



GYC Winter 2024 Newsletter



Georgian Yacht Club – Owen Sound

*Baie Fine, North Channel
credit: Dawson*



This Georgian Yacht Club Winter Newsletter is a mix of GYC members' boating and cruising experiences, a story on building dinghies and teaching sailing to initiates of all ages, and histories of ships from near and far away. The first song written for a GYC Newsletter appears here, and a story that starts with broken taillights. An article on the years-long resurrection of a classic English motorboat gives us insights into a boat that graced our docks for a while, and the people who brought her back to life. Cruising experiences from Michigan to Lake Erie provide windows on GYC members and their travels by motor and sail, and an article by a young woman cruising with her family brings warm, sunny waters to mind. Welcome aboard.



In This Issue:

- 2- **Tajlk: Isabella**
Menno Harmsen
- 4- **First Impressions**
Drew Mathies
- 6- **Dragonfly**
Joseph Hardin
- 13- **An Adventure with Tipsea**
Robin & Marg McMahan
- 14- **Start a Sailing Club in 6 Short Years**
Devin (Peppy) Genner

- 17- **Cruising From a Boat Kids' Perspective**
Brynn Ferenczy
- 19- **Our First Real Cruising Adventure**
Carol Overmars
- 24- **Green Bay to Georgian Bay**
Doug and Brenda Dawson
- 30- **Submit Your Articles**
- 31- **Calendar**



Important Dates for 2024*

- Apr 10 AGM at 19:00h
- Apr 13 Spring Icebreaker
- May 4 Launch Saturday 0800

**See Calendar at the end of this newsletter for more dates*

Newsletter design and layout: Susan Hardin
Newsletter Editor: Joseph Hardin

Tjalk: Isabella

[Menno Harmsen: *Vrouwe Morgan*]

While my time under sail is now limited to occasions when a fellow member is generous enough to offer me a ride on their sailboat, I look fondly back on my sailing days both here in Canada and in my native country, the Netherlands. As much fun as it is to let the wind carry you wherever it wants to take you, while sipping a martini and adjusting the furling jib and in-mast furling mainsail, it's easy to forget that sailing was the main mode of transportation for many centuries and required hard labour, often at the expense of life and limb.

The Netherlands was a leader in cargo movement both nationally and internationally with the "Dutch East India Company" completing over 5000 voyages between 1602 and 1796. Domestically cargo movement was mostly performed by shallow draft boats called "Tjalken" (plural) or "Tjalk" (singular). The Tjalk is a member of family of boat designs called "Platbodems" or flat bottom boats.

In addition to the Tjalk, there are numerous designs with different uses: Klippers, Schouwen, Bidders, Schokkers and Aken, to name a few. Most types are either cargo or fishing vessels.

The Harmsen family sailboat was such a Tjalk.
<https://www.ssrp.nl/stamboek/schepen/isabella-110>).

Produced in 1895 on the Crolis shipyard in IJlst, the Netherlands, she was built out of riveted iron. This was cutting edge in those days with our Tjalk being the first to roll off the yard. Until then, boats made by Crolis were all wooden vessels. While it was never the practice in, my family, to buy the first "new model" of anything (cars and such), we figured this one was tried and tested enough after 81 years.



This boat, named "Isabella" began her life as a peat moss carrier on inland waterways and the "Waddenzee", a slice of the North Sea between the Dutch and German north coast and the islands above.



This body of water falls dry during low tide so the currents during ebb and flow are challenging, in particular, between the islands. While the Tjalk's shallow draft design came in handy here, the lack of a ballasted keel meant that the righting moment angle of the boat was very small. Since starting an engine in a pinch was not an option, sailing skills were quickly developed out of pure necessity.

Typically, the captain and his family lived on board in a small cabin aft of the cargo area. Life would have been very simple and rough. The children were schooled on board as the little vessel would struggle its way up and down the coastline on the unforgiving North Sea.

After 49 years of service, in 1947 our Tjalk was converted to a pleasure yacht and spent the next 29 years with different owners. In 1976 my Uncle Johan bought her. By then she was renamed "Vrouwe Marigje" (Lady Marigje) and we did an extensive refurb. Since then, we have sailed her all over the North Sea (including the Waddenzee), Kattegat and the Baltic Sea.

In our summer holidays, we would deploy two crews; one for the way to, and one for the way back. Crew change would usually occur somewhere in Denmark or Sweden. During that one night we would have two crews on board

with not enough beds for everyone. A solution to that was to span our storm jib across deck between the forestay and mast creating a hammock, so we could sleep above decks. On one particular occasion we did this while being moored in downtown Copenhagen. We ended up having to get out of bed to break up a brawl right in front of our boat at 3 in the morning. Stay away from that Aquavit.



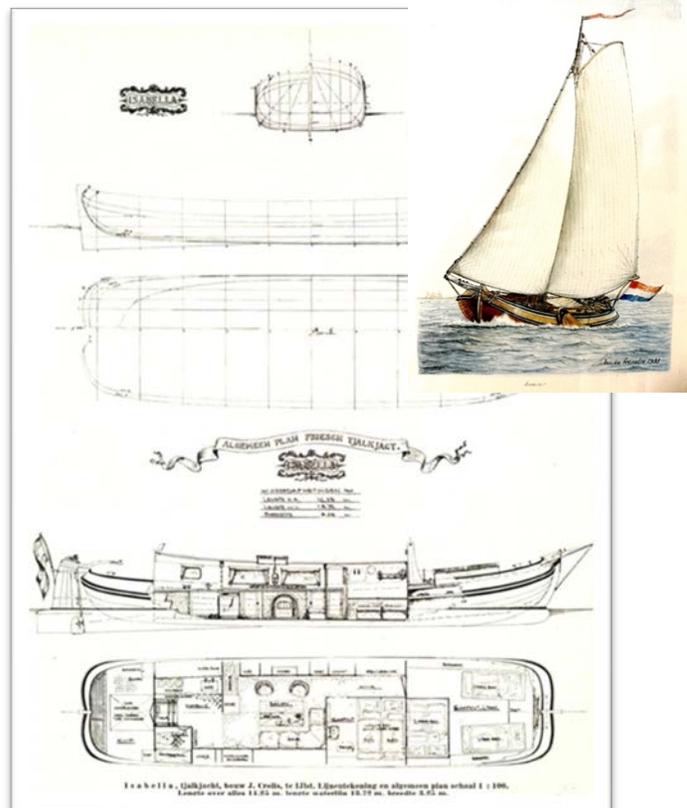
We did some racing on the Dutch lakes and had lots of great family times. Racing was hard work. With every tack the leeward side leeboard had to be pulled up while the windward side leeboard had to be lowered at the same time. With a weight of 800 kg each, this is done by wooden block and tackle. The helm was manual, made from solid 4x4 oak which required two strapping crew members in heavier wind. Trimming sails was also a two-person job. We sold her in 1987 just before I immigrated to Canada.



As with a lot of traditional crafts, the sailing of these vessels has been turned into a "modern" sport in the Netherlands, and in particular in the province of Friesland. The sport is called Skutsje Silen. Check out these links to get a flavour of the seriousness with which this sport gets practiced:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYSXfi_e5II&ab_channel=SkydroneSloten

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ziw75Ky1ws&ab_channel=MrNauthicaav



View the full-size image here:

<https://www.ssrp.nl/stamboek/schepen/isabella-110>

Back here in Canada, after owning a Contessa 26 and a Newport 30, Marjorie and I contemplated our boating future with a dwindling sailing crew as our kids made their way into adulthood away from home. We decided to take it easier, so we got ourselves a little trawler and named her "Vrouwe Morgan", after our daughter. Although we no longer get that fantastic feeling (the quietness when you turn the engine off after raising the sails) we still enjoy a leisurely day on the water as we chug along at our 8 knot cruising speed and look at the sailboats going by.

Smooth sailing everyone!

PS. Our youngest son, Tristan is now a marine engineer on the CCGS Griffon. He published a photo book about life on board a Canadian Coastguard ship.

<https://www.etsy.com/ca/listing/1449372468/twenty-eight-days>

First Impressions

[Drew Mathies: Endeavour]

“You must be the flyer with the new Beneteau,” chimed one of the three older gentlemen standing by the Club’s north gate.

As a new GYC member on my first day it was nice to be acknowledged. I looked up and smiled, “If ‘flyer’ means pilot and ‘new Beneteau’ means 12-year-OLD Beneteau, then yes, you are correct on both counts.”

I shook hands and introduced myself. “Are you comfortable manoeuvring that thing in tight quarters?” asked one of them with a smile of uncertainty.

“Haha, yeah I’m fairly confident in my docking skills, and the airline trusts me with a \$50 million aircraft so we should be good!”

The three men chuckled approvingly as I jumped into my Honda Civic. “Nice meeting you guys! See ya later.” I dropped into reverse and started to back up. CRAAAAACK...my car was jolted to an abrupt stop. By the time I got out to inspect the damage the three previously approving men were diligently picking up pieces of red plastic taillight and fiberglass bumper fragments. I had not seen the bright yellow bollard protecting the key card pylon for the north gate.

“What was that you were saying about a \$50 million jet?” The sarcasm was palpable and warranted! I tossed the bumper and taillight debris into my car, along with the shattered remains of my dignity and headed home to inform my wife that we should probably withdraw our GYC membership and go back to Warton.

Well, here we are 5 years later, still cringing every time we drive past that yellow bollard, but no further incidents to report: car, boat or aircraft, for that matter.

We eventually sold the Beneteau 343 during the pandemic to a Toronto family at RCYC. This was phase one of a plan to enter the trawler market.



It was love at first sight when we finally found our Albin 35TE “Endeavour” lying at South Bay Cove Marina on the east shore. We loved the ‘down east’, low profile sedan lines of the Albin and the deep, inky blue hull.

We’ve made some interior changes that add a convertible double berth to the main salon. The “galley down” design works well for us, feeling like a sun-filled roomy workspace with the massive main windscreens directly above. The island queen berth upfront looks like it belongs in a much bigger vessel. Perhaps our favourite feature of the Albin 35TE, however, is the enormous, partially covered aft cockpit. “TE” stands for “tournament express”. This design grew out of an offshore tournament fishing vessel platform that needed to accommodate rods and rigging, live wells, a fighting chair and 4-6 anglers.

We lined the cockpit floor with custom fabricated ‘SeaDek’ neoprene, giving it a softer, comfy feel under foot. There’s plenty of space for outdoor dining, sunbathing and relaxing underway.

Being a tournament boat, the Albin is equipped with twin Cummins 370 HP turbo diesels producing a top speed of 28 knots. Unfortunately, making an eleven-ton trawler go fast isn’t cheap, so definitely its reserved for special circumstances like outrunning a squall line or getting to a favourite anchorage before dark after a late departure.

Most of the time you’ll find us idling along at about 8.5 knots and a fuel burn that’s much easier on the wallet. I miss the Beneteau and the tactical aspects of sailing, but the Albin has increased our “reach” around the bay, creature comfort level (especially for Nancy) and offers more versatility for the kind of boating we enjoy (locked



waterways, shallower anchorages, running up to White Cloud for an afternoon).

I keep my boat handling skills sharp over winter by operating a 36' Boston Whaler Center Console in Sarasota FL (owned by a family I fly for) and playing with an App called "Boat Master" available free from the App Store. (highly recommend)

This summer we plan to focus on exploring the North Channel and leaving 'Endeavour' at Gore Bay between visits. If you see us at the club please do come over, our hatches are always open! And if you are one of those three kind souls who recall my most embarrassing moment on Day One at GYC, please remind me who you are.

I'd like to thank you for your discretion and forgiveness and maybe get a second chance at making a first impression!

GYC 2024
Launch Date:

May 4

Georgian Yacht Club
Spring Icebreaker

TRIVIA NIGHT & POTLUCK

Saturday, April 13 at the Clubhouse
5:00 pm—Happy Hour
6:00 pm— Potluck Supper
7:00 - 8:30 pm-Trivia!

Join us for an entertaining evening that will tap your knowledge of popular culture, boating and the GYC. Teams of two to six will be organized from those attending.

RSVP soon to help us plan! RSVP by replying to this email.

Bring your best potluck dish, plus BYOB, plates, cutlery and coffee mug.

Don't miss this evening of fun!

SAILING SUMMER 2024	
JULY 29- AUGUST 1	SAILING CAMP #1
AUGUST 2	OPEN HOUSE
AUGUST 3 - 4	ADULT SCHOOL
AUGUST 5 - 8	SAILING CAMP #2
HAVE FUN - MAKE FRIENDS - LEARN TO SAIL	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #006633; color: white; padding: 5px; font-size: small;"> FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.BRAKEWINDERS.CA </div> </div>	

See article on page 14 for more information

Dragonfly

[Joseph Hardin: Mujo V]

[Photos and background by Hubert van Alphen: Blue Jeanne]



Cameron Graham and Hubert van Alphen in front of Dragonfly

Dragonflies typically have very short lifespans. Some people think they only live for a day. In truth they can live as winged adults for weeks. But in the case of the boat known as Dragonfly that Cameron Graham bought in 1966, those weeks have stretched to almost a century. This Dragonfly has lived for almost an improbable hundred years now, thanks to her luck and the love of her owners, who have resurrected it not once but twice, in 1983, and, here in Owen Sound, between 2004 and 2013. That refit, rebuild actually, took place in a barn in Owen Sound and resulted in the boat that served at Dunkirk and in the D-Day operations of World War Two being a member for a short while of the Georgian Yacht Club.

It was not certain in 2004 that the little ship sitting in a field near Georgian Bay, that had beaten all the odds of war, that had improbably been shipped on a Canadian aircraft carrier to Canada in 1963, and that had been sailed through French Canals and Rideau lakes and the Waterway, and through the Thousand Islands, would ever see the water again.

In the Dunkirk expedition, 78 of the 202 boats that went out never came back. There were three boats identical to Dragonfly that served in the war. One was bombed and lost; another so badly damaged by shrapnel that she had to be taken out of service. Dragonfly herself was hit by shrapnel. But the danger to Dragonfly now was simply age and exposure.

She was sitting in an open field, and she was a wooden boat. The weather had gotten to her and she was starting to fall apart. At one point Cameron went out to the field where she sat with a match, trying to decide whether to burn her or rebuild her. A rebuild could take years, and be expensive, in both personal effort and money.

Later, Joslyn Graham would say, usually with a twinkle in her eye: "You know, we could easily be living in a beautiful place in Florida. But we're fixing the boat." Cameron and Joslyn spent the next 6 years working on Dragonfly, fixing the boat. Taken to a barn on Irish Walk Road on the north side of Owen Sound, Dragonfly was first worked on by a shipwright who did a lot of work on the bow and removed the pilothouse for repairs and to expose the heart of the boat for the extensive work needed to make her whole again. But he and Cameron had a disagreement and Cameron had to search for someone who could share his commitment to bringing the boat back from oblivion.

When Hubert van Alphen came to meet Cameron and look at the boat, he remembers standing with his son. Looking through the boat he could see the floor of the barn. He told his son this boat was never going to see water again. Her spine was broken; her struts were bad; you could see daylight through the hull.



Hull damage in 90 year old planks

This wasn't a repair or refit, or even a partial rebuild; it would be a resurrection. Hubert was not at all sure this was a project that could be done. Cameron impressed on Hubert the importance of this little boat, its history, all it had been through, the dangers it had

survived, the joys it had given its previous owners and his family; the value it would have as a piece of history for future generations, as a testament to the conflicts and sacrifices in its past. Hubert wasn't sure he had all the skills needed to do this work, but Cameron told him they could do it.

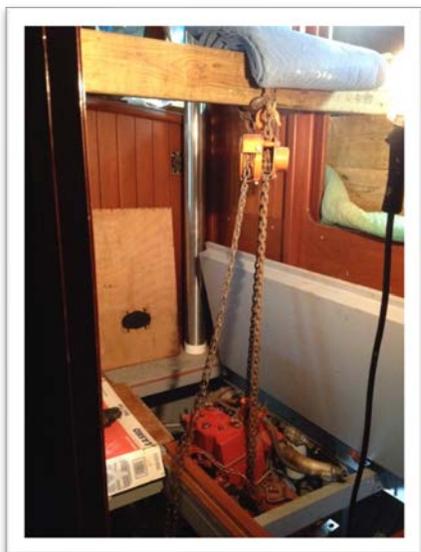
So they started out. Cameron did all the sourcing of materials because he wanted the work to be completely authentic, and researched the original techniques used in its construction. Hubert started out thinking this was sort of like a hobby, that he would do as much as he could and see what happened. But Cameron slowly brought him into the world of excitement that he had for the boat.



The shape of a new Black Locust rib. The Black Locust trees were sourced from Cam Graham's own property in Leith.

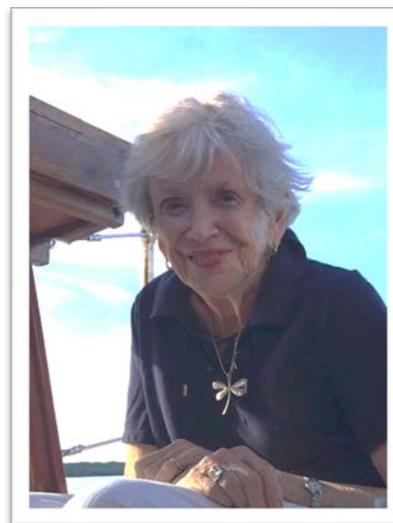
After a couple years Hubert realized that if they were going to get this boat done in Cameron and Joslyn's lifetime, he'd have to work on it full time. There were times when the snow was too deep and the winters too cold to continue work in the unheated barn, and other times that Hubert put the trouble light under his sweater to keep warm while he steamed a strut made from the black locust of Cameron's Leith property or worked the cotton caulk that Cameron insisted on for authenticity into the seams of the boat. John Kilpatrick, a longtime family friend of Hubert's, whom he describes as an incredible shipwright, and a longtime GYC member, would come and look things over and give them ideas and pointers and at times tell them what to do next. And as Hubert put it, "away we'd go."

Cameron would help out at times, but often he could only stay out, especially in the cold, for a half hour or so. As the work progressed, he realized he couldn't help as much as he wanted to so he and Joslyn started going to the YMCA, and then got a trainer and both worked to get in shape to help with the boat and to be able to sail her when she got in the water, which was looking more and more likely. After a while Cameron was out working with Hubert half the day or more.



Learning how to remove, repair and reset the 45 year old 40 hp engines

After years of working on the boat, about when they got the engines removed and fixed and back in the boat, and the mechanical issues figured out, with all the work on the spine and struts and hull of the boat coming along, it then became a big reassembly project. The drive shafts were placed in their newly fabricated housings and eventually the pilot house was put back on and the refinishing work was done.



In 2013 an insurance survey of the boat said: "the above described vessel was examined and found to be in very good condition throughout." Dragonfly was put back in the water.

For the next few years if you ever had a chance to see her at the club, or on the water, you knew she was a beautiful boat. And you could see how Cameron and Joslyn loved her. But I for one had no idea of the years and years of work that made that beautiful boat's resurrection possible.





Dragonfly was originally named Scolopendra and this is her maiden water test in 1933 performed by Thorny Croft Builders.



Dragonfly's sister-ship the New Moon

Photos and descriptions provided by Hubert van Alphen



This is the biggest part of the preservation of Dragonfly. The spine of the craft was collapsing under its own weight. This was my solution to reinforcing and rebuilding the existing spine to save the Dragonfly



Reinstalling the bilge keels that run up either side of Dragonfly.



Homemade steaming box to steam and shape the Black Locust lumber into new ribs.



Multiple new ribs installed with hand driven brass rivets and washers



Drilling the hundreds of rivet holes



The big process of sanding and repairing the hull. Brian Tannahill sanding and sanding and sanding and sanding...



Blending the old and new planks and bow sprit with more sanding



Learning cotton caulking to seal the new hull planks.



West System Epoxy used to patch hull damage where possible.



Dragonfly's original chocks



Installing the original line chocks into the new bow rebuild.



The new bow rebuild taking shape.



Shaft alignment and the other components of the propulsion line, such as the gearbox and the marine propeller.



Once the shaft is perfectly aligned and in the correct position, it can be supported by the shaft struts.



Original portholes repaired, polished, and reinstalled.



Cam's approval as the deck work finishes.



Finishing paint touches - water line corrected and repainted.



Varnishing at this level was no easy task



One last wet-sand and varnish of the aft cabin.



Finally, after 6 years of restoration, Dragonfly is on its way to be launched for the first time in 12 years.

An Adventure with Tipsea

[Robin and Marg McMahon: Tipsea]

It was the weekend of August 19th, 2023, when we decided to take our friends on an overnight adventure to White Cloud. They have no experience in sailing, and we had never been to White Cloud. Perfect combination!! As we were departing from our dock we wanted to play a song for our friends to get into the spirit of things. What better than "Gilligan's Island".... an appropriate song for this trip but without the ending.

However....The wind was from the west and strong going out the bay. Tipsea made it to 6.8 knots which is great for a sailboat her size. As we got out of the bay and hit Colpoy's the waves got very rough and the wind seemed to be becoming from all directions, or so it seemed. No other boats were on the water that day....hmmm...another hint perhaps.

Our skipper made the decision as we neared Griffith Island to turn back and head for our dock. We were not experienced enough to handle the conditions and so we felt our safety was more important than the journey.

Instead of a lengthy story we felt our adventure could be summed up by our theme song to "Gilligan's Island".



Here it goes....

Just sit right back
And you'll hear a tale,
A tale of a fun-filled trip
That started on this floating dock,
Aboard this tiny ship. (Tipsea)

The mate was a mighty sailor girl, (Marg)
The Skipper brave and sure. (Robin)
Four passengers set sail that day,
For a four-hour tour.
A four-hour tour.

The wind and waves were getting rough,
The tiny ship was tossed.
If not for the courage of our fearless crew,
The Tipsea could be lost.
The Tipsea could be lost.

The ship set sail for the shore of this,
The Island of White Cloud.
With Marg....ar....et,
The Skipper too (Robin),
Their friends Bingo and his wife (Sue),
The main was reefed,
The jib still out,
Close to Griffith Isle.

Now this is the end of our fun-filled trip,
We decided to turn back.
The Skipper felt it was too rough,
Our dock seemed safer yet.

The first mate and the Skipper too,
Did their very best
To make their friends feel comfortable
Aboard this tiny ship.

Just winds, Just waves, No motor on,
A life of luxury.
Like Robinson Crusoe
We're as happy as can be.

So join us here at the GYC,
You're sure to get a smile,
From two beginner sailors,
Here on Georgian Bay!



Start a Sailing School in 6 Short Years

[Devin (Peppy) Genner: Commodore Brakewinders Sailing Club, Wiarnton]

The Brakewinders Sailing Club is a not-for-profit group dedicated to bringing the excitement and wisdom of sailing to a new generation. Since 2018 we have been working to establish a sustainable sailing school in Wiarnton to provide the Grey/Bruce area a venue for increasing engagement in the sport of sailing for local kids 10-100.



P.S. Just a final thought!

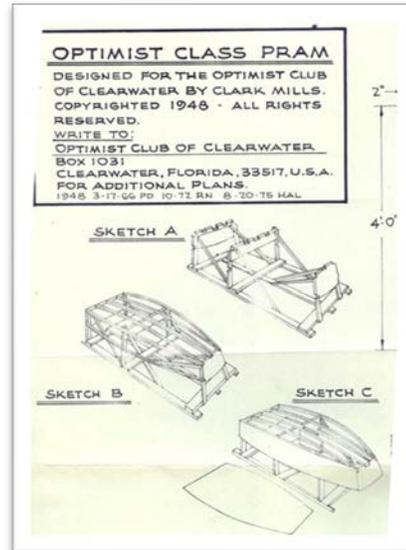
We decided to change the name of our sailboat in 2023 from Marinita to Tipsea. It was our boat and we felt it needed our touch. With that change we were told by other boaters that you are never to change a name on a boat as it brings bad luck or a curse. We thought about that for about 2 to 3 seconds and then realized we are on dock 13....so it doesn't really matter in the end.

Robin (Skipper) and Marg (First Mate) McMahon

YEAR ONE:

Build a couple boats. Optimists are recommended, designed for easy construction with minimal materials, dead simple rigging, and attractive bathtub lines.

The original plans can be found for free online. A hull can be built in about 40 hours. The spars can be built from windsurfing masts. Take donations and buy the sails and rigging. Find some kids and take them sailing.



YEAR TWO:

Build more boats. Two are hardly a fleet, and more boats is more fun! Put your new sailing friends to work. You've already built a couple. It's pretty much child's play by now, so get the children to build them.

You might experience delays if any global pandemics occur, but it should mellow out (eventually). Now you can take the kids out sailing in the boats they built!



YEAR FOUR:

Word is probably really getting around now! You might have even attracted the attention of other boating organisations. The Great Lakes Cruising Club Foundation might even endorse your vision and give you some funding to get some training.

You will probably find it more cost effective to hire some instructors and bring them to your club than it is to travel to an established sailing school. This will be very helpful if you've never had any sailing instruction before, and now you'll see how a proper sailing school should be run.



YEAR THREE:

By this point you may be experiencing increased demand and you should really start looking to become more official and get insurance and stuff. Sailing schools aren't typically created in a void, so— unless you're attached to an established club— all the necessary paperwork will seem incredibly daunting. Say "screw it" and go sailing.





YEAR 5

If possible, book those instructors again. Preferably, for a couple of weekends so you can really work out the kinks. Your junior sailors are really improving by now and will benefit from the extra instruction. Since you're hiring certified instructors, Ontario Sailing is bound to catch wind of your operation and wonder why the hell there's a sailing school they've never heard of out there.



Don't worry, they're incredibly nice. They will set you on the straight and narrow. Now's the time to really put the grind on the parents of your students, and create a board of directors and incorporate. Super fun! It's advisable to find some folks who are excellent at paperwork

YEAR SIX: ←You are here

- Incorporate as a not-for-profit.
- Join Ontario Sailing.
- Complete instructor training.
- Obtain– and find a way to pay for– insurance.

You're ready to go sailing again!

For the Brakewinders, this year means sailing RS Zest's courtesy of Ontario Sailing and the MainSail program. We get 8 dinghies, 2 support boats and safety gear on a trailer. We've booked 2 weeks this year and can book more weeks next year. After that, we get options to purchase the used gear. Until then, we have a program to design! Three board members and two teens have completed training and will be responsible for running our programs. Now let's go sailing!

Further information about us can be found on our website, <https://www.brakewinders.ca/> and on our Facebook page, Brakewinders Sailing Club <https://www.facebook.com/groups/849661776826070/>



Cruising From a Boat Kid's Perspective

[Brynne Ferenczy: Daughter of Terry & Kim Ferenczy: Clarity]



This article was originally published in the November, 2009 issue of Lattitudes and Attitudes magazine.

I can safely say that I've braved the public school system and survived to tell about it. Not that I have many hard feelings towards the educational system, just that I didn't really find it appealing. I was in public school on and off from elementary to high school, and I still maintain that being a home-schooled boat kid taught me more than any classroom ever could.

For parents who are home-schooling their kids, I applaud you. My first year of being home-schooled, in grade 3, was a challenge; mom was mom, not my teacher. Not to mention it was our first year out cruising, on a wee little boat that was such a mishmash of stuff that I'm surprised we managed to find the bow sometimes. I was also stubborn... I admit it. When I went back to elementary school the next year, I was far ahead of my peers. The teachers couldn't keep me busy with work, and for the next two years we dreamed about going sailing again. When we moved back aboard a slightly larger boat, Mom and Dad once again guided me through home-school, but it required much less 'teacher' involvement. By the time I was in grade 7, I worked independently at my own pace and managed to finish some classes within a few weeks.

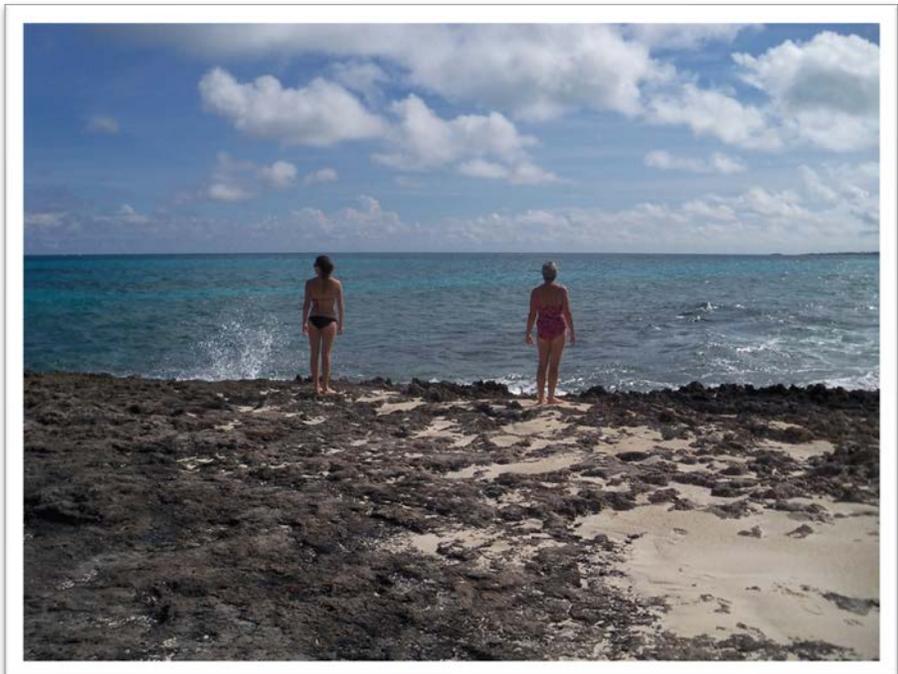
I would work on school from the morning until maybe just after noon, or depending on the weather. 'Snow days' became 'Sunshine days', and when the weather was unpleasant, I just kept working. After school was done for the day, all the kids would get together and explore whatever island we happened to be near.

I have had many people ask me why my parents took me out of school, as if I would be missing so much of my education. I agree that school is good for providing a basis for social development, involving interacting with peers and dealing with issues such as bullying and group dynamics. However, the clam-shell of the world was opened by cruising with my parents. I went from being shy to being independent and adventurous. I learned survival skills, how to 'rough it', and how important my family really is to me. I appreciated the little things, like a hot shower, or real (not powdered) cold milk. I learned about all the diverse sea life, the culture of the different places we ventured, and I tried different foods that I never would have been exposed to. These are the important things. As for academic education, I never missed out – I've been on honour roll straight through.



For me, pets were essential. I am an only child and I am an animal lover – no doubt about it. When friends are scarce, (as sometimes happens when you're cruising) it's so important to be able to have something you can interact with – other than your parents or that oh-so-tempting computer game. My best friend aboard s/v Firelight had, and still has her hermit crab, Luly, and thus began the hermit-craze. I've had all manner of creatures aboard as pets: hermit crabs, gerbils, fish, and cats and dogs, and hermits are by far the easiest. My lovely dog, Syndee, also accompanied us aboard our sailboat from Marsh Harbour, Bahamas. She was rescued as a potcake puppy and needed a home and she has been the best dog we could ask for – not to mention the fact that she loves everything to do with boating – especially kayaking.

It's strange to be down south, on our lovely sailboat with my family, as a visitor. I'm on Christmas break after my first semester at the University of Guelph, and I don't think I've ever slept so much in 3 weeks of time. But, I digress. The most exciting, thrilling, educational years of my life have been on board a sailboat, and I wouldn't trade it for the world. Cruising has nurtured a love of travel, exploration, and discovery from the very beginning. When I see young kids on board, with their parent/teacher/friend, I hope that they too will absorb everything they possibly can, just like the little sea-sponge that they are, of course.



Our First Real Cruising Adventure

[Carol and Gerald Overmars: Le Loup Marin I]

Sailing and racing has been a part of our life for over 30 years, but cruising was never a large part of our sailing experience. A busy work life cut into our available time to do more than a quick two-week adventure. However, the summer Gerald retired we decided to go sailing for 2.5 months and it was an adventure that changed our lives forever. We decided to sail around both Lake Erie and Lake Huron going up to the North Channel – a trip that set our course for a move closer to the North Channel to allow for an increased cruising lifestyle.

This is a brief overview of our adventure.

It all started with the planning. We needed to get our boat outfitted for the trip. A bimini and dodger with full enclosure, motor maintenance, new generator, stronger anchor, making sure we had backups. Not to mention all the customs paperwork. Did I mention the customs paperwork???? Nexus, DTOPS, US Boater Registration, plus updated charts and a comprehensive list of every food item on board and double checking to be sure it could be brought into the U.S. You never think about where an item came from when you bought it in the grocery store, but its amazing how many items (i.e. canned tuna) come from other countries and are not allowed into the U.S.

We also had two other boats travelling with us on the Lake Huron leg that we needed to meet in Sarnia, so we had a schedule to meet which is never a good thing when you are sailing.

The First Leg – Port Dover to Sarnia

After loading up with everything we could think of, we left Port Dover for Port Stanley (69.7 nm) on June 24. Winds started light and kept building and were on the nose. Six-foot waves and lots of spray later, we arrived in Port Stanley exhausted so we spent two days there. Next stop was Erieau (40.8 nm) with the wind and waves continuing on our nose. In Erieau a major storm came through in the night. It sounded like a tornado as you could hear the train coming through. I was very glad we were in a safe marina. The storm left us with more wind and wave but added cold to the mix. At least the wind was coming from a better direction so we started out for Leamington (44.6 nm). By the time we arrived there we were chilled to the bone and had to walk into town to find some warmer

clothes, and I thought we had packed for all contingencies! Guess not.

We left Leamington for Grosse Ile Yacht Club in Michigan. We arrived on a Wednesday night so Gerald jumped on a 39' Tarton to go racing. He had a great time and they won the race and asked him to join them for a weekend race but we had a schedule to keep so had to decline.

Entering the Detroit River shipping channel Gerald had plotted our course so we knew the absolute furthest to starboard we could go. At some points there was lots of room if a laker was going by but in other areas the line was tight and if we went past the route we would be in 2-3 ft water. We passed Detroit and finished the day in Windsor (21.7 nm).



A six am start the next morning as we headed to Sarnia (50.4 nm). Once back into the shipping channel you are keeping an eye out for the lakers that come up very quickly and quietly. Especially since our dinghy was across the back of the boat so you had to stand up to check behind us all the time. There was one dog leg exiting Lake St. Clair, when the laker arrived at the same time and it was very shallow outside of the channel. We hugged the side as much as possible and waited for it to pass. The St. Clair River was lovely and we took the more scenic path on the Canadian side and out of the main channel. We actually were able to sail upriver some of the time since the wind was on a beam reach.

When you see the Peace Bridge ahead you know you are close to the mouth of Lake Huron. You can also tell because the current starts to pick up. We had 3.5 kts of current. At the bridge you start to go towards the side where there is less current. You don't go before the bridge because there are eddies and shallows. Once you are through it gets wider and the current is not as bad. The

Sarnia Yacht Club is close by on the right-hand side and we were greeted there by Gerald's sister and her partner. Yippee – 4 days to reprovision and rest. We had completed the first leg!!

Leg 2 – Sarnia to Meldrum Bay

With an armada of 3 boats, and two spouses that had not done much rough weather sailing. It meant delays and more motor sailing than we were used to doing. But after a 6-hour motoring day we made our first stop at Port Sanilac, Michigan (26.78 nm). Customs asked a lot of questions and apparently our US Boat Registration was not populating on their computers, so they had to manually enter everything in which did not make them happy.

Next stop was Port Austin (53.7 nm) motoring most of the way. LOTS of flies but at least they were not biting. By the time we stopped for the night it was time to clean off the boat. On to Harrisville (38.5 nm) with a lovely marina with nice laundry facilities and showers. A short walk into town gives you access to restaurants, bars, groceries and an ice cream store. Next day we left for Presque Ile (45.5 nm) and finally we were able to sail most of the way. There had been a storm the night before and some of the boats had been caught out in the storm sustaining major damage. We were glad to be in port for the night.

We departed for Meldrum Bay on Manitoulin Island. The wind was from the NW 15-18 kts and waves were building. This was too uncomfortable for some passengers, so we turned around and just enjoyed the day. My premade frozen meals were now gone but I still had frozen meat and canned goods to make meals. I found out that I love my ice box with its cold plate. It keeps frozen food in good shape for up to two weeks.

The next day we set off again for Meldrum Bay (47.3 nm). Winds were light from the NW so motorsailing was the mode of the day. Why is it when we get back to Canadian waters you automatically feel 'at home' even if you are coming into a place you have never been to?

We have to say Flame (our little Min Pin) has been a real trouper. Doesn't seem to matter what the weather is he just hunkers down in the bed and curls up in the blankets. He loves socializing with everyone when we stop for the night.



Leg 3 – North Channel and back to Sarnia

On July 10 we left Meldrum Bay for a short 4-hour motor (24.1 nm) to our first gunk hole experience. Long Point Cove has a narrow entrance – well it looks very narrow but is actually about 90' wide. Very well protected and beautiful. Clay bottom so anchoring is easy. A lovely 51' Jenneau arrived while we were there, and they hailed us. We knew who it was! Some of you may know Hugh Beaton of North Sails and he was on vacation with his family. Small world. I think it was this first experience of staying out on the hook that 'hooked' us on cruising. We both loved it! Yes, you have to keep a closer eye on the weather and be prepared for whatever may come up but it is such a relaxing experience.

We did some hiking on the islands and dinghy touring and rested for a couple of days before continuing on to Gore Bay (19.0 nm). One of the boats was down to half a tank and didn't want to take a chance of running out of fuel so off we went. Waves were about 4' which was unusual according to one of our boating mates. Gore Bay had a lovely little farmers market, and we had our first exposure to playing Pickleball.



The next day we were off to Little Current (25.0 nm) and were able to sail most of the way hitting 8 kts of boat speed. You follow the channel markers at Clapperton Island and again as you enter Little Current. You watch the buoys to see which way the current is flowing and the strength of the current. That way you know when docking whether you will be pushed into the dock or have to add a little more power to get into the dock. It was interesting but completed by all three boats without incident.

Off for a 3-hour motor sail to the Benjamin's. A beautiful stay for a few days. Picked blueberries for pancakes and enjoyed



the scenery and sunshine. Enjoyed a fire onshore and cooked s'mores. Just a lovely relaxing time. We checked out possible gunk hole locations for our next trip there.

On July 19 we left the Benjamin's with a 15 kt wind on our back quarter for a beautiful sail. Arrived in Little Current and had to wait an hour for the bridge. It normally opens hourly but was under repair. The town dock is free for the day so we reprovisioned, gassed up and pumped out again. A 3-hour sail on a beam reach and we arrived at Baie Fine – the only natural fiord in North America. It is quite well marked and keep a close eye on your chart to get into Marianne's Cove. We backed into anchor, tying to trees on shore and were only about 5' from shore in 7'6" of water. This was quite harrowing for me. I don't like anchoring so close to shore and it led to some discussion between Gerald and I but we both survived.

Once safely anchored it is a beautiful spot that is extremely sheltered. A further motoring trip up Baie Fine (7.5 nm) we arrived at The Pool. Again, we anchored off and tied to shore in 13' of water so I felt more comfortable there. The Pool is actually part of Killarney National Park. We took a hike to Topaz Lake that is a lovely greenish blue colour. The hike was 20 minutes uphill in rocky and muddy terrain but worth it. Take water shoes as the rocks are sharp. It is considered a 'dead' lake but is supposed to have healing properties-not sure how that works! The walk downhill to go back was much easier. Back at the

boats we met the resident turtle that waited for any food handouts. The stars are absolutely amazing here. It feels like you can reach up and touch them. Made me wish I could read the stars.



Day 28 (July 22) we left The Pool to head to Killarney. No wind so motored the whole way. Auto pilot went on the blink and no success trying to fix it, so manual steering all the way. Arriving in Killarney after the serenity of The Pool was a rude awakening! Very, very busy. Almost got hit by a helicopter. We stayed at the island side of the Sportsman Inn which has a water taxi to take you back and forth to the mainland. The BEST fish and chip shop is in Killarney. No exaggeration.

It rained hard the next couple of days so we stayed longer before heading to Tobermory (44.13 nm) on July 25. Loved the action at Tobermory. Bad weather made it too rough to dinghy over to Big Tub. Once the weather passed through, we were off to Port Elgin (52.98 nm) and unfortunately a 10 hour day of motoring. No wind, flat water. The next day we continued to Kincardine (31.17 nm) with gusting winds behind us for a wing-on-wing sail that saw us moving at 10 kts boat speed!

Love Kincardine. You can feel and see the Scottish influence and the Piper plays at dusk. We went to a steak house for dinner, and it was an amazing meal followed by an ice cream from Dairy Queen. While walking about Gerald and brother-in-law, John, got stopped numerous times by groups of teens. Apparently, they were on a church run scavenger hunt and they needed to find a man in a flowered shirt. Gerald and John were 'it' and loved every minute of it. We got back in time to hear the piper playing. It was a lovely and mystical ending to the evening.



July 29 and on to Goderich (12.37 nm) in light winds. The entry is a little tough to spot since you are not going into the commercial entry, and it is quite narrow. The marina is small and surrounded by industry. The walk to town was UP 128 steps then down a couple of streets. Nice town with bakery with the best scones! Next day it was off to Bayfield which is only 10.5 nm south so an easy day. The showers were horrendous and the bathrooms dirty, so a short stay was best. The town was lovely and yet another ice cream shop!

Then back to Sarnia (45.65 nm) where we will leave our sailing buddies heading back to Lake Erie. Gerald's family is visiting us here tomorrow (they are from London) so we have a rest for a short time before heading back out. Time to do some laundry and reprovisioning.



Leg 4 – Sarnia to Port Dover

We said a teary goodbye to our sailing companions over a last ice cream and started off for Lake Erie. Going under the Peace Bridge the boat speed said 5.8 kts but GPS said we were 10 kts over ground. Lots of current! We hit a thunderstorm on Lake St. Clair and poor Flame was not happy with the noise. We arrived at Riverview Marina in Windsor but the weather looks bad so we will stay an extra day.

On August 5th we left knowing we would reach the mouth of Lake Erie but would decide at that point where we want to go. There are lots of choices, but we were hoping to get to Put-in-bay. Well, we arrived at Put-in-bay only to discover there was a poker run going on and no room to anchor so we went on to Middle Bass Island (52.35 nm from Sarnia) and found a slip at the MBI Yacht Club. The yacht club is small but very welcoming.

There is a ferry that runs from the island to Put-in-bay and you can bike around the island (\$10 each bike). As we watched the poker run boats depart, we left Bass Island and grabbed a mooring ball at Put-In-Bay which offers a free water taxi. We stayed a few days to enjoy the town and catch a tour. The Ohio State University has a campus on Gibraltar Island that does marine research. They had an open house and tour outlining the history and research being undertaken regarding the local flora and fauna.



On

August 10 we motored to Vermilion Yacht Club with excellent facilities. We had met some people in Tobermory, and this was their club. They welcomed us with homemade loaves and took us grocery shopping and then out for dinner. It was a great time with great people and we hope to be able to return the favour someday.

We left on August 12 with winds of 10-15 kts coming over our port back quarter. Gusts were over 20 kts and we averaged speeds of 7.5 to 9 kts. Nice! Again, in spite of the wind, there were lots of flies. Yuck. Arrived at Mentor, OH (48.78 nm) and stayed for 2 days to relax and clean the boat. We filled up the water tanks and estimate that with regular use the water will last approximately 5 days.

On August 14 we left for Ashtabula (28.64 nm) with no wind to start but the wind picked up to an absolutely beautiful sailing day. 7 kts true and no waves. We were close hauled doing 5.8 kts and the sun is shining. Priceless! One of those memories you want to save for winter. Ashtabula Yacht Club doesn't look like much, but the people are friendly and the washrooms and showers are clean and neat. The next day was a scorcher so we rested up and stayed out of the sun.

The next day we left Ashtabula for the Commodore Perry Yacht Club in Erie, PA (39.27 nm) We normally went to the Erie Yacht Club, but the Commodore Perry has a pool and that sounded real nice in this super-hot weather.

Unfortunately, they wanted a cash payment and we did not have a lot of cash with us so we had to walk into town to find an ATM. We only stayed one night then went to the Erie Yacht Club where we ran into people we had met in Ashtabula (small world yet again). We met a man that was heading to Monroe, OH to race in the Erie Single Handed Race with his 30' C&C. He was interesting to talk to and we wished him well. Note: The boat was laid up in Port Dover when we got back with a lost prop shaft. The boat almost sank before it got there.

I awoke the next day with a horrible case of vertigo and we decided it was best to go back to Port Dover rather than the rest of the way around Lake Erie so we turned the boat for home (40.82 nm) with Gerald doing most of the work as I was afraid to move. The winds picked up and we flew across the lake in 6 hours. I felt bad cutting the trip short, but it was probably the best decision.

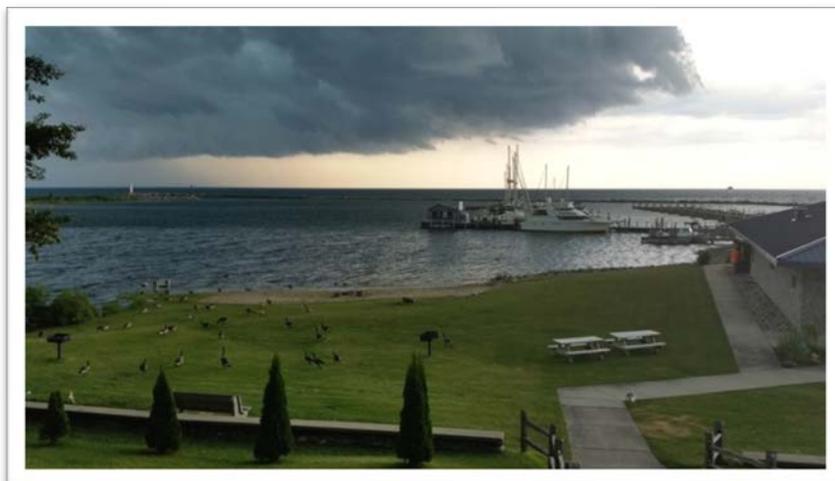
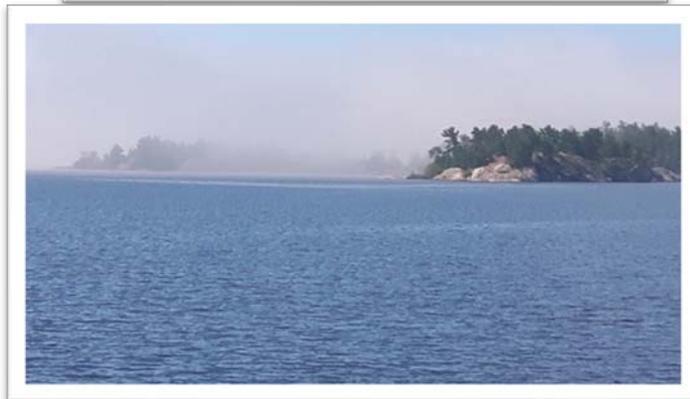
Our adventure had come to a close. It was an amazing trip. Le Loup Marin behaved wonderfully and kept us safe. We decided we both love cruising, and the North Channel was amazing. Our decision to move closer so we could do more of the cruising and living on the hook that we enjoyed so much is how we ended up in Owen Sound. It was a great decision as we have again made many new friends and the yacht club members have welcomed us into their family, for which we are very appreciative.

Just a few quick facts:

We travelled approximately 1,150 nautical miles.

We learned:

- that things don't always go according to plan, so you need to be flexible.
- things get lost or broken – blower fan in the engine area died and was replaced in Sarnia, a navigational cover for one of the instruments just disappeared somewhere
- checking the weather before you head out for a long-distance trip is a must, and
- finding oil for an oil change as well as fuel and oil filters is not always easy to find in marinas so carry your own.



boat with food, fuel, water – all the essentials we needed for the 550-mile journey home.

Saturday May 28 – Green Bay Wisconsin to Fish Creek Wisconsin

Following some time at the helm of the 340, Rod was feeling comfortable and confident and was more than ready for the extensive cruise. Our destination for the day was a trip up the West Coast of Lake Michigan to Fish Creek, but not before bidding one last farewell to the 340's previous owners.

With any trip, you can expect things to go wrong. However, we didn't think it would happen so soon. Just before we left, it had started to rain, which wouldn't have been a problem if the canvas on the bridge hadn't leaked. A towel temporarily fixed the problem. Additionally, the pressure water pump had been quite noisy and running too long after we used the tap and now it wouldn't shut off. An internal inspection of the pump revealed worn out parts – the only solution was to purchase and replace it with a new one. As it turned out, Bruce, the previous owner of the 340, drove us to a marine store in nearby Sister Bay. I find boaters everywhere are friendly and obliging, especially when you need help.

Not all was lost on our first day. Before dinner, we made our planned destination, had the new pump installed and the water was flowing from the taps again. After all this excitement, steaks sounded inviting. So, Rod and I fired up the newly assembled barbecue. But, before the meat hit the grill, our neighbours aboard their Sea Ray explained the harbour rule of "no barbecuing on the docks." The solution was a simple. Barbecue them on shore, then bring the steaks back to the boat. While dinner was late, the steak and wine had us laughing about the day's events. We were quite relaxed and ready to sleep.

Sunday May 29 – Fish Creek to Beaver Island, Michigan

It was sunny, calm and cool when we left Fish Creek bright and early at 11:20 a.m. The washrooms and showers were impressive at the municipal marina and the whole town was filled with unique gift shops – if only we had more time!

We topped up our fuel so we could do calculations on our range since Bruce mentioned the fuel gauges were inaccurate. We felt we had enough to get to St. James Harbour on Beaver Island located near the top of Lake Michigan if we topped up at Washington Island, so we set

out. As we neared the end of the four-hour leg across the top of Lake Michigan, we smiled with satisfaction and welcomed the lonely buoy at the south end of Beaver Island, which indicated the success of our accurate navigating skills.

Following our arrival, the girls enjoyed margaritas and I attempted to barbecue chicken breasts. But for some reason, the new grill wouldn't stay lit. Not to worry, though, the microwave chicken was delicious and accompanied by baked yams and salad. And oh yes, more wine to get us laughing about the day's events.

Monday May 30 – Beaver Island to Mackinac Island, Michigan

We chose to have breakfast at a local eatery and to our surprise, the restaurant clock was ahead one hour—we had already gone through the time zone. After showering, we prepared for our departure from Beaver Island with a course set for Mackinac Island.

After taking numerous photos of the many lighthouses and the Mackinac Bridge, we focused our cameras on the Grand Hotel as we approached Mackinac Island, while dodging the ferries running to and from Mackinac City. There was too much to see for our short stay, but we loved every minute. We also learned that whether the area is spelled Mackinac or Mackinaw, it's pronounced the same— mack-in-awe.



Mackinac Island is home to several highlights, including the Mackinac Bridge, which spans approximately five miles.

The island has a unique, charming and historic ambiance. Eighty percent of the island remains state park property. The pace is slow as horse-drawn carriages and bicycles are

the only forms of transportation, since automobiles were banned at the turn of the 20th Century. We rode in a horse-drawn taxi to the magnificent Grand Hotel where we wandered in amazement. No other words can describe the hotel than a living, working museum, alive with the charm and graciousness of a bygone era.

The breathtaking interior included the main formal dining room that can seat over 750 and more than 300 guest rooms capture a specific time period or theme. In fact, the movie *Somewhere in Time*, which starred Jane Seymour and the late Christopher Reeve, was filmed here in 1979. Betty Jane had been looking forward to visiting the hotel after seeing the movie years ago. Of course, she had to buy the DVD.



Brenda Dawson strikes a pose on the Grand Hotel's 880 foot long beautiful porch.

After touring the many rooms, we ventured onto the enormous front porch overlooking the Straits of Mackinac. In fact, Ripley's Believe It or Not states this is the longest porch in the world, reaching 880 feet.

We immensely enjoyed a few hours taking pictures of the hotel grounds, wondering what it would be like if we won the Power Ball Lottery. We all dreamed about staying for a week or two. This tourist town should be on every boater's itinerary.

After browsing and buying souvenirs, we reluctantly accepted there wasn't time to see everything. The history, Fort Mackinac, Arch Rock, Sugarloaf Rock and much more would have to be experienced another time.

Tuesday May 31 – Mackinac, Michigan to Gore Bay, Ontario

Our plan to leave at the crack of dawn immediately changed when the coffee maker didn't switch with the time change and we awoke at 8:00 a.m. instead of 7:00 a.m. It was a cool 55C in the cabin, but about 65 outside. We dressed quickly and trundled off to the showers with coffee in hand. Then, while Rod and I went to St Ignace for fuel (approximately a mile away where fuel was \$2.69 a gallon compared to \$3.09 at Mackinac Island) Betty Jane and Brenda walked to Market Street to do a little more shopping. Timing was perfect. When I called on the radio as we were re-entering the harbour, they were just paying for the last item and were on their way back to the dock.



Doug is an avid boater, who is happiest at the helm. He is quite comfortable at the wheel of the 340 Carver.

With more coffee, we cast off and followed the coordinates on the GPS to Gore Bay to clear customs and top up on fuel. The day's run was 110 miles across the top of Lake Huron and into the North Channel. Our fuel range was approximately 120 miles — a little too close for comfort. So, we changed our plans and decided to stop at Meldrum Bay to fill the tanks.

We arrived at Meldrum Bay at 2:30 p.m. and celebrated being back in Canada. Canada Customs had instructed Rod to call as soon as we arrived, so he immediately called the direct line to report in and clear customs while we fueled.

By 4:25 p.m. the 340 was purring on plane en route to Gore Bay. The North Channel was flat and the sky was clear and beautiful. We couldn't have asked for better weather. Rod looked quite comfortable at the wheel now. He and Betty Jane were enjoying identifying the shoreline to the charts and radar. The trip was perfect for them to get to know their boat, enjoy the sights, and learn all the ropes of a larger twin engine cruiser.

We commented about not seeing another pleasure boat other than a 57' Cruisers Yacht headed west from Mackinac and a couple of sailboats towing dinghies. While it was Memorial Day weekend in the United States and just after our May 24th weekend in Canada, marinas were mostly empty. It was the same on the second half of the trip. We were the only ones taking advantage of the beautiful sunny weather and calm water from Green Bay to Gore Bay.



The crew is all smiles after reaching Canadian soil in Gore Bay, Ontario.

We arrived in Gore Bay at 5:30 and while the hydro wasn't totally hooked up to the empty pier of the finger docks that we had chosen, we switched slips a few times flicking the breakers to get two outlets that worked. Then, as it turned out, our water hose wasn't long enough and we ended up tying the boat crosswise in one of the double slips. It proved to be an ideal location as the sun set square into the cockpit and the light breeze from the North Channel kept bugs away.



Betty Jane at the helm while cruising

Wednesday June 1 – Gore Bay to Baie Fine

Brenda and Betty Jane served a leisurely breakfast of poached eggs, bacon, toast, jam and coffee, which made the trip seem much more like a holiday than a delivery. We topped up our food supply at the local Valu-Mart and our fuel at the marina before departing at 1:00 p.m. With Betty Jane at the helm, we glided across the perfect water to Little Current.

Since we arrived in Little Current a few minutes past the hour we missed the scheduled opening of the only swing bridge on the trip, so we took the opportunity to stretch our legs and fill up with fuel at Wally's Gas Dock. The proprietor of Wally's proudly displayed a mangled prop on a sign that said, "We sell charts". No more needed to be said.

The swing bridge opened exactly on the hour. Wally informed us that the bridges monitor channel 14 not 16, 9 or 68 as stated in some of the guides. A thank-you wave and Naut-a-Care (the new designated title for the 340 Carver) continued on to Baie Fine.



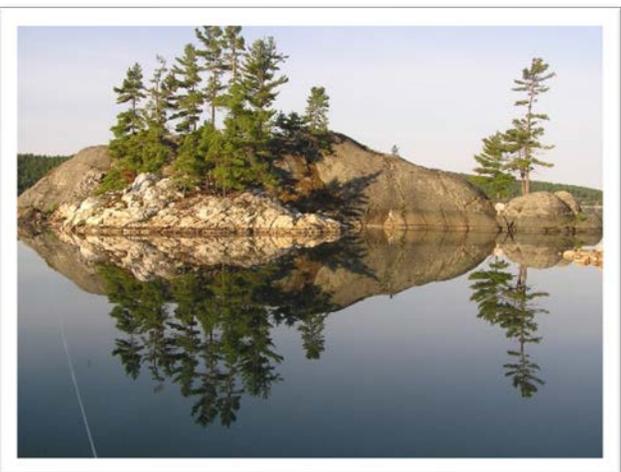
Rod and Brenda tie off the bowline at an anchorage at Baie Fine, which is located at the western edge of Killarney National Park.

At our chosen spot for the night, the water was deep right to the shoreline, allowing us to idle in close enough and drop the stern anchor from the bow pulpit onto the rocks on the tiny island. We then walked the line back to the transom. As Betty Jane let out this stern line, Rod and Brenda prepared the bow anchor to drop on the nearby mainland shore. We were between secure on two anchors hooked on opposing shores. While positioning the anchors, we admired the quartz along the shoreline all the way to the hilltops and brought a few souvenir rocks home.

Betty Jane and Brenda didn't waste any time changing into their sun tops, so they could catch as many rays as possible and enjoy wine, while observing Baie Fine. The light breeze of the day had calmed to non-existent, the magnificent shoreline was perfectly mirrored in the dead calm water. The call of loons and cries of two hawks in the distance were the only sounds. Baie Fine was almost as spectacular as I remembered from our honeymoon.

Thursday June 2 – Baie Fine to Meaford, Ontario

Naut-a-Care didn't have a generator, so the buzz of a few mosquitoes replaced our coffee maker as our wake-up call. Still, with not even the slightest breeze, the water was like a sheet of glass and we reluctantly pulled our anchors and prepared for the last day of our trip. Passing by Okeechobee Lodge, we felt privileged to have had Baie Fine and the North Channel all to ourselves. Other than being a little on the cool side, it was perfect boating weather and the scenery was spectacular. Our pictures were great, but being there is indescribable.



Only a few images, such as this one, can really capture the true beauty of the Baie Fine region. Here, you can see the faint stern anchor line running out from the boat.

Georgian Bay, which was the calmest I've ever seen it, caressed the hull of Naut-a-Care as Killarney faded behind us. Following the GPS route to Lion's Head, we couldn't help thinking how fortunate we were to have the fresh water Great Lakes in our country.

Right on schedule, we arrived in Lion's Head for fuel only to learn they didn't have hydro and therefore, couldn't pump gas. The PUC was upgrading the utilities to the harbour and wouldn't be finished until the next day—maybe.

After much calculation and weighing our alternatives, Rod and I decided to head out for Meaford running much slower at 2,000 rpm instead of 3,400 on plane to give us an ideal cruising range to make it. We also picked up some family members who had driven to Lion's Head to join us for the last leg.



While a little on the cool side, Mother Nature provided excellent weather and water conditions for most of the trip. Here, is just one of the several moments where the water was just like glass.

Coming down the home stretch seemed to be an eternity travelling at only 9 mph instead of 26 mph. After five hours of "trawler life", the entrance to Meaford Harbour was a welcome sight. We breathed a deep sigh of relief having feared the embarrassment of being towed the last mile or so by the Coast Guard into our home port. I can see it now on the front page of the Meaford Express: "Publisher rescued inches from Meaford dock after 550 miles".



The end of a journey. Rod and Doug at the helm while heading to Meaford

Captain Rod with a huge smile on his face, announced, "Prepare for docking" as we approached Meaford Harbour. Two proud Carver owners had successfully brought their 340 Carver Santego, 550 miles from Green Bay, Wisconsin to Georgian Bay, Ontario. Meaford is Nauta-Care's new home.

Written by Doug and Brenda Dawson



About the Dawsons

Written by Doug & Brenda Dawson]

Doug and Brenda Dawson are a boating team who joined the GYC in 2019 and were lucky enough to get a slip in 2020. Our 30' Windy Cruiser is now docked at G17.

I am 5th generation in the marine business. Brenda and I have worked together since we married in 1967 and now as recreational boaters, we have been exposed to every facet of boating.

I was born and raised at the family marina, Dawson's Marina Limited, on Lake Simcoe where I learned everything about boating from the best—my Dad, Art Dawson. We sold, stored and serviced Power from runabouts to Motor Yachts and Sailboats to 48'. I enjoyed delivering boats by road and by water all over Ontario, and in the US delivering new yachts from New Jersey to Lake Simcoe and some to Florida down the coast and Intra Coastal waterway and Abaco, Bahamas. Even though the marina was filled with mostly power boats, I was a Sea Scout Master for 10 years teaching many young boys the pleasure of sailing.

I graduated in 1967 from Ryerson University with a Business Administration degree, then enjoyed the position of VP Sales and Marketing at the family marina.

I served on the board of the Ontario Marina Operators Association board for 23 years and as president for 3 years in the early 80's. It was a great opportunity to get to know all the marina operators as well as visiting their marinas and helping them solve their problems. Of course, I attended Boat Shows in North America and worked the

Toronto International Boat Show with a display of boats for 40 consecutive years.

I am a founding member of the Thornbury Yacht Club as well as the Georgian Bay Sailing Regatta, both formed in the 1980's.

I tested about 700 boats across North America and Norway and reviewed them for Canadian Yachting and Power Boating Canada Magazine over 22 years. I toured many boat factories, organized many Boat Shows, Trade Shows, Boating Events and Parades as well as the first 20 Poker Runs in Canada.

Brenda and I started the first boat multiple listing service, Computer Boat Search, in Canada and started the Canadian Boat Value Book in 1984 and published through to 2003. The Book now has approximately 80,000 Boat Values for the Marine Industry—power and sail. We provided the banks across Canada with a Boat Evaluation Service from 1991 to 2003 providing all the banks with values for every boat loan.

Now being semi retired, we have an e-Commerce website www.BoatingWithDawsons.com where we offer 30 books we have written to help boaters around the world enjoy boating more. We like to say we put the "ING" in Boating with lessons for docking each drive system, sail and power, as well as Anchoring, Communicating, Conquering wakes, Docking while cruising, Enhancing boating, Enjoying your dinghy, Making ropes into lines. Ramping, Tying and using knots, Buying a boat and Being a First Rate First Mate. There are hundreds of free blogs on the site for boaters to learn about enjoying their boats more. We also have a library of 16,000+ Old Boat Brochures back to the 1950's that are showcased at www.OldBoatBrochures.com.

Brenda and I are enjoying helping boaters around the world, sharing our knowledge with blogs and newsletters and, of course, selling our lessons and other "how-to" books. Check out our websites:

www.BoatingWithDawsons.com

www.OldBoatBrochures.com

www.PowerBoatDocking.com

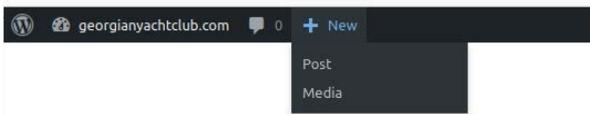
www.SailboatDocking.com

Share Your Trip Reports for Our 2025 Winter Newsletter



Share your story - How to post a Trip report
 There is a new menu entry on the GYC website: "Trip Reports". You can put up your short or long note about a trip you've been on, or one you're planning.

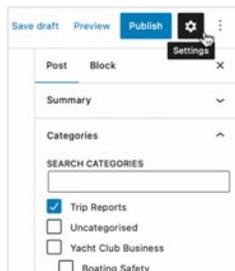
Sign in to the GYC Website
 Look for the + sign on the top menu bar
 Click on that + and choose Post.



You'll then find yourself in the editor. Paste (or type) your report in and paste (or choose) photos you'd like to add.

After adding text and/or photos go over to the Categories choice in the menu on the right and click the Trip Report box.

That's it. Preview your entry if you like (click on the Preview button at the top) or just Publish it by clicking on the Publish button at the top.



If there is any material you'd like only club members to see, use the Read More tag. Trevor has a short note on how to do that below.

OR, just send us your notes or story and we'll put them up, no problem. Then others can benefit from your experiences

GYC CALENDAR OF EVENTS: 2024 Membership Year Mar 1, 2024, to July 17 2024:

Mar 4	Board Meeting at 1900 h.
Mar	Financial Report Available after March Board mtg (Easter-Good Friday)
Mar 29	Board Meeting at 1900 h
Apr 2 Tuesday	Director Reports-
Apr 4	AGM at 19:00h [2 nd Wed of April]
Apr 10	NEW Board Begins
Apr 11	
Apr TBA	Launch meeting 9:00am
Apr TBA	Social – Ice breaker
May 4	Launch Saturday 0800 (1st Saturday of May)
May 5	Cradle moving Sunday 0900
May 6	Board Meeting at 1900 h
May 11	Property WORKDAY and lunch 9:00 am.
May TBA	Fuel Dock opens.
Jun TBA	Meet & Greet 8:30 and
Equipment Day 9:45	
Jun 3	Board Meeting at 1900h
Jun 4	Board Meetings on Pause
until Sep	
Jun 15	*Saturday*Sail Past
Jun 17	*Sunday* Sail Past Race

Contacts for GYC Operations

GYC Board

Ad-Hoc Chairs and Administration

Commodore	Becky Middlebrook	519 379-4992 M 519 371-6824 H	commodore@georgianyachtclub.com
Vice Commodore/Secretary	Mike Forcier	519 372-0722 W 519 372-5960 M	secretary@georgianyachtclub.com
Mooring	John Griffith	226-755-2956 M	mooring@georgianyachtclub.com
Treasurer	Peter Struthers	519 881-6638 M	treasurer@georgianyachtclub.com
Fuel Dock & Safety	Steve Rouse	519 379-0623 M	sbrouse99@gmail.com
Communications	Joseph Hardin	519 534-4197 M	communications@georgianyachtclub.com
Planning & Development	Brent MacKinnon	519 477-2559 M	brentmackinnon9@gmail.com
Rear Commodore/Properties & Building	Chris Haslam	226 668-8256 M	treguy_01@hotmail.com
Membership	Katherine Barton	226 923-0981 M	membership@georgianyachtclub.com
Social	Paul Weitendorf	519 270-6011 M	paul_weitendorf@rogers.com
Utilities	Joe Fryer	519 270-2624 M	joefryer47@gmail.com
Launch & Haulout	Mark Vincent	519 378-5647 M	markgrease@yahoo.ca
Past Commodore	Travis Low	519 374-1457 M	travis@vandolders.com
Historian	Sara Fenton		sarah@sfl2000.com
Privacy Officer/Treasurer	Peter Struthers		treasurer@georgianyachtclub.com

AD-HOC Committee Chairs

Security Committee	Steve Furness	Steve.Furness@Grey.ca
Technology	Paul King	paulwkingos@icloud.com
White Cloud	John Griffith	john.griffithmarine@gmail.com
Sailboat Racing	Paul Weitendorf	paul_weitendorf@rogers.com

The club also has the following, dedicated email addresses:

Email Address	Notes
boatinsurance@georgianyachtclub.com	Send your boat's insurance certificate to this address. Or give the address to your broker. Most brokers will send the certificate each year when renewed.
invoicing@georgianyachtclub.com	Invoices will be sent to you from this address. You will also use this when paying Membership Dues and Fees with an E-transfer payment.
webmaster@georgianyachtclub.com	Use this email address for issues with logging on, problems with the website, etc.