Larry: What was your watch schedule and how much traffic did you encounter?

Bill: We kept watches at all times. We had a schedule drawn up of 8 periods in 24 hours: 0800 hr to 1200 hr/ 1200 hr to 1600 hr/ 1600 hr to 1900 hr/ 1900 hr to 2200 hr/ 2200 hr to 0100 hrs/ 0100 hr to 0300 hr/ 0300 hr to 0500 hr and 0500 hr to 0800hr. The night watches were kept shorter as these are the most difficult.

We did see some traffic, however there were days that we did not see anything on the AIS (Automatic Identification System) screen. AIS would show us any ship within a range of approximately 15 nm, as well as all pertinent information such as course, speed, destination, closest point of approach, time to approach, and the name of the ship. Most of the traffic we’d see on AIS we could not see with the naked eye, even though sometimes they were within 4 to 5 nm away from us. On a clear day you should easily be able to see large ships as far away as 6 to 8 nm, perhaps further than that.

As I mentioned the traffic was light to some days nonexistent. This changed once we got closer to the English Channel, a bottle neck of ocean commerce to and from northern Europe.

The North sea was very busy as well. In these areas one would have to keep very diligent watch, and make changes to our course in the appropriate time in order to avoid a collision. One time when I was on watch we were clearly on a collision course with a 945-foot cargo ship. He was on my port side and according to the rules of the sea had to give way to me. Common sense in the boating world however says that the bigger you are the more right of way you have, and you don’t argue your right of way when the one approaching is close to 1000 feet in length! However in this case I could not turn to port to avoid him due to other traffic in the area, so I called him on the radio and asked him if he saw me, and if he planned to cross in front of me or behind me. He came back and said that he would alter course to starboard and pass me on the stern. It was quite interesting to see a 945-foot ship that had been coming straight for me alter course; all of a sudden I saw his port beam lights, and he crossed my path on the stern by less than a quarter mile.

One other container ship crossed in front of us and he was absolutely enormous (there was no concern of a collision with this one). I called him on the VHF and asked if he was the biggest container ship on the ocean. He said that there was actually one that was bigger by 60 feet. His dimensions were 1100 feet long at 100,000 tons, and he carried 8500 20-foot containers when fully loaded. It was enormous!!!

Other than having lots of traffic to look at in the English Channel, we also enjoyed the best weather of the entire trip. That deteriorated as we got closer to the Dutch coast, and we entered IJmuiden with drizzle and fog. Typical Dutch weather!!!!

Larry: I understand that you spent a good part of last winter preparing *Le rêve* for the journey. What major pieces of equipment did you add?

A windmill keeps watch on the Azores.



Horta, Faial Island, Azores, as seen from a nearby mountaintop

Bill: First thing needed was a “get home” engine. While the John Deere is a great engine, with our chosen route I had to decide between installing a gear box on the main shaft and having a hydraulic motor driven by either a larger generator or a separate engine, versus installing a completely stand-alone system with its own sail drive and prop. After talking to many people I decided to go for the latter. If I had chosen the former, and had a problem with either the main shaft, shaft bearing or main prop, the gear box would not have gotten me home.

So the decision was made to install a stand-alone system. Now what engine and sail drive to get? As I wanted to install a hydraulic pump to run the stabilizers in case I needed to use the get home system, I needed about a 2800 rpm engine. I also wanted a system that would really push the boat in a seaway. So many get home systems I see on cruising boats only allow 4 kts in flat calm water. The final decision was for the Nanni 60 hp diesel. It runs at 2800 rpm and would allow for about 6 kts in calm water. Nanni makes the engine for the Kubota line of equipment (or the other way around), and having had several Kubota tractors I think they make an excellent product.

The AIS that I had on the boat was only a receiving unit, and not a transmitting one (common for pleasure crafts). However I wanted the big boys to see me so they could at least try and avoid me rather than run

over me. So it was changed for a send and receive unit. Also, we had a fixed helm seat installed for the night watches. At least it kept us in place the odd time we happened to doze off!!! Lastly, we had a Spectra water maker installed which can produce up to 400 gallons of fresh water in a 24-hour period.

Larry: Was the trip what you expected?

Bill: The total duration of the trip was a little longer than I had expected. I had calculated the time from Atlantic Highlands to Horta to be a few days less than two weeks. As it turned out it was a couple of days more than two weeks. I believe this is due to the weather we experienced. Usually in early June the part of the Atlantic we crossed (south of 40 degrees lat.) is fairly calm with blue sunny skies. We saw only a few such days. Most days were cloudy



Le rêve in Vollenham, Holland



foggy, and/or rainy, all accompanied with a fair bit of wind. I had expected we would have some seas with substantial waves but certainly not as many days as we experienced.

In spite of the mostly unfavorable weather during the crossing I could not have been more happy with the performance of the Kadey-Krogen. Clyde Honeycutt described it best when he said, "It is quite interesting to see these large swells towering above the stern of the boat. It seems just as the following seas are about to come into the cockpit, *Le rêve* with little effort lifts her big broad butt over the waves. She reminds me of the grace, lightness of foot and elegance of watching a self-assured heavy-set girl dance." And I have to agree.

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Larry: Now that you are there, what are your plans?

Bill: Long range plans are that Joanne and I will stay in Europe for the next few years. Perhaps two or three. We plan to do the northern countries (Scandinavia) and eventually end up in the Mediterranean. Perhaps via the Rijn and the Danube. For now we will stay in Holland where there are endless possibilities to cruise.

Larry: Would you do it again?

Bill: I still need to reflect on the trip as a whole. The weather was certainly a bit rougher than anticipated and it is a long time at sea, especially with crew that you have never spent 24/7 with. It's not that the trip didn't give me a wonderful feeling of accomplishment, and it's not that I did not have wonderful crew, but it is a big ocean and a long time at sea. Then again, I am now in the town of Hoorn, in my home country, on my own boat and I got it there on her own bottom. Maybe enough said.

IJmuiden, Holland, was the destination of the last leg of the crossing.

