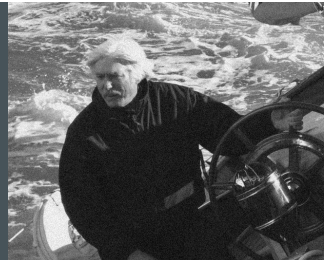


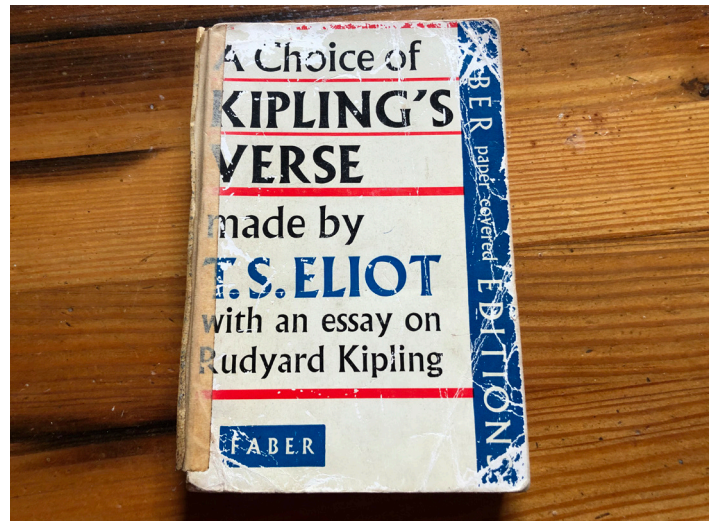
Tom Cunliffe



Tom lists his top five items without which he and Roz never put to sea



- A solid, manually operated, non-power-assisted corkscrew. This helps us to force an entry into those crucial wine bottles far more efficiently than any infuriating patent improvement on the real thing. It also beats the thirsty mariner's last resort – a large self-tapping screw and a mole grip. The only downside is that one must stand up to use it. The alternative is the two-stage lever-style 'waiter's corkscrew' such as are offered from time to time by A. N. Other Wine Club or purchased at some expense from Le Creuset. The advantage of these is that a skilled operator can open the most stubborn bottle while seated at the saloon table.
- A wire coat-hanger. No tool box can ever be complete without this. You can do almost anything with one of these: hook the corkscrew out of a deep bilge, drag lost circlips from the sump of the main engine, mend watches and, for all I know, deliver babies. You'll also need a pair of pliers or stout wire cutters to chop it into useful lengths. Now that dry cleaning shops have discovered loathsome plastic, good wire units are becoming hard to find, so if you have one, hold onto it with your life.



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- A book of Kipling's Verse. Much maligned by those who do not know him, Kipling has plenty to say to us all. For the journalist getting above himself, 'We have served our day.' For the bigot who imagines Kipling a racist, his epitaph for the Hindu Sepoy killed in the WWI trenches, 'This man in his own country prayed we know not to what powers. We pray Them to reward him for his bravery in ours.' Not only is he an inspiring read which has delighted us since the outset of our cruising, 'We're down, hull-down on the Old Trail, the Trail that is always new', it also offers the skipper a hint of comfort when it seems nobody loves him. 'If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, and make allowance for their doubting too... etc'.
 - A box of small stones from Iona. These were acquired many decades ago on a cruise off the West Coast of Scotland. They are said to protect the person who has them from drowning. I like to think they might, and we're still here after all these years, so they've done all right so far.
 - A framed print of Frank Meadow Sutcliffe's photograph of a nineteenth-century horse-drawn plough in the fields somewhere behind Whitby. The horse is steaming gently and there are a couple of guys standing by. Who were they? What were they thinking? Who will ever know? But then, who wants to look at pictures of their boat when hove-to in a Gulf Stream gale? Give me the smell of the turned earth any time! We've had this old image since 1972. It's been on all our boats. I always feel it keeps us grounded.



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Tom Cunliffe - Yachts and Yarns