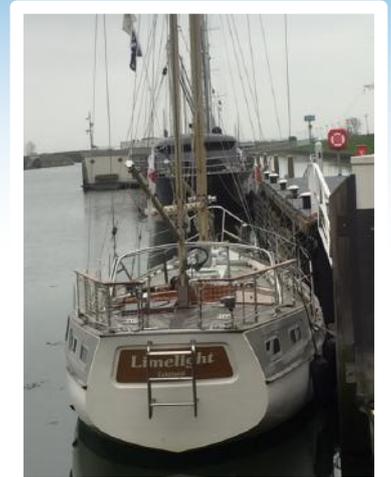


Trintella IIIa as camera boat



Steef van Velzen



Trintella IIIa used as camera boat on Oosterschelde



The Limelight, Trintella IIIa

Member Steef van Velzen is the proud owner of a Trintella IIIa, called the *Limelight*, construction number 910, since April 2019. The ship is named after a Charlie Chaplin film and finds its berth in Zuidland. Steef became a member of [Stichting Rugvin](#) in November 2019, not yet aware that his skills as a skipper would be especially useful as a volunteer. Steef shares:

The Stichting Rugvin is an independent foundation focussing on monitoring cetaceans in the North Sea and mainly porpoises in the Oosterschelde. Because of the lockdown, there was little activity in 2020 but in November 2020 the foundation's president Frank Zanderink was approached by Dutch tv show '3 Op Reis', to collaborate on an episode about the Big Five of Zeeland. Never knew that Zeeland also had a Big Five, but it turned out they were the seal, porpoise, flamingo, fallow deer, and sea eagle. It's up for debate if all of these are native to Zeeland...

I had just dried the sails and summer tent at home, removed the linen and food from the boat and tightened another line in case of storms, when Frank called.

The intention was to take a camera crew, within covid limits, from Zierikzee to spot porpoises. I thought it would be a great idea, even if the date, 27 November, was probably not my first suggestion for a solo trip of 5 days. The boat was made ready to sail in no time, diesel, and supplies on board, and I was ready to leave from Blinckvliet on Wednesday.



Water Sports Association Blinkvliet at the Spui

Research showed that to operate the Haringvlietbrug during the winter, you need to request permission from the Rijkswaterstaat, and we also checked if there would be no stagnations on our route. The first day of sailing was dry but very cold. I arrived in Steenberg around four. After getting some Chinese, I went to bed early so I could leave on time for Zierikzee.



Steenbergse Vliet

It was barely light out on the Steenbergse Vliet when I sailed to the Zuidvlije. Once I hit the open waters, it turned out to be very misty, 2 buoys in sight.

Sight after the Krammersluis was barely 50 meters and after contacting Post Wemeldinge I had to stop for the day, mooring next to a yellow barrel in the channel to Bruinisse. The mist was still intense in the evening and the warden allowed me to dock in the Vissershaven. Arriving in Zierikzee on Thursday was out of the question, maybe as well as the TV recording...



Bruinisse, waiting for sunset

Luckily, the shoot could be rescheduled, and the TV crew came aboard on Friday afternoon instead. My preference for host Jennifer was not rewarded, but host Maurice and his crew made for great passengers. Because of the COVID measures, Frank was interviewed on the dock instead. Before leaving, the camera man wanted to make sure to bring the power connection on board but accidentally left the marine ship behind us without 380 volts, resulting in loud alarms and sirens!



Naval Vessel and the Limelight



Maurice

We made it to the Oosterschelde with high water. The weather was perfect: no wind and dry! Frank thought the porpoises would get close out of curiosity if we turned off the engine and just let the *Limelight* float. And that was exactly what happened. The camera man on the aft had trouble recording them all because they were swimming on both sides of the boat. They are lovely creatures and remarkably fast! How amazing that these beautiful animals feel at home at the National Park Oosterschelde and that we can enjoy them on our boat.



Porpoises in the Oosterschelde

After sailing around Zierikzee a little, we went by Studio Bruinvis. This is a yellow buoy next to the harbour and is rented by Rugvin. A hydrophone is attached to a barrel, which broadcasts the sounds of nearby porpoises to a column on the Zierikzee pier. Thanks to 'converting' the sound so that it's audible for humans, it can be heard when a button on the column is pressed.



Buoy and column on the Zierikzee pier

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Oosterschelde



Maurice preparing chocolate

When Frank left, it was freezing once again, and I was very glad for the humming block heater. I was shocked to see that there was a no power on the 220V connection though, so the heater might give out in the middle of the night... With help of a fellow water sport enthusiast, the connection was soon fixed with a spare plug. The original plug was probably removed by a helpful camera man yanking the wire earlier that afternoon 😊.

Sailing back across the Oosterschelde – the only boat out there – was gorgeous. After spending the night in Numansdorp, I could finally really start on the winter break.



Proud Skipper

The footage could be seen in the 18 April 2021 episode of 3 Op Reis. It was a be a nice coverage on the Big Five of Zeeland, with beautiful images of the Oosterschelde, porpoises and a peak of the *Limelight!*