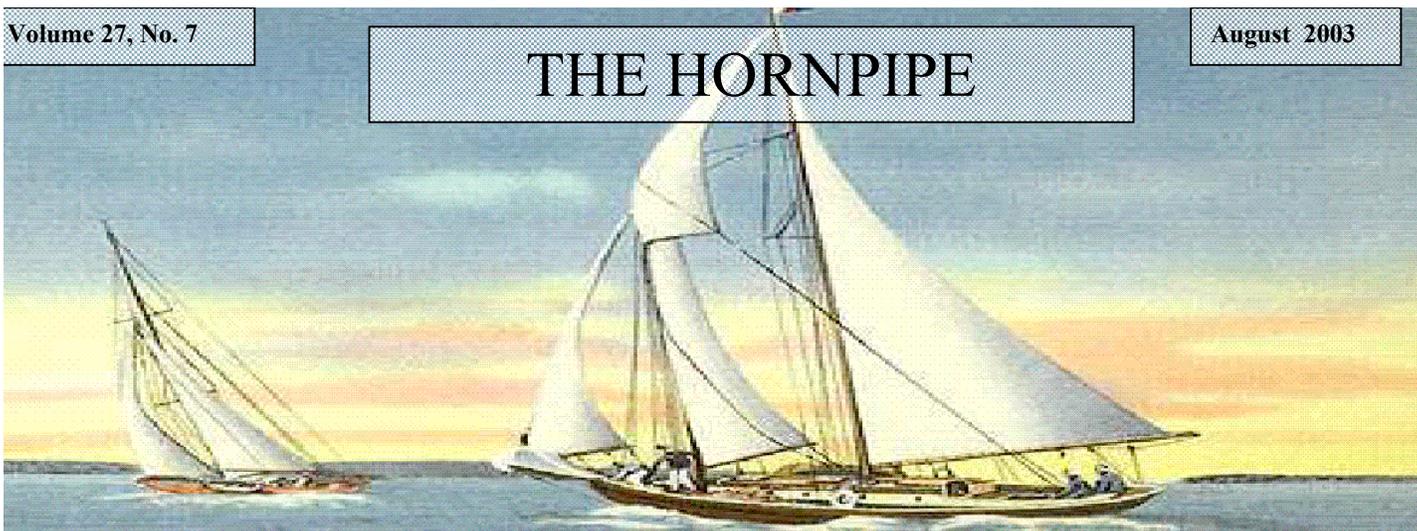


THE HORNPIPE



Commodore's Comments

Summer continues to give us rainy weekends, for the most part. The dip in the jet stream, apparently held there by a Bermuda high prevents us from getting our weekend highs. Talking about highs, I am sorry to have missed the Best Cheap Wine Cruise. However, I was on a 65-foot sailboat cruising the Bimini reefs and checking out the underwater flora and fauna.

Now for a riddle—What is the difference between sailing in the Bahamas and on the Chesapeake Bay in late July? Answer—No rain. The similarities are heat, humidity, and no wind. Anyway, being on a sailboat, even with the engine and not the wind pushing it, was better than the alternatives.

Coming up will be our August Dog-Days Land Cruise that the **Edenses** have offered to host at their new home. More details will follow.

The next planned cruise is the Labor Day Weekend Cruise, for which **Hank** and **Jan Zerhusen** will be the cruise captains. Let's think sunshine and wind, and make that cruise a singular success by joining them for the last long weekend of the summer.

Andy Monjan

DEADLINE-AUGUST 19 Proposed August 23 Crabless Feast

Please email your RSVP by August 19 to edens@comcast.net telling the Edenses whether or not you are interested in attending a cookout at their place on August 23. Jackie and Ted have said they will be happy to host the affair if a quorum is interested in attending.

Labor Day Cruise- August 30- September 1

We're starting to think about the Labor Day Cruise. Is anyone interested? If we don't get a response, we're changing the destination to San Domingo Creek Saturday night. We can dinghy into St. Mike's (the back door) for dinner and/or evening entertainment. Sunday night's destination is undecided. So far, we have three boats signed on for this.

Jan Zerhusen

Kent Narrows Narrower

FYI—*Evergreen* came through Kent Narrows drawbridge Sunday, July 27, at

1:30 p.m.. High tide was 4:40 p.m. We were bumping along the bottom IN THE CHANNEL! We saw depths of 4.2', and we draw 5'. The large powerboats ahead of us moved outside the channel (green side) and seemed okay. Just a word to the wise—maybe we need to know if dredging is being scheduled soon.

Jan Zerhusen

Best Wine Cruise, July 26-27 Shaw Bay/Wye River

When **Ted Edens** called Thursday to ask if we would substitute for them as cruise captains (**Jacki** was not feeling well), **Jutta** and I readily agreed. The weather forecast was okay—not promising in terms of winds, and temperatures were expected to be on the warm side, but no storms were anticipated. We were advised that the **Callises** and the **MacDonalds** were planning to take part, and the **Zerhusens** were hoping to go as well.

We invited a couple of good friends from D.C.—**Matt** and **Solveig McCullough**—to join us, and the four of us headed out from Hammock Island on *Breezing Up* about 10:30 a.m. Saturday morning. The **Zerhusens** left at about the same time on *Evergreen*. We motored out into the Patapsco and turned right to head for Love Point and Kent Narrows, pleased that the breezes were much better than we'd expected, and we sailed most of the way to the Kent Narrows channel.

After passing under the drawbridge we motor-sailed to the mouth of the Wye, rounding the corner into the always-beautiful Shaw Bay by 3:30 p.m. We found the **Callises**, on *Windsong*, and the **MacDonalds**, on *Heather II*, already in place and comfortably swinging on *Heather II's* famous Danforth. We rafted up and monitored the VHF as we set up for the

evening. Soon *Evergreen* appeared, and after a brief conversation we offered **Hank** and **Jan** (and they accepted) the opportunity to be the “official” anchor boat. In a few minutes the four boats were sitting comfortably at anchor, and some of us went on a “nettle sweep”—finding to our delight that the water was not only refreshing but nettle-free. We were then pleasantly surprised to see **Jesse** and **Ilyse Delano** approaching on *Agapé*—so we soon had a five-boat raft-up (and a couple more swimmers—at one point eight of us were in the water!). The **Delanoys** reported that they had enjoyed a fine night sail Friday, anchoring in the Chester River.

It soon came time to organize the hors d'oeuvres and wine-tasting session. We set up *Breezing Up's* cockpit, which quickly filled up with eleven sailors (I stayed below to handle the “blind” wine tasting). As the yummy munchies were passed around, I poured samples of the first wine, and with **Ilyse** keeping score, the contest was on! There were eight wines submitted (four from *Breezing Up*—it's a long story, but it wasn't necessarily an attempt to stack the odds in our favor, and it didn't work anyway). The six whites and two reds were quickly tasted and rated amid lively comments. The scores were added, and there was a clear winner—a 2000 vintage Wyndham Estates Bin 222 (Australian) Chardonnay, the entry submitted by **Dick** and **Barbara Callis**. [Interestingly, yours truly had submitted a vintage 2002 version of the same wine, and it got mediocre scores]. There was also a clear winner in the “worst wine” category—a nice-looking red (Shiraz), submitters to remain anonymous (but they were guests on our boat). In a personal experiment, I had also submitted **Jutta's** favorite (cheap) wine, a Glen Ellen Chardonnay—I was planning to convince her how bad it is. It actually came in second best! Prizes were awarded—a copy of the 2003 Pocket Guide to Wines to the **Callises**,

and a copy of “How to Choose a Wine” to the “anonymous” last-place finishers.

We adjourned to (light) dinners and a swim or two, then enjoyed a comfortable (if breezy) night’s sleep. The next morning the raft leisurely came to life, a few swimmers checked out the water one more time, then the **Delanoys** headed home, followed closely by the **MacDonalds** and the **Callises**. We headed out ourselves, at about 10 a.m., as **Hank** went forward to weigh anchor on *Evergreen*. It was another pleasant surprise to find solid breezes out of the south and southwest that provided most of us with a nice sail home. We decided to take *Breezing Up* back the long way, around Kent Island, and were treated to a nice view of a three-master anchored off of Annapolis, so-so to good breezes, and warm temperatures. We arrived at Hammock Island shortly after the **Zerhusens**, and we agreed it had been a fine weekend, with much more spirited sailing than we’d expected. The low tide, by the way, was evident in Kent Narrows. **Jan** told me that they encountered some four and one-half foot depths on their return. But overall, it was a terrific sailing weekend. Sometimes you win.

George and Jutta Alberts

Cruising Tales

It was a simpler time, the summer of ’71. Three inseparable friends had finished their junior year of high school on the south shore of Long Island. At 16, they had spent summers messing about in boats for years: sailing across Bellport Bay, the extreme eastern extension of the Great South Bay, to Fire Island almost daily with no more ill effects than sunburn and the occasional knot on the head from an unexpected jibe. As a rite of passage in our small, water-oriented community, heading off for the weekend at the beach unsupervised by parents was fairly

common, so the intrepid three, **Nan**, **Debbie** and **Bird** (your humble storyteller), secured parental permission to plan a trip. (Really, we HAD permission for THIS adventure...)

After surveying the vessel options available to us, we decided we needed to borrow a boat from another friend. **Nan’s** boat was a frisky 14-foot one-design, and I shared an 18-foot Cape Cod Knockabout with my older brother, both open cockpit day sailers, so the friend’s boat, a 16-foot French-built Marauder, with a hard chine hull and a cuddy cabin, seemed the height of luxury. No motor, no lights, no galley, no head, no berths; just a cooler, a box of miscellaneous dry goods and utensils, a tarp to throw over the boom, sleeping bags in waterproof stuff, sacks and camaraderie. We had ‘packed’ little more than toothbrushes and towels, since we expected to wear nothing except our standard summer garb of swimsuit, tee shirt, sandals and bug repellent (we don’t need no stinkin’ sunscreen... I TOLD you it was a simpler time). We set off Saturday morning in high spirits from the Bellport Yacht Club, headed for Watch Hill on Fire Island, about 6 miles as the herring gull flies. It was summer on the bay, the reliable southwest wind keeping the sails full and endless blue skies stretching overhead as we tacked around Howell’s Point into Patchogue Bay to the west.

The day passed as so many others had: a fine sail, a well-executed landing, hours spent body-surfing or beach-combing with the inevitable give and take of flirting with members of the opposite sex — mostly landlubbers who had come over on the ferry and had to leave by 5:30 p.m., the last scheduled run. Dinner was cooked over charcoal and eaten hurriedly, as the sky was clouding up and the wind had backed to the east and freshened. We stowed everything out of the weather, made our little ship as secure as we could, and drifted off to sleep with the sound of the rain drumming on the tent over the boom.

It was still drizzling from an iron-gray overcast when we roused the next morning. After a quick dash to the bathhouse for our morning ablutions, we set about trying to get a fire going to make coffee and pancakes for breakfast. There was no shelter, and the hibachis in the picnic area were firmly embedded in concrete, but where there's a will, there's a way. Using the camp kit components to shelter the coals from the rain, we got the fire started and put the coffeepot on (no, my priorities have not changed in 30+ years!), then mixed up pancake batter. In the meantime, in our search for something more effective to keep the rain off the food, we had discovered three older (19 or 20) guys who had spent the night in the semi-roofed bathhouse after overindulgence had caused them to miss the last ferry. They were wet, bedraggled, hung over, and suffering from mild hypothermia. We, of course, offered to share coffee and pancakes, since their remaining 'supplies' were a six-pack and a bag of chips. With a little shuffling, we transferred the coffee to the largest pot we had, adding more water and grounds. Since all of our spare plates were in use as 'umbrellas' for the fire, the pancake batter was left out in the rain and what started as proper hot cakes gradually became crepes as the ratio of rain to batter shifted in favor of the rain. Our impromptu breakfast guests were in no shape to be critical, and every scrap and drop was consumed with dispatch.

By the time we had cleaned up and stowed the breakfast things, the rain had stopped, the overcast appeared to be lightening, and our orphans of the storm had confessed that they had yet another boon to beg: a ride home. The only access to Watch Hill is by water or walking 10 miles in either direction to a bridge. Ferry tickets were round trip, but they were only good for the day of purchase, since there were no transient accommodations for those without their own boats. Our refugees had no funds and no way to get back to Patchogue. (Also

no phone, no ATM, no VHF radio—simpler time...) They were non-sailors and at least as dubious about our mode of transport as we were about further overloading our small craft, but we figured it wouldn't be too bad—the wind was light and still easterly. The seas were calm, and we only had to take them three miles straight across the bay on a broad reach. Plus, there were six of us and a whole six-pack!

We cast off, raised the sails, carefully distributed the passengers and crew to maintain a few inches of freeboard all 'round, and headed out. The voyage was made without incident, if very slowly. We dropped our passengers at the ferry dock and had a faster sail back to Bellport, reaching in a freshening afternoon breeze and arriving only a bit later than expected. Our lateness in no way alarmed our families: getting becalmed, taking extra time to help another boat, or stopping to tread clams were all frequent occurrences. We agreed to keep the reason for this delay to ourselves, innocent and altruistic though it was, since we had no desire to have our newly fledged wings clipped by misplaced propriety.

It was a simpler time – or was it? The turbulent and painful political and social issues of the late '60s and early '70s – Vietnam, civil rights, women's lib – put an indelible stamp on our psyches even as we pursued the pleasures of summer on the bay. The simple truth is that we have never stopped defying misplaced propriety or lost the taste for the delicious frisson that accompanies the act of doing something that 'girls shouldn't.'

Linda Jensen

Sail from Hell

I suppose that any Sail from Hell is composed not of one disaster, but rather of a series of small things that accumulate, and

our personal SFH was no exception. It occurred two summers ago when **Ted** and I decided to take our daughter **Lara** and her 13-year old friend **Janet** on a day trip across the Bay to Rock Hall for ice cream. **Janet** had never sailed with us before, but she was very eager to join us and arrived the night before at our home for the prerequisite sleep over. It wasn't until her mother dropped by in the morning with her forgotten sweatshirt that I thought to ask, "Does **Janet** get seasick?" "I don't think so." came the reply, "She does get car sick, but only for long trips—over, say, twenty minutes."

My heart sank as I told her mother that we expected to be out on the water for hours and that perhaps this wasn't a good idea. Her mother assured me that **Janet** would be fine and drove home to pick up some Dramamine, just in case. Then off we went.

The weather gurus had predicted a cool day with 5- to 10-knot winds from the south and 1-foot waves, so as soon as we cleared the channel out of Bodkin Creek, we put up the sails and began our voyage. I was at the helm when I thought we ran over a crab pot, and while we weren't certain if we had seen it come out behind us, our speed was good and we continued across the Bay. The winds were higher than predicted and the long fetch was beginning to impact the wave size. Though we discussed turning back, we eventually decided to continue onward... There was ice cream ahead!

We made fairly good time crossing the Bay, and **Ted** and I enjoyed the sailing while the two girls caught up on their sleep below. We headed southeast to the green can then turned northward toward Rock Hall. The waves continued to build and the two sleeping beauties awoke, eager to set foot on dry land. Our captain went to start the diesel, only to discover that we had apparently dragged that crab pot from just outside Bodkin to its new home on the Eastern Shore. Somehow in the midst of this discovery it managed to find a friend,

and suddenly we had two crab pots snagged on our prop.

The waves continued to build. We decided that the safest course of action would be to sail into the more protected Swan Creek before heading overboard to cut ourselves free. Only when we tried to tack did we discover that the drag of the two crab pots had affected our steering, and we were fast running out of water. We quickly threw out our anchor to protect *Sheet Music* from the shallows and rocks ahead, and took stock of the situation. The only way to regain power and steerage was to set free the crab pots that had taken up residence on our prop. **Ted** went overboard to work on this task while I was assigned to warn him of approaching waves. The 3- to 4-foot waves tossing our anchored boat around looked like 8-foot ones as I watched **Ted** in the water next to and under the hull. Finally, he cut us free. By now we had spent several hours dealing with the crab pots and realized that we did not have time to go ashore. When poor **Janet** heard this, her stomach lost all hope, as well as everything in it.

And the waves continued to build. We motored straight back across the Bay with our little 10-hp diesel doing its best. The waves were breaking over the bow of the boat by this time, and our pathetic crew huddled in the dodgerless cockpit getting drenched and cold. **Janet** came out from under the blankets only when her stomach ordered her to and **Lara** was looking mighty green too. They welcomed our arrival to Hammock Island, and I doubt **Janet** has stepped onto a boat since.

I'm not sure if this trip truly qualifies as a Sail from Hell. If my memory serves me right, I would classify it as a Protracted Visit to Purgatory.

Jacki Curreri Edens

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR CRUISING
TALES AND SAIL FROM HELL
STORIES TO FOLAND@AOL.COM.