

'Pub/Cuddle' Cruise Report

Weekend Fri Oct. 28 – Sunday Oct 30, 2016

Clearly, fall is the time when Salt Springers get back to their commitments and committees. So while most SISC cruisers were attending to their land-based responsibilities and other sources of joy, 3 intrepid cruising yachts (**Equanimous**/Gord and Laura Dafoe, **Bodacious**/Steve and Cindy West, and **Magena**/Diane and John Lugsdin with guests Bruce and Wendy Eggertson) ventured forth after seemingly endless days of rain, cloud, and wind.

Inspired by the God of Organization, firm plans were laid for fair weather boating. And so it came to pass that each day these yachts cast off their shore ties, the skies cleared and the glowing sun emerged, immersing all in warmth and overwhelming feelings of wellness. Sad to contemplate those whose responsibilities tied them to shore, thereby missing some of the best 'sailing' weather of the 2016 season (mind you, no sails raised in anger due to flat calm conditions). Magena's first mate, Diane, claimed the conditions to be considerably warmer than most June/July days cruising in Haida Gwaii.

All 3 boats departed Ganges harbour shortly after noon on Friday in flat balmy conditions, SVs Equanimous and Magena escorted by 'Pocket Cruiser' MV Bodacious (too bad the Canadian Navy can't adopt such salacious names for its warships). Upon reaching Satellite Channel, Equanimous' skipper Gord Dafoe had exhausted supplies of favoured rations – salt and pepper potato chips, requiring resupply at sea while both SVs proceeded at synchronized speed in sufficiently close proximity (2 arm lengths), obviating the text book fixed transfer cable for cargo resupply. Magena, being experienced with Equanimous' habits, was prepared with extra stores! All procedures were recorded for naval (SISC) historical logs by the Bodacious Skipper/Photographer/Capt. Steve West while cruising protectively a short distance off.

Quotes from Captain West: "Magena pulled up alongside to deliver goods from the 'Gord Basket' with Diane reaching to Gord as John and Laura managed the helm." Photos follow:



The Distressed! (...being out of potato chips) – Po' Gord



The Approach



The Transfer - Note the calm waters, glowing sun on dry canvas, short sleeve attire.



The Separation: Gord's ecstasy discreetly not shown.

Fortunately, the resupply was accomplished prior to encountering a fleet of 40-50 fishing boats spread across the channel and stretching to the entry to Cowichan Bay, that being enroute to Genoa Bay and Happy Hour. None of us having encountered a fishing 'opening' before, we were not clear how to proceed. The fish boats seemed randomly associated with a similar number of red marker buoys, the purpose of which was unclear, especially in that some boats were close to a red buoy and others were up to 200+ metres away from any buoy.

Bodacious, all hands on the flybridge, cruised ahead at cautiously reduced speed, suspicious of strange patterns on the water surface. Given the sun's being in the west, aside from the buoys, no clear markings were visible. Nary a fish vessel nor the large Coast Guard vessel standing a half-mile off the fleet hailed us with warning or directions. Apparently, First Nations fishers prefer not to do radio time while fishing – sort of makes sense.

In the words of Capt. Steve, "Not far ahead, a Coast Guard cutter appeared, keeping watch over a beehive of activity caused by about 50 fishing boats. We had to pick our way through while trying to pick which orange float belonged to which net trawler. It was hard to do with some of the nets being hundreds of feet long. The trick was to head toward an orange float and then pick the correct side to pass on; mostly we won, only had to stop and back up once".



The watch for fish net floats!

So, every cruise has its educational aspect and that 'fish opening' was for all of us a real learning experience; nobody ran afoul of any nets!



Sunset off Genoa Bay

Capt. Steve continues with the narrative, "We arrived at Genoa Bay at about 4:30 but the offices were closed. We picked our spots on C dock, went for a walk before supper and then had a great meal at Genoa Bay Café. The highlight for me was the decadent bread and hummus offered before the meal. The restaurant has a couple's combination 3 course meal that most people picked. Off to bed for some, cards for the young aboard the Magena. The euchre tourney was held over in favour of a new game with various pronunciations: Raunch (...we will pick a permanent name on the next cruise.)



A truly delicious dinner at the Genoa Bay Café, with gracious service, including 'hugs' for all!



Tucked in for the night in cozy Genoa Bay

The Bodacious narrative continues, “The next day had omelettes aboard Magena, and soon after that, Equanimous headed to Maple Bay early for fuel, while the others left for Chemainus after lunch. Sansum was gorgeous, so we meandered to get closer looks at what caught attention.

Harman was on hand at Chemainus to catch us and settle us on the outside near the ferry terminal. There was a fire at the Western Forest Mill that brought fire trucks to attend the black smoke. Mill workers were running around with hoses and the worst was over before the department arrived. We had some euchre activity aboard Bodacious and then went for supper. After a great meal, consisting of whatever we wanted except soup of the day, some entrees and 2 of 4 desserts, we walked home well-served.”

We were delighted to have Patrick and Gail Beattie join us including a pick-up at the docks by Patrick for those appreciating a ride up to the Pub. Unfortunately, we had already decided not to press on to Ladysmith to their home territory – perhaps next year.



The walk up to the Sawmill Taphouse and Grill is fine pre-dinner exercise and the downhill 'home' settles the beer and vitals – we were too content (or old maybe) to consider anything but bed!

Next morning, Bodacious left early with Equanimous, in considerable fog but treated to the calmest of seas. The awesome sunrise was mixed with fog, clouds and many more freighters at anchor. Magena slept in, then crossed Stuart Channel in glorious sun with lifting fog, to drop crew at Vesuvius to attend a memorial celebration at the Club. Bodacious reported, "Cindy and I spent much of the day in James Bay on Prevost because it was too nice to go in. We tendered over to Ganges to get lunch makings and headed in around 4:30, John was there to catch us at the docks."

A fun outing graciously blessed with wonderful weather – the Gods were with us and we would like to have more boats join next year.



Happy cruisers!