



ST. SIMONS TO SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

From the Logs of the Knotty Dog 2013

ST. SIMONS - APRIL 2013

Sorry to say this but this stop was not one of my favorites, mostly because of the dog situation, the bugs, the strong current that runs by the dock and the isolation. Maybe there are no better options in the area but all I have to say is I couldn't wait to get on our way.

It's tricky coming in and leaving, trying to sort the markers out between the ocean entrance, the ICW markers and the marina channel markers. Everyone was getting confused as we heard them on the radio.

BUT - What we did like about the marina though were the dock people. They were exceptionally friendly and helpful and in the morning they bring you the morning paper and muffins with a big smile which almost made up for the bugs and dog issues.

We were surprised to wake up to thick fog so will be difficult seeing the confusing markers as we head out. Larry was anxious to leave this stop also mostly because of the biting bugs. Before he took Ziggy on the long walk to shore and the proper dog area, he put on a long sleeved shirt, long pants and socks even though it is 86 % humidity out. I laughed as he said he's now ready to go out and



battle the bugs with Ziggy. He's got terrible bites all over his arms.

We push off the dock in the current, no problem (which I was worried about as the current pushes



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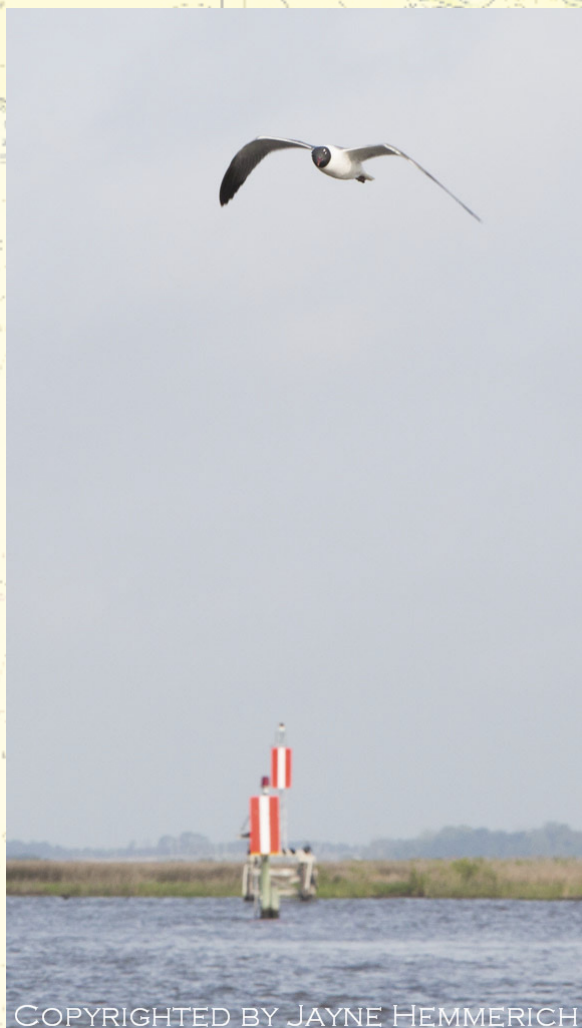
you so hard against the dock that I thought our fenders were going to flatten permanently) and as we head out the channel I dip our semi-flattened fenders like donuts into the brackish water to remove the muck that came in last night. It looked like a cruise ship had dumped there was so much and so thick. It was

really awful stuff.

We go very slowly searching and identifying the tricky markers in the fog. We make our way out being sure we get past green "1". It's so tempting to turn early before the last marker. It's actually kind of deceptive as you already see the markers for the ICW but must be patient and go all the way out to the end and then make a u turn back and into the ICW, back to "red on our left". As we get back into the ICW the fog lifts and we can see again and the day seems much better.

We go under a large bridge and soon are back into mile after mile of marsh lands, range markers and shallow waters. Many of the range markers are missing so you hope and search for maybe the resemblance of a pole that once had the familiar red and white stripe of a range marker on it and give it your best guess. If not, you just do your best and watch the depth with beads of sweat rolling down your neck as this trip today is notably the shallowest leg of the ICW. One thing I did read while writing this later is that none of the "stimulus money" was approved for dredging in this area because the spoil area for the dredging wasn't approved because it did not meet ecological standards. Guess they just forgot about updating the markers in that scenario.

We pass the cut to Hampton Marina. There's not much there either as another option for an overnight stay. Perhaps they don't have such a



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long walk to shore, but they are in the marshes so probably the bugs are even worse. We doubt the current would have been as bad as it was where we were last night. I think maybe we should have gone to Brunswick instead but that is quite a ways out of the way and if you have a long day facing you to Savanna you are better off where we were.

We pass a trawler anchored in a cut in the marsh. How can they stand being in there overnight with the bugs? I guess we just aren't used to them. Other people don't seem bothered or even mention the bugs.

Further up the ICW, we see another trawler coming out from a marshy anchorage and a sailboat going into one.

It's going to be a long day going through these narrow channels. There's lots of traffic out too. Right now we have a trawler and two sailboats to try to get around and another couple trawlers coming south. They are probably headed to Fernandino for the 60+ boat rendezvous.

Now going through Buttermilk Sounds. Best to traverse this whole route at mid tide and rising.

We pass a sailboat before a narrow channel. He

tells us on the radio to come on by and don't slow down (as there's not much room). Up ahead there's another narrow channel with two trawlers and a sailboat to pass. It's like a board game. It's a bit stressful with the narrow channel but also fun, a challenge. Back and forth we all go through the marshes as we all zig zag back and forth, back and forth and can only see the tops of masts or trawlers.

Birds are following the boats like we are shrimp boats and must surely have some snacks to throw out to them. Cormorants are perched on the markers watching us all go by. Cattle are grazing in the marsh to the left not even lifting a head to see what's happening on the waterway. There are no buildings in sight as it's all marsh land, no cars, no roads as the only way to get out here is by boat. We do pass a couple shacks that look like fish shanties.

Passing Rockdedundy Island. Love these names, what do they mean I wonder. Who named them and why these funny names?

We see another trawler ahead. It's the busiest we've seen it so far as we head north today. The migration of boats heading north is definitely on. We see a sailboat from Solomon's in the

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Chesapeake up ahead and the Canadians from Quebec that docked behind us last night. All the Canadians that we pass seem to be in a real rush to get home. You can just tell as they push it hard. They get into the docks late and head out early and don't stop to smell the roses now. Their seasons are so short that I'm sure that is why. Their boat is so small that it reminded me of 3 men in a tub.

Rub-a-dub-dub!
Three men in a tub,
And who do you
think were there?
The butcher, the
baker, the
candlestick maker,
Heading fast up the
ditch so all be-ware

Always 5 O'clock ,
another trawler is
ahead of us. We have
several long narrow
stretches to do so
will have to pull
back and be patient
then pass when it is
wider. We come to
what the chart calls
Little Mud River,

guess we don't have to wonder why they called that one. *Always 5 O'clock* is out of the channel and cutting the corners short, wow, taking some chances.

We see a shrimp boat by Doboy Island hovering by about the only house we've seen that looks habitable. There is a girl on the dock and looks like he came by to say hello.



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We're crossing Doboy Sound now. It's getting a little choppy. We're getting salt spray on the window and bow. We can see some fog out in the ocean. Three shrimp boats all lashed together are coming into the sound. We have never seen anything like that before. Wonder what's up?

Passed a few houses. First that we've seen. Must be getting close to some roads and civilization now.

Going by Little Sapelo Island and will be crossing Old Teakettle Creek soon.

You can almost count on the range markers being incomplete. We don't even question it anymore. Doesn't seem to be a problem though. The shrimp boats must know the area by heart as their drafts are deeper.

I give Larry a break for awhile. I get to take her through Hell's Gate. Thanks Larry! It was a little wild as the winds and seas picked up a bit at the entrance but just have to keep her in the channel and follow the markers. Last time we came through here it was foggy. That was scary.

Just before we got to Isle of Hope we thought we saw wild boar on an island just coming out Hell's Gate and up the channel a bit. There was a sign posted "NO HUNTING".

Tug for Two is ahead of us by Isle of Hope. We met them back in Fernandino. *Puddle Duck*, or *Three Men in a Tub*, as I like to call them, is behind us. We talk to them on the radio. They



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couldn't get any dock space in Savanna and are going to push it all the way to Hilton Head.

Yep, another storm is headed this way. We almost didn't get a slip because everyone was staying at the dock due to the storm. The storm is why we decided to push on to Savannah so we

wouldn't get stuck in a fish camp dock somewhere in the marshes in the rain for a few days. We were lucky to get some space at Thunderbolt. The dock master is squeezing us in. We stored Knotty Dog there last time for a few months while we went home. We will rent a car and enjoy Savannah for a few days.



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