

The *High* and *Dry*

Kitchener-Waterloo Power and Sail Squadron

January, 2011

The Perfect Storm

By L.Gorman, s/vInukshuk

Jane and I arrived back at the Midland Bay Sailing Club, Wednesday, August 18 after a rather harrowing few days across Georgian Bay on Monday, August 16 with the winds rated at 20 - 25 knots and waves which built toward three meters as we progressed!

After a wait of several days for a fair weather window, and recovering from a deep glass cut to my upper forearm, we decided that if we waited for two good days in a row we might never get across the bay. It takes us one day to get to Killarney and usually one eight hour day with a dawn start to cross over to Pte Au Baril, a forty-six nautical mile offshore sail. After despairing of ever getting perfect winds, we left our friends in McGregor Bay the morning of Sunday 15. Severe wind warnings were issued daily, and this day was no exception.

Interestingly, the Lansdowne Channel, to Killarney was a

motoring event in fog, at times impenetrable, clearing finally just after noon. (Our chart plotter was invaluable, as for some sections, the fog was totally impenetrable at thirty feet!) We topped up our gas-just in case, and did enjoy the fish and chip lunch on the Killarney fishing boat dock. The sky was clear and it seemed that perhaps the forecast might be wrong. However as the afternoon progressed, the wind picked up as forecast. Thomas Bay, while having an amazing vista out on the lake, is well sheltered by reefs and rocks and high topography to the west, and north.

The long range marine forecast for the next three days indicated winds from the west backing to southwest at 15-20+ knots, and I had heard earlier that waves might build to between two and three meters. I put this out of mind, as we decided to lay over here and hope for an improved forecast. Something with a nice following wave on the starboard stern quarter. The wind hummed in the rigging during the late afternoon

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From the Helm

By Bruce Holden, Commander

The Squadron has had a successful Fall and Winter to date. Our Fall Members' Night saw more attendees than anyone can recall in recent memory, thanks to the excellence of the topic and speaker, to the diligence of the committee in finding an superb venue and meal for the price, to the resourcefulness of the Phone Committee in contacting so many people and to the persistence of the Schotts for e-mailing announcements and delivering so many tickets. Our night at the Italian Cortina Club was successful.

Our Christmas Dinner saw many new faces mixing in with our repeat attendees at Milton's Restaurant. We need to do this more often! Once again, our Past Commander, Ken Amy, ensured ample prizes for distribution and properly reminded us to support our sponsors. Peter Miles coached us through a decorating exercise in origami that brought laughs to many a table.

A broad advertising campaign for winter courses has produced results. The number of registrants to our fine courses has increased. Pat Pearl, our PRO, led the advertising concept of multiple small signs throughout Kitchener-Waterloo. Support was gained during design, and many Bridge members assisted with the placement around town. Rick Brenneman, our STO, can still find spaces for people in classes.

At the National level, organizational discussions on membership are occurring. In our Squadron, we mostly look at people as people. We consider what we can provide for them and what talents they might be willing to apply for our Squadron's benefit. The rules and guidelines for membership and holding positions deserve a periodic review to ensure relevance for the changing social environment. It is expected that some changes will be made in the future to allow effective running of the organization. In recent months, the Members Forum has become virtually inactive. The Forum can be followed at <http://forums.cps-ecp.ca>, the third item, "Membership – Adhesions"

From the Training Desk

By Rick Brenneman JN, Training Officer

We had two very successful registration evenings at the Waterloo Regional Police Building on Tuesday December 28th and Wednesday January 5th. A significant number of students expressed interest in registering for our winter course offerings. As well, the website responses have been very encouraging with a large number of students indicating their intent to register on line.

We have had a very excellent training year with seventy-three registered students to date, enjoying a variety of boating courses. Currently fifteen students are registered in the **Boating** course which meets every Thursday evening at Resurrection Catholic Secondary School. In addition, six students are completing the semester Boating course that has been meeting Saturday mornings during the fall and winter sessions at the Westmount Long Term Care facility. As well, there are four students enrolled in the **Seamanship** class and one student who have elected to complete the **Advanced Piloting** course on a self-study/tutoring arrangement.

In February, nine students have currently registered for the **GPS** course which is being taught by Guy Lazure and fifteen students are enrolled in the **VHF** course that is being taught by Fred Hicks in March. We still have some available spaces in our **Boat Pro** course which will be offered in April. If you are aware of any boating friends who are interested in taking this course leading to their required **Pleasure Craft Operators Card** certification, please encourage them to indicate their intent to register by visiting our website at www.kwboating.ca.

Attention!

The 50th Anniversary Gala scheduled for Saturday, February 19th at the Walper Terrace Hotel has been postponed. Please see future issues of the High and Dry for updates and further details.

K-W Boating Signs

You might have noticed – “K-W Boating” signs. These signs are placed throughout the K-W area providing our website address for anyone wishing information on boating education services offered by the squadron.

If you know of a high traffic areas, either business or residential, that would allow you to place a sign, please contact either **Pat Pearl at 519-742-9987** or **Bill Allan at 519-576-0749**. We would be happy to arrange to have a sign delivered.

To The Past Squadron Commanders
Kitchener Waterloo Power Squadron

It has come to my attention, as I am sure it has yours that the planned 50th Anniversary Dinner Celebration of this Squadron has been as of this writing cancelled. I find this unbelievable and completely unacceptable.

As one of the oldest Squadrons in the Canadian Power & Sail Organization we have much to be proud of as illustrated in the very fine 50th Anniversary Edition recently distributed to the members. To let an event such as this go by without recognition would, in my view, be a shame.

I believe there is still time to plan such an event for this coming fall. An invitation needs to be extended to our present Chief Commander to attend as well as some of our local dignitaries such as the mayors of Kitchener and Waterloo and the Region. This really needs to be a bang up affair.

If you feel, as I do, that something needs to be done please contact a present bridge member and express your feelings. In consultation with the present bridge I would suggest a meeting be arranged for all interested members, and a committee formed to plan a really nice affair.

I would appreciate a reply to this letter to let me know your feelings in this matter.
My address is: Past Chief, Ron Watkins N, 22 Dovercourt Rd., Breslau, ON NOB IMO. If you prefer E-mail please send a note to me at ronwatkins@sympatico.ca.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Yours truly,

Ron Watkins, Past Squadron Commander and Past Chief Commander

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Storm (continued from page 1)

and evening until about midnight. Then all went comfortably quiet. A quick check at six a.m. indicated an unusual calm, with no white caps out on the lake, maybe the forecast was wrong? Still quiet and calm at seven a.m. we made a snap decision (never a good idea) to break out the anchor and motor the tricky channel out of Thomas Bay.

A light wind greeted us approximately three miles out, and all seemed well. At mile nine with the Gull Island light tower in view I had time to send a text message to our son that we were on our way. Passing in the lee of Gull Island it appeared prudent to reduce sail, and so I struggled to put a reef in the main – the first time in many years and, as usual, always done a little too late! Looking back to the north shore, a growing storm cloud was forming, moving rapidly eastward from the Killarney area. It quickly evolved into a dark, expanding ground to sky squall along the north shore. This dense black mass grew amazingly fast. Looking offshore, to our immediate west, another squall was now forming and was also growing, and getting darker! Then a third, off our starboard bow, was also moving in from the west. By now, the wind was increasing, the waves were growing, and rain could be seen descending below these clouds. We donned rain gear just as the nearest squall passed over.

In the mean time we were accelerating and the massive black North shore rain cloud, now appearing to be directly inshore (Beaverstone Bay area and east) began to form a tornado wall cloud with an easily identifiable funnel! We were now about eleven miles off shore, with an easy 1 metre swell, and a brisk wind carrying us along, enabling occasional surfing. I was still in full control and went down to get my camera. After this, things were happening too fast to take more pictures. They would have been classic "hurricane" views of whipped up water with huge rolling surf and small

dimples covering all wave slopes. The waves, now with a fetch extending across Lake Huron from the Michigan shore were building significantly; the wind seemed to have leveled off at about 15-20 knots, with occasionally higher gusts. I had raised my "Yankee", a high clewed heavy weather head sail. The main was let out against the spreader, off the wind as far as was possible. By ten a.m., three hours out, we still had about thirty-nine nautical miles still to go --and no land in sight. The periodic waves were now mountainous, and as a train of two to three bigger waves approached, we struggled to keep the boat facing on a diagonal down the slopes.

But for some reason, I could not seem to maintain control; she seemed rather unwilling to respond. The boat kept wanting to round up -and for most of the rest of the trip it took both Jane and I pulling on the helm to keep from broaching. On several occasions we actually broached precariously (swung side on to the waves) with the starboard/upwind and blinding our view to windward. That we did not go over has to be nothing short of a miracle--because as we found when we got into calmer water, we were listing. The unexpected ballast was slowing us as well as causing the sluggish helm and the slewing on the bigger waves.

But, we were still going fast enough, frequently eight to nine knots and an occasionally thirteen (and that is quite breath taking on a sail boat!) with waves of water surging between the main and lowered port hull like a fire hose. I had thought to latch down the float hatch, but the pressure was obviously able to drive a considerable amount of water into the very narrow space. Our rain jackets protected us from the explosions of water as the occasional wave hit the upwind float and spewed over the cockpit. Periodically, I would make a quick scramble below to check the chart plotter for a position, and an ETA. Because of the need to maintain an exact angle to the waves, it was critical to stay as close to the plotted course line as possible. If we got off course, I doubt we could have corrected enough to get into the narrow shoal strewn approach to the Pte Au Baril channel. Down below, the floors of both forward and aft cabins were littered with charts, books, clothes, and other things that normally never move. Never before have we had a situation like this, with bunks and counters completely cleared to the floor. Each time I made a brief trip below on this wild ride, I experienced the onset of nausea. But it's amazing what adrenaline can do for you.

At about one p.m. Jane finally spotted the Pte Au Baril white light house on the distant horizon, approximately six miles ahead. We were right on course. The next concern was the huge waves, which tend to build as they pile into the shoaling waters of this lee shore. Fortune was on our side. A series of ragged islets extend out from the lighthouse, to the WSW, for about a half mile had the positive effect of breaking up the larger swells. And so, with this WSW wind, the waves were much more manageable. But while realigning for the sea buoy we accidentally jibed, and the main sail ripped at a reef point. However, on balance, not a bad trade-off for a safe arrival. At exactly two p.m. we safely passed the light house. A record seven hour trip!

Following another hour of fast but flat water sailing, in calmer water, we arrived at a sheltered refuge in the lee of Shawanaga Island. With a bluff as a windbreak and a pleasant


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SINCE 1946

Amy

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Environmental Report

By Ardys Brenneman, JN, Environmental Officer

As the winter days lag on, and the cold weather takes its toll on our morale, we begin impatiently and anxiously counting down the number of days remaining until spring launch. As of this writing, I have judiciously observed that there are only eighty days remaining until the boat is back in the water for another wonderful boating season.

However, this spring, as you prepare your boat for the new season, take time to consider your BOD; not your slender, youthful figure, but your biochemical oxygen demand, especially when it comes to discharging that pink stuff from the toilets, onboard water system, and engine.

Boaters throughout Ontario bought massive volumes of pink propylene glycol last fall to protect their engines and water systems from freezing. However, although this pink solution is labeled as non-toxic, it contains carbon atoms which break down when entering the water environment. The breakdown of carbon atoms is caused by bacteria using it for food. The more oxygen something needs to be broken down, the higher the biochemical oxygen demand it puts on the aquatic ecosystem. Without oxygen, these ecosystems go from having lots of fish to having lots of dead fish; from crystal clear to cloudy murk; from a fresh lake breeze to a foul stench.

When several hundred ignition keys are turned in the spring, and gallons of pink, “non-toxic” antifreeze is dumped into the lake, the biochemical oxygen demand rises dramatically. Combine that with grey water discharge including soap and food bits and the BOD goes up even more. Then, add the occasional spill from an oil change gone wrong or a refueling that overflowed, and the oxygen levels in a lake are soon taxed to the limit.

This spring do yourself and your BOD a huge favour. Please, contain all that pink winterizing fluid and dispose of it properly instead of compromising the delicate aquatic ecosystem. As well, throughout the boating season, make it your resolution to reduce the grey water discharge from your vessel and limit soap and detergent use. Your BOD will thank you.

Storm (continued from page 3)

sandy strand on our bow we could at last relax and assess the results of this wild ride. I ultimately bailed fifty gallons of water from the downwind ama! It also stored one-hundred pounds of gas in auxiliary fuel tanks.

Was I scared! Throughout the whole offshore crossing we were so focused on dealing with the immediate that we really had no time to get panicky. Jane only reacted with alarm the first time we veered into the first broach, with the windward ama rising to a very precarious angle. After that experience we were both fully occupied on the helm struggling to maintain our course.

In retrospect, I can tell you that the movie/video “The Perfect Storm” could hold no more fright for us than this trip and the comparable views of these waves, passing us all day long!

Two to three meters is in the range of the ceiling of most houses. When in a trough one white lipped slate grey monster would pass under and rise again to its full height on the downwind side, as several more were approaching on the upwind side. We needed to stay focused full time on distant cloud formations on the horizon to maintain course, paying attention to the approaching waves, preparing for the next, then cranking the helm to get us on the proper trajectory to manage it—and occasionally losing control, then really fighting to get back in position for the next, and the next.

The Monday previously, I had slipped on the rocks at a friend’s island in MacGregor Bay and fell. I landed on my wrist, but a shard of glass gashed my arm at the elbow. I checked my St. John Ambulance Wilderness Survival Guide and Jane treated it and taped it tightly. But my hands from the wrist, including my baby and fourth finger have been numb ever since, with occasional pains shooting out if I bump elbow or wrist. Jane phoned the doctor at noon, as soon as we got home, and got an appointment for 4:30 of that same day! The doctor told me that I severed the nerve. But other than permanent numbness and an occasional dull ache, everything works fine, and the deep cut has mended well.

Lesson learned. Don’t ever take on two meter waves, and absolutely forget about three meters!

50th Anniversary Souvenir Book

A copy of our 50th Anniversary Publication, one per family, is available to regular members who can arrange to pick them up by calling:

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Bill/Diane Allan | 519-576-0749 | for last names Alexander to Fleischmann |
| Bryan Hodgert | 519-699-4281 | for last names Fletcher to Lazure |
| Patricia Pearl | 519-742-9987 | for last names Leach to Rivard |
| Glenn Shugg | 519-894-5335 | for last names Rockel to Zehr |

Past Commanders will have their copy delivered with the return of material they provided for use in the publication. Copies will also be available at any of our social functions for regular member pick up.

Coming Events

February 18 – 21- Central Ontario Boat Show and Sale at the Careport Expo Centre, Hamilton. Call 905-527-7469 # 411 for details.

April 15 - Brant Squadron 50th Anniversary at the Polish Hall, Pearl St., Brantford beginning at 6:00 pm with an opening reception, dinner and a presentation by circumnavigators Steve and Nancy Lefneski (formerly from the K-W Squadron). Tickets \$35.00 are available from Jeff 519-759-5203.

April 16 - District AGM will be held at the Polish Social Club in Brantford

April 27 - Kitchener-Waterloo AGM at the Waterloo Knight’s of Columbus Hall at 7:30. Details will follow in a separate mailing.

May 25 - Kitchener-Waterloo Power and Sail Squadron Graduation Ceremonies Come and recognize all our graduates who successfully completed courses this year.