

THE HORNPIPE

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FEBRUARY 2004

Commodore's Comments

Our hosts, Jan and Hank Zerhusen, and our Social Chairs, Gail and Don May, provided us with a terrific January party this year. Thanks a bunch, folks. The partygoers all brought good things to eat; and while we all munched, a couple of things became obvious: We are all eager for the season to begin, and we all hope that the weather cooperates this year.

The bay is completely frozen over this year, but if memory serves, that is not an ill boding of things to come. The seasons after the freezes of the 1970s were warm and windy. Perhaps we will fare as well this year.

I would like to remind those members who did not attend the party and who have not yet sent in their dues and membership form for 2004 to please do so as soon as possible. The dues are \$35 and should be sent to Jutta Alberts at 5514 Hillfall Ct., Columbia, MD 21045. Membership forms should be either emailed to Foland@aol.com or mailed to Judy and me at 2335 Westport Ln., Crofton, MD 21114. **If you need another copy to fill out, let us know.**

Steve Foland

All-Hands Winter Party January 31, 2004

The All-Hands Winter Party was a huge success, with 33 members attending and a bountiful

table laden with ham, turkey, delicious salads and side dishes, and of course scrumptious desserts. Andy Monjan gave out two awards—Bill Durr received the “Messing About” award and your Commodore Steve Foland and Hornpipe Editor Judy Foland received the “Outstanding Member” award.

Attending the party were: George Alberts, Janet & Ron Benrey, Barb & Dick Callis, Ilyse & Jesse Delanoy, Carol & Bill Durr, Adrian & Tom Flynn, Judy & Steve Foland, Judy & Steve Hilnbrand, Cynthia & Duncan MacDonald, Gail & Don May, Usha & Andy Monjan, Jenny & John Poniske, Robbie & Ed Sabin, Nan Shellabarger, Pat & Ed Shippey, Jan & Hank Zerhusen, Anna & Bob Cox, and special guest, Helen Isensee.

Judy Foland

Planning a Chesapeake Cruise — Summer 2004

I found this advertised on the West Marine website and thought our club would be interested. Janie Meneely of “Chesapeake Bay Magazine” will tell the secrets of plotting a cruise of the Chesapeake Bay that maximizes interesting ports of call and that identifies places of historic significance and child-friendly environments.

Date: 2/25/04

Time: 18:00

Location: 113 Hillsmere Dr.

Annapolis, MD

Contact: Mark Kellogg

Phone: 410-268-0129

Linda Jensen

How I Became a Sailor

It all started when my dad had a heart attack in the fall of 1970. I was thirteen, starting the eighth grade, and had become a pretty decent junior golfer, primarily in order to be able to have something to talk to my parents about during the summer, they being passionate golfers and the dinner table conversation consisting of little else. The doctor told my father that he had to lower his stress level. His business was not particularly stressful, and we all understood this to mean that Dad would have to revisit his highly competitive approach to his favorite sport—no more sweating nervously over twelve-foot putts with ten dollars on the line.

Around springtime, my folks started spending time with a friend who had a small cabin cruiser, about 24 feet as I recall. They would motor out of Edgewater, on the South River, and take day trips to St. Michaels, or just run around on the bay. I went once to St. Michaels (my first time there, and my first time boating—loved both!), but was more interested in school, sports, my friends, and my developing rock and roll band.

Towards the end of the summer, Dad and his friend started talking about buying a bigger boat, as partners. After thinking about it for awhile, Dad came to two conclusions: One, he didn't want to own a boat in partnership; and two, what he really wanted was a sailboat, not a cabin cruiser. He had sailed small boats in San Francisco Bay as a teen, and had occasionally crewed on cruising boats owned by his parents' friends. So we spent the fall and winter reading "Sail and Rudder" magazines, boat shopping, and, in my case, memorizing large portions of the Encyclopedia of Sailing. In late spring, we found a used Columbia 26 that Dad liked at a brokerage yard in Annapolis, the *Baby Too*, and he bought her.

We sailed her all over Chesapeake Bay, to St. Michaels, Solomons Island, the Rappahannock,

and the lower Eastern Shore. I was hooked. Sailing was my thing. In those days of the gasoline crisis, sailing was politically correct, too. We were out sailing and not burning much gas, while motorboat owners were sitting in their slips, sipping martinis. The *Baby Too* had one fatal flaw, however. Although she was not designed for an inboard, someone had located a one-cylinder gasoline inboard engine, and installed it under the companionway step. Great engine, bad installation. With no riser loop in the exhaust, any water from waves slapping the transom had a tendency to drain straight down the exhaust tube and into the cylinder head. Although the engine was all alloy, and not susceptible to corrosion, the result was that, while she would start right up at the dock, she often wouldn't start at all after a day of sailing. It took some time, and many visits to different mechanics, before we figured out the cause of the problem, during which Dad and I had to sail *Baby Too* back into her Edgewater slip many times.

Eventually, I mutinied. I told Dad that, while I loved being his crew, if he wanted me to continue pulling lines and standing watches, he'd darned well better get a boat with an engine that would start reliably. He must have been ready too, because shortly thereafter we traded up to a brand new Bristol 32, the *Tangerine* (named after her red-orange hull color), with a brand new Atomic Four engine that never missed a beat. We sailed her for a couple of more years, including a circumnavigation of Delmarva in my seventeenth summer that I will always remember. A school of porpoises, black with pink underbellies, as we left Norfolk for the Atlantic; sailing all night up the coast under the stars; finding out the next morning that my rudimentary navigation skills had us about eight miles from where I thought we were (still not sure if that was a defeat or a victory); and celebrating with a day and a half in Ocean City on the beach and boardwalk. Leaving Ocean City, we fought wind and current up the Delaware Bay into the C&D Canal, down the Chesapeake, and back home; about a ten-day trip in all.

College loomed for me, and my sailing days seemed numbered. However, as Dad slipped into

semiretirement, my parents took a charter with a captain in the Virgin Islands my freshman year. The following two years, they took their own boat down the ICW in the fall, and across to the Bahamas for the winter—first on the *Tangerine*, and the next year on an Islander 37, the *Melusine*, which they bought. Glory, glory. For two years in college, I got to spend my winter break sailing in the Bahamas! Better than that, it doesn't get.

Graduation, jobs, law school, family and kids left not much time or money for sailing. Every few years we might rent a day sailer for a few hours on the bay, or the Patapsco out of Baltimore's harbor. On a family vacation in Hilton Head, we rented one for an afternoon on Calibogue Sound, tacking up and down and watching the excursion boats.

The next year, having spent some time talking to a friend who was crewing on his boss's boat in Wednesday night races, Ilyse said, "Why don't we look at some sailboats?" That was all I needed. We boat shopped, almost bought a Catalina 27 on Rock Creek, till it failed the survey, then bought a Hunter 25, *Remedy*, in Havre de Grace. The kids were no problem; they'd already learned sailing at camp. I was ready to go. We bought gear at West Marine. Ilyse was still a bit skeptical. The day finally came to bring *Remedy* home from Havre de Grace to Pasadena. Ilyse's dad drove us up and dropped us off early in the morning. I figured about eight hours to sail home. Then, the ancient outboard wouldn't start in the slip.

After about two hours of fooling around with it, praying, and waiting for a mechanic who never showed up, the old engine finally kicked to life. Rather than wait any longer for the mechanic, I decided we should just get going. Off we went, motoring out of Havre de Grace; with me at the tiller, Ilyse in the cockpit, and the kids up on deck. My daughter shouted, "I can't believe we're out on a boat, and it's OURS!"

It was a great day for sailing, but making south was tough. Warm, sunny, about 15 knots of wind, right on the nose. We tacked back and forth down the bay for what seemed an eternity. Around six in the evening, passing Fairlee Creek, Ilyse

spotted masts and suggested that maybe that would be a good place to anchor for the night, since we weren't making as good time as we'd hoped. "Anchor?" I asked. "I'm not anchoring—I'm bringing this boat home. I don't care how long it takes."

The sun set as we moved past Middle River and Hart-Miller Island, and then into the mouth of the Patapsco, where I'd never sailed before. Vessel lights and blinking buoy lights were everywhere. We inched our way into the river, dropped sail, and started the outboard barely in time to get out of the way of a freighter moving up the channel. Not being familiar with the markers on the Patapsco, and never having sailed into Rock Creek before, only down the creek to the White Rocks and back one time, I motored us up the river for what seemed hours. Finally, my son, with the chart in his hand, pointed at a red flasher and shouted, "That's it!" We made for it, and sure enough, it was red no. 2 at the mouth of Rock Creek.

Moving up the creek even more slowly, not sure of exactly where Oak Harbor Marina lay, we took a wrong turn and wasted even more time before finally getting straightened out as to just where Water Oak Point was. We finally motored into our new slip about one o'clock in the morning, much to the great relief of waiting in-laws, with captain, first mate, and crew utterly exhausted. Of course, we'd been talking to them all day on the cell phone, but I'm sure they had visions of us sinking and drowning in a typhoon off of Fort Smallwood.

We were home, and our sailing adventures as a family had just begun.

Jesse Delaney

THE ART OF ANCHORING

Anchoring — no other aspect of sailing provokes such strong emotions and debates, sometimes bordering on religious war. At the risk of starting a fight I can't win, I'd like to offer my evolving thoughts about that subject. Perhaps we can start a regular Hornpipe feature, along the lines of: "My anchoring hardware and techniques are

better than yours. So there!" I'd especially like to hear from folks who routinely and successfully deploy two anchors.

As I worked my way down the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway this fall and winter, it was very difficult to find good, not to say ideal, anchorages, and the best anchorages tended to fill up quickly. Several considerations go into finding the best anchoring spots, of course—primarily holding, wind protection, currents, water depths, wakes, scenery, and access to shore facilities. Water depth is a major issue, especially in crowded anchorages, because it determines the minimum length of anchor rode you need to deploy for a given scope. With four feet, say, between bow roller and water, and at a recommended scope of 5:1, the difference between being in ten feet of water and being in twenty feet of water is 70 feet versus 120 feet of rode. If, in addition, there is an 8-foot tide (as is often the case in South Carolina and Georgia) on top of a charted depth of, say, ten versus twenty feet, again at 5:1 scope, you would need 110 feet versus 160 feet. In either case, add your boat length to the rode length and you get a very large "swinging circle." Generally, if I had plenty of room and good holding in an anchorage, I had little wind protection. Whether I had good protection or not, I usually had to deal with current shifts, as well as a crowded anchorage (there are no secrets on the ICW), or I was nowhere near shore facilities such as groceries, Internet access, and so on. But most often the problem was that the water depths and tides called for lots of rode, while the anchorage was crowded.

In conjunction with the large tidal ranges, the currents can be quite strong, reversing with the tides. So on top of deciding how much scope to pay out, there is the question of one versus two anchors, deployed at, say, a 60-, or 120-, or 180-degree offset (a "Bahamian" moor). Two anchors certainly cut down on swing room and promise better holding in the presence of current shifts. All of the guides I've seen strongly recommend using two anchors in situations where strong currents are an issue, and/or in crowded anchorages to cut down on the "swinging" room, but I never did!

The alternative to all these concerns, of course, is getting a transient slip in a marina. But my experience in that regard has been less than fully successful. Even with help from dockhands (usually available, but not always), working *Breezing Up* into a strange marina and maneuvering into a slip can be just as problematic and stressful as anchoring out—perhaps more so, if strong currents and/or winds are present. I had a discussion with a live-aboard cruiser in Ft. Pierce, who argued vehemently in favor of anchoring out whenever possible. In his view, fewer things can go wrong at anchor. In a marina there are "all those things to bump into." I can vouch for that.

So what's a captain to do? I was intimidated by the guidebooks, so I anchored out less often than planned, especially earlier in the trip. But my confidence grew with each successful overnight at an anchorage, as the currents reversed and/or the winds picked up or died down or shifted in direction. Most of the time the current determined how *Breezing Up* lay at anchor, but sometimes the winds confused things. I deploy a thirty-five pound CQR on twenty feet of high-test 5/16" chain and a 5/8" nylon rode (all a bit of overkill for a 34-foot boat of approximately 12,000 pounds displacement). I also deploy a trip float, although I've found it rarely necessary (but once I learned how to deploy it without looking like "Elmer" I enjoyed being able to look for it to locate the anchor relative to the boat). Once the CQR has set, it has never let me down, even in the face of strong and reversing currents, although I've frequently cut back to 4:1 or even less scope to fit into a crowded anchorage, but I haven't slept peacefully. And I don't like to deploy two anchors—I carry a 22-pound Danforth on deck, but I have not yet deployed a second anchor. I'm eager to cut down on anchor "sailing" and my swinging "circle" in crowded anchorages, but I want to avoid tangling anchor rodes on my rudder, keel, or other boats and their ground tackle.

Those of you who read "Practical Sailor" in December can probably guess where I'm going with this (I wasn't home to get the issue, so I missed it). I had previously noticed an ad in "Latitudes and

Attitudes,” placed by Cruising Outfitters, touting their "Anchor Rider" system. A bit of research taught me what most of you probably already know—that it's another old idea which is regularly being rediscovered, namely that of a "kellet" or "sentinel." A kellet/sentinel is a heavy object designed to be run down the anchor rode to near the bottom at low tide, on a line tied off at the bow. It hangs on the anchor rode and is intended to keep the rode as horizontal as possible, between the kellet/sentinel and the anchor. The theory is that it increases holding power because the more nearly horizontal the rode is, the more force is required to pull the anchor loose. I have since read the article in “Practical Sailor,” and it is encouraging but inconclusive on this point (it does point out there are much cheaper ways to accomplish the same thing). I liked the Cruising Outfitters’ offering, which they are apparently selling under a licensing agreement with the New Zealand manufacturer (who sells them as the "Anchor Buddy"). When I returned to Titusville on December 6 to resume my trip south, I had decided to check it out. Cruising Outfitters is a short walk from the Titusville Municipal Marina. Of course, I decided to go first class and get the (overpriced) real thing—the 30-pound version; nothing is too good for *Breezing Up!* I started using it at my first opportunity, and I have used it every time I've anchored since then. It is surprisingly easy to deploy and retrieve, and I believe it works as advertised. I can't prove it (nor could “Practical Sailor”), but I believe it significantly increases the holding power of the anchor at a given scope (except in very strong winds). I believe I can shorten scope somewhat, compared to the usual 5:1 or 7:1, and still hold securely in most conditions. It certainly reduces my swinging room, especially under the strong current shifts I encountered. And because it drops the anchor rode nearly vertically from the bow to the bottom, I never tangle with my own rode, and other boats don't run the risk of tangling with it either. Perhaps it's a false sense of security to some extent, but I've slept a lot better at anchor with my "Buddy" out there. So until I'm dissuaded (converted?). I'll continue to believe.

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS AND PAST ISSUES OF THE HORNPIPE. WE HAVE FOUND THESE “HOW I GOT INTO SAILING” STORIES MOST ENTERTAINING. WITHOUT YOUR STORIES AND INFORMATIVE ARTICLES, HOWEVER, WE WILL HAVE VERY LITTLE TO REPORT IN OUR UPCOMING NEWSLETTERS. SO PLEASE KEEP SENDING IN YOUR ARTICLES.

Judy Foland

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