

THE HORNPIPE

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CCSC 2008 Board Members

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Commodore's Comments

A modest number of CCSCers turned out on a cool and rainy November evening to take part in our annual Fall meeting, at the Hawthorn Neighborhood Center in Columbia. After enjoying a fine social hour-plus, we conducted a brief business meeting. As a result of that meeting we are proud to announce the election of next year's board:

Andy Monjan, Commodore
Hank Zerhusen, Vice Commodore
Nan Shellabarger, Secretary/Membership
Ed Sabin, Treasurer
Judy and Steve Foland, Hornpipe
Cynthia and Duncan MacDonald, Social

We greatly appreciate the members who have agreed to stay for another year, and we heartily welcome Andy and Hank back to the board.

Mark your calendars for the annual winter dinner/meeting on January 24. Jan and Hank Zerhusen have graciously agreed to host the event.

What to do for a sailing fix in December? With *Breezing Up* secured and on the hard, and the marine catalogs of minimal interest (I've run out of

things to buy?), Jutta and I have come up with an answer. I'm normally not a fan of big cruise ships, but we have decided to do something different for Christmas this year, and it involves a huge ship in that category, the Princess Cruises' *Ruby Princess*, a new addition to their fleet, with a passenger capacity of 3,070! We will be sailing out of Fort Lauderdale on the December 20, returning to port on the 27th after stops in Ocho Rios, Jamaica; Cozumel, Mexico; Grand Cayman Island; Princess Cays, Bahamas. We are treating ourselves to a balcony cabin and a number of shore excursions, including a tour of Mayan ruins on the Cozumel layover. We are hoping the weather is warm enough for some beach time and snorkeling as well. Look for a cruise report in the January Hornpipe.

In the meantime, my thanks for the opportunity to serve the club this past year, and happy holidays to you all!

George Alberts

COME ONE, COME ALL

What: Chesapeake Corinthian Sailing Club Annual Party

When: Saturday, January 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Why: Good fun, good food, annual awards, presentation of the new board, a winter sailing fix. If not sailing, the next best thing is to talk about sailing!

What to bring: A side dish. The club will provide the rest. (We only need two or three desserts, in addition to Judy's, give us a call if doing one)

**Where: Jan and Hank Zerhusen's home
5055 Dry Well Court, Columbia, MD
21045, 410 730 9129**

**RSVP to hzerhusen2@verizon.net just for a head count to help with food purchases.
Jan Zerhusen**

Fall 2008

As some of you may know, the Durrs have been traveling again; this time in France. In October, we spent a bit over two weeks of seeing sights, both by land and by water, and working on our diets. This is a new one called "eat, drink, walk, then nap."

Our first week in France was on a 12-meter canal barge on the Garonne Canal. We flew into Toulouse, and the following day drove in a rental car to Agens (about 40 miles to the NW), where we picked up our home for the next week. Our *pénichette* was a bumper boat designed especially for the charter trade on canals in Europe. On our size boat the accommodations for two couples were perfect. Our cabins (each with one double berth) were identical, and we had two heads, each with a shower. We had a galley, main salon, navigation station in the main area, and a useful back porch where we could have meals or relax and read.

Our friends, Barbara and Dave Barrett, shared these rather close quarters on board *Clairac*, but at least we had private cabins and separate heads. Dave and Bill did all of the driving, which

was not especially difficult because there was only one direction to go: straight ahead. We did have Dave's GPS hooked up, which gave us an idea of what might be in the vicinity of our cruising. We opted NOT to rent bikes this time, and it was just as well. We never had a moment when we wished we had them.

We were provided with a quite descriptive chart book, giving us information on the locks and the surrounding towns. Our route took us mostly to small towns along the canal route heading northwest toward Bordeaux (but never reaching that far), and the week passed all too quickly. Some of the villages where we either spent the night or just walked around and had lunch were: Séreignac, Buzet, Demazan, Nérac, and Vianne. Being there at this time of the year, we had no problem with canal traffic, and we never had to wait for a lock to clear or share a lock with another boat. Nor were there any problems of competition for parking spaces along the canal or river.

Some changes have taken place since we were last on French canals on our own. All of the locks are now automated! There are no more lock keepers to greet you (or collect a tip.) Their houses remain, however — often unoccupied. Another innovation was the way to signal the automated lock that we were approaching: a hose hanging from a cable across the canal, which we twisted to alert the system of our approach.

We all had our chores in going through locks. I handled the bow lines, Barbara the stern lines, and either Bill or Dave would go ashore to catch and cinch up the lines and push the button to begin the closing or opening of the gates. All went well. No lock disasters; except on the first one, when we had not discussed a lock plan and managed to get trapped in the lock after the water went down. Our friend Dave had to climb the slimy ladder (PROHIBITED!) to the top to push the button to open the gates. After that, our methods improved!

The weather was sometimes overcast, but all in all a pleasant temperature. Only on one occasion did we have to don rain gear. And it was indeed a pleasure to have the canal and towns almost completely to ourselves. The tourist season was over, and most of the fleet boats were in their ports

for the winter. It was rare that we passed another canal boat headed in the other direction

One of our few concerns along the way was the possibility of arriving at a town in late afternoon and finding that the restaurants were closed. Sundays and Mondays many restaurants in France are closed. We made sure we always had dinner makings on board, just in case.

Breakfasts were easy. One of us made a morning trip to the local *patisserie* and brought back croissants. So with coffee and juice, we had a rather French *petit déjeuner* aboard every morning.

Each late afternoon, we tied up along the canal banks near a town where we could do a little sight seeing, visit the *épicerie* to pick up foodstuffs, and hopefully find an open restaurant for dinner. Barbara was nearly starved in the evening by the time the restaurants opened at 7:30. Unlike Bill and me, the Barretts are used to an earlier dining time. They never did completely adjust to the later dining hours. I often caught Barb in the fridge around 5:30 looking for snacks to tide her over.

By the way, for those of you who do not know about the canals in France, the banks along the canals, not the rivers, are government owned, so wherever you want to place your stakes and tie up for the night is fine. Each boat is provided with a couple of iron stakes and a mallet — and *voilà!* It's only in the larger towns like Nérac where we had to pay (five euros) and stay in a mooring area. But what a sweet mooring place that was! It was between two ancient bridges in the heart of town, and came complete with church bells and a rooster in the morning.

All along our route the countryside was absolutely beautiful and quite tranquil. We noted that the French really enjoy their hiking or biking along the tow paths, even in a drizzle. We noticed that there was mistletoe in the soon-to-be bare trees on each side of the canal. French mistletoe is not the same variety as ours and also is protected, so no shooting it out of the trees for Christmas decorations.

When we returned the boat to Agens, we crammed ourselves and our luggage into our rental Citroen for a short trip to Albi, where we had arranged for an apartment for a week. (After much calculation and thinking, we decided that it was

cheaper to have a car for two weeks, even though it was not used for one week, and avoid any public transportation costs or taxi fares for four of us.)

The apartment was in a 1700's house that was just steps away from everything in the old town, including the central market, where we bought croissants every morning for our breakfast in the apartment. Our landlord, Alain, had made us some fig preserves, which were about gone by the time we left. (I think I may have been the one to appreciate that gift the most.) Alain had been in the antique business before he purchased and renovated the house (three apartments), so all the furnishings were period pieces; and the walls had original oil paintings — even in the bathroom!

The arrangement of the apartment was somewhat strange, in that the advertised bath and a half turned out to be a tub and sink in one area just off our bedroom and a toilet in a small room next to the kitchen (on the other side of the living room). There were no bedroom doors either. It's a good thing that our companions are excellent friends, and that we had just disembarked from a more cramped space than the apartment. We really didn't mind Barb and Dave coming through our room for their morning shower. And having just one toilet was a throwback to earlier times. We all remember growing up with a bunch of siblings and only one bathroom, don't we?

Each day we did excursions into the towns near Albi, including visiting the summer home of the artist Toulouse Lautrec, Chateau de Bosc, an ancient chateau that is still in his family. His 80-some-year-old grand niece still greets visitors to the estate. Albi features a remarkable collection of his work in the Lautrec Museum in the Palace of the Bebiers, right next to the largest brick building in the world, St. Cecile Cathedral. These were both about two minutes from our apartment stairs.

The villages all have a town hall and a central square. Some were medieval *bastides*, or fortified towns, with walls and streets laid out in parallel patterns. Most of the towns we visited likely had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. From noon until 2:00 p.m. everything shut down except the restaurants. Some of the towns we visited were Penne, Castres, Cordes sur Ciel, and Lysle sur le Tarn. Ever heard of any of those? I can guarantee

that you would enjoy visiting any one of them (but maybe not for long).

If anyone tells you everyone in France speaks English, it's not true. I was glad to have been brushing up on my French the past few years and to be able to say just about anything I wanted to say. The trouble came when someone spoke back to me. Fortunately, Dave was fairly good at comprehending spoken French. So together we managed to figure things out.

While we were there, the exchange rate between the euro and dollar improved for us each day. We considered staying longer just to come out even. Of course, we were watching the stock market, too. What a time to be abroad! Of course, when we returned and discovered that gas was 80 cents a gallon less than when we left, that was definitely a surprise.

For those of you who are able to use Tower Federal Credit Union cards for ATMs, that's the way to go abroad. Their charges were most reasonable, and the exchange rate was excellent — adjusting each day.

I was not so lucky with my experiences with my new iPhone. I came home to a \$300 bill because I did not understand that when I was using its GPS in our drive to the Toulouse hotel the first day I was paying \$1 per minute. However, without having used it, we might still be driving around Toulouse.

We did find out that although more expensive than on past visits, the smaller villages can still offer some good meals for a reasonable price. And a pitcher of wine could be had for three or four euros. We're certain that by chartering and renting and sharing expenses, the two weeks was a lot less than the tours we've made on French canals with OAT.

The most wonderful thing about our trip was that we all came home relaxed! I'm not sure I've ever been able to say that about a trip anywhere. I suspect that you all know that I'm already thinking ahead to our next trip to France. There's no lack of canals or small towns to see, in all areas of France. Our experiences with Locaboat have always been good, and they offer boats all over France (and Holland, Poland, and Germany, as well.) Please don't tell Bill. Let this be a surprise!

À bientôt!

Carol Durr

Latest from the Flynns

Hi, everyone. We are in Tucson, Arizona, and have been traveling in the RV for about six weeks. During that time we have seen some of the most amazing scenery. Some of the highlights:

We spent about a week in the northwestern portion of New Mexico — on the edge of the Navajo Nation. We went to El Morro National Monument; a wolf sanctuary in Candy Kitchen, New Mexico; and Chaco Canyon, a thousand-year-old Indian ruins. We also went to Window Rock, the headquarters of the Navajo Nation; and in a museum we watched a short film about the Navajo trading posts. Two days later, we were in a small shop in Farmington, New Mexico, and met one of the men in the film. We were excited that we recognized him, and he was so excited that he pulled out black-and-white photos of his great grandparents and their trading post in the 1930s.

We spent two weeks in Moab, Utah, and cannot say enough wonderful things about Moab. It is rock country with just incredible views. We spent a lot of time in Arches National Park and also went to Canyonlands National Park and Dead Horse Point State Park. We did a lot of hiking, loved the town of Moab, and can't wait to go back.

We spent two nights and one day in Monument Valley. It was a little commercial. In the gift shop, the John Wayne alarm clocks next to the beautiful Navajo rugs were a bit much; but it was also very interesting. We took a private three-hour van tour with a Navajo woman who has lived on the reservation all of her life; and once she got off script, she had a wealth of interesting information. Also, Adrian saw her first cowboy and Indian movie. Many John Wayne cowboy and Indian movies were filmed in Monument Valley, and they show a different one each night. We saw "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," filmed in 1949 in Monument Valley.

We also spent two weeks at Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Cottonwood, Arizona, where we visited with fellow Sonoita volunteers Pat and Keven and met new friends Pete and Nancy. We

also spent one night at Utery Regional Park, where we volunteered in 2005/2006.

We are now in Tucson, cleaning and stocking the RV. On Thursday we head to Patagonia for our two months of volunteering. We're ready and very excited.



Tom in Canyonlands



Adrian is on a hike to Corona Arch. She is hanging onto safety cables — we had never seen them before.



The arch is Corona Arch; our destination that day.



Sunset in Monument Valley

We will be at Patagonia Lake State Park until February 15. If you're curious and have a map, look about 70 miles south of Tucson on Arizona 82, halfway between Patagonia and Nogales. If needed, you can use the following address: c/o Sonoita Creek State Natural Area, HC2, Box 273, Nogales, AZ 85621

You can use this address or our Florida address. We don't have very good phone or Internet while we are there, but we do check our phone many times a day and our email every two or three days. We wish all of you a very happy and healthy holiday season — Merry Christmas, happy Chanukah, and a wonderful and happy 2009.

For our Hammock Island friends, we were hiking in the Santa Catalina Mountains in Tucson yesterday and met a woman whose cousin owns/runs Ventnor. I didn't get her name, but the cousin is Robin. Small world!!

Adrian and Tom Flynn