

THE HORNPIPE

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Commodore's Comments

We continue to have excellent sailing weather, and I hope that you are getting to enjoy this season. Ongoing concerns with my ticker have grounded Judy and me — I spent two days last week in a critical-care unit — and we find that to be dismaying.

The weather for the sailboat show could not have been better this year, and I know our bank account is in better shape for our not having been able to make it down to Ego Alley than it would have been had we been able to walk the piers, midways, and tents. Again, I hope that you weren't constrained as we were, and that you were able to attend the show and have a good time in the doing.

Don't forget our **October Land Cruise** to the Yellowfin Steak & Fish House at 2640 Solomon's Island Rd. on October 30. Solomon's Island Rd. is Maryland Rt. 2, and the Yellowfin is just BEFORE the South River bridge on your right, going south. Please let Cynthia MacDonald know **BEFORE OCTOBER 15** if you plan to be on the cruise. Cynthia can be reached at 410-799-9517 or

DunMcDnld@aol.com. Judy and I hope to see you there.

Also, please remember our year-end meeting scheduled for November 15 at the Hawthorn Center. We will be electing the new board members for 2005. If you are interested in running for a board position, please let me know. We really need for folks to volunteer for these positions.

Steve Foland

Inner Harbor Cruise, September 25 – 26

September 25 dawned cool but bright and breezy, perfect weather for the first weekend of fall. Nan and I cast off at 11:40, later than we had planned, but with plenty of time to get to the Inner Harbor for dinner at 6:30 p.m. With the wind out of the east, but trending southerly, at 5-10 knots, we had a pleasant reach up the Patapsco to the Key Bridge. There was a great deal of traffic in the river and on the bay, and also an enormous amount of debris in the water. Huge limbs and stumps of trees, along with smaller twigs, bits, and pieces of docks, hatch covers, small bits of styrofoam flotation materials; and all manner of other vegetation drifted

in windrows on the one- to one-and-a-half-foot seas. Since the obstacle course required a sharp lookout to avoid collisions with the larger flotsam, we were just as happy that we didn't have more wind than we did.

As we approached the Key Bridge, the wind dropped and we decided to motor on into the harbor from there — about an hour and a half — especially as there was a lot of large ship traffic and we were feeling a tad insecure as the approach narrowed and we were tossed about quite a bit by wakes. We had decided that we would take a slip at the Inner Harbor Marina if they had room, so we raised them as we entered the harbor and were directed to a slip, where a pleasant young man competently assisted us in getting secure greeted us. We were pleased by the security provided, the clean, well-appointed facilities, and the large urn of complimentary coffee provided in the morning (there were also donuts, but we didn't partake). We were all secure by 4:30 p.m. and ready to walk around the harbor to Harbor Place for a beer before finding the Babalu Grill.

Andy and Usha Monjan joined us for dinner, which was very well prepared and presented. The menu, not surprisingly, was primarily seafood with a Caribbean twist, supplemented by a long list of rum-based libations with creative names. We all picked our favorite potion — tap water and several bottled varieties were also available — and enjoyed hearing about Andy and Usha's travels to Ecuador and the Galapagos this summer. After dessert and coffee — the coconut crème brule is to die for — the Monjans graciously provided us with a lift back to the marina, and we turned in for a very comfortable night's sleep.

I did wake up around 3:00 a.m. and was mesmerized for nearly an hour by the fact that the water all around the boat was seething with feeding fish. I couldn't really see them except when they jumped, but there were myriad different sizes. It was enchanting.

After the aforementioned complimentary coffee, we cast off at 8:30 a.m., hoping to sail down the river before it got too busy. The wind, as predicted, had come around to the NNE overnight and was sufficient to allow us to sail all the way back in about the same time as we had made the day

before, reaching Hammock Island shortly after noon.

Linda Jensen

A Luxurious Boat Show Weekend

Once in a while, it's nice to get a chance to experience how the "other" one percent of us enjoys life. I had just such a weekend these last three days.

I've previously mentioned my niece (Kristin) and her husband (Bob), pilots for United Airlines, who are proud owners of *Nai'a*, a Swan 53, which they brought up from the Caribbean to Annapolis last spring [I've previously reported on my time with them on board *Nai'a* in the Grenadines]. They took a berth for the season at Port Annapolis Marina, and they are making plans to head for the British Virgin Islands the first week in November. I'll be crewing for them! More about that later, but first:

We made arrangements to meet at their boat to head for the boat show Friday morning. When I arrived, I met Dave and Kim, good friends of theirs, on board for the week on a visit from Puerto Vallarta, where they live aboard a Catana 42 catamaran. We water-taxied to the show and split up to explore for a while before our 1:00 p.m. appointment for a private showing of *Scarlett Muse*, a red-hulled (!) Swan 62 on display at the show. I quickly managed to find the ACR booth, where I explained to the ACR rep that I had cracked my EPIRB antenna and wanted to know how to replace it. It took him about ten seconds to retrieve a new one for me and wish me a good time at the show. Apparently this is a common failure — he said they now make the antennas with a less rigid plastic cover. So I quickly "paid" for my show ticket.

I met up with my group promptly at 1 p.m. at the Nautor Swan tent. After removing my sandals, I stepped barefoot onto the teak deck and into the lap of luxury. I can't possibly do this dreamboat justice in describing it. But it was breathtaking to explore what \$1.79 million will buy (I heard the broker quietly assure my niece that it could probably be gotten for \$1.6 million). Just to give an idea of how luxurious this boat is, the owner's cabin, aft, had a double berth and a single

couch/settee, a desk, large “closets” and a huge walk-in shower and separate head, and its own companionway. There were three more cabins forward, each with bunk berths and each with its own head (and shower, in two of them).

After returning to the show, and reality (of sorts), and a couple of hours of window shopping I headed home, skipping the BVI party the others were headed for at the Marriott.

Jutta and I then made plans to meet up with the four of them, Sunday, for a day sail on board *Nai'a*. The weather turned out to be perfect, and the waters off Annapolis were almost wall-to-wall with sailboats, including at least three racing fleets, one with its spinnakers already set. We raised the main — an in-boom furling, full battened sail — with the assistance, of course, of an electric winch. We then rolled out the genoa, killed the engine, and began what was perhaps the nicest day sail I've ever enjoyed. Bob asked me what I thought of his new Quantum main and genoa (\$19,000 of laminated synthetics!). I must admit they were objects of beauty, perfectly shaped and filled, driving the boat at about seven knots on an easy reach, in about ten knots of true wind. After dropping the center board, moving our draft from eight feet to thirteen feet, we tacked several times, nearing the bay bridge at one point, dodging the racing fleets, and delighting in the scenery, the quiet movement of the boat, and the company. I took the wheel a couple of times. The feel of the helm was incredibly sensitive, but easy to keep "in the groove" despite a fair number of wind shifts. As we headed back, with Captain Bob at the wheel, we found freshening breezes that nearly put the starboard rail in the water for a few minutes as we tweaked the sail trim and Jutta registered a complaint or two. Once we got it right, at one point *Nai'a* was giving us just over nine knots of boat speed, in about twelve knots true wind, with an apparent wind angle of about 25 degrees! Wow!

We worked *Nai'a* back into her berth, relaxed topsides with cold ones all around, and then Jutta and I headed home, passing up the offer to watch some football on their 23 inch LCD TV below, after Bob set up the satellite dish. The two of us enjoyed a delicious dinner on the outside deck at the Carroll Creek Café (rockfish and crab cakes), looking out at Annapolis Harbor, the boat show, and the Sunday afternoon crowds. It doesn't get any lovelier!

Before leaving *Nai'a* we finalized plans for me to join them for the passage to the British Virgin Islands in early November. I'll help them provision the boat at the end of October, then rejoin them on the fourth of November after I take *Breezing Up* to Havre de Grace for the winter. We hope to be in Hampton by the sixth and head out on the seventh, weather permitting, for an eight- to ten-day passage, heading easterly then southerly. Bermuda will be a bail out option if the weather sours. Otherwise we'll go non-stop from Hampton to Tortola. Two of the folks who worked on their boat this summer will come along as crew, so we plan three daily shifts, two hours on and six hours off. I'm really eager to see what it feels like to do a true ocean passage. I plan on hanging around in Tortola for a few days, then flying home shortly before Thanksgiving.

I'll try to file brief email reports along the way.

George Alberts

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS AND PAST ISSUES OF THE HORNPIPE. WE HAVE FOUND THESE 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.