



*Christie Cove decked out in her Walkpast regalia. Even the sun smiled on the event.*

## Closing out our cruising season with a bang

Literally – an unexpected but very appropriate bang following GYC Sailpast traditions including Don firing a cannon, members dutifully passing by to salute the Commodore on a *Christie Cove* decked out in celebratory flags flapping in the sunshine. And then the happy toasting of our Commodore. Couldn't have gone better.

This was a very happy ending to our sailing year, following a successful weeklong **Extreme Scream** cruise that attracted many participants and which, despite the iffy weather, was regarded as a huge success by all. **Doug, Rod and Dar, John D. and Robert** report on their experiences. The final **October Weekend Cruise and Walkpast** for the Commodore was also well attended and **Robert and Liz** reported on that. Thanks to you all. I'm sure many of you are keeping tabs on *Naida* but just in case you're not social media savvy, here are their next posts for you to enjoy. They post on both Predict Wind and Facebook so if you want to see their progress for yourselves check out <https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/Naida>.

And I'm really pleased to present three accounts of members' experiences installing and living with **Dinghy Davits: Geoff Stevenson, John Laing and Glen Mitchell** each discuss the hows and whys of their particular systems.

We had all looked forward to an in-person meeting this month, but that has to wait for one more month (at least). Staff Captain **Doug** has had to pivot (as they say) to accommodate these changes at the last minute so the Zoom meeting on Monday will feature a presentation by **Robert** on **battery life**: the bane of our existence and particularly tricky in the winter when sunshine is scarce. Nothing worse than charging and charging at anchor and always worried about whether you'll start or not. I'm looking forward to learning **How Low Can You Go?** Hope to see you all on Zoom tomorrow.

Suzanne Walker, Editor S/V *White Wolf*



## Message from our Commodore



Chris Stangroom,  
Commodore, S/V *Christie Cove*  
"Just Walk On By" ...

was the theme of the sunny  
Sunday morning at Snug Cove.

It was another **FIRST** for the GYC.

*Commodore's Message continued p.2*



# GULF SAILOR

## Executive Officers 2021

**Commodore:** Christie Stangroom  
*Christie Cove*

**Vice Com:** John Dixon  
*Tantramar*

**Fleet Captain:** Robert Sinkus  
*Reality*

**Staff Captain:** Doug MacLeod  
*Willpower*

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**Hon. Secretary:** Ken Buckley  
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*Beautiful Day*

**Past Com:** Darlyne Farrell  
*SawLeeAh*

**Hon. Editor:** Suzanne Walker  
*White Wolf*  
dandg@portal.ca

## Commodore's Message

Our tradition of Sailpast at Tiddly Cove signifying the opening of the boating season was only a distant memory this year. The opportunities were limited for our actual celebration due to Covid but we did not want to miss out! And so the **Walkpast**, to mark the end of our season on the water, came into being.

I have to say it was a lovely way to be honored as Commodore. Burgees waving, glasses of Mimosas raised, it was a sight to see from the deck of the *Christie Cove*.

Robert, our Fleet Captain, lead the parade. Ragnar, Chuck and Miles made sure there were Mimosas for all, Liz and Klaus made a bit of noise with instruments, the crew of *Forever Young* wore their whites, and smiles were the order of the day. Not to mention the weather gods took pity on us after a week of rain and the sun shone brilliantly for the event.

Thank you all for getting behind the idea and making it happen. I felt it ended the season with a flourish of GYC camaraderie!



Chris Stangroom  
S/V *Christie Cove*



## Staff Captain's Report

With the cancellation of in-person meetings in favour of a return to Zoom events, presentations planned for October and November have now been postponed.

As Dr. Henry says, "this is now, not for ever," and we hope that soon we will be able to enjoy engaging evenings together. First on the list will be John Laing's "Cape Horn: The History and the Danger" originally scheduled for October 18.

### House Batteries and their Usable Capacity and Life

To fill the gap left by John and Karen's absence, Robert has stepped in with a Zoom presentation: **How Low Can You Go?** A brief review of lead acid batteries and how deep is it okay to discharge them. General wisdom, oft quoted, asserts that you should not discharge your batteries by more than 50%. Is that really true? What happens if you discharge them more? What really causes the demise of most batteries?

Join the GYC Meeting on Monday October 18th to find out the answers to these and other questions that keep you awake at night (at least they might if your battery bank has died and your heater won't start :)).

### Looking ahead

Do you have an idea for a fifteen-minute presentation? There is a slot available after the November meeting and our AGM in January is usually followed by two or three mini-presentations. We're interested in a range of topics from DIY tips to exciting sailing stories.

Please contact me so we can discuss your presentation idea. (dmmacleod1833@telus.net)



Doug MacLeod,  
Staff Captain,  
S/V *Willpower*

# GULF SAILOR

## Extreme Scream: A Welcome Rendezvous at Montague

It was early afternoon on Saturday, September 25. We approached a mooring buoy at the marine park in Montague Harbour, planning to hunker down and wait out the wind and rain expected on Sunday.

A dinghy shot towards us carrying John from *Tantramar* and Glen from *Tango*. "There's room at the dock," John shouted over the outboard's roar. "The dock's better in a blow."

There was one spot left so my crew Bob and I quickly prepared to tie up. Waiting to help at the dock, were John from *Snap Shot* and his crew Arnie. We tossed them our lines. In minutes we were secure and ready to enjoy the last sunny day before a string of snotty weather.

It was a surprise to meet the Extreme Scream flotilla. They had planned to spend Friday night at Conover Cove on Wallace Island, but finding it full, motored on to Montague Harbour. I had anticipated a gloomy weather-bound stay but now in the company of several GYC boats, things looked a lot brighter.

Bob and I began our afternoon with a walk to the midden beach and around the Gray Peninsula. The campground buzzed with families and children. A group of boys took turns pushing one another in a baby buggy and spilling the passenger. Other noisy, excited children ran or rode bikes on the paths. Several groups lounged along the midden shore, lazily soaking in the warmth of this unexpected September beach day. Some even went for a swim.

At 17:00, the GYC gang got together for happy hour on the midden beach. The view up Trincomali Channel, towards Wallace and Saltspring Islands and beyond remains one of my favourites. John and Karen from *Spiritus II*, Rod and Dar from *SawLeeAh*, both at anchor, and Robert from *Reality*, a late arrival, joined the original four boats. It was Karen Laing's birthday so the naturally exuberant party took on an extra layer of celebration.

On Sunday a cold rain showed up as promised. The dark mood that normally hangs over me on weather-bound days was chased away by the company of GYC'rs. We were able to get a walk in before the worst weather struck. After that, even relentless rain didn't stop us socializing.

For happy hour on Sunday we squeezed, shoulder to shoulder into *Tango's* warm and ample salon. Outside, the wind sent angry cat's paws skidding across the water and rain pounded our little vessels. But inside, talk grew louder as jokes were told and stories shared. Laughter filled the cabin.



Doug MacLeod,  
Staff Captain,  
S/V Willpower

## Most of the Fleet Heads to Conover to Wait Out the Storm

*SawLeeAh* visited Port Browning after spending three nights at anchor in Montague Harbour and visiting with other Extreme Scream friends.

Over happy hours we discussed plans for morning walks the following day and for our next destination. We were the last to leave the harbour and sailed south through Navy Channel into Plumper Sound. Like everyone else, we sailed all the way and were nearly always close hauled – a lot of tacking! Approaching Razor Point at the entrance to Port Browning, we were lifted to an easier heading, but as the lift came, so did the wind die. The trip finished with a quiet motor up to the marina at the head of the Port.

Overnight at a marina gave us access to a restaurant dinner and a recharge of our house batteries. Both were good. The main docks have been recently replaced with neat modern electric outlets on the main dock at the head of each finger. Each box for



The walking group in Conover.

the electrics had a small but adequate light making for a safe and easy return to the boat in the darkness after dinner was done. The food was enjoyed by all. A highlight, for Rod, was the seared tuna poke with aloe sauce and cold slaw.

One night in a marina was enough for most and all but one of the boats retraced our route North through Navy channel and on past Montague Harbour to Conover Cove. Rob on *Reality* had his heart set on a hot tub at Poet's Cove, just around the corner so headed there.

It was our first time in Conover Cove. Our stay was enhanced by having John Dixon, who loves the little island, its trails and its history, as the fleet's tour guide. We all made the walk to the north end of the island and to the south end on another day. The weather rained on and off, and we had strong winds over one night. As the wind bent the tree tops and there were white caps outside the cove, we felt snug and safe.



Dar Farrell and Rod Caple  
S/V SawLeeAh

Extreme Scream continued on p.4



# GULF SAILOR

## Conover Cove: A Favourite Place in the Gulf Islands

After Montague and Port Browning four participants in our little flotilla (*SawLeeAh*, *Snap Shot*, *Tango* and *Tantramar*) spent two cozy nights in Conover Cove.

Some folks are reluctant to enter this small cove on the west side of Wallace Island due to concerns about the depth. Over the years I have observed that the tide height in Fulford (the closest tide station) is the same as what is under the keel of *Tantramar* when crossing the entrance reef. For example, if the prediction for Fulford is 2 M then that is how much water will be below the keel when entering Conover Cove. It turns out that during the time we were in Conover Cove the height of tide in Fulford never went below 1 M and that was at night.

Conover Cove is one of my favourite places in the Gulf Islands and this is because it has so much to offer. There is a dock that can accommodate five or six boats, good (but limited) anchorage with stern tie opportunities, lovely walking trails and the island has a deep history. All of Wallace Island is a Marine Park with the exception of a few private properties on the east side of Princess Cove.



John Dixon,  
S/V *Tantramar*



One of the reasons we wanted to spend some time in Conover Cove was that it is well protected from strong winds and there was a gale warning issued for Georgia Strait. As it turned out the breeze got up to 40 Knts at Sisters Island with gusts to 48 Knts. We experienced only moderate breeze. Day one we walked to Picnic Point for a look-see and to stretch our legs a bit. On the second day we all made it to Chivers Point (some 10,000 steps). Along the way we saw some of the remaining structures left by the cove's namesake, David Conover, a few abandoned and decaying vehicles, the Conover bomb shelter (he was an American and lived there during the cold war), the field that is slowly being repossessed by the forest and of course the spectacular surroundings.

## Fleet Captain Rob Seeks a Different Port in the Storm

*Reality* departed Port Browning with visions of hot tub soaks in his head en route to Poet's Cove. What he encountered there, however, did not live up to expectations and was too unsettling to stay awhile.

There was a forecast for 30 plus knots of wind in the Strait from the SW for the next day, with conditions getting much better each day after. Our fleet agreed we would likely spend two days at our next destination. Departing Port Browning, the bulk of our fleet headed north for the protection of Conover Cove, and closer to Ladysmith, our final destination prior to returning across the Strait.

I, however, had really wanted to get to Poet's Cove in Bedwell Harbour. Poet's Cove had several draws for me: they had previously advertised great winter deals, but I was never able to make it there from Point Roberts. My Alma Mater, U of Waterloo Engineering Society, ran a pub on campus called POET'S Pub: "Piss On Everything, Tomorrow's Saturday". And most of all, in the shoulder season, the rates were only \$1.65 per foot with free access to the heated pool and hot tub (which are open all year). Plus, I figured with the SW winds, I'd only see 24 knots on my stern headed northward back to Conover Cove – which would make for a fun sail.



Robert Sinkus,  
Fleet Captain,  
S/V *Reality*

### Poet's Cove and a Close Call with Something Sinister

So Tuesday morning I headed south into the intermittent winds, sailing slowly in the sunshine towards the south end of Plumper Sound into Boundary Pass. Eventually the winds filled in, and *Reality* was sailing at good speed again. As I began to enter Bedwell Harbour, I saw John's message on our WhatsApp flotilla chat that the winds were now forecast to be 45 knots SW in the Strait. That seemed to indicate I would likely be spending two nights at Poet's Cove, enjoying myself in the hot tub, and have a nice sail north on Thursday to Ladysmith.

After I arrived and had filled up with fuel I realized that it looked like I was the only marina guest there. I also noticed that it was a really long way to shore and thought about how very long that walk would feel...in a wet bathing suit. I investigated the beautiful pool and inviting hot tub that I would have all to myself, and unexplainably shivered. Something reminded me of a movie about another resort with no guests: *The Shining* and as I tried to imagine how nice the hot tub and pool would feel, I couldn't shake the eerie feeling. I have to confess it creeped me out.

*Extreme Scream continued on p.5*

# GULF SAILOR

*Extreme Scream continued from p.4*

It dawned on me that I could be completely and utterly alone for a day and a half, but then I suddenly remembered I had two friends I'd really love to catch up with who live close to Genoa Bay. A quick call confirmed they were home so I headed back out through Swanson Channel and enjoyed a nice sail under a lovely sunny blue sky.

Rounding Moresby Island, the wind shifted more from the southwest to right on the nose, so I started the iron gennie, furling the jib, and leaving the main up, continued towards Satellite Channel. The wind built to 30 knots apparent, but the waves were still quite new and small. As I made my way towards Cape Keppel, however, they began building quickly and splashing over the dodger. I regretted leaving the main up, as the shifting winds made *Reality* heel sharply but I didn't feel like going up on deck with the waves coming over the bow. This was certainly the extremest scream of the cruise so far!

Passing the corner of Saltspring, the winds eased to a more comfortable 20-24 knots and I was able to sail again to the entrance of Genoa Bay. Safely docked I went to the Café and ordered some of Glen's highly recommended coconut prawns – they were delicious, as were the calamari I had afterwards. My guests Lloyd and Jackie turned up with a very delicious charcuterie plate which went well with my red wine, and we barely had room left for the tuna tataki I prepared on the bbq. Dessert was Leclerc chocolate covered wafers with a marshmallow on top melted with a butane torch as per Anne and Ken's video. Delicious! And it was great to catch up with my friends. I didn't regret missing the hottub experience at all.

The next day was also spent with friends and I slept well to the sound of the pounding rain which, I noted the next morning, had thoroughly rinsed off a lot of the salt☺. I headed north through Sansum Narrows en route to Ladysmith and stopped in at Maple Bay Marina to fill my tank with almost 8 L. I pondered the value of installing a second tank, as *Reality's* 11 gallon tank is quite small, and it would be a relief to not worry about always having to keep it full, especially when using the diesel heater at night.

## Orca's a Bit Close for Comfort

Heading north from Bird's Eye Cove towards the narrows before Stuart channel, I saw several dorsal fins. Orca! and at once a fin began to rise from the water aimed right at me. It kept rising and rising, until it was about 5 feet tall, and then the body of the orca surfaced as well. Truly impressive at first, and then as the orca appeared aimed right at me – not just the boat, but right at me! – it felt quite intimidating. Then it abruptly turned under the water surfacing well off to my port. For about an hour or so, I watched the whales, took several pics, thought of continuing on, and saw them again and again. They seemed to be spread out and moving around the northwest corner of Bird's Eye Cove in a somewhat random direction, until they finally appeared to be following the wide southern shore, going SE towards Sansum Narrows.



I headed north towards Ladysmith, and saw some sails rounding Penelakut which turned out to be the rest of the fleet on their way from Conover.

## The Fleet Reunited...on to Ladysmith

After two nights in Conover Cove *SawLeeAh* headed for Ladysmith sailing the dog-legged route entirely on port tack, except for one brief gybe to starboard when we'd almost reached Ladysmith. The wind was steady and enough to move at a pleasant pace.

At Ladysmith we visited with our fleet buddies and with Adele and Bruce and Karen and John who came by car from their nearby homes. We were also joined by our newest member, Martin. Our next stop? Bowen Island and, for us, that was a motor trip.



Dar and Rod again



## Happy Hour at Ladysmith and an Extreme Return to Bowen

Our new member Martin Suo had already arrived the day before on his Vancouver 27 *Astera* to visit family, and John, Glen and I went for a shopping tour of the town. On the dock under the tent (that the LMS had left up just for us thanks to Bruce) we met up for Happy Hour with Bruce and Adele, John and Karen, Rod and Dar, Martin, Glen, John Dixon, Jon Clode and his guest Arnie.

I motored out a little early Friday for Bowen, hoping to catch the winds in the Strait before they died and ride the flood current northward. I went through Gabriola Pass on an uneventful 4 knot flood. As I entered the Strait by the Flat Top islands there was about 10 knots of wind: enough to sail on a nice reach. The winds gradually eased, so I put up my gennaker and had fun playing with the trim for several hours, keeping the leading edge just breaking for maximum speed.



Robert again

*Extreme Scream continued on p.6*



# GULF SAILOR

*Extreme Scream continued from p.5*

In the distance, I saw several whale watching boats stopped ahead of me. After a while, I heard a whoosh behind me, and saw the huge head of a Steller sea lion behind my stern looking back at me. Getting closer to the whale watching boats, I saw the two humpbacks they had been watching. They surfaced a ways ahead of me and I took several pics. With the kite up, *Reality* kept moving at about 4 knots with the gennaker up, so the next time I saw them, they were off my stern, and I kept going for Bowen.

I thought how lucky I had been. Two days earlier, I hadn't seen any whales all year, and in the last two days, I saw orca, humpies and a sea lion! The sea life viewing was extreme!

As I passed English Bay, the winds built, and *Reality* was now moving at 5 knots. As I passed the southern tip of Bowen, the winds picked up even more. *Reality* was going a nice 6+ knots. The winds kept increasing: over 14 knots, then 16. When the wind hit 18 knots. I was thinking I should take the kite down soon. The wind shifted, so I had to gybe my main, flying the kite wing on wing. It took me a minute to get the sails working right, and then the wind dropped to almost zero – in perfect time for me to drop the kite, pack it back in the Turtle, and get the boat ready to dock at Snug.

## Bowen Island Weekend and Walkpast for our Commodore

By the time I arrived at Snug Cove, *Christie Cove* was already decorated with flags flying from her bow, all the way up her mast, and then back down to her stern.



Many of the Extreme Scream participants were at Bowen, along with others who joined in for the occasion: *Moondance*, *Windstrel*, *Willpower*, *SawLeeAh*, *Moondance*, *Tantramar*, *Boqueron*, *Contender*, *Reality*, *Forever Young*, *White Wolf*, *Snap Shot*, *Astera*.

In the late afternoon members mustered on the lawn and traded stories before dinner at Doc Morgan's where we heard that the pub would be closed the next day and night for the wedding of the owner's daughter.



Robert Sinkus,  
Fleet Captain,  
S/V Reality



Dinner at Doc Morgans took place in the covered area of their outdoor patio – it was cold, even with the gas fires and blankets. Summer was over but we kept forgetting that.

Saturday, many of us gathered to walk up to Killarney Lake. We saw the beaver lodges, but as it was a little late in the day we headed back home.

Martin showed me around his Vancouver 27 and all the work he had done on her. He also gave me a fillet of the salmon he had caught the day before by Porlier Pass along with directions on how to prepare it for our HappyHour.





# GULF SAILOR

## Happy Hour in the Tower

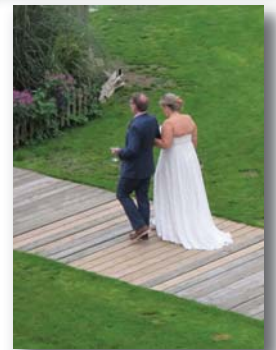
We had the Happy Hour up in the tower and Don was recruited to fire a cannon at the magical moment in the wedding on a signal from Suzanne who waited, and waited, and waited and watched for the signal from the lawn below. I got to hold a wind break to protect the flame of Don's matches. After several false starts and Laura being dive bombed by an ardent



hummingbird, Don lit the cannon which boomed and shot out bits of burning paper. It was all very dramatic but I wonder if the bride and groom even noticed.



*Being up in the Tower we had a fantastic vantage point from which to view the festivities and the cannon lighting. Don finally got the big bang we all hoped for and it didn't disappoint.*



## Then it was time for Walkpast

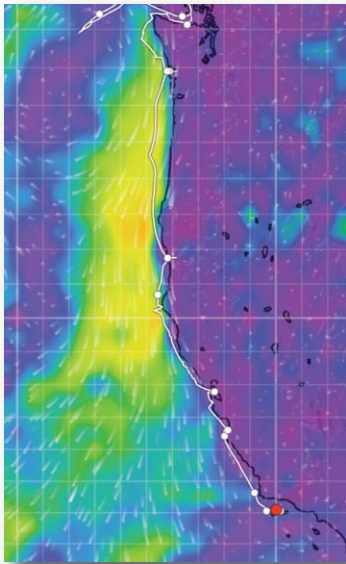
The next morning I, as Fleet Captain, prepared to lead our large fleet and we

mustered around on the dock. More members had arrived on the ferry including Wolf, Judy, Pat, Rui, and Terry. I warned them about the dangers of currents and winds (or was it just to make sure they didn't knock the table with the OJ and Champers on it). Most had their burgees with them. At 10:30, I called out "Fire in the Hole!", and Don yelled "Boom". And with that, the walking fleet saluted Commodore Chris. We walked passed her boat on the dock waving burgees and Canadian flags. Chris looked even more resplendent than the gleaming *Christie Cove*. Many commented on her smart uniform, and especially her captain's hat adorned with many genuine precious jewels (I heard she got them wholesale because of her jewellery connections). The Mimosas were handed out, Chris gave a rousing speech, and there were smiles all round. I am pleased to report that there were no collisions (or even close calls for that matter) and to declare, categorically, that our first ever Walkpast was a complete success.





# GULF SAILOR



## Naida Well Underway

If you haven't kept track of *Naida's* progress, here are all their posts from where we left off in the last newsletter: waiting out a gale in Crescent City.

You can follow them on their adventure here:

<https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/Naida>

And here are posts of their journey so far:

**Do we stay or do we go?:** Thu Sep 16 2021

This is a decision that we will have to make often. We have been watching the weather closely to see when to move further south. Our next likely destination is Bodega Bay,

about 50 nm north of San Francisco. It was looking like leaving late this afternoon was a good option as the strong winds would be abating overnight and we'd be able to sail at least half of the way to Bodega Bay. Leaving tomorrow morning looked like we would have to motor most of the way. The forecast calls for winds from the SE to come in next, which would be on our nose, so we'd have to wait for that to move through before the next opportunity to leave occurred.

Our friends Rob and Chris on *Azura Kai* and Cory and Lori on *Vortice* came in to the marina this afternoon and they both reported winds and waves larger than forecast and not abating as predicted. In a final check of the weather we also realized the waves would be too much abeam for the beginning of the trip, this could cause the boat to roll from side to side and be very uncomfortable. As Behan Gifford on *Sailing Totem* says "misery is optional", so we decided to stay put here in Crescent City. Probably a good decision as the winds have piped up here in the marina to 20 kts, gusting to 25.

We'd got our boat bruises repaired in anticipation of leaving. Our rigid boomvang is removed and stored until we can get a new mounting bracket. The tackle from the vang was taken off and rigged between the mast ring and boom so we still have the ability to pull the boom down. This is the critical function of the vang as it allows us to flatten the sail which depowers it in strong winds. The other function the rigid vang performs is to hold the boom up when the sail is lowered. We don't have this function anymore but we do have a topping lift that holds up the boom. Redundancy is great.

**On our way again:** Mon Sep 20 2021

After five days in harbour the weather has improved and made it favourable to head further south. Our route plan is for San Francisco but we will see. The winds are good today but are forecast to die tonight which will mean motoring the rest of the way. The seas are high now, but not so uncomfortable, and are also forecast to die down tomorrow morning. The round-

ing of Cape Mendocino will hopefully be uneventful.

There are three markers for the trip from the Pacific Northwest to Mexico (ok, four if you include rounding Cape Flattery at the beginning); rounding Cape Mendocino, entering San Francisco under the Golden Gate Bridge, and rounding Cape Concepcion. Cape Mendocino is known for strong winds and large waves. San Francisco is known for the iconic Bridge along with strong currents and heavy traffic but is a "must see" site. Cape Concepcion is the turning point, both physically and metaphorically. The coast turns eastward, the weather and sailing conditions improve, and sailors start to relax and enjoy themselves - the worst should be over. We are looking forward to San Francisco and some exploring. We are really looking forward to warm weather and calmer sailing after Cape Concepcion.

**Golden Gate Bridge Arrival:**

Wed Sep 22 2021

There was only wind for the first 12 hours after leaving Crescent City and then we had to motor rounding Cape Mendocino and most of the rest of the passage to San Francisco. There was heavy fog upon our arrival in Bonita channel coming in to San Francisco Harbour and many fish boats which we wound



*Naida continued on p.9*



# GULF SAILOR



*Naida continued from p.8*

our way around using our radar to guide us in. It was exhilarating to have achieved this milestone for our offshore cruising!! The fog lifted as we progressed into the Harbour so we could get some photos of the bridge. The wind also picked up, and were it not for the exhausted crew from the 2.5 day passage, we might have put the sails up to sail in the famed San Francisco harbour. We were mildly tempted when one of the Oracle America's Cup sailboats went by, presumably taking sightseers out.

Our buddy boat *Azura Kai* was about an hour ahead of us and *Vortice* about four hours behind, having experienced a break with their gooseneck before rounding Cape Mendocino. *Azura Kai* anchored in the Aquatic Park and met up with a few other offshore Cruisers also at anchor. We headed a little further to South Beach Harbour Marina. *Vortice* joined us there later in the afternoon. Anne fortuitously met the Vice Commodore of the South Beach Yacht Club who offered some sightseeing tips, and even better – the password to their wifi. The yacht club coexists with the city marina so in principal has nothing to do with transients like us. However, Norman, the Vice Commodore, was pleased to take us under his wing. We were invited to join some of their members at their Friday night happy hour, and they shared some of the highlights of the city for us to explore during our sightseeing.

## Exploring San Francisco: Sun Sep 26 2021

The Big Bus tour of San Francisco was our starting point for seeing the city, and we followed SBYC Vice-Commodore Norman's advice and visited Mission Dolores to learn about the true history of the city – founded as one of a series of missions along the coast of California in the 1700s by Spanish Franciscan monks who came north from Mexico. The Mexicans had a presence along the coast of California as early as the 1500s since the trade winds brought their ships returning from the orient as far north as Cape Mendocino. It's interesting to reflect on the trading on the east coast of Canada with Europe while trade on the west coast was with the Orient. Three years ago when we toured Gwaii Hanaas we learned about how the Haida voyaged in their canoes down the coast to Mexico in the 1700s. It was a really small world even that long ago.

The next day we walked through Chinatown and had a great lunch at one of the restaurants recommended by Wendy at the SBYC. We still needed to go to Fisherman's Wharf and have the clam chowder so that was the following day's outing. On our way back we cut

through the old city and stopped at the AT&T flagship store to do something about mobile data. We'd thought we'd survive on roaming from our home cell plan along with free wifi but even with the access to the SBYC wifi kindly given us we found this far too limiting. We need internet access for planning, booking marinas (anchoring options are slim on the California coast), and weather monitoring. Our satellite connection is vital for weather and email when otherwise disconnected but is of no use to access websites. At the AT&T store we bought a hotspot device and a data plan with 100GB for about the same as we'd pay Telus to roam with 1GB. When we



get to Mexico we can get a Mexican plan, which we'll research with all the data we currently have!

## Monterey bound: Thu Sep 30 2021

Although we would have liked to spend

more time exploring San Francisco Bay and up the delta to the Sacramento River, our mid October family wedding commitment in San Diego kept us on a southbound course. We spent two nights at anchor at Pillar Point about four hours south of San Francisco, waiting out gale force winds before heading south to Monterey.

We ventured out before the 2.5-3m waves had abated and were rewarded with sufficient wind to take us in to Monterey in one very long day of sailing. We surfed down waves at 8-9 knots and had a comfortable sail. The high point of the trip was

## Whales Bubble Feeding

The whales dive down below a school of prey, and slowly swim in a ring around them blowing bubbles in a circular motion forming a net. The rising ring of bubbles forms a column that traps the fish. On the surface you will actually see a circle of bubbles form as the whales move in this spiral formation.

The school of prey are forced towards the surface and into the centre of this circle. Then, working together, the feeding calls begin – long hollow calls followed by higher pitched squeals – and other whales in the group start swimming up through the bubble cylinder to feed.



*Naida continued on p.10*



# GULF SAILOR



*Naida continued from p.9*

witnessing humpback whales bubble-net feeding. We saw seals leaping about in churning water some distance away and then a few hours later it occurred again, this time much closer to the boat with the whales visible and many birds circling overhead. It was only a few days later when speaking to staff at the Monterey Aquarium that we realized this was humpback whales bubble-net feeding where the seals were not being hunted but instead were taking advantage of feeding on the plentiful fish brought to the surface. Seagulls hovered overhead to catch any remnants. How wonderful to witness pelagic life in action!

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## Planning is time consuming!: Sun Oct 03 2021

We have a few commitments as we travel which dictate a bit of when we need to be where. They say that you should never commit to being in a certain place at a certain time when cruising as it can lead to making bad weather decisions. The mantra is that you can commit to being somewhere or sometime but not both. Consequently, we are trying to leave ourselves lots of time to make the hops we need to make.

Potentially complicating our planning is the recent oil spill off the coast of Los Angeles. Some harbours are now closed which may have a spill-over effect of causing other cruisers to crowd into the same marinas we need to make our trip to San Diego. We think we've worked out a plan to stay in the Channel Islands and out of the nasty wind forecast for the weekend and next week, then make the jump to San Diego in calm conditions.

We have a family wedding in San Diego in mid October, then we have my Dad's 90th birthday in Ontario in late December, then we will visit with my Aunt in Nuevo Vallarta in January. It was a good thing we were able to get ourselves a good mobile data plan as Anne has spent considerable time organizing marinas so we can be in the right place at the right time. Even the shorter term planning of where we want to be in the next day or two is significantly improved with internet access.

We will be in San Diego October 14th to October 20th. Prior to that we will be in the Channel Islands. We then head to Ensenada for a few days

where we will check in to Mexico. We'll then bide our time in northern Mexico until early November, awaiting the end of hurricane season, when we will, over the next two months, make our way down the Baja and into the Sea of Cortez spending time exploring and swimming in the warm waters off Cabo Pulmo and La Paz. Our next commitment is to be in La Cruz for December 13th so we can leave the boat, get a Covid antigen test, and fly to Vancouver and on to Ontario. We will return to Mexico January 13th to move the boat to Nuevo Vallarta January 14th to visit my Aunt Ruth. As an added bonus my sister and her partner will also be there. After that whirlwind we have no schedule...

## San Miguel Island: Mon Oct 04 2021

This is the first of the Channel Islands as we head south. It is also around Point Concepcion (which in an earlier post I mistakenly referred to as Cape Concepcion) where things are reputed to be easier and warmer.

The sail from Monterey to San Miguel was actually a "motor". We didn't have the luxury of waiting for wind as the forecast showed no wind for most of the week and then way too much wind. It was also an awkward distance requiring a late afternoon departure from Monterey in order to arrive two days later in the morning. It is never a good plan to arrive in the dark, though we spent almost the whole trip in pretty thick fog with visibility less than a mile. Fortunately there is little traffic along this coast at this time of year and no crab/lobster/prawn traps to worry about. The fog cleared in the wee hours of the morning as we approached San Miguel Island so entering the anchorage was fine. The really nice thing about being in the Channel Islands is that we get to anchor! :slight\_smile: In BC we generally prefer to anchor but coming down the coast the anchoring is sketchy. Many do anchor, and I'm sure we could have also but we took the easy way and mostly stayed in marinas.

San Miguel is our first taste of the southern California/Mexican landscape, and it is definitely warmer. We anchored in Cuyler Harbour where you are allowed to go ashore on the beach and to hike up to the ranger station. You are not allowed to disturb the sea lions on the beach though but luckily they left enough beach for us go ashore. This was also another



*Our first beach landing in surf. We mostly stayed dry on the landing. Still need to launch...*

*Someone commented on the sailing ham radio net that Ken tunes in to, that weather systems – with strong northwestern winds around Point Concepcion don't often allow boats to moor on San Miguel. So we've lucked out. Both the landing and launching made for damp seats in the kayak. The dry bags were certainly a good idea, and next time we'll wear quick dry clothes. We made good use of the cockpit shower on our return to the boat.*

*Naida continued on p.11*



# GULF SAILOR



*Naida continued from p.10*

first for us, going ashore when there is surf.

We decided to take the inflatable double kayak ashore rather than trying to land the dinghy. We

didn't plan our landing quite as well as could have. We were distracted looking at the cliffside as we approached the beach and just kept paddling. We then realized we

were in the surf and had to commit to landing. Anne thinks we didn't get too wet but she was sitting in the front when the wave broke over the back... The secret to a good landing is apparently to watch and count the waves as they come in sets with a short lull in between. The idea is to catch the last wave in the set so you have time to hop out and pull your craft up out of their way of the next wave.

The landscape looks underwhelming when at anchor but was well worth a visit. The variety and colour of the vegetation only becomes apparent when walking the trails. Considerable time and effort over the last 30-40 years has been expended to restore the islands to their natural state. For 150 years settlers had established settlements and brought livestock that ended wiping out the local flora and fauna and eventually feral pigs and sheep grazed all the vegetation. The attention given to re-establishing and preserving the natural habitat is impressive, and we are fortunate to be able to experience it first hand.

## **Santa Cruz Island: Wed Oct 06 2021**

Our permit to visit Santa Cruz Island came through last night



*A lazy sail making our way to Santa Cruz Island off in the distance.*

so today we made our long trip here from last night's anchorage at Santa Rosa Island. OK, it wasn't a long trip, only about 12nm but we sailed very very slowly. We had two motivations for moving slowly, the first is being lazy and not wanting to bother putting up the mainsail and rigging the preventer etc. and the second was to prolong the time we had a reasonable cell signal.

We were trying to book flights for our trips to Vancouver and

Toronto and the reception at Santa Rosa Island was intermittent causing the booking webpage to hang.

It was kind of pleasant not to be in a hurry and just drift along at 3 kts with the foresail. Something we would never do back home when we are often trying to hit slack tide somewhere or want to get to an anchorage before it is too crowded. We've also started to motor much slower than previously, primarily to conserve fuel, but also for timing of passages to arrive in daylight.

We are anchored in Cueva Valdez tonight and plan to hop



*Tonight's anchorage in Cueva Valdez Bay on Santa Cruz. Exploring caves with the dinghy is next on the agenda.*

in the dinghy early tomorrow morning to go explore the painted cave. This is supposed to be the largest marine cave in the world, stretching 1200 feet, though only 600 feet has enough headroom to be navigable. I'm guessing that'll be far enough but we hope to find out tomorrow morning. A strong flash light is recommended, and we'll take a couple of head lamps as backup. As long as the sea stays calm and we can run the 2nm to the cave in the dinghy we should be good.

## **Painted Cave, Santa Cruz Island: Thu Oct 07 2021**

Well, 600 feet was more than enough!

The seas were pretty calm this morning with little chop and a swell that was generally less than a metre. After breakfast we donned rain gear and hopped in the dinghy. The rain gear was not for rain, though it is overcast today, but for any chop that comes up to make the dinghy ride wet. As it was we stayed completely dry.

The entrance to the painted cave is reasonably obvious as it is quite tall though there is nothing to suggest it is so different from many other similar openings in the cliff faces of these islands. As you enter the cave the swell becomes a little more pronounced as it is confined in the cave, then you start to hear an ominous rumble that comes from deep inside the cave when the swell crashes against the back. It is super eerie, especially when combined with some sea lion barking. Our headlights and flashlight were not a lot of use, the

*Naida continued on p.14*



# GULF SAILOR

## Geoff's Dinghy Davit System on *Taeko IV*

Perhaps my dinghy davit system will be of interest to some of you. In 2008 I designed a system that would work for *Taeko IV*. I had the components made although I bought cradles from another davit system.

I wanted a transverse transom elevated dinghy cradle. The issue was that all the available products located the dinghy too close to the waterline so that when the boat heeled the end of the dinghy on the low side dipped into the water – dangerous.



Geoff Stevenson,  
S/V *Taeko IV*

I also wanted the dinghy to be at least vertical as I have a 40' slip and have to fit into that with a 37'

boat. It just fits! I have since added simple stand-off bars to keep it near vertical at all times and not be dependent on tie lines. I also have a longer dinghy now but the pontoon size is only slightly bigger so I don't have to modify the existing cradle.

I use the topping lift (and winch) to raise the dinghy up and lift it over the cradles, then release the topping lift line slowly so the lower pontoon slides into them. I would make one modification if I was to do it again: I would round off the lower arm of the underside brackets to stop it catching the lower pontoon when I raise it: no big deal as it can be pushed out easily by foot. I drop the dinghy into the water by simply releasing the standoff bars and pushing the top side over and holding on to the lines – can be a bit of a splash at times if you don't hold two lines to mitigate the weight transfer.



It is too much of a hassle to lift the dinghy back and forth onto the front deck though I do that for the winter.

## The Laing's Dinghy Davit System on *Spiritus II*

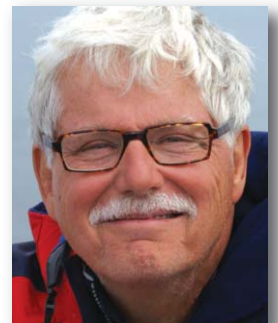


Like so many things in life, the tasks around operating a sailboat are easy – until they aren't. For example, to remove my main sail cover and attach the halyard requires me to climb the mast on our Hunter Legend 40.5. Easy once, not easy now.

Easy when we bought her in 2014 but much less easy in 2021. And the same is true for winching up the dinghy onto the foredeck. Easy then, not easy now.

It wasn't the weight of our new-to-us Highfield 290 ultralight. It was simply the bother of stopping in the harbour, fishing for the lines to attach to the spinnaker halyard, and then hauling away with one of the prime rules of sailing in mind. "If there is any way for something to snag, catch or jam, it will always happen when you're alone, in a hurry or the weather is bad." Add that to the problem of getting into our narrow slip with the dinghy obstructing the view.

So, what to do? There are lots of davits systems that can be installed on the stern, but *Spiritus II* has



John Laing,  
S/V *Spiritus II*



# GULF SAILOR

an aft mounted radar pole that would get in the way. I then looked at Geoff Stevenson's system, but there were a couple of problems I didn't know how to overcome. Geoff uses his topping lift to raise his dinghy into its davits, but mine is part of my Dutchman system, and even if I detached it, would chafe badly on the cockpit enclosure. Plus, the fact that the stern of *Takeo IV* is much more vertical than ours.

So, when I noticed that our dinghy had half of the Weaver davit system already attached, that seemed the way to go. The people at Weaver are very nice, but the Canadian distributor and a dealer are in the way. The cost was going to be over \$1,500, and if the system didn't work, it was mine and not returnable.

Harbour Chandlery in Nanaimo solved my problem. They sold me the other half of the Weaver system (designed for swim grid installation) and recommended that I talk to Unlimited Fabrication also in Nanaimo).



Once you find a suitable point of attachment on your boat, there are only three critical measurements to find before you do your drawings. One, the horizontal distance from the point of attachment aft to the water. Two, the vertical distance from the point of attachment down (or up) to the level of the dinghy davit pieces when it is crossways in the water at the stern. And three, the curve of the hull to keep it out of the way.

I can't say enough about Unlimited Fabrication. When you give them accurate drawings, they are knowledgeable, willing to work with you, fast, efficient, and inexpensive. Including the parts from Weaver, the entire system cost less than \$1000.

It remains to be seen how well it works if we are heeled over or in rough seas. However, that was never the intention. We tow our dinghy all summer, because we usually anchor, and we have a dog. And my Commodore is happy. What more could a guy want?

## Glen's Davits on *Tango*



Glen Mitchell,  
S/V *Tango*

The davits hold Glen's dinghy up horizontally, not vertically so no problems heeling.

Here is the story about my davits. They are a by-product of the solar panel supports. I thought as long as I have 1" tubing supporting the 4 panels I should put them to another use. To make the tubing strong enough to support a dinghy they are braced to the push pit.

And here is the secret hidden part: each horizontal tubing has a half inch galvanized pipe slid perfectly inside it. So there is absolutely no bending and it is really really strong.





# GULF SAILOR

*Glen's Davits continued from p.13*



*1" tubing solar panel supports.*

the dinghy onto the boat. I stood up in the dinghy while sailing to take these photos for this story.

I leave the motor on the dinghy except when I am at Townsite Marina where, instead of strapping the dinghy in horizontally, I undo the ratchet straps



*Horizontal position when sailing.*



*Vertical and secured at the dock.*



and then use my engine hoist to pull the dinghy vertical behind the transom.

Then I reattach the straps to the far side of the dinghy and secure it. That way the dinghy is within the 36ft length of my slip and the marina is happy.



*Naida continued from p.14*

daylight penetrates a long way inside and by the time it is dark there is so much mist or fog in the air that the light just scatters and doesn't help to define anything. By the time we were in 600 feet to a large cavern it was impossible to discern much, which really made me uncomfortable. There was one area that was darker than the rest and presumably that led further back but we had no desire to find out. It was hard to judge just how close to the walls we were coming and the rumble of the swell hitting the back and the sea lions barking was enough. It was a relief to turn around!



When we were out we explored another smaller cave nearby. After that we thought "OK, we've got our nerve up again, let's go back in and explore the back cavern a bit more." Well, nope,

we went in to the large cavern again and same thing – "this is cool but eerie, let's get out of here."

We poked along back to the boat and admired the amazing cliff faces, all eroded in spots with giant hollows way up the cliff – wondering how did that happen? Probably when the Islands were underwater before the plate movement pushed them up.



*Keep your eyes peeled for the next edition of the Newsletter and for more news of Naida and her crew en route to Mexico.*



# GULF SAILOR

## CBP Introduces New CBP ROAM™ Features

Thanks to Stewart Murray who posted this on our Facebook page and to Andreas who brought it to my attention so all our members could learn about the new regulations.



### CBP Introduces New CBP ROAM™ Features to Expand Touchless Service for Boaters

Release Date: September 16, 2021

WASHINGTON — To further support its innovation efforts, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced today that CBP ROAM™ will introduce new features that allow pleasure boat operators to apply for and update cruising licenses.

In 2018, CBP reinvented the way pleasure boaters notified CBP of their arrival from foreign waters. Instead of calling ports of entry to report their arrival, pleasure boaters were able to provide all required entry information and engage with CBP officers through video interviews on their smart phones or tablets. Now, pleasure boaters can apply for a cruising license through the CBP ROAM™ mobile application. This cruising license authorizes select foreign flagged vessels to travel to ports within the United States without filing formal paperwork or paying fees upon arrival.



“CBP is excited to offer this new service to pleasure boaters as part of our transition to innovative, touchless processes that enhance our operations,” said Diane J. Sabatino, Deputy Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, CBP. “By eliminating the need to physically enter a CBP Office, we provide boaters a significant time savings benefit and a safer environment for both the boater and CBP employees.”

The CBP ROAM™ application automates the process to apply for and update cruising licenses and, in most cases, eliminates the need to visit or call a CBP Office. The application process is integrated into the arrival report, making the change seamless for current users. Once a cruising license has been issued, a new button will appear that allows boaters to notify CBP of subsequent arrivals under the cruising license.

Current users who already have a paper cruising license should update their boat information in the CBP ROAM™ application with their cruising license number. Once verified, the “Port of Call” button will appear and can be used to update their cruising license.

The CBP ROAM™ mobile app is available in the Apple App and Google Play stores, and can be downloaded for free on a web-enabled smart device. Travelers must create a login.gov account to access the services. Travelers who already have a login.gov account should sign into their existing account. More information on CBP ROAM™ can be found [here](https://www.cbp.gov/roam). You may also submit any inquiries to [CBPROAM@cbp.dhs.gov](mailto:CBPROAM@cbp.dhs.gov).