

14 Ships in a Day – A 21st Century Record?

In an article in the 1971 Club Magazine one of the principal Founder members of the Club, John C. Wood, recounted the once popular pastime of steamer enthusiasts in setting records of the number of steamers travelled on in a day, and he recorded that :-

22 in 1913 was believed to be the Pre-Great War record set by Alex Cuthbert and some friends.

20 in 1937 was the between the Wars record set by James H.Herd.

15 in 1963 was the Post War record set by Peter McCrorie, Neil Murray and Alan Riddell.

In the run-up to our 80th Anniversary, it seemed to me an ideal time to see what could be achieved in this 21st Century.

I set myself a few important parameters:-

- all sailings to be as a foot passenger on scheduled service runs
- car journeys only to be used on the mainland to link the various operating areas
- and most importantly, a trip on *Waverley* must be part of any current record attempt.

I chose Friday 29 July 2011 for this challenge, my itinerary and scheduled timings being :-

<u>vessel</u>	<u>depart</u>	<u>arrive</u>	
<i>Ali Cat</i>	Gourock 0620	Dunoon 0645	1
<i>Argyll Flyer</i>	Dunoon 0715	Gourock 0740	2
<i>Bute</i>	Wemyss Bay 0845	Rothsay 0920	3
<i>Argyle</i>	Rothsay 1010	Wemyss Bay 1045	4
<i>Seabus</i>	Gourock 1135	Kilcreggan 1147	5
<i>Waverley</i>	Kilcreggan 1155	Dunoon 1220	6
<i>Ali Cat</i>	Dunoon 1250	Gourock 1315	
<i>Sound of Shuna</i>	McInroy's Point 1330	Hunter's Quay 1350	7
<i>Sound of Scalpay</i>	Hunter's Quay 1415	McInroy's Point 1435	8
<i>Sound of Scarba</i>	McInroy's Point 1500	Hunter's Quay 1520	9
<i>Sound of Sanda</i>	Hunter's Quay 1545	McInroy's Point 1605	10
<i>Loch Shira</i>	Largs 1645	Cumbræ Slip 1655	11
<i>Loch Riddon</i>	Cumbræ Slip 1715	Largs 1725	12
<i>Saturn</i>	Ardrossan 1920	Brodick 2015	13
<i>Caledonian Isles</i>	Brodick 2140	Ardrossan 2235	14

With 15 sailings, utilising 14 different vessels, I am delighted to say my plan worked to perfection despite the not unexpected late running of *Waverley*. *Saturn* was also a little behind schedule, but from her deck I spotted 3 basking shark and a dolphin on the run over to Arran, which perfectly complemented the sighting of a number of harbour porpoise from *Ali Cat* on the very first run of the day. Weatherwise the day just got better and better as the hours progressed, so all-in-all, it proved to be for me a never-to-be-forgotten day on the Clyde. Sitting alone in calm reflection on the top deck of *Caledonian Isles*, as the daylight gradually disappeared behind the Arran hills, was the perfect end to a perfect day.

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