Discovering the Charms of Beaufort in North and South Carolina

Decade Marked Since Discovery of Queen Anne’s Revenge

Archaeology Aboard an Older Sloop

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- Boat Show Previews
- Current Destination: Elizabeth City, N.C.
- Hot Toddy Sunfish Series Coverage
- Another Serving of The Pickle Dish
- Ad/Classifieds Deadline: Nov. 20

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Sailboats at Taylor Creek, Beaufort, N.C.
Photo by Jo Lucey

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Welcome Aboard Carolina Currents - Your New Sailing Magazine

Welcome to the premiere print edition of Carolina Currents - The North and South Carolina Sailor’s Magazine.

If you sail the waters between Virginia and Georgia, if you race small boats on the inland lakes of the Carolinas, or if your homeport is in the Carolinas, but you’re currently circumnavigating the globe, this is your magazine. If you crew aboard a schooner here, are building your own sailing dinghy, or even if you merely dream of sailing these waters, this is your magazine.

In this issue we are introducing several features: our Current Destination story explores those great port towns, Beaufort N.C. and S.C.

We’re excited to have Will Haynie aboard as our South Carolina Editor and regatta guru. His inaugural Pickle Dish column relates a racing adventure aboard a classic boat with a few famous sailors aboard whose names you might recognize.

We also provide a roundup of news affecting sailors along the waterways, a tale of Carolinians voyaging up the Orinoco River, a look at Blackbeard’s ship, an inspiring yacht club story, and much more.

Our articles stretch from Hilton Head Island to Washington, N.C., from the Outer Banks to Lake Hartwell on the Georgia border.

This magazine depends on many people to succeed, and the most important are you, the sailors of North and South Carolina.

If you like what you find here, let other sailors know about us. Pick up a few extra copies and pass them around.

If you have suggestions about what we might do better, please tell us. If you catch wind of something of interest to Carolina sailors - a regatta, a new marina, a boat builder, a cool boat, anything - let us know so we can cover it in our next print issue or on our web edition at www.CarolinaCurrents.com.

Thousands have already discovered our online edition, which has been live since June. Look there for everything we couldn’t fit on these pages along with timely stories that broke after our deadline. A big thanks to our webmeister John T. Beresford!

If you are (or want to be) a writer or photographer, consider submitting a story. Our contributors guidelines are available online.

If you know a sailors’ gathering spot that doesn’t yet carry us, tell us so we can send them copies.

And the best way you can help us succeed is to thank our advertisers who make it possible to produce this publication at a price every sailor likes - free! If you own a business catering to Carolina sailors, please consider coming aboard future issues.

We are Rob and Jo Lucey. We cruised aboard Sea Spell, our Morgan 382 sloop, for three years before settling here to enjoy the peaceful waterways, friendly people and great destinations in both Carolinas.

While we’ve logged a fair number of miles under our keel, we are relatively new to these waters. We will enjoy exploring local destinations with each issue, but we can’t be everywhere and know everything. You are the ones who know these waters and shorelines best. With your help, Carolina Currents will truly be the North and South Carolina Sailor’s Magazine - entertaining, informing and connecting sailors across the Carolinas.

Rob Lucey
Editor and Publisher
Federal Waterway Funding Unclear
WASHINGTON, D.C. - As Congress took a break to campaign for the upcoming elections, they left much unfinished on the past-due fiscal year ‘07 federal budget, including several waterway projects in the Carolinas. Once again, money has not been appropriated for the historic Dismal Swamp Canal. Supporters are mounting another Save our Waterway grassroots campaign to secure $400,000 for maintenance and lock operations. Funding levels were also uncertain for Intercoastal Waterway maintenance. The U.S. Corps of Engineers said it needs $30 million for Atlantic ICW maintenance. President Bush proposed just $8.79 million in his budget. In December, the lameduck House and Senate reconvene to reconcile budget differences, well past the mandated Oct. 1 deadline. Visit www.atlintracoastal.org and www.waterways.org.

Coastal Development Booming
ORIENTAL, N.C. - Oriental is a good example of the real estate boom sweeping the Carolina coasts. Among the largest projects, River Dunes, a 1,300-acre community includes a 400-slip harbor, and 895-acre Arlington Place in nearby Minnesott Beach has plans for another 400 slips. In Vandermere, just down the river, a 64-slip marina and lighthouse-style clubhouse are planned as part of the Port Vandermere development. On the Pamlico River, the 173-acre Whichard's Beach site sold for $9.5 million earlier this year. Plans for condo towers, homesites and a 150-slip marina have received preliminary approval. Marinas also remain a hot property.

In Elizabeth City, N.C., Pelican Marina sold to a group of local developers and Elizabeth City Shipyard is putting in 3,000 feet of new marina dockage. Southport Marina in Southport, N.C., is a year into a two-year expansion project. A D.C.-based group recently bought the Buzzard’s Roost and Stono marinas outside of Charleston, S.C. for $22 million.

Ocracoke General Store Reopening
OCRACOKE, N.C. - Cruisers left without a convenient provisioning stop in the Outer Banks island of Ocracoke will be happy to know that the Community Store is reopening under new owners. The business, on the waterfront since 1918, was shuttered in June. Rob Temple, captain of the charter schooner Windfall, and his wife Sundae Horn took over operations, includ-
The adjoining docks and fuel sales. Reopening was planned for mid-October.

“My winter charter base in Florida was wiped out by Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma. So I figured somebody has got to reopen the Community Store, and I have to do something, so it’s sort of a match,” Temple said as he boned up on the retail business. “We have friends who are going to set up a trendy coffee counter in the back. Gary Mitchell of Molasses Creek wants us to host Friday evening bluegrass jams around the woodstove in the store.”

E-mail schoonerwindfall@hotmail.com.

Temple admits a prejudice in his clientele: “We prefer fellow ‘blow-boaters’.

West Marine to Close Stores

WATSONVILLE, Calif. - West Marine, the country’s largest boating supplies and accessories retailer, announced in August plans to close an unspecified number of “underperforming” locations among its 400-plus stores. “We did not achieve our earnings goals for the first half of the year,” CEO Peter Harris said. “Broadly the boating industry is experiencing a down year.” It is not known if any of the 24 stores in the Carolinas are to close. The company did celebrate its newly expanded store at 4950 Arendell St., Morehead City, N.C., in August. The company has also cut advertising and will be concentrating ad dollars in powerboat rather than sailing media.

Beneteau Debuts Four New Models

MARION, S.C. - The Beneteau USA plant in Marion, S.C., is debuting four new models at boat shows this season: the high-end cruising yachts Beneteau 46 and 49, and the racing boats First 10R and First 50, the new flagship of the First line. The Beneteau 46 and 49 represent a new generation of cruisers. The Marion plant marked its 20th anniversary this year with production of its 6,000th hull.

NCBIWA Looks After Inlet Funding


“We have asked the North Carolina Congressional delegation to support a workable solution to maintain all five authorized inlets in the state,” Marlowe reported.

Arrow Takes Helm at Spirit of S.C.

CHARLESTON, S.C. - Anthony L. Arrow has accepted the position of captain aboard the replica pilot schooner Spirit of South Carolina being built by the South Carolina Maritime Heritage Foundation. With construction of the ship continuing at a brisk pace, Capt. Arrow will play an integral role in the final construction through completion some time in early 2007. He also will help develop onboard educational programs to begin that fall.

Wolff Retires from Maritime Museum

BEAUFORT, N.C. - Jane Wolff, volunteer coordinator and public information officer for the North Carolina Maritime Museum, retired Sept. 29 after 31 years on the job. Wolff was the first employee hired by original Director Charles McNeill. She was responsible for museum promotion, information and program registration, edited the museum newsletter and coordinated more than 100 volunteers. Wolff said some of her fondest memories are of interesting cruisers visiting the museum.

Sailing Promoter Fulton Passes

WASHINGTON, N.C. - Kent Fulton, 58, passed away on July 4 at his home in Washington, N.C. He was a lifelong sailing enthusiast who spent his last day on the water with family and friends. Fulton was vice president of Carolina Wind Yachting Center, a U.S. Coast Guard licensed captain, past president of the North Carolina Marina Association, and a longtime advisor to NC Marine TradeWinds marine efforts. Fulton was president of Downtown Washington on the Waterfront and a founding organizer of the inaugural Pamlico Boat Show, a full scale, in-water event to be held on the waterfront April 26-29, 2007.

Jet Skis Return to Outer Banks

HARKERS ISLAND, N.C. - Sailors seeking peaceful passages along the Outer Banks must once again share their serenity with noisy personal water craft. Under new rules that took effect in September, the previously banned PWCs can access Cape Lookout National Seashore at 10 locations for landing purposes only. When approaching these sites, PWC are required to operate at a flat wake speed and only directly into shore.

Visit www.nps.gov/calobra.

Festival Park Gets $2M Facelift

ROANOKE ISLAND, N.C. - The Roanoke Island Festival Park, home of the replica tall ship Elizabeth II, has received a $2 million state appropriation for exhibit enhancement. The project will include creation of an interactive Native American Village and Cultural Educational Center.

Cato Gives $1M to CofC Sail Program

CHARLESTON, S.C. - The College of Charleston launched a campaign in May to match a $1 million donation from The Edgar T. Cato Foundation of Charlotte, N.C., to create an endowment for the collegiate sailing team. The college will name the sailing program after Cato’s boat: the Hissar Sailing Program at the College of Charleston. The team, founded in 1964, hosted the nation’s top 25 college teams in a 10-day meet this year and came away ranked No. 1 in two categories.

Sailors Sought for National Security

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary have implemented several programs to make the nation’s ports and harbors safer. One that every sailor can participate in is America’s Waterway Watch (visit www.americaswaterwaywatch.org). If you know what is “normal” around marinas, lakes, ports and harbors, then simply report items that are “abnormal.” Call the National Response Center at (800)424-8802.
Currents. Visit http://ncgam.com/

Bob, and distribution of the first issue of Carolina
by Eileen Quinn, Claiborne Young and Skipper
(Farmer’s Market, New Bern, N.C.) Appearances
11-12 Carolina Keelboat One Design (Lake
4-5 Ninth Annual Flying Scot Fleet 48 and
4 Build a Boat in a Day (North Carolina Maritime
28-29 Boatbuilding Carpentry (Watercraft Center,
28 A Crabby Experience! (Myrtle Beach State Park,
28 SPOOK (Swift Pursuit of One-design Kraft)
25-28 2006 MC Scow National Championship
24-29 Annual Southbound Cruisers’ Rendezvous
(704) 846-5165. www.mcsow.org/fleet50/2006/
nationals. E-mail: rgrayson@carolina.rr.com.

Contact Richard Grayson.

28 SPOOK (Swift Pursuit of One-design Kraft)
Regatta (Lake Townsend Yacht Club) Visit www.
laketownsendyachtclub.com.

28 A Crabby Experience! (Myrtle Beach State Park,
S.C.) Test your luck from the fishing pier in this
catch and release program. Traps will be provided for
a $2 rental fee. www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-
catcher/795.aspx.

Aegean Sea on a privately chartered 40’ catamaran
visiting 16 islands.

18-19 Boatbuilding Carpentry (see Oct. 28-29).
24 Swansboro Christmas Flotilla (Swansboro,
Onslow N.C.) Fun begins at dusk. Contact Festival Committee at (910) 326-7370 or Swansboro
Chamber of Commerce.

24 Topsail Island Holiday Flotilla (Topsail Beach,
N.C.) Contact Topsail Chamber of Commerce at (910) 329-4446.

24 Holiday Celebration and Lighted Boat Parade
(Elizabeth City, N.C.) Annual downtown illumination ceremony followed by lighted boat
parade starts at 6 p.m. Contact Elizabeth City
Downtown Inc. (252) 338-4104.

25 Intracoastal Christmas Regatta (Myrtle Beach,
S.C.) Starts 6 p.m. Annual Boat Parade to benefit
children in need on the Grand Strand. Decorated
boats traverse the ICW from Little River to North
Myrtle Beach.

24-29 2006 MC Scow National Championship
Regatta (Lake Norman Yacht Club, 297 Yacht Rd.,
Mooresville, N.C.) Time: 9:30-11 a.m. This MCSA
sanctioned event is open to all MC scow sailors.

Currents. Visit http://ncgam.com/

Contact (704) 846-5165. www.mcsow.org/fleet50/2006/
nationals. E-mail: rgrayson@carolina.rr.com.

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Bob, and distribution of the first issue of Carolina
Currents. Visit http://ncgam.com/

15-16 Atlantic Intracoastal Waterways Association
Annual Conference (Wilmington, N.C.) www.
atlintracoastal.org

16 Speaker Series “A Bareboat Greek Odyssey”
(N.C. Maritime Museum, Beaufort, N.C.) At
2 p.m. Armchair Travel talk by Norton and Kay
Howe, who sailed during October 2005 around the
Aegean Sea on a privately chartered 40’ catamaran
visiting 16 islands.

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DECEMBER 2006

1-3 Core Sound Waterfowl Weekend (Core
Sound Waterfowl Museum, Harkers Island, N.C.)
Exhibitors and events showcase Core Sound
regional boat building, hunting and guide services,
and conservation organizations and activities.
Contact Karen Amspa cher (252) 728-1500.

2 27th Annual Charleston Parade Of Boats
(Charleston, S.C.) From 5 p.m. Official viewing sites
are Waterfront Park, USS Yorktown and the Battery
area. Call Ray Swagerty (704) 442-7370. (843) 722-1030.

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area. Call Ray Swagerty (704) 442-7370. (843) 722-1030.

2 Light Up The Night Boat Parade
(Waterfront Park, Beaufort, S.C.) (843) 722-1030.

2 Crystal Coast Christmas Flotilla (Morehead City
Park, Beaufort, S.C.) (843) 525-6644.

2 Light Up The Night Boat Parade
(Waterfront Park, Beaufort, S.C.) (843) 722-1030.

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(Charleston, S.C.) From 5 p.m. Official viewing sites
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area. Call Ray Swagerty (704) 442-7370. (843) 722-1030.
It seems like Charleston harbor pilot Crayton Walters just can't spend enough time on the water. He's one of Charleston's senior pilots and, when he's not guiding container ships in and out of the port, you'll find him on a sailboat.

A lifelong sailor, Crayton recently had the experience of a lifetime sailing on the 1929 classic yacht Dorade along with legendary sailboat designer Olin Stephens, age 98, as they raced in the Museum of Yachting Classic Regatta in Newport, R.I., Sept. 2-3. Dorade is now owned by Carolinas resident Edgar Cato, who has included Crayton in his sailing adventures since the 1994 Swan World Cup in Sardinia, Italy.

“I ran into Edgar at a polo match, we were talking sailing and the World Cup came up. I had done the regatta in 1984 and just like that, he asked me to go with him on his new boat. After that, it was a series of boats named Hissar: the Farr 40, 12 meter KZ-5, Swan 60, and a slew of other boats that were chartered for Caribbean races, New York Yacht Club cruises, and other high profile regattas,” Crayton said.

“We have participated in every major event in the U.S., Europe and the Caribbean, including the Americas Cup Jubilee in 2001. The great thing about sailing with Edgar has been the people that I have met and sailed with. I have made some incredible friendships with some very talented sailors.”

The Sparkman-Stephens name was already established when they designed the yawl-rigged Dorade in 1929. In 1931, Olin Stephens was aboard when she won the Trans-Atlantic race to England by almost four days on corrected time, and later that year added a win in the Fastnet Race, further establishing the Sparkman-Stephens name.

Asked how racing on a classic boat compares to the modern...
boats, Crayton replied, “It is actually every bit as intense and
sometimes a lot more fun. Things happen a little slower and there
are a lot more variables. There is the mizzenmast and all the sails
that go with it, along with pennants and rigging, staysails and
topsails forward as well as the fisherman and spinnakers. It really
is another great arena of sailing, and the experience is fuel for the
passion of sailing.”

With Tropical Storm Ernesto blowing up the East Coast,
winds for the Classic Regatta blew 25-30 knots both days. Cray-
ton said that, despite Stephens’ advanced age, he was “every bit
a part of the race in and out of the boat. He commented on sail
selection, tactics, time allowances of other boats, and memories of
past races.”

He added that it was the gift of a lifetime for a South Carolina
sailor to sit and talk with Olin Stephens about design, his winning
America’s Cup boats, the evolution of sailing technology and the
people Stephens has sailed with - kings, royalty, billionaires and
America’s Cup legends.

Crayton has cut down somewhat on his globetrotting now that
he and his wife, Weiza, have two children, Hope, 5, and Will, 3.

He’s also concentrating on racing his E Scow in preparation
for the 2007 E Scow Nationals in Charleston. He helped get the
winning bid for Carolina Yacht Club, where he first got involved
in sailing and, in 1982, received the club’s coveted Hanvey Award,
given annually to a young sailor who exhibits the best in sports-
manship and character.

“We made a bid in Chicago last year, thinking they would
never give the nationals to a club outside of the Midwest lakes’
Scow stronghold. I guess be careful what you ask for. We expect
50-60 boats,” Crayton said.

Gearing up for the nationals with him are crewmen Patrick
Hogan, David Dabney, James Lipp and David Hood. “With
these guys as the core group, we can always get four together,” he
commented. “They are all tremendous talents and have their own
spectacular resumes, including All-American, national champions,
big boats, Olympic experience and local knowledge.

“We are sailing where we can and will really gear up after the
first of the year in practice and regattas. I will look at some new
sails and change some of the older rigging and lines. The boat is a
2001 and still very fast and in good shape. The best part is the part
where we all have fun.”
“What is this thing?” I ponder, holding up a hotdog-shaped red bulb with a foot-long wire protruding out of one end terminating with a plug that seems to fit nothing aboard our boat.

When adopting an old boat, new owners often inherit lockers filled with gear. It seems most boaters, when they decide to part with their venerable vessel, don’t have the heart to sort through all of those spare parts and pieces settled into the depths of every nook and cranny over the years. Instead, they generously leave it to the new owner.

When we took ownership of our 38-foot Morgan sloop Sea Spell (formerly Jada, neé Little Feet), we were blessed with loads of storage space compared to my first boat, an Endeavour 32. Sadly, Sea Spell’s three previous owners had already filled most of her bounteous lockers. It seems 25-year-old boats quite literally come with a lot of baggage.

My wife and I quickly realized that if we wanted to stow any of our clothes and toys aboard, we’d have to sort through what was already there.

Much of the gear was comprised of the obvious items critical to a sailing vessel. Like sails. In addition to the ones in the cockpit sail locker, a couple of extra sails were piled in the shower. Five years later, the shower is still a storage area. Who needs to bathe in the boat? Either a sun shower on deck when cruising, or a walk to the marina showers fills that need. We also found a little-used dodger buried beneath the sails that hadn’t been included in the ship’s inventory – the first of many bonuses.

Of course there were also things listed on the inventory that we never did find. Where could they have possibly hidden that 35-pound Danforth anchor? When asked, the immediate past owner admitted it may have been “lost” somewhere in the distant past. This nebulous explanation left me wondering if it might still turn up someday, perhaps tucked away under a settee cushion.

We dug through our other lockers, spending days sorting things to determine what we’d bought, like prospectors panning for gold nuggets or archaeologists unearthing relics from the past. Some were pleasant discoveries, like spare Autohelms and bilge pumps.

Much of the sifting effort was pure drudgery. It seemed the previous owners had made a game of finding how many different places aboard the boat they could stow nuts, bolts and other fasteners. We gathered them all in a container with individual cubbyholes for different varieties of screws, bolts, nails, washers, etc. Suddenly, whenever we needed a certain screw or nail for a particular job, we could find it! Without the time spent rummaging for each fastener, projects accelerated.

After emptying the lockers, we sorted everything into major categories: We gathered tools in one place (including a hammer from the Morgan yard we found glassed into a compartment under the stove). Blocks – boy, do we have blocks! – all packed into a tackle box. Plumbing supplies in another. A toxic medley of glues, caulking and other adhesives in another. Electronics in another. Expired flares in the expired flare box.

Soon, things were starting to look organized, further reducing project times. We even began to open up space to stow our own stuff.
Despite our massive reorganization, we still didn’t have a grasp on everything on board. When stocking up with spare parts a year later, we visited our local Perkins mechanic to gather necessary bits for the diesel. He sold us a spare $100 injector and set of gaskets costing about the same. Of course we later found a spare injector and the same set of gaskets stowed among our other spare engine parts. Sorting without benefit of either a photographic memory or a complete inventory list can lead to such duplication.

After we’d emptied every crevice and restowed all the identifiable items in logical groupings, we still found a small pile of “other” items we couldn’t quite figure out. As in we didn’t have a clue what they were. My wife the admiral would hold something up now and then. I’d squint and try to visualize what it might be. An engine part? A piece from a pump? No... That’s got to be a gasket for the head, I’d declare triumphantly. But sometimes my imagination fell short.

Down in the sail locker, for example, we found a couple of oddly shaped boards with barrel bolts on them. I stared at them for a while but failed to fathom their possible use. Then one day we had a friend aboard helping us chase down a short in the shore power system. I held up one of the boards and casually asked: any idea what these might be used for?

He glanced about and pointed to the gap between the side seats and pilot seat in the cockpit.

Of course! The boards fit neatly in place creating body-length benches for those nights when we want to sleep out under the starry bimini.

But a couple of things still leave me stumped. What is that hotdog-shaped red bulb with the wire dangling out one end? I guess it may be some kind of specialized diagnostic tool for an electronic component. I keep it buried in the bottom of a locker just in case we ever need it, although we probably won’t know if we do.

Maybe the next owner will figure out what it’s for.
EDITOR’S NOTE: This column will provide tips on how to live a greener, more eco-friendly life on the water, whether at the dock or underway. Together, we can take real steps to improve our marine environment.

Our online edition includes all of the great stories you turn to in the printed edition, plus many extra features.

Look to our webzine for complete and timely regatta results and any important news stories affecting boaters that come to our attention after our print deadline passes.

While the online edition is a great alternative for many readers, we understand the convenience of having a good old-fashioned paper magazine in your hands as you laze in the cockpit at your favorite dock or anchorage. After all, wireless Internet connections aren’t beamed into every marina and hidden cove – at least not yet.

Still, as long as we print copies, we will continue to minimize the impact we have on the environment. We always insist on recycled paper content from our printers to reduce the number of trees harvested.

We also encourage you to do your part. The three R’s of environmentalism are Reuse, Reduce and Recycle. The first is the easiest. Simply share your copy with your fellow boaters. When it gets too tattered to pass along again, it can still be reused as something different. Pages can be used to catch drips under your engine during an oil change. Or tear it up for mulch in your garden. Or use it to line the proverbial parrot cage – we promise we won’t be insulted.

By reusing your copy and sharing it with other boaters, you’ve already reduced the number of copies we need to print.

Finally, if you can’t think of any more uses for it, take the last step and put it in the recycling bin. Maybe those same pages will become pulp for the next edition.

Thank you for doing your part.

GREEN TIP: See a piece of flotsam while under sail? Treat it as a man-overboard drill opportunity. Come about and bring it aboard with your landing net or boat hook. Then dispose of it properly when back ashore.
EDITOR'S NOTE: For our inaugural Currently Aweigh column we hear from the Looney family of SeaLoon, a Bavaria Ocean 40. Admiral Noelleen and Captain James set sail with their daughter Nicola, 13, as chief galley slave in August 2005. After a NYC trip, they left Beaufort, N.C. in November, stopping in Bermuda before heading south to the Virgin Islands. After 10 months gunk-holing through the Caribbean. We caught up with them in Venezuela preparing to continue west to the ABCs, Columbia and Panama.

We are currently in the Orinoco Delta of Venezuela, exploring the many waterways that are inhabited by the Wareo Indians. It has been the highlight of the trip to date.

Much of this area is still uncharted so we have been cruising by the seat of our pants, constantly keeping an eye out for depths and dodging carpets of water hyacinths that float by with the current. This area is tidal, so the current changes every six hours, and is sometimes as strong as 3 knots.

We spent the past two weeks exploring these jungle areas. We have seen monkeys, dolphins, hummingbirds, kingfishers, a plethora of parrots, toucans, woodpeckers and lots of other birds that we've tried to identify as we go.

We've also met lots of the Indians. These people live in “palofitos.” Palofitos have thatched roofs and open sides with the family’s possessions, including colorful hammocks, hanging from the eaves. Four or five huts linked by walkways make a village.

“Weareo” means “people of the canoe.” They travel everywhere in dugout canoes with about a 3-inch freeboard. Invariably, as we approach a village, the canoes are paddled toward us, all the occupants wearing the biggest smiles.

We have had canoes full of children hanging off the sides of SeaLoon. Many of these people are happy to trade but, as we are anxious about the impact of our presence to their civilization, we are reluctant to just give them things to avoid developing a habit of “begging,” so are happy to indulge in the trading business.

We have traded all sorts of clothes, fabric, needles, thread, backpacks, etc. for an assortment of their baskets and beaded jewelry. James has been coveting one of their paddles since we got here and managed to persuade a young man to trade his for a handsaw!

This area is becoming desirable for eco-tourism, and we have seen about four lodges catering to tourists. These are very rustic and again are only accessible by boat.

Lodging is in palofitos, though these are screened-in to keep out the majority of bugs. We visited a couple of these - one of which can be checked out on the website www.orinocodelta.com. They have a resident tapir, puma and Rhumba the macaw. The tapir insists on making your acquaintance and will nuzzle your ear as you sit having a drink.

My favorite was a lodge called “Campamento Mis Palofitos.” There we met some of the friendliest people and were introduced to their collection of house pets, which included a capybara, numerous monkeys, parrots, aras, toucans, a turtle, dogs and cats. We managed to organize a guided jungle walk with them and learned so much from Mary (a Peruvian, who spoke perfect English) and an Indian guide named Carmello.

After a Trinidad stop we’ll head to Puerto Le Cruz, Venezuela, stopping at Los Testigos en route. We look forward to all sorts of new adventures.
Discovering the Charms of Beaufort in North and South Carolina

by Rob Lucey
Photos by Jo Lucey

BEAUFORT, S.C. and N.C. - They’re both popular ports for cruising sailors. They’re both packed full of historic charm. And their names look the same on the chart. But Carolinians know the difference.

Beaufort (rhymes with “throw dirt”) in North Carolina made its mark on the maritime map this year when it hosted 150,000 tall ship fans for the 2006 Pepsi Americas’ Sail festival and race. But it wasn’t exactly undiscovered before that. Sailors have been hanging out here since pirates prowled the coast in the early 1700s.

Likewise, old salts have long enjoyed the charms of Beaufort (rhymes with “new shirt”), located 332 miles south down the Intracoastal Waterway, over the state line. Incorporated in 1711, the year after the colony was divided into North and South, it is South Carolina’s second oldest town.

Then North Carolina officially established Beaufort Town in 1722 as a seaport with the right to collect taxes, making it that state’s third oldest town.

And thus began nearly three centuries of confusion among mariners. “We get skippers all the time calling us and saying, ‘We’re just passing Port Royal now; We’re almost there,’” reports Walter Matheson, one of the dockmasters at the Beaufort Town Dock in North Carolina. “We tell them if they’re in Port Royal, they definitely aren’t almost here.”

The Downtown Marina in South Carolina reports similar calls from yachts far further north than they realize.

One might easily imagine merchantmen and pirates in a similar muddle in the days before accurate navigation.

Separated at Birth

Such confusion is understandable, since the two Beauforts do have much in common.

Arriving sailors will find good anchorages, although careful placement of the hook (or hooks) is crucial due to tidal swings. Both towns welcome cruisers with free dinghy docks and top-notch marinas offering inexpensive showers to crews of anchored vessels.

Major provisioning can be a challenge in either town unless you are an ambitious walker, have a bicycle or borrow a courtesy car from the marinas or the North Carolina Maritime Museum. Wireless Internet access and convenient library computer terminals connect cruisers to their homeports.

Strolling through Historic Districts in either town, sailors discover stately structures dating back to colonial times built among sprawling oaks. Ballast stones and bricks from European ships can be seen in roadbeds and the walls of many homes. Union forces occupied both seaports early in the Civil War, sparing them from the devastation suffered by many other historic southern towns.

Horse-drawn carriage tours (recently introduced in Beaufort, N.C.) offer a colorful alternative to shoe leather. And museums, home tours and historic cemeteries provide further glimpses into the towns’ parallel pasts.

After a long day of touring, thirsty sailors need not wander far from the docks to find lively watering holes in either Beaufort.
Southern Hospitality

Beaufort, S.C., is one of those stops along the Intracoastal Waterway that make doing the ditch an adventure.

Anchor just off the channel south of town after finding space among the resident fleet, which town officials have attempted to thin in the past year with controversial eviction notices. Setting the hook can be tricky if the wind is opposing the often brisk tidal current.

Care must be taken to stray neither too close to the oyster bed shallows along the shore nor too close to the deeper water midstream where larger vessels do occasionally transit the waterway. Setting two hooks is best to limit swinging near moored vessels or in other tight spots.

A free, floating day dock can be found alongside the public boat launch ramp. Dinghies generally tie on the shore side of the dock. The outside is used mostly for powerboats. Visiting sailboats can tie up for a few hours, but the low tide depth is inadequate for most and overnight dockage is not permitted.

On the north side of town, the Ladies Island Swing Bridge with 30 feet of clearance opens Monday through Friday at 7 a.m., on the hour and half hour from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at 6 p.m. and on request thereafter. Call on VHF Channel 9.

An alternative, more protected anchorage is across from town just north of the bridge in Factory Creek. A free dinghy dock is available at the public boat launch ramp east of Lady’s Island Marina, (843) 522-0430. This dinghy dock is actually more convenient for those needing provisions or a fast food fix, a small hike away.
Lady's Island Marina is being converted to dockominums with limited transient slips, leaving the Downtown Marina as the only convenient option for those who prefer the comfort of a dock. It has power, water, cable, showers, laundry, fuel, ATM, ice, pumpouts, courtesy cars and a ship's store. Transient dockage is side-to along more than 1,140 feet of floating T-heads. Call VHF Channel 16 or (843) 524-4422.

A mile north of Beaufort on the eastern side of the ICW is a channel leading to Marsh Harbor Boatyard, the place to go for any needed out-of-water repairs while in the area. Transients are accepted on the yard’s floating docks, but getting to town can be a challenge and draft is limited to 6 feet at low water. Call VHF Channel 16 or (843) 521-1500.

While sailors on larger vessels don’t come to the area’s narrow waterways for the sailing, the river is building a favorable reputation among small boat enthusiasts. The result is burgeoning growth in membership of the private Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club (www.byscnet.com). Located at 30 Yacht Club Dr. on the Beaufort River half a mile south of the downtown waterfront, the club has active fleets of Sunfish, Lasers, MC Scows, Optis and Hobie Cats launching from their boat ramp.

In addition to their interclub Fall and Spring series races, BYSC hosts several open events, including the Jean Ribaut Cup keelboat race and the Lowcountry Regatta. This year the club also hosted the JY North American Championships and the Laser South Carolina State Championship.

Northern Delights

North Carolina’s Beaufort, originally known as “Fish Town,” grew early on into a busy port town.

Early life in Beaufort, N.C., centered on boat building, fishing, exporting ship stores and lumber, but the town is best known as one of Edward Teach’s favorite ports. Most know him as Blackbeard the pirate. Visitors can see remains of what is believed to be his ship, the Queen Anne’s Revenge, excavated from nearby waters and displayed at the North Carolina Maritime Museum (See Portal to the Past p. 21).

As recently as the early 1980s, the town was home to more fishing boats than sailboats, but that had begun to change in the mid-1970s when several dilapidated warehouses on the waterfront were torn down and replaced by a wooden boardwalk.

A decline in the fragrant menhaden fishing industry coincided with historic preservation efforts, and suddenly the old town became a desirable place for visitors, many of whom continue to come via water.

The town is a convenient cruising ground with easy access to the Outer Banks, offshore waters via Beaufort Inlet, and the ICW through Gallants Channel from the north or around Radio Island coming from the south.
Small boat sailors can launch from the ramp off Front Street at Lennoxville Point up Taylor Creek just east of downtown.

Taylor Creek along the town's southern boundary serves as the most popular anchorage for visitors. Be sure to remain south of the marked channel (the Coast Guard does ask boats to move), and set your hook so you have plenty of room to swing clear of the local boats that are normally moored there. Consider setting two anchors to limit your swing, keeping you off the rocky shore and holding you in place during the reversing tidal current, which can be quite swift.

Convenient public dinghy docks let you ashore near the Post Office at the east end of the anchorage or near the Maritime Museum workshop on the west end.

An alternative somewhat shallower anchorage offering slightly more protection from onshore blows is in the cove-like Town Creek off the Gallants Channel on the north side of town. There are, however, no public dinghy docks on that side of town.

Again, you will find several resident vessels in Town Creek, often including North Carolina's latter day privateer Horatio Sinbad's Meka II. A short stretch of the Beaufort Channel crossed by the Grayden Paul swing bridge separates Town Creek and Taylor Creek. The bridge opens on the hour and half hour, 6 a.m.-10 p.m. with the exceptions of 7-8 a.m. and 5-5:30 p.m.

For transients seeking dockage, the Beaufort Municipal Docks on Taylor Creek offers the most convenient option with restaurants, shops and the historic town attractions all within a few blocks.

The floating wooden docks can accommodate vessels to 200 feet. Services include power, water, cable, ice, showers, laundry and pumpouts. Call (252) 728-2503 or VHF channel 16. Low water depths range from 5 feet for the inner slips to 12 feet on the outer docks.

Town Creek Marina, phone (252) 728-6111, is the next alternative for transients, with floating wooden docks providing power, water, ice, showers, laundry, pumpouts, fuel and a ship's store. The marina also has an on-site bar and restaurant, and a small yard including a 50-ton travel lift with mechanics on staff. The historic town is several blocks away.

Both marinas provide courtesy cars for provisioning trips.

In late October and early November, Beaufort's marinas and anchorages tend to get particularly busy as southbound cruisers settle in to await a weather window before heading out across the Gulf Stream, toward Bermuda and onward to the Caribbean.
Things to Do in Beaufort, S.C.

In its early years, the town thrived largely due to the growth of surrounding indigo, rice and cotton plantations. Plantation owners maintained homes in town for the social and commercial life. The Federal style John Mark Verdier House (circa 1790) at 801 Bay St., has been preserved by the Historic Beaufort Foundation as an example of the period and is open for tours 10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. (843) 379-6335.

Tour the town in a horse-drawn carriage, departing from the parking lot right next to the town dinghy dock. Call the Beaufort Visitors Center (843) 524-3163 for reservations.

Satisfy your sweet tooth at the Chocolate Tree, a family-run confectionary at 507 Carteret St. Watch as they pour premium chocolate into dozens of shapes, including sailboats, alligators and doubloons. Sample homemade brittles and other candies. (800) 525-7980.

Pick up a walking map at the Visitors Center at 1106 Carteret St. For a guided walking tour, consider calling Jon Sharp, a fellow sailor who washed ashore in 1992, became enamored and decided to stay. He offers five 90-minute tours daily, Tuesday–Saturday. Call (843) 575-5775.

Even if this is your first visit, Beaufort may look strangely familiar if you’ve ever watched The Big Chill, The Prince of Tides, Forrest Gump, or any of the other major films shot nearby. Look for the film locations as you stroll around, including Tidalholm (circa 1856) at 1 Laurens St.

Peruse more than a dozen galleries associated with the Guild of Beaufort Galleries. Most are arrayed along Bay Street, and all are within walking distance. Most feature local artists and their renderings of classic lowcountry scenes. www.guildofbeaufortgalleries.com.

Visit the Beaufort Museum at the Arsenal (circa 1852) housing a collection of artifacts dating back to Native American settlements in the area during prehistoric times. Open 11 a.m.–4 p.m. (843) 379-3331.

Hang out in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, surrounding the Downtown Marina. A multi-million dollar renovation includes a children’s playground, swinging benches ideal for sunset viewing and a seasonal craft and farmers market.

“Boe” or “Bew”?

Both Beaufort towns, as well as the counties in North and South Carolina, were named after Henry Somerset, Second Duke of Beaufort, one of the early Lord Proprietors of Carolina, a group of eight English noblemen who attempted to run the colony as a business enterprise like absentee landlords.

The name Beaufort refers to a castle in Anjou, France, and is the only dukedom to take its name from a place outside of the British Isles. As a title in Britain, “Beaufort” would likely have been pronounced “bew-furt,” like the “beau” in “beautiful.” As the name of a French castle, it would have been pronounced “boe-furt,” just as a handsome man in French is called a “beau.”

Why did the First Duke (also named Henry Somerset like his grandson) choose a French castle for his title? The family descended from French Huguenots, Protestants who fled from persecution in Catholic France and settled in Britain. So which is correct? South Carolina has adopted the British “bew-furt” pronunciation, and in North Carolina, the French “boe-furt” is the accepted norm.

Things to Do in Beaufort, N.C.

The first stop for many sailors is the free North Carolina Maritime Museum, 315 Front St. Besides superb displays describing the state’s maritime heritage, it offers a stately library where sailors can catch up on reading all of the boating magazines or research almost any boating topic. Visit the gift shop to ask about the loaner vehicles generously provided by the Friends of the Maritime Museum. (252) 728-7317; www.ncmm-friends.org.

Stroll the historic streets to view homes representing a variety of periods and architectural styles. The oldest, Hammock House (circa 1709) on Hammock Lane, was reputedly built for a group of sea captains and later used as a tavern and guesthouse. Its guests included the infamous Blackbeard.

To tour a few historic structures with guides in period garb, visit the Beaufort Historic Site, 100 block of Turner St., (252) 728-5225, www.historicbeaufort.com. The Beaufort Historical Association that runs the Historic Site also offers guided tours of the town aboard a British double-decker bus (contact above).

The town’s Old Burying Ground on Ann Street provides a glimpse of the town’s early settlers, like Sarah Gibbs. She married a seaman who was shipwrecked for several years. Jacob Shepard returned to find Sarah married to Nathaniel Gibbs with a child. The two men agreed she should remain with Gibbs as long as she lived, but spend eternity with Shepard, who is buried alongside her. Guided tours are available from BHA or brochures for self-guided tours can be purchased.

Cross Taylor Creek to explore Carrot Island or the Rachel Carson Reserve where horses descended from the survivors of wrecks 400-years ago run wild with raccoons, foxes and other animals prowling the sparsely vegetated sandbars.

Shop in the art galleries, antique shops and gift shops lining Front Street and the surrounding business district.

For a bit of nightlife, check out the Backstreet Pub, 124 Middle St., The Dock House, 500 Front St. right at the Beaufort Docks, the Royal James Café, 117 Turner St., or if you’re on the Town Creek side, The Sandbar Restaurant and Tiki Bar, 232 W. Beaufort Rd.
Feature Marina

Skull Creek Marina Offers Island Style Southern Hospitality

by Geoff Bowlin
Photos by Jo Lucey

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. - Hilton Head Island marks the midpoint between Virginia and Florida, and one of the island’s friendliest stops is Skull Creek Marina, located at mile 555 right on the Intracoastal Waterway.

Originally built in 1978, the docks revealed structural flaws after a few years. The owner hired Bellingham Marine to rebuild. The company suggested constructing new floating concrete docks in the slightly larger basin on the south end of the property. Workers left the old pilings behind to preserve the permit.

Now, some 25 years later, the owner has decided that it is time to build out the original northern basin again. Permits have been renewed and Phase One is expected to commence in early 2007, adding more than 800 feet of side-to dockage designed for megayachts to 400 feet (up from 200 feet currently). With no bridges between the well-protected marina and the ocean, and MLW depths of 10 to 16 feet, most yachts can find their way in with no trouble.

The new floating docks will be 30 inches high and 12 feet wide in order to accommodate golf carts, should yacht owners wish to play a few holes at the adjoining Hilton Head Country Club. A new dock house and new bathrooms are also planned.

Future phases will add another 2,600 linear feet of dockage, also designed with the big boats in mind. Those with more modest vessels will still be accommodated in the nearly 200 existing slips. The five T-heads and fuel dock are normally available for transients. Hail the harbormaster on VHF channel 16 or 10, or phone ahead at (843) 681-8436.

Sailors who prefer to drop their hook can do so in the fork in the creek just north of the marina. Anchor cautiously on the east side of the low sandy island between the marina and Channel Marker 6. Find enough depth so you don't end up aground if the tide is dropping, and put out enough rode to accommodate any rise in tide.

A friendly reception and inexpensive showers at the marina are a quick dinghy ride away. Tie up behind the harbormaster’s office and check in. The downside to anchoring out is that the marina is enclosed within the gated Hilton Head Plantation community. You may not be able to transit the gate without paying an expensive visitor fee.

Besides the golf course, one of the island’s more popular restaurants, the Old Fort Pub, is within walking distance. It is open nightly for dinner. Take a few moments to explore the remains of the earthen Civil War fort adjacent to the parking lot and read the placards describing the historic outpost. Amble down pleasant streets lined with tone homes and check out the ponds lined with sunning alligators.

For those staying in the marina, bicycles and a courtesy van complete with gate passes are available for more extensive island exploration.

Dockside amenities include full water and power connections, wireless Internet, individual dock boxes, pumpouts, fuel, ice, showers and a laundry room. The dock house includes a modest ship store and a TV tuned to The Weather Channel.

As an added touch of Southern hospitality, the marina hosts informal monthly BYOB cookouts for its boat owners.

The marina includes a 30-ton travelift to carry boats with beams up to 15 feet to the adjacent yard. Bottom jobs are done in-house and independent contractors handle other jobs.

For those who become smitten with Skull Creek Marina, discounts for seasonal dockage are available. For those truly in love with the tranquil locale, slips sized 32-200 feet can be leased for 99 years.
Mail Buoy – Your Letters on Sailing in the Carolinas

Submit Letters by e-mail to Letters@CarolinaCurrents.com. For verification, please include your phone number, which we won’t publish.

Ahoy Reader

This section is where you are truly the voice of this magazine. Your letters can raise issues of interest to sailors on our lakes, ocean and waterways. They can applaud, challenge or expand upon topics you read about in this magazine. This is the place to share your ideas within these basic guidelines: All letters must pertain in some way to sailing in the Carolinas; Nothing libelous or profane; No airing of personal conflicts or complaints; No blatant commercial plugs.

We’ll edit down letters that ramble too long to fit available space. Grab your quills and keyboards and start writing.

E-mail to Letters@CarolinaCurrents.com or mail to Carolina Currents Mail Buoy, P.O. Box 1090, Oriental, NC 28571.

What is a Mail Buoy?

Lonesome sailors have always sent missives home. In remote seas, sailors drop letters in the nearest mail buoy to be picked up by the next passing mail boat.

In the early days, these distinctive buoys were maintained in traditional whaling grounds, off islands that were too rugged to get ashore, and along major trade routes.

During WW II, the U.S. Postal Service maintained a grid of moored mail buoys so U.S. Navy seaman could efficiently send and receive mail from home.

A reputable website describes the process: “It’s a picturesque sight with postal clerks standing by the rail, boat hook in hand, deftly hooking the sacks and swinging them up on deck. Captains hate to make two passes at a mail buoy; it’s a sign of a slack crew, so the PC has to look sharp and be quick.”

Before the days of GPS, new recruits aboard Navy ships invariably drew the buoy spotting duty, often standing watch through inclement nights to ensure that their crewmates would not miss their mail as they passed the appointed buoy.

Today, the now-controversial mail buoy system remains in limited use by research vessels in remote waters near the poles. Costs are immense, particularly where buoys are subject to frequent ice damage. And Greenpeace has protested their impact on the environment in the Southern Hemisphere where they have become unnatural nesting sites for penguins.

While mail buoys provide an invaluable service, we recommend normal mailboxes.
BEAUFORT, N.C. - It was one decade ago when archaeologists discovered what is arguably the greatest pirate treasure found to date: not a chest full of gold doubloons and glittering jewels, but rather one of the most infamous of sailing vessels, Blackbeard’s flagship Queen Anne’s Revenge.

QAR was involved with the blockade of Charleston in May 1718, what some call Blackbeard’s most notorious achievement as a pirate. A few days later, according to historical accounts, the vessel was intentionally run aground off Beaufort Inlet in North Carolina. The company of 400 pirates from four ships disbanded, and Blackbeard slipped away with a small group of men and the loot.

Nearly three centuries later, a shipwreck salvage company called Intersal Inc. found the remains on Nov. 21, 1996. Realizing its potential historical importance, Intersal Director of Operations Mike Daniel halted diving operations less than an hour after they began and soon gave the rights of excavation for the 25-foot-deep site to the State of North Carolina.

Ten years later, state underwater archaeologists have carefully explored approximately 10 percent of the wreck site, recovering thousands of artifacts that seem to confirm Daniel’s initial suspicions.

According to the wreck project director Mark Wilde-Ramsing, “And perhaps more importantly, there are no other shipwrecks to be viable candidates that meet the site’s archaeological profile,” Wilde-Ramsing says.

North Carolina’s Underwater Archaeology Branch has extensive records of nearly 6,000 shipwrecks lost in its waters, and only the QAR and Adventure were lost in the vicinity of Beaufort Inlet in the first half of the 18th century.

“Although the ravages of time have reduced the ship to an archaeological rubble heap, much like detectives on a crime scene we will be able to learn a lot by what is left,” Wilde-Ramsing asserts.

Timbers and anchors represent a 200- to 300-ton vessel, and the armament is that of a 26-gun ship. According to records, QAR began as a 26-gun French vessel of that size named La Concorde before Blackbeard’s band commandeered it.

Divers recover a cannon at the wreck site

The wreck’s orientation is headed toward shore and, when transposed on 18th century charts, is at the edge of the inlet on its outer bar.

Findings so far include sail cloth fabric, pieces of howser, animal food remains, a large amount of ammunition, a collection of pewter plates, the lead liner from the officer’s head, a stemmed wine glass commemorating King George I, ceramic jugs and bottle glass, some scientific instruments and a few miscellaneous personal items, such as tobacco pipes, a button, a cufflink and a jaw harp.

The manufacturing dates of the mostly English and French artifacts places the vessel loss after 1713 and prior to 1730, putting it neatly in Blackbeard’s heyday.

The lack of personal items - and the lack of any pirate booty - is further evidence that the ship was intentionally grounded and evacuated by the crew.

The crew did a thorough packing job. While historic artifacts abound, the only gold found so far is a few flecks in the sand. But the heavy guns left behind - far more than carried by most merchant ships of that age - are further evidence of the
vessel’s menacing purpose.

Divers have recovered 24 cannons, most still loaded with typical pirate shot: bolts, nails, bar-shot, and spikes meant to shred sails and rigging or rake the decks clear of victims before boarding.

Several of the recovered cannon have been restored for public viewing along with other artifacts in the “Blackbeard and the QAR Project” exhibit at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort.

The sampling survey conducted to date has mostly identified the scope of the site. In October, the state was to begin full recovery operations to retrieve the rest of the remains over the next three years. Subsequent cleaning, analysis and conservation at the QAR state conservation laboratory on the East Carolina University campus may take decades.

While legends, myths and historical accounts about Blackbeard abound, inspiring festivals, novels and films, there was little concrete evidence of the pirate’s reign of terror along the coast until the QAR discovery.

“We are just beginning to put the pieces together concerning the make-up of the floating vessel and the crew and their activities aboard her,” Wilde-Ramsing says. “The physical remains of the ship itself should provide fascinating clues into ship construction practices and naval architecture during a period and for a class of ship where limited information survives today.”

And there’s always the chance that a dubloon or two fell out of some pirate’s pocket or was forgotten in some now decayed crevice of the ship.

Arrrrrr, treasure!

Visit www.qaronline.org to learn more about the shipwreck project.

Heads Up at Hartwell
By Ed Sherman

HARTWELL LAKE, S.C. - Western Carolina Sailing Club lies along the South Carolina banks of Hartwell Lake, one mile south of Portman Marina. This fresh water lake has 1,000 miles of shoreline and lies in the Savannah River basin dividing Georgia and the Carolinas.

The recent opening day at WCSC for the Fall ’06 series of sailboat racing found 15 keelboats crossing the line. WCSC member and boat-owner Kim Heinitsh, a single mother from Brevard, N.C., was slated to helm my Etchells, Spirit, along with another WCSC member and boat-owner, Richelle Davis of Easley, S.C.

The morning land breeze had already begun. As we were preparing the boat at the pier, moments before time to depart, Kim, wearing her US Sailing cap and shouldering her duffle, walked down the long dock towards the slip. She reached the boat and announced, “Y’all are going to love this, because I had my own head shaved to make her feel better,” she explained.

Having her aboard to drive suddenly became an honor.

A few weeks later, Kim’s shaved head had sprouted a U.S. Marine-look crew cut. She was back on the boat for the second race hearing cheers from all skippers.

Kim’s reply was touching.

“One of my close friends in Brevard was recently diagnosed with breast cancer and now must undergo chemo, so I decided to have my own head shaved to make her feel better,” she explained.

Having her aboard to drive suddenly became an honor.

A few weeks later, Kim’s shaved head had sprouted a U.S. Marine-look crew cut. She was back on the boat for the second race hearing cheers from all skippers.

EDITOR’S NOTE: We are looking for news from sailing and yacht clubs in the Carolinas. Are you hosting an open regatta? Has your club upgraded facilities, launched a membership drive, or hosted a charity fundraiser? Have you elected new officers or planned a public boating class? Do you have a special member like Kim who your fellow readers should know about? Send the information to Info@CarolinaCurrents.com. We’ll fit as much as we can in our next print edition and put the rest online in our Club Corner department.

By Ed Sherman
ORIENTAL, N.C. - When Fairwyn sailed through the Carolinas this summer, owners Stephen and Nancy Carlman were cruising her toward an anniversary party that few yachts have observed.

In 1982, the couple bought the Sparkman and Stephens-designed custom-built yawl from the original Canadian family that had it built in Scotland in 1957. The first owners kept the wooden-hulled boat on the east coast of Canada for 25 years, winning trophies in regattas including a race to Bermuda.

The Carlmans had Fairwyn shipped across the continent to Vancouver where they spent much of the second half of the boat’s life upgrading it for their post-retirement dream cruise.

Fairwyn's crew ducked into Oriental for a few nights to dodge a threatening tropical storm on their way up the coast. They plan to winter in the Chesapeake before heading for Halifax in the spring. There, the boat’s original family will reunite with their old vessel for a 50th anniversary party.

“That will complete the circle for the boat and us,” Carlman says.

During the past 25 years, the Carlmans have made many modifications both inside and outside.

“If nothing else, they’ll recognize the name. It has the same lines,” he says.

Before starting their cruise in September 1999, the couple added roller furling, an electric windlass, three GPS units, a single sideband radio, autopilot, radar, refrigeration, a wind generator, two computers and other amenities that sailors might never have dreamed of 50 years ago. Kerosene models replaced a rudimentary alcohol cooking stove and a charcoal heating stove. Carlman also built a nav station in place of a massive icebox, reconfigured the cockpit and doubled the lifelines.

“In the modifications, we have tried to pay attention to making it look aesthetically as it was intended,” Carlman said. “But in terms of working gear, it’s all modern. We do have a sextant on board, and we do know how to use it - sort of. And we still have all the wooden blocks and stuff, but they’re in my attic back home. We’re cruisers, not masochists.”

Before all of the changes, Carlman described Fairwyn’s interior as “barn like.” “It was designed for six men to race across the ocean for six to 10 days. From the very first day when we lifted it off the truck I saw some things I wanted fixed.”
New Products

Cool Boat Stuff

by Gadget Girl

LED Technology: Coming Soon to a Boat Near You

The light bulb is old hat. Light Emitting Diode (LED) technology is rapidly overtaking traditional lighting, including in the boating world. We’ve had an OGM LED bow navigation light aboard our boat for over two years and have been extremely happy with it. LEDs draw around one-fifth of the power of a standard bulb. If you are cruising “off the grid” for any length of time this can make a big difference to your power consumption. For some time, OGM has featured USCG-approved masthead tri-anchor lights (drawing 0.5 amp), with costs ranging from $239 for the base model to $369 for the model with a light sensitive photodiode and strobe. Their new TriAnchor range (see photo below) has QuickFit Disconnect wiring, allowing removal of the light (e.g. for mast removal) and ensuring the unit is completely watertight. In addition to the expected LED life of 100,000 hours, the wiring used to power these lights can be smaller gauge than normal due to the reduced power draw. OGM expects to have interior boat lights by the end of the year. Visit www.orcagreen.com for details.

According to their research, just a half dozen boats were built using the same hull design, and they were all were rigged differently. “We’re hoping to see some on the East Coast during our trip,” Carlman says. “I think they’re all here.”

Carlman maintains that classic wooden boats are quieter inside than modern vessels, more attractive and better insulated for more comfortable temperatures.

“It’s a pleasure to me when people come by and say ‘what a nice boat.’ We have met more interesting people through the boat than we would have with a modern boat,” he believes. “Would I do it again? I don’t think so. Have I enjoyed it? Yes.”

One of the smallest flashlights around is the Pak-Lite which clips onto a 9-volt battery (see photo above). Different color combinations are available including the Boatman with green and red LEDs which the manufacturers say can double as an emergency navigation light or a chart-reading light. They also claim Pak-Lites have survived a washing machine, being frozen in ice and dropped from a plane, though we haven’t tested that feature. Don’t leave one close to your compass, though, as the magnet will make it go haywire. With brighter LEDs than our original, NightStar II units cost $34.95 with a five-year warranty. Visit www.nightstar1.com for details.

For four years we have been using a NightStar flashlight, which we refer to as the “shaky torch”. With no batteries, it’s charged by shaking it, which moves an inner magnet through a coil. Our unit had a problem with the on/off switch after a year but was replaced by the manufacturer. The sealed unit is waterproof and allegedly floats, though luckily we haven’t tested that feature. Don’t leave one close to your compass, though, as the magnet will make it go haywire. With brighter LEDs than our original, NightStar II units cost $34.95 with a five-year warranty. Visit www.nightstar1.com for details.

The biggest job came when a surveyor pointed out some decaying wood in the hull leading to an expensive re-planking job.

Since setting out on their journey, they have sailed down the west coast to Mexico, over to the Galapagos, throughout Central America, through the Panama Canal and into the Gulf of Mexico. They were in a protected marina when Katrina hit Louisiana and suffered only minor damage to a rail. Then they sailed around Florida and up the coast.
Mystery Marker
Identify this Marker and Win!

Do you recognize this channel marker? If so, you can win a prize.
The first five people to properly identify this marker will win a free personal boating website for six months, courtesy of our contest sponsor, BoatTales.com. Simply e-mail the following to Info@CarolinaCurrents.com:

• The name of the channel that the marker marks.
• The coordinates of the marker based on either its charted location or an actual GPS reading.
• Describe a significant detail about the location, such as where the channel leads, a hazard in the area or some significant landmark nearby, or tell us about some personal sailing experience in the area around the marker.

• Include your name, the name and make of your boat, preferred e-mail and phone number.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Do you have a marine business and want to sponsor our next Mystery Marker contest? We welcome prize donations and will recognize sponsors appropriately.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: Do you have a marine business and want to sponsor our next Mystery Marker contest? We welcome prize donations and will recognize sponsors appropriately.

Cool Boat Stuff/contd.

Marine PCs

NautilusTek specializes in Marine PCs that can be used for navigation, entertainment and Internet connectivity.

They have three units available, all small enough to be permanently mounted near the nav station. The entry-level unit is under $1,000, and each package includes a 15-inch monitor, keyboard and mouse.

The units are treated from the inside out to resist corrosion from the harsh salt water environment. The regulated low draw 12-volt supply runs on anything between 9 and 16-volts so power is not an issue.

If you are in port for an extended period, a 120v adapter is included to run off of shore power. For $1,250 the NTM1000 - their most popular product - is designed with the modern boater in mind, from the weekend cruiser to the blue water sailor. The NTM1000’s DVD/CDRW combo drive and wall mounted adjustable monitor provide multimedia entertainment while the built-in serial port, USB 2.0 and firewire ports let you connect your GPS, autopilot or any other compatible instruments to give you an all-in-one navigation station. To access the Internet via wi-fi, a PCMCIA wireless network card or external bridge and antenna need to be added. Visit www.Nautilustek.com for details.

I’ve Been Around by Tania Aebi

This is Tania Aebi’s first book since her epic Maiden Voyage that described her round-the-world-alone trip she began at age 18. It’s a collection of articles spawned from her Latitudes and Attitudes column. During more than 20 years of cruising and leading charters she has gathered anecdotes, observations, opinions, cautionary tales and advice.

If racing boats is your thing, this book won’t hold much allure for you. Aebi admits “the sport of racing has never captured my fancy as much as the cruising lifestyle.” However, if you want to learn a novel use for duck tape (hair removal), this is your book. Topics such as swimming (you’ll discover the only stroke you need to know is the Doggie Paddle 101), boat shoes (or not), pirates, fouled props and other lessons in life are addressed.

Aebi helps us remember that sailing and being on the water are the important things, not how much the boat cost or whether we have all the latest gadgets and doohickies. Since she sailed around the globe in a 26-foot boat without GPS, perhaps we can all learn a few lessons from her.

Dear Emily,

We almost always anchor out but the proliferation of mooring fields in some popular spots can make it difficult sometimes. Can you tell me the proper way to deal with anchoring in a mooring field? If we anchor among moorings, do the mooring owners have the right to make us move?

Thanks for any light you can shed on this subject.

Signed,

Anchor Rancor

Mooring Madness Stirs Anchor Rancor

Gentle Cruiser,

We can well identify with your plight. We, too, have arrived in an anchorage in the waning hours of a day, seeking secure refuge for the night, only to find the water forbodingly littered with plastic balls.

Anchoring has long been the presumed birthright of traveling sailors. The proliferation of mooring balls has encroached upon that sacred tradition in many of the most desirable destinations from the U.S coasts to the Caribbean Islands and beyond.

Sadly, no formal protocol exists. As always, your obligation is to anchor so that you will not bump into anything (including mooring balls) as you swing with the changes in tidal current or wind direction. We’ve perfected our fore-and-aft anchoring technique for particularly tight spots.

Beyond that, we have only our own sense of propriety to fall back upon.

If a ball is occupied, ensure that your boat remains a polite distance from the other vessel - a boat length or two as a minimum, if at all possible.

If the ball is unoccupied, such discretion is unnecessary, but you must stand ready to make adjustments should the owner return.

Technically, a mooring ball owner possesses “first arrival” rights, even if their boat isn’t physically on their ball when you drop your hook. A mooring ball is the equivalent of saving your seat with your coat at a public gathering. It isn’t always in good taste, but it does carry the moral weight of “first-come, first-served.”

Just as those already anchored can politely ask newcomers to reconsider their choice in locations, so too can owners of mooring balls - if they are using the ball. They cannot “make you leave,” but you would likely bear the main liability should your vessel and theirs bump in the night.

Under no circumstances should you consider using somebody’s empty mooring ball. This is as much for your own vessel’s safety as anything else. The tackle may be in disrepair or designed for a vessel much lighter than yours. Either case could prove disastrous in a blow.

Personally, we feel that mooring ball owners should exercise considerable leniency toward their anchoring brethren.

We applaud, for example, the Beaufort, N.C., ball owner who found a desperate crew tied to his mooring (see our admonishment above) after the Coast Guard herded several cruisers away from the edge of the Taylor Creek channel one evening, forcing them to find room in the already crowded anchorage.

He politely identified himself as the ball owner and told the cruisers they could stay on the ball overnight, but the owner would be needing it the next day. Such compassion, however, is rare.

Ball owners should also down-rig moorings not being used for extended periods. If one were to save a seat with one’s jacket, and then not attend the show leaving other patrons standing in the aisles, it would be a case of unpardonable rudeness. Such is the case with mooring balls left unattended.

We have strong opinions on the appropriateness of mooring balls in general. In places where anchoring is difficult, dangerous or unadvisable, a secure mooring is an excellent alternative. An example might be in a narrow channel where an anchored boat cannot swing without ending up on shore, whilst moored boats might pivot merrily around their balls without getting anywhere near the shore.

Mooring balls may also prove a good alternative where holding is poor. A permanent screw driven into rocky bottoms is much more effective than most anchors.

However, there are also instances where mooring balls are no more than a nuisance. I recall a popular anchorage in the British Virgin Islands where we were forced to drop our hook in excessively deep water because the optimal anchoring area was filled with balls costing $20 per night.

Had the designers of this field reversed the situation - placing the balls in the deep water and reserving the shallows where far less rode is required for anchoring vessels - we would have applauded their foresight.

Similar situations are now commonplace in the historically popular anchorages from Florida to Maine. In addition to these public encroachments upon traditional cruising grounds, we must also contend with private moorings slowly choking our waterways. Who regulates these?

As you see, we fear there are no simple answers to your question and it will only grow more complicated as mooring balls proliferate alongside anchoring boats.

The ultimate solution might be a national system of free public mooring balls, such as those we found in the Spanish Virgins.

Until then, don a brave smile and practice your precision anchoring.

-Emily
Since turning our attention fulltime toward launching a magazine some months back, I must admit with some amount of shame that we have rarely left our slip. After three years of full-time cruising and anchoring out almost every night, readjusting to life at the dock has been a definite change of pace.

One of the activities I miss is casting my line off the side of the boat to explore the piscatorial culture lying beneath each new anchorage. Would schools of pinfish peck the bait off my hooks, or did squirrelfish lurk among the nearby rocks? Or might I luck into some panfish to cook for dinner?

But here at the dock my curiosity is subdued. Do I really want to eat things swimming in what is essentially our backyard?

Then one day we happened to buy a chicken for dinner. And inside that chicken was a chicken neck. I had read what to do with chicken necks. The floats in the channel alongside our marina attested that my chances of success were good.

So that evening I tied a fishing line securely around the neck, added a weight and lowered it over the side amidships.

My past experience of crabbing involved lowering a trap off the end of my pier at a previous marina. At first, I’d look forward to the thrill of raising it up every day to see what might have crept in through the openings. Along with several kinds of crabs, I discovered an eel, a sheephead and other hapless fish.

But the challenge of a crab trap was ... well, there was none. After a time it grew a bit dull and I lost interest.

My chicken neck, however, provided an entire day of entertainment. Every half hour or so I made forays up on deck and gently eased the neck up through the black coffee waters to the surface. Leaning out over the side, I watched the neck as it came up from the murkiness. And there it was almost every time: a wiggling, pale oblong shape clinging to the bony flesh.

I reached to my side and grabbed my landing net, slid it slowly into the water and smoothly scooped up under the chicken neck and my prey. I pulled it through the lifelines and stepped with satisfaction back to the cockpit where I dumped it into the bucket with the rest.

Then the neck went back over the side. By bedtime I had four keeper-sized blue crabs and decided to leave the neck dangling over the side.

The next day I continued to ease the now greatly diminished neck up all day long until I had perhaps a dozen keepers and had tossed nearly that many back in to grow a bit more.

I recently heard a parable of crabs: You don’t have to keep a lid on a bucket of crabs. If one tries to crawl up out of the bucket, the others grasp him and pull him back down.

The person who told this story had compared the crabs to employees in a government office. Luckily I had not heard this tale before I eased my catch into a pot of spicy water on the stove.

After adding a couple ears of corn and some quartered potatoes, I shut the lid and carefully ignored the sounds inside as the water heated up. A short time later, the blue crabs had turned a fiery orange and I dished up dinner.

And that, it turns out, is the hardest part of crabbing. You have to eat the things. We made it through a couple each. After dinner I spent more than two hours picking the meat out of the remaining ones. We had tasty crab cakes, crab salad and crab sandwiches for a few days.

I believe I’ll wait awhile before I slip my next chicken neck over the side.
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<tr>
<td>34’ Rival</td>
<td>'76</td>
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