

GRANDE ENDEAVOUR

By Bob Rice



Gold Coins And A Salmon Bake

Without any assertion of accuracy or special knowledge pertaining to the intricacies of U.S. law and its implementation, I make the following observation. When interpreting law there is often a discussion of the subtle differences between the letter of the law and the intent of the law. There's a federal law known as the Jones Act that states something to the effect that foreign vessels, be it planes, ships or donkey carts can't take paying passengers from point A to point B within the U.S. That, very loosely stated, is the letter of the law. Apparently, the intent of the law is to prevent foreign carriers from competing with domestic carriers. The Coast Guard, in its ongoing quest to protect U.S. interest, apparently cracked down on the Endeavour for charging voyage crew members for their passage on various legs of the ships itinerary along U.S. coastal waters. Rumor has it, they actually threatened a cease and desist order to curtail the Endeavour's activities. Don't get me wrong, having personally been rescued at sea while on a disabled sailboat, I have the utmost respect for the skill and tenacity of the Coast Guard. However, in this case of whether we are paying passengers or working crew, I think the vigilant Guard has overstepped its bounds. Did it not occur to these officials that when it comes to the spirit of the law: The Endeavour isn't in any way competing with other domestic, commercial passenger carriers while it goes on its way reenacting James Cook's historic eighteenth century voyage? Well, to the credit of the concerned parties, a compromise was struck. All payments made by the voyage crew to go on board and participate in this historic and educational experience were returned to us, and we in turn had the option of making a financial donation to the Endeavour Foundation.

So, before disembarking at Gray's Harbor -- I've always liked that word and now I've actually gotten off a bark -- the entire crew assembles below deck where Captain Blake awards each of us with a beautiful certificate attesting to the fact that we have crewed on the H M Bark Endeavour, listing the pertinent ports and dates. He also distributes a whimsical map portraying the course of our voyage, including statistics of distance covered and the fact that we were under sail 54% of the way. This document was a combined creative effort of second mate Jason and two artistic crew mates, Jay and Rich. Finally, to satisfy the requirement of payment for our services, the Captain presents each crew member with a shiny, new Australian gold coin.

Much of my second voyage -- from Gray's Harbor to Victoria B.C. -- is encased in gray skies and fog with little wind. The final tally will be a mere 27% of the voyage under sail. But none of these factors dampens my enthusiasm, nor that of my new set of mates. One effect of the gray days is that our focus is turned inward to the ship's operation and less outward to the stars and far horizon. However, there are plenty of sublime incidents to keep things interesting. At one point Helen, once again my captain o' top, this time for the foremast watch, calls us to our muster station. We are facing toward the starboard side of the ship when Richard shouts, "Wow! did you see that, a whale jumped clear out of the water"? He is facing the port side, to our backs, and for an instant we assume he is messing with our minds. Nevertheless, we turn in unison just in time to see a repeat performance. It's a stunning sight to witness such a magnificent creature propel its enormous body entirely out of the watery realm to hang suspended in midair for a magical moment with a shimmering moon as a backdrop.

Those who are familiar with Pacific Northwest ocean waters know the late summer advent of phosphorescent plankton. It envelops anything moving through the water in a sheath of luminescence. This makes bow watch in the wee hours of night a transcendent experience of a singular magnitude. Not only is the bow wake transformed into a psychedelic light show, but it becomes a surfing haven for porpoise who frolic about and sing in a chirping voice. Occasionally, holes open in the clouded night sky allowing a few stars to shine through. With the diesels churning away, I steer the ship by fixing on a star twinkling through the rigging, referring to the compass to confirm our course. Under sail we can steer the ship so as to maintain our relative angle to the wind. While the diesels propel us we move through the water like a cumbersome, snub nosed bathtub pushing through the heavy swells, but with the billowing sails flying we gain lift and the ship itself as well as the crew respond with elation.

Geoff has warned us to avoid certain things while we go about the business of sailing the ship. One of these is to not push a particular bottom as it is satellite linked and will set off a world wide distress signal and search and rescue effort. A false alarm can be a very expensive mistake. However, one day after notifying the proper authorities and all ships and planes in the area, the permanent crew shoots off a dozen or so date-expired emergency flares. There are a few fishing boats nearby, but having heard the radio announcement that this is only a drill they enjoy the fireworks display along with the rest of us.

The Straits of Juan de Fuca are notorious for their rough waters and heavy tidal flow. They are also a major shipping lane serving the port cities of

Washington State and British Columbia. We sight Neah Bay, at the mouth of the straits, just before dusk on the fifth day of our voyage. By nightfall we are engulfed in a dense fog, limiting our visibility to a mere two hundred yards. After serving a turn at sounding the ship's fog horn, a six second blast every two minutes, Jason as officer of the watch sends me below to the chart room to relieve the crewman at the radar screen. I'm given a brief refresher course on radar watch duty and then left alone. Within minutes a blip appears on the screen seven miles out and I scurry up to the helm to inform Jason. Together we return below where he mans the radio to contact the Canadian navigational control authority. It turns out to be a large freighter bearing down on us and since we're cruising with diesel power we show a white running light. If we were under sail we'd be showing green and red lights indicating that we have right of way. It takes only twenty minutes to close the distance between us and the freighter refuses to yield its course, coming way to close for comfort, well within our limited range of eye sight.

The fog lifts a bit and the wind picks up enough to warrant setting sails for a while, but this proves to be short lived and we go aloft to again furl the sails in anticipation of reaching Sooke harbor sometime after daybreak. The wind shifts, now coming straight at us and kicking up a good sized swell. This makes for a lot of "rock n roll" as we strain to hang onto the yardarm and haul in the heavy topsail. We're scribing quite an arc against the night sky and once Helen is satisfied that the sail is secure we cautiously step off the rat line and descend the top shroud to the battle platform half way up the mast. At this point one of my watch mates finally feeds the fishes - if you get my drift - and the stench sparks a chain reaction. Most of us, despite our best efforts at restraint, join in the "hurling contest". Fortunately, most of our watch crew is aloft rather than down on the deck and nobody gets a shower. However, the battle platform is transformed into a skating ring of slime and we make haste to descend to the weather deck lest we slip off to oblivion.

The next morning we motor into a beautiful and well protected bay where lies the charming town of Sooke. A flotilla of varied crafts escorts us to the inner harbor. There are long boats from around the northwest that have assembled for an annual series of combined rowing and sail races, fishing boats, pleasure crafts and four long dug out canoes with intricate carvings and paintings on their hulls. These

are being paddled by members of the local Indian Band (tribe) including relatives of Jennifer, a young woman who has been part of our voyage crew. Once we have set our anchors we shuttle ashore where we are welcomed by townsfolk and Indians. The Chief presents Captain Blake with a hand carved mask of great beauty and he in turn presents the Chief with a special canoe paddle. Indian dancers in full costume perform, and drumming and prayers are offered. Following this the entire ships company is treated to a fantastic salmon bake before some of the crew slips away to find the nearest pub.

We have three days in Sooke and some of us accept the town's hospitality by taking a guided tour of a delightful historical museum packed with artifacts from the local Indians and early European settlers. With great civic pride our guide also shows us a rather derelict looking remnant of a shipyard that once served a thriving fishing industry, and a town park that doubles as a venue for an annual timber festival. On one drizzly day six of my mates and I rent bikes and take a drenching thirty mile ride along an erstwhile railroad track.

Victoria and the end of our voyage awaits us after one more day of motoring. As we approach the city Geoff calls me aside to say that I am definitely on for the voyage to Hawaii and he expresses confidence that I'll be going on to Fiji and New Zealand as well. I'm stoked as we enter Victoria Harbor to the greetings of thousands of onlookers lining the shore and following along in boats. We blast our cannons and the harbor fireboat shoots arcing jets of water into the air as we proceed to dock. Once our mooring lines and gangplank are secure Anthony, Dougal, Paul, Jordan and Richard live up to their reputations by wrestling Dominique to the deck and then throwing him overboard to celebrate his twenty-sixth birthday. As the drenched fellow climbs back up the ships ladder his mates dump a bucket full of baking flour on him, thus creating a glue monster who is again pitched overboard. When Dom finally regains the deck the curs bind his wrist and string him up to the main staysail block where they stuff his pants with cooked spaghetti and fresh seaweed. If anyone asks on the ocean voyage, I think I'll say that my birthday is on the thirtieth of February.

Bob Rice's Grande Endeavour will continue next month.

**DUANE JOHNSON
REAL ESTATE**



436-0451

• FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS •



**Steve's
Maintenance**
Licensed
Specializing in:
Environmentally Friendly
Window Cleaning

Steve LaMontagne
P.O. Box 669
Cannon Beach, OR 97110
(503) 436-0942

SAM ABSHER

North Coast Construction, Inc.

ADDITIONS
GENERAL CONTRACTING
QUALITY CONSTRUCTION
REMODEL
LEVEL - STABILIZE

Cell: 440-0278 Fax: 717-0389
P.O. Box 2577 Gearhart, OR 97138

738-7563 CCB# 114007

I do not dislike but I certainly have no special respect or admiration for and no trust in, the typical big moneyed men of my country. I do not regard them as furnishing sound opinions as respects either foreign or domestic business. Theodore Roosevelt.

**Manzanita News
& ESPRESSO**

A Cheerful Presence in Manzanita

PORTLAND ROASTING Coffee & Espresso Drinks
TEMPTATIONS Homemade Pastries, Sandwiches & Soup
435 MAGAZINE TITLES
Oregon Coast and Local Maps, Local Newspapers

Open Daily 7:30am—5:00 pm
500 Laneda Ave. Manzanita 368-7450

THE WORLD FOR WOMEN

M. Sellin

*finely selected
women's clothing*

Portland (503) 239-4605 Cannon Beach (503) 436-1572

work hard dress easy™