

Saorsa II — 2009 Cruise

This year's cruise has somewhat different flavour to it. Rather than cruising alone as I've done in the past, I have two crew on board. The 2009 cruise is a "dress rehearsal" cruise for the 2010 cruise which will be much longer in duration and will see me take Saorsa II down the St. Lawrence river and explore the east coast of Canada and the United States. The two crew are candidates to crew on next year's extended cruise.

Both of the crew, Myra Murray and Narelle Sheridan, are experienced sailors from Australia. They arrived a few weeks ago and have been living aboard Saorsa II since arrival. Thus, they have had an opportunity to become familiar with the vessel's systems.

We had our first "work up" outing a week before the start of the full three week main cruise. We start our journal with that first week-end away.

2009-06-13 11:45 EDT (15:45 Zulu)

At last, underway. Full sail. Main is hoist and the big light Genoa headsail. Very broad reach in gentle SSW breeze; making 4.5 to 5 knots.

The water is gurgling past the hull once more. Delightful delicious sound; melodic, gentle. Always the water is there waiting for me to return. Forever.

My Lady is moving with grace and elegance. Once more in her element.

It feels strange not to be alone on board. In some ways, more pleasant. Certainly easier to work the boat with extra hands. In other ways, intrusive and disruptive. Mixed feelings.

Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" is playing in the cabin, a lovely complement to the sound of the water gurgling past the hull. Beautiful music. Magic moment. If only it could go on forever.

Yes, the water, the sea does go on forever.

Please protect me and my little boat. The ocean is big and I am very small indeed.

2009-06-14 07:15 EDT (11:15 Zulu)

Lovely morning. A little cool (15C) but clear and crisp. Very quiet. So quiet one can hear the incessant traffic on Hwy. 401 a few miles to the north. Occasional plops as a tern fishes for breakfast.

Crew asleep in the saloon, but the kettle will soon deal with that.

Lovely event last night aboard "Haida Legend". Brendan and Sylvie were the consummate hosts, great food and drink (watch out for something called a "Dark and Stormy").

Kettle boiled, just made tea and coffee.

A good first sail yesterday. Wind SW3 most of the day. On a very broad reach most of the way making 4.5 to 5 knots. Big light Genoa set with main. Crew did fine.

Narelle put together a marvellous lunch underway of wraps with hummus, lettuce, tomato, and turkey.

Arrival in Cobourg was fine. Rafted off "Haida Legend" with no difficulty. Lots of fenders. The mercenary

minions of the marina charged us \$12 for the privilege of rafting alongside a friend's yacht.

2009-06-14 12:20 EDT (16:20 Zulu)

Beating to windward. She's romping along under full sail at 5 knots. The water rushes past her hull with a glorious gurgling hiss. Like this, She lifts her skirts and flies along. Beautiful powerful Mistress.

The sun shines and the water sparkles. In her element at the joining of wind and water. This most beautiful experience.

2009-06-20 16:50 EDT (20:50 Zulu)

A day of preparation. Loaded a few last minute items and my clothes in the car. Purchased 36 litres of diesel fuel (two jerry cans). Buy some U.S. Cash and get a bit of extra Cdn cash. On to the marina.

Poured rain all morning but mercifully relented as I was loading the dock cart and trundling down to the boat.

Headed out on a provisioning run. Purchased some rum, gin, and a multitude of victuals. All brought on board and ably stowed by the crew.

Lying in my berth feeling quite tired from the week's exertions. Just beginning to think about relaxing. Crab Fest at the marina tonight.

Off to Niagara tomorrow.

2009-06-20 21:20 EDT (01:20 Zulu)

Returned from the Crab Fest. Much good food, drink, conversation. Left crew enjoying the live band (very good indeed) and dancing up a storm. Lovely evening. Good start to the cruise.

Enjoying a few minutes of quiet solitude on board while crew enjoys the party. I miss the peaceful cosiness of my little floating home. The welcoming warmth of the kerosene cabin lamps. Here, now, at peace.

2009-06-21 12:20 EDT (16:20 Zulu)

All's well in my little floating world. Sailing easy under all plain sail, beam reach, 4 knots, on course for the Niagara River. Beccy Cole's CD playing in the cabin. Boat moving gently.

The crew is doing well. They can trim a sail very well. They handle lines well when docking and departing. I miss the solitude of sailing alone, but welcome the pleasant companionship.

We'll get to Niagara some time later today, perhaps tonight. Then a rest and explore day tomorrow. Should be good fun.

Boat took on 55 litres of diesel fuel this morning. More than I anticipated. The tank was only about half full. Must keep a better eye on that.

In the quiet moments between songs, the water gurgles gently past the hull. Lovely delicious sound.

2009-06-21 22:10 EDT (02:10 Zulu)

Glorious day. Sailed from Whitby to Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) at the mouth of the Niagara River on Lake Ontario in grand conditions. Used the engine for the last hour of the trip. Passage about eleven hours underway. Tired now. Tomorrow should be an easy day playing tourist in town.

For tonight we're docked at the fuel dock. We'll be evicted in the morning. Hopefully there will be a transient slip available for us to use.

2009-06-22 09:40 EDT (13:40 Zulu)

Dock attendant arrived and assigned us (after a bit of pressure) to a slip on the inside basin. So, a quiet night tonight sheltered from wind and wave.

Glorious morning. Sun shining from a mostly cloudless sky. Temperature low 20's; wind ENE about 10 knots, lovely gentle breeze.

Arose a little early this morning, had a shower, and waited for the attendant to arrive while sipping coffee in the cockpit.

2009-06-22 18:30 EDT (22:30 Z)

Simply grand weather today. Sun shining down from a near cloudless sky, perhaps a little warm with temperature in the high 20's.

Went for a walk about in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Peeked in the shops, admired a little architecture, experienced sticker shock at tourist prices. Ate a light lunch at the Anchorage. The same place I frequented in the summer of '77 when I worked in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Good place, still. Decent food at reasonable prices.

A quiet lazy afternoon on board. Sitting now in a borrowed lawn chair at the shore of the Niagara River. To my left is the river mouth and Lake Ontario beyond. On the American side of the river is Fort Niagara and the U.S. Coast Guard base. To my right is the town of Youngstown, New York State. Out front are the moorings of the Youngstown Yacht Club. Very little traffic on the river just now.

The sun is just beginning to get lower in the sky behind me. The far shore is colour saturated with its fading light. Eyes drift shut; just enjoying being.

2009-06-23 22:30 EDT (02:30 Z)

Interesting day today. We moved the boat to the sea wall on front of Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club. A somewhat unprotected berth. Fortunately, we have settled weather and only need to contend with the wake of passing vessels. Not too uncomfortable.

Elizabeth drove down to join us for a day outing to Niagara Falls. We left Myra at Niagara-on-the-Lake as she wanted to see a play at the theatre (Shaw Festival). Narelle, Elizabeth, and I headed off along the Niagara Parkway. Stopped at Queenston Heights for lunch. A little expensive, but very nice.

Went on to Niagara Falls and visited the U.S. Immigration folk to sort out Narelle's paperwork for entering the U.S. Took a while.

Went for a ride on the Maid of the Mist for a close up view of the Falls. Very impressive.

Tomorrow, we continue the cruise. Plan is to head east along the U.S. Shore to Oak Orchard. Forecast is for light wind. We'll see how we get on. For today, play tourist in NOTL.

2009-06-24 12:50 EDT (16:50 Z)

Left Niagara-on-the-Lake this morning with a forecast of light wind. Sadly, the forecast is proving to be quite accurate.

Cleared the mouth of the Niagara River about 10:00, hoist the main, and rounded the green bouy marking the shoal. Genoa poled out to port on the Spinnaker pole.

Ghosting downwind in a very light westerly breeze. Dropped head sail and set Spinnaker (a little fussy), but set well and now pulling the boat at 2 knots in a very light westerly breeze.

Spinnaker halyard turning block at mast head had its sheave shatter due to age and loading during the hoist. Will purchase a new block in Rochester and make a trip to the mast head to replace.

Heading east hoping to reach Oak Orchard. At this pace will reach Oak Orchard around sun rise tomorrow. Ghosting along now, silent save for a gentle burble sound at the bow and the occasional rattle of a sheet or block. A gentle rocking motion holds me in her arms.

2009-06-25 11:25 EDT (15:25 Z)

At Tuscorora Yacht Club visitor's dock in Wilson, New York.

Enjoyed a "classic" vacation cruise evening last night. Got in the dinghy and went over to a waterside bar. At first, the fellow on the dock threatened to charge us \$10 to tie up the dinghy, but relented and allowed us to step ashore without charge.

Ashore, enjoyed a Wilson Sunset (read "silly rum drink that goes down far too easily") and listened to the live music. All very nice.

Up this morning and stow outboard and oars. Got the forecast using laptop and free WiFi from Tuscorora Yacht Club. A more interesting weather day is coming. Wind SW 10 knots then veering W and NW while increasing to 20 knots. Threat of thunderstorms. Might make for an interesting day out on the water.

Just now, we're sailing gently on a very broad reach with the full main and big Genoa head sail. The water is burbling and gurgling on the bow as I sit here writing. Prescott Coast Guard radio just announced a strong wind warning and squall watch for Western Lake Ontario. Things may get more interesting. For now, gentle relaxed sailing.

Soon, perhaps, we will be tested.

2009-06-25 19:30 EDT (23:30 Z)

Just returned from a walk into the town of Point Breeze at the mouth of Oak Orchard creek. The crew had expressed an interest in sampling a genuine "American Hamburger". Our quest led us to the Black North Inn which offered a few varieties of the sought after delicacy. One of the crew recanted at the last moment and ordered grilled haddock, but the other and the Skipper settled on a third of a pound of ground beef

carefully grilled and topped with strips of bacon, etc., etc. It's good that we had to walk back to the dock.

Earlier today, we sailed. The squalls arrived as forecast, accompanied by rolling thunder, much lightning, and horizontal rain. We changed down to working headsail and double reefed the main. On a broad reach, we easily maintain hull speed.

In the gusts (probably 35 knots, Near Gale to Gale on the Beaufort Scale), she's hard pressed and rounding up. The autohelm is having difficulty maintaining the course in the gusts so I take the helm and hand steer my Lady to help her deal with the wind and waves.

Together, we help one another, working together as the waves come up astern and hit her port quarter, slewing her around. Then, each wave hisses and boils as it surges forward along her hull. At one point, our speed matches that of the wave and we surf forward, exceeding hull speed. Near eight tons of boat and crew momentarily poised on the surging face and crest of the wave.

The lake went from placid almost flat calm to surging whitecaps in a matter of minutes (literally). Heeling and surging in the wind, she romps along taking each wave in its turn.

The Ensign (3' by 6' wool and nylon bunting) streamed out taut and snapping in the wind. At one point, one of the crew expressed concern for the integrity of the flagstaff on the stern (1" diameter solid ash) and asked if I wanted to take down the Ensign. A polite, "No, that's not necessary", was all that I replied while thinking this ship will never strike her colours.

We surged, rolled, pitched, and yawed for the last 15 miles of our little outing.

Later, after docking safely in Oak Orchard, we were told that some on shore had placed calls to the local Sherriff's Marine Unit expressing concern for the safety of the boat on the lake in the middle of the storm. We told the Officers we were fine, thanks. Today, the water decided to test us. We did just fine.

But, there will be other days. The water is always there, waiting for me.

2009-06-27 18:30 EDT (22:30 Zulu)

Sitting in the Laundromat at Rochester Yacht Club. Yes, this too is part of cruising under sail.

Today was a do "stuff" day. A little grocery shopping, a chandlery visit for a chart and a new spinnaker halyard block, call in to U.S. Immigration, and so forth.

The team is beginning to show some tension. Myra and Narelle are having some differences between one other. It seems clear to me that we will have some difficulty before the end of the cruise. It remains to be seen if this "team" can pass through the storming stage of team dynamics and begin to function well. At this writing, I'm not optimistic.

The hospitality at Rochester Yacht Club has been outstanding. Last night the Vice-Commodore, Keith Burhans, stood us a round at the bar. Today, a member, Ed Burns and wife Barbara, approached us and offered to drive us to the market. Then, they waited while we shopped and drove us back to Saorsa II.

We had a good Gam with Henry Williams (yes, that really is his name) who owns the yacht "Walter Mitty", another Niagara 35 built the year after Saorsa II. We compared notes on rig and so forth. He was quite impressed with the quality of the work in Saorsa II's deck refit.

He spoke of cruising in Newfoundland, Notre Dame Bay, in glowing terms. Perhaps some day.

Tomorrow, we're off to Sodus Bay for a bit of time at anchor. Should be a good test of the team dynamic.

2009-06-28 13:07 EDT (17:07 Z)

At the Visitors' Dock, Rochester Yacht Club

We decided to stay another day in Rochester. There were a handful of chores that needed doing and the crew still hadn't had much opportunity to explore the town.

This morning, we re-bedded one of the bolts holding the new deck organiser in place. In heavy rain, it had leaked a few drops.

After that, I got kitted up and went to the top of the mast to replace the spinnaker halyard lead block. It was a little bit of a fiddly fussy task. We attached a light messenger line to the halyard and fed it up the mast. At the masthead, the messenger line and halyard were separated, the old block removed, and the new block threaded onto the halyard and hung in place. Then the halyard's bitter end was bent to the messenger line and fed back down the mast. All accomplished with no real difficulty.

We took the normal safety steps. One headsail halyard was shackled to the Boatswain's chair; the other was shackled to my safety harness. The crew tailed and ground the starboard winch to hoist me in the chair while the Rochester Yacht Club dock master, Brady, tailed the port halyard keeping it taught as a safety line but not lifting. No problems. All accomplished while suspended fifty feet in the air at the masthead. This, too, is part of cruising under sail.

Alone on board now, crew are off to explore the delights of Rochester. I needed some alone time and solitude. It refreshes me. Blessed peaceful solitude with my little ship, my Lady, my Mistress.

Those who know the bond between the sailor and his ship will understand without explanation; those who do not understand, never will. The sailor accepts that his fate and that of his vessel are inextricably linked. He will give his all for her. For in her is his safety, his soul, his peace, his life, his salvation. She is, of necessity, a jealous Mistress who will countenance no other before her. So, as countless others have done before, he risks all for her, spills his blood on her deck, cares for her, spends his coin for her.

In return, she carries him across the waters on his lawful occasions and offers him refuge. It is a fair exchange.

2009-07-01 12:15 EDT (16:15 Z)

It's been a couple of days since I put pencil to notebook. A reflection of the uneventful nature of the past couple of days.

We left Rochester a couple of days ago with an inauspicious weather forecast. Seems there's some sort of low pressure disturbance parked over the Great Lakes. The daily weather pattern is pretty much the same all week. A bit of wind and sun each morning with the wind turning light around mid-day and the sky clouding over. Then one or more thunderstorms with heavy rain and strong winds would come through in mid to late afternoon. Not particularly good sailing weather.

When we left Rochester we set course for Sodus Bay. The latter is a lovely spot, large bay dotted with islands and a few nice spots to anchor.

The weather led us to run the engine for essentially the entire passage. That, too, is part of cruising under

sail.

We arrived at Sodus Bay in early afternoon before the thunderstorms and anchored in the NE basin a little east of the town of Sodus Point.

The anchoring dance went passably well considering the crew were quite inexperienced with the process. Eventually, we were anchored in twenty feet of water using the fifteen kilogram Bruce anchor and a shot of 5/16 inch chain. We also used the new snubber line I had made up with a Wichard chain hook and some 3/8 inch New England Ropes 3-strand nylon line. The anchor was well set with the thirty foot snubber cushioning the cable.

We cleared away, hopped in the dinghy, and had a run ashore in Sodus Point. While ashore, the sky blackened, the air crackled with lightning, rolled with thunder, and a torrent of rain fell on us.

Following the deluge, we returned to Saorsa II to find all well except for some damp crew berths. It's best to close all ports when going ashore in unsettled weather.

We stayed in Sodus another day and visited the old Sodus Point Light House museum and had a nice lunch at a small café.

This morning, raise anchor and underway once again. It always feels good to get going. As Uncle Horatio was fond of saying, "Port rots both men and ships".

Again, raising anchor went well. A little mud on the foredeck, but not bad. Once we had the chain vertical, we used a bit of throttle on the engine for the final break out.

As I write, we are motoring to Oswego in very light wind. A few showers on us and in the distance ashore some serious rain falling. Frustrating weather.

2009-07-02 09:20 EDT (13:20 Z)

We're docked here at Oswego Yacht Club utility dock. Last night was race night for a fleet of J/24's. One of the crew, Myra, managed to get taken on as crew for the race. She had a good outing in spite of the fact that her boat withdrew due to lack of wind.

We awoke this morning to a steady rain falling from a leaden sky with no wind apparent. Decided to stay here in Oswego another day to explore the town.

2009-07-03 20:45 EDT (00:45 Z)

Awoke today to a low grey overcast sky and a Coast Guard Strong Wind Warning for Eastern Lake Ontario. So, we sailed.

Got the boat cleared away, put the light weather head sail below, and brought the No. 3 jib up on deck. Tied the first reef into the main and then briefed the crew over morning coffee.

Initially, a simple sail today heading NNE in clear water with strong westerlies. But, some difficult pilotage needed to enter Henderson's Bay. Lots of rocks and shoals best avoided.

We left the dock and hoist the reefed mainsail and No. 1 jib in the shelter of Oswego Harbour. Passed the harbour breakwater outbound at 09:00.

After making a little northing, we bore off onto a beam reach and settled into our routine. We were making 6.5 knots with no difficulty.

The waves rolled down toward Saorsa II like unwelcome suitors. Each, in turn, attempted to sway her and shove her aside. Each, in turn, was rebuffed as my Lady pressed forward. With purposeful power and strength, her sails harnessing the wind, she shouldered aside each wave in turn and continued on her way. The water parted by her bow rushed down each side of her hull with frothing hiss.

Myra prepared porridge for breakfast as we sailed on. Eaten in the cockpit and most welcome.

On approaching Henderson Bay, the excitement and anxiety of entering unfamiliar waters. Eyes scan the horizon for marks. We enter safely, skirting the hazards and come hard on the wind back down the bay. We start the engine and motor sail the length of the bay.

In Henderson Harbour, the main is lowered and we dock at Henderson Harbour Yacht Club. The Club members who helped us dock are surprised that we made the passage from Oswego in such weather. A good day on the water.

2009-07-06 12:00 EDT (16:00 Z)

Catching up on my notes again.

We stayed in Henderson Harbour until the morning of July 5 (yesterday). We had planned on going on to Sacketts Harbour by boat but changed our mind when we found the marina fee for a single night at dock would be over U.S. \$80. Instead, we managed a ride with a Henderson Harbour Yacht Club member into town.

Ate a very agreeable brunch breakfast at the “Tin Pan Galley” and then went on to explore the town, shops, and parks.

That evening, July 4th, was one of the most amazing fireworks displays I have ever witnessed. The whole of Henderson Bay is ringed with cottages and summer homes. As dusk fell, each of the cottages attempted to out dazzle the others with their private fireworks displays. Clearly, these were families of some financial means as many of the displays approached semi-professional levels for brilliance and complexity.

The effect of the entire event was awesome and spectacular. One literally did not know where to look next as displays of fireworks erupted on all sides. Even the Yacht Club got in on the act with its own display of “the rockets red glare and bombs bursting in air”. The show went on for at least two hours. Just when one thought they had expended all, another display would shoot skyward.

In addition to the fireworks, each of the homes lined their seawall frontage with brilliant red road flares. These are expired / outdated flares that are sold by fire departments as a fundraising initiative.

It all gave the effect of lining the entire bay with glowing red pinpoints of light. It was a truly moving experience.

The next morning, it was time to return to Canada. We left Henderson Harbour Yacht Club with fond good-byes and set sail for Kingston, Ontario.

2009-07-08 17:00 EDT (21:00 Z)

Docked at the west end of the Murray Canal having just finished a two day passage from Kingston via the Bay of Quinte.

After leaving Henderson Harbour Yacht Club and Henderson Bay, we had a wonderfully good sail to Kingston. The wind was W as forecast, but stronger than predicted, at least 20 knots, perhaps more. We made the entire passage under sail alone.

The pilotage was not difficult, but we took care to ensure we knew where we were at all times. At some points, we plotted a fix every 10 to 15 minutes.

The wind seemed to increase as the day progressed until we were sailing with the working headsail and a double reefed main. Even at that, we consistently maintained hull speed of 6.5 knots.

Of some note was passing close alongside the fairway bouy marking the juncture of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River / Seaway. A sad sign of the times, we saw no freighter traffic at all.

After an absolutely grand sail, the best of the trip, we approached Kingston, lowered sails, and motored in to Confederation Basin Marina in the centre of the old city.

We chose to dine ashore at "Chez Piggy". Food was excellent; highly recommended.

The next day, we arranged to have lunch with Andy Soper, Sailmaker. I hadn't seen Andy for some years and it was delightful to reconnect. We had an excellent lunch at "Pan Chancho".

After lunch, Myra and I walked along to the Marine Museum and spent an enjoyable few hours touring the facility.

We left Kingston the next morning (July 6) to begin the return trip to home port in Whitby via the Bay of Quinte. There was sufficient wind to sail for the first couple of hours, but we ended up running on engine for most of the first day.

After passing Picton Bay, we were able to sail again for the last few miles and we managed an idyllic late afternoon sail the entire length of Long Reach. As we approached the north end of Long Reach, we lowered sail and motored into the anchorage behind Grassy Point. A beautiful quiet spot.

Anchor set well in 10 to 11 feet of water on 9 fathoms of chain. After setting the hook, we indulged in brie, camembert, cheddar, and a few rounds of "Dark and Stormy".

Subsequently, I donned my new Hawaiian Shirt (purchased at Oswego Yacht Club as a gift from Myra) so as to dress for dinner and then fired up the barbecue. Steaks, potatoes, and salad.

Dinner dishes washed and anchor lamp hung on the forestay. Then to bed. Slept a little late this morning. Got moving, weigh anchor without difficulty, and then motor the rest of the way through the Bay of Quinte, past Belleville and Trenton.

2009-07-09 12:12 EDT (16:12 Z)

Yesterday, we motored through the Bay of Quinte past Belleville and transited the Murray Canal. Docked for the night at the concrete abutments at the west end of the canal.

Underway this morning about 09:30 local time; followed the channel and range past Brighton and out of

Presque'île Bay. Very little wind so we motored in a flat glassy calm and hoist the No. 3 Jib to dry it.

Once we had breakfast we lowered, flaked, and bagged the No. 3 before hoisting the big light Genoa to dry. Delighted to discover a very light southerly breeze had come up. Engine shut down and we're now sailing under Genoa and main on a beam reach at about three knots. Water surface is flat calm save for a few ruffles and the ripples of our bow wave.

Amazing to watch the slightest breath of wind carry us along. The dinghy towed behind gurgling in delight at the gentle pull on its painter.

The sky above is cloudless with but a few billowy white cotton balls over the land. We sit lazy and languid under brilliant sun each enjoying the day in their own way.

A few minutes ago (12:20 EDT) the breeze increased slightly. Now, we heel ever so gently and the Lady accelerates forward with grace and elegance. The gentle burbling at her bow becomes a more insistent and steady rush of water. On She sails, carrying me in her arms.

Would that it could go on forever.

2009-07-09 16:34 EDT (20:34 Z)

Just docked at the public wall in Cobourg Harbour.

The plan is to raft alongside "Haida Legend" when she returns from an afternoon outing in an hour or so.

We had a lovely sail today. The south wind that we started with filled in nicely and we soon were surging along a 5.5 knots on a port tack beam reach.

The big light Genoa dried nicely and we did a neat job of flaking and bagging. Once that sail was stowed below, we hoist the No. 1 working headsail and let it dry for a while. The wind faded just as we approached Cobourg, so we did a very neat stow on both the headsail and main before entering harbour.

Both crew are off the boat just now. One to the showers; the other to town for messages. A bit of peace and solitude is appreciated.

It feels odd to think we had our first "work up" cruise to here almost four weeks ago. The time has flown by, really. Just as I settle into shipboard routine and life aboard, it's time to move ashore again to the other life. No matter. The ocean will be there waiting for me to return. Always, I must.

2009-07-11 17:44 EDT (21:44 Z)

When "Haida Legend" returned to her marina berth, we moved off the public dock and rafted alongside. As before, Sylvie and Brendan welcomed us and were gracious hosts.

Also on board were two friends of Brendan and Sylvie, Mark and Anne, with whom he teaches a course. We had a pleasant evening with appetites satisfied by excellent take-away Thai food from the restaurant in Cobourg.

I retired early as I was feeling a little unwell. Myra stayed on and had a lengthy and enjoyable chat with our hosts.

Next morning, not too early to rise and an uneventful departure from Cobourg. We cleared the harbour

entrance about 09:10 and had the main sail and working jib hoist shortly after. The sails went up quite smartly and soon we were headed out on a course of W by S on a beam reach.

Bearing off, we realised our course to Whitby put us on a downwind run, so out came the Spinnaker. Much discussion ensued as to the proper and best angle for the Spinnaker Pole. Eventually, we settled on a position much forward of the theoretically correct position. This was attributed to the relatively narrow cut of the sail.

The wind came and went, veered and backed. After making sometimes good progress, sometimes not, under sail, we decided to drop the sails and start the engine.

A heavy haze on the water and a threat of a thunderstorm were factors in the decision.

All of the head sails had been nicely set, dried, bagged and stowed over the past couple of days, The mainsail was flaked down well and the cover put on.

The bitter-sweet feelings that occur at the end of a cruise were present as we approached our berth in Port Whitby Marina.

We were met at the dock by Brendan, who had lunched in Toronto and was on his way home.

After securing the vessel, I left her in the care of the crew.

Thus, a very successful three week cruise of Lake Ontario was completed. For me, an interesting and very instructive time.

Wm.E. (Bill) Henry

S.V. Saorsa II

Call sign: CFA2983

MMSI: 316005655

Web: <http://www.venturesail.com>

Voice: 1-416-953-6896