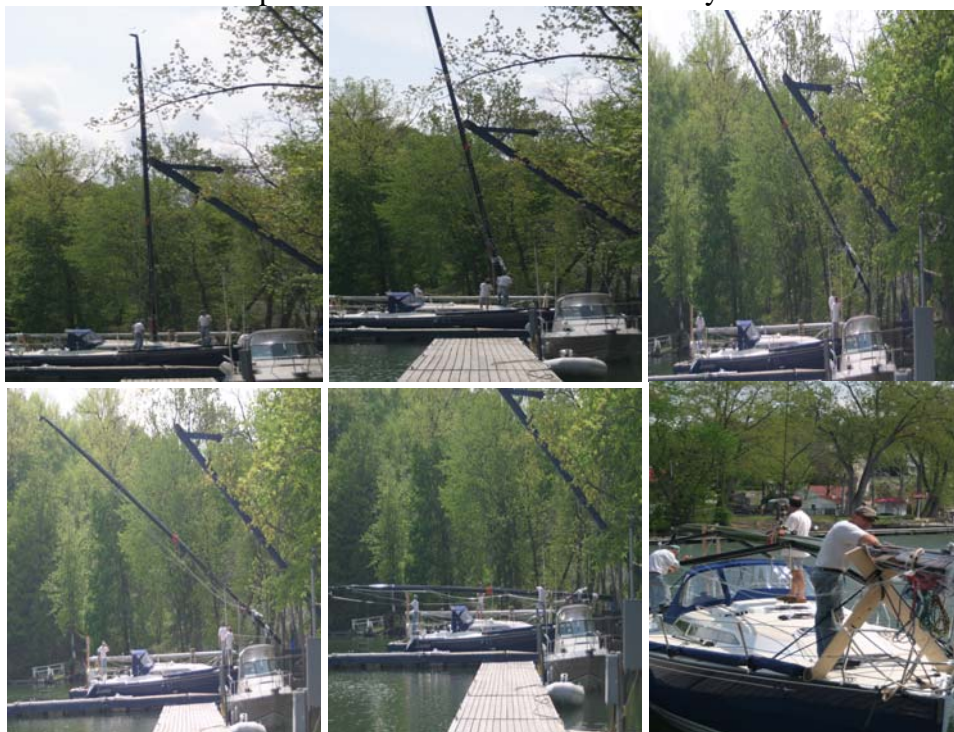


Journey From Annapolis: Catskill, NY to Plattsburgh

Although SOUVENIR is now safely docked at PBB and ready to sail again, I'd like to share with you the final leg of our journey from Annapolis. I also want to thank you for the very many positive comments about our travel log and Brian White for doing a great job posting the log on VSC's website.

At last printing, Kathy and I had docked SOUVENIR at Hop-O-Nose Marina in Catskill and were waiting to have the mast de-stepped. On Friday morning, Shawn, the 1-year owner of Hop-O-Nose, with his Laurel and Hardy type workers, after some discussion fit for a vaudeville show, did an excellent job attaching the crane to the mast at just the right lift point, lifting the mast out of SOUVENIR and placing it on the cradles they made for the deck of SOUVENIR. Kathy and I then finished the job of tying the mast securely to the cradle. The whole process took a little more than 3 hours. We then said our good-byes, left the marina at around 1:30 p.m. and headed north up the Hudson River towards Albany.



Approaching Albany on the river is always interesting particularly because Albany is Kathy and my primary home and work base. First, we pass the Port of Albany, located on both sides of the river, where the industrial section resides, cruising not more than 300 yards from dockside. There were a number of barges, small freighters and tugs at the port and lots of forklift activity at the adjoining warehouses, but certainly not the numbers you see in New York City. Then, as we round a starboard bend in the river, on portside the Albany skyline comes into view. Albany really looks grand from this vantage point. To starboard are the city of Rensselaer and the Albany Yacht Club. Some of Kathy's co-workers came down to the Yacht Club docks to greet us as we passed through. The Yacht Club was gracious enough to allow us to stop and chat for a short



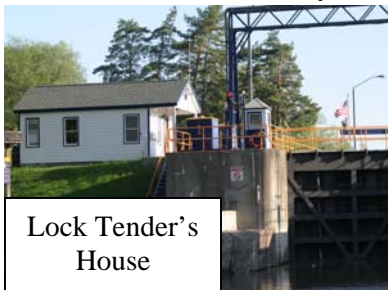
while. This is the same Yacht Club who had all their docks with boats still attached ripped from the riverside last year after an unusual storm caused excessive currents in the river. It must have been quite a sight to see the docks and boats tied together floating downstream. Their new docks are exceptional.

By now it was around 5:00 p.m. and we were anxious to get through the first lock of the canal system before it shut down for the day at 7:00 p.m. Our goal was to reach Kathy's former resident town of Waterford, located at the junction of the Erie and Champlain Canals. We were running low on fuel and had to make another stop before reaching the lock since the Yacht Club was not set up yet for diesel. So we said quick good-byes, chugged up the river a few miles to the Troy City Dock and filled our. We made it to the lock timely and to our destination just after sunset.



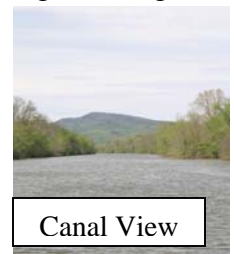
The Waterford city dock is located a short distance off the Champlain Canal on the approach to the first lock of the Erie Canal. It is an excellent facility in a neat waterfront park with free dockage to transients. After securing SOUVENIR, Kathy and I wandered into the town, found an excellent restaurant and pub named McCulties (or something like that), and chowed down on some upscale food choices. Their seafood gumbo was excellent!! We plan to return on another meal there. During the meal, we realized we had only two days left of vacation time and still had a long way to travel – through 12 locks of the Champlain Canal and up the length of Lake Champlain.

Generally, sailboats are not able to pass through all 12 locks in a single day. And since the lock were still on their abbreviated early season schedule of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. we had our doubts of making it through all in



Lock Tender's House

one day but, lo and behold we did! We left Waterford at the crack of dawn and hit most locks when the green light was on our side. The lock tenders made quick work getting us through each lock. The first nine locks were uphill. We entered each on the lowside and SOUVENIR would then rise with the water as the locks were filled – much like an elevator going up. It is fun to see the landscape around the locks appear as



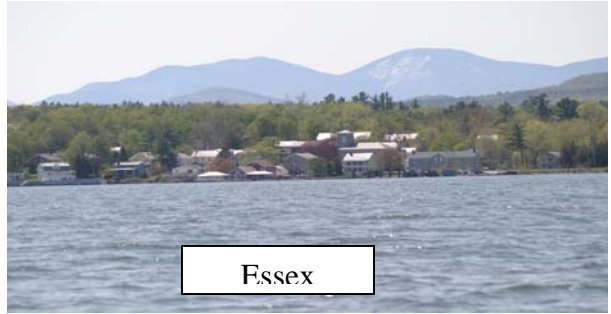
Canal View

our elevation increased. The last three locks were downhill, with the last lock letting us out at Whitehall about 5 minutes before 5:00 p.m.

Once again we were in need of fuel. Our tank holds only 26 gallons of diesel and lasts a little less than one full day of motoring. So we stopped at the Lock 12 Marina for fuel and noticed how very high Lake Champlain's water level is. Half their marina was under water! After fueling, we decided to continue until dusk with our goal of reaching Chapin Point Marina, some 20 miles up the Lake.

The southern part of Lake Champlain is extremely narrow, very much river like and swampy on both sides. The high water overflowed its banks and the whole area looked much like the bayous of Louisiana. We were looking for crocs in the swamp but decided the cold temps kept them away. We continued on our way and made it to our destination after dark, tying up on the marinas service dock.

The owner of Chapin Marina, a very nice older gentleman who looked very much like Santa Claus, greeted us early Sunday morning. He had hoped to step our mast, but, because of the high water and our 60' mast height, decided it was too risky a venture. He thanked us for stopping, waived charges for our use of the dock, and invited us to return. We left the marina with strong Northwest headwinds that created that familiar Champlain rough chop. By now the Lake was widening, with New York on our port and Vermont on starboard. To keep on the lee of the land for a smoother ride, we stayed on the New York side, passing Fort Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Westport, Essex, Willsboro Point and then saw the welcomed sight of Valcour Island. We once again noticed the very fine setting this Lake creates and what a great sailing venue this area truly is.



We made it to Plattsburgh as the sun was setting.

