



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Longest Lasting West Wight Potter Club in the World

November 2013

Wonderful Weekend on Tomales Bay September 28-29, 2013



Each year the Tomales Bay Overnight is looked forward to as one of the very best Potter Yachter outings.

The Buzz. This year's Tomales Bay sail and overnight campout was a memorable one. There was a lot of anticipation and advance interest in postings on the Trailer Sailor Bulletin Board (aka TSBB), even before Host Eric Zilbert sent out the roll call.

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New Approach. While the pre-Tomales buzz was happening on the TSBB, Tomales Bay, there was a
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The Potter Yachter



The Commodore's Corner

Well, here we are. The holiday season is on us, the weather is getting cooler, the leaves are falling from the trees, and sailing season is drawing to a close. Recent Potter Yachter sailing outings at Tomales Bay, Moss Landing to Monterey, and Bud Kerner's 7 Bridges Delta Sail have been immensely successful and rewarding to those who attended and contributed.

The Newsletter editor is a very important position. Jerry Kergan has "retired" after many years of outstanding work and having emerged from successful heart surgery. So the search is on for someone new to take up the "torch" and carry the masthead of our Club as newsletter editor for the coming year. To apply, please contact the Commodore.

A "club" is a bunch of people who like the same stuff. In our case, we all like hanging out with one another and enjoying sailing adventures together in our West Wight Potters and other related small trailer sailboats. Our club runs on volunteer power and it is what you give. Make it great.

*"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." —
Winston Churchill*

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CALL FOR CALENDAR PHOTOS:



The Calendar Committee is putting together the 2014 Potter Yachter Calendar. You can have your photo on the calendar for others to enjoy for an entire month. So if you have West Wight Potter photos that you feel would make a great calendar photo, please email them to Don Person at

dnjperson@comcast.net as soon as possible, since the creative process is beginning soon.



(continued from page 1, Tomales Bay Overnight)

discussion of how to get there and I posted my standard route of 101 to Sir Francis Drake

Blvd. through Kentfield, Ross, San Anselmo, Fairfax and thence into the hinterland through Olema and Point Reyes Station out Highway 1 to Miller County Park. However, poster Michael P15 #2538 suggested a better route through Lucas Valley Road: From the Golden Gate



Bridge, take Highway 101 north 16.1 miles to Exit 456 for Lucas Valley Road. Take that exit 0.3 of a mile to a stop sign, turn left on Lucas Valley Road and drive 10.4 miles to Nicasio Valley Road. Turn right and drive 3.8 miles to Point Reyes Petaluma Road. Turn left on Point Reyes Petaluma Road and drive 3 miles (past Nicasio Reservoir) to a stop sign and junction (Platform Bridge Road on left). Turn right (still Point Reyes Petaluma



Road) and drive 3.1 miles to Highway 1. Turn Right on Highway 1 and drive through Marshall to Nick's Cove and Miller County Park. Well, I tried this route on the way in and it is far superior to the old route, which I will never take again. It is a beautiful country drive through the hills and redwoods. After Rob Sampson told me where to look, I ever saw the gate to George Lucas'

Skywalker Ranch while taking the country drive route back home.

Location, Location, Location. Other buzz on the TSBB was about how to find Tomales



Photo by David Myers

Beach and how to deal with the challenge of finding a parking place with your trailer. At the last minute on Friday Judy B arrived early and called me to let me know there was virtually no parking available at our launching place, Miller County Park, and that all tent permits for Tomales Beach were

already taken. Just when we were on the verge of getting Harry Gordon to finally come to

Tomales, I had to post the parking situation on TSBB and Harry opted out with a post entitled “The Last Straw.” Darn it, we almost had Harry out to Tomales; maybe next time.



Parking. Last year, the parking was so bad that some of traveled to the Tomales Bay Resort, formerly known as The Golden Hinde, and braved the dilapidated docks and the obstacle course of abandoned boats to get in and out of the ramps

This year we were determined to do better; and we did. I managed to get a

parking place in the dirt lot in back of Miller Park, others parked on a dirt pull out to the south, and walked back, and yet others separated their cars from their trailers and found parking space.

Conspicuous in Their Absence. We were also missing some special people who usually



make this event extraordinary, namely oyster and guitar master Rich McDevitt, the inimitable Jim “Goose” Gossman (both waylaid by post knee surgery recovery), and my old friend Leaf & Vine vitner and guitarist Rick Keith.

Newcomers. We enjoyed having some great first timers on this overnight, including newcomers

Judy Blumhorst, husband David, and son Joey, Phil Marcelli, Dennis Vaders, Cindi, and John Chile (who brought his beautiful P-14 Hobbes up from Ventura to join us), each of which added to the mix which made this an especially fun weekend.

How Many Boats? In addition to the four boats of the foregoing attendees and myself with Dagmar, other attendees included (6) Host Eric Zilbert, (7) Jerry Higgins, (8) Mike Higgins, (9) Dan Phy, (10) Jim Kirwin, (11) Rafael Donaldson, (12) Brad Evans, (13) David White with son Theron and grandson Anthony, (14) Cindi, (15) Rob Sampson, (16) David Myers, (17) Dave and Francesca Kautz, and (18) Steve Potter and his Potter Yachter Sailboard (does this count as a “boat”?).



Great Day Sailing. After putting in the water, the weather was beautifully sunny, yet not hot, and there was a steady breeze blowing down Tomales Bay from the Northwest. After sailing around, several of us gathered together and enjoyed a long downwind run for miles down the length of Tomales Bay until just past Marshall Beach, after which we tacked back up the bay.

Wooden Boats. There were many beautiful wooden boats of all varieties sailing about since the wooden boat club had also made this weekend their occasion.

Establishing the Beachhead. We were fortunate that the Potter Yachters who came early on Friday had established our beach head on Tomales Beach and secured one of picnic tables and the south side of the beach.

Friendly Kayakers. There was a plethora of kayakers on the beach as well, in multitudinous tents. Several kayakers came and joined us at our campfire, with Martin and Alexandra being very curious about our boats and joining in the enjoyment of conversation and barbequed oysters by the campfire.



Shucking and Barbequeing the Oysters. Since Oystermaster Rich McDevitt was recovering from knee surgery, we had to make some preparations to cover, including watching youtube oyster shucking and buying an oyster knife, gloves, and several bottles of barbeque sauce. Eric Zilbert and I managed to tag team the barbequed oyster production (with help from Dennis Vaders) fairly well, judging from the rapidity with which the barbequed oysters



disappeared from the plates. *Music by the Campfire.* Then as the sunset came and the curtains of darkness descended, David White began to build a beautiful campfire, and we all pulled up our chairs. I pulled out my guitar, Phil Marcelli brought a banjo, and we had a very enjoyable time playing music. At one point we broke into twelve bar blues, and Judy B contributed some very professional sounding Jazz scat singing. We must do this again.



Got Cold Early. As the night air became chilly, many folks retired to the warmth of their sleeping bags in their boats, while more stalwart Potter Yachters pulled closer to the fire, enjoyed David White's fine bartending talents, and enjoyed conversation into the night.

Turning In for the Night. When I finally retired for the night, I had Dagmar set up differently from the prior years when I used to pull her bow up on the beach. This time I turned her around bow away from the beach, and had her tied between a small anchor tossed out far into the bay and a shore anchor. In this way, Dagmar stayed flat on the water for the night, and it was actually more comfortable than sleeping on the beach. But you could still feel the tide fall and the boat stabilize on the mud and then feel it rise again with the tide. The down side of sleeping on the water is that your feet get wet on the way on and off of the boat.



The Morning After. What woke me in the morning was the sound of little waves slapping against the hull. I managed to get up at the crack of dawn and take my camera around to get those special photos that only happen during that wonderful twilight zone of 15 to 30 minutes of dawn

light. I was fortunate to get some really nice photos.

Departure. Most folks packed up to head back home and motored back to Miller County Park, but others lingered to enjoy more sailing on Sunday.

Conclusion. Tomales Bay is magnificent, even the drive there and home is beautiful, and to enjoy it with good friends is even better. This overnight is still at the top of my favorites list. Had a simply spectacular time. Host Eric Zilbert did an outstanding job. It was great seeing you all out there. This is why I look forward to the Tomales overnight every year.

- Carl Sundholm



Moss Landing to Monterey

October 12-13, 2013

Story by Eric Zilbert



Photo by Mike Swartz

We left from Moss Landing. There were six of us at the yacht club that night. Bud Kerner (P19), myself (P19), Dave White (P19), and Bud Newhall (P15) were in the water. Rafael Davidson was there with his Com-Pac Picnic Cat, and Vin and Barbara O'Hara were there in an old P14. It was pretty cold.

Rafael decided not to go to Monterey, electing instead to explore Elkhorn Slough with his wife. He had never been to Moss Landing and wanted to explore the area. Vin and Barb also decided not to launch after experiencing some foul-ups in setting up,



indicating that they might launch later from Monterey. Mike Swartz came down from Monterey by car to find out who all was going. He was to launch his Cal 27 from Monterey and meet us as we came in. I arranged with him to get a ride back to Moss Landing to pick up my trailer on Sunday, as I would need to leave from Monterey.



Saturday was mostly cold and foggy, we made preparations, including Dave White rigging a jack line (see photo). We set out at about 11:00 am, motoring out to the center marker buoy just outside the harbor. The wind was from the Northwest, and we began sailing south slowly at about 3 knots.





I used my big genoa for the entire day, a first for this new Hyde sail.

We (or at least I) had to sail by dead reckoning, and tried to stick reasonably close.



Bud Newhall started ahead of us and motored longer, he was out of sight when we came out of the harbor.

Outside of the harbor we saw the first of what was to be many mats of bull kelp, some were so large that birds were standing on them.

Exiting the harbor with us were some 50 or more sea lions apparently chasing fish. I got a good picture of them.



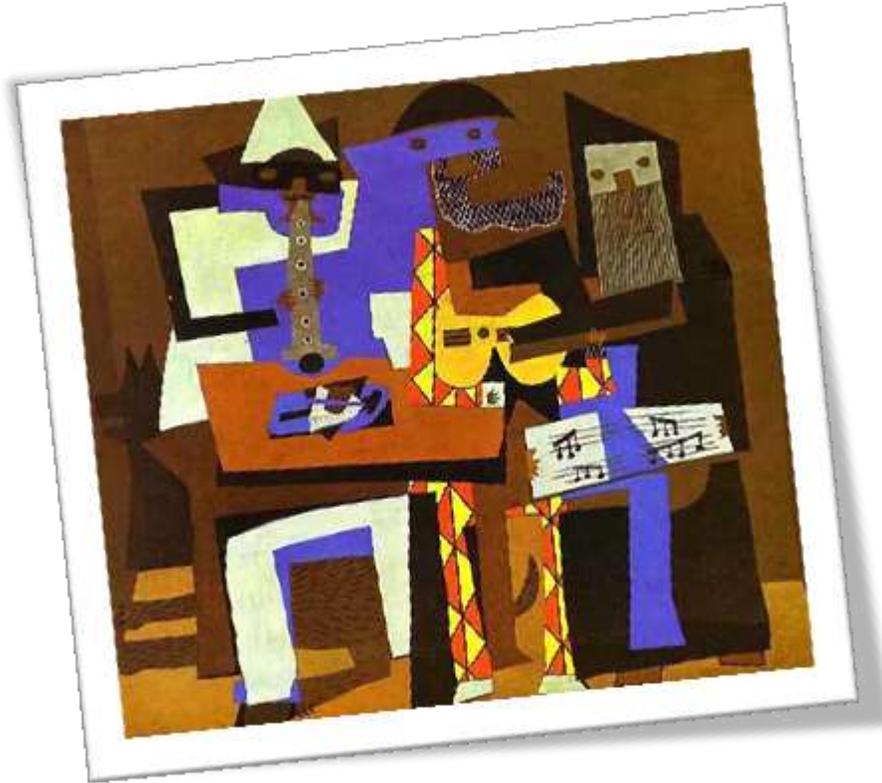
Not long after we began heading southward (I was steering 195) I lost sight of Bud and David. The wide picture above shows the kind of visibility we had. Most of the trip consisted of dodging kelp. I thought how funny I might look to an observer, sailing along on a steady course and then, boom, an emergency jibe for no apparent reason!

Bud Newhall saw a mother and baby humpback whale cruising alongside his boat on the way to Monterey, and took this photo.



As we neared Monterey the fog began to lift and we met Mike. He was taking pictures of us from the Cal 27, driven by his son. His boat looked great and moved very well. At this point we began to get more wind, and I even had one roundup. Bud and I were right together, when suddenly he began to pull ahead markedly. I questioned my sail trim and found nothing amiss, and then I remembered, check for kelp. Sure enough, I had a huge chunk on the rudder. This came off easily and I set off after him. Suddenly, he comes to a complete stop! He had plowed into a big patch and had to lift his keel. We made it into a sunny Monterey and were greeted by about 50 Flying Juniors having a race right in front of the harbor entrance.

I played some jazz on my cornet for the folks on fisherman's wharf when I went in (the sign says "Sound Your Horn").



[Credit: Pablo Picasso, Three Musicians]

We ate dinner at the Pub as a group. The next day Mike helped me get my trailer and I packed up. Bud, Bud, and Dave left at about 10:30 a.m. All in all it was a great trip. Next time I will plan to take both Friday and Monday off. I really wanted to see the whales.

- Eric



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With a Grain of Salt

The **Potter Yachter** is a forum for exchange of ideas and information among West Wight Potter (and other mini-yacht) sailors. But we Potter Yachters are mostly a bunch of amateurs finding our way by trial and error and luck.

You will probably find some very helpful tips or ideas in the Potter Yachter that will enhance your sailing experience, but you may also find some ill-advised suggestions or ideas that just don't work for your particular boat, your sailing environment, your level of sailing experience, or your boat-working skills. So please understand that any sailing tutorials, suggested boat modifications, recommended cruises, etc., are the opinion of the author, based presumably on his or her personal experience and judgment at the time the article or letter was written.

If a Potter Yachter believes s/he has a good idea and submits it to the newsletter for publication, we will usually pass it on to the rest of you in the newsletter, but take it "with a grain of salt" and a large portion of your own good judgment, and perhaps get a second opinion before undertaking a modification or cruise or sailing technique you read about in the **Potter Yachter** (or any other publication)

- *The Editor*

