Jeanie Johnston agus Loch Riach.

Caitlin Uí Bhaoill ag stiúradh an Jeanie Johnston thart ar Chionn Mhálanna ar an bhealach ó Ghaillimh go Doire.

Cé nach raibh Jeanie Johnston le feiceáil ar Loch Riach riamh is cosúil gur roghnaigh cuid de mhuintir Locha Riach gabháil chomh fada leis an fharraige mhór léi.

Tá an long cáiliúil ar a bealach thart ar chósta na hÉireann i láthair na huaire agus bhí triúr ó Bhaile Locha Riach ar bord ó Ghaillimh go Doire. Seans gur chreid siad go raibh an oiread sin fearthainn i ndiaidh titim le deireannas go mbeadh sé níos fearr dóibh a bheith ar long ag snámh ná ag gearán fán easpa gréine i dtír.

Mar a tharlaíonn sé, tá Barra Ó Seachnasigh, ó Bhaile Locha Riach mar dhuine den criú lán-aimseartha i mbliana agus taithí mhaith aige ar an fharraige. Bhí an deis ag Caitlin agus Pádraig Ó Baoill taithí oibre a ghlacadh ar bord fosta, iad ar diúite lá is oíche: ag coinneáil súil in airde le rudaí san fharraige, ag stiúradh na loinge, ag dreapadh in airde, ag scuabadh is ag glanadh na deice is fuithi, ag obair sa chistin agus eile. Bhuel .... saoire a bhí ann i ndáiríre.

Loughrea and the Jeanie Johnston.

With all the rain that fell over the past few weeks some folk from Loughrea decided that the best route was to take to the high seas. As the Jeanie Johnston sailing ship visited Galway harbour in mid August, it set sail for Derry Quay with a few of the crew on board from Loughrea.

Barry Shaughnessy, (son of Martin Shaughnessy, auctioneer) is one of the permanent crew leaders this season. Barry is in his final year of maritime studies Ringaskiddy, Cork and certainly has plenty of experience at sea.

Two others, Caitlin and Pádraig Ó Baoill joined as trainees in the Jeanie experience for the trip round the coast taking over two days and nights to complete the journey. All hands were brought on deck for watch during daylight and night, each having to do the turn at the helm, on lookout, in the galley, scrubbing above and below deck, climbing the rigging… all part of the experience.

Well, if the Jeanie Johnston couldn't come to Loughrea…. Loughrea had to go to the Jeanie Johnston.

Barry Shaughnessy agus Pádraig Ó Baoill ag ceangailt na seoltaí in airde ar an long seoil, Jeanie Johnston, sular tháinig siad i dtír i nDoire.