



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

May 2007

Sailing & Event Calendar

April 14, Oakland Estuary Day Sail, launch at Grand St. Alameda. Sail Host, Bruce Hood

April 18 & 22, Strictly Sail, Jack London Square, Oakland.

May 19 & 20, Delta Cruise, Overnight, Brannon Island to Lundborg Landing. Sail Host, Jerry Barrilleaux

June 2 & 3, Woodward Annual Campout, near Oakdale, CA. Sail Host, Rich McDevitt

June 24 & 25, Eagle Lake Campout, near Susanville, CA. Sail Host, Dave White

July 15, Richmond Day Sail, to Loch Loman

July 28 & 29, Cruiser Challenge VIII, Monterey. Annual fun race/social Weekend, sponsored by Potter Yachters and MPYC.

August 18, Richmond Day Sail, Angel Island Circumnavigation. Sail Host, Don Person

Sept 4 to 20, Usual Suspects to Pacific Northwest. Recommended for experienced trailer/sailors. Sail Host, Dick Herman

Sept 9, Delta Day Sail B&W Marina to Korth's

Sept 29 & 30, Tomales Bay weekend. Sail Host, Eric Zilbert

Oct 13 & 14, Monterey Overnighter. Sail Host, Mike Swartz

Nov 3, Richmond Day Sail. Sail Host, Dave Meredith

Change the Date, Delta Sail May 19 & 20

Don't hold your Mother responsible for the Delta Sail to Lundborg Landing being scheduled on her day. It is good to see that Mother's still hold sway over sailors planning a weekend sail. So, it has been rescheduled because we want to go to the Delta and we love our Mother's. Editor

We will be launching around 9 AM from Brannon Island State Park, and sailing over to Lundborg Landing on Bethel Island. This has always been a fun sail, and usually draws a nice turnout. The folks at the Landing are very Potter friendly and they are expecting us. The Landing serves Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner. They also have Live music on the weekends. They have a full Bar, and FREE guest docks. They also have a campground if you want to bring a mob.

To get to Brannon Island take Highway 4, go over the Antioch Bridge it turns into 160. Go for several miles and just after you cross the second bridge the Park entrance will be on your right. Tell the ranger you want launching and overnite parking. If the ranger isn't there you will find envelopes at the ramp. If you come early Brannon Island also has nice overnite slips next to the launching ramp.

We usually have Breakfast at the Landing and then have a great sail back to the launch ramp on Sunday.

If you have any questions call Jerry Barrilleaux at 925 685 4577

SEE YOU THERE!

The Commodore's Log

Without doubt, the monthly newsletter is the heartbeat of the Potter Yachters, and we are lucky to have Mike and Janet Dolan as editors. They do a professional job that is truly noteworthy. But it is up to us to supply the goodies that they publish. So folks, pitch in and send any tidbits you might have that could be of interest to your fellow Potters.

I like doing the Commodore's Log (okay, so I suffer from diarrhea of the word processor) and have started the Captains Locker for those little items that are fun to write about. The sail hosts pitch in, and Rich McDevitt and Bruce Hood are always contributing stuff. We could sure use some help from the rest of you. It would make Mike and Janet's job a lot easier if they had a backlog of

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The Captain's Locker

By Dick Herman

Got a tidbit about sailing you'd like to share? This is the place. It doesn't matter what it is, somewhere you've sailed, a technique you've learned the hard way, or just something neat. Write up a paragraph or two and send it along

Are you a turtle?

Turtledom is an honorable estate and it has been has been said that there are those of us who have turtled, and those of us who will. For the record, I am a turtle and I did it in front a group of Potters outside Marina Bay at Richmond.

When I was learning to fly, one of my instructors asked me why do planes land with the gear up? The answer: because in most cases, the pilot told it to. It's that way with turtling. In most cases. the boat capsized because the skipper told it to. Granted, the Skipper probably didn't know what he said to the boat, but you can be sure whatever he told the boat to do, it was wrong.

So how do you avoid doing the wrong thing? Well, do you remember to put the center-board down? Do you know the best angle to cross a wake? How do you punch into a really big wave and come down the backside? How fast can you un-cleat or release a mainsheet? Do you always sail with the companionway boards in? Do you think reef early? Do you always sail with the companionway boards in? Do you think reef early?

Having said that, there are times you are just going to go over because you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Hey, that's sailing. Just hope your wife or S.O. is not aboard when it happens.

Dick Herman



Potters at Jack London Square

Photo by Jerry Kergan

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WAYWARD OUTBOARDS

By Ed Dove

Yes, it is outboards, with an “S”! When I purchased my Potter 15, it came with an old 2 cycle outboard. For the first year I used it for a while, however, it was very unpredictable and unreliable. So off to the shop to “fix it”.

The motor ran well for a short time after I got it back from the shop, then the old beast started to act up again. So, back to the shop it went and again it worked well, but only for a while. The motor would not start, pull, pull, pull, when it would finally start it ran rough and would not idle.

By this time I'd had enough of an old unreliable motor. Some nice boaters would ask if I needed a tow to get back in, when it would not start. As Chester A. Riley use to say, “what a revoltin' development this is”. What is a new sailor to do?

The logical thing was to spring for a brand new motor. How about the much acclaimed Honda 4 cycle, 2 hp motor that so many Potter Yachters have? After all I have had a Honda motorcycle for



over 20 years with typical Honda reliability. It's a no-brainer!

So, I bought a new Honda. It worked fine for a while. Oh no! Here we go again! It would not idle. Wait a minute. I just went through this with my old 2-cycle. But a new Honda? What were the odds?

I took the new motor back to Honda. They fixed it, under warranty and it worked well, but only for a short time. Not again!! If by now you're thinking I had to return to Honda a second time I'd say you get an “A” in insight.

Well, this story does have a happy ending. The new Honda continues to run well after its second trip to the shop. The folks at Honda told me they were having problems because of some change in the gas formula that happens about the time I bought my motor. Honda had a “fix” and it seems to work like I imagined a Honda should.

Honda's

photo by Dave Kautz

Ordeal on Monterey Bay. A pleasant beginning turned into frightening odyssey

The night before a big sail I never sleep very well. Will the motor run if we need it? Will we get there on time for the launch? Did I bring enough wine? All burning questions that kept me tossing and turning until our four o'clock wake up alarm.

The morning broke bright and clear two and a half hours after we left home. The prospect of sailing is one of the few things that will get me out of bed before the birdies. This trip was a much anticipated jaunt from Santa Cruz, California fourteen miles to Moss Landing with the Potter Yachters. The PY's are an intrepid bunch of pocket cruisers that smile at the prospect of crossing the deepest marine canyon along the entire coast of North America. Did I mention that great white sharks and killer whales haunted my dreams as well? They inhabit this canyon. Changing head sails would be my husband's job this trip.

We arrived at the Santa Cruz launch ramp in plenty of time. A bevy of Potters and other associated pocket cruisers were scattered about the parking lot in various stages of rigging and launching. The ramp at Santa Cruz is plenty wide but there is no place to tie up on the starboard ramp. This is a major inconvenience for single handed sailors. Fortunately the PY's have a team spirit and eventually all boats were launched safely.

The ten o'clock departure time came and went without incident, or departure. I anxiously waited for the first little Potter to head down the harbor mouth. Sailing in the ocean is a terrifying prospect for my husband and myself. We have a boat on a mooring in Morro Bay and have yet to venture out of the harbor. We looked once and turned around.

Finally the pod of ten pocket cruisers and a tender by the name of "Dauntless", piloted by our organizer John Wheeler, made for the harbor mouth. My first view of the ocean was waves breaking across the harbor mouth. "We're gonna die." I told my husband. "No, look. We can stay to port and miss the waves." He is so cute when he's scared.

Finally out in the ocean we raised the Genoa and cut the motor. Ah, that moment of quiet we all dream about. You can talk without shouting over the motor, seagulls call happily overhead and all is right with the world.



Dauntless on the left.

We were told by one of our fellow travelers that as soon as we exited the harbor we would be able to see the steam towers of the power plant at Moss Landing. No dice. The opposite side of the bay was swathed in fog. I assumed it would burn off by the time we got there five hours later so we could see the harbor entrance. Never assume.

We separated a bit as the larger boats pulled away from the smaller Potter 15's. The conditions were mild and I estimate the winds were around five knots. Our Compac 19 took the conditions with confidence. As we approached the midway point in our trip the fog reached lazy arms around our little procession and we were at once in isolation. I believe we were just at the edge of that previously mentioned canyon as the conditions worsened to sharp faced swells and contrary wind waves.

Our babysitter "Dauntless" suggested on the radio that we huddle up in pods. We found ourselves in the company of two other boats that seemed to know where they were going. Brad on his seventeen foot Vagabond "Mosey" took the lead as we dropped into second place. Brad was following a heading on his compass and assured everyone that he had the coordinates to Moss Landing on his GPS. I had also put Moss Landing on my GPS but I suspected I had marked the parking lot, not the harbor mouth, first lesson learned.

As the wind picked up we decided to take down the Genoa. I was unanimous in my decision that my husband should make the
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trip to the bow with an encouraging wink. I took the helm. Dan bounced around up there quite a bit but finally was successful in wrestling down the Genoa and hoisting a standard jib while the other two boats in our flotilla waited.

As we headed once again toward Moss Landing I found we were in the lead. "I don't want to be in front." I announced to anyone who might be listening on the radio. "Ok, I'll take it." came John in "Dauntless". "Keep a heading of 120 and follow me in."



Passing in the fog

Previous to this I had commented to my husband, Dan, that Brad on "Mosey" was having a hard time holding his course. Well, I was about to find out why! I had never steered a course by the compass under sail. To add to the fun the swells were coming on our starboard quarter and they were steep. It took every bit of concentration I had to keep heading somewhat in the right direction. I kept an eye on "Dauntless" through the fog and finally came upon the harbor mouth.

In the meantime the smaller Potter contingent was in the process of avoiding a fogbound cable laying ship in the bay. It's fog horn was blaring and I understand that one of our hearty band mistook the horn for the harbor entrance to Moss Landing and followed it through the fog like a lost duckling. Imagine his surprise when the gray superstructure of the

massive ship emerged from the fog! Eventually all the flotilla found it's way safely into the harbor and we rafted up stern too on the Elkhorn Yacht Club guest dock. By that time it was 3:45. The bar didn't open till four. What to do, what to do.

By around five thirty we finished our run on the bar at the yacht club and decided that it was time for dinner. There is one restaurant near the Elkhorn Yacht Club on the parking lot of a nice new launch ramp. This was unfortunately not our destination. Steve Chambers led our intrepid band on a "short walk" to Moss Landing. He encouraged us with tails of the wonderful sea food at Phil's. It took quite a bit of encouraging, since we had to walk down Highway One for what seemed like thirty miles. Steve has an inseam of something around seventy inches, so keeping up with this retired backpacker was a trick.

Thirty long minutes later we finally pulled open the doors to Phil's. I do have to say it was worth the walk. The food was excellent and the conversation,



No wind, no engine. The author at the helm.

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fun and educational. Unfortunately, at the end of dinner we were once again faced with a walk back along Hwy 1 in the wake of daddy long legs.

Sleeping accommodations in our Compac 19 consist of two quarter births with all our stuff piled in the V-berth. The quarter berths are plenty comfortable and offer ample headroom. We used a boom tent over the cockpit and that made it possible to sleep with the companionway open for fresh air. Since the 19 doesn't have a galley per se, we use a backpacking stove to heat water for coffee and oatmeal. It works just fine for one or two nights out.



In the morning the yacht club opened up to us with hot coffee and hot showers. By around nine thirty we back in the boats and headed out for the open sea. The wind was on the bow so motoring was the order of the day. The seas were relatively calm and I anticipated an uneventful trip home. Then the motor coughed.

My husband had chosen to bring an older Honda that he took in trade for a jack hammer. "Once I took the hornet's nest out of the engine compartment it runs great!" I was informed. Yah right. I don't know anything useful about outboard motors. That's his job. The motor coughed again and I looked for reassurance. I didn't see any. "We have plenty of help around us if the motor quits." I observed without confidence. The silence was deafening when it finally happened. It wasn't the nice silence like when you turn the motor off intentionally once the sails are set. Oh no, this was a bad silence.

Thankfully we did have plenty of help in a very short period of time. The big decision was upon whom to bestow the honor of towing us. We finally settled on Mike and his son Russell on "Burgundy Splash", a lovely Potter 19 with a good motor. An hour and a half of humbly submitting to a tow line and we were back in the safe arms of Santa Cruz harbor.

Gretchen Ricker

(The Commodores Log, Continued from page 1)

stuff to publish. There now, I feel better.

Strictly Sail at Jack London Square is always fun to attend and I look forward to it each year. I hadn't been there ten minutes Saturday, April 21, when I ran into Jerry Barrilleaux. We wandered over to the International Marine exhibit and ran into Bruce Hood and Dan Phy. We talked to Ryan and Jim, and all oohed and awed over a very tricked out Potter 19 and the new Sanibel. Both were gems with their blue hulls and fine detailing. It is an interesting crowd with a variety of vendors and boats on display. But I couldn't help smiling when Potters sailed by on the estuary. I recognized Ron Bell, Dave Kautz, Jerry Kergan and Don Person. I apologize if I missed anyone else who was waving the ensign. Not only were Potters at the show, we were on the water.

Thanks to Pat Brennan, the website for Cruiser Challenge VIII is up and taking reservations at <http://home.comcast.net/~pat-brennan> There is a lot of interest and we are up and running.

Finally, one of the unexpected consequences of this job is the mail I get. A lot of it is junk and I'm wearing out the delete key. But I have met some nice folks who are interested in sailing and the Potter Yachters. Unfortunately, they are geographically impaired for membership. But it has made me appreciate even more what we have.

Woodward Campout June 2nd and 3rd.

by Rich McDevitt

Its time for the bazillionth annual Potter Yachter Woodward Reservoir campout. This stalwart event makes the calendar every year because it is a fantastic venue for small boat sailing and camping right on the shore. This year promises a record turnout for this event so don't miss it. Facilities have been improved over the years (tables, restrooms, launch ramps, camp sites) so if you have not been in a while this would be a good year to reacquaint yourself with Woodward. This is a great lake for fishing, swimming, water toys, windsurfing, exploring, and sailing. If you have extra fun water toys gathering dust, bring them along. Woodward is a great place to bring kids and let them wear out in the fresh air. Woodward offers islands to sail to or around, countless coves to explore, some wide open sailing, paddling, waterskiing, and unfortunately a few PWC's.

Woodward is located just north of Hwy. 120 between Escalon and Oakdale. From Highway 99 in Manteca take 120 east for about 18 miles. Make a left (north) turn onto 26 mile road (J14) for approximately 4 miles and you will see the park entrance. We will be camping in an area known as Pelican Cove. The wind generally allows us easy coming and going from the beach at Pelican Cove. You can RV, trailer, tent, or boat camp here. There is a limit line now that requires you campsite be approximately 10 or 15 yards from the water's edge but no one has ever hassled us for sleeping on the boats.

It helps if someone can go out a day or two early and stake out our turf as there are no reservations accepted for the Pelican Cove area campsites. If someone is available please let me know, (925-829-7792 or email cadcotsm@aol.com) if not we just take a chance. There is a launch ramp (Bayview Boat ramp) within walking distance of the camp site, at Pelican Cove, look for the windmill. If you arrive early just ask a ranger and follow the road around the lake.



On Saturday afternoon Happy Hour will start around 5:30 and last until dawn Sunday unless you go to bed. Also starting at 5:30 PM Saturday we will have our 2nd Potter Yachter swap/exchange meet. Bring your extra boat jewelry, you know, paddles, shackles, line, teak, stainless steel parts, fasteners, old VHF's, GPS's, foul weather gear, etc. The things you no longer use and see if you can sell them for a few bucks or trade for what's behind door #2. Starting at 6:00 PM Saturday will be our usual extremely unorganized pot luck. Bring something to share, like smoked salmon, venison jerky, steak, escargot, lobster, caviar. You know the kind of things we Potter sailors usually eat. Of course we also like bread, salads, beans, heck; we've even been treated to pop-sicles and ice cream over the years.

Good things to bring to Woodward: All of your food and drink for the weekend (I think the marina store is still closed), drinking water, sunscreen, swimsuits, water toys, camping gear, shade, chairs, tables, bug repellent, firewood, smiles and friends. If you can't make the weekend, see if you can make it for Saturday. Entrance to the park allows you to stay until 10 PM so you can attend the pot luck before you head home. If you are currently not a Potter Yachter or a Potter owner, come anyway. For a few bucks entrance to the park, I can pretty much guarantee you a

good time, opportunity to sail, and check out a few Potters. Even if you don't sail, there is usually some activity on the shore (telling of some very high caliber lies and tales).

Fees: Day use is \$8.00 per day per vehicle and \$7.00 per day per boat. Camping in the undeveloped sites at Pelican Cove is \$15.00 per day. Some senior discounts may be available, ask at the entrance kiosk.

////////////////////Create a Wake////////////////////////////////////

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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*