

CRUISING NOTES FROM THE KEN & SHERRY DIETZ LOGBOOK

Editor's Note: Sherry has graciously provided us with these invaluable comments and observations that should be very useful to our cruisers. Please understand that these are the Dietz family's notes and are not meant as an "official" or solicited advertisement for the clubs or facilities in question! Good luck in your travels and we look forward to adding your thoughts to this excellent list.

Greenwich, CT: Old Greenwich Yacht Club

- Close to a lovely park with walking trails and great views of the Sound
- No "town" within walking distance; beach snack bar on the opposite side of the park
- No cost for mooring, but if you use the launch they ask for an "appropriate donation" for the launch driver [2009]
- Clubhouse has a nice deck, restrooms (did not see showers available for use)

Branford, CT: Branford Yacht Club

- Slips are \$90 per night and include hookups (power, etc.) [2009]
- Very nice clubhouse with spotless restrooms and showers that include soaps/shampoo
- 15-20 minute walk to town, which has charming old houses and a nice "Main St."
- Anchored with a few other sailboats outside the harbor [2010], behind Big Mermaid rock (enter left of the green day mark posted on the rock); water 8'-10' deep at low (shallower as you go up) and protected from all but southerly winds – had some occasional light boat wakes until 10pm then calm; watch for a 4' spot to the immediate west of the Big Mermaid (it's a granite rock – so give it room)
- Both the BYC and Brewer's next to it offer diesel (club is slightly cheaper usually) and water

Essex, CT: Essex Yacht Club

- Mooring for \$50 [2009]
- Lovely clubhouse with clean restrooms and showers; nice launches, lovely clubhouse
- Quaint town within easy walking distance; Griswold Inn from 1776 (food and entertainment), lovely old homes, shops, places to eat
- Club has restaurant service; on our visit, enjoyed their Memorial Day BBQ for a modest charge
- They charged everything back to KYC – so have your member number available
- NOTE: Essex Boat Works right next door is a good place to have those unexpected repairs done on the boat [www.essexboatworks.com, 860-767-8276]. We had a leaking stuffing box that they fixed in about an hour without an appointment during a holiday week. Pete was our technician – he was quick, professional, and took the time to explain the repair and provide maintenance tips to us. And they charged us a very fair price.

Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport

- Two bridges to traverse on the way up river (one railroad, one highway – one opens on demand, but the other is on a schedule – so it's important to check timing); seaport is within ½ mile of the last bridge on starboard side
- Recommend calling in advance to reserve if possible – dock master is only on site for an hour a day (12PM to 1PM), and is off on Tuesdays
- Slips only, no moorings and no anchoring; pricey, but a one-in-a-lifetime thing you have to do
- Very cute town within easy walking distance; shops, restaurants (including Mystic Pizza of movie fame – pizza is actually quite good)
- Restrooms and showers on site near the slips; basic but clean, near the workshops

Noank, CT: Spicer's Marina

- Slips \$2.50 per foot (minus a 25% Boat US discount) [2009]; floating concrete docks
- Small village with tiny general store
- Restrooms and showers available; billed as “Best on the Sound” – clean and fairly new but I wouldn't call them the best

Guilford, CT: Guilford Yacht Club

- Basically a “yacht-ominium” place; slips are \$3 per foot including power [2009]
- Very nice restroom and shower facilities with soap and shampoo provided
- Free wifi
- Yacht basin/marina area depths 8' at high tide; VERY quiet at night
- Channel is VERY shallow, particularly at low tide, and has some shoaling; we left at low, and saw 5' on the depth meter in the middle of the channel – if you have a deeper draft boat, wait for high tide to go in and out
- Approximately a 1.5 mile walk to town from the marina
- Town has a gorgeous “green” and charming shops, restaurants; 19th century homes
- Diesel available at Brown's, across the channel from GYC
- Whitfield House: museum, oldest home in New England (1639), available for tours on Wed, Sat, and Sun

Bridgeport, CT: Black Rock Yacht Club

- Moorings \$45 per night [2009]
- Some boat traffic at night (some rocking)
- In a residential neighborhood – no real “town” within walking distance
- NOTE: Dropped anchor in the harbor outside Black Rock later the same season. There was plenty of space and good holding, but it was a rough ride as there is not much protection from the wind and it can turn you contrary to the currents

City Island, NY: Harlem Yacht Club

- Mooring \$30 [2009]; launch driver messed up our placement so we had to drop and pick up another
- Decent club house with restaurant and bar; restrooms and showers in fair condition
- Pretty much right in town; some shops, several restaurants in walking distance, IGA grocery store
- Most of the nicer things are south on City Island Ave.
- Rough ride in the anchorage – many boats, jet skis, etc. zooming through, as well as Southwest winds (little protection in that direction)
- Convenient departure point for the Hell Gate (90 minutes away motoring)

Shinnecock Bay via Shinnecock Inlet

- Had no trouble entering the inlet; some waves at the mouth, and some commercial boat traffic, but nothing terrible
- Channel is decently marked
- Make a hard 90 degree left turn after passing the end of the inlet (pass the fishing fleet); you'll have 20-30' of water here and until you turn right (north) near the Coast Guard station where we saw 6' one hour past low tide
- Anchored at the edge of the bay in 7-8' of water; good holding
- Extremely quiet and peaceful, little to no boat traffic just up from the Coast Guard station
- Oakland's Marina (near the fishing fleet) has diesel and water

Block Island, RI: Block Island Boat Basin (Great Salt Pond)

- We visited during a shark tournament, so no moorings were available
- Slip \$4 per foot plus \$20 for 30amp electrical service [2009]
- Restaurant, bar, bike rentals right on shore
- Aldo's bakery for a bear claw (they deliver by boat in the Pond early in the morning)
- Rent a bike (\$30 for the day) and see the island – easy to do it all in a day (though it is hilly); see the Southeast Light and the bluffs
- Cute town (many 18th century buildings) has boutiques, shops, restaurants/cafes, post office, museum

Port Judith Harbor of Refuge:

- Anchorage with good holding
- Don't anchor too close to the west breakwater – the fog horn is LOUD and incessant when it is on (bring earplugs)
- Some weird currents swirling in the harbor, but not uncomfortable or dangerous for anchoring

Cuttyhunk, MA: Cuttyhunk Town Marina

- No launch service, so if you don't have a dinghy you'll need to get a slip – which we had to do at the time; \$2 per foot Monday through Thursday plus \$20 for power [2009]
- At low tide, we did stick to the bottom a bit (we draw 4'6") in the slip, but it was easy to break free with the application of some throttle – will do a mooring next time (plenty deep out there)
- Moorings appear to fill fast on busy days; tie to the top of the mooring, which has a post atop with a ring in which to attach your line. Harbormaster comes through on a boat in the evening to collect payment
- "Town" is tiny, and right near the docks; tiny grocery, pizza place/restaurant with outdoor tables, B&B up on the hill with breakfast available to non-guests
- Great place to walk – almost no cars, charming old homes; climb to the top of the hill for 360 degree views, and a great look at Martha's Vinyard
- Town docks include several stalls with vendors, including a fisherman who will sell you fresh seafood he caught that day (had scallops right off the boat: huge, not cheap, but worth it), and a raw bar that also delivers via boat in the mooring field in the late afternoon
- Showers not available in the harbor
- Girl selling pastries at the dock early in the morning – recommend the Blueberry Buckle if offered

Sakonnet Harbor: Sakonnet Marina/Town Harbor

- Ducked in here only for a few hours to ride out a thunderstorm that blew up en route to Newport
- Called Sakonnet Marina – guys there gave us the number for the Harbormaster, who gave us permission to pick up one of the two available town moorings (no charge) to ride out the storm. He offered us the mooring for the night at no charge if we wanted it.

Newport, RI: Ida Lewis Yacht Club

- Mooring \$65 [2009]
- Nice launches and clubhouse; restrooms and showers clean and nicely maintained; food available during our visit (Independence Day BBQ type thing)
- No need to describe Newport's features – it has everything! – and all in walking distance from the club
- Recommend the Thai restaurant on Thames St. – very good food and reasonable
- Diesel available at Newport Yacht Center

Fishers Island: Fishers Island Yacht Club

- Slip \$3 per foot plus \$5 for electric [2009]; moorings available at another club on the island, but at the time we had no dinghy (no launch available)
- Harbor is calm as a lake
- Restroom and showers available; clean and basic
- Town is a short walk away – walk out the back of the club, then turn left at the baseball field; post office, shops, cafe
- For grocery and liquor store, turn right at the baseball field
- New London ferry available at the west end of the island if you are so inclined

Milford, CT: Milford “Gulf” (behind Charles Island)

- Nice anchorage, good holding, protection from all but the Southeast; very peaceful, although several other boats were also anchored there

Sea Cliff, NY (Long Island north shore): Sea Cliff Yacht Club

- Mooring \$45 [2009]; nice launch, club house, remodeled restroom and showers for ladies (men’s was “due”)
- Not much going on in town, which is a short walk from the club
- Totally wide open anchorage to the north – VERY rough ride on the mooring with any amount of northerly wind

Stratford, CT: Housatonic Boat Club

- A hidden gem! Moorings are free for other yacht club members if you want to stay just a few hours for lunch or whatever; \$20 for overnight [2009]
- Launches are small but adequate
- Club house is very nice; offers restrooms but only outdoor showers
- Recommend Umberti’s for fish and chips (short walk from the club – turn right out the parking lot and walk for about 10 minutes...the folks at the club can give you more details)

Sachems Head, CT: Joshua Cove

- Just east of the Thimbles; great view of them at sunset
- Nice anchorage with good hold and protection from all but the southwest; 8’ of water fairly far into the cove

New London, CT: New London Town Moorings

- Up the Thames river a bit, port side just past the GE Electric Boat plant; industrial area with ferry traffic, but a surprisingly calm anchorage and pleasant view of the lights at night
- Group of about 10 town-provided moorings; no launch, must have dinghy to get to shore (dingy dock provided); \$35, collected via boat at 8AM [2009]
- Restrooms and very nice showers available (combination for lock in September 2009 was 341256)

- There are some shops and restaurants near the dock, but no grocery store that we could find in walking distance

New London, CT: New London Town Moorings *(continued)*

- Amtrak station right near the dock (some train horns, but they stopped by 10PM)
- Recommend the Mexican restaurant right across from the train station – can't remember the name, but excellent authentic Mexican food and cold cerveza
- Thamesport Marina near the mouth of the river provides diesel, water, pump-out and trash disposal. Near this marina on shore is a little place called "Ma and Me," which offers excellent breakfast sandwiches.

Dutch Island Harbor, RI: Dutch Harbor Boat Yard (same island as Jamestown, but other side)

- Mooring \$50 [2009]; includes launch service, which runs only to 9PM (after Labor Day, to 7PM)
- They monitor channel 69; accept credit cards for payment right from the launch
- Very calm and quiet anchorage for the most part; can get choppy if winds from the west blow over 10kts
- Short walk across the island to Jamestown, which is the "bustling" side of the island and has all the shops, cafes, and ferry to Newport; marine stores available, old-fashioned hardware store

Old Lyme, CT: Old Lyme Dock Company

- Just past the Old Lyme railroad bridge (with the most entertaining bridge operator ever) on the starboard side going up-river; biggest American flag I've ever seen, impeccable facility
- After Labor Day, we paid \$35 for space at the dock with power [2009]; moorings also available
- Offer diesel and water; pump-out available next door at the CT DEP facility (opens 10AM), or by hailing the pump-out boat
- Rip-roaring current in the river, but smooth
- Very nice restrooms and showers

Milford, CT: Milford Landing Marina

- All transients, floating docks, very nice facility with laundry room, morning coffee and newspaper; clean restrooms and showers
- \$2 per foot after Labor Day, \$2.50 before, plus \$7.50 for electric
- Pretty town just a block from the docks; restaurants, shops, post office, town green/park with mill pond
- "Taste of Thai" restaurant about 2 blocks from the marina; 10% discount if you show you are staying at the marina (good food to boot)

- Metro North train station a short walk away

Manhasset Bay (Long Island, north shore): Town of West Hempstead

- Free town moorings available, first come/first served basis, just north of buoy 3A
- Town water taxi available from there if you need to go ashore (may be small charge – we did not use)
- Free pump-out available at the town dock on the far east end of the anchorage; town police also have a small office there if you need assistance (they can direct you to the free moorings)
- Roughly 2 hours from here to the Hell Gate

Oyster Bay, NY (Long Island, north shore): Sagamore Yacht Club

- Mooring \$50 [2010]; launches in fair condition
- Club facility is nice, restrooms and showers very nice; restaurant and bar, offering Saturday dinners and Sunday breakfast; ice on the expensive side (\$3/bag)
- Town just a few blocks away; small but with some cute shops, restaurants, drug store, galleries, popular-looking ice cream place
- Sagamore Hill Historic Site is a two mile walk (better if you anchor near the east side of the bay and dinghy over to an available pier there); run by the National Park Service, and beautifully preserved – take the tour

Northport, NY (Long Island, north shore): Northport Harbor

- There are several marinas in the area with moorings, but we chose to anchor (at the edge of the mooring field); good holding, nice moderate depths (10-12')
- Water is clean and pleasant for swimming in the bay
- Seymore's Marine Service offers diesel, water, trash/recycling receptacles
- Town dock, just past Seymore's, allows for two-hour tie-ups
- Town is right next to the harbor, small but charming with many shops, restaurants, post office, drug store
- Recommend Tim's Shipwreck Diner on the main street for breakfast – enormous egg sandwiches (no pork roll, but still good!) and kitschy décor.
- Band shell in the waterfront park has free concerts on Thursday nights

Port Jefferson, NY (Long Island, north shore): Setauket Yacht Club

- Mooring \$45; located at the foot of the harbor, nice launches, small clubhouse
- Restrooms and showers in the lower level; clean and in good condition (requires pass code to enter)
- Pump out barge in the harbor – just tie up and pump out (manual pump)
- Very nice town, right at the docks. Many shops, galleries, restaurants, banks, post office, CVS drug store, small grocery, used book store

- Recommend Z Pita for lunch or dinner, right on Main St; huge portions, reasonable prices, Mediterranean/Greek/Italian selections, offer beer and wine, open 7 days, casual
- Ferry to Bridgeport and large power-plant (with American flag painted on the side) nearby, but the harbor was quiet and calm

Old Saybrook, CT: North Cove

- West side of the river just past the Dock-n-Dine
- Channel 6' at its shallowest; deeper in the basin
- Pick up any mooring sporting a yellow flag/streamer – free! Check the mooring weight, painted on the ball, to make sure you get one sufficient for your boat (they start at 100lb and go up to 500lb)
- If you need a launch, the North Cove Yacht Club will provide service (fee); there is a nice town dock where you can tie your dinghy right next to the club
- Very tight mooring field, but had no trouble; very secluded and peaceful
- Town of Old Saybrook is only a couple blocks walk from the waterfront; shops, restaurants, grocery, post office, bank, Katharine Hepburn Cultural Center (free concerts Wed. nights), farmer's market Wed. and Sat. mornings.

East Hampton, NY (Long Island, Gardner's Bay): Three-Mile Harbor

- At mid-tide, the channel carries 12' of water; at low, 8.3' was lowest we saw
- Beautiful, large, secluded anchorage with good holding and protection in just about all directions
- Town moorings available on far western edge of the harbor (looked like half-dozen or so); did not use

Sag Harbor, NY (Long Island, Gardner's Bay): Sag Harbor Marine Park (town facility)

- Mooring \$2 per foot, includes use of launch/water taxi to shore, use of restroom/shower facility ashore (clean and basic)
- High-class little town (Billy Joel supposedly has his house on the water), and enormous motor yachts in the marinas and at anchor; numerous shops, grocery, restaurants/cafes, bars, hardware, post office
- You can also anchor outside the breakwater; we saw 70'+ yachts at anchor, so the hold must be pretty good! Since the harbor itself is pretty secluded, I assume the ride at anchor outside the breakwater isn't too bad.
- Town provides free pump out boat.
- Suggest visiting the First Customs House and neighboring Whaling Museum (get a combo ticket for just around \$8).

Dering Harbor, NY (Long Island, Gardner's Bay): Town Dock

- On northern side of Shelter Island
- Take the east side of the entrance channel – shoaling on west side; once in, the channel shallows to around 6' in places

- Town dock allows for two-hour tie ups if you want to walk around the town, which is tiny and offers a couple restaurants/cafes, a hardware store, gas station, post office
- Diesel available at neighboring facility in harbor; getting rid of trash requires you to purchase a trash bag from the town
- Shelter Island Yacht club in the harbor; we did not visit

Southport, CT: Pequot Yacht Club

- Bahamian moorings (aft and stern tie); was not charged [2010] but not sure if that's typical
- Gorgeous clubhouse and well maintained launches (staffed by extremely friendly and helpful drivers); the "club cat" wanders the property, very friendly
- Clubhouse offers a reasonably priced lunch in their beautiful dining room
- Restrooms and showers clean and basic
- Town of Southport is BEAUTIFUL: loads of 17th/18th century homes and churches, charming little shops and grocery, florist, pizza place, drug store, old fashioned barber; all located within easy walk of the club; golf course adjacent the mooring field opposite the club
- Metro North station in town
- Club offers diesel/gasoline, water, pump-out, trash/recycling at dock to transients

Bayside, NY (Long Island, north shore): Little Neck Harbor

- Last NY-side bay before the Throg's Neck bridge
- Anchored just outside the Bayside Marina mooring field (attempted to hail them repeatedly on July 4th and got no response); some power boat wakes until after dark, then fairly calm water
- Good holding, depths 8'-10' near western shore; some "city noise" due to highway on shore
- Good jumping-off point for Hell Gate – about an hour away motoring