



NEWSLETTER

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1980 SCHOONER CRUISE REPORT

By VERN BRADY

Commodore Tom Schiller was successful in coordinating the participation of four boats in the American Schooner Association's 1979 cruise, and with such outlandish reports of unseamanlike but very schoonerish behavior it was easy to entice a few more vessels to take part in this year's debacle.

Cruising in schooners, as opposed to racing, has several distinct advantages. First and foremost, the boats look great - even L. Francis Herreshoff

concedes that. And since it's a cruise, we all get a chance to take a good long look at each other, not just sterns disappearing over the horizon (or maybe that's just BOUNTY'S perspective). It's also a lot easier to admire your fellow skipper's vessel when he doesn't have his bowsprit in stuck in your ear. The easy-going pace of a cruise and the relaxed itinerary are such a relief from the overnight slogs to get to the skipper's meeting (and party) on

time. There are no race connections to coordinate and crew schedules and accommodations to worry about. Some race weekends seem to require more pre-planning than the landing at Normandie.

In any case, the 1980 Schooner Cruise went off approximately as planned, and this report will be excerpted from the log of BOUNTY, or rather what would have been the log if I had managed to keep one. The Schooner Cove

EVENTS — 1981

Date	Event	Location	Contact
June 20	Seawanhaka-Corinthian Invitational Wooden Boat Regatta	Oyster Bay, N.Y.	Lawrence Woodworth Race Committee Seawanhaka Yacht Club
June 27-28 thru July 12	ASTA Windjammer Weekend	Mystic, Ct. & various locations	ASTA Headquarters
July 10-12	New Haven to New London Race	Western L.I. Sound	City of New London, Ct.
July 18	Douglaston Windjammer Race & chili party	Little Neck Bay, N.Y.	Henry Hock, Douglaston, N.Y.
Sept. 4-7 Labor Day Weekend	The Wooden Boat Show and The 2nd Annual Museum of Yachting Classic Yacht Regatta	Newport, R.I.	The Wooden Boat Show P.O. Box 748 Newport, R.I. 02840
Sept 11-13	Essex Traditional Boat Weekend	Essex, Ct.	Race Committee, Essex, Ct.
Sept. 26	Mystic Seaport Schooner Race	Mystic, Ct.	Race Committee, Mystic Seaport
Oct. 10 (tentative)	Mayor's Trophy Schooner Race	New York Harbor, N.Y.	South Street Seaport Museum

Block Island to Newport Race, the weekend prior to the Nantucket Opera House Race
Souffle Cup, Martha's Vineyard, the weekend prior to the Nantucket Opera House Race
Opera House Race, Nantucket, Mass. Not yet scheduled.



Bounty

Photo: Vern Brady collection

Race on August 2nd served once again as the rendezvous point and the excellent post-race festivities precluded a pre-noon start. Unfortunately, pressing business commitments prevented Tom and Ro Schiller and BOUNDING HOME from joining the cruise, and Sam and Jeanette Hoyt's WILD SWAN had a previous date with some new keel bolts and fastenings. Both vessels and crews were missed.

The first planned port of call was Port Jefferson. VOYAGER, TOTEM, EBB TIDE, BOUNTY, PANDORIAN and MYTH all straggled out of Stamford as soon as the condition of captains and crews permitted. Hot, humid weather with virtually no wind caused most boats to opt for motoring with some very creative sun canopies sighted. Not sighted were several reported skinny dipping parties among the far-flung fleet (that's easy for you to

say!). Boy, was it hot! The boats eventually gathered in the sheltered anchorage to starboard on entering Port Jeff Harbor just inside Old Field beach. Naturally, as soon as the hooks were down a nice southerly breeze came up. It did cool things off a bit. Swimming parties were organized and visiting other vessels was accomplished sans dinghies. Late afternoon entertainment was provided by the captain and crew (including dog) of PANDORIAN who proved, while returning from "shore leave", that Schooner sailing dinghies don't go to windward any better than the mother ships. Maybe they need another mast!

By common consent it was decided to make Monday a long run to Shelter Island in hopes of escaping the doldrums of Long Island Sound. MYTH, unfortunately, had to return to home and work and TOTEM elected to take a

side trip to New Haven to visit friends, so BOUNTY and PANDORIAN struck out alone an hour before dawn to make the run at Plum Gut, VOYAGER and EBB TIDE made a later start and eventually all four boats came together again in Dering Harbor.

Swimming parties and bathing suits were again the order of the day as the weather continued hot and humid but with none of the predicted afternoon thunderstorms materializing. Barry and Mara Abrams turned in early as PANDORIAN was bound for Block Island the next morning and then east to Cape Cod Bay via the Canal. Schoonering continued on EBB TIDE for some time, however.

The following morning saw the crews of VOYAGER and BOUNTY ashore for a bit of provisioning and later a brunch on board VOYAGER, a delightful combination of freshly baked Irish Soda Bread and cold beer. In the afternoon VOYAGER and EBB TIDE sailed for Niantic while TOTEM rejoined BOUNTY and went across to Greenport. BOUNTY moored in Sterling Basin and exchanged past hellos with the Schooner PRINCE OLAF. TOTEM took a dock space near Preston's (Those rich New Yorkers!). That night Linda and I had a very pleasant visit and dinner with Ed and Olive Schauss, the former owners of BOUNTY, who now live in Southold near Greenport, having retired from work and schoonering (or is that the same thing?).

Wednesday morning was spent provisioning heavily as prices in Greenport are better than out in the islands. TOTEM left for Montauk to pick up Bill Graves (poor lad had to work all week) and BOUNTY sailed to Coecles Harbor in the first strong afternoon Southwesterly of the cruise. Coecles was delightfully quiet and the few boats at anchor were well spaced (no pun intended). The wind held light from the Southwest and in the morning we hoisted the foresail, raised anchor and sailed out past Ram Island. A broad reach up four lowers brought us past Gardiner's Point, gobbling up a

surprised fiberglass sloop in the process. Then it was wing and wing with topsail all the way to Block Island. We reached into the Salt Pond in a freshening Southwester, dropped sail and anchored close in by the docks in the Southern end of the harbor nearby PRINCE OLAF. TOTEM and EBB TIDE joined us before dark with EBB TIDE rafting up to PRINCE OLAF.

Friday morning was spent in a semi-successful attempt to purchase ice. Only one block per boat was available. This, by the way, was a characteristic of the entire cruise — block ice in very short supply and very expensive. Only in Newport at the ice house were we really able to load up. It gives one second thoughts about mechanical refrigeration -- high initial expense versus wasted vacation hours. The alternative is totally unacceptable -- warm beer! Friday lunchtime was shore leave for the crews of EBB TIDE, PRINCE OLAF and BOUNTY with a nice lunch ashore in a restaurant overlooking the Old Harbor. The wind really began to pick up in the late afternoon and dinghy travel became difficult. BOUNTY'S evening entertainment consisted of monitoring a search and rescue operation on the VHF to locate a small sloop who had become lost between Montauk and Block Island. While I applaud the Coast Guard's patience in the face of inconceivable stupidity, I can only wonder how long the rest of us taxpayers will be forced to subsidize the ignorance of our fellow "yachtsmen".

By Saturday morning it was still blowing about 18 to 20 knots from the South Southwest. VOYAGER came in to anchor near the NE side of the harbor, by Indian Head Neck. This was sort of a general signal and soon all schooners present had anchored near her. REBECCA and TODDYWAX joined the fleet and an unexpected arrival was VENDREDI 13, fresh from the charter fleet in Newport. She was 130' overall, a three-masted staysail schooner, and positively dwarfed every boat in the anchorage. We had planned a beach party ashore on nearby Crescent Beach but continuing

strong winds made use of the dinghys impractical, especially landing on a leeshore. VENDREDI 13, however, extended an invitation to all schooners present and a happy evening of cultural exchange took place -- quite possibly the best thing to happen to Franco-American relations in about 200 years.

Right after sunset the winds went quietly and gradually swung to the Northwest under a now clear, star-filled sky. FORTUNE came in and anchored well after dark. She immediately launched her Avon and ignoring all hails, dutifully went off in search of the non-existent beach party!

Sunday, August 10th was the day of the Great Block Island to Newport Schooner Race. Captains from all boats rowed over to FORTUNE for an impromptu skippers' meeting. An anchored start was agreed upon, there being no committee boat. Eight boats took the starting signal: VENDREDI 13, VOYAGER, TODDYWAX, TOTEM, EBB TIDE, FORTUNE, REBECCA, and BOUNTY. PRINCE OLAF had sailed for Watch Hill to change crew. Unfortunately, on hearing the starting signal, the Northwest wind promptly died and all boats enjoyed a very hot 2½ hour drift. The bulk of the faster drifters edged north close to shore, while BOUNTY and VOYAGER held man overboard drill close to the mouth of the Salt Pond. Suddenly a light breeze came up from the Southeast and blew ever so gently out the entrance channel. BOUNTY and VOYAGER ran a mile or so off shore while the remaining six boats were blanketed by the hills on the North tip of Block Island. REBECCA was the first to succumb to boredom and started her engine and withdrew. FORTUNE elected to make the supreme sacrifice in the interest in preparing the victory party and raised a huge green gollywoobler and promptly disappeared into the sunset. It must have been sunset because all the other schooners had flags up that were so red in color!

EBB TIDE, meanwhile, was trying as aggressively as ever to get ahead. She has previously

attempted to confuse the opposition by setting her new fisherman staysail upside down. Captain Beckwith now tried to shorten the course somewhat by cutting close to Block Island North reef. Unfortunately, in this instance the little green schooner was done in by her own namesake as the current set her down on the reef. Cries of "Land-Ho" and other 4-letter words prompted the second "internal combustion" alternative of the race.

In the meantime, far removed from these shoreside doings, BOUNTY and VOYAGER were happily engaged in a vicious wing and wing blanketing duel, the wind having veered South. It was down wind and dirty all the way to Point Judith -- a gaffer's dream come true! Eventually the Southwest wind made its appearance and the bigger boats got their chance. VENDREDI 13 took the first to finish prize, crossing the line doing 13 knots. BOUNTY managed to save her time for first place while following the fleet across the line. TOTEM took the staysail trophy, and VOYAGER the gaff prize. The finish line had been set between Fort Adams and Goat Island and racing into Newport with every rag flying, in company with two 12-meter boats, Baron Bic's big 3-masted schooner SHENANDOAH, and a host of spectator vessels is definitely not recommended for captains with claustrophobia. The post race party was held at the Yankee Peddler Inn, sponsored by FORTUNE'S Don Glassie, who had organized the race, with able help from Brian Beckwith. In all, a memorable day, especially for BOUNTY.

This was the end of the 'planned' part of the Schooner Cruise. Several boats headed for home while others laid over in Newport to see the sights and wait out a bit of bad weather. Some of the fleet met again a few days later at Vineyard Haven, and some good evenings were had with VOYAGER, EBB TIDE, FORTUNE, BOUNTY and MALABAR II, all in harbor. All these schooners were bound for Nantucket to enter the Opera

House Cup Race on Sunday, August 17th, but heavy weather and the need to accomplish a crew change on schedule kept BOUNTY at Vineyard Haven. By all accounts we missed an exciting weekend.

On Tuesday the 19th, we turned BOUNTY for home. It was a strange feeling to sail alone after so much pleasant company during the preceding two weeks. The chance to socialize as much or as little was one desired, to have privacy and complete independence, all the while travelling with a group of friends is the strange mixture that makes cruising in company such a good thing.

All in all, it was a memorable Schooner Cruise, one which Linda and I shall think of often as it, sadly, turned out to be BOUNTY'S last. She was driven ashore and wrecked in the severe Easterly gale which struck the Atlantic Coast in late October.

THE ANNIE C. ROSS

by
Francis James Duffy

When the great American square-riggers disappeared from the world's oceans, at the turn of the century, victims of the battle with steam and motor driven ships, there was still enough profit left for the operation of the wind-driven schooner rigged vessels. They were launched from the shipyards of Maine as late as the 1920's for commercial service. The number of schooners in this period increased, built with more tonnage, more masts, (The THOMAS W. LAWSON held the record with seven) and power hoisting machinery to turn capstans and windlasses, and sail with smaller crews. The traditional fore-and-aft vessels sailed into the 20th century, not because of any romantic attachment to sail, but because of the small investment needed, low operating costs (which unfortunately meant low wages and poor food) and the overall efficiency of the management and captains, who were often part owners.

World War I caused an acute shortage of bottoms in the United States and old schooners were pressed into service and returned to sea, while shipyards launched new ones, to sail off to the unfamiliar waters to supply the troops overseas. Proof of their value was the sinking of several by German U-boats.

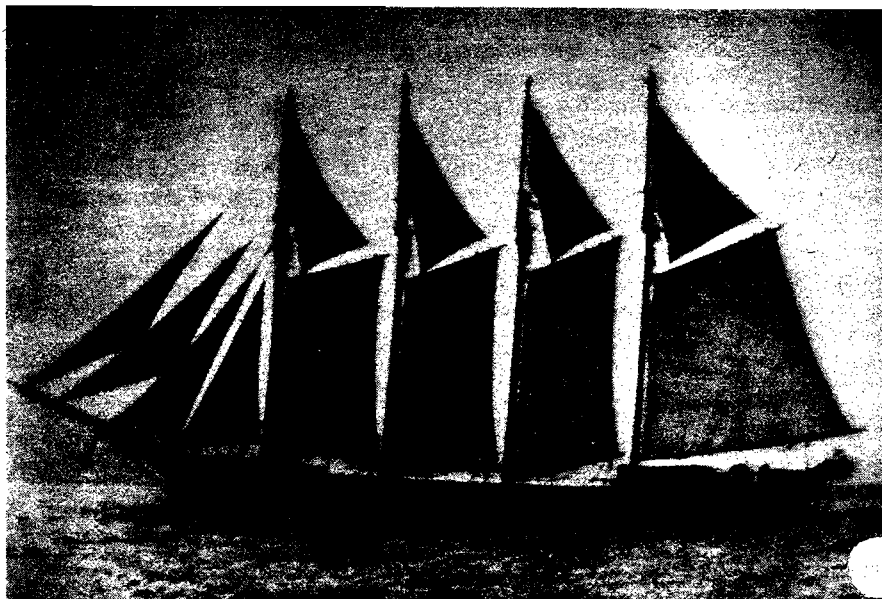
After the war the schooners continued to haul bulk cargoes and lumber, mostly in the coastwide trade, working the narrow channels, creeks, and other restricted waters that were unprofitable, and beyond the reach of the power vessels. In the twilight years, during Prohibition, the schooners made their "last hurrah," sailed by buccaneer captains, in the illicit rum running trade from the West Indies to the bootleggers off the coast of Long Island and New Jersey.

The economics of the power vessels finally won out, for wasn't the oil needed to fire the boilers, or run the diesel engines so cheap that operators could afford to turn from the free winds? The last of the schooners furled their sails, and after four hundred odd years of commercial use, wind-driven vessels faded from the seas. They had made a valiant fight, being run down at night by the faster steamships at sea and crushed ashore by the Great Depression.

The schooners retreated to join the hulks of the square-riggers in the back waters of the great ports they had so long served, to die a silent death with the ever-changing weather and tides. It is still possible today to see the ghost like hulks of the HESPER and the LUTHER LITTLE, dying slowly on the banks of the Sheepscot River in Wiscasset, Maine. Sail would now be used only for recreational and racing yachts and cruise boats. The traditional horseshoe, nailed to so many schooner's sampson posts, had lost its good luck charm.

One of last schooners to come to the Port of New York, and the last four-master to carry cargo under sail on the East Coast, was the ANNIE C. ROSS. She has earned a place in American maritime history not for any spectacular rig or deeds, but merely for the fact she was the end of wind-driven ships operated in commercial service to call the Port of New York home. She is also well remembered because there are still sailormen around who sailed as crew members aboard during her last days.

The ANNIE C. ROSS was launched in 1917, named for the wife of the first captain, and built to fill the wartime need for cargo carries. She came from the shipyard of Percey & Small, in Bath, Maine, which is now part of



The Annie C. Ross Photo: Collection, F.J. Duffy

the Bath Marine Museum and which was noted for the construction of wooden hull sailing vessels. Percey & Small continued building schooners into the 1920's. She was a beautiful sight when she slid down the ways with a white hull and flags flying from her four masts. The ROSS first entered the coal trade, but could not compete with the steamers so switched to a lumber carrier, a service that she stayed in the remainder of her commercial days. She was 175 ft., 6 inches overall, with a 38 ft. beam, and weighed 791 gross tons.

The lumber trade for the schooners in that period centered around Georgetown, South Carolina, the southern loading port, and the storage yards on Newtown Creek, in Maspeth, Queens, on the East River, Port of New York. Sailing in this trade, the ROSS never made the news, except once when she ran aground while entering Pensacola, Florida, but then she was refloated with little damage. The round trip from New York to Georgetown, and return was made as fast as twenty days, including loading and unloading of up to 700,000 feet of lumber.

In the 1930's, ownership of the ROSS changed hands from Captain Alex Ross to Captain Joseph Zuljevic of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, but she continued in the lumber trade, with New York her home port. The four-master sailed with a small crew of seven, Captain, two Mates, three Able Seaman, and cook. There was no radio, and in the days before radar and Loran, the skill of the master navigated and piloted the ROSS up and down the coast and into the harbors, with the assistance of a tug to dock. A "make or break" donkey engine, run by gasoline, helped raise the anchor. Without refrigeration, crew members still lived on salt "horse" and canned goods, with the cook also helping to tend the lines. (One cook who went ashore from a schooner found his skill in rigging was more in demand than that of cooking.) Yachtsmen who would visit the schooner would marvel at the size of the crew and the weight and size of the gear.

While the ROSS sailed the coast and the years passed, the sailormen started to fade from the waterfront, with the old schooners outlasting many of them. The low pay, poor food and hard work did not draw many young men to the work. In the late 1930's, Black Charlie, who was the last shipping master for wind-driven ships in the Port of New York, had difficulty finding experienced hands to crew the schooners. The legion of aging men, mostly Norwegians and Finns, with no home but the sea, became fewer at the Old Seaman's Church Institute, 25 South Street, or in the cheap hotels on the city's Bowery.

We are fortunate that towards the last days of the ROSS, a new breed came aboard to learn the ropes, and they are still around to relate their experiences. Most sailed as "workaways," on vacation from school and happy to just to be a part of a real commercial sailing ship's crew. In later days they left the schooner's life, but never forgot the days under sail on the ROSS.

Captain Martin Reed, of Dix Hills, Long Island, went on from the ROSS to the New York State Maritime College, and still follows the sea working on a containerships. Biff Bowker, works at Mystic Seaport Museum, and is one of the few former crew members who still sails on a schooner, as skipper of the Museum's two-master BRILLIANT. Ed Moran is a well known worker at the South Street Seaport Museum, a great source of oral maritime history. John Noble, the famous marine artist from Staten Island, worked winters for a dollar a day to guard the schooners in New Town Creek, and many of his works are of the schooner in the harbor. F. F. Kaiser, of Hampton, Virginia, became a close friend of Captain Zuljevic, and helped him lay up the ROSS after the last trip. Kaiser stayed in the maritime industry to become a shipyard nuclear engineer, but still shares his stories about the ROSS with readers of the National Fisherman.

The ROSS brought a cargo

from Georgetown in November of 1940 to Newtown Creek, and went into a period of temporary lay-up, a term that often spelled the end of a ship's sailing days. She became a maritime landmark, visible from the then new Kosciusko Bridge over the creek. World War II offered no demand for her service and as the years passed her pant peeled and the rigging frayed.

There was talk of sending her back to sea in 1942, but it never came to pass. In 1947, it looked as if she would leave the creek, when a Captain Joseph Rosario bought her and started to make plans to return the schooner to the Cape Verde Island trade, one of the last passenger service left that was carried on under sail. Her topmasts were lowered to fit under the bridge to leave the creek, but died before she sailed. Frank O. Braynard, the father of Op Sail '76, appreciated her historic value, and started to raise money to have her rerigged to sail in National Maritime Day. Beth Steel agreed to do the job gratis, but at this time the vessel was so in debt that if she left the Creek she would not be permitted to return.

The vessel was sold at auction to an actor, Scott Moore, who lived aboard with plans to convert into a seagoing TV studio, one of the more unique ideas for a second career for an old ship. Moore lived aboard, but the plans never went anyplace.

In 1954 the Catholic Sea Scouts bought the old schooner for \$2,000, had her towed to the East Side of Manhattan, at a pier at the foot of 26th Street. Her name was changed to STAR OF THE SEA, and the scouts painted "training Ship" on her bow. Her rig was changed by removing the topmasts and she now became a "bald-header." She stayed at the Manhattan pier for a time, with the scouts rowing around her in lifeboats and dreaming of the day they could take her back to sea.

The Catholic Sea Scouts proved their intention of sailing the old schooner again when they had her towed from the city pier to Hempstead Bay, in Long Island Sound. The plan was to have the

boys carry on the needed work while the vessel was anchored. On September 2nd the crew of nine aboard discovered that there was water coming in through the rotting hull timber. She was off Morgan's Point Park breakwater, Glen Cove, Long Island.

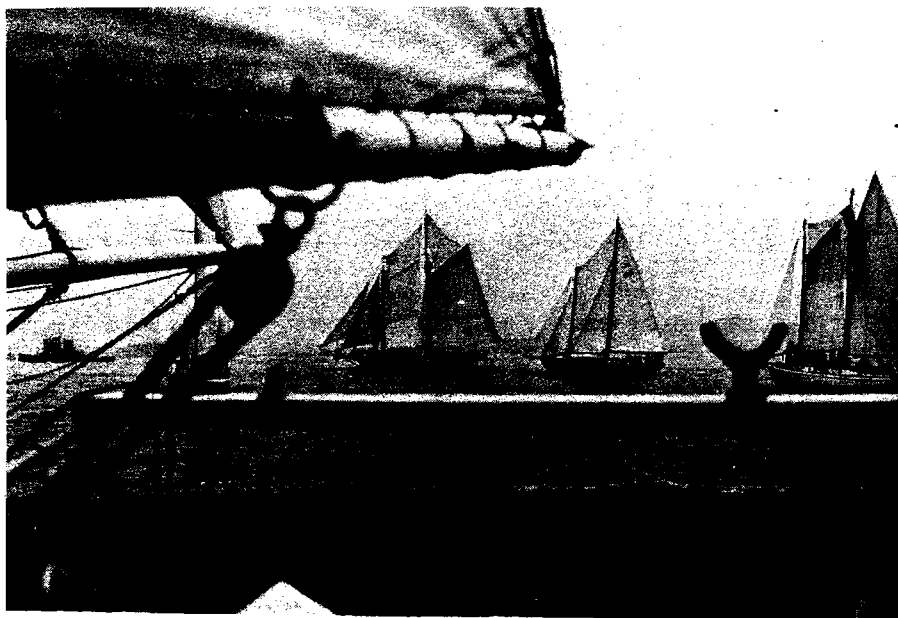
In the fine tradition of the sea the young crew reversed the national ensign to signal distress, and the Coast Guard and Nassau County Marine Police came to their aid with handy billy pumps. In the three days that followed the pumps lost the battle and the

sea came in on September 5th, forcing the crew to abandon ship. Just before they left the old schooner, one of the boys took down and removed the American flag, ending her 38 years afloat. She sunk in 21 feet of water, and since the vessel had a draft of 18 ft., she was a sorry sight with her four masts sticking out of the water.

On September 6th, looters went aboard the half sunken schooner and stole her steering wheel and lanterns. High winds downed two masts, and the other

two were removed in an aborted attempt to raise the ROSS. The wreck soon became a menace to navigation in the busy harbor, and in the spring of 1956 the Army Engineers awarded a \$11,900 contract, money that would have meant so much a short time before to refit the schooner for sea, for her removal. The firm of Edward O. Sanches, New Bedford, Mass. received the contract to tow the ANNIE C. ROSS to 90 feet of water and sink her. The last four-master ended her days, buried at sea.

Mr. Duffy, a marine author, who contributes to *Soundings* and *National Fisherman* is also on the staff of *Sea History Magazine*.



Mayor's Cup Race

Photo: Closner

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