

THE HORNPIPE

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Commodore's Comments

We have reached the midpoint of the sailing season and some of our best sailing is ahead of us. Enjoy it!

In the dog days of summer I again find myself dreaming about living at the water's edge with the boat sitting in a slip a few steps from my deck. I have also dreamt about how great it would be to live in an area that offers year-round sailing. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have the option to go out for a sail at any time of the year (and not having to winterize)? Florida, of course, comes to mind. But then there's the hurricane season. San Diego is also an exciting-sounding choice — ideal weather! But there aren't a lot of friendly overnight destinations.

The more I think about these fantasies, the more fortunate I feel to be doing exactly what I'm doing. I think I enjoy my visits to the boat a bit more because visiting the boat takes some effort (and expensive gasoline!) and seems more like an event to me. As far as year-round sailing is concerned, I have come to realize how much I enjoy the rhythms of the sailing season on the bay. Spring launch leads into six or more months of sailing

(early in the season, waiting for the weather and the water to warm up as the days grow longer); summer, enjoying a swim wherever we can find nettle-free water, and dodging thunderstorms as the sun sets earlier and earlier in the evening; fall, with pleasant weather and excellent sailing. Then we get the boat ready for the winter. Then the reading through the catalogues begins, making the spring checklist, prepping the boat — then the cycle repeats.

Indeed, I think the absence of a beginning and an end to the season would make it less enjoyable, rather than more. Like life itself — if we lived forever, I'd think each day would become rather meaningless. It's not clear, of course, that life is a cycle, repeating itself. But fortunately for us, sailing certainly is.

* * *

On another topic, I have not received any comments about lightning protection systems, in response to my last month's remarks. Maybe none of us have installed a lightning protection system? Or maybe we just don't want to talk about it.

George Alberts

Best Beer Cruise, June 21, 2008

We left Hammock Island on Friday evening and spent the night anchored outside of Castle Harbor in the Chester River. Saturday, we made our way up the river, spotting some skates in the water along the way, and arrived at Caccaway Island around 3:00 p.m. Jan and Hank Zerhusen were already there on *Octavia*, along with their teenage friend AJ. Robbie and Ed Sabin arrived a bit later on *Aldebaran*, and after a bit of afternoon swimming for all hands (except Ilyse and Jesse, who relaxed on board), we commenced what must be the shortest beer tasting contest in the history of the CCSC.

Appetizers were set up in *Agapé's* cockpit, and we enjoyed the food and company, and AJ's guitar playing, while exactly three beer drinkers taste-tested exactly three beers. Scoring was based on a scale of one to five points, with the following results:

First prize went to the Zerhusens for Pyramid Hefeweizen beer, with a score of 11 points total. First prize was a painted "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere" beer mug.

The Sabins took second place, with St. Pauli Girl beer, with a score of ten points.

Ilyse and Jesse finished last, with Shipyard Export beer, and a score of 8 points. Since we, the Delanoys, brought the prizes, we couldn't bring home the booby prize, which was a lighted wall hanging of a sailing ship. The wall hanging was therefore awarded to the Sabins, who were thrilled with it because, as Ed told us, he "likes 'kitchie'".

The entire contest took something like ten minutes, start to finish.

Since the wind was blowing pretty strongly, we broke off of the raft to go anchor for the night, and made our way home the next day in light air.

Ilyse and Jesse Delanoy

Long Summer Cruise July 4 –18, 2008

When Barb and Dick Callis said they couldn't go on the cruise this year, Hank and I agreed to fill in for them. We did our best, but we were not the glue that held this trip together. This turned into a drop-in, drop-out type of cruise. To

start, we backed out of the first night, July 4, due to predicted nasty weather (and it can be said that we had both been under the weather with colds). The Bakers, on *Courtney II*, were left to do their own thing. They had planned to join us for only two nights.

Saturday, July 5, the MacDonalds on *Heather II* arrived at Dun Cove to find no other members at anchor. Meanwhile, back at Hammock Island, *Breezing Up*, with George, and *Octavia*, with us, spent the night in our slips.

Sunday, July 6, found two boats heading south towards Solomons Island. We stopped Sunday morning in the Bodkin to clean *Octavia's* prop and rudder — really dirty. That wet suit is nice to have on board!

Sunday night, we and *Octavia* anchored in the Little Choptank; the MacDonalds and *Heather II* were on a mooring at Zanhisers, Solomons; George aboard *Breezing Up* and the Shippeys on *Evening Light* were at anchor in Solomons; and Art and Sue Grotz, on *Lauren A*, were at anchor in Dun Cove. (There will be a quiz).

Monday, July 7, found five boats rafted in Mill Creek, Solomons. The MacDonalds remained on the mooring. We enjoyed cocktails and catching up with the news on the Shippey's *Evening Light*, and then broke the raft for the night. Mill Creek is a great place to anchor. It is quiet, is good holding, has a little traffic only till dark, and, best of all, has lots of room.

On Tuesday, July 8, all of us headed to Crisfield, 40 nautical miles away. It was one of the best sails we've all had in a long time. On the same tack, we sailed from the Patuxent River to within two miles of Janes Island Light in Tangier Sound. By then the wind was building and was on the nose, so most of us just motored into the marina. We saw boat speeds of over seven knots; heeling of 25 degrees, sometimes more; and wind speeds of 12 knots building to 18 knots. Hank and I talked of reefing, but we were too lazy.

We all arrived fairly closely together, except for the MacDonalds aboard *Heather II*. We knew they were coming because the reservation was still on the books. One of the dockhands came by at about 4:00 p.m. to advise that some nasty weather was coming and to suggest that we check our lines

or even double them up. The sky kept getting darker with ugly looking clouds; AND finally *Heather II* arrived. We waved them into their slip; helped with the lines; and, ten minutes later, wham, the storm hit. George clocked 60 knots, we saw 42, and the boats were heeling in the slips. There were whitecaps in the harbor, rain, lightning, and howling wind. It was exciting — so glad we all were in a safe harbor. At about 7:00 p.m., the rain stopped and some of the group went out to supper, others out for ice cream! Then early to bed. It was a tiring day.

The marina at Somers, during the week, gives the third night free (except for electric); thus, we had two more days to fill. We spread out the fun in this dazzling resort town, doing laundry, grocery shopping, and window shopping; eating out; doing boat chores; napping; and socializing. On Thursday, the town put on a cookout celebration because “The street’s complete.” The paving of Main Street was finally finished. We had hotdogs, soft drinks, chips, a DJ with a great sound system, and a chance to mingle with some of the locals.

Some of our usual restaurants have closed, but we heard about Gordon’s for breakfast. The report from Captain Hank was that the food was just OK, but the floor probably had not been washed since they opened in 1934, only swept; and the chairs were original, also not washed. We’re guessing the kitchen is one we’d rather not visit; so we’ve scratched that one.

Friday, July 11, it was time to move on again. The upcoming week’s weather was predicted to be hot and humid, and we changed our schedule to let all of us head home sooner. The Grotzes aboard *Lauren A* headed north towards home, and the other four boats headed to Smith Creek on the Potomac River. Smith Creek is a place Hank and I had not visited before. We ended up motoring all the way.

The plan was to anchor out and dinghy ashore to the restaurant for dinner together. Arriving at about 2:00 p.m., it was hot; so again we all took slips. Point Lookout Marina is old. The docks are somewhat wobbly, but absolutely spotless everywhere; and there is a friendly staff. A lovely pool was on a hill, with trees providing shade in the afternoon. As for the restaurant, they probably do

lunch better. (My crabcake looked like a pancake and tasted about the same.) However, the sunset sort of made up for that by turning the sky and the water a soft shade of pink!

July 12, Saturday, was another motoring day up to Solomons. The MacDonalds took a mooring again because they needed some work done on the boat’s head. The rest of us anchored in Mill Creek for the night.

Sunday, George and *Breezing Up* headed north towards home, the Shippeys and *Evening Light* went up the Patuxent for a couple of days, and Hank and I aboard *Octavia* moved over to Back Creek to anchor near the museum. As a note: our anchor set so well it took a while to get it up when we left Tuesday morning.

We enjoyed our two days in Solomons; cocktails and dinner out with the MacDonalds, a museum visit, and a walk to Woodburn’s for groceries (like Trader Joes but bigger, and they provide a ride back to the marina if asked). We used Zanhisers dinghy dock for a small charge, but so convenient for trash dump, showers, or going to town.

Tuesday, July 15, the MacDonald’s *Heather II* was scheduled for boat parts installation, and we sailed *Octavia* to the Little Choptank River on five tacks. In the whole bay there was not a boat to be seen, when a huge ship came our way, putting us on a collision course. We changed course just as the pilot called us on the radio, very nicely, to make sure that we were not going to try to cross his bow.

Wednesday, July 16, *Heather II* and *Octavia* anchored in the mouth of Plaindealing Creek (across from Oxford). Hank and I were treated to cocktails and a summer supper by the MacDonalds aboard *Heather II*. It was a quiet evening, with only the sounds of lawnmowers, birds, and waves lapping at the nearby shore. The moon, almost full, made it perfect

We heard from the Shippeys that their engine quit without a sputter as they motored into Galesville on Wednesday. Ever the competent sailor, Ed chose to sail into his slip (on the head sail at one knot) and solve the problem after turning on the AC. So far it looks like a fuel pump problem.

On Thursday, would you believe that once again we moved into a slip for the day and night? It

was very hot, probably close to 94 degrees. We went to the Oxford Boat Yard Marina. Hank could look at boats to his heart's content. As for me, I don't think I had ever seen so much brightwork in one place. The MacDonalds went to Mears Marina, which has a great pool. Again, we all went out to supper at Schooners.

All in all, we did very little sailing on this cruise, but visited lots of marinas and did a lot of eating out.

It was getting hotter, so it was time to head home. *Heather II* was off to Cambridge. With a south wind of ten knots and very choppy seas, we motored back to Hammock Island.

Going through Knapp Narrows at mid-tide, we saw 8.7 feet in the eastern channel and over 10 feet on the western side. Some work was being done on the western side, new riprap. Hopefully that will slow the shoaling. The *Cruising Guide* says that the Poplar Island project has also helped with the shoaling.

On *Octavia*, we were out 13 days, traveled 293 nautical miles, and used 31.6 engine hours. We did too little sailing and too much motoring, but the time spent with friends: priceless.

Barb and Dick, we missed you.

Jan and Hank Zerhusen

Full Moon/Sunset Cruise, July 18

In preparation for the moonlight cruise Friday night, I took Friday off from work and got to Hammock Island early enough to do boat chores aboard *Mutima* while waiting for it to cool off enough to go sailing. While I agreed with George Alberts to depart around 7:30 p.m., the two of us foolishly forgot to coordinate routes or other intentions, or even a radio frequency to monitor.

About an hour before scheduled departure, Matt Coyle called and was instantly persuaded that he and Barb would be very welcome, even useful, additions to *Mutima's* crew. The Coyles arrived just after Jenny arrived, and, with very little ado, we were off; all hands wearing PFDs, in compliance with the newest boat rule for night sailing.

The night was soft, the breeze was steady and pleasant (8-10 knots?), and the sunset was

spectacular. We caught a great view of *Breezing Up* silhouetted against the lovely sun. But then we parted company and only caught suspected glimpses of her as *Mutima* headed southeast to the mouth of the Chester River.

We selected the course as a close reach in order to give us a downhill ride home. The moonrise, an hour later, was equally spectacular, huge and blood red above the eastern shore. Caught in the spell of the night, we were into the mouth of the river before I realized we had to turn around and go back if we wanted to get any sleep at all.

The ride home was easy, fast, and fun; and the magic GPS took anxiety out of identifying the key marks. All hands peeled their eyes to find crabpots and daymarks as we cautiously made our way back into the Bodkin. After all was secured, we lingered over drinks in the cockpit, reluctant to let the night go.



Breezing Up, Sunset/Full Moon Cruise

Mutima sports brand new navigation lights on brand new wiring that we ran throughout her hull on a sweltering, thundering day in June. Because of the faulty old wiring, the lights had never worked right. So we had never done night sailing on *Mutima*. The lights worked great (new LEDs), and once again proved the benefit of selecting your crew based on handyman skills and willingness to spend large amounts of time messing about in boats.

Nan Shellabarger



Nan at helm, Sunset/Full Moon Cruise



Barbara and Matt Coyle, Sunset/Full Moon

July 19-20 Cruise to Still Pond

My cruise report is very simple: simply perfect.

To elaborate, we had good wind, the weather and water were balmy, the company and food were terrific, and nothing (additional) broke on *Mutima*. It was about as good as it gets.

The weather threatened to be very hot for the weekend of July 18, and several potential cruisers were deterred by the thought of a long, hot motor to a sweltering anchorage.

We saw south winds forecast and an unusual lack of thunderstorms in the offing, so we decided that sailing was better than staying home. Jenny

and I on *Mutima*, and the Albertses aboard *Breezing Up* spent Friday night at Hammock Island after our lovely Sunset/Full Moon Cruise.

It dawned a pleasant temperature, and we were determined to head out as early as sufficient coffee intake permitted in order to beat the coming heat.

Mutima was off just a few minutes before *Breezing Up*, but George and Jutta passed us easily as we killed the engine and fumbled around with the spinnaker just out of the mouth of the Bodkin. (They didn't kill their engine, which may have helped their speed advantage.)

Our philosophy is to sail as long as we have steerage way, and only start up the engine if we're totally becalmed or if we have a schedule to keep. In this case we decided to poke along north under sail and do an ETA check in the early afternoon.

Setting the spinnaker on the free-standing mast of a Freedom is quite different from setting it on "normal" boats. We don't leave it rigged and fly it only once or twice a year; so each time is a learning opportunity.

This time I played the foredeck crew and scrambled up and down, fore and aft, and all around to set each of the four new lines with associated snatch blocks, snap shackles, thumb screws, and other miscellaneous hardware (an average of two times each and one boat bite to get them right). I wrestled the huge spinnaker pole into its gun mount, figured out which corner of the sail was which (eventually), and let fly. The wind was from the south, we were headed northeast, and we kept that balloon full for a good three and a half hours as we glided north at 3.5 to 4.5 knots.

We arrived at Still Pond in the early afternoon to find that George, by prearrangement, had set the hook towards the back of the large pack clustered against the southern shore of that bay. We rafted up, and everyone jumped in the water, which was cool enough to be refreshing but far from breathtakingly cold. The normal raft-up activities of boat chores, cocktails, books, finger food, politics, and perhaps some tall tales took place.

Jenny and I spent the night in the cockpit again, because the night air was lovely, but the breeze had died, and it was stifling below. We woke with the dawn, and sailed off the raft without

starting the engine (with George's indulgent assistance).

The wind had come back, southwest and stronger, so we knew we had a long day's sail in front of us. The first tack across the bay and back again gained us just a couple of hundred yards towards home in 45 minutes. It started looking like a *really* long day.

Things got better as the wind continued to back and strengthen all day. In the end, we made it to the Bodkin in seven tacks, with one tack lasting over three hours. It took us from off Worton Creek to the southern shore of the Patapsco west of the Bodkin, doing the crabpot slalom and dodge 'em the whole way.

During the sail, the wind had picked up enough that we contemplated a reef, but we held off due to a potential jam in the sail track. Instead, we spilled wind out of the mainsail and lost efficiency as a result.

Eight hours after casting off we were snuggled up at Hammock Island.

Good sailing, good company, no thunderstorms, and no newly broken parts. What a perfect weekend! The only thing that would have made the cruise more perfect would have been more members coming.

Nan Shellabarger

Best Cheap Wine Cruise, August 2, 2008

Saturday morning started off with thunderstorms, overcast skies, and NOAA calling for hazardous weather conditions and a small craft advisory for the day. This led to calls to the Albertses, Coyles, Sabins, and Zerhusens to see if they were still planning on joining the cruise to Whitehall Creek. Jan suggested that we could have the cruise aboard their boat, *Octavia*, which was sitting comfortably tied up at Hammock Island.

This great idea was quickly concurred in by the other intrepid sailors, and we set 4:00 p.m. as the raft-up time. I then sent out emails to the rest of the club membership (It turned out they were sent several times due to a transmission error by me.).

Bill Durr quickly volunteered Hammock Island as the "anchor boat".

At the designated time, everyone was gathered at Hammock Island except the cruise captain, who had just then gotten on the road with his mate. Usha and I arrived in time to start the proceedings on the lawn just before a strong wind came through, blowing plates and food off the table and forcing all to a hasty retreat to the clubhouse.

Present were what seemed to be almost all (but really was about half) of the club membership: Jutta and George Alberts, Barbara and Dick Callis, Barbara and Matt Coyle, Ilyse and Jesse Delanoy, Carol and Bill Durr, Virginia and Cliff Jackson, Suzanne Bucher and Bob Lowenstein, Usha and Andy Monjan, Robbie and Ed Sabin, and Jan and Hank Zerhusen.

We had an abundance of tasty snacks to complement the dozen bottles of wine.

The wine tasting and scoring would have made the wine spectator proud of the critical palates amongst our crews. Out of a score range of one to ten, there was only one 13, with quite a preponderance of twos, threes, and fours. However, because of a tie in the white category, we did have three clear winners. The winners were a 2007 "Washington Hills" Riesling from Washington state (submitted by Dick Callis) and a 2006 "Now and Zen" Wasabi white from Alsace, France (submitted by Cliff Jackson). In the red category, Matt Coyle submitted the winning 2007 Merlot, "Ecco Domani" from Italy.

NOAA's predictions of scattered heavy rains and winds were correct, although we did experience periods of sun and comfortable temperatures in the mid-80s.

The Albertses and Coyles spent the night on their boats in Jubb Cove in the Bodkin Main Creek, or so they said, as the rest of us drove home through a heavy downburst. Incidentally, the Annapolis area had 1.75-inch hailstones Saturday.

It looks as if all enjoyed this weather-rescheduled raft-up.

Andy Monjan