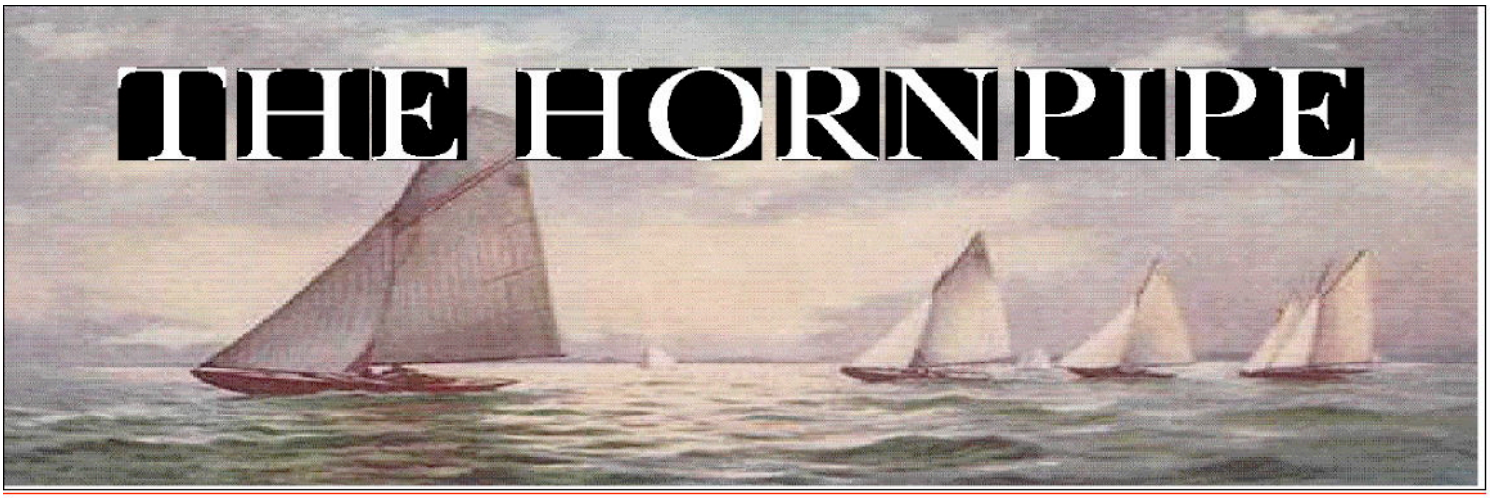

VOLUME 33, NO. 3 *THE HORNPIPE* *MARCH 2009*

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Commodore's Comments

It is the middle of March, and we are getting confusing signals about spring. After a entry like a lion (our March 2 snowfall), last weekend's mild weather brought thoughts, if not actions, of getting our boats into Bristol condition. Now, we are looking forward to another unbalmy weekend. OK, back to those catalogues from Defender, West Marine, etc., for our wish lists (And with the economy, it may be only wishing, although our economists do encourage us to spend money to stimulate the economy!). However, we will be doing more than that as we welcome spring in at our club dinner at the McDonald's home. Be sure to come. Please bring ideas, as well as food for the body, since I would like to have another open discussion on what you all want to get out of the CCSC.

Next month we will be having our annual spring picnic and meeting at Hammock Island, and at it we will call on people to volunteer as cruise captains. So, in addition to other events you would like to see for the rest of the year, do provide Hank before the picnic with suggestions for cruises and themes. We need input from all to make sure that everyone participates as much as possible.

Think about those days working on the boats in preparation for those days under sail. Of course, the sweetest sound of spring is the sound of your engine turning over after its winter hibernation.

Andy Monjan

Attention – Attention - Attention
CCSC March Potluck Social
March 21, 6:00 p.m. at the MacDonalds, 6427 Koffel Court, Elkridge, MD
Club will provide appetizers and beverages.
Bring a dish to share.
RSVP (just for a head count): to Zerhusens
Email: hzerhusen2@verizon.net Home: 410-730-9129

Attention – Attention – Attention
Upcoming Events Reminder
What: Spring Picnic & Cruising Schedule Review
When: April 25, 3:00 p.m.
Where: Hammock Island Marina
Bring: Appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share

Lifelines — More Than You Would Ever Want To Know?

I have stored my boat on the hard this winter, at the Tidewater Yacht Service Center in Baltimore. They offered me a courtesy inspection of my standing rigging, and I took them up on the offer. Most of their findings were minor and easy

for me to take care of on my own. However, they reported rust at several points in the lifeline system, and strongly recommended replacement. After I took a look at the lifelines, it was easy for me to say yes. Indeed, I'm entering the tenth season(!) on board *Breezing Up*, and it looks like this is a good year for me to do a number of things in the refurbishment category. I'm having the dodger restitched completely, and I'm planning on rebedding all the deck fittings, including one leaking chain plate and a leaking stanchion base.

There is much more on my list, but back to lifelines — the yard gave me a reasonable estimate for replacing all the lifelines and associated hardware. They asked just one question — coated or uncoated?

I had not given this much thought, but they say that almost all of the owners who replace their lifelines are choosing the uncoated option. I've also read somewhere that the ocean racing rules require uncoated lifelines. I was surprised at how hard it was for me to answer this question for my boat. I do like the look and comfort of the vinyl-coated lines that came with the boat. I did a good bit of research, and gave this a lot of thought before deciding. I won't tell you what I decided — you'll have to take a look at *Breezing Up* this season to find out.

As I was looking into this question I found an interesting undated article by Ralph Naranjo, at: http://www.ussailing.org/safety/Studies/lifeline_study.htm
He reported on a study he supervised, at the Naval Academy, conducted by senior mechanical engineering students. I've excerpted parts of the study here:

"The first surprise was that lifelines and hardware (at least the heavy-duty selection employed aboard the Navy 44s) usually don't fail. The critical point of failure occurs in the pulpit and tubular stanchions, which in turn slackens the wire and permits it to deflect outboard...

"In follow-up testing, bow and stern pulpits were replaced by a weldment that could handle several thousand pounds of tensile loading without any significant deflection. In these tests, the same wire and stanchions withstood almost three times the load imposed in the first round of testing. When failure did occur, the cause was a wire pulling out of a swage fitting...

"Some lifeline failures stem not from broken hardware, but from modern sandwich core deck-construction techniques. On some decks built in this manner, the core is eliminated near the hull/deck joint and the laminate is fairly thin. Particularly around the stanchion bases, there often isn't enough point-load resistance to handle routine tension and compression strains caused by leverage exerted on stanchion bases. Backing and topping plates and additional fiberglass in the area of the hull-deck joint may be needed to prevent the deck from failing....

"Firsthand reports on lifeline failure reveal two things: quality U.S.- and European-made wire rope rarely breaks, and top-of-the-line terminals offer visual warning signs of deterioration prior to failing. Failure is often caused by a lost clevis pin (after the ring pin is accidentally yanked out by a snagged jib sheet), or a loose turnbuckle nut that allows the barrel to unwind. Gate hardware and some imported plastic-coated 7x7 wire are also prone to failure. So it makes sense to eliminate gates when possible and to replace coated, uninspectable rigging wire with conventional lxl9 wire. If you require a lifeline gate, don't skimp on the hardware, especially the gate clips…"

Coated versus uncoated: the arguments against coated (vinyl-covered) lifelines focus on the inability to inspect them and the possibility of small cracks in the vinyl leading to trapped water inside the coating, leading to rust and potential failure. Another potential issue is the need for stainless steel to "breathe" oxygen, which is inhibited by the vinyl cover. Furthermore, one could theoretically use a larger diameter wire line in the case of uncoated lines, for a fixed size opening in the stanchions.

On the other hand, thousands of boats still carry the coated lines with no bad effects. The most important message in either case, but especially with coated lines, is that you should inspect them regularly.

If you have coated lifelines, an excellent suggestion is that you shrink wrap the end of the lifelines where the vinyl coating has been cut to accommodate attachment to fittings, to prevent water from seeping in underneath the vinyl. Those

are the areas where most of the rust occurred in my lines.

Finally, an excellent suggestion is that you tape the Pelican hooks closed when underway —these are the hooks that enable you to open and close the gates in your lifelines.

George Alberts

What's Happening, Flynns?

Hi everyone; just a quick catch-up on our travels.

We just finished volunteering at Sonoita Creek State Natural Area in Patagonia, Arizona. We were there for two months and had a great time — worked hard and played hard. We look forward to going back next year — even if Ranger Bill says that isn't going to happen! We are truly sorry about all the budget cuts and job loss/change stuff going on and hope things work out. We're trying to keep up with it all through the Internet, etc.

While we were in Patagonia, we hiked, we worked, we socialized with friends (Blame it on the margaritas!), and we gradually became birders. During the two and a half months we were in southern Arizona, we saw 108 species of birds, and more-and-more we can identify them on our own. We worked at least 20 hours a week each, working in the visitor's center, working on trails, and guiding boat tours on Patagonia Lake. We also took field trips with the other volunteers to learn about the area.

One of our trail jobs was to paint signs. Since the signs are spread out over 9,000 acres of land and over 21 miles of trails — this took us a while. The coal mine camp sign is part of our handiwork.

We took a field trip to the San Rafael Valley, where many films were made, including *Oklahoma*. Since this is cattle country, we are in front of a cattle skull, which is holding our hats

We led Saturday evening twilight boat tours on Patagonia Lake.

We are now in Silver City, New Mexico, and will be here for a month. If you look on a map, we are about 50 miles north of Deming (on I-10). Since we are at an altitude of 6,000 feet, it is a little cooler — in fact, in the 20s at night. And since we are on the edge of the Gila National Forest, we plan to do a lot of hiking and birding. On Saturday, we went on our first Audubon Society bird hike. It was fun, but crowded — 27 people!

Anyway, from here, we will put up the RV and start east. On March 23, we will fly to Belize out of Houston. When we return, we plan to visit with Brandy, Rob, Rusty, and Tyler before we head to the boat. We should be back on the boat some time in early to mid-April.

That's it for now. Have fun everyone and take care.

Adrian and Tom Flynn

The Volvo Ocean Race

I've paid little attention to this year's Volvo (Round-the-World) Ocean Race — largely because the Baltimore/Annapolis stopover was dropped from the schedule. The race came to mind as I was working on *Breezing Up*, on the hard at Tidewater/Baltimore, last week. This is the marina that hosted the boats for repairs and race prep during their stopover last time, and there is one large (and fast-looking) boat in stands at the yard that reminds me of the Volvo racers. It has a thin keel extending to a bulb about twelve feet beneath the hull! The only indication that this boat is no longer a serious racer is the fixed three-bladed prop.

I've now become reinterested in the race, after discovering that WMPB (Channel 22) is carrying a weekly half-hour report on the race, at 6:00 p.m. every Saturday. I watched this Saturday's version, then went to the official website to check things out, at: http://www.volvooceanrace.org

I find the current leg rather fascinating. It began in Qingdao, China, and ends in Rio de Janeiro after rounding Cape Horn. It's an incredibly long leg, at over 12,000 non-stop miles.

Of the eight boats that started the race, only five remain active.

Team Russia ran out of money in Singapore.

Leg 4, from Singapore to Qingdao, was brutal on the remaining teams.

Delta Lloyd suffered major structural damage from a collision with "something" underwater and limped to Taiwan for repair and shipping to Rio de Janeiro.

Telefonica Black retired.

As of March 10, the fleet of five racers was about half way between New Zealand and Cape Horn. At that moment Ericsson 3, which took a more northerly route after nearing the northwest tip of New Zealand, enjoyed a 272 nautical mile lead.

You might want to check out the website. It makes for great day-dreaming as we wait for the weather to turn and begin a new sailing season.

George Alberts

Summer in Antarctica

Our trip to Antarctica in February allowed us to avoid the cold weather at home; in fact, down there we had temperatures ranging from 25 to 35 F.

I had been planning on an Antarctic trip for several years, with a notion of doing some diving, and I had been comparing prices and itineraries when I received some alumni brochures on such a trip, sans the diving, that was in a reasonable price range. Since we would be going to the end of the world, I added on several other destinations that made our trip a multi-suitcase adventure. We would be going to the high desert of northern Chile (the Atacama Desert), the tropical rain forest of northern Argentina (Iguazu Falls), and the southern Patagonia of Argentina (El Calafate and El Chalten); but Antarctica remained the centerpiece of the trip and the focus of this report.

The majority of tourists to Antarctica (about 30,000 per year) leave from Ushuaia (54° 48' S, 068° 18' W) in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, the southernmost port in the world.

Ushuaia

We boarded our ship, M.S. *Le Diamant,* on February 2. *Le Diamant* is a French ship that was converted from being a ferry vessel into being a cruise ship. She has about 135 cabins and carried 198 passengers on this voyage, all from various alumni associations throughout the U.S. and Canada. The food had a French flair, and the wine an Argentinean flair. Our fellow travelers were interesting and cordial.

We were scheduled to leave our dock around 1800 hours, but there was a problem with the electric system. As a result, the main power was cut off and backup power was turned on (better here

than in the Drake Passage), which led to a short dinner and a long open-bar. Power was restored around midnight, but not to the captain's satisfaction until about noon on 3 February. That was when we started our sea passage through the Beagle Channel to a smooth crossing of the Drake Passage, experiencing 15-foot swells and 15-knot winds.

We crossed the Antarctic Convergence (at 59° 28' S, 062° 13' W) early in the afternoon of 4 February; this is the region where the colder, denser, north-flowing waters of Antarctica meet the warmer and less dense sub-Antarctic waters, with a boundary characterized by a decrease in temperature and an increase in salinity and nutrient levels. Throughout our sea passage, we spent much of the time attending lectures on the geology, climatology, law, and wildlife of Antarctica; along with socializing, eating, and enjoying the calm seas and the following petrels and albatrosses.

We awoke on the morning of 5 February and were thrilled to see many large tabular icebergs floating serenely past us.

Our first landing was on Gourdin Island (63° 12' S, 057° 17' W), just off the tip of the mainland of the Antarctic Peninsula. Our landings were made via Zodiacs that held eight to ten passengers each.

Because the Antarctic Treaty limits the number of tourists to one hundred at any one time at any site, we went in assigned groups for about one-and- a-half- to two-hour landings.

Unlike much of the polar Arctic, which is ocean, the Antarctic is a vast land mass covered with snow and ice, and thus we landed on rocky beaches of black volcanic origin, making the terrain a monochromatic vista of black and white.

We all wore red jackets, which were provided and which we kept, and waterproof boots, which we brought, and which were disinfected before and after each landing.

Tabular Iceberg

Welcoming Committee

This was our initiation to sights, sounds, and smells of penguins: colonies of Adelie, chinstrap, and gentoo penguins.

Gentoo Greeters

As in the Galapagos, the animals here are not afraid of humans, and it was often difficult to maintain the five-meter distance between them and us.

During lunch, we entered the Antarctic Sound (63° 20' S, 056° 45'W), with more scenes of tabular icebergs, which may have broken off from the Larsen Ice Shelf to the south, on our way to our second landing at Brown Bluff (63° 32' S, 056° 55' W). Brown Bluff, our first landing on the continent,

is an ice-capped, 2,444-foot, flat-topped mountain and an exposure of an extinct englacial volcano. We again were welcomed by hoards of gentoo and Adelie penguins.

After an overnight passage, we awoke on 6 February in the South Shetland Islands for a landing on Half Moon Island (62° 35' S, 059° 54' W). Half Moon Island is a crescent-shaped island, about one-and-a-quarter miles long that is home to an Argentinean navy station and to a colony of chinstrap penguins. The former were invited aboard for lunch and, in return, stamped our passports as temporary visitors; the latter had to fare on their own.

We had to negotiate around numbers of fur seals, and we visited the nesting sites of large numbers of Antarctic terns, Wilson's storm petrels, kelp gulls, and skuas. We were there during the late breeding season, and we saw many penguin chicks that were vulnerable to falling prey to the skua. Yes, it looked like a Discovery Channel nature documentary.

Fur Seal

Our next landing was nearby at Deception Island (63° 00' S, 060° 34' W), with its narrow (755-foot-wide) entry through Neptune's Bellow. Deception Island is an active volcanic center (The last eruption was in 1970.) that is circular and about 10 miles in diameter. Its caldera is the harbor of Port Foster. There are several current and abandoned scientific stations on this former island whaling station.

Commonly seen on Deception Island, at Pendulum Cove, are half-naked hominoids jumping into the Southern Ocean (registered temperature of 35.6° F.) with loud vocalizations and shivering movements of the upper torsos that are being flayed by their upper limbs.

I participated, and this action gained me membership in the Antarctic Polar Plunge Club. My certificate reads: "*We do solemnly acknowledge that this was an act of indubitable courage (as well as extraordinary, incomparable foolishness). Based on the Expedition Leader's observance of this act of absurd heroism, and the Ship's Doctor's confirmation of the said person's temporary loss of any common sense, we consider the bearer of this certificate a key member of the Antarctic Polar Plunge Club."* Of course, I was led to believe that the thermal springs would provide me with Caribbean pleasures, but the hot water was used up before I got in. However, just a short distance away, at Telefon Bay, I warmed up by hiking about 985 feet up to the rim of the crater formed by the most recent volcanic eruption and seeing the glacier striated by ashes from various eruptions.

Bathing Hominoids

Our next port of call, on the morning of 7 February, was back on the continent at Neko Harbor (64° 50' S, 062° 33' W), at the base of Andvord Bay, where we preceded the landing with a spectacular ride around the calved icebergs. Some of the icebergs were blue and as smooth as glass. The whole area was surrounded by high mountains, hanging glaciers, and tide water glaciers. Our ever-familiar gentoo penguins again met us.

While others in our group climbed to see some skua nests, I went along the shore with one of our naturalists to the base of one of the glaciers.

Along the way, she introduced us to Antarctica's largest terrestrial animal, a nematode about one millimeter long that is found under rocks. We also saw pink snow, which is a snow alga and which is distinguished from the other causes of pinkish/orange colorations caused by the penguins.

We also saw a number of large fur seals that were very possessive of their terrain and that told us so in very loud snorts.

After a short cruise, and a tasty lunch, we reached Danko Island (64° 44' S, 062° 37' W) and watched our friendly gentoos climbing up and sliding down well-worn paths in the rock and snow. We hiked up to the summit of the island's peak at 590 feet for views of the surroundings, but missed seeing the leopard seals on the icebergs and the minke whales that later groups encountered.

Our final day on the peninsula was 8 February, and we were scheduled to visit Petermann Island after a morning cruise through the narrow (5250-foot) Lemaire Channel. We got as far as 65° 08' S, 064° 03' W, when the captain did a U-turn due to the channel being blocked by icebergs and a greater than 40-knot tail wind. At that point, our southern most, we were only 1,492 nautical miles from the South Pole.

In lieu of the landing, the captain went to the Neumayer Channel (64° 47' S, 063° 30' W), where we watched several humpback whales.

Then it was to the final landing on Jougia Point, Wiencke Island (64° 50' S, 063° 30' W), where the wind was still blowing hard and where we saw more gentoo penguins, blue-eye shags and nesting skua, a reconstructed skeleton assembled from locally found whalebones, and a couple of sailboats (66+ feet) down from Chile (a club cruise next year?). Our final visit was just across a narrow channel to the gift shop and museum at Base A at Port Lockroy on Gourdier Island (64° 49' S, 063° 30' W).

Ice Blocking Lemaire Channel

Breezy Anchorage

Composite Whale Skeleton

On our return trip across the Drake Passage on 9 February, we encountered 20-30 foot seas; winds at 30 knots, with gusts to 50 knots; and my birthday party. I tried to go to the end of the world to avoid it, but Usha was ahead of me. At least I

didn't have an albatross around my neck, it was following the ship.

Aheel in the Drake Passage

The next morning, 10 February, in scattered rain squalls as we approached the mainland of Argentina. We saw Cape Horn as a gray emergence from the misty seas.

Then we had a calm passage through the Beagle Channel to disembark in Ushuaia.

All told, we traveled 1,692 nautical miles and consumed over 1,800 bottles of wine (all of the passengers collectively, that is). It was a wonderful experience. Antarctica is a unique continent, and one that is pulling on me to return. I may have come forth with a latent case of polar fever, but I anticipate no cure, only more exposure.

Andy Monjan