Cruise Report: CSSM Chestertown Sultana Downrigging Festival Cruise

October 29 – November 1, 2026

Cruise Captain: Keith and Debbie on Mystic

Fellow Cruisers: Denny, Brad and Kim on Divided Sky
John and Barbara on Shaken Knot Stirred
Matt, Jenny and Ben on Hobnob

This was a sea and land cruise event that included 16 members and guests on the Pride of Baltimore sail and 15 for lunch at Bad Alfred's Distillery. We were blessed by perfect weather the entire time.

Thursday, October 29th

Meredith Creek was chosen as a stopover for those coming from farther away. The distance from Meredith Creek to Chestertown was 34 nm. The previous night's cruise in the Rhode River served as a feeder for the start of the Chestertown Cruise. Divided Sky and Shaken Knot Stirred arrived first followed by Mystic, just in time for the 4:00 pm Cocktail Hour aboard Mystic. In attendance were Keith, Debbie, Lynn and Dave from Mystic; Denny and Brad from Divided Sky; and John and Barbara from Shaken Knot Stirred. As Mystic was not fully provisioned for the rest of the trip, she peeled off after Cocktail Hour and spent the night in home port (about 2 nm away).

Friday, October 30th

Departure time was approximately 8:00 am. Shaken Knot Stirred returned to home port. Divided Sky and Mystic proceeded to Chestertown and were joined by Hobnob from the home port of Whitehall Marina. A gradually increasing northwesterly assisted in the motor sail up the Chester River. Mystic did manage to cut the engine three times for maybe a total of 1 and ½ hours of pure sailing. The engine came back on when sailing speed dropped below 5 knots. We were all anchored by 3:00 pm. Again, Mystic hosted our Cocktail Hour. It was quite a sight to see the tall ships return from their Friday afternoon voyage. After dark, the tall ship rigging was brightly lit. We were also greeted by fireworks around 8:00 pm. Anchoring was challenging due to the tidal current shifting every six hours. At times, opposing wind and current created some interesting dynamics.




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Saturday, October 31st

We all dinghied ashore around 9:00 am to enjoy the sights and see the exhibits prior to our gathering for the sail aboard the Pride of Baltimore. Divided Sky and Mystic were joined by additional land cruise attendees representing the crew of Shaken Knot Stirred, Mistral, Moonshadow and Last One. Additional guests included Brad and Kim (Divided Sky) and Lynn, Dave and Mallory (Mystic). We were impressed by the seamanship and discipline of the Pride of Baltimore crew. Within a minute of leaving the dock, the engine was shut off. First the square fore topsail was set, followed by the jib. Further downstream, the foresail was set. Only the mainsail was left furled. We had comfortable wind and direction allowing us to sail down the Chester River until we returned with both the engine and sails propelling us. Just before we returned, we overtook the Lynx and exchanged cannon shots. It was a sight to behold!

Our next destination was Bad Alfred's Distillery. Despite not making reservations, they went out of their way to accommodate us, offering us our own private room in the back. After lunch the land cruisers returned home. The sea cruisers reunited on Hobnob for the final Cocktail Hour of the cruise.






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Sunday, November 1st

After the time change adjustment, we departed shortly after 8 am, arriving home by 3 pm. Divided Sky took the shortcut through Kent Narrows. We mostly motor sailed home in light and variable wind.

Cruise nights:

Divided Sky	3
Mystic	2
Hobnob	2
Shaken Knot Stirred	1
Total	8

Additional land cruisers:

Shaken Knot Stirred
Mistral
Moonshadow
Last One

