

## How and why I have desired and chosen a WESTERLY VULCAN 34 bilge keel boat by Gilbert Breton

First of all, thanks a lot to all the members of the Westerly Owners' Association and especially to the organizers and participants who it was my great pleasure to speak to on January 25th and 26th at your Annual General Meeting.

My experience is not unique ... Each Westerly owner, I have spoken to, has a great story to tell about their boat and the way they have discovered the Westerly world. And so, following the gentle persuasion of Jill and George Pickburn, I am going to tell you mine.

In 2010 I had a fast motor boat (6.4m.), with already a small deck-saloon but not large enough to share good times in reasonable comfort with family and friends. Its harbour was located in Aber Wrac'h (Landéda 25 km north of Brest, 25 minutes drive...) at a pontoon. I had the opportunity to see many English boats mooring there after crossing the Channel. The Harbourmaster's team is very warm and attentive in their welcome to visitors and its berth holders alike... I take the opportunity to say that their facilities have very recently been refurbished.

During my free time, I'm always enchanted by the magic and excitement when I stroll on the pontoons (which is easy to do in France during the day), to dream on and discover all sorts of boats and their equipment, thoughtful, practical and ingenious ... I am particularly fond of sailing boats with a deck-saloon.

And so it was during the 2010 season, on one of the Aber Wrac'h pontoons, in front of my little motor boat there appeared:- a nice yacht with generous proportions, such as I've never seen before ... might it also have a deck-saloon, a bilge keel, etc...? Of course a multitude of questions jostled in my head ... So to get the best answers....? The solution was to meet the owners! Taking a turning around the curious boat, I noticed two, both smiling and a little bit suspicious, faces.

A few words in English and French were exchanged and I quickly understood that I was invited to visit their WESTERLY "VULCAN 34" called *SENYOL III*. Despite the language barrier, I immediately understood that Sally and Philip Loynes were welcoming and passionate about their VULCAN 34 ... So I discovered immediately:

- A very large bright area, so a real deck saloon ...
- Cockpit designed with navigational instruments ...
- Numerous berths, 7-8! Split between 2-3 separate cabins plus the saloon which miraculously converts into a double bed, without getting in the way of or interfering with the position of the central table, which is particularly convivial ...
- Stowage, incredibly important ...
- A shower room / WC just as it should be ...

- A small kitchen and well appointed to allow preparation of good festive meals ...
- A powerful engine (50-60 hp) in the large hull of the boat, easy of access under the floor, further lowering the centre of gravity ...
- An overall comfort afforded by large fuel tanks, fresh water (cold and hot) heating etc ...
- A huge locker with access from the outside ... a real / proper small workshop if you want ...
- And finally : the discovery of two keels under the boat! Which are perfect for our region ... Brittany.

It can also be a comfortable little apartment on the water with a panoramic view of the surrounding landscape, guaranteeing isolation and relaxation. So there you have it, all the parameters put together, a boat that would satisfy my desires, and also to be an investment and a new adventure .....

I must emphasise that I was most delighted by Sally and Philip's reception. They were able to tell me about the many qualities of Westerly boats, and of course their own VULCAN 34 cruiser designed for all-weather cruising, combined with great comfort for its size of just over 10 meters. Unfortunately, I have read an article reporting that the company had to stop production as the boats were too expensive to build. I told myself that Sally and Philip were very lucky to own such a boat.

And then the months passed!

- I searched on internet
- I put it aside a few months

- I visited Boat Shows in London and Dusseldorf in January 2011

In Germany, I found a boat which matched my search criteria, a Sirius 35 DS modern of course, but horribly expensive and with a delivery time frame of 2 to 3 years. There and then, I told myself that the VULCAN 34 WESTERLY had it all and probably even more!

I already had information about a VULCAN 34 for sale in Penzance and also a Moody Eclipse, 34 Riviera etc.

Back from my boat shows, I decided with my wife Helen, to make a prospecting journey to Great Britain to visit the boats for sale. My sons Yann and Steven helped me at distance for organizing contacts and translating. Whilst we were going from appointment to appointment, all fruitless due to the poor quality of the boats, there remained one last boat for us to see, at the end of the world, Penzance! Very disappointed with our previous encounters, we were about to cancel this last trip! Penzance welcomed us at nightfall in a storm, it was raining cats and dogs. A good oilskin on and off I go into the dark, head down towards the harbour ... There very quickly I come across two VULCAN 34s firmly planted on their keels.

So, which one are we going to visit tomorrow? I have a glimmer of hope ...

The sun had been out since daybreak ... Bodes well for visiting a boat! Joyce and John Darvell are there waiting for us and show us round *SELENE* ... Helen and I immediately sense that they are very fond of their Vulcan and it's a big wrench for them to have to give her up. The boat, although dating from 1983, seems