

# The Shakedown Cruise -- October 20-21, 2004

## October 20, 3:00 pm:

After a couple of weeks fiddling with the boat, and finding a new rig to tow it, my nephew and I finally took it for a cruise. We put it in at Edmonds, Washington and drove it through fairly heavy chop to Gig Harbor, about 40 miles South. We took it easy, and got there in about 2 hours running time, with a stop at his boat to pick up an alcohol stove. Got into Gig Harbor about 6, just as it was getting dark.



The boat's being prepared for launch with a hoist that runs on a track. The operation took about five minutes.

The tow truck is a 2001 Dodge 4x4 "Quad Cab," for which I traded in my Concorde and my Mazda pickup, which couldn't handle the weight of the boat in tow. The truck is a sweetheart, and as comfortable to drive as the Concorde.

Here we're doing about 20 mph over about a 2-foot chop. The boat could run at its top speed (about 30) in this chop, but there were heavy swells in the area, caused by ferry traffic. 20 was a good, comfortable speed.

The canvas cabin provided ample standing headroom over an area of about 7x10 feet, and was completely dry and warm even in the heavy rains that came that night. This was a relief for me, as I had first been looking for a hard-top boat.



I went for this one because of its pristine condition and the pair of 4-stroke Honda outboards. These outboards are known for their reliability, quietness and fuel efficiency. The boat can handle more horsepower, but I don't need it for the speeds I prefer (20-30 knots).



Here we're doing about 25.  
Those Hondas never missed a  
beat.

Entering Gig Harbor. This was about 6:00 p.m. It was darker than it appears in the photo. Before I lightened it up, that photo was too dark to see the shore! Aint technology grand?

Gig Harbor is a couple of miles long and maybe a quarter-mile wide, with a narrow opening (about 100 yards).

When the Charles Wilkes expedition first explored it in 1841, he sent the ship's gig in to explore the harbor. Hence its name.

When I had my sailboat, 20-some years ago, it would take 4 hours to sail from Des Moines to Gig Harbor. With this boat, it's about a 15-minute trip.

We tied up for the night at The Tides tavern, a watering hole for boaters and other tourists which has (among other things) the best pizza I have ever eaten. Overnight moorage is free there.





We left Gig Harbor about 9:00 a.m., after a breakfast of ham and eggs fixed on a one-burner alcohol stove. The stove was donated by my nephew, a spare from the sailboat *Harbinger*. It's just the right size for my boat, and is easily stowed.

Below are a few pictures of me at the helm. Am I having fun yet? You bet!



And here is the Tacoma Narrows bridge, the replacement for "Galloping Gerty" that went down in a storm November 7, 1940 -- much to the consternation of the insurance agent who had pocketed the premiums. This is as far as we went on this trip. We could have gone another 10 miles South to Olympia and beyond, but I'll save that for another day.



## So what's next?

Well, I'll spend the winter messing around Puget Sound, getting used to the boat, refamiliarizing myself with the area, poking into new holes and harbors, and in general staying pretty close to home and in protected waters.

Come spring I'll start cruising the American and Canadian San Juan Islands, and hopefully by June or so will head for Princess Louisa Inlet (a cathedral-like fiord that has stunned boaters for years by its grandeur and beauty). And finally, to Desolation Sound, an area of spectacular beauty enhanced by the fact that nobody lives there.

Both of these areas are north of the Canadian San Juan Islands, and well on the way through a protected route to Alaska. Probably I'll never go *that* far, but who knows? It's not impossible.

Somewhere in that mix is a season of salmon fishing. I'd be doing it now, for my boat was built for that sport, but as yet I have no gear, no license, and no clue about how to do it. And the season ends next month.

But next year looks good!

Dave Goodfellow

