

# DOCK LINES

SUMMER 2016



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## From the Bridge

Welcome everyone to the 2016 sailing season. I would like to thank you all for entrusting operation of Sail Georgina in the hands of myself and the other executive members this year.

Over the winter, while we were planning the 2016 sailing season, racing, and social events, I noted the many changes that have happened within SGA over the 33 years we have existed. Some I have seen and been a part of, but there have been many years of SGA before I became a member some 10 years ago.

There are many past Commodores that I have not known, but quite a few are still members. Jim Reeves was our first, and longest serving Commodore (7 years), and is still an active member to this day! Tim seems to be a favourite name for Commodore having had 3 different versions: Francis, Glover and Ayerst (7 years in total). Proof that it takes three Tims to equal one Jim I think! They are all still active members of Sail Georgina, and their experience is invaluable to running our little club. Roy Ham served 3 years as Commodore and has been active on the Executive up until last year, when he was finally allowed to retire. Judy and Nancy Glover have been the only female Commodores..... to date I should add. And of course, our esteemed David Goldstein has served us well the past three years. In total, 23 years of Commodores, of the 33 years Sail Georgina has existed, are still active members. Wow! I will try to live up to the standards set by all of them.

Speaking of longevity, Sutton & Jackson's Point are 125 years old this year. I can only imagine the changes that have taken place, but I expect a few of our more senior members may still remember some of it! We know the police moving into the harbour has been shelved, but not officially dead yet. Who knows what will happen. Chris, who has supported and helped us for so many years has moved on, and all her friends at Sail Georgina wish her nothing but the best. I have had the opportunity to meet her replacement Darrell recently. He has been with the Town for 20 years, but this is a new role for him. He and Chris were good friends, so I am optimistic that he will be a good resource for us. Darrell, welcome to the Harbour!

I expect we will see many more changes over the coming years, and your current and future executive will continue to work hard and put in many hours on your (our) behalf.

Fair winds my friends!

Commodore Ken

\*\*\*\*\*

"Any damn fool can navigate the world sober. It takes a really good sailor to do it drunk."

-Sir Francis Chichester while loading his boat with gin.

\*\*\*\*\*



## From the Engine Room

I have always called this the Engine Room over the years, meaning to imply that this is where this publication was “engineered”. Of course this is not entirely true because much of this comes from other members of our club, and I must thank them for their help and contribution to Dock Lines. I often tell them that there is no way I can do this alone. Of course, everyone is very busy and all prefer to be out on the water, go sailing, instead of the writing of an article.

Our members are a heterogeneous lot, all different, all with different interests. But then if we were all the same, that would be rather boring. And so, the contributions are all a little different, and I hope, of interest.

I would like to thank Roy for his account of a harrowing experience in the Bahamas last January when the 38 ft. Hughes he crewed on went on the rocks during heavy storms. We are happy to have him back at our club safe and sound.

Bob Luery was a valued member of our club. We lost him on Lake Simcoe last October, and I deeply thank Neil McLaughlin for his piece in memory of Bob.

I trust the Rijn cruising story is of interest to all, considering it was a cruise of a different kind.

I was also reminded that last year’s racing results of our club can be found elsewhere on our website at [www.sailgeorgina.ca/racingseason/2015/](http://www.sailgeorgina.ca/racingseason/2015/) and therefore there was no point in duplicating them in this issue.

I should also like to thank the members who submitted a photo or two which I include in this issue of Dock Lines.

Please have a look at our advertisers in this issue who support us, and please patronize them, also if you happen to be visitors to our little harbour in Jackson’s Point on the south shore of Lake Simcoe.

It surprises me how few sailors have actually travelled beyond the confines of Lake Simcoe and used the locks. I hope the article on lock etiquette is of some interest for those of you who wish to cruise further abroad.

I always look forward to your comments, questions, or suggestion. It seems that I receive them more readily if you direct them to my personal email, namely: [mhpape@interhop.net](mailto:mhpape@interhop.net)

We wish you a safe and great summer of sailing.

H. Pape  
Editor

\*\*\*\*\*



## SOME QUESTIONABLE AND PUZZLING SITUATIONS

Speed and the prompt delivery of cargo carried by commercial vessels was always an important factor in their operation. The timely delivery of goods affected the profit of the company.

The captain of a sailing vessel becalmed in the Horse Latitudes promised any crew member who could come up with a solution a fat bonus. One sailor did so by constructing and mounting a very large set of bellows in the stern of the ship to direct wind into the sails. We all know the gag, put an electric fan in the back of the boat to fill the sails to go faster and win the race.

Why does it not work? Look for the answers further along.

The skipper of a sailboat was an excellent navigator. He understood his charts better than most and had swung his compass to utmost precision. He could not go wrong.

Still he was deeply puzzled. No matter which way he pointed his ship, his heading was always south.

Now while he sat there at his navigation table, scratching his head, he happened to look out of his window and to his astonishment he spotted a bear. What colour was the bear?

The wind source in the back of the boat will not work for the same reason as that of the passenger on the front seat of the car who cannot make the car move faster by pushing against the dash with his hands.

Oh, the bear was white because only at the north pole are all directions south.



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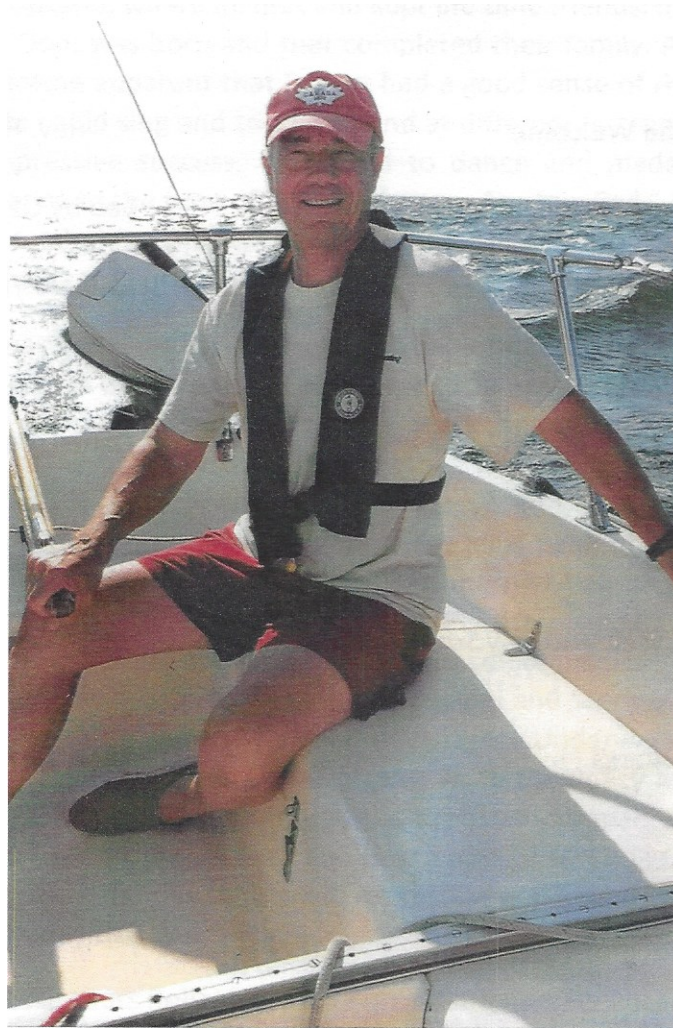
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Bob Luery – July 1, 1946 – October 15, 2015

*In Memory of Our Fellow Sail Georgina Member and Dear Friend*



**Sailed Home  
October 15th, 2015**

Everyone knows that we lost a senior member of Sail Georgina last October when Bob Luery disappeared on Lake Simcoe while sailing Therapy to Lagoon City to put her away for the winter. While several months have now passed, writing this article for the Docklines is no easier for me nor for those reading it as we think about the events of that occurred on that tragic day. Personally, I lost one of my best friends, a fellow racer, mentor and “brother”. So, when Hessel asked me write this article, it was with a certain amount of hesitation that I accepted and then procrastinated for months. However, I could not put it off any longer as the Docklines publishing date was upon us. Therefore, please read this story with the best of memories of Bob knowing he shared a similar passion as all of us for sailing, competition and camaraderie.

Much of this article is extracted from the eulogy that I gave at Bob’s memorial service. Early on in the message, I placed a Mount Gay cap on my head with great respect and affection for what it means to us all.

Bob had an identical one, and it is what you would see him wearing in the harbour. I could have also decorated the pulpit with some of Bob's several race winning flags, or the trophy that you may have seen Bob and I hoisting in the attached pictures after we won the race that we called "the

biggest world championship race on Lake Simcoe".



Elaine Luery can attest to Bob's passion for his sailboat. She once shared with me his excitement upon purchasing his boat. As is the case with so many of us sailors, naming our boat is a serious task; one we think about deeply. Bob was pondering this important decision when Elaine finally suggested "Therapy," because she said spending time on the boat was a form of therapy for Bob – a means of relaxation, a way to unwind, a step away from the business of life to enjoy the beauty of nature, the sound of the water, and the thrill that comes with a strong wind. Bob agreed; it captured what sailing was to him; and so the boat was



christened “Therapy.”

I first met Bob at Cedarview Community Church nearly 25 years ago. However, in 2011, through the course of our conversations, we discovered we had a shared passion for racing. At that time, I did not own my own boat, but I had been racing dinghies and crewing for many years on top ranked keel boats in Toronto and had won all the major races on Lake Ontario and Lake Huron. One Saturday, Bob invited me to come up to Lake Simcoe and crew with him for a race. After the recent years spent racing on Lake Ontario, I thought, surely, racing on Lake Simcoe must be a bit of a joke. Yet, wasn't I surprised in the first race when several other boats left us behind at the starting line and me wondering what happened. None-the-less, Bob invited me to be his first mate and I took advantage of the opportunity to spend more time near home and with Bob who was becoming a great friend and mentor. Bob and I spent many hours racing and sailing together, and I can attest that Bob had a mighty competitive side. He was in it to win. That next year, we did go on to win several races and have his best year ever, culminating in the Georgina Cup.



As I mentioned, sailing brought pleasure to Bob in many ways. Aside from the challenge of racing, sailing was a means of fellowshiping with others. Sail Georgina is a small club, and you quickly get to know others. It's a time to socialize, to help each other in the many tasks sailors have to do on their boats, share meals, and gather on each other's boats for beautiful, and often exhilarating, evening sails. Bob was known for his ready smile, willing hand, and infectious laugh. All of us in this tight knit community sorely miss him.

Sailing was also a means of spending time with his friends.

Late last summer, Elaine and Bob, Marion and Dennis, Adele, and I, went out for a beautiful sunset sail on my boat. As is often on a warm summer's evening, there was not a whisper of wind. No matter— we started into a truly enchanting evening; we had good food, good friends, and great conversation. Bob greatly valued deep and meaningful conversations. He especially loved to converse about books that he read, and about theology. He was continually striving to learn and grow in his walk with his Savior. It was in the midst of such a conversation that our tranquil evening suddenly changed. A minor squall came across the lake and almost instantly, we were heeled over and the boat was flying across the water. While everyone was scrambling to get hold of something or someone, Bob was jumping into action to let out sails and batten down the hatches, all with a massive smile on his face. Now, we were sailing!!!!

Lake Simcoe — it can be quite unpredictable. Those who have spent much time on the lake would have experienced that unpredictability on a number of occasions. In a race, four years ago, Bob and I were last across the finish line, but thinking we had a pretty good race. (As an aside, I will spare you all the details of how a boat that is last across the finish line could win a race but talk to me later if you are



interested). As we were finishing, a famous and scary Lake Simcoe squall swooped in that whipped up the waves near Sibbald's Point to over 3 meters and we were heading for the rocks. Fortunately, we prayed fervently, thought quickly about our limited options and surfed the massive waves around the Point to safety behind the shelter of the trees where we both collapsed with joy and thankfulness.

But on this past October 15<sup>th</sup>, Bob was alone to face the unexpected storm. So, we are left to contemplate the “whys” and “what-ifs.” We can rest in the knowledge that Bob was not really alone – Jesus Christ, his savior was with him. Jesus was there to welcome him into the eternal kingdom.

Let me share with you a scripture from Hebrews that I believed captured Bob’s life:

"Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith".

Aside from racing, Bob's love for the gospel and his competitive spirit drove him to go beyond the norm and

help as many people as he could in a day. He volunteered himself and his talents for many different service opportunities including singing, teaching, helping at Vacation Bible School, cooking meals for the needy, and driving cancer patients to name a few. I remember one afternoon at the "Inn from the Cold" when a team from Cedarview was preparing dinner for the homeless. We were slicing roast beef and Bob made that menial task into a competition as well. He shamed me by slicing his beef half as thick as I could. Although, I did learn later that he had a much better knife. Serving and loving other people, whether at home, at church, at a shelter, a hospital or even at the harbour reflected his love for Christ and a servant's heart. For those of you that have seen the Facebook posts from his recent Europe trip, you would know that all the strangers in those pictures that he met would have been left with memories of a Canadian guy with a weird hat who entered their hearts and left them better than before they met him.

Bob ran his race with everything he had. He had his eyes on his Savior in everything he did. He ran with perseverance and endurance, and as we mourn our loss, we rest in the knowledge that he is with Christ.

As we all struggle with this loss, the following quote from “A Path through Suffering” by Elisabeth Elliot may help us deal with the thoughts of that terrible day:

*A naval officer once wrote his wife, “If you should hear that our cruiser was sunk and none were saved, then do not weep. The sea in which my body sinks is nothing but the hollow of my Savior’s hand, and nothing can snatch me from it”*

Bob was such a special friend, a godly man, a loving father, a wonderful husband and certainly was a mentor to me and so many others that we will never know. However, God knows. So, one day, if there is sailing in heaven, by God’s grace, I will wait patiently on that heavenly dock and hope that Bob invites me to crew with him again!







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# LOCK ETIQUETTE

H. Pape

Though many of us sailors seem to exist solely for the thrill of racing, competing for that elusive cup, and that pennant which proves that we are most skilled sailors (someone once told me that you can only learn to sail efficiently if you participate in club races), there are also those of us who prefer living on board for a few days or longer, and cruising where ever the winds choose to take us.

Those of us on the shores of Lake Simcoe are lucky to have such an extensive lake with many destinations, but then the urge hits to go further afield. That usually means cruising the Georgian Bay, or travelling to more eastern destinations. Inevitably this means entering and negotiating the Trent - Severn Waterway, together with its several locks, depending in which direction we go. Between Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay there are four, including the Marine Railway, if you think of it as a lock. But more about that later.

In what ever direction you decide to go, the first consideration has to be the height of our ship, and that means the mast, which has to come down. Going to Georgian Bay, the bridge at the Atherley Narrows has a clearance of 25ft., so no mast up. If you can lower and raise your mast yourselves, you are lucky. On our boat we have built a rig that allows the two of us to drop it (and raise it again at the other end with some effort). It consists of some aluminum piping that can be assembled into an A-frame, swivelled on some special fittings on the port and starboard decks below the mast.

For most boats you will need to drop your mast at your club, or at a marina with mast crane facilities, which now charges anywhere from \$80 to \$120 for the service. Once through the canal at Port Severn that usually means motoring to Midland or Penetanguishene harbour to raise it again.

Speaking of motoring, another consideration, of course, is the anticipated fuel consumption needed to complete the canal trip till the mast can go up and you switch to sailing. The motor, therefore, must be reliable and able to do the job.

So, on our way to Georgian Bay we arrive at the first lock, lock 42 at Couchiching.

Planning to return to our Lake Simcoe at the end of our cruise, the most economical way is to purchase an up and down pass for each of the four locks. They are valid for the whole season. Good etiquette includes a slow approach to the lock, keeping a

respectful distance from other vessels, likely a tying up to the blue wall, and a patient wait till the gates open and light turns green, when you race in as fast as you can, to get there ahead of everyone else, right? Of course not! It is the lock master who decides who comes first and the order of entering the lock. Therefore you must wait for instructions. Good preparation also includes having a bow and stern line ready for use inside the lock, together with a crew member up forward. Such lines are never tied but a short loop is passed around the cables hanging from the walls and held by hand such that it can be slid up or down or quickly released in case of



Swift Rapids lock.



emergency. Once the gates are closed, the lock becomes a box without a lid, a perfect container for fumes. Everything must be turned off, motor, etc., including the galley stove while the gates are closed, so no heating up water for coffee while dropping the 21ft. to the next part of the Severn River.

About 4½ km further along there is a bridge that has just 8 ft. clearance and opens up for boat traffic. For the purpose a loud blast on a horn has to be made (yelling through cupped hands will not work) so that the bridge attendant is informed that you like to pass through. The whole procedure takes a little time since he resents being awoken and the traffic on the road has to be considered. Point is, you have to have a suitable sounding device on board, one that is loud enough to wake - well, never mind.

Sparrow Lake can be a bit of a challenge, especially on a hazy day when Grandview Point is hard to spot, a distance of perhaps 3 km away. The lake is crossed more or less on a diagonal and there are no markings along the way. A good compass, correctly swung, or a GPS course plotter is a great asset here.

Lock # 43 at Swift Rapids is quite impressive and has a drop of some 47 ft. Of course the same rules of etiquette apply here. The lock master rules. By the way, it can be quite windy at the top end.

Speed limits are often posted along the Severn, especially in the narrower places. All along the shorelines there are numerous cottages, with their docks and boats. All traffic on the waterway is responsible for its wake, and in close proximity of the shoreline, no wake is the general rule. The latter does not seem to apply to power boat operators who prefer to demonstrate their macho by the size of their wake. Many a glass or cups of coffee get upset when they pass by with a smile, a friendly wave of the hand, and a not so friendly wave following them in the water.

The Big Chute Marine Railway at Severn Falls is an interesting experience. Many sailors have expressed their doubt over the years about having their yacht subjected to this operation. The boat is indeed lifted entirely out of the water and transported some 57 ft. down the hill in a very large carriage, usually together with three or four other craft. This modern system, although built quite a number of years ago to replace the old one at the other side of the hydro plant, rolls on two separate sets of tracks, keeping the carriage perfectly level. Large movable supports on the floor of the carriage give perfect support to the boats, even if the sailing vessel should not be resting on its keel. You should really go and see this ingenious invention if you have never been there.

Just a word of caution. A little more than a kilometer along there is a rather narrow channel, Little Chute, which can have a fair current flowing. We have seen it close to 6 kts. Going down this cut requires some attentive steering, while returning the motor must be big enough and give you sufficient speed to allow you to make headway against the current. The distance through this narrow part is about 400 meters, slightly less than a kilometer (about 1300 ft.)

The final lock at Port Severn, and the gateway to Georgian Bay, has a drop of about 14 ft. It is a rather small lock and has little space to tie up, especially down below. The other issue often is the vicious current down below, which together with the wind, usually from the west or northwest, blowing in from the open Bay on sunny and clear days, calls for some careful control of the boat.

On a whole, it is a lovely trip, and the cruise on Georgian Bay is well worth it. Don't forget your charts. You will need them, and are required on board by law.

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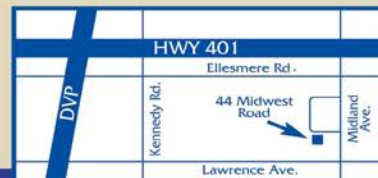
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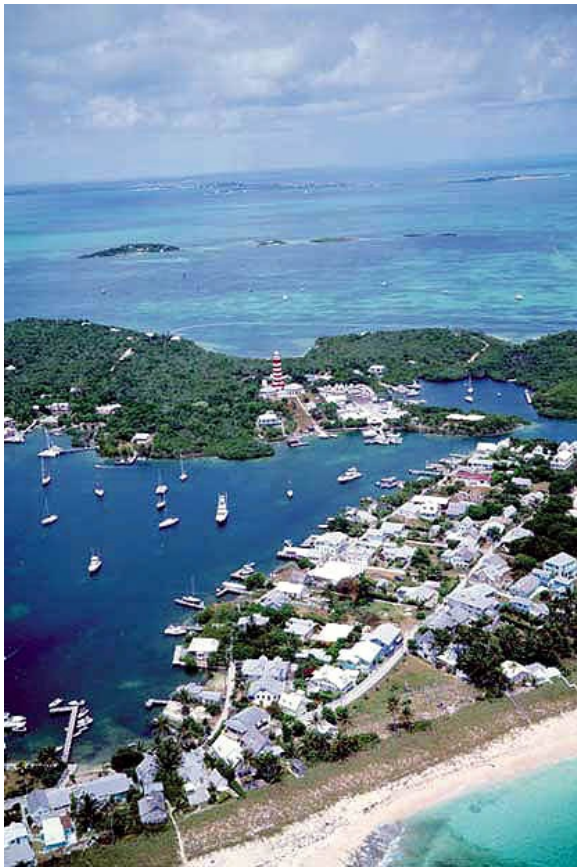


# ON THE ROCKS

By Roy Ham

Nature can be brutal and can present us with some life threatening challenges. We certainly did not expect the sort of treatment from the elements that we were put through. There were no warnings whatsoever. Still, I suppose it could have been worse. We could have lost our ship altogether, but we did not, and the sustained damage was more or less repaired. And, we both made it home safely after our ordeal.

Link (Robert Linkletter) is a former member of our club here, Sail Georgina, who moved to Nova Scotia a couple of years ago, together with his newly acquired yacht, a 38ft. Hughes, bought in Penetanguishene and shipped to his new home. Hoping to reach the Bahamas, he eventually sailed south into the intra coastal where I had joined him last year for two or three weeks cruising with him.

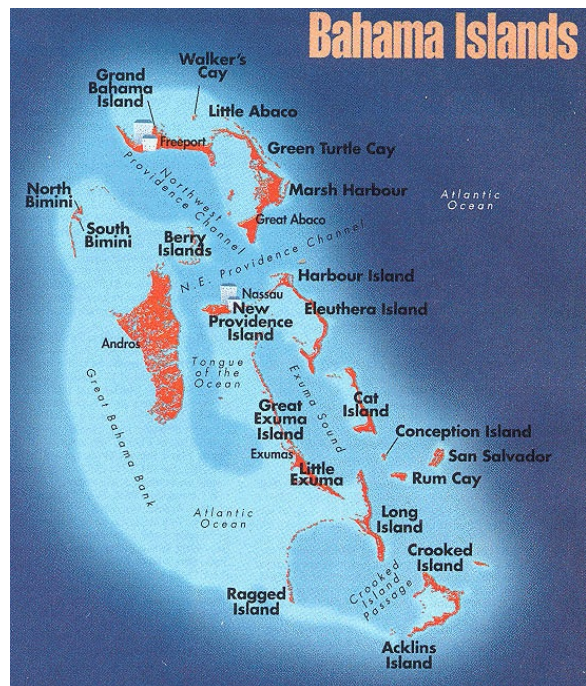


Marsh Harbour, Bahamas

This past January, therefore, was the second time to join Link for a trip in the south, a holiday truly to look forward to.

Since Link was already cruising down there, we exchanged a good number of text messages to determine the best and easiest location that was mutually agreeable for me to join up with him. In the end we decided upon Marsh Harbour, a busy tourist location and harbour in the Abaco region of the Bahamas.

That settled, I left Toronto Pearson Airport on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2016, boarding an American Airlines flight, and arriving at Marsh Harbour via Miami.





No luggage arrived. It seemed that, what with a change in the timing of the flight, my luggage had not accompanied me. Not a good omen.

Fortunately I was able to tell the airline at which marina Link's boat lay for the delivery of my luggage. The wind, I was told, was too strong for safe landings, so we waited, and waited . . . It took four days.

Finally, with my things safely on board, we left and sailed to Man-O-War Cay where we had our first taste of Bahamian anchoring. It proved to be very difficult. The Bahamian shelf is comprised of shale, covered with perhaps two feet of sand and some weeds, not very good holding ground. We spent a wearing night anchoring, re-anchoring and adjusting, even though we had two anchors out. The one was a seven and a half kilo Bruce, while the other was a more recent design, a twenty kilo one, which had a single pivoting fluke and a sort of roll bar on the opposite side. The latter anchor simply would not dig in. As a result we returned to Marsh Harbour, where we could get the tools to alter the anchor such that the fluke would be

permanently angled to make sure it would dig in. That done, we returned to Man-O-War Cay and tested the altered anchor with much better luck. This time it seemed to hold.

The entire Bahamian shelf has a mean depth at low tide of seven feet. Considering that the Hughes 38, *Link's Lady*, has a draft of 5'-11", we had to be very mindful wherever we went and watch our depth everywhere.

Reasonably confident that we had solved our anchoring issue, we left and set sail for Hope Town, on Elbow Cay, a very beautiful little town with an ancient still working light house. From it we had an excellent view of the whole area. The only problem was that the entrance to this lovely harbour was often less than six feet, and we grounded twice while trying to make our way out. In the end we had to wait for high tide when we plowed our way out through to deeper water.

From here we plotted a zig zag course, following the deepest channels, and heading south past Deep Sea Cay, Lynyard Cay, and on to Little Harbour. The latter is the home of the infamous Pete's Pub. Pete is famous as an artist, his foundry and his store.

Inevitably, trying to get into the harbour we ran aground and had to be assisted by two ribbies tugging and pushing to finally get us free. Afloat again, we managed to get into the harbour and found a mooring. In retrospect we thanked our lucky stars for having it, because for the next four days we had winds of thirty knots and more. Obviously we stayed put and had plenty of time to consider our next part of the cruise.

When the winds finally subsided, what with our 5'-11'draft, and a channel of just six feet, armed with good advice from the locals, we made it out and to somewhat deeper water.

Our plans were to sail south from here to Eleuthera and Spanish Wells. We estimated this to be a twelve hour journey and therefore we decided to hang back a while and anchor just outside of Little Harbour till



the morning. The plan was to leave at sun up and pass through the Ocean Gap between where we were located and Lynyard Cay.

Our trip south was excellent. We had good winds, plenty of sunshine, and just small waves. We also had along with us another fine helmsman to assist us, a very silent sort of fellow in the form of an auto-helm. He did a far finer job of steering the ship and keep it on course in the right direction that Link or I ever could.

We entered the Eleuthera chain through the gap between Royal and Russell Islands and anchored off Russell Island close to the harbour entrance of Spanish Wells. That night we had rather high winds, but the anchor held well. In the morning we entered the harbour and took a mooring at the east end. Over the next two days the winds remained very strong and we remained moored till the winds finally subsided on the third day.

Since it was our intention to continue in a southerly direction through the Current Gap, and since the winds seemed to have abated, we decided to leave the mooring and anchor outside the harbour at the same location where we had dropped anchor when we had arrived some days earlier. After setting our hook, and satisfied the boat was secure, we went back ashore to say good bye to the friends we had made at Budda's Bar and Restaurant.



Meanwhile the winds started to build again, and by the time we arrived back to our boat, they had increased to, what I estimated to be around fifteen to twenty Knots. In fact, what with the wind and the wave action, it became almost impossible for me to get from the dinghy into our boat.

Once on board we watched and took careful note of our position and remained doing so for a good hour before turning in.

The wind remained excessively high and it was obvious that the waves continued to build. At about 1:30 in the morning I got up for a head break, and decided to go to the cockpit to check our position. Our sight lines, a light on each side of the boat, were still in line, so I went back to my berth.

I had just dozed off, or so it seemed, that I became aware that the wind had become so violent that I thought it would rip our dodger right off the cockpit, and it was at about the same time that I felt our keel hit bottom. Our situation had become serious. I got up again and made my way to the cockpit once more to find that we were moving sideways and towards the shoreline. We were barely twenty feet from shore and its razor sharp rocks.

Desperate now, I yelled for Link who quickly became aware of our impending danger. Together we made a frantic attempt to save *Link's Lady*, Link at the bow pulling on the anchor chain trying to bring the bow around, and me at the rudder, with the motor at top speed, and the rudder hard over, trying as hard as we could to keep us off the rocks.

We might have succeeded but all our efforts were in vein when a large wave picked us up, and together with another gust of wind slammed us into the razor sharp rocks. The noise was deafening. The grinding on the rocks was horrendous. The water came rushing into the boat.

Somehow, the cockpit remained above the incoming water, so trying to save whatever items we could, we threw them in there. Down below the water was already up



to the top of the navigation table. Much of our possessions and equipment were already soaked. Up above, Link made an attempt to tie us off to shore fore and aft to keep us in place. Indicating just what a vicious location we were in, the rocks left Link with cuts on his hands and his legs.

Eventually, while it was still quite dark, the tide started to go down and with it some of the water in the cabin. With flash light, still working, we looked about the cabin to see if there was anything else we could rescue. Our search was rewarded by a most important find: two bottles of medicine, Rum and Vodka. With these we tried to get comfortable in the cockpit and had a drink.

The former, that of trying to get comfortable, was an unsolvable challenge. With the tide out, and the keel resting on the bottom, the boat lay on a bow down angle and with a 30 degree list to port side. We had no way of getting comfortable during our wait for dawn.

When dawn came, we took stock of our situation and tried to figure out how to get out of our predicament. Neither of our radios were working. Both our hand held unit and our fixed one were under water. To go across land for help from where we were was totally

impossible. The terrain of sharp rocks and dense thick bush made our way impassible.

Our stroke of luck came in the discovery of Link's cell phone which was dry and alive. We had a local magazine, and though quite wet, we found the ad of a local marina, complete with the telephone number, which we called for help. They eventually showed up and got us off safely and to solid ground.

Our rescuers set us up with Robert Roberts, the owner of a marine repair business, and who in this small community was the go-to guy for everything.

Robert took a trip out to our boat to assess the damage. It turned out that the hole was above the waterline so he devised a plan to retrieve *Link's Lady*.

Once the weather calmed down and improved, Robert and his crew waited for high tide and went out with two boats. They pumped out our boat and attached two lines to her, one to the top of the mast to get her to heel as much as they could, and the other to the bow to pull her off and move *Link's Lady* into deeper water. From there they towed her into the harbour and to the docks at Roberts' Marina.

Link and I were put up at a local motel,





just steps away from where our ship was docked. We spent the next day or two stripping everything we could from the boat, washed it all thoroughly, and let it dry in the sun.

I flew out on Thursday, February the fourth, six days after our ordeal. Link stayed behind to wait till repairs were completed. The hole in the hull was about twelve to fourteen inches in diameter, and there were numerous other gashes and smaller holes.

It all took a good while to get the job done. The boat and Link are now safely back in Nova Scotia.

*Editor's Note:* Roy pointed out that in the spring 2016 issue of Gam you will find an article by Dave, the skipper of BLISS II, who while at anchor just outside of Georgetown, Bahamas in January was hit by what was likely the same storm. Hit by a boat that broke loose up wind he sustained much damage to the stern ripping his pulpit apart and losing his brand new dinghy. Winds were recorded in excess of 100 knots. Many boats were damaged. One was reported to be a total loss.

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## THIS YEAR'S PHOTO GALLERY



Impromptu pot  
luck on the  
dock.



Jeff set his spinnaker.







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Sail past spring 2010



Fishing for lunch.  
Actually, the weeds at our  
harbour grow very well.



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## CRUISING NOTES

Our cruise last April was not a sailing cruise, but a cruise nevertheless, aboard the 135 meter long *Scenic Jade*, literally a floating five star hotel that plies the river Rijn between Amsterdam and Basel and back every summer. On this trip, her first of the 2016 season, she carried 169 passengers (guests was their terminology) seven nautical crew including the captain and the first mate, and forty three hotel crew, consisting of kitchen staff, the chef, cooks, etc., bar staff, servers, waiters, cabin girls and boys, our tour leader Kurt (an energetic young man from Antwerp, Belgium), his administrative staff, and what have you. All our comforts were looked after, except the weather. It was surprisingly cool, windy, and often rather wet.

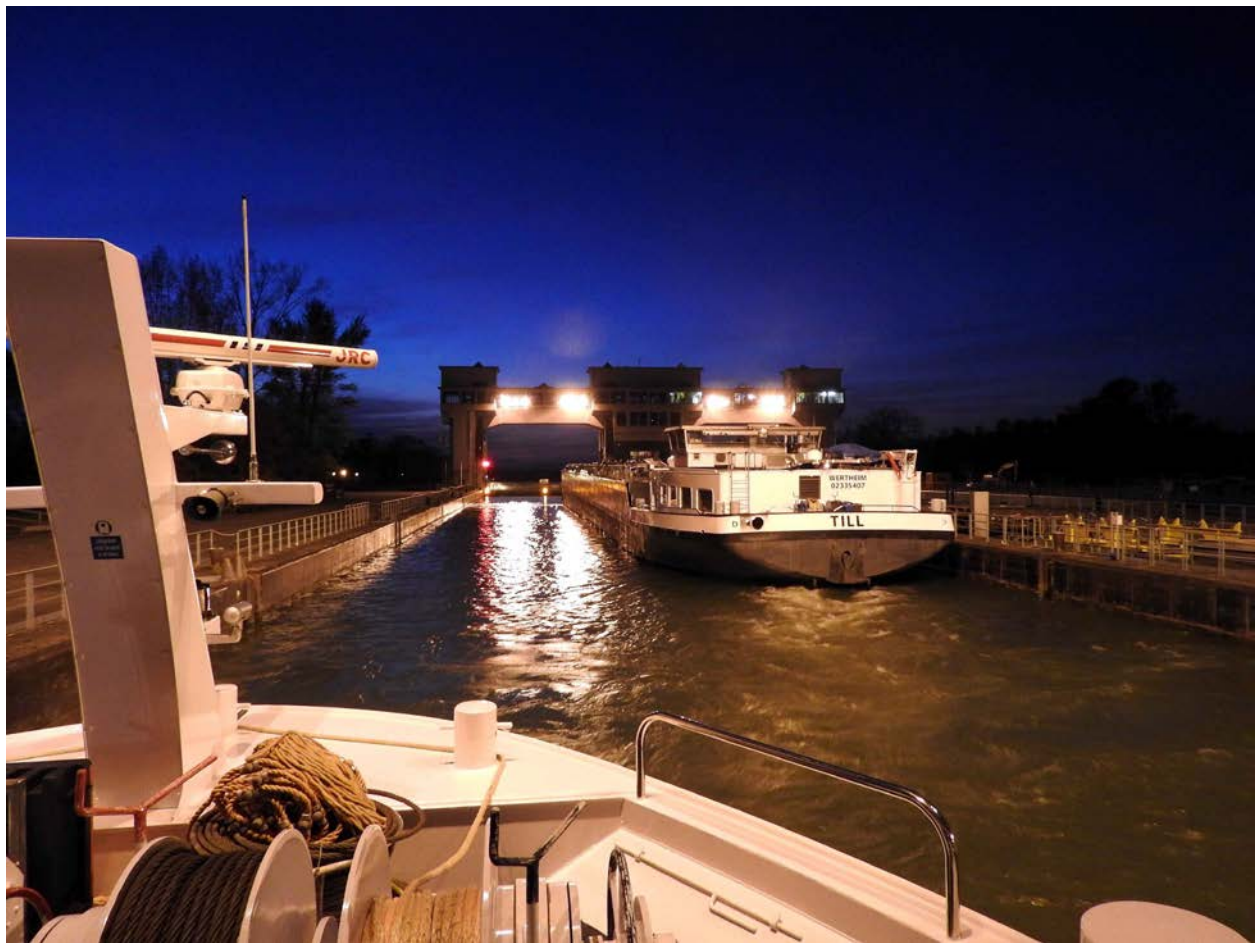
Our cabins (suites) were comfortable, though, as was the large indoor lounge located forward on the upper deck, complete with all inclusive drinks any time of the day, and the spacious dining room one deck below, where the meals, well . . . , the gourmet dinners prepared by our top chef, including such entrees as lobster tail, caviar, and baked Alaska for desert, could not just be called meals. It was definitely fine dining for each visit. Breakfast, (and lunch if so desired - a la carte was also offered) were self serve buffet where selections included just about anything one fancied. Our morning fare usually included a taste of smoked salmon.

It was so nice to return to our cabin after breakfast to find our bed made, bathroom tidied up and everything ship shape. Our cabin girl did a super job each day. Returning after super in the evening we would find our bed turned down, complete with a chocolate on our pillows, and a sheet of paper on at the foot of the bed, outlining our activities and excursion for the next day, together with such useful information as the predicted weather and current exchange rate for Swiss Francs, or the Euro, whichever applied. The Euro averaged at about \$1.44 Cad. The rate was also given for New Zealand and Australian dollars. We had a good number of guests from Australian and New Zealand on board. Interestingly the Canadian and Australian dollar were at par with each other during most of our time on board.

We decided to do the tour backwards, starting at Basil, to allow us a few days in Holland afterwards. We flew to Zurich where we spent a day or two before boarding the coach (arranged by the tour company) to collect us at the airport hotel and transport us to Basel where we embarked

our ship. On our last morning in Zurich we had time to walk along the Limmat River that runs through the city. Along the northern bank, where our hotel was located, was an impressive park dressed in spring time attire, and with the opportunity to stroll or bike for several miles. Some distance along the river shore line we came across the local yacht club, complete with extensive docks and a club house out on the water. Surprisingly most sailboats there were of humble size, some quite old and traditional, but well kept up. It was obvious, though, that on warmer days there would be much activity at the premisses. The river here was wider and extensive, and great for a day's sail.

Having boarded our cruise ship late in the afternoon, and welcomed with a glass of Champagne, and there after settled in to our quarters where our luggage had already arrived, we were quickly on our way. By supper the shoreline of the Rijn passed by at the steady pace of about ten knots and by dusk we negotiated our first of a number of locks. Being a novelty at this the early



part of our trip down the river, we spent a good while on the front deck into the evening watching the proceedings and taking photos. Unlike our locks on the Trent system, the gates were raised vertically and thereby restricting the height of the ships using the river. Of course, fixed bridges across the water way are also a factor. These considerations were the reason that the river cruise ships, and there are quite a large number of companies operating them now, are restricted to two

or three decks above the water line. In some cases, we were told, when the water level is up, the open air upper deck sun shade has to be removed to allow passage under the lower bridges. In fact, the water level of the river can be a serious concern. This spring, 2016, when, due to heavy rains the Seine in Paris threatened to overflow its banks, there were problems elsewhere as well. We were told that a couple, going on an European river cruise a few weeks after we returned to Canada, did most of their “river” travel by motor coach because of extensive flooding.



Along the way we met an amazing number of commercial shipping every day. The River Rijn continues to this day to be a major transportation highway for many industrial and commercial goods. Together with its locks, the river provides a transportation corridor all the way from Switzerland, France, and Germany into Holland, with access to the world via its deep sea ports. These commercial river vessels are long and flat, and often referred to as *rijnaken* or Rijn Arcs. They carry amazingly large loads, and not needing to account for excessive waves on the river, many show very little free board when loaded. Some now carry the modern containers, that are transferred on and off these ships at specialized container ports.



It has always been my impression that the Rijn Lands were an intensive industrial area, one of heavy industry, conveniently located there due to the advantage of being able to transport raw materials and finished products by water. Such has always been the most economical and opportune method to convey freight of many sorts.

I well remember on market day the low barges coming into the city past the back of our garden from the fields in the country side, and loaded with vegetables such as red cabbages (we lived along the *Oude Rijn*, part of the Rijn delta). Often these barges were “poled” rather than powered by an engine. The skipper had a long pole with a short cross piece on one end to fit his shoulder. He would walk with it to the bow of the barge, stick the other end of it into the water and into the bottom, and walk to the rear on the narrow walkway along the side of the boat, pushing it along and forward. His young son might be at the helm at the stern. This way they brought their produce to market. Often in the evening the rotten cabbages, that did not sell, would come floating along from the city and drift their way out to sea with the slow current, if there was any.

At the German part of the Rijn, though, industries and large commercial yards were a predominant feature along various stretches of the river. And along with them were the large cranes





and derricks of various sizes, some quite large. I took a number of pictures of these, mainly for the Meccano enthusiasts who build impressive models after the real thing.

We did a great deal of the “sailing” at night, and other than lights on shore passing us by, we did not see a great deal of the country side that we travelled through. Of course, the purpose of the Rijn cruise was not so much focused on the travelling part of the voyage, but rather the points of interest, the history, and attractions along the way. Oh, and shopping. It seems that at every port of call we were reminded that you could buy such and such, and to be sure to drop in at so and so’s to buy yourself those special mementos of the trip.

“Leave your men at Heinz’s Pup to enjoy a glass or two of our local beer, while you do the shopping, ladies,” we were told at the briefings before stepping ashore. All guided tours ended in an hour of so free time to browse in the stores and make your purchases.

Well, it is true that in spite of the cool windy weather, and the frequent wet weather, we saw a great deal during our daily excursions on shore. At most of our landings comfortable motor coaches awaited us to take us around, complete with well trained local guides who filled us up with the local history, and facts so numerous that we had most of them forgotten by the time we boarded our ship again. Often there was a choice of tours. At our landing at Strasbourg/Kehl my wife and I opted for the *“Guided tour of the Black Forest with a decent hike through the vineyards and a*

*tasting of Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte*". There we were also treated to sample of the local Kirch Likör. The latter they called schnaps, and of course we were all expected to buy a bottle or two. Of a forest we saw nothing. I suppose the trees are all gone now.

It is true that we saw a great number of vineyards, many along the southern facing slopes on both sides of the river and for many miles. Rijn wines, of course, are famous throughout and on our cruise we had many opportunities to sample such wines at lunch or dinner. Since it was just April when we toured the area, the grape vines were all carefully trimmed on their low fences, but already in leaf. Spring, of course, happens considerable earlier in western Europe than it does here, and all the trees were in leaf and much parks and gardens were in full bloom. In fact, arriving in Holland at the end of the month, we found most tulip fields much past their prime.



We tied up at such places as Mannheim, Heidelberg, Rüdesheim, and Koblenz where we took the cable car across the river to the large Ehrenbreitstein Fortress for beer and pretzels served for happy hour that evening before dinner on board, and on another day a coach tour along the Moselle Valley for a tour of Cochem and up to the magnificent Reichsburg Castle. Our city walking tour of Cologne (Köln) was very cold and windy, but the amazing twin towered Gothic Cathedral in the historic centre of the city was frankly stunning with its intricate filigree and sheer size.

We did spend an afternoon cruising along a section of the Rijn noted for its numerous ornate castles high up on the banks. Unfortunately we had much wind and frequent rain squalls, most unpleasant. You popped out on deck for a photo just briefly and often the rain obscured the view for a decent shot. With luck the sun would come out for a moment to compensate for all the missed opportunities. Many of the castles that overlooked the Rijn were of an ancient vintage, built for



defense or to indicate independent ownership of that particular region. Some exacted toll from passing ships, but others date to more recent times, built to satisfy the dreams and fancies of someone with too much money to spend.



Squatted low on the top deck of the *Scenic Jade* sat the wheelhouse. A number of us passengers spent some time there with the captain or the first mate, whoever was at the helm at the moment. Our captain was a Swedish gentleman. In fact the members of our crew came from at least a dozen or two different countries and spoke as many different languages. Frankly, I don't know how they all understood each other.

The ship, built in 2014, carried the latest in technology. There is no

wheel as such, but it is steered with a joy stick. Three other controllers, reminiscent of video games, govern the speed and direction of three separate props, the captain explained, two at the stern and one at the bow, each of which can change in any direction, 360 degrees. The ship was extremely maneuverable. The screens on the "dash board" included two radar displays, the GPS/course plotter, and a depth contour readout. The visit had been most interesting.

I found it somewhat regretful that the last segment of our cruise, trip into Holland, happened at night. We arrived in Amsterdam around breakfast. It would have been interesting to see the countryside on the way, to pass under the bridge of Nijmegen (A bridge Too Far) and to leave the river when entering the Amsterdam Rijn Canal for our final destination, the Veenkade of the inner harbour, not so far from the Central Station.

On the last day a canal tour of the city was one of the choices for the morning, or one could take a coach tour into the country north of the city. We chose the latter, and walked around Edam and Volendam in the pouring rain. You could buy real Dutch cheese at the cheese farm we visited at twice the price of the same product in the supermarkets where we did some shopping some days later with our cousins in the town where I was born. Of course that's not the same because the four or five little round cheeses don't come in that special souvenir bag in which they are sold at the tourist shop.

The village centres are truly old and quaint - I had forgotten - and very quiet because during the day everyone now works in the city - Amsterdam. Also, everyone now goes to the large shopping centres so very few of the little local shops are open any longer, except for the numerous tourist shops along the harbour walk, where you can buy an amazing array of Dutch souvenirs, dolls



in local costumes, windmills, things to eat and all sorts of trinkets and the like, all made in China (except the cheese).

Volendam originally was a small fishing port, harbouring smacks that plied the IJsselmeer. However, as a result of large part of it now drained and converted into polder lands for agriculture, there is no more fish to be caught. Most fishers, we were told, keep their fishing boats on the west side of the province and now ply their trade on the North Sea, the Dogger Banks for haring and the like. The one thing we noticed, though, and that was that the harbour was well utilized by pleasure craft, among which we saw many sail boats docked. In fact, where there was water in Holland there were sailboats, lots of them. Sailing is a most popular sport in the low countries and on a sunny weekend afternoon the lakes are full with sailing enthusiasts. Knowing the rules of the road is a useful thing what with all that congestion. I remember sailing on a small lake north of our city once many, many years ago, and dodging the other sail boats, marveling at the skill of the young man at the helm. How lucky were we with all that space on our Lake Simcoe.

Looking back now, yes, on a whole the weather was not pleasant, but that was to be expected for the month of April, but we saw a great deal and we would do it all over again. To finally cruise and see most of the entire length of the Rijn, along a tiny part of which I grew up so many years ago, in which I swam and on which I spent many happy hours in my canoe, was an amazing experience. We would do it all over again. It is a trip worth taking, even if it is not in our own sail boat.



Volendam, an old fishing boat now used to take tourists out for an hour's cruise on what is left of the inland sea, the former Zuider Zee.