
The Shallow Water Sailor

Number 141 *A simple boat, a bit of marsh, a redwing's song, and a friend or two* August 2007

The Bosun Chair

Dear Members,

It's 12:30 AM on Labor Day. Couldn't get to sleep so here I am in the quiet, in front of the computer. First I must say that I'm sorry that this issue is a month late. I kept the August date on it, just to emphasize the lateness. For the last ten weeks I was part of two assessment teams that looked into safety programs at the Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear power plants. Both of these plants are along the southern shore of Lake Erie, so I was not too far from water and thoughts of sailing. While at Davis-Besse, which is near Port Clinton, Ohio where the team stayed. I got to talk to quite a few boaters. The area is unusual for the otherwise barren coast of the southern shore of the lake. Port Clinton is at the mouth of the Sandusky River, and has a group of islands just off the coast, the North, Middle, and South Bass Islands.

We found a favorite little bar-restaurant right on the water where a large catamaran ferry with water jet propulsion kept bringing tourists back and forth to and from Put-In-Bay of the Middle Bass Island.

Most of the boaters I met were fisherman. Four fisherman stayed at the same hotel and on Sunday morning after fishing all day Saturday they reported each one had a 100 pounds of fish iced-up

and ready to go. Walleye and yellow perch were caught. They said when the Mayflies are out the fishing is great.

Now the Mayflies are a story in themselves. Several days while at Port Clinton, my car was covered with a hundred or so of these flies. Well the Mayfly stories I got both at the nuclear plant and at the hotel were amazing. Every few years clouds of Mayflies come out of the lake and if the wind is right, will pile up until you can't walk or drive on the roads. Plows and dump trucks are brought in to clear the streets and sidewalks of the slippery and smelly bugs. The nuclear plant had to make modifications to air inlets and had to cut down on the lights that attract the flies. The high voltage electricians did say that the 350,000 volt transformers became the biggest and most spectacular bug zappers they had ever seen!

Well, it's good to be home and ready to get back to my real job, the Shallow Water Sailor!

Hope you enjoy this issue, as always it's so much fun to put these stories together.

Faire winds,



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Let's Write

Just another reminder about the fact that this newsletter depends on you, the member, to send in stories and how-to articles for publication. I know you are busy and that writing can be hard. But a story need not be written in a day. Take your time, take a few weeks, and put down that adventure or report on that project to be shared by all. Here is a little experience of mine that concerns the importance of writing.

It has been my experience that college graduation commencements can be horribly boring. Surprisingly, it is the keynote speaker who depresses me the most. I'll take a highschool valedictorian speech over a college keynoter most any day.

Not so with the last college commencement I went to. A niece of our's got through four years at George Washington University and on May 22, 2005, she received her well earned diploma.

Not only was it a delightful day, but it was held outside on DC's Ellipse a block away from the White House. The speeches were all, thankfully, short and then it was time for the keynote speech. It was 60 Minutes' Andy Rooney who got up to talk. He gave a wonderful speech, fully focused on the graduates and their future working lives. Here is what he said about writing:

"There are great opportunities for anyone who can write because we're short of good writing in movies and television. There are a hundred producers, editors, directors, publishers, and advertising executives waiting for one writer to put something down on paper so they can do their thing with it. Actors are a dime a dozen. There are 10,000 actors waiting for every writer to write something.

"The computer has been an amazing tool for the exchange of information, but the writing that goes into computers has not been up to the standard of the machines' technical excellence. This is a turn for the worse because of how important good

writing is in our society. If you write it down it's harder to fake it, it's harder to avoid saying what you really mean, than it is when you're speaking.

"Anyone who knows what he's doing ought to be able to put it down in words. Anyone who knows what he thinks should be able to write it out. If you can't write down the idea you have, the chances are you don't have an idea. In conversation people keep saying 'You know what I mean.' I always feel like saying: No, damn it, I don't know what you mean; would you put it down on paper."

If you are interested in Rooney's entire speech email me and I will send you a pdf file. It's a good read.

"I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see and what it means. What I want and what I fear."

– Joan Didion

"Typos are very important to all written form. It gives the reader something to look for so they aren't distracted by the total lack of content in your writing."

– Randy K. Milholland

The **Auk** Has Landed

by Hannes Kühtreiber

*Here are two e-mails from our Yahoo Group
Peter Duff must be proud to know one
of his children has found its way
to Austria*

Dear Shallow Water Sailors,

Let it be known a Dovekie has crossed the Atlantic. In a container, that is, together with some engine parts and other stuff. The guys from "Transport Partner" have done a good job, and I went up to Rotterdam to pick up the boat over the weekend.

When I walked into the big, dimly lit warehouse there it was, all mine, import duties paid, and looking just about the right size. I suddenly understood why the boat had appeared to be so big on the pictures - the trailer wheels are tiny!

One tire was flat and the bow eye had chewed up the bow roller, possibly from being tossed around in the Atlantic storms, but these minor problems were easily fixed. The plug for the trailer lights was unlike any I had ever seen, but a trip to a nearby dealer provided a European lighting bar, which I mounted to the gudgeon with cable ties and lashed in position. Had a nice chat with the trailer guy who had been to the US recently, riding a Harley all through the south west (4000 km, that's 2485.4848 miles) in two weeks. Enjoyed it a lot, except for obnoxious sheriffs who gave him a hard time for having a pee on the roadside somewhere in the middle of the desert.

Off I went, a quick check showed the tires were running hot - not the hubs. Pumped them up real hard, incredible 60 psi, and I couldn't feel the trailer any more. So light! 75mph and no vibrations, nothing.

Still the trip was pretty bad. It is about 1000 km (621.37119 miles), which, as Mason pointed out, is quite a modest distance, but I hadn't driven that far in the last years. The roads were packed, plus loads of trucks. Traffic jams of less than 10 km (6 miles) were not even mentioned on the radio, and there were many



dovekie_render01.png



dovekie_render02.png



dovekie_render03.png



dovekie_render04.png

While waiting for the **Auk's** arrival
Hannes did these renderings of a Dovekie
The originals are in color

of them, plus longer ones, even during the night. Sleeping trucks blocked every spot available at road houses so I couldn't even stop for a coffee. Tried, but tore off one of the new trailer lights plus the license plate while weaving my way through the parked trucks. Not nice, the trailer is not licensed yet, and so has no insurance either. But damage to the truck was minor, and the driver pretty relaxed about it.

I had not known traffic would be that bad in Germany. Had not been there for years. Austrians don't, usually.

Well, finally took a license plate off my car and put it on the trailer. Reconning, as long as it looks right at first glance, the cops won't bother me, and they didn't. Lucky. The trip home took me about 22 hours, with 4 or 5 hours of sleep thrown in, so was only marginally slower the the way up.

So I am back, the happy owner of an illegal boat (EC pleasure craft regulations, I'll deal with this

later) and an illegal trailer. Haven't even had time to climb inside and savor all the goodies, but I will tomorrow. And I have to get the boat off the trailer to have the latter type-approved. Who has done this in his back yard? What is the best way to do it? Suggestions anyone?

Regards,
Hannes

[You can congratulate Hannes using his e-mail at:
datenmull@gmx.at]

*The story of the Auk begins
with Mason Smith another SWS member
who bought the boat through E-Bay.
Here is Mason's e-mail response
to Hannes' e-mail above*

Hurrah, Hannes!

Wonderful yarn of her arrival and trip to Austria. Should be no trouble dropping the boat off the trailer on some grass, letting the trailer tilt, holding the boat back by some means and driving the trailer out from under it, with care. It'll go back on just as easily, with the winch.

Did I tell you that I now have a Bolger Micro, well-made, on a trailer, with a Honda 8, but no spars, sails, or ballast keel. However, half the 412 lbs of lead came today, so did a sample of the Dutch tanbark sailcloth Douglas Fowler is using for my sails, and I have various spars around the place which are going to serve, if imperfectly. So I might even get to the WoodenBoat Show with it. That would be nice since they are celebrating Bolger there this year. I also took in a Bolger Tortoise, along with the Micro; both from David Dawes, who bought my Birdwatcher last year and I think will be taking it to the show.

I also have purchased the Dutch sloop I may have mentioned, and hope to haul it to the shore of the lake and let it soak up later this week, for towing up the lake and hauling home as soon as possible.

Yakyakyak, you know. Bet you're having fun with Dovekie. I miss her, but they keep popping up in

various places, so if I want one badly enough, I can just shut up and pay the price and have one. I think I'm going to enjoy the Micro, though with that keel she isn't the sort of thing I'm used to at all, at all.

See that you don't pee on the roadside and give trailersailors a bad name on the Continent.

Yours,
Mason

Sad News

*this is certainly bad news
we will miss you Bill*

I have some possibly sad news. I have SOLD my Bay Hen PMT, **Amenity**, and am dropping out of the Shallow Water Sailors.

I want to thank you for your friendship (and Virginia's) and all the work you have done and now do for the SWS. Do give my best wishes to everybody. Great gang !!!

I have many, many very fond memories of friends in the SWS and the various Spring Cruises and other events I was able to make.

I have a feeling that this somewhat closes a chapter on boating in my "book-of-life", which started with canoeing as a teenager with my buddy, Rip, who eventually married my sister. Although aircraft carriers are not considered boats I did make two US Navy cruises to WesPac on the Shangri - la and Midwaytaught white water canoeing with the Wilmington Trail Clubmany fun times sailing (with sails !!!) my Potter 15, **Just Wight**, with the East Coast Potter Association and then with my PMT-Bay Hen with the SWS. I guess however that my cruising about in **Amenity** was mostly solo....sometimes as long as two weeks on the Chesapeake Bay...two solo cruises from the top of the Elk River to Annapolis, a cruise up the Delaware River to Trenton, NJ, and many, many other outings.

Thanks again for everything.

Wishing all " fair winds and a following sea ! "

Bill & Karen Zeitler

Flatter not yourself that good luck is judgement and discretion, for all your eggs could have foundered if the spirit of the sea had just said the word.

– Herman Melville

The above quote reminded me of the laws which have my name; be aware of them always, you who ply the deeps.

Murphy's Laws

1. Anything that can go wrong, will.
2. If nothing can go wrong, something will anyway.
3. That which goes wrong will be the worst thing, in the worst place, at the worst time.
4. If everything is going well, you have obviously overlooked something.
5. If you perceive that there are four possible ways in which something can go wrong, and circumvent these, then a fifth way, unprepared for, will promptly develop.
6. It will be impossible to fix the fifth fault, without breaking the fix on one or more of the first four.

BoatU.S Membership

The BoatU.S. Cooperating Groups program will continue for another year. As a reminder, because of our special arrangement, you get 50% off the annual BoatU.S. Membership dues when you join. You pay just \$12.50 a year, which is regularly \$25. BoatU.S. provides a range of services, information and savings to recreational boaters, including:

- Members-Only discounts and Member Rewards on West Marine equipment purchases.
- Discounts at marinas on fuel, overnight slips, and repairs.
- BoatU.S. will pay up to \$50 per incident On-the Water Towing with your Basic Membership. Higher-option per incident towing service levels available up to Unlimited.
- Marine insurance from boating experts.
- Full year subscription to the BoatU.S. Magazine.
- Representation on Capitol Hill.

If you're already a BoatU.S. Member, be sure to mention our Cooperating Group ID number GA84562B to get the specially reduced rate.

Friends and the North Channel

By Nick Scheuer

Photos on page 11

FRIENDS – No, not the TV Show, the friends with whom we cruised in company with the Trailer Sailor Association earlier this summer through Lake Huron's North Channel. Foremost were three other Rockford Yacht Club boats, the *Mucky Duck*, the *Martha J*, and the *Gayleann*. Then there were several boats I know well from the Trailer Sailer Forum on the Internet which included Rod and Ondine Brandon

from Peterborough, ONT in their Mac-26 and Jerry Hardin from Tennessee in his wife's Catalina-22, *Sandpiper*. Even the Shallow Water Sailors, the group of mostly Edey & Duff boats with whom we've sailed the North Channel on three previous occasions, were represented by the *Reasonable Assurance* a Dovekie towed up from Detroit by Mark and Marilyn Bertacchi. Finally, there were the many new friends we met in the Trailer Sailer Association, some of whom have been doing this annual North Channel Cruise for a decade. Together the company numbered 39 boats.

They could not have chosen a better place to rendezvous than the Municipal Marina at Spanish, Ontario. Consider the large parking lot, the excellent concrete ramp, the secure piers, and of course, the matchless public building that includes dining facilities, large bathrooms with saunas, a clean laundry, a gift shop, an accommodating staff, and a great lounge for hanging out in air-conditioned comfort.

The Cruise Leader had prepared three float plans; one-week, which included the Jepsens and Siegworths going as far east as Little Current; two weeks, which included Gayle and I as well as the Tarrants, reaching a point east beyond Kilarney; and a two week one-way journey east from Spanish to the town of Britt located in Baie Georgiene.

Only the first day gave us winds gusting to 20 knots and water to match. Of course, the cruise plan called for beating right into it west along Whaleback Channel. It would've been a wonderful sleigh ride had we gone east instead.

The *Mucky Duck* suffered some misfortune on the first day out, breaking their rudder right in two! Unable to steer using just their motor in the boisterous weather, we tried to tow them back to Spanish. Again, steering was a problem, so we rafted alongside, but that proved to hazardous for both boats. So Dave and Joy just put down the hook and waited in the lee of a small island for the weather to calm down enough to permit steering with their motor. They were finally able to return to Spanish later in the evening.

Dave had suffered some badly bruised ribs in a fall on deck following the rudder failure, so they

elected to return home rather than try to fix or replace their rudder.

True North was trying her new mainsail from Harding Sails (vendor of our original sails) for the first time, and it proved a great success. Unlike the original, this one has some roach, along with three battens. We will be furling this sail on the sprit instead of vertically on the mast, as Harry Mote does in the Shearwater *Ardea*.

We experienced a dearth of wind throughout the cruise, following the first day, spending at least part of each day under auxiliary power. Fortunately for *True North*, her 9.9-hp Yammerhammer was up to the task. Our intermittent problem of not being able to start the motor electrically over the last three seasons was solved last winter when a new repair shop discovered that the fuse in the starter circuit was an automotive type, and too short to maintain continuity. The proper marine fuse is 1/8 inch longer.

The Bertacchis had planned to end their cruise at Little Current. We wanted to have a farewell dinner with Mark and Marilyn, and so did the crew of *Tarranui* a Precision-23 from Ontario. *Tarranui* and *Reasonable Assurance* both had tow vehicles in Little Current, so we drove to a resort located on a small interior lake which features a German style restaurant. A worthy repast it was.

Note for the more competitive SWS, (Toby?); the Bertacchis have logged many leagues under sail, and really know how to make a Dovekie go.

Old Hands at cruising the North Channel often tell about Ann Westlund and her *Raggedy Ann*, a 20-foot sloop featuring red sails which she handles solo. We consider ourselves fortunate for having crossed tacks and speaking to her a mile or so east of the Strawberry Island Lighthouse.

Shallow Water Sailor friends who cruised the North Channel some years ago in company with my daughters Laura and Ellen in my old Dovekie, *Pil-Pel* may remember the cranky skipper of a 40-footer from Lake St Claire, MI which they had T-boned in the fickle winds of a mainland cove located several miles north of the Benjamins. Well, we encountered him

again, and his temper has definitely not improved over the intervening years.

We were tacking *True North* at close quarters through the cove on the north side of Eagle Island amongst the assemblage of TSA boats who had preceded us. Our objective was a beach at the head of the cove, and we did a creditable job of crisp tacking, according to comments by various TSA mates later. When we came about toward the big sloop from Michigan, close, but not dangerously so, he was seen to be scampering about the deck of his vessel showing, "PASS ASTERN, PASS ASTERN! The last time I saw a boat like yours it RAMMED ME !" Well, passing astern had been my intention all along, and I certainly did not require directions from a maniac scampering about waving a boat hook and yelling at me. Nevertheless, I maintain that Shearwater certainly does not "look like" a Dovekie. Dovekie is much more handsome. We disdain imprecise speech in my boats; always have.

Faire winds, Y'awl,
Moby Nick & Gayle

A Pleasant Close Encounter

By Harry Mote

Photos on Page 11

On our sail back to Essex Bay from the Merrimack River on our recent cruise of Cape Ann, we were tacking south in a light breeze, with genoa and sun shade set, about 2 nm off Plum Island beach, barely making 1-1/2 kts. We were enjoying another beautiful day, the beauty of the landscape and a relaxing sail when Alice suddenly said, in a hushed voice, "Don't move." She motioned that there was something behind me.

I turned slowly to see a small bird fly up and then alight again on a different part of the mainsheet line. It flitted about the stern of the boat until it seemed to feel comfortable with us and then came into

the cockpit. It flitted from cockpit seat to floor and then back again, looking about as it did. Was it hungry?

We had just finished lunch and offered the bird small pieces of bread, which drew no interest. Then it snatched a small black fly that landed on the seat. Aha! It nailed four more of these morsels in short order. Two of them had alighted on Alice's sock. Both times, the bird jumped upon and clung to her sock to snatch the flies. At one point it perched on Alice's shoe, without apparent fear, looking about for more flies. At another point Alice held out her open hand when the bird was on the floor. It pecked her ring, probably attracted by its brightness.

Then our new friend discovered the dead greenhead flies under the cockpit floor grating. The store of greenheads was the result of our self-defensive slaughter over the past three days. The little bird was able to retrieve the greenheads by pecking through the holes in the grate.

Final tally: six live black flies and nine dead greenheads - Alice kept count. Twice during the bird's feeding it seemed to rest. It sought shelter once under one of my shoes, which had landed askew on the cockpit floor, and once in the corner of the cockpit, seemingly closing its eyes.

When it seemed rested and fed, it investigated the rest of the boat, including entering the cowl vent just ahead of the mast, probably looking for more flies.

It then flew from Ardea to the dinghy, towing astern, before thanking us for our hospitality and saying goodbye. It had been with us for about 35 minutes. We had continued on our inshore tack to take the bird closer to shore and to not disturb its visit.

As it flew toward shore, we could see it bobbing and weaving like a swallow, apparently catching more flies on the wing. Our visitor was a light yellowish green, or olive, and appeared to be a fall warbler, Alice's initial assessment, that had ventured too far off shore in its feeding.

According to the bird books, "fall warblers" are immatures of many sub-species in dull plumages, characteristic of many bird species in the fall. In its

dull fall plumage it is very difficult for amateurs like us to tell what species it was. But as we looked through bird books, based on the shape of its head, the coloring of its plumage, legs, feet and bill, plus that it fed on the wing, we took a guess that it might be a female Wilson’s warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*).

One bird book says, “Immatures, especially females, require careful study.” Translation: amateurs like us shouldn’t even take a wild guess at our little friend’s identity, considering the gazillions of different warblers out there.

This was a most pleasant close encounter with a wild thing.

Good birding.
Harry and Alice

John Smith’s Shallop

By Ken Murphy

On June 2, 1608, Captain John Smith and fourteen English colonists set out from Jamestown in a 30-foot open boat or “shallop” to explore and map the Chesapeake Bay. They traveled over 1,700 miles in just over three months.

On May 12, 2007, Captain Ian Bystrom and eleven US citizens (6 men and 5 women) left Jamestown, Virginia, in a replica of John Smith’s shallop. On August 18th they landed at the City Dock in Fredericksburg, Virginia, along the upper Rappahannock River. The photo on page 11 shows the landing of the boat. My wife, Ginny, snapped the picture and took part in an afternoon’s worth of great activities that included talking to crew members, watching some great American Indian dancing, a local symphony and a pipe and bugle corp.

The crew will finish up their 1500 mile journey on September 8th returning to Jamestown.

After reading several books about John Smith and his two exploratory trips around the Bay, Ginny really got into the history of Jamestown (our youngest son lives about 1/4 mile from the island) and so she went off all by herself to see the shallop and its crew. Why all the fascination? Why did Ian Bystrom and his

11 person crew give up four months of their lives to sail, row, and at times jump off the boat and pull the shallop when there was no wind and an adverse current? So many questions come to mind when we try to go back 400 years. The sailing ships of that time seem to us as silly contraptions while 400 years ago they were considered like our spacecraft, which incorporated the most advanced technologies of the day.

Consider too, that small boats on the Chesapeake were the only real way to travel long distances. There were no cars, no roads. Even going by horseback was impossible without a reasonable system of trails. No way can we modern men and women come close to understanding the way it was back then. Our concepts of how the world works differs so entirely from John Smith and his countrymen. I suppose that is part of the fascination with history, trying to understand how our ancestors lived and thought. One of the biggest differences between then and now is what we do for work. I kidded some of the engineers at the nuclear power plants because all day long they sat in front of the computer staring at they monitors. Contrast this to our

parents and grandparents who had job titles like “tailor”, “seamstress”, “hatter”, “cobbler” and “farmer”. Shake the hand of any of these folk and you would find a firm, strong, and rough hand. Today our hands are soft and lack strength - something to think about!



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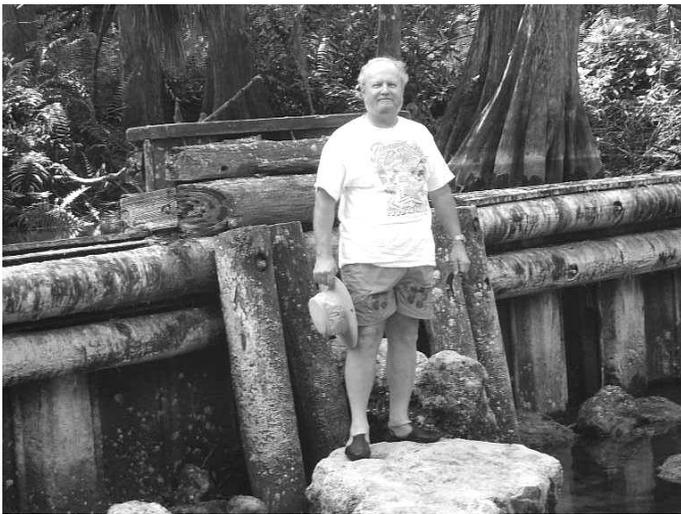
The purpose of the SWS is to share members’ sailing experiences and know-how. It is through this sharing that sailors are made and friendships gained. With such skills and relationships, sailing becomes more than a past-time, it becomes a life-long pursuit, a source of joy and rich memories.

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Kayaking the Loxahatchee River

By John Martin

Here are some pictures I took when we kayaked the Loxahatchee River in Palm Beach County. It was incredible. I kayaked with Helen Horton and Kathi Schelling and we were lead by Tom Slye who was the only one of us who had kayaked here before. The three of us were overwhelmed with the beauty of



John Martin on the Loxahatchee

the area.

There were mostly Cypress trees with their knees sticking all around.



There were a lot of Sabal palms but very little of other trees. The water was unusually low and we had to walk the boats a few times.

We portaged over one dam and stopped and turned around at the second dam. We saw half a dozen 10-12 foot gators and a few little ones and numerous birds and fish. Only saw five other boats in the 5 ½ hours we were on the river. At one point we had to go between two Cypress trees that were only three feet apart. There were numerous downed trees



probably from hurricanes Francis and Jeanne which came ashore just 20 miles north of here in 2004. We had to negotiate under, over and around all of them which made the trip more interesting and challenging. One gator was facing the water and therefore us as we passed by only about 10 feet in front of her. I say her because a young lady who passed the gator right after we did said the gator opened her mouth and hissed at her and she could see a small gator further up the bank so we figured she was a mother protecting her young. Not a gator one wants to mess with. She was the usual 10-12 feet long and was missing her left front foot.

We all agreed that it was a perfect day in paradise.



To The Thawing Wind

By Robert Frost

Come with rain, O loud Southwester!
Bring the singer, bring the nester;
Give the buried flowers a dream;
Make the settled snowbank stream;
Find the brown beneath the white;
But whate'er you do tonight,
Bathe my window, make it flow,
Melt it as the ice will go;
Melt the glass and leave the sticks,
Like a hermit's crucifix;
Burst into my narrow stall;
Swing the pictures on the wall;
Run the rattling pages o'er;
Scatter poems on the floor;
Turn the poet out of door.





Moby Nick stretching his legs on one of the North Channel's many uninhabited islands

Harry and Alice's surprise visitor, before he or she left after a nice lunch

The Replica of John Smith's Shallop landing at Fredericksburg

