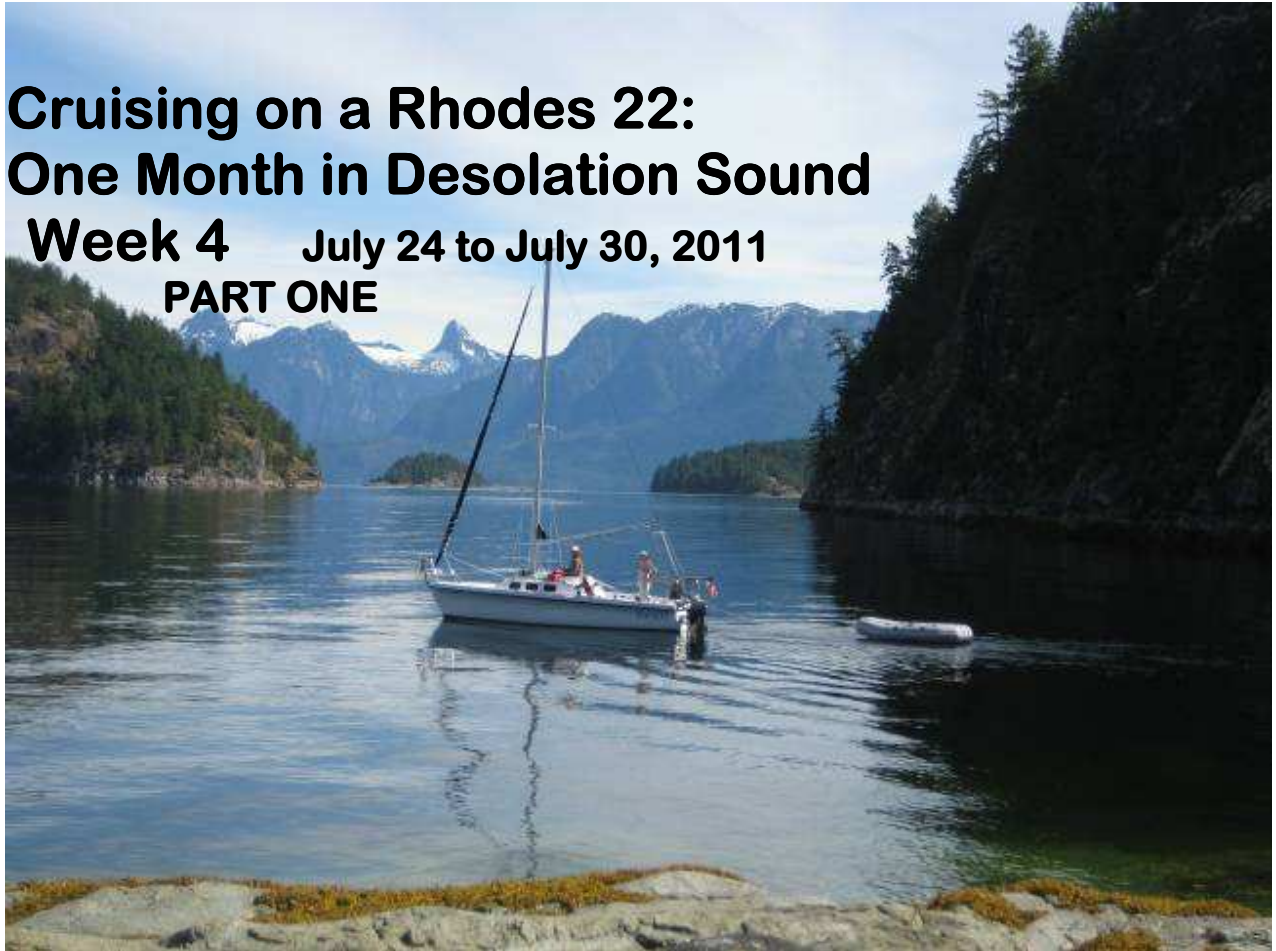


Cruising on a Rhodes 22: One Month in Desolation Sound

Week 4 July 24 to July 30, 2011

PART ONE



My short time with my sister and her husband was a lot of fun. For week four I sailed with a friend of theirs and co-worker with my sister. I had met Michael when I first brought the boat up and we hit it off quite well, good to know when you will be sharing a small space with someone for a week.



Michael Thompson at the tiller

Michael Thompson is a fascinating guy with an engineering and geology background. He grew up in England and now lives in Canada with his wife and young son. He had some experience sailing small boats and the purpose of this week in Desolation sound was for him to learn more.

After I got back from the doctor's, Greta and Pat left. Michael was able to get the motor to run, sort of. But it was at the cost of a bad burn on a

couple of fingers. It was late and so we decided to have dinner at the old hotel in Lund and spent the evening tied up to the dock. We left the next morning with a nice 10 knot southerly wind which was a great intro for Michael. Since he was new to sailing and the water was a bit chilly here (64°) we both wore our auto-inflate life jackets.



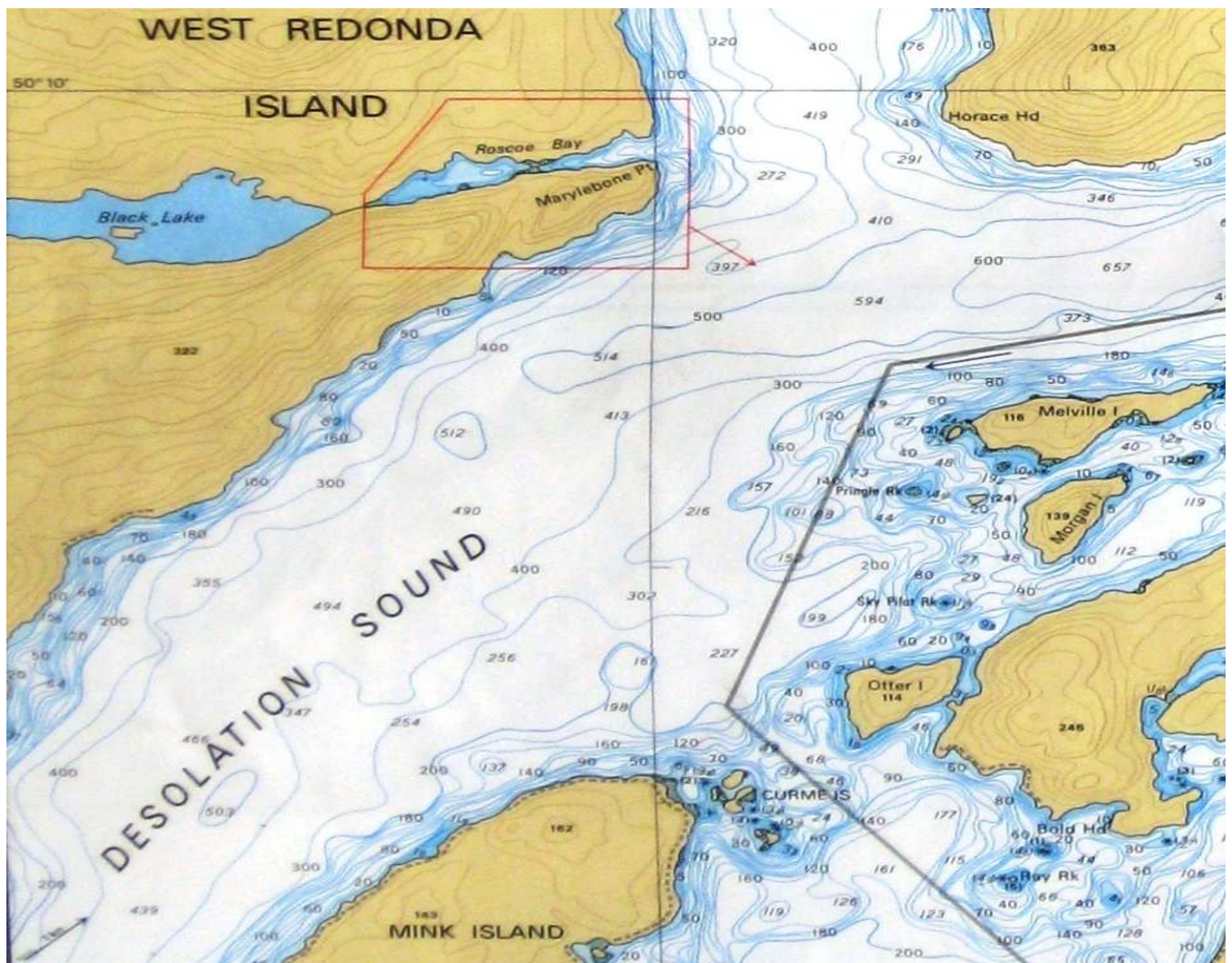
We sailed back and forth below Desolation Sound and stopped for some lunch. We resumed sailing until we realized we forgot to get any ice. There was just a bit left from the 5 pound block and small bag of cubes that Greta and Pat put in

Michael enjoys the sail north to Desolation Sound

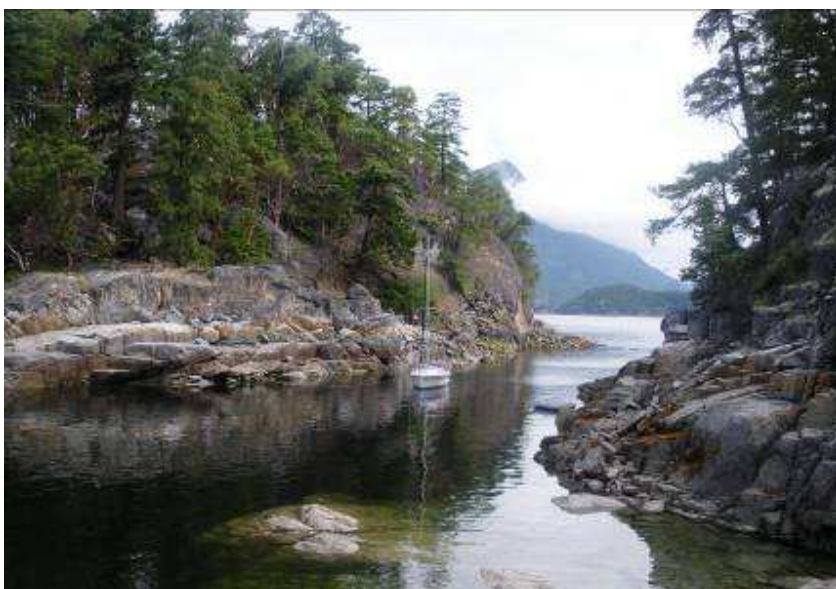
the ice box a week before. I had

replaced the old icebox with a new one and then super-insulated it. It was nice to know it would keep things cool that long. However, it still needed new ice. We headed for Refuge Cove and arrived there with only minutes to spare. The motor simply would not start so we sailed into the cove and just as we were sailing up to the dock were redirected around to the back side of the dock. This involved some very quick tacks and a bit of sculling but eventually we sailed up to the dock and tied up. Michael ran up to the general store and got the ice with 3 minutes to spare. He then proceeded to work on the motor again. With the help of several friendly cruisers, some carb cleaner and WD40 sprayed into the cranking motor, got it started. A few hours later the Canadian Coast Guard towed in a 32 foot Freedom or Nonsuch unstayed cat rigged sailboat. Their diesel would not start and it was getting dark. They should have bought a Rhodes! It was quite windy that evening but we eventually fell asleep.

By 9:00 a.m. the next morning the 26th of July, we were headed out the entrance *under motor!* Our plan was to stop at some small islands called the Curme islands just NE of Mink Island. It would be tight but it looked like an interesting challenge.



For reference, see week one story, page 6 the “chart collage” shows part of Mink Island on the upper western side of the chart. On the above chart Roscoe Bay is a bit less than a mile long.



In the mini-fjord in the Curme Islands

We slipped into a little mini-fjord on the south side of the northern most island in the group. There were a few rocks but the water was very clear. The small island to the west had a camp for a few kayakers. When we reached a depth of 10 feet half tide, I dropped the stern anchor and then let the boat drift



forward and to port where Michael set a grappling anchor on shore. I got into the dingy and rowed another shore line on the starboard side so we had a 3 way moor. Michael put on his wet suit (water temp was a balmy 66°) and snorkeled around the northern island while

The three point lunch mooring system

I climbed the three nearby islands. There were neat views and interesting glaciated and weathered granite rock. Tide pools were every where full of interesting life. We had lunch and then headed to Roscoe Bay by way of the "Otter Pool" where Pat, Greta and I stayed a few days before. There was a light wind from the south



Ghosting past Otter Island

and we sailed out of the fjord by turning the boat around by hand using the lines and then pulled in all the lines simultaneously. It sounds harder than it was. We approached the southern entrance to the "pool" wing on wing and just ghosted into the anchorage and continued out the north exit.



Roscoe Harbor looking east A short time later we entered the mouth of the very popular Roscoe Bay. The bay is a bit less than a mile long and a couple of hundred yards wide. It is divided into 2 parts and in

order to get into the inner portion of this harbor, even with a shoal draft boat, entrance is restricted to half tide or better. We timed it well and slipped in with the motor running! Of course there was no wind and we had to go in at about 4 knots, but what the heck, we were in. We motored to the head and dropped anchor in 25 feet of water and ran a line ashore to a tree atop an awkward climb up a rock face. There were lots and lots of boats in the harbor.



On the trail to Black Lake



Michael fishing, great form, but no fish

interesting as there were the remains of old locks to float down logs from an old timber operation around the lake many years ago.

Along the way we crossed the creek, found massive stumps and an old abandoned logging camp complete with the remains of a wood stove and iron bed. Michael tried his luck at fishing but had no joy. There were a number of water snakes and one really big 6 inch leech. Yuck. On the return we passed a massive cedar that had been blown down and while walking through the chest high

If you look at the previous chart you will see the layout of the bay and that a short distance up a small creek is Black Lake. This freshwater lake looked intriguing and there was a trail to it. It was early so we rowed ashore and did some exploring. Michael is an avid fly fisherman and has a beautiful "kit" with everything he needs. He brought along his equipment and had high hopes. The creek was



ferns in the understory came across some unusual fungi. Even though most of the forest in this part of Canada has been logged at least once, it



is is so productive that the second growth forest still seems primitive and remote.



Low tide was 7am so we had a leisurely breakfast and while Michael fished I rowed out to the restricted entrance to the bay to check it out. I was not alone. There were all sorts of other dinghies doing the same thing. After some careful high-tech soundings with the paddle I felt we could safely leave in an hour. We motored through (again at a high rate Of speed) and headed 20 mi. north to Toba Inlet.



A Rhodes mizzen deployed on the way to Toba Sound

Toba Inlet is pretty remote and not often visited like some other parts of Desolation Sound. This is due to the fact it is essentially a “dead end” and there is almost no place to anchor as the mountains plunge down to the sea and just keep going and going. We, however, were undaunted; we had the Rhodes that can do anything and Michael had some “knowledge of Geology” that would prove useful. These inlets or a better description is Fjords were all ice carved and magnificent. The high mountains above were snow capped and the chart showed that many of these areas of snow in late July were in fact snowfields or non moving glaciers. Because of the steepness that meant that the runoff from the melting snow would produce waterfalls and very steep and powerful streams.



Approaching the narrows

We were not disappointed. The weather was clear and almost hot with a bit of wind from the south so we sailed up Waddington channel. We timed our departure to not have to fight the strongest currents in this narrow channel. Within a short time it clouded over but was still pleasant. As we

approached the narrows between East Redonda Island

and West Redonda Island we could get an idea of what awaited us. Through the narrows, we crossed Pryce Channel and then went up Toba Inlet.

The scenery was so magnificent words just do not do it justice. As soon as we sighted Toba we could see several waterfalls cascading down the mountain sides.



One of many waterfalls we were to see in Toba