



## The Commodore's Cockpit

### Opportunities of Spring

By Donna Schlachman, *s/v Kinship*

The October Annual Meeting is well behind us. If you missed it, you missed a good time! The highlight for me was the video put together — and set to music! — by Paul Hitchcox, with contributions of photos from some of our members. This summary of MHSA's 2010 activities can be accessed on our web site. I highly recommend it if you are looking to put a smile on your face.

Speaking of needing a smile on our faces, Rob and I attended the New England Boat Show's opening day on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Perhaps many of you also used the boat show to hurry Spring along by looking over boat gear and checking out the new Hunters. Seems we always find one or two of our members at the boat show so it was not surprising to bump into Chuck (*www.Escape*) and Peter (*Rhythm and Blue*) who were also mostly window shopping. While we went with a very minimal list and left empty handed, it was worth the entrance fee nonetheless.

At the boat show, we met and had a nice conversation with a new Hunter 356 owner who will keep his (new to him) boat in Newburyport, Massachusetts. I realized belatedly that I did not have any copies of the MHSA brochure with me! Happily, this fellow had already been on the MHSA web site and had noticed our Cabin Fever Event. Perhaps he'll join our ranks before too long.

I hope you will all make an effort to keep our club brochure handy the next time you are at a boat show or sailing into a new port. By not sticking one in my own backpack, I missed the opportunity to leave a potential new member with a concrete visual reminder of our conversation.

Speaking of not missing opportunities, make sure you put our Annual Rendezvous at Long Island on your calendar — the date is **June 25th**. We have moved it back a week this year in order to give members the chance to get their boat ready so they can sail to the Rendezvous. I believe that the most we have had is five boats moored off Long Island for a MHSA activity. This year's Rendezvous is once again on a Saturday, and most likely some boats will meet on Friday evening for a pot luck supper and a Saturday morning sail over to Long Island for the Lobster Feast. I have it on good authority that our own High Priestess of the Socks will be there to perform her magic so we will have another safe, dry and fogless sailing season. Hope to see everyone there.

Speaking of being there, this column would not be complete without a few "Thank You's" to some of our fellow MHSA members who have stepped up to the plate to be there for us.

**Dale and Ross Ketchem** – You keep having us back! We love and appreciate celebrating our Cabin Fever Brunches at your home.

**Jerry Homer** – You keep coming up with Educational ideas and we are grateful for your generosity in sharing your knowledge.

**Sue Hitchcox** – You keep tracking down great opportunities for our Cultural field trips and taking care of the details.

More thanks always to those who serve and contribute to this club in various capacities, including our amazing newsletter editors, **Pam and Bruce Foshay**. You are all the glue that makes the Maine Hunter Sailing Association the great organization that it is!

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#### Upcoming Events

- **MHSA Rendezvous  
Long Island Lobster Bake**  
June 25th, 2011 (tentative)
- **Little Snow Island Sail In /  
Pot Luck Cookout**  
July 16th, 2011
- **2011 MHSA Flotilla  
Destination TBD**  
August 6th - 20th, 2011
- **Newport Boat Show**  
September 17th, 2011
- **2011 Annual Meeting &  
10th Anniversary Dinner**  
October 29th, 2011



## Get to know your fellow MHSA Members: Paul & Sue Hitchcox

By Peter Poulin, s/v *Rhythm and Blue*

Sue & Paul



Well, this works well. Paul Hitchcox's ideal boat is a Sabre 42 and the boat of Sue's dreams is an 18' wooden day sailor. Now, in my opinion, if you cross those two together you get a Hunter 290, which just so happens to be the boat that Paul and Sue Hitchcox own. Some things in this world are just perfect!

Paul and Sue have been members of the Maine Hunter Sailing Association since 2001; they purchased *White Cap* in Newburyport, MA that May. They found many reasons to love their new boat, from the excellent reviews it received to its very roomy interior. Like most of us, they always yearn for a bigger boat until spring commissioning and waxing begins.

They have made improvements to *White Cap* over the years, and now enjoy the benefits of an innerspring mattress, electric head and remote control flood light.

Paul and Sue truly love to sail their boat. I know because I am frequently in and out of their marina and often see the boat gone, or see them sailing off on a nice summer evening, sometimes when other boats are putting in. They love the silence on the water and the ability to explore Maine's prettiest harbors without worry of disturbing the peace or counting their fuel dollars.

Paul learned to sail through a community college course and Sue picked up the bug in a three-day women's sailing program. Paul had prior experience from building and sailing a square-rigger catamaran when young.

Paul's most memorable sailing adventure came when the couple overnighted to Monhegan Island whereas whenever Sue needs to mentally detach, her thoughts escape to a backdrop of dark green mountains and a blue flat sea, while sailing across Penobscot Bay with a glistening sun, a perfect breeze and a couple of porpoises alongside.

Many of us in the club have really appreciated Paul and Sue's friendship. In one unique adventure, a sheave broke on top of my mast while heading to Tenant's Harbor one day and this problem prevented me from bringing my mainsail down. Paul was right there to help and shimmied up the mast to manually relieve the sail. And everyone knows how the club has benefited from Sue's dedication to making the club interesting through her work on the activities committee, and her winning smile.

They look forward to the annual flotilla for the joy that surrounds it, the companionship, and the adventure. They spend most of their sailing time in Casco Bay, but long to do more exploring on the Maine coast and perhaps even into Canada. They hope to achieve this dream in a few years when they plan to live aboard for a full season.

Paul and Sue have 2 children. Kristen is 24 and lives in Boston. She works as a research assistant at Joslin Diabetes. Doug, 22, is a finance major in his senior year at University of Maine, Orono and is an accomplished bird photographer. In their spare time, Paul and Sue enjoy biking, gardening, watercolor painting and spending time with family and friends.

*Editor's Note: This article was written with input from Paul & Sue - thanks for sharing your story with us!*

## Book Review

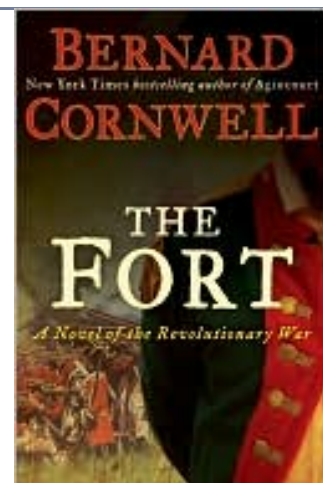
By Pam Foshay, s/v *Charis*

Not a book about sailing, per se, this is a terrifically entertaining novel about what took place in the northern reaches of Penobscot Bay during the Summer of 1779. Written by Bernard Cornwell (an Englishman perhaps best known for his Sharpe series about a British Army officer during the Napoleonic Wars), *The Fort* tells the story of the Battle of Castine.

At the time of the American Revolution, Castine was known as Majabigwaduce, and was still part of the colony of Massachusetts. The opening scene is the arrival of a small fleet at Majabigwaduce, bringing a Scottish regiment led by Brigadier General McLean, to capture and fortify the settlement. A combined expedition of Continental Navy and Colonial Militia is quickly dispatched to dislodge McLean, and the story builds from there.

Bruce and I are big fans of audiobooks, especially when read by skilled performers. Robin Bowerman does a great job with this one, with a great range of character voices including a highly credible Scottish brogue that brings an added dimension to the story.

Whatever format you prefer, *The Fort* would make a great read for this summer's flotilla.



## But for the Kindness of Strangers...

Subtitle: A Rumbling in the Gut

By John Bowen, s/v Sarah Violet

### West End of Townsend Gut

A little after noon on a Saturday in July

(In slow motion) BAM-BAMITY-BAM-BAM.  
All stop!

Unsecured cargo, animate and inanimate, shifting immediately forward by about a foot. A momentary sag in the forestay as the mast adjusted to its new velocity (zero). Captain, thrown gently up and over the wheel, bangs chin on rear of dodger. Crew, below, tossed into V-berth no physical injuries. Shouts of: "Are you Ok?" and "Are we taking any water?" and (oh yeah) "The dog just swam by."

Floor boards are lifted, no water.

Dog pulled back aboard and shakes, spraying us and we realize we were hard aground. The tide was high slack and we were on our side in 3 feet of water covering a shale ledge. We lay at a ten degree starboard list on the ledge on the western end of Townsend Gut right to the outside of the nun opposite the day mark. Our mast was pointed over the real channel (where we should have been) which was filling with about twenty other boats just being flushed through the Southport bridge. As the tide was starting to ebb, I envisioned the boat upside down if the tide fell too much before we got out of this predicament.

### Three minutes before

Robert Carter, in his book *Carter's Coast of New England*, described Townsend Gut in 1858 as being "A singular strait—narrow like a river of moderate size, and bordered on both sides by meadows green to the water's edge, with occasional groves ringing the banks."

It is still beautiful today with a few more cottages and it had been a couple years since we were through here. We had sailed that morning from Pott's Harbor and were just picking our way through Ebenacook Harbor when we heard on the VHF that the bridge was opening in a few minutes. With our dog Lady standing prominently on the bow like the queen of the world, we quickly talked over the prospects of waiting a half hour for another opening or making a run for this one.

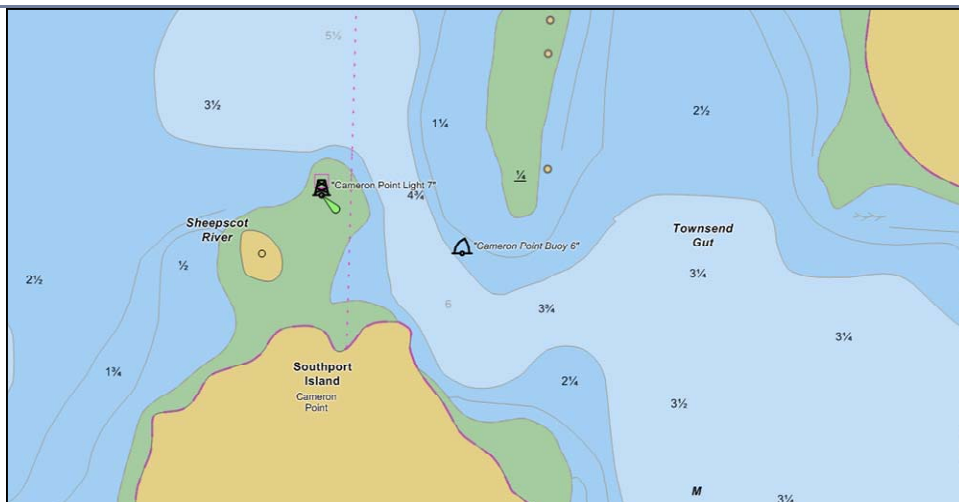
A tanned hand pushed the throttle open, a bow wave climbed the stem, a rooster tail *nearly* formed behind our 30 year old Pearson 30, and Lady's ears spread like the Flying Nun's head piece. We were at full speed and approaching the turn into the Gut from Ebenacook at a chest pounding 6 knots. As we made the turn I was gauging the distance to the bridge, letting the nun go by on my starboard side (I forgot about the North to South thing). We were confident, crew was down below putting things in order for taking a mooring in Boothbay. I aimed for the opening Southport bridge hoping we'd make it... when it happened.

### The Present

There we sat in a wash of boats. I never knew there was so much traffic in the Gut, but it was July.

Among the first boats on the scene was the big jet excursion boat out of Bath. We watched in awe as it dramatically pulled alongside. The captain flipped open his cell phone, not fifteen feet from us, and loudly called the Coast Guard to report a boat on the ledge in the Gut, amid flashbulbs from the passengers "from away". His call triggered a worried radio traffic exchange with Coast Guard Group Boothbay to confirm that all souls were all right... and then they lost interest. We just needed to be twitched off, we knew the Coast Guard doesn't do that so we bid them adieu and assessed our options, which seemed sadly at the time plentiful and varied.

The next visitor was a strikingly neat lobster yacht with banners proclaiming "US Coast Guard Auxiliary". A man in blue and a large orange PFD left the pilot house (or was pushed) to state through a bullhorn (after some useful fidgeting with it) that we should don life preservers as well. I informed him (politely) that we had all of three feet of depth under our keel, that I could walk around the boat and that we were not going anywhere for a while, unless they could please take a line and help us off this ledge. Being rebuffed (politely), at this point he needed to lead, follow or get out of the way. I had to interview other prospects.



The setting... Townsend Gut, Southport

## Website Review: [www.activecaptain.com](http://www.activecaptain.com)

By Peter Poulin, *s/v Rhythm and Blue*

December is a pain. It's dark, and there you are once again trudging through slush and going from store to store looking at the same merchandise and trying to find a gift that stands out. Success is elusive and time's running out. And the joy of sailing is like an object shrouded by a dense Maine fog. It's out there, but it's like... it doesn't even exist.

The end of March is so different! The days are getting much longer. The snow banks are receding and you get that occasional day when the thermometer flirts with the 50's. On those days, you look for red lights on street corners so that you can roll down the car window and take in the sounds of the water running down the street and the birds singing while the sweetness in the air teases your senses. The breeze blowing through your window lifts your spirit and soon you see yourself on that perfect broad reach in Penobscot Bay with that sensuous Herreshoff gliding... HONK — Ooops, the light is green now.

As sailors, we truly know the meaning of spring fever. And the only way to cope with such a malaise is to immerse yourself in plans for the upcoming season. There are many great ways to do this, but one of them is to sign on to [www.activecaptain.com](http://www.activecaptain.com).

This is a cool web-site and it is part of a new on-line trend called "Crowd-Sourced Cruising" which consists of user generated chart and destination data that is constantly updated and shared by fellow cruisers. They decide on the locations and advice to offer. It starts with a blank chart and suddenly markers pop up with all manner of interesting information on inlets, marinas, restaurants and other points of interest. Many chartplotters today feature information on cruising destinations, but that information is static and often becomes inaccurate. Same thing goes for cruising guides. By the time they get published, some phone numbers have changed, a marina is no longer in business, and the Coast Guard relocated an entrance buoy. "Crowd-Sourced Cruising" sites have constant updates and user opinions from their users.

Activecaptain.com was formed in 2007 and allows cruisers to add fine detail and commentary about destinations like marinas, anchorages and approaches. Frank discussions of personal experiences find their way in so that users can hear the good and the bad. There are nearly 100,000 boaters registered so far and membership is entirely free. Some users claim to find better information on the web-

*(Continued on page 5)*

### Editor's Note:

This article was submitted back in February... hence the references to the cold dark days that are now (hopefully) behind us. We are printing Pete's article as written, partly 'cause he's just such a darn good writer... and partly because even in April, this is New England and we just can't take spring for granted, not quite yet...

## The Kindness of Strangers... (continued)

*(Continued from page 3)*

During this time there were a lot of boats going by, and a lot of head shaking..., we even saw one woman crossing herself. One in particular was 8 foot inflatable carrying an older couple of fellow sailors with large brimmed hats, their Schnauzer dog and a cooler. They clung to our toe-rail like pilot fish and provided moral support and anecdotes. They were so sweet.

After many shrugging shoulders idled by us, finally a lone young man (Our Hero) in a 22 foot runabout with two massive outboards offered to take a line off our mast head and we bobbed free in one pull. "No charge!" he said. As luck would have it, the bridge was opening again. As we headed the rest of the way to Boothbay through all the oncoming boat traffic, we could not help but think that everyone was coming to see the sailboat ashore in the Gut. It was a busy day in the Gut. We made good but attentive speed to the mooring and took the rest of the day off.

### Epilogue

Oh yes, we knew why we landed on that rock that fateful day. I was at the helm, I had the chart plotter right in front of me and I know the rules of the road. It was a momentary lapse in judgment, being in a rush and inattentive, "pilot error" as they say. We later found we'd cracked a stringer but the boat had other problems... but that's another story.

To this day though, we still hold the great Roger Duncan's words in the highest esteem: "If you haven't been aground, you haven't been anywhere."

These days, even armed with a SeaTow card, we are very careful to stay afloat — and try to remember that North to South thing — but we still stub our toe once in a while.

## www.activecaptain.com (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

site than what they can find in their cruising guides. If you zoom in on the Maine coast you will already find a lot of coverage and captivating information.

There is a lot on this site. You can get a lot of spring fever therapy here. The markers are color coded so you know right off what kind of information they present. When you click on a destination marker, you get a dialog box that pops up with General, Navigation, Dockage, Fuel, Services and Reviews tabs. There's a rating system so you can see at a glance what other cruisers thought about the place. The inlet markers show the name of the inlet, the lat-long and notes that cruisers have left about markers and hazards to avoid.

The screenshot shows the ActiveCaptain website interface in a Windows Internet Explorer browser. The main content area displays a NOAA nautical chart of Tenants Harbor, Maine. A popup window titled "Tenants Harbor" is open, showing details for a harbor marker. The popup includes the following information:

Tenants Harbor	
Details	Reviews
Name	Tenants Harbor
Position	Latitude: 43°57.820'N Longitude: 069°12.183'W
Description	Tenants Harbor mooring field.
Approach	
Typical tide	10 feet
Internet (cellular, WiFi, signal strength, etc)	
Pets	
Dinghy dock access	
Other services (grocery, laundry, etc)	
Average ratings compiled from 2 ratings	5: Overall rating (excellent)

The left sidebar shows a list of markers, including "1. Cod End Restaurant and Marina" (4 stars), "2. Dense Lobster Pots (south)", "3. Long Cove", "4. Long Cove Inlet", "5. Lyman Morse at Tenants Harbor" (4 stars), "6. Makertown Cove Inlet", "7. Mosquito Harbor Inlet", "8. Muscle Ridge Channel Inlet", "9. Seal Harbor Inlet", "10. Tenants Harbor" (3 stars), "11. Tenants Harbor Boat Ramp", "12. Tenants Harbor Inlet", and "13. Two Bush Channel Inlet".

Screen shot from [www.activecaptain.com](http://www.activecaptain.com)

Harbor markers give you a great and concise description of the harbor and its conditions, and in the review tab you'll probably learn something about the harbor master. A click of the mouse changes the presentation from a NOAA chart to a Map or to a zoomable satellite view.

The neat thing about Activecaptain.com is that anyone can contribute information as long as they are a registered user which, you may have forgotten by now, is free. Of course, being the skeptical downeaster that you are, you may think it highly unlikely that someone from "away" might actually have something of value to say about "your" waters. Well, it turns out that the good folks who run the site do in fact validate all of the changes. Not sure exactly how, but that is what they say. Regardless, it sure beats sitting in front of the TV for yet another reality show.

The members of the Maine Hunter Sailing Association have to take notice here and recognize that they have the potential of making substantial contributions to the information on this site. Oh, and I almost forgot. If you make contributions to the site and they get validated, you earn points that can be redeemed for, well yes, a fairly short list of premiums, but gifts nonetheless.

This is not only a great way to ease into springtime, but a great resource for planning flotillas. So don't fight it. If spring fever causes you to lose sense of place and time, who cares?! Because in so doing, you've rediscovered the joy of sailing.

## Check Your Steering Linkage!

By Bruce Freeman, s/v *Summer Wind*

Spring is here, and what comes with Spring is the commissioning of our beloved vessels... with a very long check list.

As you are planning what has to be done, checking and rechecking your list to make sure that you have completed all tasks before you launch, you should include a check of your steering components in that list... especially those vessels which have mechanical steering systems, AND especially those vessels that had a close encounter with the bottom at some point last season.

I say this because a couple years ago I went aground rather hard. *Summer Wind* went up onto a ledge and then over she went onto her starboard side. Five feet of water is all we had on the starboard side yet when I went over to the port side you could not see the bottom, all kinds of water. I needed to get pulled off the ledge and luckily there were all kinds of good Samaritans willing, able and available to help.

I gladly handed off the halyard to one such good Samaritan, who secured the halyard to his stern and powered up his vessel. *Summer Wind* slowly heeled over and I powered off the ledge, a classic text book recovery. It was a bumpy ride, I felt the keel bottom out a couple of times and then the rudder bottomed out as we were powering off the ledge, but we did get off. We finished the day with a pleasant sail, lovely dinner and my first mate Claudette had a restful night. I, on the other hand, kept tossing and turning most of the night wondering what I had for damage.

The next morning I donned my diving gear and went under for a closer look. The keel sustained minor damage and with a little bondo, I could fix the keel — not a problem. On the other hand there was the rudder. I found the bottom of the rudder to be split open at the seam. Not wide enough for my diving knife but I could see the crack. From down below it appeared to be a minor crack which would not affect the performance of the vessel and I determined that we could finish the season. Just another Spring project to be added to the "To Do" list. The forces I experienced on the keel and rudder were compression forces and not twisting. There was no strain on the rudder that was transmitted through the steering system, nothing that would have given off an alarm that something was seriously wrong.

Spring time came around. As expected, I was able to repair the keel with a little fairing compound, but the rudder was a different story. I knew that the rudder had taken on some water and needed to be drained, so in the Fall I had drilled a few holes on the bottom for drainage. When I returned in the spring with my to do list, I was pleasantly surprised to find the rudder was still weeping out water even after draining all winter.



~ Cabin Fever Brunch 2011 ~  
Good Food, Good Friends...  
A Good Time was had by all!

What to do? I sealed the crack with sealant, installed a tap at the bottom of the rudder, installed a vacuum pump and let it run 24/7 for a couple of weeks. The first couple of days I collected just about a quart of water. As time went by I collected less and less until I was no longer collecting any water. I continued running the vacuum pump for a couple more days just to make sure that all of the humidity was out of the rudder. I must admit I was concerned about getting all of the humidity out of the rudder but it worked.

While waiting for the vacuum pump to do its thing, I decided to take a closer look at the remainder of the steering system, everything from the rudder post to the chain sprocket at the helm. In the Hunter 410, what connects the rudder post to the helm is a connecting rod with tie-rod ends. To my surprise one of the tie rod ends was broken. Hindsight being 20/20, we were very fortunate that we did not lose our steering as we finished the previous sailing season.

It turned out to be an easy fix.. A couple of nuts to take off, screw in the new tie-rod end, align the steering and you're done. 60 minutes at the most is what it should take you. Finding the rod end is another issue, at least one which is affordable. Edson steering system, parts can be purchased on line. Edson only wants \$172.00 for a pair tie-rod ends. If you look around you can find the tie-rod ends for less than \$40.00 a pair.

So when you're going through your Spring check list, make sure you add: "Check Steering Linkage"... and then stay off the ledges this summer!

**The next issue of WaterWays is coming in mid-Summer.**

**Share your early summer sailing adventures.  
How about some tips on provisioning or safety  
preparedness to get us ready for the upcoming flotilla!**

**Due date for submissions is July 1<sup>st</sup>!**

## Winch Way to Mount Deck Hardware?

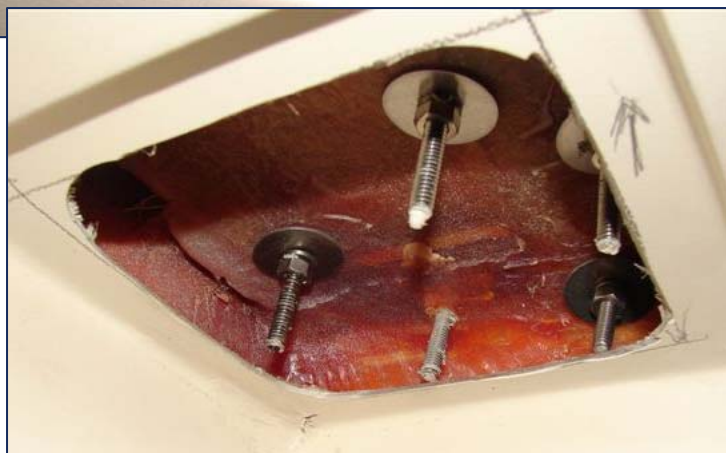
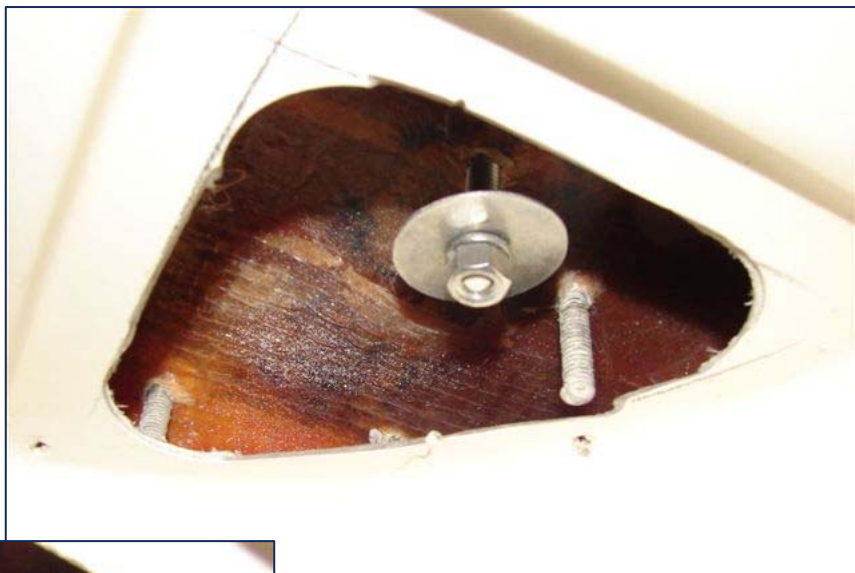
By Donna Schlachman, *s/v Kinship*

This year we decided, as part of our winter work, to check all the winches of our 2000 H380. We have four winches: two mounted on each side of the cabin top just under the dodger. Not being the DIY types, we hired the good folks at Great Island Boat Yard to inspect the winches and perform whatever work was needed. Our expectation was that the winches would simply need to be cleaned and greased.

I'm not sure if looking at winches from underneath is a common practice when cleaning and greasing winches, but GIBY did so. What they found under the access panels is shown in these photos.

The four winches appeared to have been secured in three different ways: one tightened down, two with loose hardware, and one with only one nut/washer in place. According to the report we received from GIBY, the bolts came out without needing to be turned (just a light tap from the bolt end).

I sent an email to Hunter with these photos, asking for their comments on what we discovered about how our winches were mounted.



I received an immediate reply email from Hunter with the following explanation:

"The mounting bolts [for deck-mounted hardware] are threaded into aluminum plates laminated into the deck.

The nuts and washers are for back up reasons should something unexpected overload the winch. This process was only done on accessible hardware. Many of the [deck-mounted] items are only threaded into the aluminum plates.

After ten-years of use I can't tell you why the [washers and nuts] are as shown."

The good news is that, in ten years of use, we have not seen any movement or separation of the winches from the deck. We only discovered this anomaly when the access panels were opened up.

My advice... Take a few minutes this Spring to unscrew those access panels and check out the deck mounting hardware on your boat.

## Things Not To Do... Part One

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By Scott Burns, *s/v Talisman*

~ Chapter One ~ "Why I should have know better!"

Planning is an important part of a safe and enjoyable offshore sailing cruise. The story I'm going to tell is what happens when planning is not done properly! But first, let me take a moment and give some history of my seamanship skills, for perspective — which is to say: why I should have known better!

I grew up around boats. From an early age, I remember my Dad always had a boat around. Both my brother and I started lobstering in the Frenchman's Bay area as soon as we hit our early teens. In my late teen years, I left fishing for another career, but I just couldn't let go of my love of the sea. Sailing brings out a spiritual emotion and a place of balance in my life.

My electrical career took me far away from the coast of Maine to Vermont. The on-site engineer was a sailor, and when he asked me if I wanted to crew for him I jumped at the opportunity. We raced out of Mallets Bay Boat Club on Lake Champlain. I crewed on many different boats... from a Seidelmann 24 to a Catalina 34. We raced and cruised from one end of the lake to the other, and even chartered several sailing trips well into the 80's. Lake Champlain can offer challenging sailing conditions, but it doesn't have the smell or the feel of salt water.

My career as an electrical supervisor eventually moved me from Colchester VT back to York Me. It didn't take long to find a group of sailors at Kittery Point Yacht Club in New Castle NH. I was lucky enough to get on a J-24 skippered by a close friend and we raced weeknights and weekends, often placing in the top 3. I have many trophies still packed away to show for my days and nights on the water.

Our skipper purchased a Bill Shore boat (of Shore Sails fame), a J-34, located in Newport RI. We sailed the Newport Races and brought the boat back to KPYC. As a KPYC member, I quickly became known as a crew member on Joe Cote's boat. We were the boat to beat.

While I was living in the York area, I met a woman whom I dated off-and-on for 8 years. In the early part of our relationship we traveled to St John USVI. Her father was a freelance photographer and one of his clients was National Geographic. He owned a Hinckley Bermuda 40, and we often talked about an extended cruise, until finally came the day.

I secured the necessary time off from my career. We spent the entire week before departure prepping the boat and making our final plans for a 3-month cruise sailing the Leeward and Windward Islands. Our excitement was building. Two days before we were to leave, Jack (the dad) had an offer from National Geographic for a photo shoot in Africa. Jack had observed my sailing skills and he knew his daughter could handle the boat as well. To our surprise, he called us over to the boat, put his arm around my shoulder and asked if we would like to start the trip without him. Jack would catch up with us somewhere along the route. My friend and I looked at each other, smiled and said "Sure!". "Wow, what an opportunity!". We set off on that sail in early February of 1985.

After that 3-month cruise (another semi-uneventful sailing story I will save for another time...), I would crew on any boat at KPYC that would let me aboard. I raced until the mid 90's. I also had the opportunity to assist in yacht deliveries (more stories...) along the eastern coast from Maine to Florida (one was a delivery of a 105' whale-watch vessel to St. John USVI...) and do my own sailing charters in the BVI and Leeward Islands, which in turn led to more boat deliveries. Which brings me to November of 1994, the trip you're now going to read about. The delivery from hell.

~ Chapter 2 ~ The Set-up

The summer of 1994 was a typical hot, humid New England summer: fair winds in the spring, but in July and August come the "dog days of summer"... with little wind. During one particular drifter race, I noticed a large sailboat motoring up the mouth of the Piscataqua River. This boat had good looking lines and I'm thinking how nice it would be to sail aboard a boat like this. About the time that thought came into my head, the wind picked up and my attention went back to finishing the race.

As we came up the river to the yacht club, I saw that beautiful yacht tied to KPYC dock. Now I had to find out who owned this vessel... and somehow get aboard and finale an invitation to sail. My expectations were high.

Once we put our own boat to bed for the day and made it back to the dock, I walked over to this beautiful stranger to get a closer look. The owner was just climbing out of the cockpit and walking along the deck to the bow to work on the windlass. He was having problems with an electrical connection. What luck: an electrical problem! I quickly offered some help, and that's all it took. He welcomed me aboard, gave me a tour and we went right to work. The next day we went sailing and the die was cast.

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Things Not To Do! (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

*The Waldo Pepper* was a custom Frers 48, built in Thailand in the late 70's. During the rest of the summer of 94, the owner — whose name was Wally — let me take his boat, so on off-race days, *The Waldo Pepper* and I went sailing. I started to learn more about the boat and some of the issues it had. For example, one day coming back into port, I went to start the engine and the start switch didn't work. Fortunately we were far enough out and the wind was calm; we were in no danger yet. I found some tools and took the start switch apart, touched the wires together and the engine came to life. I should have been warned.

In September of 1994, I was called back to Burlington VT. I couldn't make it back for the weekday races and Wally wasn't around on weekends. Sadly, I lost touch with *The Waldo Pepper*... until late fall, when I received a phone call from my new friend Wally. He was selling his boat, and needed to move it to Florida. "Would I take *The Waldo Pepper* to Fort Lauderdale?"

With job commitments, the only time I had available was early November. My idea was for Wally to find someone else to get the boat to Norfolk VA and I would take it down the ICW. I really wasn't thrilled about sailing from Portsmouth NH to Norfolk VA in November. Wally, however, had other ideas..., and convinced me that his were better.

Against my better wisdom and judgment, I agreed to move the boat to Norfolk. We would shove off the first week of November. As I was now in a mad rush to get the Vermont project finished, I didn't take the time to oversee our preparations. Wally assured me he would stock and prep the boat. In our conversations, I specifically mentioned that I wanted updated charts of the entire coast. I had no reason not to trust him.

Commitments in Vermont kept me from arriving at the boat until 11 pm Friday November 4th, to meet my crew for the first time. There was Joe, a former marine fighter pilot. Then there was John — we called him James Bond — he was a former naval intelligence officer, suffering with arthritis. Then came the girls: my sister and her girlfriend. Neither of them had much sailing experience, let alone time off-shore.

Back in 1994, the chart-plotter was a new and expensive toy and Wally had no intention of updating the electronics on a boat he was selling. We had a Loran C, RDF (Radio Direction Finder) and a hand held GPS. We had a very old SSB radio (that wasn't tuned in correctly), a VHF radio and compass. The Loran worked (most of the time). The RDF worked but you had to know how to use it and this required constant attention. The SSB sounded like you had marbles in your mouth. The compass deviation card had been lost. The hand held GPS worked  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the time; the rest of the time it was receiving fault signals. More warning signs, but we were committed.

### ~ Chapter 3 ~ The Trip Begins

At 4 AM, November 5th, we cast off from the dock in Pepperell Cove. The sea conditions were calm; we motored out of the harbor and set a course to Cape Ann/Thatcher Island. It didn't take long for problems to begin. One of the girls got sea sick, and wanted to stay below in the forward state room. I convinced her to come topsides, take in some fresh air and eat some crackers... she eventually felt better. Once around Cape Ann I set our course for the Cape Cod Canal. We motored all the way, still with no wind, as I wanted to make the canal before dark and we did.

By this time, I had noticed the charts had old dates on them, back into the 40's, and I wasn't pleased. As we got close, I called Cape Cod Canal traffic control and got clearance to proceed. We made it through the canal without incident by 4 pm, and decided to pick up a mooring in Onset Harbor for the night. Motoring in, it became obvious that the buoy system didn't match the very outdated charts. We very slowly picked a slot I thought was the channel. On our first try we ended up just touching the bottom. I felt the boat make a gentle stop and quickly hit reverse and backed out. Our vessel drew 7'; the depth indicator was 6'5"! I never saw so many green markers along the mainland side of the canal, but for some reason the reds were out of service. Perhaps the local notice to mariners would have explained this, however, none were aboard that were up to date. We finally found our way in and settled for the night.

The next morning we woke to a heavy fog. We waited a few hours for high water and luckily the fog cleared. We slowly motored out of the harbor into the east end of Buzzard Bay. The wind was out of the northwest, blowing about 20 knots; we motored until we got to Cleveland Ledge Light. Once past Cleveland Ledge, we plotted a course to Newport, RI and I was back on familiar territory.

I had hoped to arrive at the Texaco Gas dock in time to refuel but the dock was closed. We did go ashore to stretch our legs and pick up some provisions before motoring out to a mooring for the night. (We had no skiff, that was left ashore at the Wally's house with a hole in the air chamber.) That night, safely on a mooring, the wind picked up and blew with gusts above 40 out of the northwest.

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## Things Not To Do! (continued)

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Man, did it howl!

We were not alone in the Newport Harbor. Not far from our mooring was a large British ketch with masts at least 80 feet high. The vessel was somewhere around 100' with three spreaders on each mast. When they left the next day, the wind was blowing 35 with higher gusts. I wasn't about to leave the mooring. (With no skiff we couldn't spend the day ashore either.) Later that day the British vessel came back into port. They ran into 60 knot winds with higher gusts. I was some glad to be right where we were. We spent the day going over outdated charts and emptied what fuel we had in cans on deck into the tanks.

The forecast for the next day was 15 to 25 knots out of the NW; not bad for a reach on the south side of the Connecticut shore. Once around Point Judith the wind became more of a westerly breeze, right on the nose. We changed course and headed for the north side of Long Island shore. It was a delightful day, the breeze was refreshing, the skies were clear... until around noontime.

As we reached an area called The Race in Long Island Sound (known for its opposing winds and tide) things changed quickly. The wind was coming around to the NEN and building. We were still sailing but after a gust hit us that clocked at 43kts, we quickly took in the sails and proceeded under motor. The seas began to build and the winds continued to howl. The forecast hadn't predicted it but a bomb was developing in Long Island Sound. We hit a couple of 15 foot waves, with green water coming right over the bow.

*The Waldo Pepper* had two companionways from the deck to the cabin below. The center companionway had a clear cover that let daylight in. When we hit one of those 15' crests, I was below decks plotting our course along the north-eastern side of Long Island. All I saw was water above the decks; I didn't know if the crew was still aboard! I knew we were not sinking as water was not coming below decks. About the time I was coming out of the main salon, a VCR came flying from the starboard side at me. I brushed it aside and watched it crash to the floor. The next thing to come flying was a red bottle of wine; that too crashed to the floor and broke.

I quickly went topsides to see if I still had a crew; to my relief all were aboard. But the dodger had some issues from this wave beating, and I was looking at a very wet crew. Long before this point, of course, we all should have been harnessed in, tethered to the jack lines. The only crew member who knew what I was talking about was Joe. He had checked the equipment out the day before we left and found only one to be in reasonably good shape, but had neglected to communicate that to me.

I'm going to break the story here, to be continued in the next newsletter, but story only gets "better": propane tanks floating in water, deck scuppers plumbed to drain into the bilge, high-water alarms going off, sails tearing apart, the motor coming to a halt when we needed it most, a water cooled manifold leaking water below the deck, losing a man overboard and a trip to the hospital for a crew member. Stay tuned!

## Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences

By Jerry Homer, MHSA Treasurer

One of my most memorable experiences was taking a group of Boy Scouts across the "Back Narrows" of the Damariscotta River to Fort Island after dark on an early summer night. The river was alive with phytoplankton and the wake of each canoe and each paddle stroke was marked by "pixie dust", as the phytoplankton became phosphorescent from the disturbance of the water. I now know that "phosphorescent" is not the accepted term. It is "bioluminescent". By any name, it was thrilling to see.

The abundance of phytoplankton in the Damariscotta may partly explain the historic abundance of oysters and mussels found here. The river banks are covered with ancient shell middens, evidence of thousands of years of summer feasting by native Americans and prehistoric man. Abundant microorganisms attract fish in abundance and fish in abundance attract predators. Osprey are the most common fish hawks seen in the area, however bald eagles have made a strong comeback and frequent at least three nest sites in the area. Besides attracting fish, and predators, the abundance of phytoplankton in this area is also partly responsible for the establishment of the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences here in the Boothbay region in 1974.

In July, 2005, Bigelow was further memorialized by the launch of the NOAA research vessel Henry B. Bigelow. Watch the launch at:

[www.moc.noaa.gov/hb/launch.mov](http://www.moc.noaa.gov/hb/launch.mov)

The laboratory was named for Henry Bryant Bigelow (1879–1967), a pioneering oceanographer and marine biologist. His expeditions in the Gulf of Maine, where he collected water samples and data on the phytoplankton, fish and hydrography, made this region one of the most thoroughly studied bodies of water, for its size, in the world.

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## Green Cleaning Tips

By Bruce Foshay, s/v *Charis*

So it's spring cleaning time again at your favorite boatyard... Here are a few tips we have picked up over the years for alternative "natural" cleaning solutions. Disclaimer: we have not tried every one of these ourselves!

If you have tried any of these or if you have others to add to this list, please share your knowledge! Send an email to [Newsletter@mainehuntersailing.com](mailto:Newsletter@mainehuntersailing.com) and we'll update this chart for posting on the MHSAs website.

Alternatives to Commercial Products For Cleaning Your Boat	
Commercial Product	Environment Friendly Equivalent
Bleach	Borax or Hydrogen Peroxide
Detergent & Soap	Vegetable or Citrus-based Soaps
Scouring Powders	Baking Soda
Floor Cleaner	1 cup of White Vinegar in 2 gallons of water
Window Cleaner	1 cup of White Vinegar in 1 quart of warm water
General Cleaner	Bicarbonate of Soda and Vinegar, or Lemon Juice combined with Borax paste
Head Cleaner	Baking Soda
Shower Cleaner	Baking Soda
Aluminum Cleaner	2 tablespoons of Cream of Tartar in 1 quart of hot water
Brass Cleaner	Worcestershire Sauce, or paste made of equal parts Salt, Vinegar, and Water
Copper Cleaner	Lemon Juice and Salt
Chrome Cleaner / Polish	Apple Cider Vinegar to clean / Baby Oil to polish
Fiberglass Stain	Baking Soda
Drain Opener	Use Boiling Water and Plumbers Snake
Mildew Remover	Paste using equal parts of either Lemon Juice and Salt, or Vinegar and Salt
Furniture Polish	3 parts Olive Oil and 1 part White Vinegar
Wood Polish	Almond or Olive Oil (interior wood only)
Hand Cleaner	Baby Oil or Margarine

## Bigelow Laboratory (continued)

*(Continued from page 10)*

The Bigelow Laboratory is an independent, nonprofit organization with a primary focus on basic research of microbial processes affecting the productivity of the world's oceans, coastal seas, and estuaries. It takes pride in its spirit of scientific freedom and a tradition of open, interdisciplinary collaboration, mentorship, and entrepreneurship.

In September, 2010, the Bigelow Laboratory broke ground in East Boothbay for an entirely new campus facility for science and education. The East Boothbay campus will eventually replace all of the lab's rented space at the Division of Marine Resources in West Boothbay.

A more extensive article on the Bigelow Laboratory is posted on the MHSAs website.

[Click Here to read the full article.](#)



# WATERWAYS

▶ SPRING 2011



John  
Bowen



Scott  
Burns



Pam & Bruce  
Foshay



Bruce  
Freeman

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