

Blog of the *Mary T*: Newfoundland 2009

May 22, 2009

Deale, MD to Cape May, NJ

We finally left our favorite marina, Shipwright Harbor, on Monday, May 18th. The wind was about 15 knots and gusting to 20 and, of course, was out of the north. Since we were in no hurry, we tacked up the Bay until the wind quit near Thomas Point Lighthouse. Our destination was Whitehall Bay, near Annapolis and it was a perfect first anchorage.

Tuesday was a beautiful, sunny day but one without wind. So, we motored toward the C&D canal expecting to anchor in the Bohemia River or to take a slip at the Summit North Marina. However, we caught the north-bound current and flew through the upper reaches of the Chesapeake and then the canal. We were doing 8 and sometimes 9 knots which is quite fast for us.

We anchored behind Reedy Island just south of the canal. It has a spectacular view of the cooling tower at the Salem Power Plant across the river in NJ. The last time I was there was in 1987 when I was sailing north with Justin, Kai-lee and our dog, Duke.

There were quite a few other boats anchored there as well so we picked what seemed like a reasonable spot and dropped our trusty plow. The wind was blowing at about 15 knots out of the south and the current on that portion of the Delaware is rather strong. We were curious how things would play out when the current changed. Slack tide was around 9:30 pm and by 10 pm wind and current had settled into an opposing condition. This caused one of the other boats nearby to swing extremely close to us. It would veer away to a more suitable distance and then veer back. So, after about 15 minutes of deliberation, we decided to move a hundred yards or so away. No trauma to report. The move paid off and we had a very restful sleep.

The following day we motored on a windless, bug-less Delaware Bay to Cape May. We had considered going on to Block Island but did not have enough diesel fuel and the weather predictions indicated that we might have to motor quite a bit. We chose to take a slip at a marina and take in a dinner at Lucky Bones.

Upon the routine check of the motor for oil leakage, I discovered an unusual amount of green liquid caught in the oil drip pan that lives under the motor. Tracing the leak to the source, we determined that it was anti-freeze leaking from the cooling system water pump. I'd seen a few drops of this before but didn't recognize it as anti-freeze. Anyway, we ordered a new pump that we expect will be delivered on the 22nd. We'll then head to Atlantic City to give it a test and to visit our friends Paul and Coleen. Paul is the good Samaritan that helped us back in 2005 when we broke the cable to our transmission. New Jersey people are the greatest!

So, while waiting for the pump, we will enjoy Cape May.

-Ken

BEGIN AMY :

It feels good to be cruising again, though I did not feel the delirious joy I did when we set off two years ago. It was more like relief to finally be pushing off. My back had been bothering me, so our departure was delayed and I was beginning to fear we'd never go anywhere. I'm glad to say my back is getting steadily better.



Unlike our previous trip, when I shot loads of video, I have not shot 1 frame. In fact, I'm still editing the video from the last voyage. I do plan to complete it before I leave this earth.

Somebody once said, "cruising just means fixing your boat in exotic places." I couldn't agree more. What's more exotic than Cape May, New Jersey? We took a lovely bike ride into town yesterday and ogled the beautiful Victorian B & Bs, checked out the beach and settled into a beer at a sidewalk cafe to watch the passersby. It's one of those places that makes me feel like maybe I'm not such a bad dresser.

Here's a typical interaction between Kenny and I.

Kenny: Mumble, mumble, mumble...

Amy: What?

Kenny: Mumble...

Amy: Are you talking to me?

Kenny: No, I'm singing. (Or) I'm talking to the radio.

Apart from the fact that we're already over budget, all is well. Life is good.

May 25, 2009 Atlantic City

After having our faulty water pump replaced, we prepared to leave Cape May on May 23. It was a clear, sunny morning as we backed out of our slip at Utsch's Marina. "This is going to be the best day ever," we thought. A friendly sailor in a neighboring slip helped us get off and as he cast off our last dock line and tossed it to me, it met me in the face knocking my fairly new prescription glasses into the the murky depths. Or course, I should have been wearing croakies to hold the damn things on. Time to get out the spare drug store glasses.

Less than a quarter of a mile out of the marina, Kenny pointed out our engine's temperature gauge. It was nearly pegged to the max., topping 200 degrees Fahrenheit. (It usually reads around 130). As we were nearing the anchorage, we decided to turn into it and drop the hook. Best day ever. After talking to a mechanic on the phone we decided it prudent to call for a tow back to the marina rather than fire up the engine and have it blow up on us.

Back at Utsch's Marina, another mechanic, named Steve, came and assessed the situation. Seems there wasn't enough coolant in the system. We asked him to replace the thermostat since he was there. As Steve replaced the old one with our new spare which we had on board, he explained every maneuver, so we would understand exactly what he was doing. To be sure, he completed every statement with the phrase, "You know what I'm saying?" He was a man who was clearly passionate about his work. In a few hours he had us up and running, but it was too late at that point to head for Atlantic City, so we took a long last walk into Cape May to watch the tourists coming and going with their giant ice cream cones and strollers.



The morning of May 24, we left at 6:30 a.m. and headed for Atlantic City. It would be the best day ever, no doubt. This time I kept my glasses on and the temperature gauge stayed at 130 degrees. We motor-sailed all the way to Atlantic City and arrived at Gardner's Basin Marina shortly after 1 p.m. We got together with our friends, Paul and Colleen, whom we met here in 2005, when Paul helped us solve a mechanical problem with our steering. They hope to go long-term cruising in the near future, so they too can fix their boat in exotic places. Our little cocktail party aboard *Mary T* lasted from 6 p.m. 'til 10 p.m. without a single gap in the conversation.

Unable to justify spending any more money on marinas, this morning (May 25) we came out to the anchorage. It is well protected and calm, so we will wait out the passing of several cold fronts here

gazing at the gleaming casinos in the distance.

Next stop: Block Island.

June 6, 2009

Atlantic City, NJ to Provincetown, MA

A quick note about the position reports on <http://www.pangolin.co.nz/yotreprs/tracker.php?ident=WDE2028>: we do not haul our boat ashore at every landfall and carry it inland a quarter mile. The latitude and longitude are correct but Pangolin's map is off by about .25 mile south of our actual locations.

Our stay in Atlantic City left us no richer or poorer than when we arrived. The boardwalk and casinos depressed me more than usual. I was going to spend \$20 of the cruising kitty on slot

machines in hopes of winning big, but it's no fun to play them anymore. They don't even take quarters. You have to start with at least a five dollar bill and the machines don't give change just tickets. By the time the cashier finished explaining to me how it all worked, I'd lost any desire I once had to play.

Instead of throwing our money away gambling, we wandered outside onto the boardwalk to check out the scene. There is beach on one side and casinos on the other, with a lot of other crap thrown into the mix like an amusement park, carnival-style games, a Ripley's Believe it or Not, and a thousand shops selling T-shirts and cheap jewelry. We purchased a funnel cake and huddled on a bench, cowering from the seagulls to devour our treat. A funnel cake is a tangled mass of worm-shaped deep fried dough bits covered with powdered sugar. Delicious. According to my sister Mary, a funnel cake has 780 calories.

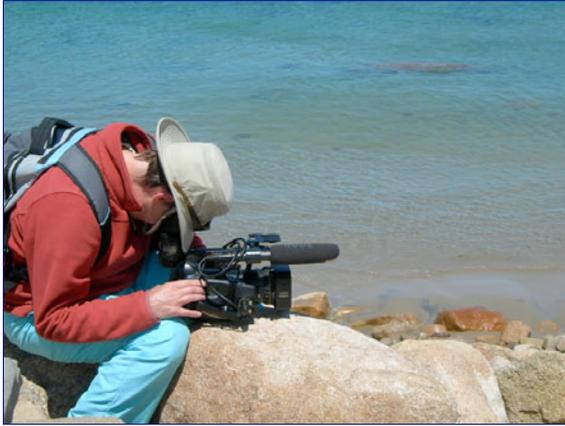
After stuffing our faces, we continued walking in the stream of tourists until we could stand it no more. We ducked into the Irish Pub, just off the boardwalk for a drinkypoo. We later learned that one of the employees there had been stabbed and killed trying to break up a fight. That was our only foray into town and I couldn't wait to get back *Mary T.*

One day in the anchorage at Atlantic City, an old acquaintance, Alison Nichols, paddled by in her kayak looking for the grocery store. It was not a huge surprise, as she'd informed me prior to her departure from Annapolis that she and her husband Russ were headed for Newfoundland. Still we did not know they were in Atlantic City. We explained that there was a grocery store nearby, but nowhere to land a kayak and no way to get ashore without walking through a marsh and scaling a rather high seawall.

Undeterred, Alison set off in the direction we indicated. An hour and a half later we saw her paddling back toward her boat loaded down with bags of groceries. We were most impressed. Later on the phone she explained that she had pulled up to the dock of a house for sale, tied up her kayak and simply proceeded to the store. She and Russ are now in Martha's Vineyard and will continue from there directly to Halifax, Nova Scotia. They will probably arrive in Newfoundland at least a month before us.

Cruising is all about waiting for good weather. Where you decide to sit and wait is often an interesting challenge. A safe cozy anchorage is great but generally, you don't want to leave the boat alone for any extended time. A marina allows you the freedom to go for a land cruise but the docking fees take a big bite out of your budget. We chose the anchorage in Brigantine, next to Atlantic City in hopes that the bad weather would break in a day or two. However, it was just about a week of languishing at the anchorage before we could set sail for Block Island, RI on May 30.

We motor-sailed all the way and made the trip in 29 hours. As night fell another sailboat hailed us on the VHF radio. We'd been sailing in tandem for quite awhile and they finally broke the silence. We checked in with each other every hour overnight which helped alleviate the monotony and loneliness of night watches. The name of their boat was *The Great Catsby*. Owners of catamarans cannot resist giving their vessels cutesy names with feline references. *Salty Paws*, *Rum Tum Tiger*, *Cat's Meow* are some of the names we've come across. If I had a catamaran I'd call it *Kitty Litter*.



We spent two nights in the Great Salt Pond anchorage at Block Island. Block Island is a treat with its tremendous vistas and all the Cape Cod style houses with weathered shake siding. The anchorage tends to be very windy though and we couldn't seem to silence all our halyards. Silencing the night noises is one of Kenny's favorite jobs. He just loves pulling himself out of bed, half asleep to trudge up on deck in the clammy dark to figure out what is making that banging noise.

The highlight of this trip so far was meeting up with our cruising friends Lou, Jane and Tony in Mattapoisett, MA. They were heading south in their Freedom 36, called *Ripple Effect* after extensive repairs in Newburyport, MA. Last summer they went crashing into the bridge over the Annisquam Canal. The bridge was in the up position, but apparently it didn't go up quite high enough and their masthead caught the light hanging from the bridge. It put an abrupt end to last summer's cruise, but they're back in the water again. We had a gay night aboard *Mary T* in the Mattapoisett anchorage together and I'm sure if anyone could have heard us, they would have been sure we were a bunch of adolescents. I brought out all the percussion instruments and we had a jam. Lou was the chief lyricist, singing songs about Mattapoisett and New England types who use summer as verb and songs about the wreck of *Ripple Effect*.

As I write, we are underway in Cape Cod Bay headed for Provincetown, MA. This body of water is habitat to the Northern Right Whale, so I've had my eyes peeled, but so far, no luck. I did come here on a whale watching boat several years ago and saw several at the time, so I know there down there playing possum. The most memorable part of that trip was when my baby nephew threw up his clam chowder and his father managed to catch all the liquid in his two bare hands. Without spilling a drop he carried the regurgitated soup and his son to the restroom.

It is now two days later, June 5, and we are in Cape Cod Bay again heading for Gloucester, MA. This time the giants of the sea revealed themselves. A family of five Right whales was feeding and we lingered nearby, maintaining a respectful distance as much out of fear as admiration. It was a glorious and majestic site to see them spout and then slowly curve downward to sound revealing every inch of their massive bodies finishing in white flukes. It was a graceful water ballet.

Yesterday in Provincetown we wandered up and down the ever-so-cute main street of endless galleries and restaurants. Finally weary we plopped down for lunch on the deck of a restaurant with a view of *Mary T* (off in the distance in center of photo).





Well rested and nourished we marched into a bike rental establishment and were given two very nice bikes for only five dollars an hour each. Delighted with my new form of locomotion and happy to be ogling a different section of the main drag, I failed to notice an open car door, looming in front of me. Had Kenny not shouted out a warning, causing me to swerve at the last second, I would have impaled myself on the door. I missed it by millimeters. Thank you, Kenny.

The seashore bike trail wound up and down through dunes and forests and sometimes hugged the shoreline. The crisp New England air felt cool and clean in my lungs.

Kenny's bike ended up having a problem so he couldn't use all the gears, which made it difficult getting up some of the steeper hills, but we still had a swell time. The guy at the bike shop was so mortified he only charged us for one hour even though we were gone for 2.5 hours. Kudos to Arnold's Bike Rentals for doing the right thing. After all the biking and walking we returned to *Mary T* a couple of limp rags and slept like a two pigs.

June 12, 2009

Gloucester, MA and the Isles of Shoals

We arrived in Gloucester, MA, on June 5. The small anchorage was a bit crowded, so we opted for a city mooring. We called the harbormaster to be sure it was okay, but he did not respond to either the VHF radio or cell phone. We figured we had ourselves a free mooring, but he caught up with us the following day and let us know that our chosen mooring ball was in fact reserved, so we moved to another one and wrote him a check.



Sister Molly came that day and whisked us off to her lovely lake house in Littleton, MA. There would be a small gathering at her house that evening of 18 people. As she left to come and fetch us, her husband, Tim, was removing all the patio furniture from the deck and was pressure washing it in preparation for a paint job the following day.

Could you put the table back for the party?
No, that probably wouldn't be a good idea.

On top of it, the house was a mess and there were piles of wood in the yard from the demolition of a fence and mountains of gravel intended for the new Japanese rock garden. All this, Molly explained while driving a hundred miles an hour in the left lane with me hanging on for dear life.

I reminded her of our maternal grandmother's favorite adage:
The cow is in the hammock
The cat is in the lake
The children in the garbage can
What difference does it make?

Everything would turn out fine. She'd left Tim a list of things to do and it was a potluck party after all. Molly just had to make margaritas and guacamole.

She was right. It was a fabulous party with live music and roasted pork and trips out on the little lake aboard Tim's homemade wooden moon-viewing boat. Molly is an excellent jazz pianist and most of her friends are musicians so parties are usually a nonstop jam session.



Tim's wooden boat is equipped with an electric motor, so it is silent. The design is based on Japanese boats employed for romantic moon viewing outings. The boat seats about eight people comfortably. Tim usually wears some kind of Japanese habille while at the helm. The night of the party, one of the musicians brought a guitar out on the boat and softly sang Brazilian ballads with a Brazilian woman who was in attendance. Parties at Molly and Tim's are always a treat.

As promised, the following day, Tim, son Woody, and his friend Garrett, painted the deck burning red and moved mountains of gravel into the rock garden, while I did one thousand loads of laundry. Later we all sat on the newly painted porch and drank champagne to celebrate Molly and Tim's 15th wedding anniversary. Woody enticed us into games of badminton, which he always won. He's a vicious player with no mercy.



The morning of our departure from Littleton we enjoyed a generous breakfast of eggs, sausage, toast and fruit on the wooden boat. It is not exclusively for moon viewing. Back in Gloucester, our cruising friends Raffi and Lisa, who charter their beautiful 49-foot Hinckley ketch *Windfall*, had just returned from the Bahamas. Lisa took us on a world wind tour of Cape Ann followed by dinner at a funky, local, BYOB, seafood restaurant called the Causeway. The food was excellent, copious and cheap. (If anyone is

ever interested in chartering a sailboat in New England, please checkout www.defiancesailcharters.com. Raffi and Lisa will treat you like royalty.)

On June 9, we took leave of Gloucester and headed for Isles of Shoals, six miles off the coast

where New Hampshire meets Maine. Five of the Isles are part of Maine and the remaining four are in New Hampshire. We were torn about remaining there as we had an excellent breeze and could have easily sailed all the way to Portland. But the free moorings at the Isles are hard to come by in July or August so we thought we'd better grab one while they were empty. There was only one other sailboat moored there and it appeared to be unoccupied.

We jumped in the dinghy to visit the islands of Appledore, Smuttynose, and Star. These islands once boasted a thriving cod-fishing industry, and then became a popular vacation destination with the construction of two hotels in the mid 19th century. Today the Isles are the stomping grounds of Christians and marine biologists.

Arriving at Appledore we were met by an employee of the marine lab. She was very friendly and indicated the walking paths explaining that it was seagull hatching season, so the birds were a bit more aggressive than usual. The most prevalent species of gull on the island happened to be the world's largest: the Great Black-backed Gull with an average wingspan of 5 feet. Indeed, there were seagulls nesting all over the paths and they terrorized us every step of the way. One of them chased Kenny for several yards as he passed by a nest, so I took an alternative route at that juncture and was molested by another bird. Of course, the baby gulls were adorable--little beige fluffy things with black spots. Why did they grow up to be so huge and vicious?

After a very brief and frightening walk, we determined to leave Appledore and try another island. A boat was having difficulty landing at the dock, so we stood by to take their lines. The boat was full of students and professors who had come to visit the Shoals Marine Lab. The director of the lab walked straight up to Kenny and me, introduced himself and launched into a description of the experiments being undertaken at the lab followed by a discourse on the history of the islands. He was certainly a jolly and gregarious fellow with an enormous affection for the Isles. He would not allow us to depart Appledore until we promised to go and visit the garden of Celia Thaxter. She was the daughter of the light-keeper on White Island who built a resort hotel on Appledore in 1850. Celia grew up to be a poet, painter and gardener who attracted all sorts of famous people to her father's hotel. Painter Childe Hassam and writers Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were among those who visited Appledore. (Yawn).



We didn't have the heart to tell him we were tired of being chased by seagulls and just wanted to get back in our dinghy and disappear, so off we tramped through the seagull gauntlet once more to Celia's jardin. Next to the garden, which needed replanting, were the remains of the stone foundation of Celia's house where more students were conducting an archeological dig around the perimeter. A friendly teacher's assistant explained what they were doing when the professor approached to expound upon the cod industry on the islands such as it was in the 1700s. Such a friendly and informative bunch, we had never encountered.



Galloping back through the seagull gauntlet, we finally regained our dinghy and escaped to Smuttynose. There we were greeted by two goats and the keepers of the otherwise deserted island. They offered no lecture, so we headed off down the walking trail and were immediately greeted by an even more aggressive population of gulls than we'd encountered on Appledore. Forget it. We did an about face, jumped back in the dinghy and headed for Star Island, which we were told had fewer seagulls.

Star island is co-owned by the Unitarian and Congregationalist churches. The historic hotel is now used for religious retreats and as a conference center. From the dinghy, passed the hotel and down wooded paths to the rocky coastline we walked unmolested. Kenny suggested we walk back around the island on the rocky shore. I looked up and saw hundreds of gulls flying above the rocks.

“But the birds are there.”

“Oh they're just up in the air.”

“Okay.”

We scampered joyfully over the rocks enjoying a bit of uninhibited exercise. This carefree rock bounding lasted for about three minutes before we were sprayed by the largest amount of birdshit ever known to descend on human beings. I'm sure that gull must have been constipated for days. How could we have forgotten my sister Mary's wise words: Bird equals turd.

Kenny tried to rinse the spots off his jacket in the saltwater pools between the rocks, but I was hit in so many places I didn't know where to begin. I had crap on my hat, my jacket and my jeans and it stunk! I removed the jacket and hat, held them at arms length and started retracing our steps back toward the dinghy as quickly as possible. Kenny and I argued the whole way about whether or not the bird did it intentionally. He insisted that they didn't have that kind of aim. I resolved to Google the subject matter but have yet to do so.

Back aboard *Mary T* we jumped vigorously into the cocktail hour. Appledore, Smuttynose who knew the Isles of Shoals would be more fun to say than they are to visit.

June 18, 2009

Cape Porpoise to Robinhood Cove

Another note about our position reports: Pangolin does not seem to be recording them at all, lately. We are currently in Robinhood Cove off of the Sheepscott River in Maine. Visit Google Maps to see where we are as of June, 19, 2009.

Willy Beamis, the director of the Isles of Shoals Marine Lab, left a comment on our blog site clearing up the bird doo issue. Seagulls do indeed crap aggressively when they feel their territory is being invaded. Thank you, Willy. Tim Ahern, Amy's brother-in-law, had also confirmed this behavior as intentional. So why then does the expression, bird-brain, refer to a person as having confused ideas and being incapable of serious thought? Seems like it should mean someone who is very protective, cunning, and has good aim. Oh well, on with the story

On June 10, under increasingly gray skies, we bid adieu to our seagull friends in Isles of Shoals and headed for Portland. As often happens, the weather forecast was off the mark. So, after four hours of fighting wind and waves, we decided to put in at Cape Porpoise just a stone's throw from Kennebunkport. We dropped the hook amidst a few sailboats and many lobster fishing boats. After swinging on the anchor for a few hours, a friendly local sailor came out on his skiff and told us if we wanted to take the nearby mooring, we were welcome because the owner would not be using it in the near future.

We had planned on departing the next day, but the weather was gray in the morning and the wind still against us, so we moved over to the offered mooring ball. In the afternoon, we hopped in the dinghy and went to explore the town and eat lunch. No sooner had we exited the dinghy when a man came out of a restaurant, and headed straight for me. Do I know you? Do I look familiar to you?

I studied his face for a second. I don't think so

You're the ones on the mooring out there, right?

Yeah.

Well that's my mooring. I thought maybe I knew you, 'cause I tell people I meet cruising to use it if it's empty so I thought maybe we'd met...

Oh, do we need to get off? Another sailor told us to go ahead and pick it up, so

No, no, you're fine there. My boat's out of the water

His name was Peter and he told us to make ourselves at home. No problem at all. Cape Porpoise was turning out to be a swell place. The little town was full of beautiful homes, a library, a few restaurants, and a small but well-stocked grocery store.

Later on, we settled into the Ramp restaurant near the wharf for clam chowder and mussels. It was excellent.

The next day the sun shone for the first time in days, but we stayed on in Cape Porpoise anyway. The big news in town was that George Bush Sr. would be jumping out of an airplane and landing in nearby Kennebunkport. It was his 85th birthday. Go George!

Kenny's second cousin Brian and his wife Samantha, who live in Kennebunkport, picked us up and treated us to dinner at their favorite restaurant in town. Everyone was so generous with us; we started thinking maybe we should just stay in Maine forever.

At the bar of the restaurant, was a paratrooper who had jumped with George. A CNN reporter was there too. For a minute, it felt like we were back in DC.



Saturday was clear and sunny so we headed out for Jewell Island in Casco Bay. We got there in the late afternoon and were the third to last boat able to fit in the small anchorage. The island is state-owned and permanent moorings are not allowed in the harbor. On any given summer weekend, it would be jam-packed. Fortunately for us, it was still early enough in the season that the numbers of people and boats was small.

We hiked to the World War II era observation tower which is still maintained for natural resources marshals who look for lobster poachers. However, the public is allowed up the eight story tower to take in the grand views of Casco Bay. It's a hike well worth the torment of the mosquitoes.

The beautiful weather ended Saturday evening when the rains came. It was so rainy we decided to stay put for another day and go to Portland on Monday. Despite the heavy rain, several Mainers were out there fishing, seining and otherwise enjoying the island.



We arrived in Portland Monday morning and took a mooring at Portland Yacht Services. There is no anchoring allowed in the harbor. We set out on our mission of buying the necessary Canadian Charts from Chase and Leavitt and going to the grocery store.

We managed to accomplish all our tasks and still have time for a much needed shower. Once back on board, we did a routine check of the oil and found an excessive amount had leaked out during the short trip from Jewell Island to Portland. Not a good sign.

We had considered heading straight to Nova Scotia from Portland since the weather prediction was so favorable, but decided instead to go to Boothbay Harbor both to test the motor and to visit with cruising buddies on *Blessed Spirit* whom we had met in the Bahamas. When we arrived in Boothbay Harbor, we checked the engine. There was even more oil oozing from the motor than before. Our boat's motor is a Perkins 4-108 and is widely known to be sturdy, reliable, and a leaker. We've always had leaks like all the other owners we've talked to or read about on the Web. However, this was well beyond our comfort level.

When our friends, Corning and Tita, came out to our boat for cocktails we discussed our

options. Corning told us who to contact and who in the area had a good reputation. They then took us out for a wonderful dinner at the Boothbay Harbor Yacht Club. We were the only patrons since it was the first night of the season for the restaurant.

Wednesday morning we called a few of the boat yards Corning had recommended and decided to go to Robinhood Marine Center which was only about four miles away off of the Sheepscott River. We had been there in our previous trip to Maine. Gordon, the friendly mechanic came by within a few hours of our arrival and diagnosed the problem. We figured it was a gasket issue, but we wanted the opinion of an expert. Gordon said it was the timing belt cover gasket and that we could continue our trip but it would need to be fixed at some point in the not-too-distant future. So, we decided this was as good a place as any. Besides, we were running out of oil-absorbent pads.

Readers who are not boaters may wonder why a motor is important on a sailboat. Well, it's a big convenience. It allows you to keep going if the wind dies as well as navigate through narrow places where you cannot sail such as docks, narrow inlets, rock-strewn coves and other such places.

So, here we are, Thursday afternoon, hanging out in a very pretty, very protected cove waiting for a gasket to arrive. We repeat the adage that cruising is fixing your boat in exotic places and feel we've come up a rung from Cape May, NJ.

June 25, 2009

Robinhood Cove to Love Cove ME

We left the Robinhood Marine Center yesterday after spending about five days there getting work done on our boat's motor. The weekend delayed things but there was no extra charge and we got to use all the great facilities at the marina. The weather was so bad that we would not have been moving anyway, so, it turned out OK.

We moved to Love Cove yesterday and hope to head out to Nova Scotia tomorrow if the weather is good. We figured there have only been about five good weather days in the last 15 or so.

July 2, 2009

The Rain in Maine is Certainly a Pain

(Note: the position reports are working again. The explanation for the inaccurate placement is that Pangolin's positions are saved only to the nearest minute of latitude and longitude so as to conserve data base space.)

So, we're shopping in a grocery store in Boothbay and this one ancient Mainer asks an even older man if he can recall experiencing a month wetter than June of 2009. The second man doesn't hesitate for a second and says, Sure, November, 1944. We figured he must have been referring to the infamous rains that hampered the Allied forces during the Battle of the Bulge.

A small history lesson given right there in the cereal aisle put it all in perspective for us.



After leaving the Robinhood Marine Center and going to Love Cove, we did nothing but wait for decent weather. It was either raining heavily with fog or the wind was straight out of the direction we wanted to go. Or, it was all three fog, rain, and east/southeast wind. So, we waited, and waited and then took up Corning and Tita's offer to come to their house up in the far reaches of the Sheepscot River.

We put the boat on a mooring in a nearby marina rather than staying on the free mooring we had in Love Cove. Not knowing whose mooring it was nor its ability to hold our boat in a strong blow, would not allow us to rest easy while away. We would have motored up the river to their house, but the fog made pea soup look like chicken broth.

The Townsends live on Davis Island and have a stunning view of the Sheepscot and Back Rivers. They generously put us up in their guest room and treated us royally. Their house is in the final stages of renovations yet still looks great.



Tita is a very talented artist working in various mediums and Corning is a naval architect extraordinaire. They are both possessed with great senses of humor so the evenings were non-stop laugh fests. We celebrated Amy's birthday with a superb home-cooked meal and enjoyed a long jam session with many different instruments. And, although everyone seems to be somewhat musically inclined, no one seems to have mastered any one instrument. This did not deter us in the least, much to the neighbors' chagrin.

On Saturday, June 27, the Townsends loaned us their car and gave directions to a very nice hiking trail in a nearby state reserve. As the day worn on it actually got hot! We hadn't sweated in weeks. So, in order to cool off, we went to Boothbay Harbor for lunch where the temperature was about 15 degrees cooler. We also visited the towns of Damariscotta and Wiscasset.

After breakfast on Sunday, we contemplated our next move. The Townsends invited us to stay longer but we were thinking we might have an opportunity to head eastward to Nova Scotia on Monday so we went back to the boat. Corning came out to the *Mary T* with us to play his concertina for Amy who needed some music for her upcoming production tentatively entitled, *The Great Sailing Adventure* which is about our 2007-2008 cruise. Monday broke foggy and rainy but we figured we should move just to keep the barnacles from growing on the boat's bottom. We got out on the Sheepscot heading southeast and realized we wouldn't

enjoy going very far. So, we settled on Christmas Cove just up the Damariscotta River. The fog and rain never let up until we were entering the cove. According to our calculations, we had about 800 feet of visibility. With the forecast for more of the same for the entire week, we decided to take up the Townsends on their original offer.



While sitting at our mooring Monday, our condo tenant called us to say that it had been a very tough June. The kitchen faucet needed repair, the AC was on the blink and the refrigerator was toast. But worst of all, the place had been broken into. The thief, or thieves, pried the door off from its hinges and stole John's two laptops before apparently being scared by something and taking off. Fortunately, no one was hurt. The door can be replaced but sadly, what lingers is the feeling of vulnerability.

After digesting all that bad news, we considered the bright side nothing had gone wrong with the condo in all the years we (and John) have lived there and we feel very fortunate to have such a responsible tenant keeping on top of things.

On Tuesday, we went back to the Sheepscot and travelled all the way upriver to the Townsend's dock. We've resigned ourselves to sit here until we get some dryer, clearer, and more favorable weather. Or maybe, we'll just move in for good. Townsend Manor is very comfortable, offers amazing views, and the company couldn't be better.

The weather and subsequent shipboard mold, the expensive condo and boat repairs are testing our patience. Yet the spirit of the crew of the *Mary T* is not easily dampened. Each obstacle is a lesson from which we learn and grow.



Ahhh... such beautiful fog.

July 8, 2009

Sheepscot River, ME to Shelburne, NS

We left the Townsend's dock on Saturday, July 4th and motored down the Sheepscot River headed for Nova Scotia. About an hour into the trip, Corning called to say we left our

binoculars at his house. We arranged to meet him back at a marina in Ebencook Harbor. The side-trip took us only an extra half hour. We thank you again, Corning, for taking the trouble to endure holiday traffic in the town of Boothbay Harbor to deliver us our bins.

Later, about 20-25 miles off the coast of Maine, we heard reports of severe thunderstorms heading our way. We were still in range of our Verizon broadband so, we went to a weather web site and saw one tracking right towards us. We took our sails down, turned off all the electronics and went below for safety. After about 15-20 minutes and a lot of rain, we realized that the worst of it was on either side of us. We did not get a direct hit. We got underway again and had no weather issues after that although we saw lightening far off in the distance.

The wind was directly behind us for our trip across so we tacked downwind for a more comfortable ride. It was the best long-distance sailing we had in all our recent passages. On Sunday morning we were treated to the sight of the silhouette of whales, breaching in the path of the morning sun.

We didn't try to time our arrival at Cape Sable Island to catch a favorable tide but we lucked out and had it with us. We were doing 9.1 knots at one point. And, although there were many large commercial fishing boats in the area, none posed a real navigational problem for us. They all seemed to be working in a predictable fashion that allowed us to drive between them without getting in their way.

We arrived in Shelburne Harbour around 7AM safe and sound. We took a mooring at the local yacht club, checked in with Canadian customs and then went to sleep.

It's Tuesday evening and we are now anchored in Lockport Harbour, just up the coast from Shelburne. Just us and the loons.

July 12, 2009

Shelburne to Lunenburg, NS



Shelburne was very quiet compared to our previous visits. The friendliest yacht club on the coast was still friendly, just empty. We spent one night then headed out. The wind was on the nose so we had a very lively sail up to Lockport Harbour. Dozens of sailboats zoomed passed us in the Marblehead to Halifax race. In Lockport, we were the only boat in the peaceful anchorage. Amy's saxophone playing roused the loons into mating calls. The next morning as we did the routine oil check, we noticed oil leaking from the plate behind

the newly installed raw water pump. New worries ensued. We tightened up the nuts and

hoped for the best. The wind was still out of the northeast but we had a better angle to work with and had a gorgeous sail to Port Mouton. This anchorage was more crowded (three boats) and we had to hunt for our perfect spot.

We headed out for Lunenburg the next morning with the best wind of the week. Although it was out of the east, our angle was even better than the day before so it was just a one tack day. Later on in the afternoon, the wind was behind us so we were able to deploy our whisker pole and enjoy a wing and wing sail all the way to Lunenburg Harbour. It ranked as one of our best sailing days ever. And good thing, too, since we still had this new oil leak to worry us.

Lunenburg is a little picture book village with brightly colored houses perched on a hillside. It used to be a major fishing port and is now home to one of the best maritime museums anywhere. It is also home to Bluenose II, a replica of the famous Bluenose fishing schooner, which won many a race. The people of Lunenburg are a friendly bunch. Everyone says hello on the street and you can sit in a cyber cafe 'til the cows come home and never be chased out no matter how crowded it gets.



In Lunenburg, we poured through the engine manuals and at first, thought the problem might be bad oil. We were about to change it but after reading the label on the oil jug, we figured that wasn't the issue. Then we noticed that the coolant was low. We checked the dipstick several times and could not get a reading. We had heard from the mechanic in Cape May that if you check the stick and don't get a reading, it could mean that the coolant has leaked into the oil which means a seal has given out. We began suspecting the worst. We asked some folks working on a nearby boat if they could recommend a local mechanic. Without hesitation, they said, Kenny Knickle, pronounced Kanickel.



We gave him a call and he came out that evening at 5:30. Kenny it turns out, is in very high demand. He said all the other local mechanics had moved out to Alberta to work in the oil fields. He diagnosed our problems very quickly. The coolant was leaking out from a hose connection which had nothing to do with the oil leak. We had replaced many hoses before the trip and some just needed re-tightening due to normal settling in. The oil leak from the pump was similar. The nuts just needed more tightening than we had given them.

The right size tools did the trick. He then gave us this advice: "Go tie up securely to a dock and put the boat in forward and give it full throttle for one hour. Then add some Lucas oil stabilizer." For all his time and advice, he charged us nearly nothing.

We went to a nearby dock on Saturday and did the exercise Kenny had recommended. Black smoke billowed for an hour and coated the transom in soot. Kenny Kurlychek then had to do a thorough cleaning and in the process, saw some rope around the prop.

A number of attempts with the boat hook only proved that the material was indeed rope and not seaweed. We tried taping a knife to the boat hook in order to cut it away but this did not work. So, Kenny Kurlychek had to don his wet suit and go for a swim. Luckily, the rope came off quickly and Kenny Kurlychek did not get too cold. Anyway, when we checked for leaks in the motor, we were pleased to see that the one we were most concerned about, was virtually gone. Whether it goes away completely or not, we are relieved to know that the problem is not the major catastrophe we feared. Hurray.

(Begin Amy)

Right now there is a street fest and craft fest underway. There is live music in the square from 10a.m until 4 p.m. and all the merchants have their goods out on the street at half price. The craft fair is full of homemade baubles that might go well in your great aunt's house. There were some ladies selling hemp oil, which is apparently a cure for everything. I asked them some questions about it, and they inquired as to what might be ailing me.

“Club foot,” I responded. You should've seen the look on their faces. I burst out laughing much to their relief.

Molly and Tim, Amy's sister and brother-in-law from Massachusetts will be joining us on *Mary T* today. The welcoming ceremony will include a shot of Captain Morgan's Private Stock rum followed by the handing out of rags and clorox to each new crew member whereupon they are told to clear a spot for themselves amongst the mold.



They will be aboard *Mary T* for 5 days during which time we will make our way up to Halifax. We've made arrangements for them to leave their car at a restaurant called the Knot Pub, which is off the beaten path and undiscovered by most tourists. It is the best pub in the whole world. The food is good, the ambiance cozy, and the staff efficient and friendly, so it is busy every day all of the time.

Anyway, I think it's time to finally get out of this lovely coffee shop before our butts become permanently affixed to these seats.

July 26, 2009

Lunenburg to White Head Harbour

After a fun-filled five days with Molly and Tim cruising from Lunenburg to Halifax with various stops in Mahone Bay, we set out on Sunday, July 19, for our trip up the coast to the Bras D'or Lakes. Despite the forecast of dissipating fog, we had pea soup just about all the way to Owl's Head Bay. We were rewarded the next day with clear skies and wind out of the southwest. After a great sail we arrived at Spanish Ship Bay near Liscomb late in the afternoon and were struck by the strong smell of pine coming off the land. There are just an incredible amount of pine trees on the shoreline.

This area is much more remote than the coast below Halifax. Even though Spanish Ship Bay is deep, large, and offers great protection from all directions, we were the only ones in the anchorage. We were thinking that if this were Maine, it would be full of mooring buoys. We were lucky to be there, too, as the next two days brought very heavy rains and more thick fog. We left Spanish Ship on Thursday and had to deal with 15 knot headwinds. Since this was no fun, we cut the day short and went into Webb Cove in Isaacs Harbour.

Friday brought more of the same wind so we just motored a short way up the coast to White Head. This update is sent via SSB so we are limiting it to just the facts—we'll elaborate more when we have Internet access. There are not many towns on the coast between Halifax and Canso, so we anticipate that St. Peter's on Cape Breton Island will be our next encounter with city life.

July 29, 2009

On our way to Newfoundland

We did not succumb to the temptations of the Bras D'or Lakes. The weather was warm, the sky was sunny, no fog and no waves. Not to mention that the scenery is gorgeous. It's a boater's paradise. But we feel like we're on a mission so, we're currently on our way to Newfoundland having left Baddeck around 12:30. There is supposed to be 15-20 knots of wind out of the southwest but there's nothing right now so we're motoring. We will try to update this when we arrive tomorrow.

July 30, 2009

Change of Plans

The weather didn't cooperate so, we changed plans and turned in to Ingonish on Cape Breton Island. It's a beautiful diversion though it was very scary coming in at 10PM through a 30 foot wide entry channel. More on this when we have more time online. Still hoping to get to Newfoundland in the coming days.

August 3, 2009

Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland

We arrived here Sunday, August 2nd after two nights in Ingonish and two in Dingwall on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The trip over was uneventful—just tedious as we had to

motor the whole way due to lack of wind. But, better boring than terrifying we like to say. We plan to head east along the southern coast and see what's shakin'.

August 5, 2009

Port aux Basques to Rose Blanche

We spent Monday in Port aux Basques tied to the public wharf because of the foul weather. That gave us a chance to walk around a bit, do some laundry, buy some groceries, and chat with the many locals who find their way to the dock to look at the yachts that have come in. We were one of three—a couple from Maine and a couple from Montreal. The Mainers are headed east, like us and the folks from Montreal are heading back. We had a very pleasant, sunny sail today to Rose Blanche and had time for a hike to Harbour Le Cou. The hike took us across the high, rocky hills that afforded us views of bays and islands in the distance as well as meadows and ponds nearby. The people are very friendly as evidenced by a woman we met when asking for directions to the trail. She just drove us to the end so we'd know where we'd come out and then back to the beginning. Oh, and she took us to the liquor store too, so we could get some wine. Tomorrow, we hope to go to Grand Bruit.

August 7, 2009

Rose Blanche to Grand Bruit

We are currently in Grand Bruit (pronounced Grand Brit). This place got the name from the magnificent waterfall that tumbles down into the head of the harbour. We sailed here in company with an Alden 44, *Challenge*, from Maine. We're rafted up together at the public wharf enjoying all the beautiful scenery that Grand Bruit has to offer. Tomorrow, we hope to make it to Burgeo if the weather permits.



Rose Blanche



View from the trail to Harbour Le Cou



Rose Blanche



Rose Blanche



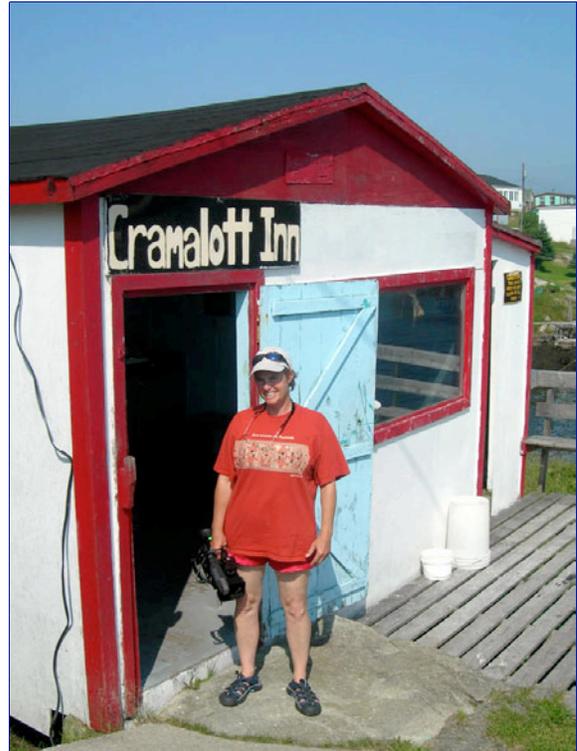
View from the trail



Rose Blanche lighthouse



Canine Guide in Harbour le Cou



Grand Bruit



Karen and Amy



Harbour le Cou



The swimming hole in Grand Bruit



Challenge & Mary T in Grand Bruit

August 9, 2009

Grand Bruit to Burgeo

Motor sailed on Friday to Burgeo in company with “Challenge.” Anchored in Long Reach then went in to town to see “The Funny Fisherman,” a one-man musical comedy act. Stayed put on Saturday to wait out bad weather.

August 11, 2009

Newfoundland: Port aux Basque to Francois in Detail

Newfoundland is truly a magnificent place. The hospitality is unbeatable.

Less than 24 hours after our arrival in Port aux Basques a man offered us a pile of fresh mackerel fillets. Now mackerel is an oily bait fish which some people eat, but I've never tried it, nor has Kenny. I managed to unload some of it on another cruiser who told me she fried it and found it delicious. The Quebecois cruisers politely declined to take any, so now we have eight fillets in the freezer awaiting culinary inspiration.



Later that day our new cruising buddies Karen and Phil met a man who offered to drive them to the gas station for diesel and I hitched a ride. The man was originally from Ontario, but he was infected with Newfoundlander generosity. He wanted nothing in return for his trouble. In Port aux Basques and now here in Rose Blanche, a lot of people like to come by and just stare at the boat. Most of them are retired men over 60. They're always happy to chat and tell us about their lives and how great the fishing used to be back in the day.

Things are tough now, but most people maintain a chipper outlook despite hard times.

In Cape Breton, NS too, all the people seemed so happy no matter what they were doing. The employees at the grocery store, hardware store, liquor store, and post office all provided service with a smile. A woman who worked at the grocery store in St. Peters, Cape Breton joyfully volunteered to give us a ride back to the boat with our groceries. Our new cruising friend, Phil says it's a product of good social engineering. Just about everyone is solidly middle-class and they all have health insurance. That isn't to say they don't complain about the government.

Mary T was the only sailboat among local fishing boats on the wharf at Rose Blanche, population 600. Opposite us there was a warehouse where fishermen store gear and bait their hooks. I stepped in there one morning and chatted them up while they slapped squid and mackerel on their long lines of 300 hooks. They explained to me how they set their lines and informed me that the government quota was 3000 lbs. of cod per week. People are allowed to fish for three weeks in July and 2 weeks in October. There was a complete moratorium on cod fishing from 1992 to 1998, but now things are up and running again, though it ain't nearly as good as it used to be. Hard to catch anything nowadays. Seals are eatin' all the fish, one man explained. Time to get back out there and start clubbing the baby seals again, I thought.

Rose Blanche is a gorgeous little seaside village perched on the cliffs. We heard about a hiking trail leading to the next village of Harbor Le Cou. Stopping at the only convenience store, we asked for directions to the trail. A woman named Shanda, who worked there, ended up driving us all the way to Harbor Le Cou so we could see the route by road. I expressed an interest in the whereabouts of the liquor store, so she stopped there for us. After a complete tour of Harbour Le Cou and Rose Blanche, Shanda dropped us off at the beginning of the hiking trail. She even let us keep our wine in her truck so we wouldn't have to carry it on the trail. You know where I park it, so just pick up your wine when you get back from your hike.

The hike was spectacular. When the fog cleared the views of endless moss covered cliffs plunging into the sea were spectacular. On our return trip, we were followed by a small, black Lab who felt the need to escort us all the way back to Rose Blanche. Even the dogs in Newfoundland go above and beyond to make visitors feel at home.

After spending two nights in Rose Blanche, we moved on to the village of Grand Bruit as did Phil and Karen on their Alden 44, *Challenge*. Phil is a retired physician bent on reforming the health care system. His partner, Karen, used to work for Blue Cross Blue Shield. They are good company and easy to be with. It's a good thing, because we seem to be on the same schedule. In Grand Bruit, there was only room for one boat at the floating dock so *Mary T* and *Challenge* rafted up together. It's difficult to anchor in some places because of the rocky bottom.

If Rose Blanche is cute as a button, then Grand Bruit (Great Noise) is a 3 button village. It gets its name from the thunderous waterfall at the head of the harbor. Colorful saltbox homes dot the hills on either side of the waterfall. A paved sidewalk weaves up and down the hills connecting all the homes. The waterfall is fed by a fresh water pond just on the other side of the hill and beyond that are cliffs and mountain ranges as far as the eye can see. Kenny and I took a dip in the pond. The water was gorgeous. Apart from Karen, who joined us, the place was deserted.

During our wanderings, we stopped to chat with some men on a porch. I asked them about the Cramalott Inn, a postage stamp sized building on the hill from which canned music was emanating. It turned out to be the local hangout. Bring your own booze or food or instrument and make a party. Adorning the walls of the interior of the Cramalott are calendars of buxom women in bathing suits and photos of a bygone era showing Grand Bruit Harbor packed with fishing schooners. If we return to Grand Bruit on our return trip, we'll surely make a point to rock the *Cramalott Inn*.

There is no road in Grand Bruit, so the tiny town is slowly dying. The government is talking about moving everyone out and cutting off all services to the 50 or so residents who remain. Since the decline of the fisheries and the closing of fish plants, many towns have been shut down or declined severely in population. To survive many men go to work in the oil fields in Alberta five months out of the year. It made me sad thinking about this as we walked about the town and surrounding hills. In Grand Bruit, it seems outsiders are slowly buying up all the properties. Not sure how they'll manage if the government pulls the electricity and cuts off the ferry service

As in Rose Blanche, we had a black Lab accompany us on our hike over the surrounding hills in Grand Bruit. We learned that her name was Molly and she too, was a perfect tour guide. At one point, she came running up to us with a large bone in her mouth. We joked that it looked like a human thigh bone. Later, we learned that there were several grave sites at the local cemetery that were deteriorating. Hmmm, guess we shouldn't have tossed it for the dog to chase.

At the end of our walk, we stopped by the porch again to visit with the fellas and one of them mentioned Caribou. I asked if people did much Caribou hunting these days. I noticed horns adorning many a lintel in Grand Bruit. Well, the man said, not too much anymore. Coyotes killing all the Caribou. And sometimes they don't even eat it. Just do it to kill. They're predators, ya know. They was brought here from the mainland.

You mean the government, introduced Coyotes here? Why?"

Don't know. leave it to the government.

That night we had a delightful dinner aboard *Challenge* and planned the next day's adventure.

We departed Grand Bruit on Friday under sunny skies and light winds and motor sailed to Burgeo, the site of Canadian author, Farley Mowat's *A Whale for the Killing*. About 50 years ago a whale was trapped in an inlet and some of the town folks started using it for target practice. Farley alerted the international media in hopes of saving the whale, but he only succeeded in gaining the contempt of many of the townsfolk. In the end, the poor whale died.

Geographically stunning but architecturally purposeful Burgeo nonetheless, has fuel, food and entertainment. Jimmy Flynn, The Funny Fisherman, was to perform Friday night at the rec. center. We elected to go despite being in an anchorage a half mile away and having no idea where the rec center was. If Jimmy only knew the lengths we went to catch his act. His one-man comedy/music show consisted primarily of bawdy jokes and popular folk songs like *Whiskey in the Jar*. It didn't have much to do with fishing or Newfoundland, so we were a little disappointed.

Our trip back to *Mary T* was an adventure as there were no lights to guide us through the very narrow passage way to our anchorage. Thank goodness we brought our big spotlight with us in the dinghy.

The next day I went off with Phil and Karen to find diesel. We were only on the road for ten paces with our fuel jugs in hand, when two trucks stopped to offer us a lift. Ivan Lushman was headed for the gas station anyway, so we went with him. Not only did he take us to the gas station, but took us for a tour of the town. He even pointed out the entrance to the inlet where Farley Mowat's whale had been trapped. Ivan was only 12 years old at the time, and his father and friend took Farley Mowat in their skiff to go and feed the ailing whale. Ivan said the unfortunate thing about the incident was that all the town of Burgeo was blamed when it was only a handful of folks who were shooting at the whale. I was only 12 then, but I knew what they was doing was wrong.

Ivan said the unfortunate thing about the incident was that all the town of Burgeo was blamed when it was only a handful of folks who were shooting at the whale. I was only 12 then, but I knew what they was doing was wrong. Today, Sunday August 9, we find ourselves on the Island of Ramea about 10 miles from Burgeo. Our arrival was fraught with the usual stress and confusion about where to tie up. The old fish plant wharf was decaying. The outside of the ferry wharf was too exposed to waves and the public wharf was full of fishing boats. Finally a boat moved from the wharf and we dashed in. A nice man caught our lines and then the throngs came out for a look at us.

It is the opening day of their Come Home festival and we arrived just in time for the parade complete with a puffin mascot, floats, marching veterans, ambulance and fire truck. Best damned parade I ever saw. Short and sweet. The marching band consisted of a glockenspiel and bass drum. There is a festive air in the town as people long gone return to bask in the warmth of family and friends. This afternoon many different musical groups will perform, so we've got to get out there and check it out.

(Two days later)

Well, we did check out the music, and it was a hell of a wang dang doodle. Hundreds of

people were gathered under a tent placed over the outdoor hockey arena. Three bands played for an hour each. Kenny describes their music as Cajun polka meets Celtic. Several couples got out on the dance floor and jigged up a storm.

We now find ourselves in the beautiful town of Francois, which is as far from a road as you can get in Atlantic Canada. Strangely, the small island of Ramea does have roads. Approaching Francois by boat is like driving into the crater of a volcano. The town sits on the bottom by the water. The hiking trails go on forever and the views of rocky mountains go on and on and on We are rafted up to our buddies Phil and Karen. Dinner aboard their boat last night. Dinner on *Mary T* tonight.

This is probably the end of the road for us. We'll anchor in some deserted fjords on our way back west along the coast, then cross back over to Nova Scotia before the end of the month and start heading southwest, retracing our steps. If all goes well, we'll arrive back in the Chesapeake Bay before the end of October.

August 21, 2009

Heading West Away from Bill

We had thought we would ride out the hurricane at anchor in Long Reach at Burgeo, but today, Friday, looks like a good travel day to go further west. We hope to get to the Port aux Basque area this evening. We figured further away to the west is better than closer in a sheltered anchorage. The problem with that anchorage however, is that the shoreline is all jagged boulders. We envisioned a torn up *Mary T* if our anchors did not hold. Please use all your powers of positive thinking to move "Bill" well to the east of Newfoundland.

August 22, 2009

Isle aux Morts

We arrived here around 7pm Friday evening and found a good, solid government wharf to tie up to. We plan to ride out the hurricane here unless we learn of something better tomorrow. We'll leave the boat if conditions warrant but, last we heard, the storm was going to be well east of here and that we would get hit with only the fringe. Unfortunately, this town got its name from the many shipwrecks off its coast.

August 22, 2009

Battening Down the Hatches

Hurricane Bill is approaching the eastern section of Newfoundland's southern coast late Sunday night. Gratefully, we are as far west along the coast as possible. Today, (Saturday August 22) we busied ourselves attaching every line we own from the boat to the dock and now *Mary T* looks like a spider in the middle of a web. We feel quite secure at this wharf and all the townspeople have assured us that there is no cause for alarm. The news reports refer to the hurricane's effect here as a "tropical storm." At this point, we are planning to stay aboard

during the blow, so we can adjust lines as necessary. Many of the townsfolk come to visit and observe us in our preparations, so we are not at all lonely. We'd like to thank our dear friend Corning Townsend for all his weather updates and moral support via single sideband radio.

August 24, 2009

Survived Bill

Hurricane Bill started affecting our area at about 7pm and blew hardest from around 9:30 to midnight. It acted as forecasted so we probably had around 50 knots of wind at the worst of it. Even though the waterfront nearby was not very wide, enough waves were kicked up to send spray over the side and keep us heeled over from time to time. We were kept off the dock by a web of lines but one in particular, that stretched to the far end of the dock (about 100 feet), seemed to do the most work. We survived unscratched. The locals have been coming by to let us know that this storm was nothing compared to what they get in the winter. Whatever.... we're very, very happy it's over. Thanks for all your thoughts and prayers.

August 27, 2009

Back in Baddeck

We left Isle Aux Morts, Newfoundland, yesterday morning and arrived in Baddeck in the Bras D'or Lakes in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, at around 2 AM Wednesday. The sail across the Cabot Strait was fast but we had to negotiate the narrow entrance to the Great Bras D'or Channel in the dark which was quite tedious. We discovered that our masthead running light fixture was blown off by "Bill" and is hanging on by only its wire. We will try to get that repaired tomorrow and be on our way, but may have to wait due to the possibility of gale force winds.

August 31, 2009

More on Newfoundland and Cape Breton

As we have been far from Internet connections and only able to post brief blogs through our single side band (SSB) radio, many of the highlights of our trip have failed to make it to print. Now, from the comfort of the dock of St. Peter's marina in the Bras d'Or Lakes of Cape Breton, I shall try to recapture some of the stellar moments of our voyage.





In the town of Francois, set dramatically at the bottom of a red-cliffed fjord, Karen, from *Challenge*, was given two huge cod by a local fisherman. He then asked Kenny and I if we would like some too. I looked at the bewildered Karen holding the two big fish by the gills. I think we could share what you've given her. Karen looked at the fisherman imploringly, Do you think you could show me how to fillet these? The fishermen kindly took them back and deftly turned each fish into 4 ready-to-cook fillets. Dieu merci. I put ours in the fridge

and baked it in bread crumbs the following night. It was possibly the best fish I've ever eaten.

That day in Francois was the last we saw of our buddies Karen and Phil on *Challenge*. They were unsure of their destination as they had to figure out a place to meet up with Phil's brother who was to arrive in Baddeck, Cape Breton in a couple of days. As their boat disappeared over the horizon, we imagined they were heading for St. Pierre and Miquelon, French islands about 60 miles south of Francois.



Contrary to what we'd previously decided about turning back to the west, we headed



further east and turned up a fjord called Hare Bay. It is difficult to convey in words the majesty and vastness of these places. And I think I should give an even poorer rendition were I to turn to watercolors. I never knew rock could be so beautiful. When the slanting rays of the sun lands on the cliffs it reveals a great range of hues (pinks, greens, grays, reds) and textures. Sometimes the fog drapes around the peaks like a gauzy shawl constantly rearranging itself. Other times the fog is so thick you can't see the wall of rock which you know

is fifty meters off your beam. But we were lucky. There were only a few occasions when we sailed in fog so dense we could only make out the edges of the boat and the wave about to pound into the hull of *Mary T*.

In Hare Bay there was one other boat at anchor. A fishing boat turned into a pleasure craft with a young happy couple aboard. We jumped into our dinghy to explore further up the bay and came upon a most gorgeous waterfall set in pink stone. We tied up to it and climbed among the rocks. It was so perfect, it almost didn't look real but rather something created by

Disney.

The following day the sun shone bright and the winds were favorable, so we could not resist the idea of sailing to France. We headed south off shore for the mystical Gaulic islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. It's all that remains of the French empire in North America, but that's more than the English can boast. Although Great Britain finally triumphed over France in the war for north American territories, America and Canada soon became independent nations. St. Pierre and Miquelon, however, are still part of France. Vive la France!

After a beautiful sail from Hare Bay (55 nautical miles), we pulled up to the yacht club dock in St. Pierre and tossed our lines to the customs and immigration agents, who just happened to be there. They came aboard and we quickly went through the formalities. They were more than affable and spoke French with French accents, not like the Quebecois whom I sometimes find difficult to understand. We cast a glance around for *Challenge*, but she was nowhere in sight.

Later we went ashore in search of a Basque restaurant which had been recommended. The town is laid out on the slope of a hill ascending from the harbor. The commercial center of town only takes up a few blocks. The houses are mostly wood and brightly colored. Though the town was much bigger than the tiny Newfoundland outports we'd visited, it was dead. There was hardly a soul on the streets.

Unable to find the place, we asked the only locals we saw standing outside someone's home. They directed us there and highly recommended it. The restaurant called Ongi Etorri, or something like that, was a bit more formal than we expected, so we chose a discreet table on the fringe of things so as not to distract from the ambiance with our slovenly dress and sailor talk. Although the place was nearly empty when we entered, by 10 p.m. it was full. The St. Pierrais are not early diners.

Kenny ordered the salmon and I the scallops drenched in a sinfully rich cream sauce. As is our custom, we exchanged dishes midway through the meal. Both were delicious. Because we didn't yet know the exchange rate of euros to dollars we thought it a bargain. Ignorance is bliss.

The following day we decided to breakfast at l'Hotel Robert, famous for its display of Al Capone memorabilia. The croissants at l'Hotel Robert were decent, but the cafe au lait was disappointingly prosaic. Not what one expects in France. There was a little room off of the hotel's restaurant proudly devoted to St. Pierre's important role in the rum running business. Al Capone was a frequent visitor to the hotel and owned a warehouse in St. Pierre where he stockpiled alcohol to be shipped to the USA during the prohibition years. The display which treated the murderous thug as a kind of hero included a large photo of Al and his trademark boater. I suppose to thousands of alcohol consuming Chicagoans, old Al was also a hero.

We visited another museum in St. Pierre which was primarily devoted to the history of cod fishing on the islands. Like Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, these little islands came to be populated by Europeans because of the vast amounts of fish and whales to be found in their waters. My favorite thing in the museum was an honest to God guillotine which was used only once in St. Pierre.

In the latter part of the 18th century, a man found guilty of murder was sentenced to death. The island was not in possession of a guillotine so one was shipped from the Caribbean Island of Martinique. Why they couldn't have just hung him, I don't know. Then came the problem of choosing the person who would let the blade fall on the condemned man's head. Although a fairly hefty sum was offered for a volunteer, no one would step forward, so a convict was pressed into the position. It was decided that they should test the machine on a calf to make sure it worked. The blade failed to sever the head of the calf completely so it was sharpened before the real event.

On the day of the beheading the town's square was full of onlookers. The condemned man admitted before the crowd that he took a man's life and now as a consequence his life would be taken. He bravely went to his place without struggle and stretched out his neck so the blade would make a clean cut. The man appointed to let the blade fall suddenly froze. Finally, the condemned spoke up. C'mon, make it quick.

The blade wobbled and descended. The cut was imperfect. The volunteer had to finish the job with his own knife. The crowd shrunk away in horror. Never again was a man condemned to death on St. Pierre. Vive la France!

Our last day on St. Pierre we took the dinghy around to a deserted cove and had a lovely picnic lunch with red wine on a cobblestone beach. Lunch was followed by a brief constitutional clambering over rocks to achieve a summit with a rather lovely view. Then back to the dinghy which we rode over to a tiny island called Grand Colombier which is home to seals, puffins and other assorted sea fowl. Puffins are very tiny and fly quickly, so it's hard to appreciate their cuteness in person. They are easier to see in photographs.

On our way back to *Mary T*, we made one more stop at Isle des Marins, which lies just across the harbor from St. Pierre. It was the site of much cod fishing activity back in the day. The cobble stoned beaches were once covered with cod put out to dry. Now it has a few habitations, beaches, a cemetery, and strewn rusty remnants of a shipwrecked freighter. There little museums devoted to different aspects of fishing — the lines, the hooks, the dories.... We hiked from one end of the island to the other until we could no more.

Unfortunately we did not get a chance to visit nearby Miquelon, which is home to wild horses which took up residences when the ships upon which they were borne wrecked on the shoals. Miquelon is also the summer haven of many a St. Pierrais. It's convenient to have a summer house so close to home.

Although the scenery in St. Pierre was not as breathtakingly dramatic as the south coast of Newfoundland, it was fun to enjoy a bit of French culture in the North Atlantic. Our only disappointments were the lack of sidewalk cafes and boulangeries (bakeries). We didn't enjoy a single baguette the whole time we were there! Au' revoir St. Pierre. A la prochaine.

Having spent our last euros on digestifs, we headed back to Fortune near the tip of the Burin Peninsula in Newfoundland. It was as pleasant 25 mile sail from St. Pierre. Fortune is one of the designated ports of entry for Canadian customs. We were able to check in over the phone. No official ever came aboard. Fortune had more floating docks than we'd seen since we'd left the states. The town reminded us of suburban America.

We only spent one night in Fortune as we were anxious to start heading west and then return to Nova Scotia before the autumnal gales set in. Francois was our goal for that day, but the winds turned against us, so we went back into beautiful Hare Bay. This time we were the only boat there. Bliss.

We awoke to pea soup fog, but decided to head for Francois anyway. It was only 10 miles away and the entrance is wide and easily navigable blind. Of course our radar and GPS are indispensable at such times. Departing Hare Bay we saw very little of the rock walls looming up on each side of us, nor could we see the cliffs upon entering Francois. Fortunately we could see the dock.

Come home was underway in Francois so the docks were full of boats two deep. We rafted up to a trawler outside of a fishing boat making *Mary T* the third boat out from the dock. Newfoundlanders are accustomed to rafting up and are very accommodating in such situations. The couple next to us were in their eighties and very spry and fit, much like my own mother and her husband. The man used to fish for cod from a dory off a big sailing schooner out of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. They mostly plied the Grand Banks, which is quite a distance off shore. He was the real deal, but unlike many he did not wax nostalgic about those days. I asked if he had enjoyed. Not really. We did what we had to do. He was also an excellent concertina player so it was a treat to be his neighbor.

His wife understood our American accents better than he could and often repeated to him what we said. We had a hard time making out what they were saying, too.

Got any floys over dere? he asked.

Floys?... Oh flies. No not now.

In Newfie: bye = boy; foine = fine; toime = time; th = d or t. Basic greeting: G'day. Noice day.

Some people were easier to understand than others. Occasionally we just faked comprehension with a nod and a smile, and they did the same to us.

That night there was a dance in Francois in their community meeting space. It was reminiscent of a middle school cafeteria. We sat at the end of a long table of strangers, exchanging nods and smiles. The place was packed. You could bring your own booze or buy it there. We bought it there figuring it was the least we could do to support the community. After all, the docking was free and so was garbage disposal.

The music at the dance consisted of a one man band playing a combination of American pop and old Newfie favorites like Coxie Woxie. Coxie Woxie always get everyone out on the dance floor.

Coxie Woxie, Dixie Bird

How I love my Coxie Woxie Dixie Bird....

Kenny didn't feel like busting any moves, so I danced with other girls or just by myself. The

dance floor was packed for almost every tune. Newfoundlanders love to party.

The next day I went for a hike while Kenny worked on the boat. Much to my surprise I found loads of wild blueberries. I dumped out my water jug and used it to collect the berries. The only people around was a young couple enjoying the fresh water pond. It was a bit chilly for swimming for my taste, so I stuck to my berry collecting and just enjoyed the pungent smell of fir trees and the tremendous views which I'll never be able to paint.

It was in Francois that we learned of Hurricane Bill from our cruising friend, Corning Townsend. We went to the library to get on-line and discovered that the models projected the path of the storm to come right through Francois in about five days. We immediately delved into a healthy cocktail hour and discussed our plan. First we thought we'd head out the next day for Sydney, Nova Scotia and batten down the hatches there. Surely they'd have good docks and a hotel room if necessary... Then we decided, it would be better to head west along the Newfoundland coast and get as far away from the storm's path as possible.

We departed early the following day and sailed in a total white out until our arrival in Burgeo when the fog lifted. Dropping the anchor in long reach with two other sailboats, we breathed a sigh of relief, until we looked at the weather report again. Now the hurricane was projected to make a direct hit on Burgeo. Great. Westward ho to Isle aux Morts.

Isle aux Morts lies 55 nautical miles west of Burgeo and just five east of Port aux Basque on the south coast of Newfoundland. It was about as far west as we could go. We nestled into the corner of the wharf and waited for Hurricane Bill.

There were two other boats moored there and they belonged to locals. Tom Harvey was one of the boat owners and we became instant friends. He brought beers over to *Mary T's* cockpit and we took a break from tying things down. Other men lounged on the wharf and joined in the conversation. Tom's ancestors were famous in Isle aux Morts (Island of the Dead) for rescuing the victims of shipwrecks. Isle aux Morts takes its name from all the ships that crashed on the rocks just off shore. Although there are many little islands surrounding the town, Isle aux Morts proper is on the mainland.

Neither Tom nor the owner of the other boat were taking the extensive precautions that Kenny and I were. To them it wouldn't be any worse than a normal blow in the winter months. Nevertheless we decided to prepare for the worst.

Just as the Harveys of the 1800s helped rescue people from sinking vessels, Tom looked after us and invited us to his house to take showers. His wife even gave us a jar of pickled mackerel. They couldn't have been nicer.

We spent four days in Isle aux Morts and had continual visits from the townsfolk. One man, aged 77, was a foreman at the now defunct fish plant. (Every town on the south coast of Newfoundland is home to a closed and rusting fish plant). He told us, People came from towns all around to work in the plant and we all made money hand over fist. My wife worked in the factory too. The harbor was full of fishing boats.

Then he explained the surgery he'd recently undergone to have a cancerous tumor removed from his liver. Lifting up his shirt, he revealed the giant scar on his abdomen. Never felt no

pain from it.” He was indeed a healthy looking older gentleman without an ounce of fat on him unlike so many Newfoundlanders who suffer from obesity.

Weathering the hurricane didn't turn out to be so bad. The worst of it lasted about three hours. It blew and it rained and blew and rained and we drank rum to calm our nerves. At 12:30 p.m. we went to bed and slept like the dead. The only damage was to our masthead light's bracket which we later had repaired in Baddeck.

Following the storm we wanted to fill up our tanks with diesel before heading back to Nova Scotia. The only gas station was in Port aux Basque a 20 minute drive from *Mary T*. We figured we'd stand by the road with our fuel jugs and stick out our thumbs or get a cab if necessary. Turns out we didn't have to do either. Ward, the harbormaster came by in his car to check on us and offered us a ride. We did top off his gas tank to show our appreciation, but he wouldn't have asked for anything. Ward had a heart of gold.

In addition to his job as harbormaster, Ward was in charge of allocating cemetery plots, which was a pretty touchy occupation. Often times people changed their minds about where they wanted to be buried as a result of divorce or family feuds. Newfoundland is primarily rock, so burial space is at a premium. Ward told us about his sister with Alzheimer's a disease to which he'd also lost his mother. He used to fish and be a hunter of caribou and moose, but now his knees were giving him trouble so he couldn't walk too far.

You might think Ward was an unhappy man, but nothing could be further from the truth. He professed enjoying life and appreciated what he had. Before we left Isle aux Morts, he gave us two jars of moose meat as a parting gift. I had expressed a curiosity about the taste and he hadn't forgotten. I look forward to our first moose stew.

There were others who came to talk or observe us at the wharf. One man who appeared to be a little on the slow side just sat and watched us for hours. A woman working in her yard one day stopped us as we were passing by. You the ones on the yacht? Yes. Everyone referred to *Mary T* as a yacht because it was for pleasure, not work. We loved that. The woman then proceeded to tell us of her daughter who lived in America and worked for Southwest Airlines. She and her husband used to go and visit all the time, but now he had health issues relating to his heart and had to be near the blood bank in Port aux Basque. No one complained about the health care system.

As Kenny pointed out, we were the only new set of ears in town. Although people usually expressed a desire to know where we were from, most were more interested in sharing their own story. I enjoyed being able to learn so much about people without having to ask many questions.

Our crossing back over to Cape Breton was swift and lovely. It was a beautiful sunny day and the wind was off our beam. For a few hours we traveled at 8 knots which is fast for us. We reached Baddeck at 2:00 a.m. Only the last part of the trip was nerve wracking as it was dark and difficult to judge the distance of the navigational buoys and pick them out from lights on land. It was like sailing into a Christmas tree.

In our haste to get to Newfoundland we did not do justice to Cape Breton's Bras d'Or Lakes, which boast many a lovely anchorage. We did stop at two lovely places near the northern tip

of Cape Breton on our way to Newfoundland. Both Ingonish and Dingwall are known for their highlands which are often compared to those of Scotland. There's even a distillery nearby where they make Scotch. We swam in a freshwater lake in Ingonish. The water was glorious — clean and not too cold.

Dingwall has practically no town, a dying resort and huge, beautiful empty beaches. Were it America, they'd be packed with sunbathers and chain hotels. We met an honest to God treasure hunter there, selling fast-food out of a trailer. He talked with the passion of a gambler and told us how he hires several divers to go out with him and systematically comb the waters off the coast where a Spanish Galleon and other ships are said to have gone down. He knew it was a long shot, but he was addicted.

Now at the marina in St. Peter's we're poised to head southwest, back to familiar waters. We hope one day to return to these parts.

September 12, 2009

Back in the USA

We weathered the remnants of tropical storm “Danny” while in St. Peter’s, Cape Breton. It was no big deal compared to “Bill” the week before, still, we had some significant wind for a few hours. We let the sea settle down before heading for Sambro on Monday, August 31. Sambro is a small harbor south west of Halifax. The wind was perfect until about 10pm when it quit requiring us to motor through the night. The moon was almost full so we had great visibility.

Our progress was so good we decided to bypass Sambro and keep going to Lunenburg, NS one of our favorite places. We picked up a mooring and enjoyed the great view of the harbor before heading off to our favorite bar in Nova Scotia, the “Knot Pub.” It felt almost like going home. The fish and chips dinner and the scallops were as good as we remembered from before.

We contemplated staying there another day because the wind was going to be against us but decided to push on anyway to Port Mouton. However, after thrashing about for a few hours in opposing wind and seas, we changed plans and headed into the LaHave River. We’d heard good things about the area, so it was not a hard decision to make.

One thing local cruisers and guide books rave about is the LaHave Bakery. Not only do they have great baked goods, but they have moorings as well. This was our destination. You can’t miss the bakery as it’s on the water and has the name painted on in very large, block letters. The moorings were harder to locate. The one that we initially tried seemed way too small, so we dropped it and headed towards some larger ones that were just a stone’s throw away. After picking one up, we relaxed in the cockpit for a few hours before heading over to the bakery’s wharf in our dinghy. We had only gone a few yards when we saw a man on a dock off of a nearby house, waving his arms to get our attention. We figured we were on his mooring.

“Welcome. My name is Grant. Would you like to tie up your dinghy to our dock? Want showers? Can I take your garbage for you?” It was like Newfoundland hospitality all over

again. He went on to say the mooring was not the bakery's but that the owner hadn't used it all year so, sure, go ahead and stay there. Then Donna, his wife, came out to greet us as well. Grant and Donna are cruisers who recently retired and moved from Halifax to their new home on the river. They invited us to come back after our visit to the bakery and our walk around town.

We bought some bread at the bakery and left it there so we could walk unencumbered and pick it up upon our return. Nearby we found a an historical site and museum commemorating the original French settlement. After reading all the information plaques, we sat on a bench to stare out at the river. Within a few minutes an older gentleman walked up and started chatting about the history of the place, why we should move to LaHave, US health care reform, world-wide food shortages, the Clans in Scotland and on and on concerning a wide variety of topics. Although he was very pleasant and interesting, we were rather tired and concerned that the bakery would be closed before we got back to pick up our bread. We finally made our move to leave. He, it turned out, was headed in the same direction. So, we chatted and chatted some more while walking. We left him at the post office—his destination—and continued on to ours.

The lady at the bakery said she wondered if we had walked to Halifax as we were gone so long.

“No, we just ran into a very talkative guy at the park” I said.

“Was he wearing boots and shorts?” she asked.

“No, but he was Scottish.”

Then she described someone else that did not fit the bill and noted that there are quite a few long talkers in town. We got back to Grant and Donna's house and planned to just say thanks and move on. However, they invited us in for drinks and to talk about our recent cruising adventure. We thought that sounded like a fine idea. Their house is right on the water with a beautiful view of the La Have River. They had just moved in a few weeks prior and were planning to cruise on their sailboat, Mr. Bill in the coming years, so they were eager to chat about boats and destinations. It turned out Donna was from Newfoundland, so we felt right at home. We thoroughly enjoyed the several hours we spent there and will definitely look them up again the next time we pass through.

The following day, the wind was still against us but we did manage to make it to Port Mouton. *Mary T* was thoroughly covered with salt from all the spray we took. Port Mouton is a place we've been to before and enjoy it every time. There is a beautiful sandy beach and very clear but cold water.

From Port Mouton, we went to Shelburne where we planned to wait until favorable winds would carry us to Portland, ME. The Shelburne Harbour Yacht Club was sponsoring a sailboat race and cook-out. As we were sailing in to the harbor, the racers were headed out. We felt like Muslim pilgrims at Mecca walking the wrong way around the Ka'ba. We recognized one of the participants—Blue Chip and a short time later they called us on the radio. After the race, we met up with Darrel and Janet on their boat and had a fabulous cocktail hour with them and their friends. Turns out they quit the race and motored back to

the club as they were getting bored by the whole exercise. They insisted we join them at the cookout even though we had nothing to bring except our giant box of red wine. Everyone in the club was very gracious towards us, even though we lacked a covered dish for the pot luck table. We didn't end up lingering in Shelburne, but headed out the next day for Bar Harbor. The wind would be favorable and, we felt like visiting Acadia National Park on Mt. Desert Island.

As it turned out, there was hardly any wind at all and we motored the whole way—about 26 hours. Boring but efficient.

Arriving at Mt. Desert Island from the water is quite spectacular and reminiscent of Newfoundland. Bar Harbor was hopping with activity which was somewhat of a culture shock for us. We enjoyed a few of the local restaurants and the free buses sponsored by LL Bean were still running throughout the national park. We did a rather strenuous hike and ended up at the Jordon Pond house, a restaurant in the park famous for popovers. The other dishes were nothing to write home about, but the Popover a la mode (chocolate Sunday in a popover) was to die for.

We anchored the following off McGlathery Island in Penobscot Bay's Merchant's Row. Close by was the 145 foot schooner, Heritage. Heritage is a charter vessel and the crew had just rowed the guests to a beach on the island. Amy, every curious, decided to go over and see what they were up to. Turns out they were having a lobster bake and Captains Doug and Linda invited her to join in. They were even kind enough to send one lobster back to the *Mary T* for me.

We're currently at Robinhood Marine Center waiting to visit with our friends, Corning and Tita Townsend, who live in nearby Edgcomb. We had also hoped that the yard here would re-install our water pump which they had installed back in June. It has leaked oil ever since. We were very disappointed when we were informed that they would not do a re-install gratis. There is much we like about Robinhood but we would not recommend the place for mechanical repairs. We shall continue heading toward the Chesapeake Bay on Sunday September 13, because it is getting chilly. It is time for the snowbirds to fly south.

September 23, 2009

Change of Plans

This is just a quick entry to let you all know that we changed plans regarding how we'd get back to the Chesapeake Bay. We were going to sail from Block Island, RI, to Atlantic City, NJ, but the forecast for the coming week didn't look promising. So, we opted to go through Long Island Sound and down the Jersey coast. We hope to be back in the Bay by late September/early October.

October 15, 2009

Southbound from Maine

We've been back in the Annapolis area since Oct. 5 but were too busy to finish the blog in a timely manner. So, here's the belated recap of where we've been and what we've done since leaving Robinhood Marina—the end of the last major blog entry:

We left the foggy, foggy Sheepscot River on September 13th. The pea soup gradually dissipated and by mid-day the sun was out. Our destination, Cape Porpoise, was about 45 nautical miles away. The sailing was good fun until the last hour or so when a front approached driving some big waves and gusty winds. And, just like when we arrived back in June, the entrance to Cape Porpoise was congested with an inordinate number of lobster pot buoys that added to our other challenges.

We navigated through without mishap and again found an unoccupied mooring. It was right next to the one we had used on the way up which, at this time, was holding the boat of the fellow who owned it. He happened to be aboard so we invited him over for a drink. Peter didn't quite remember us at first but we jogged his memory with a reminder of how we ran in to him at the town dock. The course of the conversation covered sailing, lobstering, Buddhism, and small town politics among other things. Peter departed as the sun set and wished us fair winds and flat seas.

We set out for Gloucester on Monday with hopes of seeing our friends from Windfall, Raffi and Lisa, as well as Amy's sister, Molly, and brother-in-law, Tim. Despite a somewhat light wind we sailed most of the way and arrived in the late afternoon. We picked up a city mooring in Smith Cove and Molly and Tim drove out from Littleton to join us for dinner. Amy cooked up a delicious pot of lentil stew as well as the leftover moose stew that Tim was eager to try.

Raffi and Lisa were away with charter guests, so, we decided to stick around to see them when they returned the following day. It gave us an opportunity to get some walking in and see parts of Gloucester we'd missed before. We were also able to have our refrigeration system examined by a fellow whom Raffi had contacted. The system had been quitting on us at random intervals since Shelburne, NS. Herman, the repair man, diagnosed it as needing a new controller but he didn't have one to replace it with. So, we figured we'd deal with it in Maryland and just continue to buy ice.

Raffi and Lisa returned later that day and invited us to join their charter guests for cocktails. The guests, a couple from New York, were eager to hear of our trip to Newfoundland.

The following day, Windfall headed to the Misery Islands near Salem, since the forecast was for rather strong northeast wind. We were heading for Scituate or Provincetown and figured the strong winds would get us there quickly. However, after a few hours, we found the very large following seas to be a bit too unpleasant. So, knowing that Misery loves company, we decided to rendezvous with Windfall.

The Misery Islands are part of a conservation organization and there are many moorings available used mostly by day-trippers. Raffi saw us approaching and got in his dinghy to

assist us since the moorings do not have pick-up lines. We threw him one of our dock lines and he attached it to the mooring for us. Such service!

Windfall departed shortly afterward due to their guests' schedule, but we decided to spend the night. Although there was a wee bit of ocean swell that rolled through the very small break between the islands, the anchorage was very protected from the 25 knot north east winds that were blowing. We remained at Misery for two nights waiting for the seas to settle down. Although we were not actually miserable, the swell made us have to hold on as we walked around the boat.

We left Misery behind on Friday and had a lively ride to Scituate. The wind was still in the 20s but the waves were somewhat kinder and gentler. Saturday brought even stronger winds but we thought that the waves would be smaller since we believed the wind would be more offshore. Our geography was a little off, however, as the wind had a lot more fetch and thus produced some rather large waves. We moved quite fast under reefed sails and hit the Cape Cod Canal on schedule and rode the tide to Onset, the first town on the western side of Buzzards Bay.

Onset has a very nice anchorage and quaint atmosphere—at least in the waterfront area. We didn't get to walk around as much on our previous visit in 2007 and were quite impressed with the place this time around.

We set out for Block Island on Sunday but were not making very good time. The wind gradually picked up but it was against us. Feeling that we were in no hurry, we decided to go up the Sakonnet River rather than beat all the way to Block Island. The Sakonnet is east of Newport and the Naragansett Bay. It has grand mansions like Newport but not the heavy boat traffic.

It was around this time that we decided to head down Long Island Sound rather than spend several days waiting on Block Island for favorable winds. We figured we had time to enjoy the Sound and didn't relish the thought of meeting up with the fleet of commercial fishermen during the overnight portion of that route. During the next few days we hit Fisher's Island, NY, the Thimble Islands, CT, Stamford, CT, and finally City Island in NYC.

In Stamford, we visited with Amy's friend, Michelle, who treated us to a fine, home-cooked meal and much needed hot showers. We were also able to hook up with cruising friends Lou and Jane from Nyack, NY. Our visit with them was quite memorable for a variety of reasons, including seeing Lou and Jane's house; being chauffeured by them around the treacherous NYC metro area in rush hour traffic; going to the fabulous Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Garden in Purchase, NY, and seeing a very large gathering of Hasidic Jews involved in Tashlikh—the practice of casting off the year's sins by throwing bread into the Hudson River and preparing for the new year.

We had heard on the news earlier in the week, that a record number of the world's leaders would be gathering at the UN starting around September 21. These events happen about once a year and back in 2007, our friends, Bruce and Ester, aboard Con El Viento, got hung up in the East River during that year's meeting because the Coast Guard closes the river to all boat traffic. Their story was quite scary, and we didn't wish to be caught in a similar situation.

Therefore, we decided to wait until Saturday, when there were no scheduled meetings with bigwigs at the UN. We had telephoned the Coast Guard and they informed us there would only be the standard security zone. After we started to head down the East River at Hell's Gate, we heard on the VHF radio that the Coast Guard moved the security level up a notch so that we had to transit on the east side of Roosevelt Island. It wouldn't be such a big deal except that there is a bridge there that must open for us to pass under. We had a very difficult time finding out the opening schedule due to the very busy VHF radio traffic. Although you would think the Coast Guard would help mariners by giving out the schedule, they insisted they did not know what it was. Another boater heard our conversation and said it is simply every hour and half hour. How hard would it be for the Coast Guard to relay that information in their radio announcements?

Anyway, we arrived at Atlantic Highlands, NJ, around mid-day and settled in for an extended stay waiting for favorable winds. When the wind finally shifted to the north, we had an exhilarating ride down the coast of New Jersey. The wind was truly offshore this time, blowing in the upper teens. The waves, however were non-existent so it was like sailing on a lake.

We arrived in Atlantic City after about 12 and a half hours and found a spot in the Brigantine anchorage. The next day was a shorter run to Cape May where we ran in to our favorite good Samaritan, Paul. Paul lives in Atlantic City but was in Cape May aboard his boat, Journey, headed for the Chesapeake. We had dinner together and shared many cruising stories. Fortunately for Paul, Journey fits under the Cape May Canal bridge. *Mary T's* mast is just a couple of feet too tall. This means that Paul can shave about two or so hours off the trip up the Delaware. We, on the other hand, have to head back out the Cape May inlet into the Atlantic and go around the very bottom of the Cape May peninsula. We, along with all the other cruisers poised to head up the Delaware the next day, had the choice of leaving in the wee, wee hours of the morning to catch the flooding tide, or wait until the afternoon. We figured we'd just leave at daybreak.

This was not a good decision. Although the wind was favorable (from the southeast), the current was against us. Despite the conflict, we were making good time at the start. But later in the day, as the current grew swifter and the wind stronger, we had some serious gybes both planned and unplanned. We were motor sailing with only a reefed main but the reef was coming undone with each gybe. The conditions were so rough we figured it was better to live with it than take a chance on the deck. We knew we'd eventually get to some protected waters but we had a bit of a struggle to get there. Our nerves were severely tested by the weather as well as the large ship traffic, the shoals, and the crab pot buoys. This particular Saturday won the award for the worst sailing of the whole summer. Luckily, no one got hurt and nothing got damaged.

In order to help recuperate, we treated ourselves to the marina at Summit North, DE, and then sailed into our beloved Chesapeake on Sunday, October 4.

After about four and a half months and 2,950 nautical miles, our second sailing adventure was over. After much thought, we decided to stay put in Maryland for a year rather than continue heading south to the Caribbean. We plan to continue cruising in October of 2010.

Amy is currently working hard on the docu-comedy of our 2007-08 adventure which we

hope to make available for public consumption in the coming month—just in time for Christmas. Check back here for the release announcement.

That's all for now. Thanks for reading.