



*Tantram under tarps having a well deserved rest after travelling 1,206 miles over 88 days.*

## Wild Weather Makes Up For Idyllic Summer

Wind and rain warnings and ferry cancellations have replaced heat warnings, water restrictions and covid cancellations. Life has opened up and shut down at the same time. The GYC has also had to cancel our Awards Dinner and replace it with a Christmas Party at a pub. Make sure to 'save the date' (p.2).

Times, and circumstances, force other changes for the GYC. Voting on Membership Definition changes will be taking place at the next meeting so I've reprinted the why's and wherefore's to refresh your memories. **Remember: only numbered members are allowed to vote.** If you're not sure you're one of those, just look yourself up in the roster.

*Naida* has made it to Mexico! She is hanging about in Ensenada waiting for favourable winds and calm conditions to head further south. We pick up where we left off in the last Gulf Sailor following their progress from the Channel Islands. Check out <https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/Naida>.

My knowledge of **bilge alarms** is next to nothing so I'm looking forward to **Glen's presentation** at the meeting. We had a scary event take place on our previous boat which would have been somewhat less harrowing if we'd had a bilge alarm installed. How quickly we forget! And how important to be reminded.

**Robert** gave me his notes on **battery life and charging** so you can take your time to go over the detailed information he gave us in his presentation (and maybe add some extra life to your batteries).



Now that the cold and rain has soaked in we're scanning the horizon less and our libraries more, I have reprised our "Reading at Anchor" spot to introduce you to a new-to-me writer of sailing-based thrillers. If you have already followed *Arrow's* adventures let the rest of us know what you think.

Hope to see you all on Zoom on Monday.

Suzanne Walker, Editor *S/V White Wolf*

## NOVEMBER 8

*There's  
Water in the  
Bilge!*



Glen Mitchell,  
Hon. Treasurer, *S/V Tango*

Join Glen after the general meeting on November 8 and learn how to install a bilge alarm. Glen has put together a short video that will answer all your questions and make the procedure look simple.

Why have a bilge alarm? Read on.

*More about Bilge Alarms p.2*

# GULF SAILOR

## Why Have a Bilge Alarm? by Carolyn Shearlock

The only time our previous boat *Procyon*, a C&C30, was sailed by someone other than us, our friend ran over the dinghy painter which twisted the shaft which shifted the stuffing in the stuffing box which created a leak into the bilge which went unnoticed until he had gotten all the way from Silva Bay through Gabriola Passage and was heading down Trincomali Channel. *Procyon* was sinking. He called a Mayday! And he didn't sail again for many years. A bilge alarm would have at least sounded an alert while he was still in safe waters. So, why have a bilge alarm? Peace of mind isn't a bad reason don't you agree? (Ed.)



**Carolyn Shearlock** curates the The Boat Galley website aimed at people who are interested in living aboard and cruising for extended periods. Her experience of an unexpected leak prompted her to write this article which, combined with Glen's presentation, provides us with a lot of information that can help us help ourselves to be safer. Here is an excerpt from her article: <https://theboatgalley.com/why-have-a-bilge-alarm/>

We were doing our normal morning stuff aboard *Barefoot Gal*. I was replying to some emails and Dave had just brushed his teeth. And suddenly there was a loud whistle noise coming from the port side of the boat. The bilge alarm??

Yep.

Dave was standing right over the bilge access panel and looked in. He was rather shocked to find a couple of inches of water in the bilge, which is normally totally dry (*Barefoot Gal* is a catamaran, there's no stuffing box and her bilges are very shallow). We typically check it every few days and there is just never anything in it.

The water wasn't yet deep enough for the automatic bilge pump to kick on yet. But the alarm had let us know that we needed to check out a potential problem.

And so we're checking. The first thing to check in a situation like this is whether the water is fresh or salt, so you know where to start looking. And next check the rate of flow.

Our leak is nothing that is going to sink the boat, that much was immediately clear. After a full day of checking, we know lots of things that it's not. We've checked all the potentially big problem areas and they're not problems. We finally have concluded that there was a tiny crack in a water hose where it went on a hose barb. We've fixed that and will see if any more water appears. We're now checking the bilge every 30 minutes.

But really, the source of the water isn't the topic of this article...but being alerted to the problem is.

What I want to write about here is the importance of having a bilge alarm. **It let us know there was a problem even before the bilge pump kicked on — had it been a big problem, even a few minutes early warning could have been critical.**

Twice on our previous boat, our bilge alarm alerted us to problems: once an improperly replaced stuffing box after we'd been on the hard and another time that we had a pinhole leak in our fresh water tank.

### You can do bilge alarms several different ways:

- Wire it into the bilge pump circuit so that if the bilge pump goes on, the alarm will sound
- Put it on a separate circuit with a float switch to trip it (two fewer connections in the bilge circuit; fewer possible points of failure; also can possibly mount the float switch lower than float switch for bilge pump)
- Use a separate battery-powered water alarm (very easy to install, but not nearly the battery life or loudness of one that's wired into the house batteries ... but also won't drain the house batteries if the bilge pump is needed and easy to turn off the alarm whereas hard-wired ones can't be unless you install a switch)
- There are also stand-alone alarms that can send a message to a cell phone if you keep your boat at a marina where wifi is available (they'll also let you know if power or wifi goes down). These are good if you only occasionally stay on the boat so that you know of a problem when you're not there.

## Staff Captain's Report

We can't have our usual Christmas sing-along but we can get together to enjoy an evening of food and good cheer.

### Hold the Date!

On December 13, the GYC is going to Mahony's in False Creek for a Christmas party. Put this date on your calendar.

Details will follow. See you there!



Doug MacLeod,  
Staff Captain,  
S/V Willpower





# 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*

**Exec. Officer:** Pat Costa  
*Sparkle Plenty*

**Hon. Secretary:** Ken Buckley  
*Naida*

**Hon. Treasurer:** Glen Mitchell  
*Tucana*

**Hon. Signals Officer:** Andreas Truckenbrodt  
*Beautiful Day*

**Past Com:** Darylne Farrell  
*SawLeeAh*

**Hon. Editor:** Suzanne Walker  
*White Wolf*  
[dandg@portal.ca](mailto:dandg@portal.ca)

## Commodore's Message

We all know fall in Vancouver can be WET and the past couple of weeks has been no exception! It seems boating season has come to an end for 2021 for many of us. Some boats are covered with tarps, others on the hard. The clocks will roll back this weekend and I'm sure we would all like to sink our toes into warm sand somewhere warm and dry with an umbrella drink in hand!

In the meantime, it's been another COVID year of postponed, changed and cancelled events for us social loving GYC'ers. For two years we've missed the Annual Awards Dinner Dance in November and last year we missed ending the season singing Christmas Carols and noshing on goodies at the Maritime Museum after the meeting. At our last Executive meeting it was unanimous that we all felt we could not let this December pass us by without a get-together of some sort and a Ho Ho Ho toast to mark the end of 2021.

With this in mind, we are planning an event for the December meeting. You will have read the "save the date" note from our hard-working **Staff Captain Doug** for Monday, December 13th, 2021. It's in the works and we are excited!



Chris Stangroom  
Commodore,  
*S/V Christie Cove*

This Monday's General Meeting is an important one as we are presenting the special resolution to change our **By-Law for Membership Definitions**. Suzanne has reprinted the information for us as a refresher. It is important to have as many numbered members as we can attend via ZOOM because this change will allow all GYC members to be involved in the successful running of the Club. Voting will take place Monday night at the meeting. See what's involved below.

So, sleep an hour longer on Sunday, get your woolies out, walk in the rain, and look longingly at the sky for a ray of sunshine. Remember, only four and a half more months until Spring. I'll see you all on Zoom on Monday night!

## Membership Definitions – Changes to By-Laws

With more members residing outside of the Lower Mainland and some moving to power boats, fewer people are eligible to participate on the Executive under the current By-Laws. So the Executive wants to make some changes to allow more members to get involved.

### Why change?

- More members moving to the Islands and the Sunshine Coast
- More members moving to power boats
- We don't see a difference between the activities of associate members and other members
- It's sometimes difficult to get members to participate on the Executive
- Zoom is becoming popular
  - All members can attend meetings and chat before official start
  - We'll keep Zoom when we go back to in-person meetings

### The Executive wants ...

- The focus of the club to continue to be sailing
- To keep the rule that in order to join the club you must have a sailboat
- To become an active member you must still sail across Georgia Strait
- To keep the option for power boaters to remain as active members of the club if they have been a sailboat member for a minimum of five years
- All members to feel fully engaged in our club
- All members to feel equal with the same rights
- All members to understand they are important to the successful running of the club

### The Executive suggests ...

- Deleting the definitions of
  - Resident/Non-Resident membership
  - Associate membership
- Having only
  - Active and Non-Active membership
  - Interim membership
  - Honorary and Honorary Life membership
- Having a reduced fee for
  - Members 40nm outside Lower Mainland – the Gulf Islands, Sunshine Coast – pay less

These proposed changes will not affect the current fee schedule. Members living outside the Lower Mainland continue to receive a reduced membership fee.

*Membership Changes cont. on p.4*

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## With these changes the Executive hopes to ...

- Reinforce the unity of the club
- Make more members eligible to be on the Executive
- Allow more members to vote
- Maintain the spirit of the club as a sailboat club
  - Members must still own a sailboat to join and be a sailing member for a minimum of five years before changing to power
  - Power boat members will have been in the club long enough to understand and appreciate the sailing aspects of the club

Thanks to the Membership Committee – **Commodore Chris, Past Commodore Dar, Staff Captain Doug, Hon Secretary Ken and Hon Signals Officer Andreas** – who worked hard to figure this all out. Also thanks to Andreas and Glen, for their side-by-side comparison of the by-law changes: the old and new versions viewed together make the proposed changes easier to understand.

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>13. Membership</b>  Any person wishing to become a member of the club shall complete an Application for Membership form to the satisfaction of the Executive Committee, such application shall be considered for approval by the Executive Committee. No one shall be eligible for membership unless the name and address of the prospective member together with the names of the proposer and seconder have been lodged with the Honorary Secretary for at least seven (7) days prior to an Executive Committee Meeting.  The Executive Committee shall have the power to grant membership status as and when they see fit when exceptional circumstances present themselves.	
<b>a) Resident Memberships</b> Resident members must reside inside a circle, the radius of which is forty (40) Nautical Miles from the Burrard Street Bridge, within the Province of British Columbia and not on one of the Gulf Islands (including Bowen Island) or Vancouver Island or the Sunshine Coast (including Keats Island, Gambier Island).	(deleted)
<b>b) Non-Resident memberships</b> Non-Resident members must reside outside a circle, the radius of which is forty (40) Nautical Miles from the Burrard Street Bridge, outside of the Province of British Columbia, on one of the Gulf Islands (including Bowen Island), on Vancouver Island or on the Sunshine Coast (including Keats Island, Gambier Island).	(Resident and non-resident definitions will be used to determine respective membership dues)

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>c) Active Membership (Resident)</b> The following are eligible for Active Membership (Resident): 1. Owners or joint owners of cruising sailing yachts. 2. Such persons shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age. 3. Applicants must satisfy Section 28 of the By-Laws. Active Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club.	<b>a) Active Membership</b> The following are eligible for Active Membership: 1. Owners or joint owners of cruising sailing yachts. 2. Such persons shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age 3. Applicants must complete an application for membership form 4. Applicants must satisfy Section 28 in the Constitution and By-laws 5. Should a member sell their sailboat after 5 years of membership and buy a cruising power yacht, they are entitled, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, to maintain their active membership.  Active Members who are owners or joint owners of cruising sailing yachts or cruising power yachts are entitled to all the privileges of the club.
<b>d) Active Membership (Non-Resident)</b> The following are eligible for Active Membership (Non-Resident): 1. Owners or joint owners of cruising sailing yachts. 2. Such persons shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age. 3. Applicants must satisfy Section 28 in the Constitution and By-laws Active Non-Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the club except for holding office	

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>e) Associate Membership (Resident)</b> A member with at least five (5) years as an Active Member (Resident or Non-Resident) and no longer owns a cruising sailing yacht but now owns a cruising power yacht may apply to become an Associate Member (Resident). Associate Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Associate Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club except for voting rights and holding office.	(deleted)
<b>f) Associate Membership (Non-Resident)</b> A member with at least five (5) years as an Active Member (Resident or Non-Resident) and no longer owns a cruising sailing yacht but now owns a cruising power yacht may apply to become an Associate Non-Resident Member. Associate Non-Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Associate Non-Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club except for voting rights and holding office.	

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>g) Non-Active Membership (Resident)</b> A member with at least five (5) years as an Active Member (Resident or Non-Resident) who no longer owns a boat but retains an interest in sailing may apply for Non-Active Resident Membership. Non-Active Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Non-Active Resident Members shall have all the privileges of the club except for voting rights and holding office.	<b>b) Non-Active Membership</b> A member with at least five (5) years as an Active Member who no longer owns a boat but retains an interest in sailing may apply for Non-Active Membership. Non-Active Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Non-Active Members shall have all the privileges of the club except for voting rights and holding office.
<b>h) Non-Active Membership (Non-Resident)</b> A member with at least five (5) years as an Active Member (Resident or Non-Resident) who no longer owns a boat but retains an interest in sailing may apply for Non-Active Non-Resident Membership. Non-Active Non-Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Non-Active Non-Resident Members shall have all the privileges of the club except for voting rights and holding office.	

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>i) Interim Membership (Resident)</b> Interim Resident Membership is available for up to one (1) year pending a satisfactory completion of the Strait of Georgia crossing as per Section 28 of the Constitution and By-Laws. Interim Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Interim Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club except for voting rights and holding office.	<b>c) Interim Membership</b> Interim Membership is available for up to one (1) year pending a satisfactory completion of the Strait of Georgia crossing as per Section 28 of the Constitution and By-Laws. Interim Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Interim Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club except for voting rights and holding office.
<b>j) Interim Membership (Non-Resident)</b> Interim Non-Resident Membership is available for up to one (1) year pending a satisfactory completion of the Strait of Georgia crossing as per Section 28 of the Constitution and By-Laws. Interim Non-Resident Membership is granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Interim Non-Resident Members are entitled to all the privileges of the Club except for voting rights and holding office.	

2019 by-laws	2021 draft
<b>d) Honorary Member</b> The Executive Committee may have the power to elect for the current year as Honorary Members such officers or representative members of other clubs of special distinction as may seem to them desirable. Any person may become an Honorary Member who is approved by the Executive Committee and is elected by a two-thirds majority of a General Meeting of the Club. Honorary members have all the privileges of the Club except voting and being eligible for office. They shall not, however, have any proprietary rights in the assets of the Club and are exempt from any fees or assessments.	
<b>e) Honorary Life Member</b> An Honorary Life Member shall be one to whom the freedom of the Club has been presented in recognition for important services rendered to the Club or its representatives. An Honorary Life Member is exempt from payment of any fees or assessments and entitled for life to all the privileges of the Club including the right to vote and hold office. An Honorary Life Member shall not have any proprietary rights in the assets of the Club. Honorary Life Members may only be elected at a General Meeting of the club by a unanimous vote of the members present.	



# GULF SAILOR

## How Low Can You Go?

At the last General Meeting Robert gave a great presentation about charging lead acid batteries. Here are his notes to refresh your memories.

### Three Ways to Measure Battery Life:

1. Years - great for budgeting and as a general metric, but not really a useful figure for comparing useful output
2. Total Charge Cycles – sounds technical, but can be misleading
  - If you focus on the most cycles, you may end up with larger heavier, more expensive systems that take up more room in your boat, and actually cost more in both short and long term, especially if you use your diesel engine at anchor to charge your batteries
3. Total Power (Amp Hours) over the life of the battery bank
  - I propose this is the single most important metric: i.e. if you only get ¼ the cycles, but over 4 times the power, that is better
  - We can use this for design and deciding on charging/discharge regimens, but not easy to measure over the life of our batteries

### Battery Construction (FLA = Flooded Lead Acid)

- Battery plates have a lead oxide coating which is what holds the charge and gets discharged.
  - During the charge and discharge process, a very small amount of material is actually removed and reattached to the plates
  - A tiny amount is shed (i.e. it doesn't reattach to the plate, and instead falls to the bottom of the battery)
- Quality Marine Deep Cycle Batteries have a thicker coating of lead oxide, resulting in longer cycle life
  - This allows for many charge and discharge cycles before the plates have bare spots and capacity starts to be lost
- This coating thickness affects how the batteries accept charge, as they get closer to fully charged, the better quality thicker coatings take longer to charge

### Depth of Discharge (DoD)

- This is the percentage a battery is discharged
- At 25% DoD, 25% of the capacity has been discharged, and the battery still has 75% of its charge capacity available

### Battery Monitor

- A battery monitor is really a **must have** to manage your battery bank intelligently
- It has a shunt that measures the current in and out of the battery.
- It measures the actual DoD
- The battery plates take up to 24 hours to stabilize after either

being charged or discharged

- The surface is charged/discharged, and the voltage will change as this effect migrates through the full thickness of the plates
  - Remember this effect is greater for higher quality batteries with thicker lead oxide
  - The effect of the discharge/charge reduces over 24 hours
  - Any loads such as lights, refrigeration, stereo will affect this
  - Voltmeters read the surface charge
    - on a boat in use, a Voltmeter is NOT an accurate measure of DoD
- **ONLY Battery Monitors measure the actual DoD!**



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

### Bulk Charging (100% DoD to about 20% DoD)

- Note, you never want to repeatedly bring your batteries all the way to 100% as this may damage the plates
- Outer surfaces of plates are being charged and are passing charge into the "near surface" area of the plates
- This can absorb current at a high rate:
  - From full AH rating at 90% DoD: I.e. 200 AH FLA battery can accept 200 A
  - To 25-40% of rating at 50% DoD: I.e. 200 AH FLA battery can accept 50-80 A
- A battery will accept a full bulk charge to 80% in only a few hours:

### Charging batteries with less than 20% DoD (Absorption, and Float Charge Stages)

- The charge (and charged electrolyte) has to migrate further into the battery plates to reach the innermost areas
- This happens less quickly AND creates heat
- The initial phase is absorption, and the current (amps) into the battery is reduced
- As the battery nears full charge, these effects are increased, so the current (amps in) are reduced further as the charger goes into FLOAT mode
  - **Can take many hours to charge this last 20%**
  - This happens even more for high quality batteries with thicker lead oxide coatings

### Water levels for FLA batteries (Flooded Lead Acid)

- The water boils off faster when there is heat from the charging process

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- Especially in the 0-20% of discharge range
- vs when they are lying idle, and the water slowly evaporates at room temperature
- So you have to add water more often when your batteries are in use
- If a portion of the plate dries out because the water levels are too low,
  - Then it may cease to function forever, and the battery loses some capacity
  - This is not unavoidable aging, but actually damaging your batteries
- **So always keep your FLA electrolyte levels topped up!**

## What does this mean?

- Properly sized shore power chargers should fully charge your batteries overnight
- Your other charging systems (solar, alternator, wind) while at anchor will put the most amps back into a battery when the DoD is greater than 20%
- So the usable amount of power from your partial charging will be higher when you run your batteries with over a 20% DoD
  - Note: this is not an issue if your solar can keep you at 0% DoD

## BUT WHAT ABOUT BATTERY LIFE????!!

I first looked at Nigel Calder's notes from

– Boat Owners Mechanical and Electrical Manual, Nigel Calder, 2005 edition, P 19

**TABLE 1-5. Cycle Life of Trojan Industrial Batteries**

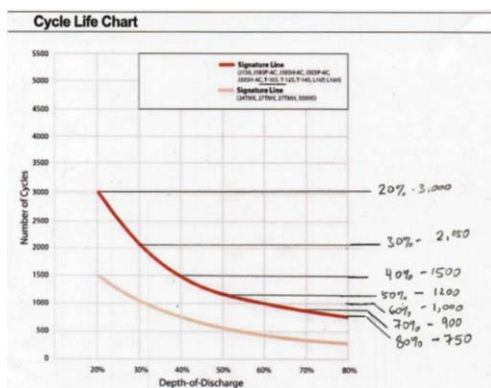
Depth of Discharge at Each Cycle	Number of Cycles to Failure	Amp-Hours Delivered During Life (per 100 Ah of battery capacity)
10%	6,200	62,000
20%	5,200	104,000
30%	4,400	132,000
40%	3,700	148,000
50%	2,900	145,000
60%	2,400	144,000
70%	2,000	140,000
80%	1,700	136,000

Depth of Discharge at each cycle	Number of Cycles to Failure	Amp Hours Delivered During Life (per 100 AH of battery capacity)
10%	6,200	62,000
20%	5,200	104,000
30%	4,400	132,000
40%	3,700	148,000
50%	2,900	145,000
60%	2,400	144,000
70%	2,000	140,000
80%	1,700	136,000

- Interestingly, the most battery Amp Hours delivered are with DoD's of 40-80%
- That means you pay the least per amp hour used if you are in this range.
- The best is at 40%, but that is only 8.8% better than going to 80% discharge
- NOTE: this data is all assuming the batteries are restored to full 100% charge after discharge

## HMM! 40-80%!

That's not the "no lower than 50%" I hear everywhere, So I looked at Trojan's own research on their website  
<https://www.trojanbattery.com/products/deep-cycle-flooded/signature-line-flooded-2/>



Signature Line Flooded Batteries

**225 AH Battery**

DoD %	# of cycles	DoD % X # of cycles	225A Total AH over life
20%	3,000	600	225 135,000
30%	2,050	615	225 138,375
40%	1,500	600	225 135,000
50%	1,200	600	225 135,000
60%	1,000	600	225 135,000
70%	900	630	225 141,750
80%	750	600	225 135,000

6,750 more AH than if go to 20% DoD

- Note: the max difference is (630-600=30 cycles)  $30/600 = 5\%$ 
  - Or:  $6,750/135,000$  AH over the life of the batteries
- So yes, in going from 20% DOD to 80% DoD, you will have 25% of the cycles (750 vs 3,000)
- BUT you are drawing out 4 times the energy per cycle ( $80/20 = 4$ )
- So the total AH you get from the life of the battery basically balances out

- **In fact the best total AH output is 141,750 at 70% DoD**

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**So why would someone want to say that you should**  
“Never run your batteries below 50%”?

Consider their sale size if you choose a larger battery bank:

- The battery bank, install fees and heavier duty wiring for additional batteries
- The shore power charger (typically 12-50% of Battery bank AH)
- The alternator to charge that bigger bank
- The size of solar panels - remember that batteries accept a smaller fraction of Amps when they are above the 25% DoD line

**But to be fair to them:**

- If you run your batteries consistently without recharging them fully they will die an early death due to sulfation!

**What they should really be saying is:**

- Get your batteries fully charged to 100% frequently while cruising! (Preferably weekly, or at least every second week)

**Final Thoughts**

- Early battery death is usually caused by dried out batteries, sulfation and over/under charging
- I water my flooded batteries every 2 months with a watering system: takes minutes
- Sulfation is caused by having batteries stored at less than full charge for weeks or longer
  - This means if while cruising, you only keep your batteries from say 60% DoD to 80%

– Instead, you want to:

- Top them up regularly to 100% while cruising and
- Keep them topped up at the dock  
<https://batteryuniversity.com/article/bu-804b-sulfation-and-how-to-prevent-it> seems to indicate that a full charge cycle of over 14h every week will reduce sulfation effects significantly (a marina stay from 5pm – 9 am is 16 hours)
- Can sometimes be mitigated on FLA with desulfation devices to soften the sulfate crystals
  - Not an exact science, and may damage FLA batteries – Some manufacturers recommend against them
  - Often not done on AGM's due to risk of boiling them dry
- Firefly Oasis batteries 3rd party testing indicates they can fully recover from sulfation
  - Their useful cycle life is much longer than other AGM/FLA batteries
  - Interestingly, they are rated to 3,600 cycles at 50% DoD, but only 1,000 at 80% DoD, but are supposed to keep their full capacity for that time

**When Cruising**

- It is a good idea to **regularly top up your batteries to 100%** with shore power if your solar cells do not keep them at full charge – **preferably weekly, or at least every second week**  
**AND!**
- Don't worry if you occasionally drop as low as 80% DoD – **just be sure to charge them fully ASAP!**

## Reading at Anchor (or by the fire)



This is a heads-up introduction to a local writer and lifelong sailor, **Joel Scott**, who currently lives and sails out of Chemainus.

Reviews call his stories *fine, rollicking adventure stories set in lovingly-drawn locations*. Action takes place aboard *Arrow*, a 46ft wooden sailboat, in salty locales like the Salish Sea and 'bleak waters of Desolation Sound', the Great Sea Reef in Fiji, and even an 'exclusive yacht club in Vancouver's West End'. Scott is a two-time winner of the Cedric Literary Award (for unpublished BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Yukon writers over the age of 50). I have yet to get my hands (or eyes) on them. (Ed.)

**Arrow's Flight**, 2018, starts off the series. Jared Kane is a West Coast commercial

fisherman down on his luck who inherits *Arrow* and sees a chance to turn things around. He plans an offshore voyage, sailing from Vancouver down the Pacific Coast and onwards to the South Pacific but he and his friend Danny are forced to flee aboard *Arrow* when Danny is attacked by unknown assailants and lies helpless in his berth under the erratic care of Jared's grandfather, a Haida elder who won't speak English. On the search for a safe haven and with the would-be killers hot on their trail, they run south – ill-prepared, poorly provisioned and crewed by a silent old man and an injured friend strapped into his bunk.





# GULF SAILOR

## Naida's Arrived in Sunshiney Ensenada

Here are all of *Naida's* posts from where we left off in the last newsletter: anchored near the Painted Caves on Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Islands National Park just south of mainland Santa Barbara.



### Stugeron at Anchor?!: Sat Oct 09 2021

We debated where best to wait out the strong NW winds forecast for the afternoon and evening off the coast of Santa Barbara and the Channel Islands. The anchorages in the Channel Islands are all comparatively exposed. The previous day we had made our way to Scorpion Bay on the north side of Santa Cruz Island and spent a comfortable night at anchor, having deployed the flopper-stopper. This is a large surface area device that hangs in the water over the side of the boat to dampen the motion of the boat in the waves. It doesn't eliminate all rocking but does slow it down and makes it a bit more comfortable. People have commented that you don't necessarily notice the flopper-stopper when deployed but you sure do when you retrieve it.



The winds were forecast to increase over the previous night by 5-10 knots, to 20-25 kts. We had deployed a 5:1 scope on our anchor rode which was holding nicely. Our rode is entirely chain and the weight helps keep the anchor set rather than pulling out. We have a snubber on the chain which transfers the forces to the cleats on deck and we had a backup snubber line in case the first one released. As the wind picked up in the afternoon we calculated distances to set a tight anchor alarm that would alert us if the anchored dragged even a bit. We used yesterday's at-anchor track when the wind was blowing from the NE and today's with the wind from the NW. We always

set an anchor alarm, but since the location of the anchor drop isn't always known precisely we usually set the radius conservatively and that is adequate. This time with the winds building we wandered outside the conservative setting and the alarm, a cow bell sound, went off. Having established that we weren't actually dragging, we calculated what our full range side to side should be, we set the anchor alarm radius at that, and it nicely encapsulated our tracks over the last day. We could then be confident that if it went off again, it would indicate that the anchor was dragging, i.e. not holding, and we'd need to pick it up to reset it at this or another location with possibly better shelter.

Our options for a better location which we'd considered earlier in the day had been: adjacent Little Scorpion Cove although we could see one boat on the AIS, and there had been two boats there the day before; Smuggler Cove on the south side of the island but Charlie's Charts described wind that blows down through the canyon straining the ground tackle, so not an obvious choice; or further west in Scorpion Bay where there might be reduced swell, although it wasn't so obviously less as seen from our location. In the end we decided to stay put. We also considered deploying a 7:1 scope for overnight if the winds had picked up, but that wasn't needed.

We had about 1 metre of swell at its highest and winds of 20 gusting to 25 knts. The rolling was sufficient to cause us to have dinner in the cockpit rather than down below so as to keep our eyes on the horizon and avoid feeling nauseous. That was a first for us, experiencing slight seasickness while at anchor. And undoubtedly it won't be the last as we make our way down the outside of the Baja over the next month as anchorages there are similarly exposed.

*Naida continued on p.9*



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*Naida continued from p.8*

In the end the swell and wind diminished and we turned into our aft cabin berth and had a settled night sleep before getting up at 4:45am for an early morning's departure to Santa Catalina Island where hopefully the east side will afford us more protection from the swell.

P.S. Had the forecast been for stronger winds we would have made the decision to head for a sheltered marina like Oxnard 20nm away.

P.P.S. It'll be a while before we can associate a cow bell sound (Ken tells me it's a ship's bell) with a peaceful pastoral setting.

## Southern California in the Fall: Tue Oct 12 2021

It's with some trepidation that we write this post since most reading it are in more northern latitudes already experiencing the first signs of winter – snow on the Coquihalla we're told; although in southern Ontario it was warm enough to have Thanksgiving dinner outside on the patio!

We have been enjoying 20C temperatures these last few days on Santa Catalina Island, although we've also had to duck in behind the breakwater in Avalon for protection from



the strong winds blowing down the coast – gusting to 30kts here, and 40kts in Morro Bay further up the coast where a buddy boat has taken refuge.

We are enjoying the warmth and sunshine

of southern California. The warmer climes have taken us a little by surprise these last few days since the trip getting here hasn't been warm. The coast of British Columbia and North West US in late summer and early fall experiences a steady occurrence of fog which can last through day and night. The fog is a result of the deep east setting Pacific ocean current, forced upward as it arrives at the west coast of the continent, meeting the warmer air. That fog combined with winds from behind – predominant winds are NW and they are also our preferred wind direction for sailing – makes for a cold damp ride on the ocean. As a result we had pretty well all of our layers on, including toques and gloves, to stay warm especially on the overnight passages when there's no warmth from the sun. The fog does clear in the afternoon but not always.

We had also noticed dampness in the boat, so early on we took to leaving the solid companion-way panel in place and just climbing over it to come and go below.

After we put sufficient distance between ourselves and

Point Conception, just Northwest of Santa Barbara, we have finally arrived in the warm dry southern California climate. One of the perks of this is discovered when climbing into bed, the sheets don't feel chilly and damp the way they do in the Pacific Northwest!

🎵 *26 miles across the sea:* Wed Oct 13 2021



Google those words above and listen to the Four Preps sing about Avalon and Santa Catalina Island. Avalon is a little bit of the Mediterranean off the coast of California. It is a pretty harbour almost entirely filled with mooring balls and surrounded by restaurants, shops and houses built on the hillside. The town has about 4000 inhabitants and exists pretty much solely for tourism. There are only a few hundred people that live on Santa Catalina Island outside of Avalon.

I'm intrigued by communities like these and start to wonder how they function; where does their water come from, where does their power come from, where does the garbage and sewage go? The density is modestly high, most buildings are 1 to 3 stories but they are packed cheek to jowl. The gap between homes barely fits a bicycle, and that is on three sides. Cars are very few, the town opted for golf carts instead and severely restricts the use of cars. Apparently the waiting list for a permit to own a car in the town is 20 years. Every home is automatically allowed one golf cart though. Some homes have tiny little garages but most keep them in front of the house. Some have canvas covers with the street number in large characters. I wondered about this until learning about the permitting.

At 26 miles across the channel, and as much as 2900 feet deep, running power lines from Los Angeles was presumably too expensive. Power is generated by 6 diesel generators and 23 low-emission combustion turbines operated by Southern California Edison. Interestingly they installed a large battery bank 10 years ago in order to operate the engines most efficiently with the lowest emissions settings. At night the excess power is stored in the batteries for use the next day.

Water is sourced both from surface *Naida continued on p.10*

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*Naida continued from p.9*

water that is collected in reservoirs and from a desalination plant. Interestingly this plant supplies about 30% of the water but consumes about 70% of the power generated on the island.

In an effort to minimize fresh water consumption, Avalon installed dual water supplies, fresh and salt. Homes use saltwater for toilets. This has the unfortunate effect of being very corrosive to the sewage pipes and harder for the wastewater treatment plant to deal with. There is talk of adding another, more energy efficient, desalination plant and moving away from using salt water in the waste flow. Avalon has a wastewater treatment plant but residents outside of Avalon and the other town of Two Harbour must install their own septic field. The island has its own land fill and they do have recycling bins around town but I didn't look at what happens to that material. Presumably it gets shipped over to the mainland.

Groceries are available in Avalon at the Vons grocery store. This is now a large, well stocked store (we went and bought some fruit) but this wasn't always the case. Until recently Vons operated two small stores that were reported to be expensive and not well stocked. Residents took the ferry to the mainland (referred to as going over-town) on large provisioning expeditions. Vons had been trying to purchase land and get a building permit to build a single large store that would be sustaining for both the company and the island residents but this was a hard fight. Many long-time residents thought this would change the character of the island and opposed it. After something like 10 years the issue came to a vote and permission was granted for the store.

Another fascinating tidbit that came up in my research is the effect of cruise ships and holidayers on the island services. Water and waste demands oscillate dramatically with the coming and going of tourists and must be taken into account when trying to size everything related to these services. Water demand (and presumably waste) is reported to be maximum on July 4th, and several times greater than average loads. Unlike most cities that build to average demands, Avalon must build to something close to peak demand in order to keep their harbour and city clean and tourist friendly!

(All these numbers come from town documents or blogs I could find online. Most are several years old, and might be out of date.)

## San Diego and a Wedding: Fri Oct 22 2021

We left Avalon at 5pm Oct 13 for an overnight sail to San Diego. In the Pacific Northwest summers it is possible to cover 80 miles or so in daylight but not here. (There has to be some down side to wearing shorts and T-shirts in October!) The trip

to San Diego is about 90 miles and we've taken to doing these distances overnight. We get to leave in daylight, arrive in daylight, and each get some sleep, though we still need a nap at some point the next day. Otherwise these trips would involve one end being negotiated in the dark. That's ok if it involves leaving a roomy anchorage but not so great if it means navigating out of a busy city port or into an unfamiliar port or anchorage in the dark.

We were in San Diego for our niece's wedding on Anne's side of the family. It was great to spend time with the extended family. Singapore relaxed the restrictions on travellers from the US so Anne's brother Bernie, who lives in Singapore, was able to fly in at the last minute to attend the wedding. We hosted Bernie on the boat for the week we were in San Diego, a highlight for both parties. We stayed in Harbor Island West Marina which was very pleasant. Fortunately Bernie rented a car so getting around town was easy. If we had stayed in Shelter Island we would have been closer to the shopping (i.e. boat stores) but San Diego is currently crowded with boats arriving for the annual Baja HaHa, a rally of boats heading south to Mexico that departs November 1. This year there are 200 boats reported to be joining, so transient moorage is hard to find.

We only needed a few boat parts in San Diego, which was good, but it still amounted to \$450. When you get into a good chandlery it is amazing how many things you remember you need. We've heard lots of stories of people spending many boat bucks (\$1K units) doing last minute upgrades before getting into Mexico where parts are harder to come by. We hope we didn't forget anything important!

The wedding was lovely, held in Temecula, at a villa on top of a knoll providing a 360 degree view over the surrounding countryside. The ceremony took place in the late afternoon sunshine followed by an outdoor sit down dinner (about 40 in attendance). The couple wrote their own very moving vows which had many in attendance surreptitiously wiping away tears. The groom is second generation Mexican and they served Mexican food, so it was a warm up for the next leg of our trip and it did not disappoint! After the wedding we visited with Anne's family while also attending to some boat jobs. The new boom vang bracket got mounted, the broken sail slugs replaced, and the dinghy wheels installed - a chance for some brother-in-law bonding over tools.

After all that work and visiting with family there were happy goodbyes with everyone heading their separate ways. We set out for an overnight passage to Ensenada.

## Ensenada – A Mexican Culture Immersion: Mon Nov 01 2021

We arrived in Ensenada at Cruiseport Village Marina a week ago last Friday after an overnight passage of mostly sailing from San Diego. We had to remain aboard the boat until we had our temperatures and blood

*Naida continued on p.11*



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*Naida continued from p.10*

oxygen levels checked by medical staff who also explained the COVID requirements for wearing a mask when indoors and the importance of washing hands or using sanitizer. We had decided on the ECV marina as they assist with the whole clearing in process – Immigration, Port Captain, and temporary boat import permit.

Ensenada is one of the few places in Mexico where all the services are integrated into one building. The whole process took a few hours, and ECV staff assistance in English was much appreciated by the tired *Naida* crew.

The other plus to staying at ECV is the moorage pricing. Once you've paid for five days you've essentially paid for the month and if they have space you can stay gratis for the rest of the month. This turned out to be advantageous since we needed to kill some time as we did not want to head down the coast of the Baja before the start of November when the risk of hurricanes has diminished, and we also want to allow a few days for the 195 boats in the Baja-HaHa 2021 rally to pass by before we head south.



*It is apparently important to provision well, even when going out for a day sail in a dinghy. This fellow returned to the slip across from us overnight.*

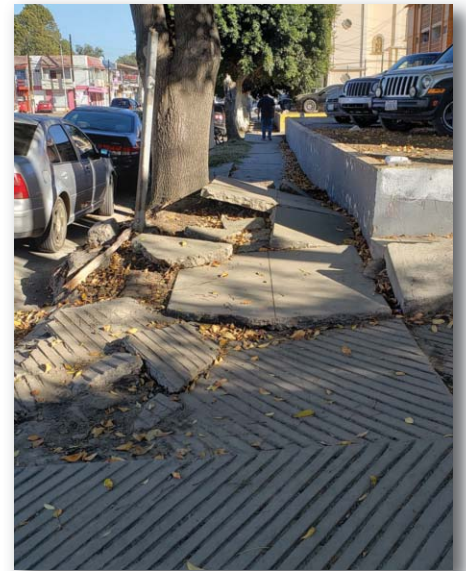
Because we had some time to kill, we spent last week in a 5-day long beginner Spanish immersion class at the Pacific Spanish Institute with our friends Cory and Lori on buddy boat *Vortice*. We are grateful to them for having done the scouting for this Escuela de Español! It was thoroughly enjoyable and an excellent way to connect with local Ensenadans. At the outset Ken wondered whether he was going to find it tough spending six hours a day speaking a foreign language (as he said "I don't speak English for six hours a day.") However the small class size of two and the patient teachers made for a wonderful immersion experience. On our

fourth day we shopped for ingredients to make tamales for Friday lunch. The school is in a Mexican home where a couple

of bedrooms are small classrooms, and there's a kitchen and eating area. One of the other more advanced students who has been in Mexico working as a minister for a year prepared the masa and manteca that lines the corn husk wrappers which is filled with a cooked salsa, pulled pork and quesita fresca. The filled husks are then steamed for an hour in a large pot. It was mucho delicioso!

It's been a good nine days and an excellent introduction to Mexican culture.

We've enjoyed Mexican cuisine, much of which is new to us. Ken scouted some YouTube reviews of Mexican food trucks, and we tried out some Taco pescados which were delicious. We've also been out to a birreria for birria which is



*This is unfortunately not atypical of the sidewalks in Ensenada. No walking while staring down at your cellphone here!*



*It can be difficult to know which of the sauces are picante, so one needs to go easy with quantities.*

a stewed meat which one eats in a corn or flower tortilla with fresh cilantro.

We'll spend some more time exploring Ensenada and doing a few boat chores before departing later this week.

*Looking forward to your next installments Ken and Anne!*

# GULF SAILOR

October Virtual General Meeting Minutes Cont. from p.13

## Staff Captain –

- Chris read out Doug's report. The presentations in October and November have been postponed until we can meet in person. While this is disappointing, we should remember Dr. Henry's statement that "this is now, not forever". Soon we will be able to have engaging evenings again such as John Laing's upcoming presentation "Cape Horn: The History and the Danger".
- Thanks to Robert Sinkus for stepping in with a presentation on batteries tonight. There is still a 15 minute slot available for the November meeting if anyone would like to present. The Annual General Meeting in January is usually followed by a few 5 minute presentations. Please get in touch with Doug if there is anything you would like to present.

## Secretary –

- No report.

## 2nd Door Prize Draw

- Glen drew *Koinonia*. Fred and Deidre will receive a \$50 gift card to Martin Marine.

## Vice Commodore –

- John explained the Executive's reasoning behind cancelling the Dinner Dance again this year. The current Covid-19 restrictions prevent any mingling, do not allow any dancing and require everyone to wear a mask when not eating. This would be no fun.
- The 2022 Dinner Dance is booked at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club for November 19, 2022.
- Robert Sinkus asked if there is a chance to do something informally and John welcomed any suggestions. Geoff Stevenson suggested saving this year's awards presentation until the May or July rendezvous as it will be warm enough to do something outside. John commented that the executive would like to present this year's awards soon. Chris noted that the executive is still considering all options. Chuck Spong noted that the May rendezvous is one of the best attended and would be a good venue for the awards presentation. John thought this was a good suggestion.

## Past Commodore

- Dar is recruiting for next year's executive and at this time is looking for a Vice Commodore. Please consider volunteering for this position or she may call you! The Vice Commodore is responsible for refreshments at the club meetings, this used to be alcohol, then switched to coffee, and with zoom meetings at home you have to get your own drink. The Vice Commodore is also responsible for organizing the annual Dinner Dance. Next year's is already booked and there is lots of help from other members. This is a fun position.

## Gulf Sailor Editor –

- Suzanne noted that she would prefer to get contributions to the newsletter early, this edition was late coming out as she was waiting for contributions. Her goal is to get the newsletter out a week before the club meetings so people have time to read it and digest

any information before the meeting.

- Chris stated that Suzie will always take help with producing the newsletter.

## Commodore –

- Chris reminded everyone of the proposed changes to the club bylaws that would alter the membership categories. The proposed changes were published in the June Gulf Sailor. The purpose of the changes is to allow participation of more members in the Executive and to be more inclusive of all members. Resident, Non-resident, and Associate categories will all collapse into Active memberships. The fee structure is not proposed to change, members that are not local will still pay a reduced fee. The vote on the proposed changes will be held at the November 8 meeting. The Executive feels these changes are important to the future of the club as the current pool of potential Executive members is small.
- Mike Sutcliffe noted that the present rules were made in the '70s to limit the influence of power boaters on the club and to recognize the reduced possibility of participation for members living outside the lower mainland. Chris reiterated that the goal of the proposed changes is to allow those out of town to participate more fully. Dar noted that we currently have two executive members that have left the lower mainland during their term on the Executive and are still carrying out their duties. Hybrid meetings hopefully will allow this to continue.
- Geoff Stevenson raised his request for a junior membership category again and suggested it is something that could be given to one's grandchildren. Chris stated that the Executive considered this proposal quite seriously but decided it was not something that would work right now. Chris stated that she will save her report for the end..

## Business Arising from the Reports

- None.

## NEW BUSINESS –

- None

## 3rd Door Prize Draw

- Glen drew *Reality*. Robert will receive a \$50 gift card to Steveston Marine.

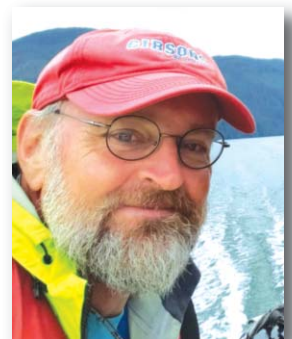
**Motion to Adjourn** by Glen Mitchell. Carried.

**Meeting adjourned** 20:12 hrs.

## Presentations:

- Robert Sinkus : Battery Capacity – How Low Can You Go?

**Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by** Ken Buckley, Hon. Secretary, *S/V Naida*.





# GULF SAILOR



## Minutes

of the Virtual General Meeting,  
October 18, 2021

The meeting was called to order at  
19:33 hrs by Commodore Chris  
Stangroom.

### COMMODORE COMMENTS AND WELCOME

- Commodore Stangroom greeted everyone by noting there is currently too much rain but the sun did shine for the Walkpast at Bowen Island. Chris showed off the hat she decorated for the ceremony. Some members are preparing their boats for winter and others are starting on off-season projects. *Christie Cove* is at Shelter Island getting 15 years of bottom paint removed. Chris recommended taking a walk through the yard at Shelter Island as there are many interesting boats there. Commodore Stangroom also commented that the pub night at Mahoney's was a great success.

### Motion and Second for The Minutes of the previous meeting

- Moved by Phill Little and seconded by Robert Sinkus. Carried.

### Business arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting • None

### 1st Door Prize Draw

- Glen drew *Knotsure*, *Malaika*, then *Christie Cove*. Chris asked Glen to continue drawing and he drew *Kailani* who will be awarded a \$50 gift card to Martin Marine.

### REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

#### Executive Officer –

- Pat reported 46 members present, a testament to the popularity of the zoom meetings.

#### Treasurer –

- Glen reported \$4,124 in the savings account and \$12,591 in the chequing account for a total of \$16,715. \$1002 was spent on the Newcastle rendezvous.

#### Fleet Captain –

- Robert thanked those that have been coming out to the cruises. It was great to see new member Martin Suo attend both the Extreme Scream and Bowen cruises. Apparently some members got together and purchased a large power vessel, the *Queen of Capilano*, and came to the Walkpast at Bowen on that ship. It was great to see such club spirit at the Walkpast. Special thanks to Don McLeod for setting off the canon.
- The next cruise is the New Year's Eve cruise to Snug Cove.
- Robert is pondering a spring cruise and reminded members of the flotilla WhatsApp group where such things can be discussed. There is also the regular club WhatsApp group. Get in touch with Robert to join either or both.
- Commodore Stangroom thanked Robert for a great job at Bowen.

### Executive Officers Present:

Commodore	Christie Stangroom
Vice-Commodore	John Dixon
Fleet Captain	Robert Sinkus
Hon. Secretary	Ken Buckley
Hon. Treasurer	Glen Mitchell
Executive Officer	Pat Costa
Signals Officer	Andreas Truckenbrodt
Past Commodore	Darlyne Farrell

### Other Officers:

Gulf Sailor Editor Suzanne Walker

### Absent:

Staff Captain Doug MacLeod

### Hon. Signals Officer –

- Andreas reported that a test for future hybrid in-person and Zoom meetings was performed at the Maritime Museum and went well. It will be feasible to hold future meetings in-person and simultaneously on Zoom. It is hoped that those able to come to the Maritime Museum will do so as it is always nicer to meet in person.

### Council of BC Yacht Clubs –

- Marine Parks Forever Society, George Creek (President).
  - Stern Ties: There has been little progress since the last report in June.
  - The Saturnina Island purchase by BC Parks Foundation (donation by Chip Wilson/Lululemon) did not require our authorized \$200,000 so this money can be directed elsewhere
  - A motion to donate \$50,000 towards the acquisition of land on Lasqueti (land adjacent to Squitty Bay Marine Park) as proposed by the BC Parks Foundation was defeated. The land in question provides no benefit to boaters. The general feeling was that MPFS donations should be restricted to land which boaters can use.
- Luxury tax on boats
  - The proposed luxury tax only applies to new boats. There is a good chance this will be brought forward once again by the new government.
- Proposed Council name change
  - After considering all factors, a name change is not supported.
- Double-sided laminated flyers promoting MPFS
  - It was suggested to create flyers and give them to the member clubs for sale to the members. A donation of \$20 to MPFS would get two laminated copies of two areas as well as a tax receipt.
  - The GYC Executive discussed this proposal and doesn't think it adds a lot of value to GYC members.
- Nominations
  - Both MPFS and the CoBCYC are calling for interested members to supplement/replace retiring board members.

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