



The Potter Yachter

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

September 2014

Report: Richmond Day Sail

Potter Yachters Enjoy the Windy Conditions at Marina Bay YH!

Story and Photos by Phil Marcelis



I was looking forward to my first time launching at Richmond’s Marina Bay Yacht Harbor. Thanks to Neil’s article in last month’s Potter Yachter, which provided excellent “on the ground” information, I was ready with a ten-dollar bill in hand for the parking meter. Unfortunately, the line of trailers waiting at the gate was caused by an out-of-order machine, and we all had to traipse upstairs to the harbormaster’s office for a paper receipt to put on the dashboard.

Undaunted, we made it into the parking lot and started rigging exactly according to plan. Still being the good host, Neil went around and let folks know that there’d be a captain’s meeting around 10am. So, adhering strictly to Potter Standard Time, we held that meeting at 10:40am. (The “ish” is always implied in any times specified.)

The day started off with a bit of overcast that threatened a drizzle, and winds were predicted to be at the top end of my current comfort range (20-25 knots). As Goose explained, “Yeah, it’s a normal summer day on the Bay. It’s gonna clear up, and then it’s gonna blow like stink.”

Don Person confided that it’s “always good to test the boats with a little wind.”

Thankfully, I wasn’t alone in thinking that it was windy enough to put a reef in the main before heading out. I think I heard someone in the crowd say, “You can always shake out a reef if the wind dies down.” As it was, I left my reef in and joined the majority of the Potter Pod who kept to the right and sailed up Harbor Channel: Dave Bacon, Don Person, Rich and Mary McDevitt, Dan Phy, Jim Kirwan, Pat Brennan, Neil Dorf, and Mike Truman.

But there were others who looked at the conditions a little differently and chose to go left.

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The Commodore's Corner

By Carl Sundholm

This has been quite the unusual year. The drought has been one of the most significant in California history, and now we have just had the biggest earthquake since the great quake of 1989.

We are fortunate that the drought did not significantly impact our sailing calendar, since nearly all of the events this year were planned to be in water venues that do not depend upon rainwater replenishment.

We have had a lot of good sails this year, a great Cruiser Challenge in Monterey, and are approaching the end of the sailing season. Yet, there are still four great sails left on our calendar. For September, I am hosting the Clipper Cove day sail on September 6th, and we have one of the most picturesque and enjoyable events of the season reserved for September 29th and 30th, the Tomales Bay overnight.. There is even more fun in store for October with Mike Swartz's Santa Cruz to Moss Landing sail on October 4th, and Bud Kerner's fantastic Delta 8 Bridges (hope I got the number right) Overnight Sail set for October 18th.

Looking forward to seeing you all out on the water! - 

Club Events on the Horizon for 2014

Sept. 6 (Sat) Clipper Cove (Carl)

Typically an easy day sail with a picnic at Clipper Cove, although it has been intermediate due to wind on occasion

Sept. 13 (Sat-Sun) Possible Morro Bay Overnight *CANCELLED*

This was tentatively placed on the schedule, but it's not going to happen.

Sept. 27 (Sat-Sun) Tomales Bay Overnight (Eric)

Generally easy; the overnight is spent either anchoring-out off Tomales Beach or camping in the boat pulled up onto the beach

Oct. 4 (Sat-Sun) Santa Cruz to Moss Landing Sail and Overnight (Mike)

Intermediate to advanced, depending on weather; it should be noted that most open ocean sails are advanced and not for beginners

and for the last sail officially scheduled in 2014:

Oct. 18 (Sat-Sun) Delta Eight Bridges Sail and Overnight (Bud)

Generally easy; perhaps intermediate on windy occasions; the overnight is usually spent in the boats moored at a dock

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“Sweet 16” Cruiser Challenge 2015

by ‘Goose’ Gossman

The feedback from CC15 was fantastic, and almost everyone had a blast. For the event next year, I would like to make a proposal to fellow Potter-Yachters which I’d like you to think about so we can have a vote, and/or make a decision at the annual meeting in January.

With renewed emphasis on the “Cruise”, how about launching from Moss Landing Friday, gathering at Elk Horn YC Friday night, cruise/race to Monterey Saturday, get slips at Monterey Harbor and banquet/awards at MYC, then cruise/Dory Taylor Race back to Moss on Sunday?

This format would offer significant benefits to this already great event:

--- A “destination cruise/race” would inject a modest element of adventure, and be fun, fresh and fulfilling. Moss to Monterey is already a PY event, and the course well known. Time on the water is about 3-4 hours, similar to the day-sails in Monterey. While not recommended for newbies, prudence will dictate the float plan. Perhaps Mud Hen, MaxSea, or Gale/ReGale could be available as an escort vessel.

--- Monterey parking and launching hassles eliminated. The reserved parking has been a big improvement, but is still very difficult. This year we were lucky the fish weren’t running, and conflicts with fishermen limited at the ramp. I was on task on Friday from 5am to 5pm to make it work. In contrast, Moss Landing has abundant parking, and is only a 20 minute drive for those staying with spouses at hotels in Monterey. For anyone wanting to sail down, then pull out in Monterey, shuttling trailers is an easy option... and the plan if weather isn’t favorable for sailing back to Moss. Reserved parking in Monterey would still be available, although a parking czar would be needed to volunteer for enforcement duty.

--- Racing in Monterey Saturday. For those who wish to launch in Monterey and race around the buoys “as usual”, this is available. We would need a volunteer to hold skipper’s meeting and be aboard RC boat. I would suggest a single start, all-fleet race around Mile Marker, with one or two laps depending on conditions. Trophies for both buoy-racers and C-Racers from Moss would be arranged.

So, that’s it! I think this would turbo-charge CC16. Please think about it, so that we can make a decision at the annual meeting.

Regards, Goose. – 

[To publish a response to this proposal, please email comments/opinions to the editor.]

PS- Another option would be to move CC racing back to Alameda/Oakland, where it began. We could have the Moss-Monterey Cruising Event, and then the CC Racing Event at the Oakland YC.

From the Mail Room:

All my life I have been crazy about sailboats, and in 1966 when I saw my first Potter 14 at a boat show, I fell in love with her. But life and the Army got in the way and I didn't become a Potter owner until 1974. I ordered my new boat and the long wait began. I didn't have even a small outboard, but I found a used Seagull in a box for \$20.00. I drove down to the factory to pick up my boat but she wasn't finished. So I helped finish her.

That was forty years ago and I still own her. *Breezy* has taken me and my four kids through many adventures over the years. And then there are the Potter Yachters, the nicest bunch of folks you will ever meet. Twenty years ago I bought *Sunshine*, a 1974 HMS 18 that needed lots of work. It took me three months to get her seaworthy but it was really worth it. My wife, Carol, enjoys sailing and we have had some wonderful times together. I look back on forty years of Pottering and these little boats have greatly enriched my life.

– Jerry B. *Sunshine & Breezy*



This sample, from the [Jan. 1980 issue](#) of the newsletter, is just one of the many cartoons which talented Jerry B has contributed over the years.

Upcoming: September 27-28, 2014

Potter Yachter Tomales Bay Trip

Hosted by Eric Zilbert



LAUNCHING

The Tomales Bay Potter Yachter Trip is scheduled for Sept. 27 & 28, 2014. We will be launching from the ramp at Miller County Park near Nick's Cove, located on the east side of Tomales Bay, off Highway 1, north of the town of Marshall. Parking can be difficult and may require shuttling people to parking spots along Highway one. Parking is usually easier on Friday if you can arrive a day early.

The fee is \$5.00 to launch plus \$5.00 for overnight parking. [Park Service maps](#) disagree with [official chart 18643](#) as to the location of "Tomales Beach". (see chart included below) We will have an oyster BBQ and pot-luck dinner on what we'll call [Potter Beach](#) (same location as last year) at about 5:00 p.m. Most camping beaches have pit-toilets. Communicate on VHF Ch. 68.

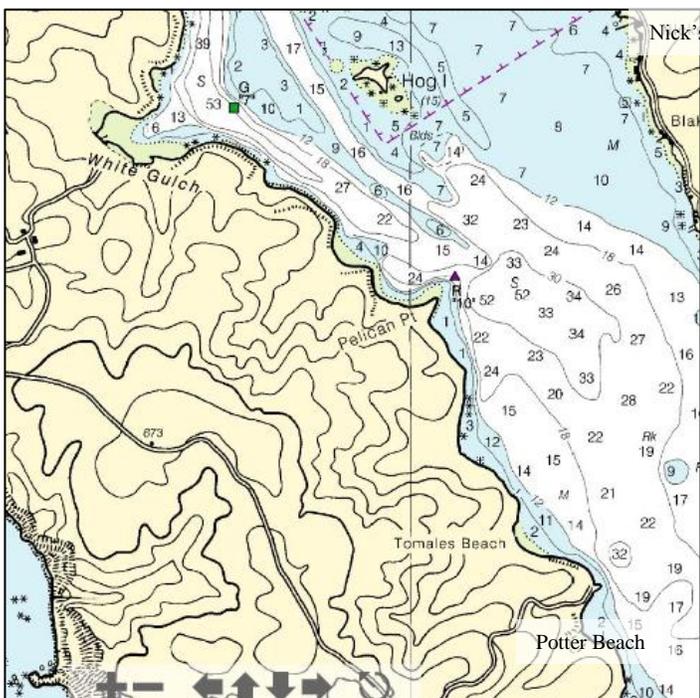


NOTE: A porta-potty is required on board for overnight stays on Tomales Bay. I have been inspected by the rangers.

TIDES AND NAVIGATION NOTES

The tides this year are perfect for mid-day sailing. Launching and retrieving should be no problem. Boats should be floating at bed-time if you want to get off late in the morning.

Leaving from Nick's Cove, sailors seeking the channel on the west side of the bay going north should be aware that the bay is quite shallow on the east side north of Hog Island. There is also a shallow area to the west of Hog Island extending both north and south that contains large shoals of eel grass in the middle of the bay that can seriously slow your progress. (refer to the chart)



Tides at Tomales Bay:		
Friday, September 26		
02:07 hrs.	4.41 feet	High Tide
08:12 hrs.	1.59 feet	Low Tide
14:02 hrs.	5.09 feet	High Tide
20:49 hrs.	0.56 feet	Low Tide
Saturday, September 27		
02:53 hrs.	4.20 feet	High Tide
08:46 hrs.	1.90 feet	Low Tide
14:36 hrs.	5.10 feet	High Tide
21:31 hrs.	0.34 feet	Low Tide
Sunday, September 28		
3:44 hrs	3.97 feet	High Tide
9:24 hrs	2.22 feet	Low Tide
15:15 hrs	5.07 feet	High Tide
22:20 hrs	0.29 feet	Low Tide

The best way to get to White Gulch (where the Elk hang out) is to go well south of Hog Island and then head north.



The entrance to Tomales Bay is a legendary hazard, due to large sleeper waves that may break in the entrance. Boats should not anchor in the entrance, and should transit the area quickly and with great caution. California's boating tips Webpage on Tomales has more information (and stories) see: <http://www.dbw.ca.gov/Pubs/TomalesBay/TomalesBay.pdf>

Tomales Bay is fairly shallow south of Marshall. The west side of the bay is deeper and with the predicted tides you should be able to get to the southern end of the bay at any time other than

(*Tomales Bay Trip* continued from page 4)

the early morning lows. Be sure to stay to the western side of the bay.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Boaters may anchor out, or camp on the beaches north of Marshall Beach on the west side of the bay. No permit is needed to anchor out (a boat-in camping permit must be obtained from the Bear Valley Visitor Center near Olema on the south end of the park if you plan to camp in a tent on the beach). There are no car camping areas in the park, but there is a private campground/trailer park near Olema (no access to water).

DINING

There are a number of restaurants on Hwy 1 south of Miller Park, and last year the restaurant at Nick's Cove was open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I generally treat a trip to Tomales Bay as a camping trip.

E-mail (ezilbert@cde.ca.gov) or call to let me know if you plan to attend. For more information you can call: Eric Zilbert: 530-757-6783 (eves) or 530-665-0698 (cell).

Other Useful Numbers:

Bear Valley Visitor Center 415-663-1092

[Nick's Cove](#) 415-663-1033

"Your cellphone won't ring out here, but we have landlines if you need to make a call." - Nick's



Upcoming: October 18-19, 2014

Bridges Sail and Overnight

Hosted by Bud Kerner

Come join the **Potter Yachters** for a sail thru the West Delta. We will launch on Saturday October 18 at the Rio Vista City launch ramp, where parking is free but there is a \$10 launch fee. I would like to have all boats in the water by 10 o'clock.



photo: Phil Marcelis

After launching, we will sail down the Sacramento River to Three Mile Slough. From there we will connect with the San Joaquin River and sail to the Mokelumne River, where we will traverse Little Potato Slough to Tower Park Marina for an overnight.

The Tower Park Bridge has a clearance of 35 feet at high tide. If you need more room we will have to call 4 hours in advance to have the bridge opened.

The slip fee at Tower Park Marina is \$17 per boat. There is a restaurant/bar there that serves dinner and breakfast. The next day we will continue on Little Potato Slough to Potato Slough to once again connect with the San Joaquin River. We will sail down the river to Three Mile Slough, and then back to the Sacramento River for the sail to Rio Vista. The two day sail is approximately 40 NM, about 20 each day. Gas is available at the marina. - 

Directions to Rio Vista City launch ramp **from Highway 12 West bound:**
Make first right after crossing Rio Vista Bridge,
Right to go under bridge.
Just after Stop Sign turn left into launch ramp parking lot.

from Highway 12 East bound:
Turn right just before Rio Vista Bridge at Chevrolet Dealer.
Right at Stop Sign.
In approximately .25 of a mile straight at Stop Sign.
Launch ramp parking lot just ahead on left.





Captain’s Meeting: Neil (left) goes over the sail plans with Dennis, Mike, Don, Harry, and a few other Potter Yachters within earshot.

Since it was getting to be about lunchtime, I tried to make my way to the lee of Brooks Island with the hope of anchoring, but it looked too shallow and I thought I might need to crank up the centerboard. There was a bit too much wind, so I started the engine and pointed into it to get the sails down, when suddenly the large barge that I thought was moored to the dock came alive and scared me with three toots on the horn. I got out of his way and decided to have my lunch at the docks.

I found Don and Dan and some others who apparently had the same idea, and not long afterwards I was enjoying the camaraderie of some truly fine folks. -



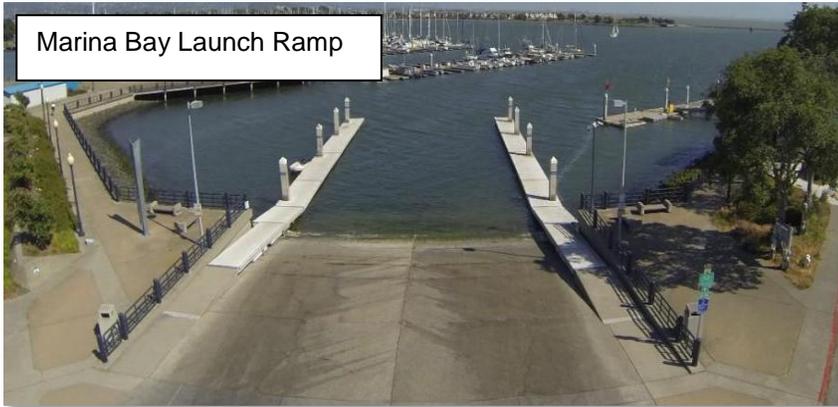
Potluck “Happy Hour”. (from left, behind tiller): Bud, Jim, Dan, Don, and Phil.



Dennis heads to the ramp with crewmember Cindi.



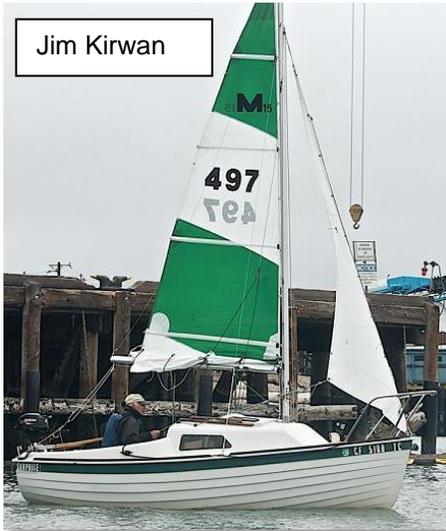
Jim, Goose, and Don probably talking about Potters.



Marina Bay Launch Ramp



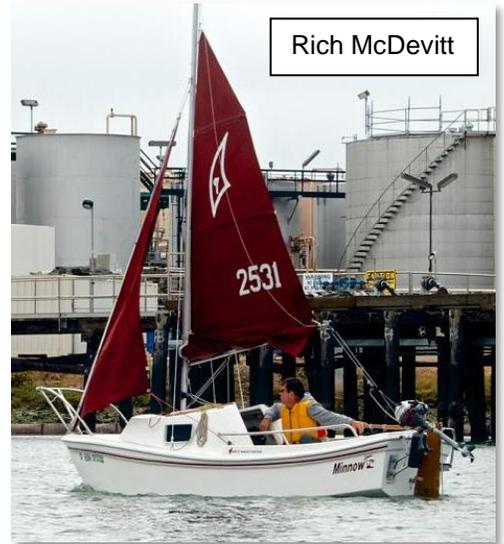
Dave Bacon



Jim Kirwan

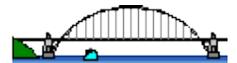
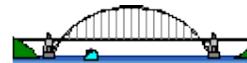


Phil Marcelis



Rich McDevitt

Skipper photos this page by Don Person



Classified Ads

FOR SALE: Standard Horizon GX-1700 VHF Radio w/GPS. White. Almost new condition, in original box with all mounting hardware. Works great. Asking \$165. Contact Phil – sail@marcelis.com

Potter Yachter Membership

Join the *Potter Yachters* – the club that has been around since 1978 and, with your participation, will continue to withstand the test of time. We’re really a bunch of nice folks who would just love to have other nice folks join us. Your dues help support club activities and publish the newsletter, so you’ll be sure to know when we’re out sailing, whether that’s in the San Juan Islands, Monterey, the SF Bay, or elsewhere. Annual dues are \$25. Make checks payable to “Pat Brennan”.

Send your payment (with your name and address) to:

Pat Brennan
 1305 Webster Street #C205
 Alameda CA, 94501

See us online at: www.potter-yachters.org

Organized in Northern California in 1978, the *Potter Yachters* is the longest running West Wight Potter club. Membership is open to anyone interested in West Wight Potters and other trailerable microcruiser sailboats.



Patrick Brennan
1305 Webster St., C205
Alameda, CA 94501

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*

