

Northern Chesapeake Cruise Report – North East and Return

Cruise Captains –

June 14-15 McClouds on GypSea

June 16 – 19 Soksos on Voyager

The Cruise was originally planned for nine days with Havre De Grace and Northeast as the prime destinations. However, dire weather predictions – thunderstorms, damaging winds, hail, locusts and maybe even a plague or two forced the cruise captains to reconsider the itinerary. Ultimately the decision was made to delay departure for three days until the weather settled a bit. This meant eliminating the stop at Have de Grace.

On Saturday June 14, our merry band, Karaya from the Miles, Voyager from TOC and GypSea from Grace Creek ventured forth. GypSea after a brisk run down Broad Creek met up with Voyager near the mouth of the Bay. It became clear that winds from the north blowing 19-24 kts with seas of 2-3 feet would make it difficult to reach their first destination at Whitehall Bay. Some consideration was given to alternate plans but ultimately, it was decided to bite the bullet and head north, with a less ambitious goal of reaching the Rhode River. Anchoring was accomplished with no drama and no unplanned visits to Sunken Island. Cocktails aboard GypSea preceded a pleasant evening with the 3 boats rafted together for the night.

On Sunday, June 15 the boats prepared for day's adventure sailing to Fairlee Creek. Given tide predictions at arrival, to accommodate deep draft boats, this was changed to Belly Button Bay at the mouth of Worton Creek. Unfortunately, as GypSea was leaving the anchorage, its engine quit. Irv and Denny came over to help and the problem was diagnosed as an airlock in the fuel line and quickly dealt with. As light winds prevailed, motor sailing was pretty much the order of the day although GypSea made a game attempt to fly its chute. A lovely evening of cocktails and pot luck dinner on Karaya with a peaceful night on the hook ending the second day.

On Monday June 16th three boats motored north on the bay to Turkey Point. It was a very hot day about to get hotter. The channel up the Northeast River presented a challenge for the deep draft boats and the GPS charts were not the greatest for navigating the upper part of the river. After several close calls with the bottom all arrived safely but hot at the NERYC. The first order of business was to wash the boats and turn on the air conditioners. GypSea's air conditioner was hardly blowing air and it was 91 degrees inside. Turns out the coils had frozen and needed thawing. At 5:30pm we gathered at the club house on top of the hill for a picnic and a game of Mexican train followed by a lovely sunset.

On Tuesday June 17th at 9am we all loaded into a van generously rented by Denny and headed to Havre De Grace. Who said we had to cut out this part of the cruise due to a late start resulting from bad weather! There Stephanie shopped while the rest of us went to the decoy museum and talked to the Light House grounds keeper. As a side note we thought the museum was very well done and would recommend going to see it. I know you've seen one decoy you've seen them all, but the lifelike depiction of the carvers in their workshops made it special. At noon we met at Mc Gregor's restaurant (mixed reviews) for a leisurely lunch. For the second part of the day, we drove to the town of North East. Again Stephanie shopped while the rest of us toured the grounds and inside St. Mary Anne's Church built in 1743. The interim Rector was our tour guide and a very knowledgeable source of

information. After going to West Marine and the grocery/liquor store we headed back to the club to freshen up for our group dinner that evening. At 5:15 Linda and Jim Montague (Rejoice) joined us for cocktails by land cruiser. Kate Vargish had recently read a great review of the Steak and Main restaurant in town so we met there at 6:30 for dinner and indeed, it turned out the meals were excellent. Great service and even better food. Thanks, Kate.

On Wednesday June 18th under partly cloudy skies we departed the docks for Worton Creek Marina. Thoughts were it was hot and the destination needed to be amended to accommodate a low tide at Fairlee Creek and take advantage of our ACs. Gypsea left early to make an appointment with the AC repairman while Kayara and Voyager waited for the tide to rise. The winds were out of the northwest and provided a great sail once we were out of the river. It was four o'clock and storms had been predicted but we were able to tuck up the creek at Worton Creek Marina and with the air conditioners running full blast. Pamela had already been to the marina's great ship store and told Jane and Stephanie of her purchases and off the two went.

Later an intense game of catch phrase was played during cocktails by the pool. The men vs the women provided a lively time refereed by an outside party from the pool. With the women gloating over their crushing defeat of the opposition, we returned to the boats for dinner. The stormy night, as predicted, lit up the sky and turned the electric off several times during the night.

On Thursday June 19th under yet another stormy forecast we left the marina by 6:45am and headed south to Harness Creek on the South River. Making good time by alternately sailing or motor sailing we arrived at noon. The total distance was 34 miles. Jim walked the nearby park while others read and swam in the creek. A gathering was planned for 5:30 but had to be cancelled due to a storm. Fortunately, the storm was short lived and not as bad as had been forecast. Voyager's crew, including Winston, loaded into the dingy for a ride around the creek and visited the others to say good by. Tired from a long day we retired early.

On Friday June 20th Voyager and Gypsea weighed anchor at 7:30 and headed for home port. The wind was out of the west/northwest and provided a great sail (yes, no motor) all the way to Knapps Narrows. Karaya left later that morning to return to the Miles and enjoyed an equally good sail.

Nights:

Voyager – 6

Karaya - 6

GypSea - 6