

Gouk's Excellent Adventures Part 2

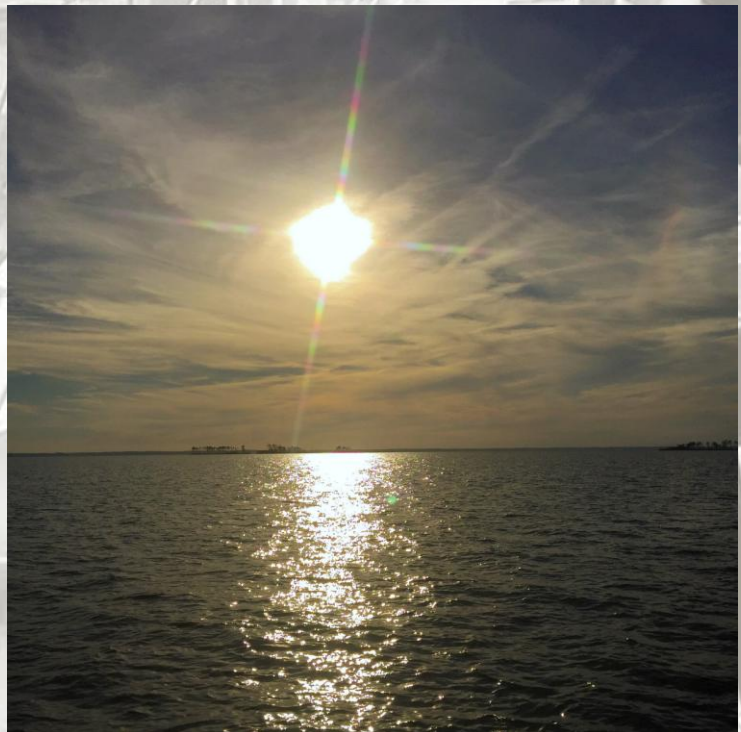
Taylor's Island Tuesday, October 11, 2016

Departed Georgetown Yacht Basin, Maryland at 7:15 a.m. and made a nice long day of it, arriving at Taylor's Island, Little Choptank River, Delaware at 5:30 p.m. Fueled up along the way. Our intention is to ensure our tank is always full in the event that there are issues getting fuel further south after Matthew. The fuel line has gone from seeping to dripping to the inevitable constant stream and we have quite a supply of diesel in the bilge.

If the weather does what it is supposed to it looks like we should get three good days in a row to travel all day and hopefully reach Norfolk and hold up there for a while.

I missed a great shot, a bald eagle flew right by the bow just a few feet away and decided in mid stream to open his wingspan and hover for a second, unbelievable. I gasped with delight which Wallace mistook for a holy crap gasp...he just about had a stroke. Sorry Wallace and sorry, no picture.

Coast Guard issued a warning about a 42 ft. sailboat that sunk in Weems Creek with just the mast above water. Tons of crab traps everywhere, but we did the slalom course and avoided all hazards and arrived to this beautiful sun.



If you squint your eyes, you can almost imagine these are palm trees



So a rum and coke for the captain, rye an coke for me followed by a much needed shower. Thanks god it is just the two of us, I'm sure we are somewhat pungent.



Another gorgeous sunset



Piankatank River October 12, 2016

Left at sunrise headed to Piankatank River, Stone Point Neck, Maryland.



OMG look at what we saw, Pelicans. Another first for me. There had to be 20 of them coming down to feed. They look quite elegant in flight but about a foot above the water they just stop moving, like they've given up, and kerplunk/splash into the water.





Portsmouth, VA October 13, 2016

Firstly, happy anniversary to my wonderful husband. We were married one year ago today and in one way it seems like a million years ago and in others it's been the blink of an eye. What an amazing year we have had and we've only just begun.



We left Taylor's Island and headed towards Norfolk VA at sunrise. It was foggy for most of the morning and I got a lesson how to display the radar overlay and decipher what I was seeing.

It surprises me more each day the number of coast guard announcements; sunken vessels, overturned row boats, unmanned vessels, and floating debris. It reminds you that you have to stay alert as you can be easily mesmerized by the water and zone out.

Arrived at Hampton Roads/Portsmouth and secured a free dock for the night. Our backyard:



Portsmouth: If you stop here there are two basins with free docks and a small anchorage however no grocery store , laundry, or fuel etc. There is a coffee shop with free wifi.

The next morning two woman dropped by and we were asked to leave the dock as it was reserved for the end point of a schooner race. As Wallace had the fuel system apart, we weren't going anywhere. So the ladies, Brenda and Linda arranged with the powers that be and we were allowed to dock with the schooners. If you know Wallace, you know how engaging he is and we went from being vacated to joining in with the schooner chanty sing a long party in the evening. Neither of us new any of the songs, but hey, they had champagne and rum.

It was fun getting off the boat at high tide, Wallace had to piggy back me.



One of the schooners was When and If, owned originally by General George S. Patton:



Young lady up the mast





A confusing mess of lines and a broken boom



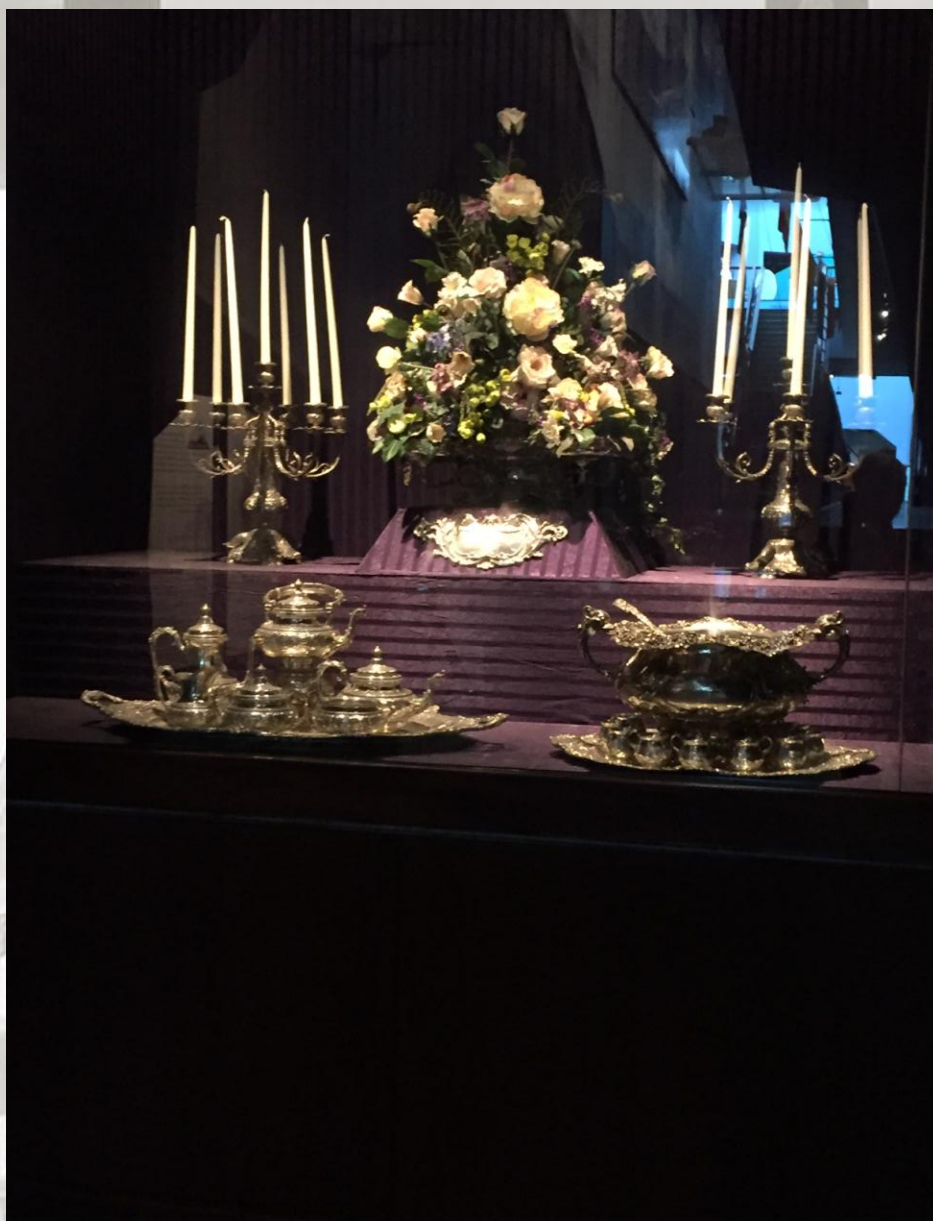
That's us way in the back

We took the ferry from Portsmouth across the river to see the Wisconsin and visit the museum.



Big Guns (I mean Wallace not the ship)





USS Wisconsin Silver

Cause very battleship needs a silver setting

16.5 million dollar boat (and Wallace eying a mermaid)

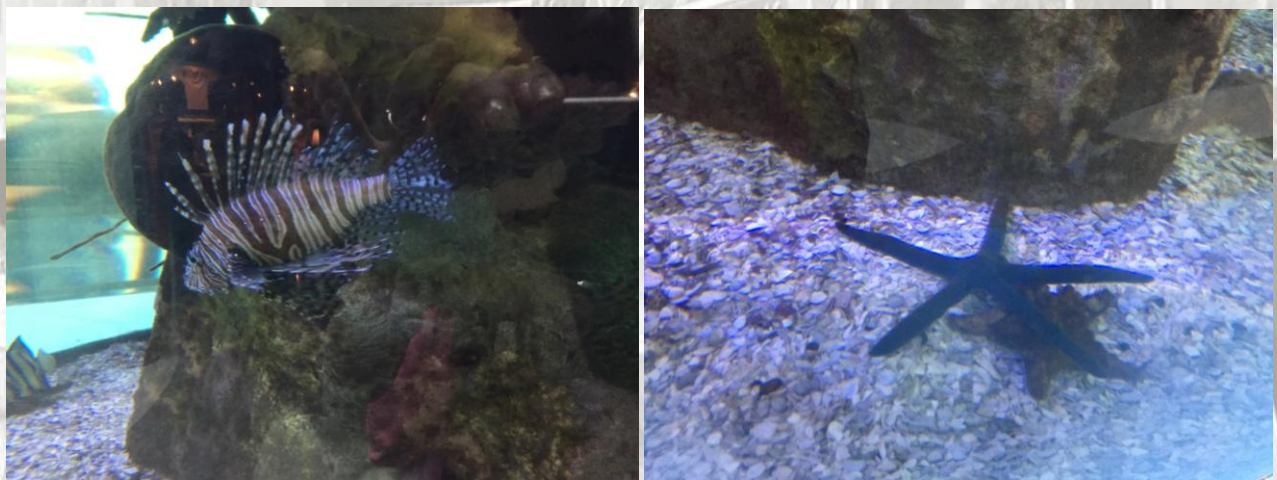


Why you would name it SKAT is beyond me. Those are his two jet skis on top

Wallace got his mermaid



From the museum's aquarium





For our bench collection



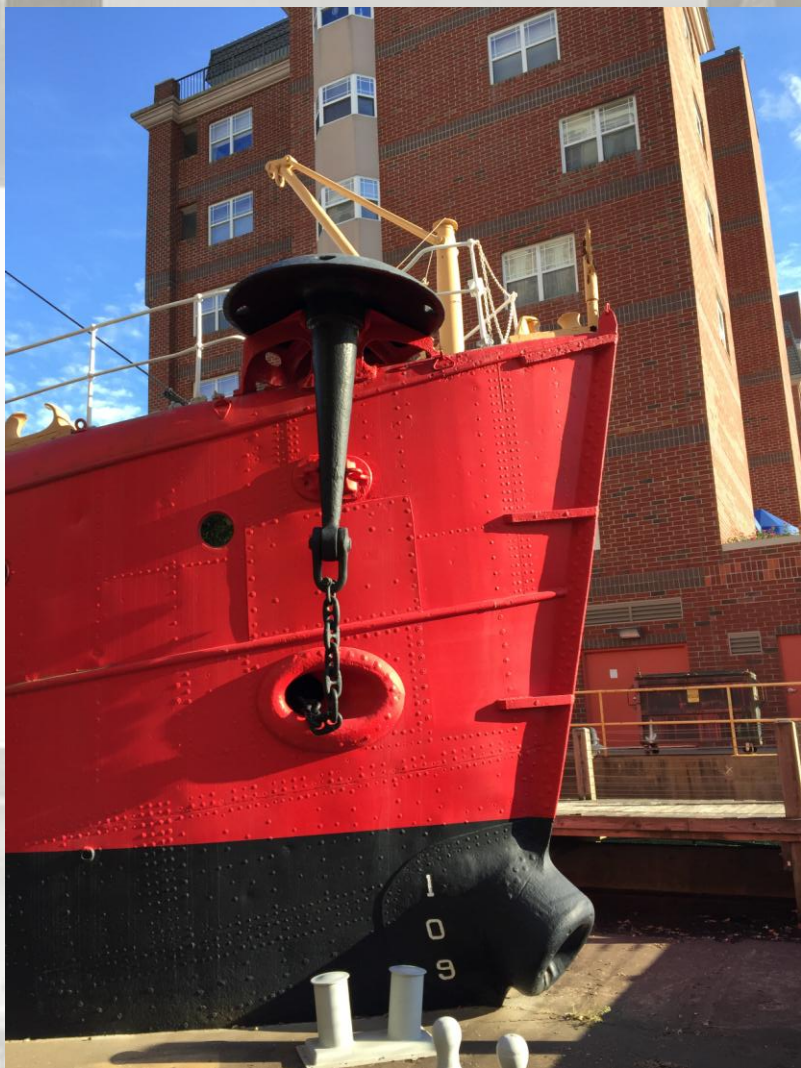
Around Portsmouth:





Lightship Portsmouth

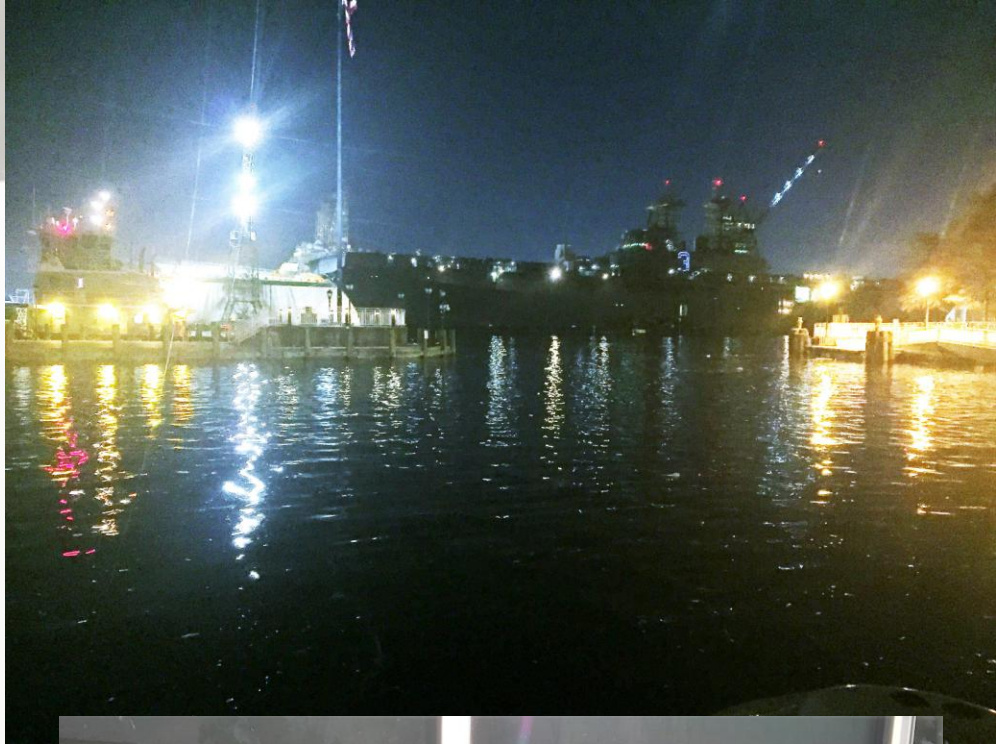
Lightships were floating lighthouses anchored at entrances to ports, bays and outer limits to off-lying danger areas. They served as aids to navigation.





FIRST ORDER FRESNEL LENS
from the HOG ISLAND LIGHT







The Julie Anne

Great Bridge October 15th

Departed Portsmouth headed for Great Bridge.

We passed the Dismal Swamp by as it remains closed after Hurricane Matthew and heard third hand that Robert Peake said it won't open again until next spring. We still plan to backtrack a bit and go to Elizabeth City, apparently it's not that far out of our way. Wallace wants us to go to a movie dinner theatre there.

We did the huge lock with at least 15 other boats so it was slow going but made it in time to get space on the free dock where we stayed for two nights. Great walk to town where they had everything you could possibly need: laundry, good grocery store, dollar store, smoke shop, fast food, Mexican restaurant and a Chili's restaurant. Pretty much everything you could ever want in one place.

Bought cigarettes at a price we haven't seen in years.

You can almost afford to start smoking again



We were serenaded in the afternoon by the song of the mockingbirds, the sun was out and it was a true summer's day.

Met Ted on a Cherubini Trawler, Slow Hand, who rafted off us as the docks on both sides of the bridge were full. This was our new backyard:



Blue Crabs, caught off the pier we were on (not ours)



What dirt people see when the bridge goes up

Got all the laundry done and the grocery store was kind enough to freeze our meat order for us for pick up in the morning. Luckily when we went back we met Wesley in the line-up and he offered to drive us back to the boat. I'm sure he felt sorry for us trying to stuff a mountain of frozen meat in our knap sacks. But...I think we finally filled the freezer to the max, it is bigger than it looks.

Met a group of cruisers who were part of a convoy following Wally Moran, a noted cruiser (?) to Florida. They all paid \$850 to travel with him. Had to laugh, I asked three

people where they were going and they all had different answers. They have a meeting each night and get the next leg of their trip laid out for them - so next they do Coinjock.

The bridge lifts here every hour and we loved watching the parade of boats pass by.



My favourite

There is lots of flooding still evident in the rivers.



Coinjock October 18th

Left this morning for a dock in Coinjock with the hopes that all is well there. They have a hot tub and a pool there but when we arrived they advised us that it is winter and the pool is closed for the season; and they were fully booked for the night. So we went across the river to the Coinjock Marina fueled up and paid for the evening. Our fuel system didn't leak one drop, finally fixed.

*Coinjock Marina is \$.75 per foot per night.
Power, water, showers, laundry and restaurant.*

Elizabeth City October 19th

Departed Coinjock and arrived in Elizabeth City.

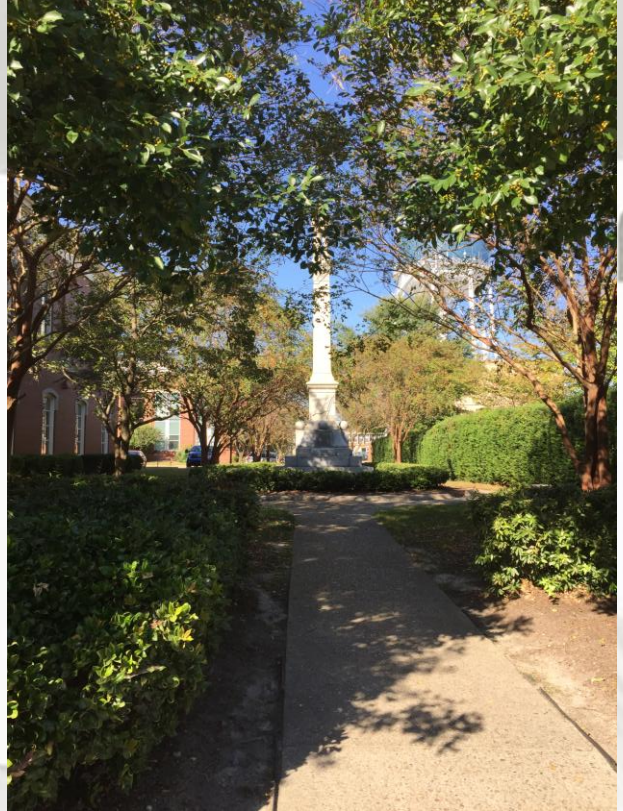


The movie dinner theatre is closed down now and has been for several years, so much for that romantic evening. A lot of the town is closed and vacant, but the waterfront is lovely and boater friendly. There was a rosebud welcome in the afternoon where the visitors centre tourism gal, Kate, welcomed everyone with a rose for the ladies, a fly swatter for the men and wine, beer, cheese and chicken strips. We were among the group of boats travelling together again here, packed every slip.

*Elizabeth City is a free dock. There is no power, but there is water and free wifi.
The wifi reception is poor at the dock but if you take our laptop to the bakery
or adjoining park it works well.*

A walk around Elizabeth City







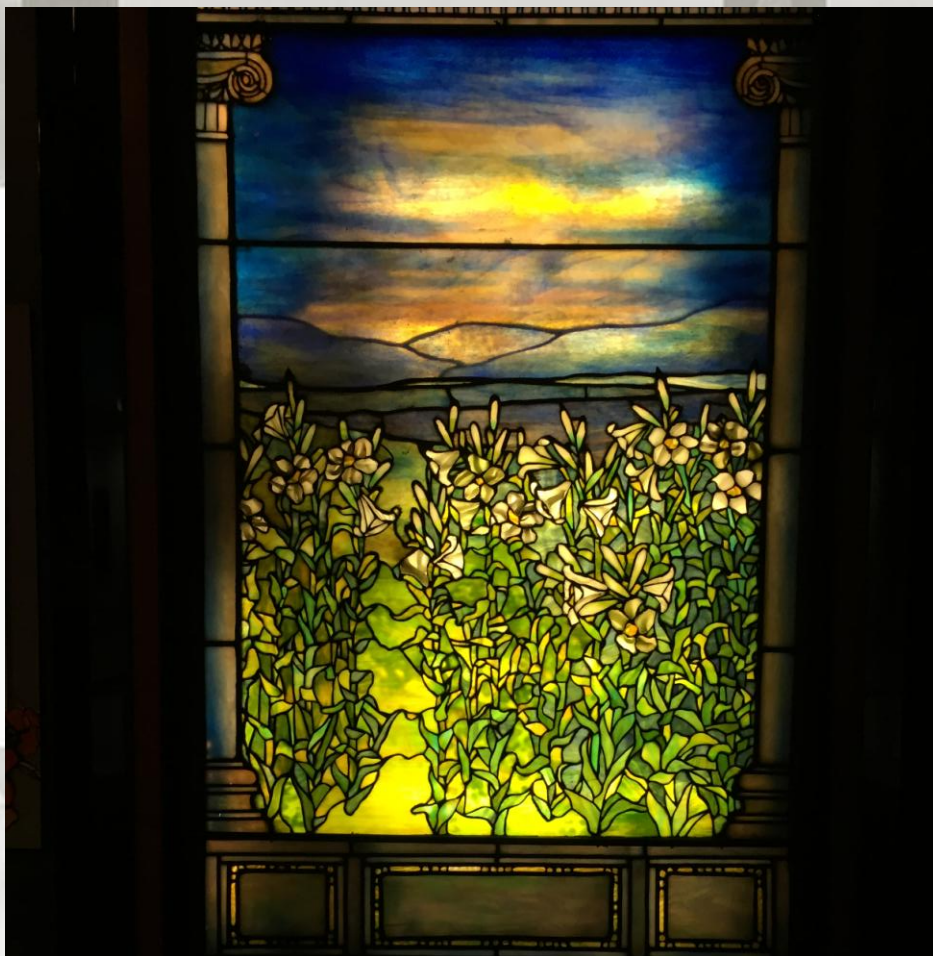
MUSEUM OF THE ALBEMARLE





Shad Boat





Tiffany Stained Glass



**Ladies, do you remember the old Toni perms we used to have,
well check out this permanent wave machine circa 1930**

We dined at the seafood place the first night for Wallace and Sydney's Bistro the second day for me. Rode the bikes in search of fuel filters, but none of the five automotive stores in town carried what we needed.



Wallace arranged a book exchange with the boater group and we managed to get a half a dozen new books. That should keep Wallace busy for a couple of weeks. The weather is warm and sunny and it is nice to get the cushions out and use the cockpit again.

All is good in Wally World.

End of this post....

Georgetown Basin, Sassafras River, Maryland

Spent three nights here at anchor. Lovely spot right by a beach with lots of wildlife. Watched a heron chase a Cormorant off a mooring ball right next to us and a Cormorant catch and wrestle to eat a fish.



We stayed on board for the first two days as the winds were too high to try and get the dinghy off the cabin top. It was rainy most of the first two days and a bit cool so we warmed the place up by baking brownies and cooking some (whisky) ribs.



No sunset, but still a beautiful sky here.



The hatch still leaks, aaahhh !!! Went to town on day three, Galena, and found a canvas shop at the Georgetown Yacht Basin. We ordered a hatch cover that was ready in an hour and hopefully that will fix the problem and keep out some of that sun that we are anxiously looking forward to.



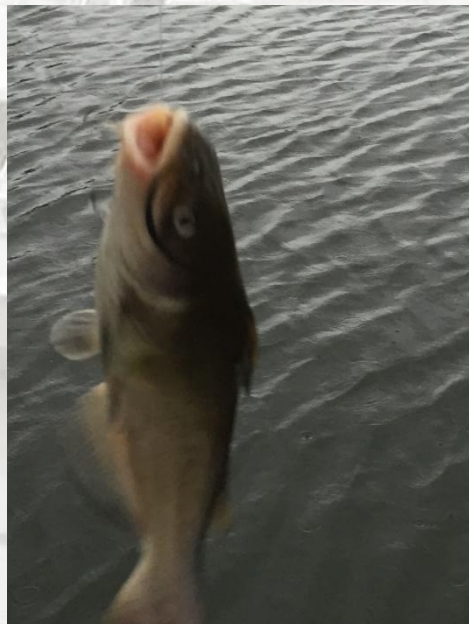
Did some grocery shopping and Debbie, the proprietor, drove us back to the dinghy with the load. The Americans along the way have been extremely hospitable.

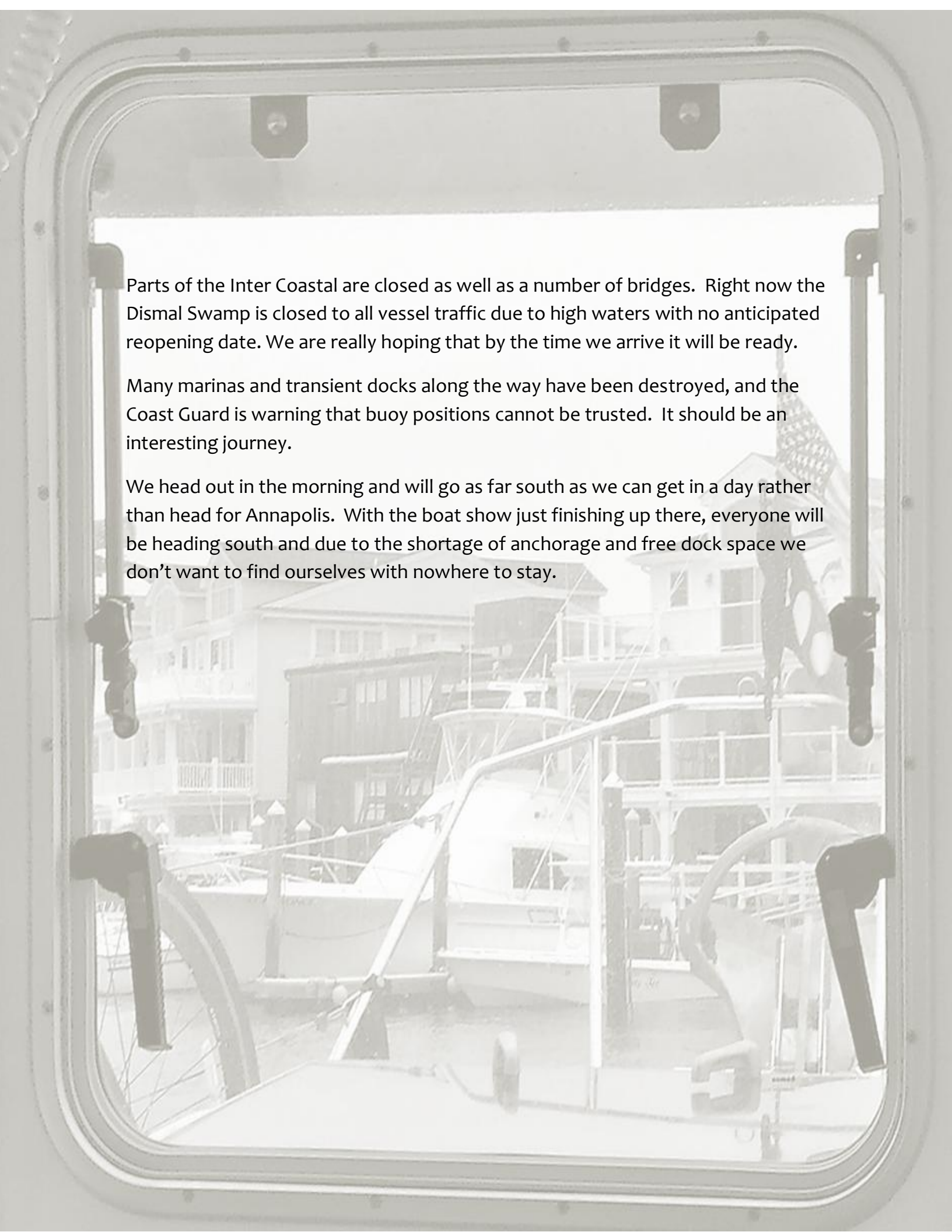
No words can describe this find!



It seems I will get to see a bit more colour in the foliage as we are still far enough north and things are starting to turn.

We caught our first fish. Wallace says it's a Channel Catfish.





Parts of the Inter Coastal are closed as well as a number of bridges. Right now the Dismal Swamp is closed to all vessel traffic due to high waters with no anticipated reopening date. We are really hoping that by the time we arrive it will be ready.

Many marinas and transient docks along the way have been destroyed, and the Coast Guard is warning that buoy positions cannot be trusted. It should be an interesting journey.

We head out in the morning and will go as far south as we can get in a day rather than head for Annapolis. With the boat show just finishing up there, everyone will be heading south and due to the shortage of anchorage and free dock space we don't want to find ourselves with nowhere to stay.



Let the adventure continue...

