

Cruise to Santa Catalina for the Southern California Nordic Tugs Rendezvous

Participants CARMEN NT42, Anthony Thorne and Jane Thomas-Thorne

BUOY TOY NT37, Wayne and Linda Farris (plus Cal Robie for two days)

HOOT NT32, Shep and Nancy Jenks

Saturday September 13th to

Well we did have a skippers meeting and all was well. Carmen had made a short shakedown cruise up to Benicia at the west end of the Carquinez Strait just in from San Pablo Bay. The skipper and crews of Buoy Toy and Hoot joined us at the Benicia Yacht Club and we went over the basics of the trip. Present were Shep and Nancy Jenks of Hoot, Wayne and Cal of Buoy Toy and ourselves, with Linda and Cathie as outside auditors. We had returned from a brief but hectic visit to our BC home where we had sold our Salt Spring property and purchased and moved into a Sidney property. Now we were back in the bay area planning our trip south to the SOCAL Rendezvous at Two Harbors, Santa Catalina Island.

The trip consists of four travel days , first to Monterrey, second to Morro Bay, third to Santa Barbara and then on to Two Harbors. Of course Murphy was around so Santa Barbara was not in the cards for Carmen, but more on that later.

The weather was deemed to be appropriate the evening before the designated day. So at O'dark thirty (Wayne doesn't recognize numbers before dawn - whoever she was) and with excitement running high we cast off from Pt Richmond yacht club who had graciously hosted us for the night and moved into the channel. BTW Friday night there they have a super dinner. Carmen led as it was easier for us to get moving. In the middle of the channel we stopped to consult the instruments and Nobeltec, Raymarine and the radar all agreed we were in the middle and ready to turn right onto our exit course. At about this point I noticed out of the Starboard pilothouse door that Wayne and Cal had entered into a shouting match but decided to cheat the current and move out. Later I heard that they thought I was too far over to the shallows, again beginners luck.

So down the bay; behind Angel Island and out of the gate at slack water. Passed under the gate at 0631. There was little in the way of swell so a peaceful trip to sea. We turned to port at Seabuoy 8 and ran down the coast towards Monterrey on a fairly gentle sea. At 1726 we made fast at Breakwater Cove in Monterrey Harbor, after passing some large number of basking sea lions who seemed to be making a study of discontent. Strange bathroom habits too, as the air was rife (as in loaded) with what can only be described as

an off-putting Pong. For some strange reason there was lots of mooring space at Breakwater Cove. Being close to deaf we went to dinner at the nearby restaurant.

The sea lion lullaby was not appreciated by anyone and some folks even stayed up all night to see if they stopped! The next day being a long one we elected to leave at 0400 the next morning. Again we started in the dark when we set off bound for Morro Bay.

The seas again were quite peaceful and the trip to Morro Bay was uneventful. We arrived at 1600 and at 1625 made fast at the Morro Bay Yacht Club, who again deserve a big thanks from us for all the help provided. Dinner followed and the deteriorating weather situation was discussed. The buoy data did not seem to be in line with the predicted storm, so we decided prudence was the better part of valor (not that I have met them). Also as some crews had had no sleep the night before at melodious Monterrey there seemed to be a feeling that a rest was in order. We stayed.

On Monday Shep of Hoot asked if we had any ideas about his battery situation. It turned out that he had been concerned about the volts being under 12 all the way down. With the assistance of someone at the MBYC we found someone who not only knew about alternators, but had a shop - wait there's more - he also had a truck and was scheduled to arrive at 0700 the next day. The atmosphere of frivolity was heightened by the arrival of Linda and Susanne at 1700.

Tuesday saw the group lounging around, shopping, sightseeing and generally relaxing. 0700 did indeed see the alternator guy arrive (sans tools) to remove Hoot's alternator. He said he would be back "tomorrow" which was a bit of a problem as we were leaving at 0500 to round Arguello and Conception on the way to Santa Barbara. Somewhat miraculously, after a phone call he agreed to deliver and install at 1900 (same day service!)

Wednesday 0500 saw the group move down the river to the sea and head out to the south. Arguello was passed with little to-do but the wind was rising and it began to blow the tops off of the waves around us making for a beautiful blue and white seascape. Luckily this was behind us so we started a surfing party all the way around Conception which was wonderfully clear in the rising wind. A wonderful day for a boat ride!

Nearing Santa Barbara the berthing situation changed as someone large took the last large slip. There was room for Hoot and Buoy Toy and after having been under way for some 13 hours or so, they went in. Carmen made arrangements at the Channel Islands Harbor (Oxnard) some 3 hours further on and settled down for the night run. We made fast at 2205, had a bowl of soup and crashed.

On Thursday Hoot and Buoy Toy made an 0700 start for Two Harbors while Carmen decided that a rest day was in order. Fortunately there is a West Marine within walking distance as our TV antenna had crashed to the boat deck (a trip it did not survive) as a result of the ratchet mount coming apart. The mount was reassembled and a new antenna put on top. This was the only casualty on Carmen for this trip.

Friday at 0745 we cleared the Harbor Masters office and arrived at Two Harbors at 1530, picking up the assigned buoy. The Santa Barbara Channel has so far proved to be rougher than the open Pacific, so much for my predictions of calm water.

On Friday evening there was a beach welcome party where we met with the other boats folks. A wonderful and very welcoming group of people. After the beach thing we, the Northern group, went off to dinner - we tend to do this daily.

Saturday early afternoon saw the 'scavenger hunt' affair that was won by Buoy Toy - congrats to Linda and Suzanne. This was a major victory as the winners of the scavenger hunt had the first choice from the prize table. The evening party was dinner catered on the beach and a very fine spread it was too. There was a nautical trivia contest that had a geography question thrown in that all of the contestants had to guess at; only one guesser was successful, sadly it was not me. It was a great evening and we all went back to our respective boats well fed, watered and entertained.

Sunday saw the Northern group break up, with Hoot heading to family at Redondo Beach and Buoy Toy and Carmen heading to Avalon. Sunday and Monday were great sightseeing, shopping and eating days. On Tuesday Buoy Toy sadly had to leave for other commitments and the trip back north, our thoughts go with them.

Carmen will remain here until Saturday when we will head to Ventura for a few days, after which Well who knows.