

positive, and I had been very proud of her calmness in the situation we had found ourselves. Indeed, she started making suggestions for improvements to the boat's rig and took a keen interest in the immaculately turned out Dutch boats. They reflected the lifetimes of sailing experience represented, and were all pared down for serious offshore cruising, neat and tidy with no frills, and sailed with impressive seamanship. We managed most of the time without *Pamela's* rather large "party tent", which is fine in the marina, but not at anchor in a cove or off the beach when the occasional nocturnal lookout is advisable. Sailing for the remainder of the week was good, with some thrills but no spills in a mixture of weather conditions and some long hauls of six hours plus, but *Pamela* never got left behind. Steve Maynard in *Spray*, with his local knowledge, acted the good shepherd and in spite of sailing about 5% faster than the other Coasters (how?), would always heave to till we caught up. We called in at some super places – tidal creeks, sheltered coves, fishing villages etc before I used the amazing and cheap French public transport from Port Louis, Lorient to retrieve my car and trailer from Port la Foret. We had also had great fun with the Dutch and spent more than intended on some wonderful meals. With marina fees at 9 Euros a night, power included, and several nights at anchor, this was affordable. Steve and the other serious sailors stayed on to visit some small islands then on to Golfe du Morbihan, Vannes and Auray.

Mary and I now realise that we will have



Steve landing on Isle Mouton

to invest in proper equipment if we want to do more of this type of sailing, and to improve our skills, but tacitly agreed it was a lot more fun than caravanning. A decent chart plotter would facilitate navigation, as one should not rely on following others, and when the wind gets up you simply cannot be poring over a paper chart. The domestics of living on such a small boat were also a bit of a challenge, but interesting.

The French love their sailing and the boats attracted complimentary comments wherever we stopped. On the beach at the Glenans that first evening a dozen blokes in offshore sailing gear came over. They were from the Glenan sailing academy and had watched us come in that afternoon. "What *are* these boats?" one asked. "It's an English design," I replied matter-of-factly, "called a Drascombe." 🚢



Peter heads for cove under full sail