



Tiller Tales

October 2008

Headline News !! — GSC Regatta Needs Help

Tuesday, October 28, 2008

You have 7 days to get your regatta registration to me and register for the 17th annual Gulfstream Regatta.

As of today I have 1 registration.

I NEED your registrations to basically run the regatta.

You can go to <http://www.gulfstreamsailingclub.org/> to get entry form and NOR. Astrid Hunton, Regatta Chair

From The Editor

This is the second edition of eTiller Tales! Enclosed is a timely article by Marilyn Mammano on proposed new anchoring restrictions in Florida. See page two for some club news and thanks to Karyn and Steve James, we have an interesting article on sailing to Svalbard. Besides looking really cold, you may ask “ Where is Svalbard? “ According to Wikipedia, it is an archipelago in the Arctic Ocean north of mainland Europe, about midway between mainland Norway and the North Pole and forms the northern most part of Norway. Three islands are populated:

Spitsbergen, Bear Island and Hopen. The largest settlement is Longyearbyen. After launching THRESHOLD, a 54’aluminum, twin head sail, pilothouse sloop by Paine/Kanter, in 2002, Steve and Karyn crossed the North Atlantic in 2004. Since then they have cruised every country of Atlantic Europe plus Morocco spending winters in London, La Rochelle, Lagos, and Lanzarote. This is their latest of many adventures.

We will try to include more racing and Lake items in the future. Next Tiller Tales is in December since your editor is going sailing in Phuket. - Franz J. Walkow



Karyn and Steve James - THRESHOLD



Hot Off the Presses—Latest Club News

FINANCES: We have \$3374.35 in the General account, time to start renewing those memberships. Two new members joined in October.

LAKE: Lake and Opti fleet gong well, Learn to sail 9/6-11/8 and 11/22-1/17/09. Please volunteer and participate.

Looking into Junior membership for kids/Lake users for one year to encourage membership in GSC

COLUMBUS DAY: Commotion, Breeze, Munin, Takahani, Risque, Patriot, Wind Pirate, Yellow Jacket and Permanent Vacation went. CRUISING: Caretta going to the DR May through July 2009, a buddy boat or two would be welcome

WORK DAY: Nov. 22 or 23 to help Jeannie Little with yard work, check with Drew for details

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINEES are as follows:

Commodore: Astrid Hunton

Vice Commodore: Gary Pirtle

Rear Commodore: No nominee from the Committee

Secretary: Sue Rineer

Treasurer: Linda Gossett

Auditor: Jay Wood

Board Member: Doris White from committee Becky Castellano from the floor

Nominating Committee: Helen Swinghammer

Voting will occur at the November meeting November 11th, 2008

- Sue Rineer, Secretary

GSC REGATTA: November 8th is the 17th annual MIA SF Gulfstream Sailing Club Regatta. This year's regatta will take place off the beach in Fort Lauderdale. The start is scheduled for 11am. We will have sections for PHRF, ARC and Gunkhole.

Friday November 7 we will have the packet pick up and skippers meeting. Doors open for packet pick up at 6:30 with the skippers meeting occurring around 7:30. The packet pick up will be at the 'Surf & Yacht club'. The address is 1 Palm Ave, Lauderdale by the Sea. The easiest way

To get there from the west is to take Commercial Ave., cross A1A and turn right on El Mar. The Surf & Yacht club is on the left at the end of El Mar. Park in the lot and at the Holiday Inn. From Fort Lauderdale, take A1A north to the light at Imperial (I think). If you see Hibiscus turn right and head south on El Mar. The after race Regatta party will be held at the Bahia Cabana starting at 7:00pm and trophies will be presented around 8:00pm.

The entry fee for the Regatta is \$50 and that covers your boat for the Regatta and you and your crew for food at the after race party.

You can download the Notice of Race and Entry form at

<http://www.gulfstreamsailingclub.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PostWrap&file=index&page=regatta>

Or

<http://www.gulfstreamsailingclub.org/> and click on the Regatta tab on the left side

Or

click on the link under Latest News concerning the Regatta.

A lot of time and effort has and will be put into running this Regatta and you as boat owners can show your appreciation by participating.

Last year we had 26 boats on the water. I would like to match or exceed that amount.

Entry forms need to be returned by Nov.5.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. strid@mindspring.com or 954 796 7447

- Astrid Hunton, Regatta Chair

Draconian Limitations on Anchoring Proposed

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FFWC) is proposing state legislation to give cities the power to regulate anchoring. WHY SHOULD YOU CARE???

For unknown reasons (*perhaps responding to pressure from cities, marina operators and waterfront property owners?*), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission is holding hearings around the state to take public comment on proposed legislation that would give cities the power to regulate anchoring within their jurisdictions. Power that they currently do not have. For information about this proposal go to <http://myfwc.com/boating/>. Go to [Click Here for Draft Anchoring and Mooring Concepts for the draft proposal](#).

Starting at page 24 you will find a new section 327.61 called Anchoring, Local Regulation. The law would allow cities to “prohibit anchoring of vessels within the waters of its jurisdiction in excess of 30 consecutive days or 120 days cumulative in a calendar year”. This is aimed at live boards.

It then goes on to say “Any ...municipality that has established a managed mooring field (such as Fort Lauderdale) and determines that the protection and enhancement of public health requires greater protection may prohibit by ordinance the anchoring of vessels within the waters of its jurisdiction IN EXCESS OF 3 CONSECUTIVE DAYS OR 10 DAYS CUMULATIVELY IN ANY CALANDER YEAR.

This is being called the 3day/10day-anchoring rule.

Under the guise of clarification, conformity, comprehensiveness, best practices and other bureaucratic bull this state agency that is responsible to protecting our natural resources and public access to them is proposing to give cites the power to limit our access to the public waters of our state. If cities are given the power to limit anchoring to 3day/10 day rule (not withstanding a required finding by FFWC that a sufficient number of public moorings are available to meet the needs of residents and transients vessels) you can bet that city governments will succumb to the political pressure of waterfront property owners to enact such an ordinance.

What does that mean to you? Well you can kiss raft ups in Lake Sylvia goodbye. Two nights on the hook uses up three days. Three weekends in a year and you are over the limit. All this will mean is harassment by the Marine Police who will now be required to spend time taking names and kicking ass. Talk about a waste of taxpayer money.

Don't let this happen. Fight back. Send your comments to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission opposing any change in state laws that would allow cites to regulate anchoring. You can submit your comments in opposition at <http://myfwc.com/boating/>. Or you can send an email directly to the FFWC at Anchoring.Mooring@myfwc.com.

Gulfstream Sailing Club and all boating organizations in Florida should be cooperating and coordinating an organized effort to defeat this stealth attach on our ability to access and enjoy the waterways of Florida.
- Marilyn Mammano

Palm Trees to Polar Ice: 5,000 Miles of Atlantic Islands, 27° N to 80° N

Adventures of Karyn and Steve James

There are a number of reasons that sailing to Svalbard is not for everyone. The distance, to not only get there but to also return, can be daunting. The thought of sailing past the edge of civilization and even beyond permanent human occupation can get one's attention. The potentially hostile environment is also a deterrent. Yet, all these also provide the attractions: the challenge, the remote isolation, and the beauty of the unspoiled nature. We first considered taking *Threshold* to the far north while we were wintering in London in '04/'05. A practice cruise to the Shetlands and southern Norway only whetted our appetites. A real commitment didn't happen until the winter of '07. We decided to set sail from the Canary Islands, 27° N, in late April '08. We had a long way to go. This was certainly going to be the challenging cruise we envisioned.

Threshold is a great boat to make this cruise. She is well-seasoned and tested and her aluminum construction gives one some confidence for possible ice encounters. Possibly her best feature for sailing to Svalbard is her very livable pilothouse where we can stand watch in a protected environment. She was also designed with short-handed sailing in mind. This would be a real test of her capabilities and good motivation for getting her in optimal condition. Steve's job was to make sure all the systems on *Threshold* were in top shape. Major servicing was accomplished on the engine, generator, the winches and windlass. An important modification allowed engine coolant to flow through the Webasto radiator system for heating while motoring. An extensive list was complete and we 'thought' she was ready.

Karyn undertook the task of feeding Steve and the crew. She became an expert with the pressure cooker and the vacuum sealer in the galley. While we had shore power available, she made efficient use of a portable single-coil electric burner conserving our valuable propane. Before we departed, the freezer was full of precooked, frozen, vacuum-sealed meals for four. She made sure every locker was full of reasonably-priced provisions knowing the high cost of living in Norway.

Many thanks are due to our friends, associates, and clubs who loaned us many of the charts and cruising guides that were required for the trip. What we could not borrow we were able to buy. There are new and updated guides to Norway and Svalbard. Judy Lomax has written the new RCC guide *Norway* and Phyllis Nickel and John Harries of *Morgan's Cloud* have taken on updating the *Norwegian Cruising Guide* by Armitage and Brackenbury in e-Book form.

Another preparation requirement was acquiring permission from the Governor, the Sysselmann of Svalbard, to cruise there. The entire archipelago is a protected area administered by Norway. In order to get permission you must agree to their serious rules of not disturbing anything that predates 1946. You must acquire insurance or a bond to cover the costs of search and rescue in case you need it- 200,000 NOK/\$40,000 in our case. And, most dramatically, you must have a high powered rifle for polar bear protection if you intend to go ashore any place other than a major settlement. All this required multiple communications and not an insignificant effort.

Canary Islands-Azores

April 22nd we left Santa Cruz, **Tenerife** and were off toward Ponta Delgada, headed north at last. We made a relatively efficient passage to the Azores covering 745 nm in 4d23h. **Santa Maria, Azores** had not been an intended destination but passing so closely and not knowing when or if we would ever be there again, we decided to stop. What we found in Vila do Porto was a brand new, yet to be opened, small marina where the price was right – free! This short visit to a still-unspoiled, rarely-visited island was

a real pleasure but a crew rendezvous in Ponta Delgada, **Sao Miguel** demanded we continue.

Here is where Andy Wall, our veteran sailing friend from Florida met us. He had last sailed with us from Florida to the Azores during our Atlantic crossing in '04. It was great to have him back with us. Also joining us through cyberspace and radio links was our sailing friend and NOAA weather forecaster, John, who would be providing daily weather briefings and routing.

After a quick land tour, topping off the provisions, fuel, and propane, the three of us were ready to depart for Scotland. On May 5th the weather window opened and we were off.

Azores-Hebrides

This leg north would be our longest. The plan was to go past Ireland's west coast into the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. The rhumb line distance from Sao Miguel to Barra Island is 1,375 nm.

There is always something that makes every cruise a challenge. It seems that we also loaded on some 'boat gremlins' while at the dock in Ponta Delgada. These 'gremlins' were enough of a challenge that they began to threaten our plans to get to the far north. On the third day out, our ship's primary computer quit. The back up inverter was connected so we were back in business but we were prompted to now also get the lap top computer and backup GPS up and running. We of course have paper charts, and use them, but prefer the electronic charts for their tools and instant situational awareness.

Karyn undertook the task of feeding Steve and the crew. She became an expert with the pressure cooker and the vacuum sealer in the galley. While we had shore power available, she made efficient use of a portable single-coil electric burner conserving our valuable propane. Before we departed, the freezer was full of precooked, frozen, vacuum-sealed meals for four. She made sure every locker was full of reasonably-priced supplies. The next item for the 'electrician' was Ferris, our Hamilton Ferris tow generator. Offshore it does a great job of supplementing our large electricity needs, easily providing 100 to 150 amp-hours a day. Ferris started blowing fuses. It seemed as though it had a failed diode. Fortunately, there was a spare on board.

The electronic gremlins continued to attack and created a failure in the AIS receiver. While not a substitute for watch keeping, the AIS has become a valuable asset that we do not like to be without. Knowing the name and navigational data of a nearby ship has proven invaluable in getting them to respond on the VHF. It was eventually fixed with a new replacement chip.

Our passage gave us light air for the first few days, followed by some good winds interspersed with motoring. It was during one of the motoring phases that we discovered

a more serious problem: salt water in the bilge. Andy and Steve traced it back to the propeller shaft seal. It was not a lot of water but it was continuous and demanded close monitoring. We were 250 nm from our closest point of land. A couple of phone calls on the satellite phone to knowledgeable Irish and Scottish friends gave us the leads to start e-mailing boat yards that could lift us out. Pam, Andy's wife, who was acting as our shore base manager, arranged for the parts to be over-nighted to our son Nate who was planning to meet us in Scotland. Thankfully the leak did not increase substantially and the bilge pump could easily handle the flow. Oban Marina was selected as the best location for us to divert into for their hoist capability and their location for meeting our parts. We arrived in Scotland after 1,418 nm in 10d2h.

The un-anticipated haul out with the replacement of the shaft seal creates a story of its own. Over the weekend, we sat in the slings of an amazing new Wise 50-ton adjustable, submergible travel hoist, assisted by a very accommodating marina staff. Next, Andy, Nate and Steve were pulling a prop shaft that had never been pulled before...building the tools to pull the prop shaft that had never been pulled before...replacing the seal with hand-carried parts arriving just in time... Whew! What an event! Sometimes, but not often, a project actually goes right.

The Scottish Isles

We were slightly off track in the western isles of Scotland but not far behind schedule. Continuing to move north, we hit some of our favorite spots: a pub lunch at Tigh-an- Truish near Puilladobhrain; a visit to Duart Castle and Torosay House Museum and gardens; and a quick stop at quaint, colorful little Tobermory on the Isle of Mull. We then sailed on to Loch Nevis where we dined at the Old Forge, the “remotest pub on mainland Britain” in the exclusive company of climbers and sailors- there are no roads to this pub. We visited the mountainous Isle of Skye with its historic Dunvegan Castle and made a mandatory stop at the Talisker single-malt scotch distillery.

A few miles out of Loch Bay, finally en route to the Outer Hebrides, a loud thunk came from beneath the boat. The short story is that the prop shaft had come loose from the coupling and slid aft to be held in the strut by the anode. All this was realized after sailing back to the village of Stein and diving under the boat. “I have seen the gremlin (sic) and it is I.”

The tapered pin, designed to hold the prop shaft connected to the coupling, which had been lovingly cleaned and greased in Oban, had become dislodged. After Steve made multiple cold dives to push the shaft back in place while Andy guided it from the inside, the tapered pin was now secured with Loctite® and also a stainless hose clamp. The series of problems was beginning to cause us to worry “What next?”

‘Next’ happened as the last few links of anchor chain came across the anchor roller after being hauled up from a 60-foot bottom. We made a short stop at Tarbert, Isle of Harris, home of the Harris Tweed and moved on to the South Harbor of Scalpay. This is a wonderful, land-locked, though deep harbor. We had a bit of luck the next morning when the faithful windlass motor died in the last moment of completing its mission. Dismantling of the motor revealed a strange, pasty carbon built up inside. A thorough cleaning and reassembly thankfully resurrected the motor. Without our windlass we are out of commission on this trip. Bringing up the 88 pound Delta along with whatever amount of 3/8 inch chain is deployed could be done, once, without the windlass. After that we are limited to pontoon berthing. When the windlass hesitated once again it became apparent that this voyage was not going to proceed without a new motor. Hence, our shore-based Pam, shipped that and a new computer inverter to meet us in Bodø, Norway.

It was a great bit of the sport of navigation calculating the passage from Harris to Stromness in the Orkneys. The currents and rip tides run strong in this area. With good winds to start, we had a pleasant sail through the Minch and around Cape Wrath. Proper timing gave us 10 knots across the bottom for a bit. When the wind failed we had to rely on the diesel to keep us on schedule to cross the Merry Men of Mey and get us into Scapa Flow ahead of the serious adverse current. On May 30th, twenty-four hours and 154 miles later, we tied to the pontoon in Stromness in the Orkney Islands.

Note: We did not intend for this article to be an account of our maintenance issues, but it emphasizes the obstacles we encountered as we felt the pressures of distance and time to reach the remoteness of the Far North.

The Orkneys, Fair Isle and Shetlands

The Orkneys are recognized as historically significant in Neolithic as well as modern times. We had to take a few days' break here to visit the World Heritage sites of Skara Brae village, the Maeshowe burial mound, and the standing stones of Brogdar and Stennes. We chose not to don dry suits in order to do the popular Nitrox/Trimix dives on the German and British ships that still lie on the bottom of Scapa Flow. However, we highly recommend the small but very excellent Stromness Museum dating from c.1830. .

After an all too brief cruise through the rolling hills of the Orkneys, we made a quick stop and hiked around that remotest of inhabited UK islands, Fair Isle (pop. 70), known for its bird observatory and puffin population. We then sailed north for Lerwick, capital of the Shetland Islands. This was to be our last stop before Norway: last chance for UK prices, last chance for duty free provisioning. (Note: Norway's prices are about 2X that of the UK, and 4X US). Sadly, this was the end of Andy's time with us and he had to return to the summer heat of Florida. It would be just the two of us now for the next 500+ miles to Bodø, Norway.

Norway

Lerwick is a convenient holding spot to wait for weather windows. Often the frustration of waiting seems to overcome the good sense to stay as the weather patterns seem to persist longer here than would be imagined. During our previous visit we were amazed at the Norwegian boats arriving in the midst of a gale, loading up with duty free, and departing back across the North Sea with the gale still blowing. A North Sea gale is one to be cautious of as the shallow ocean bed contributes to some notoriously steep, short-period waves. We were having a pattern of strong northerlies that were predicted to continue. Frustrated, we needed to leave. We made an attempt but turned back after several hours due to the steep seas, taking refuge in the Out Skerries.

We slowly worked our way up through the northern Shetlands until the seas had calmed down and on June 16th, we FINALLY set out for Norway. The unfavorable wind had slowly fallen to no wind at all. As we approached the west coast of Norway, north of the dangerous headland of Statt, snow-covered peaks were in sight. We had had enough of motoring and diverted into **Kristiansund** for a break after 60 hrs and 314 miles. Kristiansund's cod-fishing and boatbuilding past has been replaced by the oil platform service industry, hence, here was one of the best commercial tool (toy) stores we've ever seen. We had little time to explore, however as the wind was now in our favor. We headed for Bodø 350 miles away and would be crossing the Arctic Circle en route.

During this passage we noticed the recurrence of a strange, sulfur-like odor that we had smelled on a brief occasion before. We had also noticed throughout the past several weeks, that our batteries did not seem to be holding a charge, but dismissed that as being due to the constant energy drain of continual computer use. After a bit of research, a few phone calls, and emails, we determined that we had a bad battery (s). "We have got to exorcize these gremlins!" We have six 8D AGMs which are difficult to access. Should we venture on to Svalbard with bad batteries? Would we be able to replace them in Bodø? At this point, we were mentally prepared to just cruise northern Norway and the lovely Lofotens. We had over

3200 miles under the keel since the Canary Islands nine weeks ago; we'd come a long way not to be able to fulfill our dream. Fortunately, we located one bad battery and disconnected it from the system.

Our arrival in **Bodø**, 60 hrs and 344 miles later, was highlighted by the arrival of Evi Nemeth, who left her own 40' sailboat *Wonderland* in Bonaire to join us on our Arctic adventure. Our shipment of parts had arrived as well and we spent a few days reprovisioning and doing repairs. Now the windlass motor was new, the computer inverter was new, the AIS chip was new, the prop shaft was behaving, and the remaining batteries seemed fine. *Threshold* was finally ready for the challenge; now it was up to us to see if we were.

Svalbard

Three days of 50 miles each got us through the **Lofotens**, a wall of snow-capped, craggy, mountainous islands jutting west off the Norwegian mainland. We stopped at picture-postcard perfect Reine, with its little red rorbærs (fishing huts), the busy Lofoten capital of Svolvær, and Langøy Island. Here lie the ideal cruising grounds that are the ultimate destination for many- quaint fishing villages and remote anchorages, with easy cod fishing just a 'jig' away. We were only able to do a quick fly by.

The unspoken goal was to be in Longyearbyen for July 4th. It was now June 30th.

Longyearbyen is 550 miles further north from here. We were at 69° N and Longyearbyen is at 78° N. The weather forecast was not great, but okay. The ice charts showed that the south and west coasts of Svalbard, as well as the western fjords, were clear of ice. There was a small feeling of hesitancy about heading offshore into the far north, but everything was ready- it was time to go, and go we did.

The wind was on our nose most of the way which meant long tacks. There was supposed to be a north-going current but we never saw it. It was a long, lumpy trip with mostly low, overcast skies, but night watches were made pleasurable due to the perpetual light- the midnight sun. One could read all throughout the night without the aid of lights. Navigation lights were not needed and coastal nav lights are turned off this time of year. It was very invigorating.

Spitsbergen and the Ice

After 5 days and 771 miles of tacking, we spotted the snow-capped peaks of Sorkapp, the southern tip of Spitsbergen. It was a brilliantly sunny day. Not long afterwards, we saw tiny white peaks on the horizon looking somewhat like a small boat regatta. We soon realized that it was ice we were seeing. The ice was not supposed to be here, south of Svalbard. We naively marveled at it glistening beautifully in the sunshine. Several hours later, the bergs became more numerous and eventually formed a solid line, like a breakwater, between our position and Sorkapp paralleling our route north. We were considering our alternatives, when we spotted the cruise ship *Crystal Symphony* (name provided by our AIS) slowly paralleling our course to the west. Suddenly it reversed direction. When we contacted them, they said they could not see a way through the ice and were diverting 30 miles to the west to get around it. Obviously, they had not known the ice was there either. Most likely no one knew it. The ice had just arrived.

After being offshore for 5 days now, we were not eager to add another 50 miles to our day. It looked as though we could continue to weave our way north through the ice line into clear water beyond. With Karyn on the bow, Evi motoring on the wheel, and Steve in the spreaders, we undertook some Bahamas-

style navigation. Although there was more ice in the distance, it looked navigable and we proceeded to weave our way through the bergs. Then the FOG set in. Now it became ice navigation by radar. A serious concern had been whether any wind would come with the fog, pinning us between the ice and a lee shore, but fortunately none did. It took another long six hours in thick fog, scattered ice and 38 °F temperatures to cover the last 30 miles to **Hornsund fjord**.

The passage did not end when we set the anchor at 0400 July 6th. Now anchor watches began. This watch for weather changes and ice was kept at all anchorages for the next three weeks until we were back in Norway. Not only was there a concern of being trapped in by icebergs, but also of having a berg trip our anchor rode. It is difficult to relate the intensity of being in waters with ice; there is never really a time for total relaxation. Our introduction to the ice had just begun.

The Polish Polar Research Station onshore near our anchorage gave us a nice welcome and tour. They are one of several outposts of international scientists doing a large variety of polar research on Svalbard, the village of Ny Ålesund further north being the largest and most permanent one.

Twenty-four hours after our arrival in Hornsund, we started off for Longyearbyen in bright sunshine. There was ice around us as we approached the exit of the fjord where we could see a thick fog bank offshore. A Norwegian Coast Guard aircraft called us on VHF to warn of dense ice within the fog and eventually gave us vectors to get through it. Quite a service! There was also a Coast Guard cutter in the area that had responded to three yachts in distress, trapped in the same ice we had slipped through the day before. After several hours of foggy ice-dodging in even worse conditions than we had seen previously, we made it into clear water. Almost 24 hrs and 122 nm later we made an early morning arrival at the hub of Svalbard- Longyearbyen.

Longyearbyen

This major town (pop.2000) is the crossroads for all travel in and out of Svalbard. It boasts a small airport, a few hotels, an excellent museum, nice souvenir shops and the only opportunity for reprovisioning. It has a coal mining history and is now a popular ecotourism destination. Its somewhat colorful wooden, barracks-like houses are set in a treeless rocky terrain; it probably looks better in the winter snow. There were only 2 floating pontoons where an international collection of yachts were rafted 2-3 deep. Small polar cruise ships use the main quay. It is here that we must all check-in with the Sysselman (governor) who holds all our pre-registration information and issues the cruising permit. We then rented our rifle at a nearby sports shop. Although there were supposedly 30 boats planning to cruise Svalbard this year, we saw only a handful- representatives from France, Holland, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Norway, Finland, but no other Americans. There seemed to be a unique bonding amongst the sailors here- a mutual respect for having made it so far north, following in the wake of famous polar explorers Nansen and Amundsen.

The anchorages

After checking in at LYB, one is then free to cruise Spitsbergen. Traveling into the fjords to the anchorages is often a 20-50+ mile trip. Almost every fjord had a glacier at its head, sometimes three or four. These glaciers were quite dramatic- icy blue, often a couple of miles wide and easily 100 feet high, with an abrupt, ragged, sheer face. One could often hear the thunder of them calving; you don't want to get too close! LYB and Ny Ålesund had the only pontoon facilities. Every other stop was a remote

anchorage where we generally found good holding in 25-60 feet of water. Norwegian paper charts are necessary as electronic charts were sometimes up to ¼ mile in error. Some of the glaciers have receded over the years, so some depths and terrain have not been surveyed.

Everywhere the surrounding landscape was mountainous with snow and exposed rock. There were old trapper's cabins and ruins of whaling stations, burial mounds, and coal mines. There are no roads except near LYB- travel is by snowmobile, dogsled, helicopter or boat. While we were there this year, the sky was often overcast with low clouds, fog, drizzle, and an occasional sleet or snow shower. The water temperatures were 32°-36° F, and the air temperature 37°-46° F most of the time. One could not visit this part of the world comfortably without heat.

We visited the anchorages of Trygghamna, Farmhamna, Selvågen on Prins Karls Forland, Blomstrandhamna, Danskeneset, Magdalenefjord, Lilliehookenfjord, Murraypynten, and several harbors in Bellsund. We saw beluga whales, bearded seals, a small variety but huge number of birds, Arctic fox, and reindeer. We most enjoyed seeing the walrus. Several colonies of walrus are scattered about Spitsbergen and we were actually able to approach fairly closely on foot. They lay in clusters, all atop of each other, scratching themselves and just lolling about. As we got near, one or two would gaze at us with bloodshot eyes and then go back to sleep. We marveled at the length of their tusks- up to 18" long. Needless to say, they are not on the menu for the polar bear!

Which brings us to a sore subject- as much as we searched, we never saw the elusive polar bear.

80° North

Heading north, we stopped at the scientific community of **Ny Ålesund** (pop. 40-150) for fuel and did a walking tour of the town. There is nothing here for a tourist aside from the northernmost post office in the world, one souvenir shop, a small mining museum, and a memorial to Amundsen. The village primarily consisted of college campus-like buildings housing international scientists all buzzing about, involved in all sorts of ecological research projects.

Reportedly, some of the most picturesque cruising of Svalbard is the northwest and north coasts of Spitsbergen. Our destination was to be Magdalenefjord, a beautiful anchorage with a classic calving glacier. As we approached late in the evening the sun was still high. It had already been a long day, but we were having a good sail. We were only 20+ miles from our goal of 80° N. Although 80° N is just a line on the chart, if you are this far north, why not go for it? So, we did. Shortly after sailing past the entrance to Magdalenefjord, we could see 'ice blink' off to the west. 'Ice blink' is when ice reflects light onto low clouds giving them a white tinge. We then saw the ice edge. A small polar expedition ship ahead was wedged into the pack ice watching for wildlife. We ventured toward them and then zig-zagged northeast along the edge of the pack until at 0053, July 15th we crossed 80° N! Since April 22nd, we had sailed 4,545 miles from the palm trees of the Canary Islands to the polar ice, 600 miles from the North Pole!! This demanded a small toast of Aquavit to ourselves and to Amundsen and Nansen, the whalers and fishermen, and the many others who had been to the ice before us.

Now we had to turn south and find a safe anchorage after an already long day. Our chosen spot was the recommended Sallyhamna in Holmiabutka, 20+ miles away. As we sailed down through Barentsundet between the Norskøyane Islands, we noticed ice now working its way into our path and toward our anchorage. Not wanting to get trapped in this rapidly moving ice, we continued another 5 miles south to

our alternative choice, the old Dutch whaling station headquarters of Smeerenbutka on Amsterdamøya. This too had become filled with ice and slush, so, very tired and chilled, we plodded on to a clear anchorage, Danskeneset on Danskøya, and finally anchored at 0915, 24 hours after our 'marathon' journey to 80° N began, elated, exhausted, and with hot-buttered rums in hand.

Southbound

We had reached the climax of our cruise, the ice of the Farthest North. What a fantastic adventure! We finally sailed around to **Magdalenefjord**, yesterday's destination. Its glacier sparkled brilliantly in the afternoon sun and we could understand why this is one of the most popular spots in Spitsbergen. We spent several days hiking around the glacier, seeing deer and Arctic fox, but never the 'elusive' bear. We then cruised south along Spitsbergen until Sorkapp, stopping at several new anchorages along the way. By July 25th we were finally on our way toward Norway leaving the rugged beauty of Svalbard behind. Again, this was not an easy piece of ocean to cross, but we made it to Tromsø and back to the Lofotens. Then it was back to real-time and the real-world. We had to move fast toward commitments and ahead of the rapidly approaching change of seasons. It was time to be south!



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