

Saorsa II – 2013 Cruise

SitRep 005

Oh ... My!

In sitting down to write this, I realise it's been almost two months since my last Situation Report (SitRep). I'm really not sure what to say about that. It seems my motivation to eke out timeless prose is sadly lacking.

Some of my reticence arises from the fact that what I'm doing is no longer a "grand adventure". In many ways, cruising under sail has simply become my way of living. So, to me, it's no more worthy of documentation than any other of life's normal daily routine. Does one "blog on" about normal daily activity, or even the answer to that important question of "Where shall we go for lunch"? To do so feels rather narcissistic.

As some know, I have been putting out Tweets from time to time and publishing photographic images I've created. That feels a far more timely and better way of sharing than sporadic missives of this, that, and the other.

However, I believe some of my correspondents continue to enjoy my writing, so I'll produce a SitRep from time to time and attempt to document some of the highlights of *Saorsa II's* travels.

After leaving Port Hawkesbury, we had an enjoyable time cruising the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia. Her bow once more rose to the broad Atlantic swell and She revelled in this wondrous playground. For some, the Eastern Shore is not a favoured cruising ground, but we found the anchorages attractive and the few people we met very pleasant indeed. The only real difficulty comes from the fact one is working south and west against the prevailing winds. It makes for a bit of an uphill slog.

A delightful small-world story unfolded when we went into Liscomb Lodge to refill water tanks. The very small dock there was already occupied by a substantial ketch, *Mur Dina*, a CSY 44. With a bit of to-and-fro conversation, we received permission to raft alongside and did so with due care.

After introductions to the vessels owners, Steve C. and Greg G., we found that Steve kept his boat at the same marina in Whitby, Ontario from which *Saorsa II* had started this cruise and that Greg was also from my home town of Toronto. Even more curious, the dock to which *Saorsa II* was assigned this past spring was immediately alongside Steve's older boat, *Southern Comfort*, which is now kept at Whitby Marina by his son. Small world, indeed!

We had a lovely time socializing with all aboard and found they were planning a most adventurous cruise out to Sable Island.

On leaving Liscomb, we proceeded to Halifax and docked at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron for a few days and then moved to a public dock on the downtown waterfront. Both locations had been recommended to us by Greg G. As we were approaching the waterfront dock, we saw another vessel jockeying for our spot on the dock. It was, to our complete surprise, *Mur Dina*, just returned from her sojourn to Sable Island.

With acquaintance renewed, we were regaled with tales of their voyage to the island and their time ashore there. My goodness, what a magical place it is.



While we were in Halifax, Tim W. joined the crew of *Saorsa II* primarily to assist with the crossing of the Gulf of Maine. I had first met Tim and his family in 2010 while cruising in Maine. Then, in 2012, I renewed the acquaintance and Cindy, “The Crew”, had an opportunity to meet them as well. We were initially quite pleased that Tim was able to get the time and make travel arrangements to join us.

After a few pleasant days on the Halifax waterfront taking in the Buskers’ Festival, the museums, and other sights, we set out south and west along the South Shore of Nova Scotia towards our destination of Shelburne which was planned as the departure point for the crossing to Maine.

Along the way, we visited a number of anchorages and spent a few days in Lunenburg. The latter, of course, is a “must visit” site for any yachtsman with a sense of history, time, and place.

After a safe arrival in Shelburne, we visited the town and waited for a good “weather window” to make the crossing to Maine. As it turned out, the crossing was entirely uneventful and involved a 36 hour motor run across the Gulf of Maine.

On arrival at Rockland, Maine, with Tim at the helm, we had the misfortune to run over a lobster pot float and line. The impact damaged the engine mounts and led to some lost time and expensive repairs.

Tim left the boat at Rockland as planned (he lives nearby); *Saorsa II* and Her crew breathed a collective sigh of relief. Tim’s time on board as crew proved to be a great disappointment. His behaviour was characterised by reckless haste, recalcitrant wilfulness, and lack of regard for the vessel and Her equipment. Both Cindy and I were often completely baffled by his actions. Clearly, inviting him aboard was a significant error in judgement on my part.

On a positive note, Cindy has now had first-hand experience in crewing with an absolutely outstanding shipmate in Jason S. and one who was very much less so.

The better part of a week was spent in Rockland harbour at the Journey’s End yard effecting preliminary repairs to the engine and mounts. The staff at Journey’s End were immensely helpful, highly professional, and very competent. I recommend the yard to anyone in the area needing work done on their vessel.

I should also mention our clearance into the United States was conducted very smoothly. The representative of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection was an exemplary blend of professional courtesy, efficiency, and an appropriate level of welcoming warmth.

Since leaving Rockland, we have made our way south along the New England coast and into Long Island Sound. We visited Salem, Martha’s Vineyard, and Mystic Seaport along the way.

The latter is always a “must visit” for me and again I was not disappointed. We had the good fortune to be there when a number of schooners stopped in on their way to the Schooner Festival in New London. It was quite a magnificent sight to see the old seaport as a back drop to this collection of beautiful vessels.

We are now on a transient mooring at the 79th Street Boat Basin in New York City. Soon, *Saorsa II* will head further south than She has ever been before.

I remind my correspondents that there continue to be crewing opportunities available for various portions of this cruise. I encourage all who are of good moral fibre, strong back, and adventuresome spirit to contact me directly if interested. In return, you’ll find adventure, hardship, good food, strong drink, charming companionship, and wonderful memories.

Yours aye, Bill
(aka Captain Zaphod)

