
The Shallow Water Sailor

Number 181 A simple boat, a bit of marsh, a redwing's song, and a friend or two

August 2013

The Bosun Chair

I'm finally sitting down looking at an empty page to fill all about shallow water sailing. Ginny and I have been busy getting ready for our 50th wedding anniversary. She is doing most of the work, but I do some of the heavy lifting.

In this issue we have a Spring Cruise report that was in my mailbox that contained over a hundred emails and I totally missed it. Please forgive me Jake.

The long time members will remember the Chewnings, Bill and John, a father and son team who sailed Bill's Dovekie, *Selah*. Bill passed away in 2005, but now we must also say good bye to John; see his wife's message and John Zohlen's remembrance.

Two old articles have been added, one by Nick Scheuer and the other by Bobbie Moore. These are examples of the kind of articles I hope to receive in the future. Nick's is a salty "how to" tip, so we need more such articles. Bobbie's is a "where to sail" article giving insights on interesting cruising waters, and so please, keep this type of article coming also.

The last two articles by Jake and Bill are additions from two boat builders. Their creative efforts are always welcome. Without such people we

would not have our nice dry boats to mess about in.

Without boats we would have to swim in cold wet water to enjoy the sea ... which reminds me of the book I quoted on the cover page! Lynne Cox wrote a great book about swimming with a baby gray whale! I found the book on the "teenage" bookshelf of our library. (I find such books tend to be more to the point than adult books that go on and on and seem never to end.) Lynne's book, "Grayson" is a short read, perfect for the beach. By the way the sand castle photo is from a relative's recent vacation where both parents and older kids went wild building numerous such sand structures.

Oh, here's another thought, even though we still have months of sailing left this year. We will need an article or two about the best ways to store our boats for the winter. I think many of us can use help here. I think of John Zohlen's winter experience concerning mice eating away at his sail! So let's hear from y'all.

I got the term y'all from a new member, Wendy Hooten, from Arkansas whose sailing article will be featured in our next issue!

'Till then, happy sailing y'all,



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2013 Spring Cruise, Part 2

by Jake Millar

Little Choptank River - From Sedge's logbook

Thursday, May 2nd - Pulled into the Madison Bay ramp area at 1:30 after a 4½ hr uneventful drive. Several boats are already launched and sailing, and 2 others arrived while I was rigging *Sedge*. Morry and I went for a pre-sail crabcake/beer then set out for Hudson Creek across the river. Had an exciting sail crossing the Little Choptank and was glad for the protection that Hudson Creek offered. I pulled in to a beautiful quiet cove and got an anchor down, Morry came alongside and we rafted for a few hours. Talked about the damage at home from Sandy, boats, future sailing plans and eventually a lot of jokes and laughs. Tented in when the no-see-ums arrived and listened to good music and looked at a book I brought along ("Shelter" by Lloyd Kahn).

Friday, May 3rd A.M. - Up about 6 AM with coffee perking and water on to boil for breakfast (S.O.S and an onion roll). Beautiful view from the beach chair set up in the cockpit - it looks like a sculpture garden of sun bleached driftwood carefully arranged/displayed. Plans are to sail up to the top of the Little Choptank and visit the Spocott windmill. There's a good bit more wind than NOAA was predicting yesterday so I'll probably put 2 reefs in before heading out to the river.

May 3rd - Noon - Well I sailed out of the cove double reefed and hoping to catch up with Morry who'd sailed out about an hour or so earlier. I got to the mouth of Hudson Creek and immediately got nailed by a 20+ gust that put *Sedge* over on her side - to make matters worse the mainsheet became fouled around the outboard shaft and I had to lean out and over the low side to clear it. Once that was done the boat righted itself. I tacked and ran with my tail between tucked my legs right back into Hudson Creek and anchored in the same spot as earlier. Well, this is



a "vacation day" for me, and spending it in a beautiful place reading, napping and birdwatching suits me just fine.

May 3rd - P.M. - I let a little anchor line out, just enough to pole the boat back to the shoreline. Stepped off the back of the boat onto a mostly dry, grassy "beach". Had a closer look at the driftwood in the area and tied the stern off to a dead pine tree. It was a great day for birdwatching and relaxing - the most memorable part of my day was when two bald eagles flew over at tree top height and literally shoulder to shoulder, and began "mock fighting", one bird would bump into the other and then that bird would tumble and fall only to catch itself just before hitting the water, then rise up, rejoin its companion and give him a bump, then that bird would tumble, fall and rise up to repeat this game all the way across the cove. Now it's time to get my bedding set up and settle in with a Yankee game on the radio and a crossword puzzle.

May 4th - Saturday - Sailed out of Hudson Creek and on to Phillips Creek. Had another "exciting" sail but made it to Phillips Creek without too much drama. Once in the creek I motored around looking for any possible spot to anchor that wasn't wind whipped. Put an anchor down in a tiny nook just barely out of the wind about 3 PM. Morry pulled alongside shortly after and we spent another



afternoon/early evening gabbing and laughing. We combined our "talents", a boat hook and some elbow grease to wrestle a pretty good sized bit of driftwood aboard *Sedge* - Judi will have this artfully arranged in her garden when I get it home. Plans are to sail out of here early tomorrow AM before the wind pipes up. Crabcake and a cold one (and a chance to say hi to all my SWS friends whom I didn't see out on the water this weekend!).

May 5th - Sunday - Up very early - motored out of Phillips Creek and as the large bit of driftwood lashed above the forward hatch might have fouled rigging if I tried to sail, I had a pleasant (but very cold!) motor back to the ramp.



John Chewning Remembered

Dear Mr. Murphy,

We've been cleaning out John's desk this week and came across the Shallow Water Sailor member roster from 2007. I don't know if you are still the editor of SWS or if it's still being published, but day sailing was such a big part of John's life before he was diagnosed with MS. He and his father, Bill Chewning, joined in many cruises with various SWS members through the years, trailing their beloved Dovekie behind Bill's Chevy Impala.

It is with much sorrow that I pass along to you and the other members the news of John's death on May 21, 2013. For the past three years he had been confined to a wheel chair, after major surgery for a benign pancreatic tumor. While these last three years were incredibly challenging and involved open heart surgery, emergency abdominal surgery, and several hospital and rehabilitation stays, John's spirit remained amazingly positive. He was an inspiration to all who met him. John did have a chance to greet and fall in love with our three precious grandchildren, sharing his love of boats with Colin, the oldest of the three.

While I started to toss the membership book, I could hear John's voice urging me to hold on to it. I just wanted someone in your group to know this news. Thank you for all the years of joy your group brought to John and his father.

With wishes for safe waters
and smooth sailing,

Blair Chewning

John Zohlen's Memories of the Chewnings

John Chewning crossed the bar on May 21st. While his family and friends will certainly miss him, John is in a much better place now. He had been confined to a wheel chair for the last three years and had endured MS, several surgeries, hospital stays and rehabilitation. According to Blair, his wife, John's spirits remained positive throughout this ordeal.

John and his father, Bill, participated in many of the early Shallow Water Sailor Annual Chesapeake Bay Spring Cruises. They sailed in Bill's beloved, much modified Dovekie No. 066, *Selah*.

I can remember many years where Bill would call before the Spring Cruise and tell me about all of the modifications he had made to his boat, sailing rig and trailer THAT year. There are too many to mention here but it is suffice to say that Bill was acknowledged as the "Ben Franklin" of the Dovekie sailors. Bill and John would show up at the launch with *Selah* in tow

behind Bill's big Chevy Impala with a Virginia motor vehicle license that read "DOVEKIE". Bill's latest modifications were a must see. They generally made launching, rigging and sailing the Dovekie much easier for a senior sailor. Bill was in his seventies and John was his constant sailing mate. I can remember always seeing two heads in *Selah*. Bill and John, one on one side of the cockpit and the other on the other side. Their sailing style was easy and comfortable. Like two peas in a pod...

Bill and John invited me to join them for a day sail to Urbanna VA one November many years ago. Urbanna was having their annual oyster festival and Bill had grown up there as a child during the summers. We launched *Selah* at a ramp on the Rappahannock River, a mile or two above Urbanna. Bill and John had left the mast and sail back in Richmond. We motored down the river to Urbanna with a trolling motor mounted to the modified rudder and powered by, get this, a "weed wacker" sized, two-cycle engine driving a small 12v DC generator. This "power source", of course, was another of Bill's inventions. The "power source" fit into a 9" x 13" aluminum baking pan and sat on the cockpit seat. A black rubber hose "piped" the engine exhaust overboard. The motor screamed, the rubber hose smelled because of the hot exhaust, but by golly, the boat moved!

It was a beautiful day. Cool and crisp. Bill showed us the remains of a very large centerboard that had been sitting on the beach near Bailey Point for many decades. It was all that was left from an old bugeye that he had crewed on in the 1930's. Bill talked about delivering watermelons to Baltimore and using that big centerboard for navigation in low visibility.

The winds began to increase as darkness fell. It was time to go back to the ramp, which unfortunately, was up wind. I remember looking at lights on the shore out of the "hard shell" cockpit enclosure that Bill had made. *Selah* trying to make headway and not doing so well. The weed wacker engine was screaming and the rubber hose was stinking and we were going backwards! John finally suggested we beach the boat at someone's home on

Urbanna Creek. We did. John walked up to the house and talked to the owner. I do not remember if he knew him or not. Anyway, the home owner opened a chain across a nearby community launching ramp. We moved the boat there. John then WALKED back to the car. We recovered *Selah*. They drove me back to my car.

As I drove back to Annapolis that night, I marveled at the calmness of the two Chewnings as it became apparent that we were not going to get to where we wanted to go.. and John's volunteering to walk back to get the tow vehicle. John and Bill were so compatible. I will always remember the two of them calmly assessing the situation in their soft Richmond drawl.. and that stinking rubber hose.

Day sailing was also such a big part of John's life before he was diagnosed with MS. He passed on his love for boating to his three grandchildren. He was an inspiration to all who met him

So, here's wishing you eternal faire summer winds, John. We will miss you.

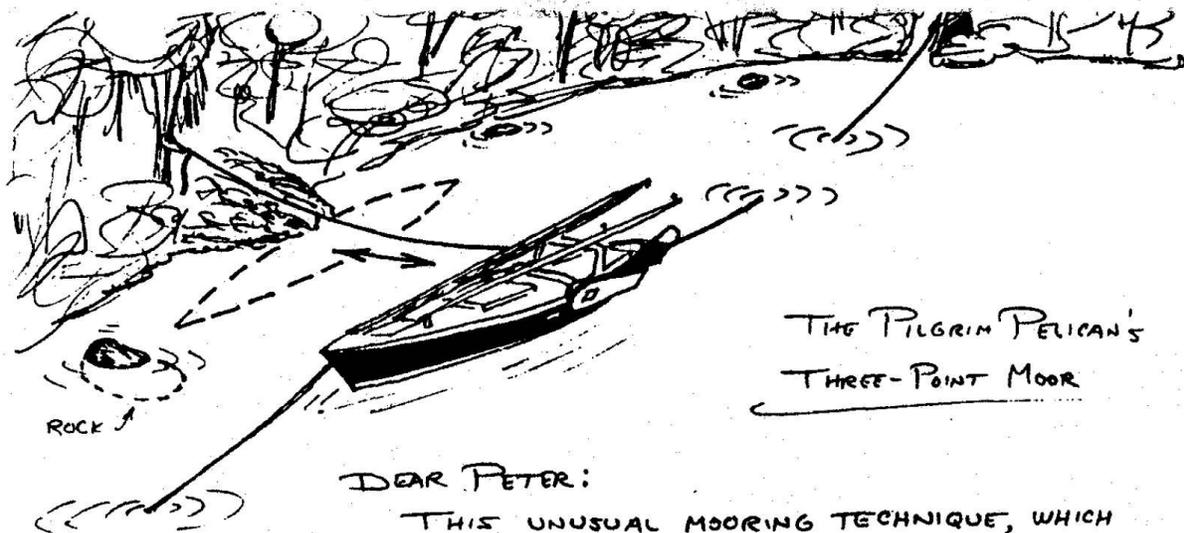
Blair Chewning can be reached at bchewning@collegiate.va.org if you wish to send along your condolences.



Business Report

As of August 1 our bank account totals \$702. We have 68 members with about half receiving hardcopies and half downloading PDF copies via the Internet. We have kept the dues at the same level for a good number of years even though postage, ink, and reproduction costs have increased somewhat. We keep the Internet costs fairly low, because most of the space is provided by my own personal web site (Comcast provides a GB space free to its subscribers). Our members outside the USA are given PDF memberships for free, in the hopes they will keep us informed of the sailing activities in their countries. There, I filled up this last bit of space!





DEAR PETER:

THIS UNUSUAL MOORING TECHNIQUE, WHICH WE DISCOVERED FOR OURSELVES AT HORSESHOE ISLAND ON GREEN BAY, IS WRITTEN ON A SEPERATE SHEET IN CASE YOU WANT TO FILE IT WITH YOUR BOOK NOTES, OR SOMETHING.

THE MOORING LOCATION AT THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF THE COVE AT HORSESHOE ISLAND WAS CHOSEN FOR MAXIMUM SHELTER FROM WIND AT THE TIME WE ARRIVED, AS WELL AS FROM LIKELY CHANGING WIND DIRECTION. ADJUSTING OUR ROPE

JUST A FEW FEET ALLOWED US TO USE A PROJECTING FINGER OF GRAVEL TO ADVANTAGE BY RIGGING A STERN LINE TO A LARGE TREE AFT AND A BEAM LINE TO A SAPLING BEHIND THE GRAVEL LANDING. THE CANTENARY OF ROPE AND STERN LINE, PURPOSELY SLACK, KEPT P.P. FLOATING WELL CLEAR OF THE STONES AT ALL TIMES EXCEPT WHEN SOMEONE DESIRED TO GO ASHORE WHERE WE COOKED OVER A CAMPFIRE, OR RETURN ABOARD WHERE THE POTTI AND MOSQUITO-FREE SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS WERE.

VERY LIGHT TENSION ON THE BEAM LINE DREW P.P. SMARTLY TO DRY GROUND WITHOUT FUSS.

THERE WERE FOUR IN OUR CREW, INCLUDING TWO YOUNG NEPHEWS. WADING WITH BOOTS OR BARE FEET WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE BROUGHT CONSIDERABLE WATER ABOARD.

DOVEKIG'S ULTRALIGHT WEIGHT, PERMITTING SLACK LINES TO HOLD HER IN POSITION, CONTRIBUTED AS MUCH AS SHALLOW DRAFT TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS EXERCISE.

(OVER)

WE WERE SO IMPRESSED WITH OUR CLEVERNESS THAT WE USED THE SAME MOORING TWO NIGHTS; CIRCUMNAVIGATING CHAMBERS ISLAND IN BETWEEN.

THERE WERE OTHER BOATS IN THE COVE BOTH NIGHTS SOME QUITE LARGE, BUT OF COURSE NONE ANCHORED SO CLOSE TO SHORE AS THE PILGRIM PELICAN. INTERESTED EYES OFTEN FOLLOWED OUR PERIODIC MOVEMENTS ABOARD WITH THE SOLO SKIPPER OF THE SLOOP PAPILLION MOTORING OVER IN HIS INFLATABLE FOR A CLOSER LOOK. HE WAS CURIOUS ABOUT WHY WE HADN'T LEFT THE RIGS STANDING. I QUOTED APPROPRIATE PASSAGES FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PETER.

SINCERELY,

Walt Scheuer

Chincoteague Rendezvous

by Bobbie Moore

Memorial Day Weekend 1998

Chincoteague Bay on the "DELMARVA" peninsula was made for shallow water sailors. It's a long shallow bay separated from the Ocean by a barrier island. This is also parkland with an abundance of wildlife and well-known herds of wild horses. The Atlantic provides steady and relatively cool ocean breezes throughout the heat of our mid-Atlantic summers. Its shallow water and distance from "DC", and isolation from the Chesapeake limit boating activity to mostly local fisherman. For these reasons, and the area's natural beauty, it is a favorite cruising ground for Dave Graves and Hope Stanton. At Norm and Diana's winter party, Dave offered to

share their treasure, proposing a Memorial Day Chincoteague cruise. The prospect of warm shallow water, isolated beaches and great sailing made the idea an instant hit. This year's inaugural cruise had something for everyone! Those who gathered for the adventure were:

Dave Graves and Hope Stanton – Dovekie 28, *Saffron*
Norm & Diana Hudson-Taylor, Dovekie 42, *Ornithopter*
Walt Elliott and Bobbie Moore, Dovekie 128, *Pintail*
Ken and Virginia Murphy, Bay Hen, *The Sanity*
Fred and Ann Abeles, Bay Hen, *Toyot* (joined us for day sailing)

Because I'd flown in from a west coast business trip on Saturday AM, the shallow-water armada was launched by the time we arrived. Dave had left chartlets and instructions for late arrivals proving his credentials as tour leader

par excellence!. As is typical for weather patterns on the coast, the breeze started light and picked up to a sea breeze by afternoon. Aided by Dave monitoring VHF on the hour we were able to link up with the fleet and motor out to join them as they beat their way out into the bay in the light early afternoon winds. As the breeze freshened we had a glorious afternoon and a close reach in a fresh breeze all the way to our first destination.

Chincoteague Bay is protected by Assateague Island, a barrier island split between Maryland and Virginia. This includes a national wildlife refuge on the Virginia end and state beach on the Maryland end that has several canoe camp sites on the Bay side. These allow solid ground for going ashore and a cleared path to the ocean beaches. They are well marked (when you know what to look for) and had ample anchoring room. After socializing we bedded down for the night. Dovekies are to thunderstorms what trailer parks are to tornadoes. And as usual on a Dovekie cruise we got a good dump that night.

The second day found us with very light morning air – some motoring by all! – freshening to a strong bright afternoon breeze as we headed for our second canoe camp site. This turned out to have a half-collapsed dock which easily accommodated Ken and Virginia’s Bay Hen and a raft of Dovekies, much to the dismay of some campers who were presuming a greater degree of privacy. Liberty call found our band of sailors lathered up in Norm’s tick repellent, a necessary but not sufficient condition for a successful land venture at Assateague. We then headed across the island to the ocean beach.

In contrast to the isolation Bobbie and Walt had experienced on a previous trip to the national park and wildlife refuge, what we found on the Maryland state park side was 4-wheel drive surf caster vehicles as far as the eye could see. It’s a big beach and other than breaking the serenity there was plenty of oceanfront for everyone.

After an afternoon of beachcombing and shell collecting we headed off for the night. The lack of a clear channel to an open anchorage area found our fleet scattered in the various coves and channels

of the bay marsh for a comfortable anchorage as we were again stalked by thunderstorms.

We awoke to find a low pressure center had moved in with a gray wet sky and strong southerly winds. These conditions ominously encouraged an early underway and made for a quick sail back to the mainland to pull out and get an early start in navigating our way back to DC in the Memorial Day traffic coming from Ocean City.

Norm discovered to his dismay that he’d brought a tiny tick home as a souvenir, and showed great consideration by calling the other participants to let us know. The only other insect alert that needs to be made is that flies – the biting type – are very much in evidence a little later in the season. Nonetheless, Walt and Bobbie made a trip to Chincoteague Bay last 4 of July, and had no problem with insects, even on a trek to the ocean.

Many thanks to Dave for the vision of a Memorial Day cruise on Chincoteague Bay, and for persevering to make it a reality.



Dovekie Rudder Pennant Stopper

by Jake Millar

Here's a Dovekie specific "tweak" that's been tested (by me!) for the last three seasons. It's worked great and it's sooo simple, I can't believe that it took me so long to figure this out!

A common annoyance when sailing our Dovekies is the tendency for the rudder blade's uphaul/downhaul pennants to pay out and trail a few feet behind the rudder in a loop that catches grass, seaweed and many other marine mysteries. I simply took about 10" of 1/4 inch bungee cord and formed a loop and then stitched the ends together with some waxed marline. Slide this over the tiller and back to the "cheeks" and then pass the uphaul/downhaul lines under the bungee and forward - the bungee will maintain enough pressure to prevent the pennants from paying out under sail, but if you strike bottom they are free to allow the rudder to kick up.

Fortunately, a picture is worth a thousand words and I have 2 photos that will illustrate how to make and locate this gizmo. I hope this is helpful to some of my Dovekie sailin' friends.



Happy Birthday *Ardea*

by Bill Haberer

see photos on next page

Happy 25th birthday to Shearwater, *Ardea*, indeed!! How time flies! I arrived to start working at Edey & Duff in April 1995 just in time to help put the last coat of fiberglass on the Shearwater hull mold. (Building in wood was old hat to me but fiberglass was a new experience). After curing, the next project is separating the mold from the plug done by some very careful prying, thumping, twisting and pouring water in the thin space between the plug and the mold. It is amazing how much pressure a thin skim of water exerts in that small space! Photo #1 shows most of the crew, (I was taking the pictures), standing between the blue plug and the black mold when we finally got them apart.

After the mold was polished the first hull was made and placed in our big A frame, see Photo #2, ready to start building the deck mold. My first solo job with E&D was setting up the wood supports for the one piece deck and cockpit mold and starting the deck, as shown in Photo #3. During the next two months four or five of us worked to complete the plug, make the mold and the first deck and cockpit piece and install it on the hull. After another month of installing masts, sprits, sails, water ballast tank, leeboards, etc, etc, and without paint, "Willy the whale," (as we called her), was ready for her first outing, see Photo #4!

The rest is history and for those of you who have enjoyed these wonderful boats I am very happy to have been a part. Being a special breed sadly, only eleven were built, but like all Edey & Duff boats, they are well built and will be around for a long time!

Photo #5 shows her in all her glory, with me at the helm, sailing her singled reefed during a photo shoot for Small Boat Journal in heavy winds! All I can say is what a way to make a living, and thanks for the memories!!



Photo #1



Photo #4



Photo #2



Photo #5



Photo #3

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Below is the first paragraph and part of the second from *Grayson* a book by Lynne Cox. In it she tells the story of a miraculous ocean encounter that happened to her when she was seventeen: "There is something frightening and magical, about being on the ocean, moving between the heavens and the earth, knowing that you can encounter anything on your journey.

The stars had set. The sea and sky were inky black, so black I could not see my hands pulling water in front of my face, so black there was no separation between the sea and the sky. They melted together."