



The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

April 2008

Come Sail With US: An invitation to all Trailer Sailors

by Jerry Kergan

Throughout this 2007-08 down-season, the time when we wish we were sailing but can't for the bum weather and frequent holidays, I found buried within threads on the Trailer Sailor West Wight Potter Forum, several postings from Northern California skippers who have recently acquired Potters. The subject seems to routinely focus on requests for help, in one way or another, with getting familiar with their new vessels.

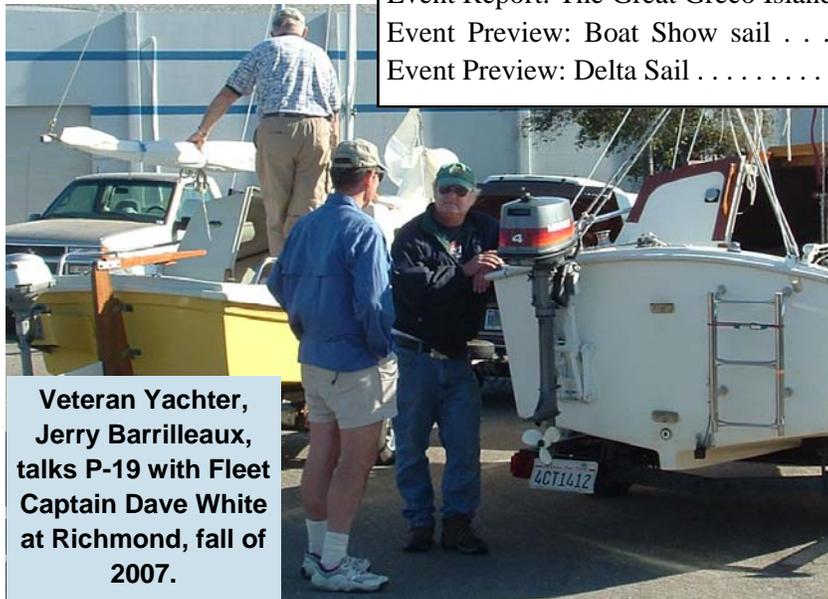
Although assistance of this kind is one of the missions of the online forum, I realize that online help has its limitations. This brings me to what I have believe is possibly the #1 benefit of our Potter Yachter community: the abundance of eager, willing, and experienced members who are ready to step forward and share their assistance. I have seen this wealth of experience shared by many, on repeated occasions at our Potter Yachter functions, and have personally benefited from it as I discovered sailing over the past couple of years.

It should be emphasized that



Below, Keith Hubbard shares his Lateen sailing experience with visiting Bill Bechtel (left) and Dan Phy (right) at Woodward Reservoir in June, 2007.

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Veteran Yachter, Jerry Barrilleaux, talks P-19 with Fleet Captain Dave White at Richmond, fall of 2007.

Potter ownership is not a requisite for membership in the Potter Yachters. Our Commodore, Dick Herman, sails a Com-Pac SunCat; we now have three members with Com-Pac 19's . . . Two who trailer, and one, Dave Meredith, who births at Emeryville and joins us on sails out of Richmond and Alameda. Our numbers include several Montgomery 15's, and Dave Kautz's O'Day 19 as well.

Anecdotally, about this time last year I took my friend Mark Erickson for a P-15 introductory sail on Oakland Estuary; my first outing of the season.

(continued page 4: PY invitation)

The Commodore's Log

The sailing season is off to a great start. By all accounts, the Redwood City Sail to the U.S.S. Thompson went very well. I made the Delta day sail, on Sunday, March 30, along with eight P-15 captains. Jerry Kergan left the Lazy Ka at home and came armed with a camera to record the event. The weather and the winds cooperated and we sallied forth from B&W Marina to pass through the Mokelumne River Bridge in mass. It was a great sight.

I had an old friend aboard, Gale Stockdale, the former owner of Stockdale Marine in Sacramento. Gale is 83 years old, and the number of people who knew him was amazing. And everywhere I looked, there was Jerry with his camera. When we docked at Korth's Pirate Lair Marina for lunch, the eight P-15 captains were all double-tied at the visitors dock. Another great sight.

We descended on the cafe for lunch, and thirteen of us gathered around one table. The easy camaraderie, the laughter, and the friendship were infectious. I love being on the water, especially when the boat is working well with the gentle sounds of wind and waves lapping at the sail and hull. Being with friends makes it even better.

In the last Commodore's Log, I mentioned dealing with a man overboard situation. David Meredith picked it up on the TSBB and a great discussion ensued. Anyway, I came up with a plan. The freeboard on my boat is low enough that a person in the water can get a handhold on the amidships cleat. That won't get them in the boat and I may not be strong enough to pull them up. I sail with the bow dock line attached and leading back to the cockpit. I'm going to drop it over the side with the bitter end passing through a block attached to the stern cleat. Hopefully, the poor sod in (continued page 4: Commodore's Log)

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON:

Saturday **April 5** & Sunday **April 6**: Santa Cruz to Moss Landing. **Postponed! New date TBA—see details on Pg 4**

Wednesday **April 16** to Sunday **April 20**: Strictly Sail exposition, Jack London Square.

Sunday **April 20**: Oakland Estuary Day Sail. Host: Bruce Hood.

Sat/Sun **May 3-4**: Overnight Delta cruise Brannon Island State Park to Lundborg Landing, Bethel Island. Host: Jerry Barrilleaux.

Other events of interest . . . Tall Ships galore!

The *Hawaiian Chieftain* & *Lady Washington* remain in the bay area into mid April: Oakland; March 24-April 6, Redwood City; April 7-13, Sausalito.

The Privateer *Lynx* will visit northern California in a April and May: April 2-17, Monterey; April 19-27; Pillar Point/Half Moon Bay; April 28-May 4, Oakland; May 5-13, Antioch; May 14-21, Rio Vista; May 22-27, Encinal Yacht Club.

San Francisco Festival of Sail: Wednesday, July 23—Sunday, July 27; see <http://www.festivalofsail.org/ships.asp> for a list of participating vessels and event information. Vice Commodore Hood, a volunteer docent at the San Francisco Maritime Museum, points out that volunteer support for the event is still needed: <http://www.festivalofsail.org/NEWvolunteerSF.asp>

The Officer's Club

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The Great Greco Island Circumnavigation Adventure

By Carl Sundholm

Pottering about in Northern California for longer than just about anyone else, Harry Gordon has become a prominent figure on the trailer sailing landscape, much respected for his interesting and original ideas: from naming the “Potter Yachters,” to improving the structure and handling of this plucky little sailboat, to finding new and interesting places to sail. So when Harry says he has an idea about a challenging sail, people listen

... even if it appears at first glance to be a little “far out.”

As the sailing season for last year drew to a close, Harry’s thoughts turned to pipe dreams of local sailing explorations out of his home port of Redwood City that he had never before attempted.

The Port is situated near the head of the lower portion of Redwood Creek, also known as Redwood Slough, which sprawls out for miles like the trunk of a tree through the marshes, with myriad meandering cattail lined sloughs branching to the right and left before its slow flowing waters finally reach San Francisco Bay. Although not evident to the eye while sailing out the main estuary, the last two large limbs of the slough on either side twist and turn to eventually reach the bay themselves, effectively forming large flat islands of marshland bracketing the mouth of Redwood Slough. On the left, Corkscrew Slough winds to meet Steinberger Slough and thence to the bay forming outer Bair Island. On the right, Westpoint Slough winds an ever tapering serpentine course until reaching its final mile of skinny narrows in Bayfront Park before widening into San Francisco Bay.



Clearly, the challenge of navigating these branching sloughs is very tricky since they contain hidden muddy shallows and submerged wrecks that can make them risky or impassable without the clearance provided by the highest tide and a considerable amount of luck.

As far anyone knows, the only Potter skipper to navigate Outer Bair Island via Corkscrew Slough was Mike Westfield years earlier, but no West Wight Potter (and quite possibly no sailboat) has ever circumnavigated Greco Island.

Harry’s friend Oscar Koechlin, an experienced and astute P-15 sailor in his own right, planned out the idea of circumnavigating Outer Bair Island via Corkscrew Slough, as Mike Westfield had done before, and on November 25, 2007 Harry and Oscar used the high tide to successfully circumnavigate Outer Bair Island.

After Harry posted the Bair Island adventure on the trailer sailor bulletin board, he mentioned that he had a few other pipe dreams of slough exploration that he’d still like to do, one of which was to follow Westpoint Slough all the way through to the bay and thus circumnavigate Greco Island.

On learning this, I hit the tide tables and let Harry know that December 23, 2007 was the highest tide of the year, suggesting that it might be the best opportunity to do what had never been done before. Harry posted the call for the sail on the trailer sailor bulletin board and the adventure was scheduled.

By this time I was beginning to realize that since I was likely going to be

(continued page 5: Greco Is.)

(from *Commodore's Log: page 2*) the water can step or sit on the dock line while I pull on the bitter end. Think elevator. I pull on the dock line, which lifts the guy in the water enough to get him up over the side.

I'm not sure if this will work or not. But I'm going to keep working the problem so that if it does happen, I'll have a clue about what to do. Maybe that's the secret: have a plan.

See you on the water.



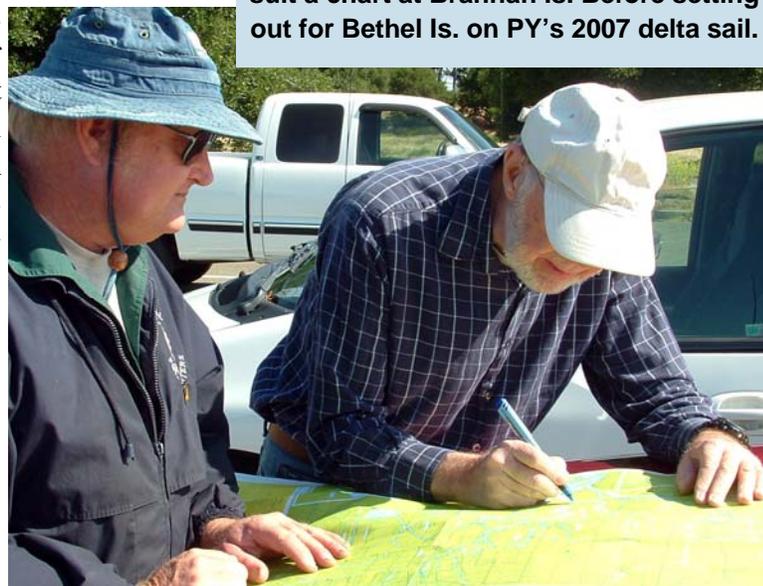
Dick Herman

(from *PY invitation: page 1*) Upon returning to the Grand Street ramp, we found a fellow and his daughter putting their Monty-15 away for the evening. Ashley Truman was his name. As all trailer sailors have much in common, we struck up a conversation. Ashley lamented that the downside to trailer sailing was that he seemed to have difficulty finding others of a common mind with whom to share his enthusiasm for sailing. I put Ashley in touch with Don Person, our, P-15 Fleet Captain, and subsequently Ashley joined us on several events well into the summer. The point, there are many trailer sailors who could benefit by joining our ranks; in return, we too would benefit from their personal contribution by their presence as well.

Jerry Barrilleaux and Harry Gordon consult a chart at Brannan Is. Before setting out for Bethel Is. on PY's 2007 delta sail.



Dave Kautz sharing his knowledge from the deck of his O'Day.



Consider this an invitation to all Northern California trailer sailors to come join us at our next event. I, for one, would like to see the number of non-Potter boats joining our sailing events increase in numbers. I think I can speak for the Potter Yachter membership in extending this invitation to make the 2008 season, our 30th year, the best sailing season yet!



Barbara Simpson

Barbara Jean Simpson April 14, 1944 - Sept. 17, 2007 Resident of Orinda She was predeceased by her husband of 29 years John L. Simpson in 2005. Survived by son David D. Hogan, his wife Candy, grandchildren; Heather Hogan of Antioch, Krystle Hogan of Pleasant Hill, Michael Hogan of Concord. Survived by sisters; Rose Ann Harris of San Francisco and Kyle Rhiannon of El Sobrante. Barbara served in the U.S. Navy Waves from 1962 - 1963 in the Hospital Corp. She retired from Pacific Bell in 1996 after 30 years working as an overseas operator, in graphic arts and as a communications technician. She was predeceased by her mother Helen H. Cole, brothers Ronald L. Cole and Vince J. Drum. She also leaves behind a nephew in Oregon and five nieces in California and South Carolina. Barbara was a member of the West Wight Potter Sailing Club and loved sailing. She also loved art, books and oriental antiques. She was a long time member of Alcoholics Anonymous and owes the past 30 years to that organization.

David Hogan

(continued from page 3: *Potters Venture Beyond*)

the only big Potter 19 on this adventure, that if any boat was going to get stuck in the marsh, it would be me, and that therefore I should probably scout out the route to get a feeling of whether it could be done by a boat as big as *Dagmar*. The first time I checked out the narrows at high tide from Bayfront Park in Menlo Park (accessible from the Marsh Road exit off Highway 101), I did not get a warm fuzzy feeling of comfort since even at high tide the narrows looked to be a mile long tulle lined ditch with a threshold maximum depth of about 2 feet, and being about 7 yards wide, which could



make it difficult or impossible to turn a larger boat like mine around in the event the narrows became impassible.

While I love to take sailing photos of Potters, the image this brought to mind was of *Dagmar* wallowing in the mire as the highest tide of the year receded, landlocked for who knows how long in the muddy narrows of Westpoint Slough. My hopes that the extra foot of water with the highest tide on December 23rd would improve the prospects of success for a P-19 were encouraged

when I re-visited the site the day before the scheduled sail and the scene looked a bit more promising.

Before the sail, Potter emeritus Dave Norris provided a map of the proposed journey, extra enthusiasm, and committed to be the land-based photo-documentarian. Mike Swartz volunteered to be my P-19 co-captain on *Dagmar* and I brought a coin to flip in the event that if she got stuck in the mud, one of us would probably go overboard to help push her out while the other would provide counter ballast to raise the beached portion of the hull. I recall Tim Derry remarking we'd better bring the wading boots.



Harry's laconic comment was that the possibility of our Potters getting stuck in the mud brought to mind the image of Humphrey Bogart pulling the *African Queen* through the marshes and mud of Lake Victoria.

And so it was that on the morning of the highest tide of the year, Harry went over the plans for the day for the first circumnavigation of Greco Island ever by any West Wight Potter (and possibly by any) sailboat with an avid group of Potter sailors eager to give it a try in five small Potters, including Dan Phy, Don Person with grandson Duncan, Oscar Koechlin, and Dave Kautz with Russell Swartz, and a lone Potter 19 co-captained by Carl Sundholm and Mike Swartz. Below is a great photo of Harry briefing the troops.

It was a perfect day for attempting the circumnavigation and challenging the treacherous shallow and narrow end of Westpoint Slough: the winds were light, the sun was bright, and the tide was high.

As the Potters gathered at the dock in anticipation of the adventure in slough exploration, we realized that we had better get going since "time was of the essence" and there was only about an hour and a half of high tide left to get through the narrows.

(continued page 6: *Potters Venture Beyond*)

The Potter Yachter

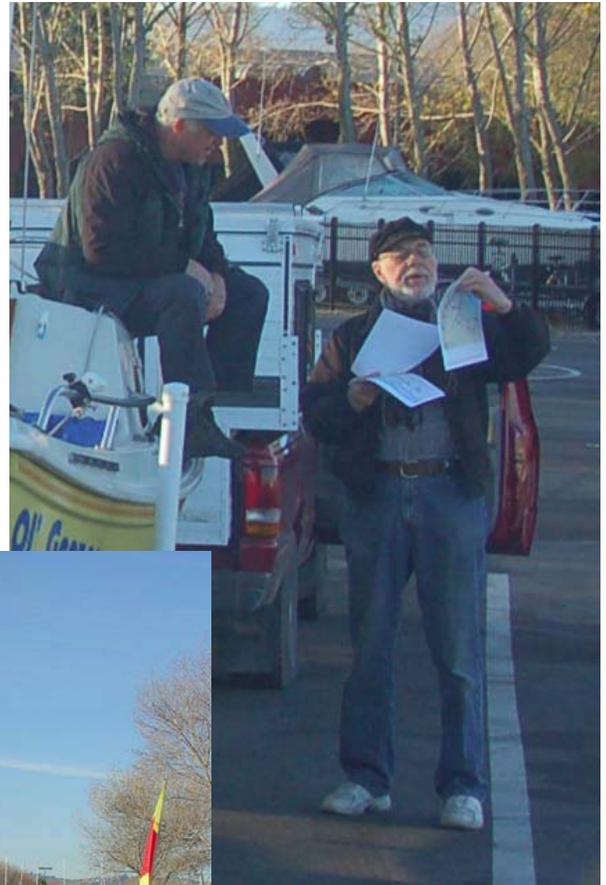
(continued from page 5: *Potters Venture Beyond*)

Harry was the first to cast-off, and the other Potters followed one by one.

When the fleet turned the first major bend of Westpoint Slough as it began to narrow, a wrecked sailboat lay tilted over mired in the mud as if to stand as an example of what could happen to unwary sailors in these waters.

As Harry led on into the middle section of Westpoint Slough, the flooded adjacent baylands and clumps of reeds randomly scattered about by an earlier swamp buggy airboat made it very difficult to figure out where the course of the slough went.

Harry's superb story-telling is the best description of what happened next: *"I found the earlier parts of Westpoint Slough--well past the new marina, but before the park narrows--harder to navigate than I had anticipated. Because the high tide had flooded the adjacent baylands, there seemed to be water everywhere. I was following the star-board shore because I was watching for the dead-end branch to the right which I wanted to avoid. Instead I found myself cruising down the dead-end slough. Oscar sailed near and was shouting 'Number one!' and holding up one finger. I had no idea what he meant since I had failed to notice that the dead-end branch had a name of its own. It was several days later when I looked more closely at the chart and saw that the dead-end branch was named 'First Slough.' So that's what Oscar meant! Duh. Fortunately it was only a short distance before the dead-end became*



obvious and I turned about. Oscar turned also and took the lead. The rest of the procession followed faithfully, apparently enjoying the diversion as part of the exploration."

There was some thought as to whether the delay from the foray into First Slough might cause some difficulties if the tide was lower when we eventually reached the narrows.

Harry continues his narrative: *"I soon arrived at the bend into the narrows at the edge of the park. There I found Oscar backing out, and thought, 'This is as far as we can go; he ran out of navigable water.' But as I approached, Oscar pointed me in the right direction, closer to the park shore. I threw the helm over to take an apparent open path to the channel, but Manatee motored straight ahead and plowed into some reeds. Apparently I had run across a shoal and bumped the rudder blade up, so I had no rudder control. Don Person caught that awkward moment in one of his photos--Bateau Ivre backing out and Manatee jammed into the reeds, while Dave Norris observed from the shore. I pushed the rudder blade back down and found*



Photo by Dan Phy)

(continued page 7: *Greco Is.*)

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(continued from page 6: *Potters Venture Beyond*) *there was plenty of water under the stern, so I easily backed out, then turned and found the correct channel, proceeding through the flotsam."*

Harry then re-assumed the lead of the procession of Potters as they entered the narrows, followed by Dan, Don, Mike and me, Oscar, and Dave.

Just before *Dagmar* entered the narrows, while we still had the daggerboard half down, it thunked against some submerged hard object which was likely part of a sunken wreck, since the only other thing down there is mud, which generally does not thunk when you hit it.



(Photo by Dave Norris)

That's when we figured it was time that we pulled the daggerboard all the way up and I went forward to the bow with the sounding pole (and camera).



(Photo by Don Person)

I suppose I should have been doing the "Mark Twain" thing, like the Mississippi Steam boats, except I would have been calling out "Quarter Twain" ("Twain" being two fathoms or the 12 feet which those boats needed) for most of the narrows.

Mike's skilled hand steered the tiller through the narrows, while I moved to the bow with the boat pole to plumb the depths intermittently, trying to remember where the deeper parts of the narrow channel were.

Around the time we plumbed a shallow point of about 2 feet in the narrows, we got real careful about keeping the barely protruding tule tops that marked the left bank of the channel just to the port side of the bow.

As the parade of Potters was navigating the slough narrows where it borders Bay-front Park, you could see onlookers with a stunned look stop dead in their tracks to watch, likely having never seen sailboats travel these waters.



(Photo by Dave Norris)

As we were reaching the end of the narrows, Harry seemed to catch a little breeze from the bay and started pulling farther ahead, while the rest of us were wearing big grins from the realization that we had made it through without any mishaps.

Then as we rounded the final bend, the narrows widened as we reached the wider expanses of San Francisco Bay.

Harry later said "It was a great feeling, as we finally headed out toward the open bay and I looked back to see all five boats still following. . . Potters are great little boats! Of course, their skippers had something to do with it too."

It was a great winter day for sailing out on the bay and the increasing breeze provided a peaceful and pleasant sailing reward for making it through, before

(Photo by Dan Phy)

(continued page 11: *Potters Venture Beyond*)



The 2008 Strictly Sail Boat Show, held at Oakland's Jack London Square, is scheduled for April 16th through 20th. This is the 13th year of this event. In past years members of the Potter Yachters have attended the boat show to visit with fellow Potter Club Members, Ryan Forrest, the International Marine staff, and to take a look at the latest craft from the West Wight Potter Builders in the boat show tent. Last year we had a look at an example of the Sanibel-17, the well established cruiser that the Potter factory has revived, and is now in production at the IM plant in Inglewood, CA.

This year IM will not be have a display at Strictly Sail.

Strictly Sail Boat Show gathering of Potter Yachters

Host: Bruce Hood

When: Sunday, April 20 (10:00 AM Launch Time morning.)

Where: Grand Street ramp, Alameda

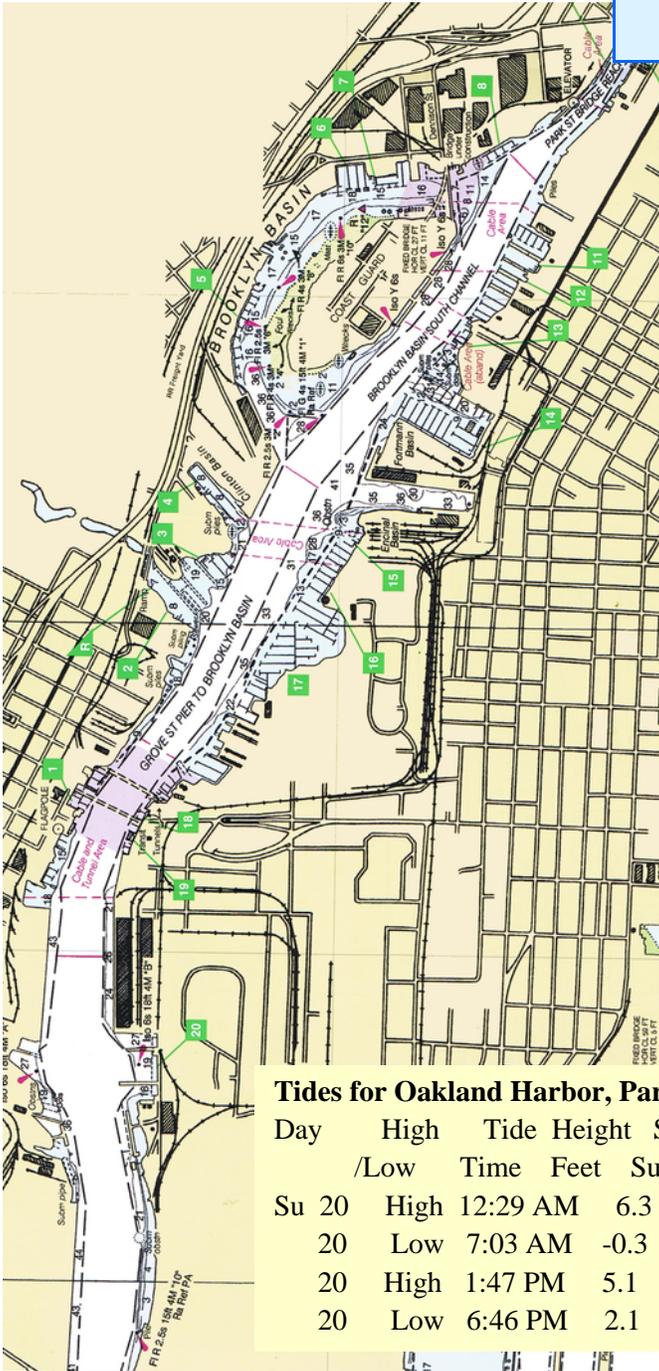
Fees: Free launch & parking

Meals: 6:30 PM Dinner at Pasta Pelican (R.S.V.P to host)

Distance: 1.5-2 miles from the Grand Street ramp to boat show central at Jack London Square.

Phone #s:

Host 510-846-4306



Potter Yachters often run into one another on the show floor, or in the food court where they share a drink, some lunch, and have a good visit. IM's absence won't prevent that!

I think the majority of our Potter Group will visit the show on Saturday . . . but you may see some of the Potter group on any day of the show that suits your schedule.

On Sunday the 20th, weather permitting, all interested Potter Yachters will congregate Grand Street ramp, launch, then sail up the Estuary to Jack London Square, and do a "Sail By Potter Parade," just off the crowded waters and docks of the Boat show craft exhibiting at Jack London Square. If the weather sucks, or there is some other difficulty, we can make a spontaneous plan in the Grand Street parking lot.

We will head up the Estuary from Grand St. at 10:am, so you will want to be launched and ready to go by then.. We will probably arrive by water at the Square around 11:30, Sunday, circle around together for half an hour or so in front of the boat show docks . . . then the members in the fleet are free to scatter and sail as they please for the rest of the day.

I am going to make a reservation for a table at 6:30pm Sunday at The Pasta Pelican restaurant, and any of our Potter Friends may join us. Give me a call if you plan to be with us at the Pelican. I need a head count! Call me 510 846 4306 The Pelican is a big brown building on the Alameda side of the estuary just across from Jack London Square.. they have parking on the landward side, so you can drive there if you are in your car on Alameda.. there is also a guest slip or two in front of the Pelican, right by the big white Hornblower excursion boats. Prices for meals vary from 15-30 dollars, and pleasant BYO drinks of all sorts available

I live on Alameda Island, not far from the Oakland Yacht club, and not far from the Grand St Launch ramp as well. I often meet with Dan Phy and other Potter Yachters in the run up days to the boat show weekend, and help them in any way I can. Hope to see many of you there, and have a good visit during the boat show week.

Tides for Oakland Harbor, Park Street Bridge April 20, 2008.

Day	High /Low	Tide Height Feet	Sunrise Sunset	Moon Time Visible	% Moon	
Su 20	High	12:29 AM	6.3	6:26 AM	Set 6:12 AM	99
20	Low	7:03 AM	-0.3	7:50 PM	Rise 8:35 PM	
20	High	1:47 PM	5.1			
20	Low	6:46 PM	2.1			

Cheers, Bruce





May 3 & 4 Brannan Island State Park to Lundborg Landing

This has been one of the favorite events over the years. We will be launching from Brannan Island at 9 AM, and sailing on the cross Delta trip to Lundborg Landing on Bethel Island for an overniter. The Landing has great food, cold beer, nice people, and free berthing. The Landing also has a launch ramp and a campground for those not wanting to make the trip. I talked to Craig Lundborg the owner, and he sail we are always welcome.

Brannan Is.-Bethel Is. DELTA SAIL

Host: Jerry Barrilleaux

When: Saturday-Sunday, May 3rd & 4th (overnight on our boats) 9:00 AM Launch Time Saturday morning.

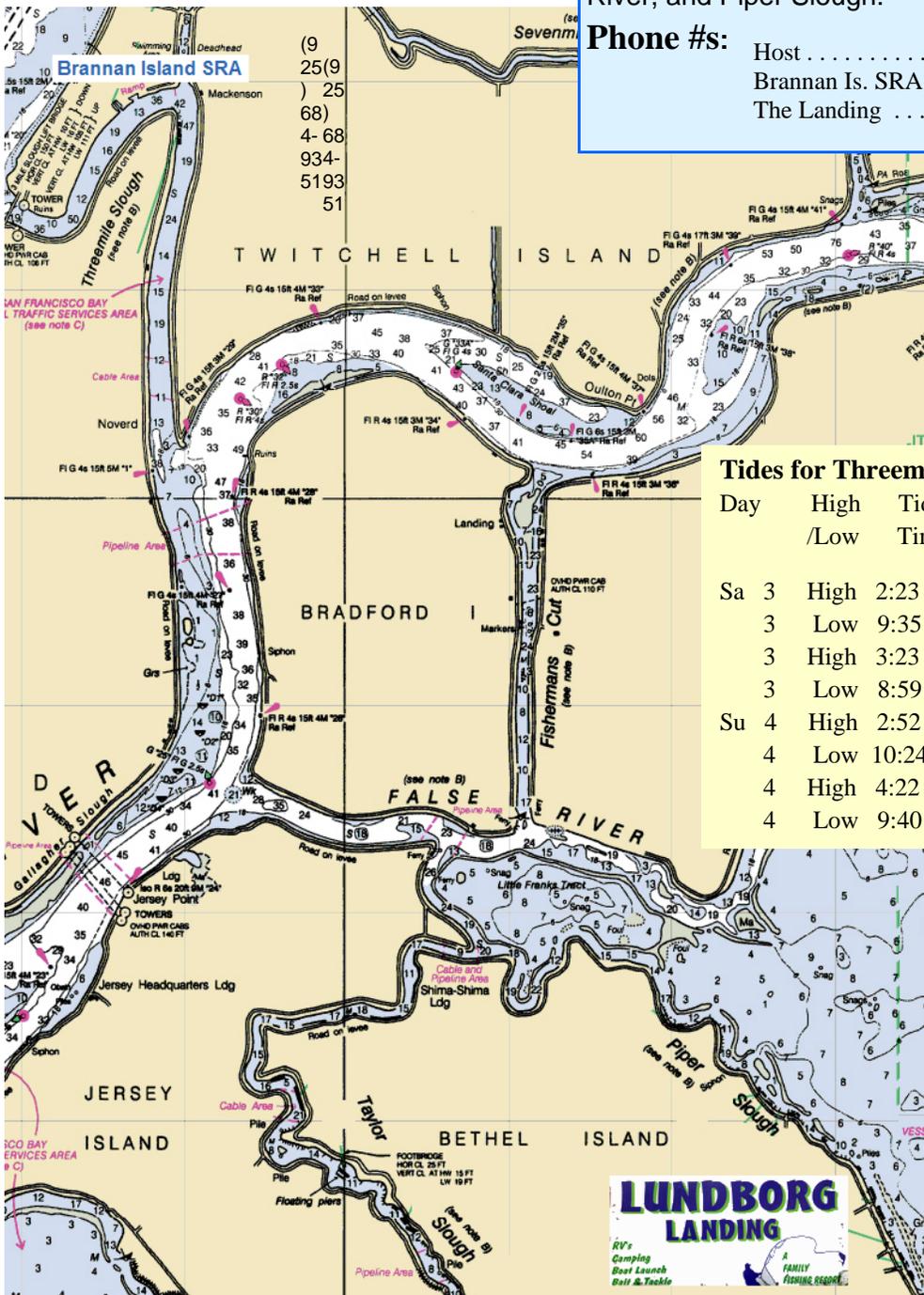
Where: Brannan Is. SRA, Hwy 160, Brannan Island, 100 yds north of the 3 Mile Slough Bridge)

Fees: launch \$5.00; day use \$5.00 per day (parking); camping \$15.00 (if you come up Friday night)

Meals: Sat. Lunch, dinner & Sun. breakfast at The Landing

Distance: 10.5 miles by way of Threemile Slough, False River, and Piper Slough.

Phone #s:
 Host 925-685-4577
 Brannan Is. SRA 916-777-6671 / 916-777-7701
 The Landing 925-684-9351



To get to Brannan Island State Park take Highway 4 over the Antioch Bridge, it turns into 160 continue a few miles and just after you cross the next bridge the entrance will be on your right. Tell the rangers you want launching and overnight parking. (around \$15.00)

Tides for Threemile Slough starting with May 3, 2008.

Day	High /Low	Tide Height Feet	Tide Time	Sunrise /Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Sa	High	2:23 AM	4.0	6:07 AM	Rise 4:39 AM	9
	Low	9:35 AM	-0.2	8:00 PM	Set 6:19 PM	
	High	3:23 PM	3.1			
	Low	8:59 PM	0.7			
Su	High	2:52 AM	4.3	6:06 AM	Rise 5:11 AM	3
	Low	10:24 AM	-0.4	8:01 PM	Set 7:37 PM	
	High	4:22 PM	3.2			
	Low	9:40 PM	1.0			

If you have any questions please give me a call Jerry Barrilleaux 925-685-4577

SEE YOU THERE!
Jerry



Jerry Barrilleaux teases us with these four photos of the relaxation that goes on at Brannan Is. (left) and Lundborg Landing.



(continued from page 7: Potters Venture Beyond)



we finally returned to the docks.

That evening at sunset, Harry re-visited the scene of the narrows at Bayfront Park where we had sailed through just hours before and took the photos below showing a dramatically different Westpoint narrows.

The fact that it is not too difficult to visualize these photos with one or more of our Potters lying on its side land-locked in the muddy ditch of the Westpoint narrows underscores the fun that we had in going where no Potter had gone before in our Great Greco Island Circumnavigation Adventure.





Patrick Brennan
1305 Webster St., C205
Alameda, CA 94501

Santa Cruz to Moss Landing. Postponed!

Sometime in early March, it was brought to the attention of your event host that the scheduled dates of April 5th and 6th coincided with the start of the Salmon fishing season. This means, in the words of our illustrious Commodore, t "there's no room at the inn" . . . In other words, there are no berths available at Moss Landing for the scheduled week-end.

To those planning on attending this event, please watch the Trailer Sailor West Wight Potter Forum for notice of new dates as more information becomes available. — Ed.