

**Follow along with us as we cruise onboard our
56' Ocean Yacht.**

Somewhere on the Water

Our Great Loop

Lake Couchiching anchorage to the Big Chute Free Dock

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

11th day on the TSW

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

7:40 am – Mark weighed anchor, and we cruised towards the Georgian Bay, not knowing how far we would get today. We have a couple of swing bridges to get through and two locks before we would arrive at what, so far this trip was classified as the biggest, most anxiety-producing lock yet....the Big Chute Marine Railway.

Will we get to it today or tomorrow? At the time we left our anchorage next to Chief Island, we were not sure. Also on today's to-do list was to take on diesel fuel if possible. There are not many diesel stations along the Trent, so future cruisers, pay attention to the signs '*last fuel until*' and know your range. We were not in danger of running low. The captain likes to keep Valkyrie at half-tank. He wanted to top off and possibly get through Canada without having to refuel again.

Lake Couchiching is about 10 miles long and averages 9 feet deep. Its name means *Inlet* and is separated from Lake Simcoe by a small, narrow channel.

By 9:00 am, we had entered the Sevren River and were waiting at the railroad swing bridge for an opening. There is a sign that reads that the next opening is 1700 hours, but we were hoping that was leftover from the night before. We had read horror stories of boaters being held up at this bridge for hours. We are hoping not to become one of those stories. There was no communication from the bridge attendant. There were signs that stated *no mooring*, and we had two boats behind us also waiting.

We were excited that a train had gone through at 9:40 am, and the latest update was that there was another train coming and the bridge wouldn't open for at least 40 minutes. The boats behind us had been diligent about trying to communicate with someone. They called the Couchiching Lock, they tried the bridge attendant, and finally, someone was successful enough to receive an update.

There was no current. Mark shut off Valkyrie's engines and attempted to fish. We saw several muskrats, and there was a huge beaver den right next to our boat.

Finally, the second train passed through, and we were able to lock through our 1st lock of the day, Couchiching Lock #42, with a 20' drop in elevation by 11:11 am. When we approached the lock, there were eight boats waiting to lock through.

Crossing Sparrow Lake was beautiful.

Fun Fact:

The lake was named after a William Sparrow, an Englishman, who fished and hunted the area in the 19th century. He disappeared one summer giving rise to stories that he may have been murdered.

It is also slightly famous as being the northern setting for the Showcase TV show Paradise Falls. Various settings and lodges around the lake were used for filming. It is also home to Sparrow Lake Camp (founded 1912), the oldest children's recreational camp operated by the United Church of Canada. [https://bracebridgerealty.ca/Lake/?muskoka=Sparrow-Lake-\(Gravenhurst\)](https://bracebridgerealty.ca/Lake/?muskoka=Sparrow-Lake-(Gravenhurst))

Our next lock, Swift Rapids, Lock #43, is the highest elevation of any conventional lock in the system (TSW).

We enjoyed today very much. The scenery, as you will hear many times, was spectacular. Some of the areas on today's route were narrow and would be uncomfortable to meet another large boat. As the day progressed, we ended up on a pack of 5 boats. Several stopped at the marina just above the Big Chute, but since there was no line, we decided to go for it. We watched one group of boaters descend, and one group of boaters rise before it was our turn.

By 3:00 pm, we completed the Big Chute and had tied to the free dock located next to the hydro-powered plant next to the Chute.

The Chute went smoothly. The attendant was very careful about placing Valkyrie in the harness at just the right spot to support her keel. He talked the Captain through the entire process. Valkyrie is 1 of 11 56' cockpit motoryachts made by Ocean Yacht. It is essentially the 48' model but with the addition of the cockpit, so all the running gear is a bit more forward than one would expect. Once the harness was in place, Valkyrie would actually be sitting on the bottom of the carriage and not swinging freely. Since we had Valkyrie hauled out the winter before departing on the loop, we knew where the harness needed to be, so Mark had placed tape to indicate the location.

The anxiety, anticipation, the long day of cruising, and the heat blended, forging an overwhelming amount of emotions inside me that once we were tied up, rushed out with a huge sigh of relief! I don't think I realized that I was stressed about it until after it was over, and my shoulders just let down. The actual ride was quick, smooth, and the attendants were professional, which gave you the confidence needed so you knew your vessel was in good hands.

It works on an inclined plane to carry boats in individual cradles over a change of height of about 60 feet (18 m). It is the only [marine railway](#) (or [canal inclined plane](#)) of its kind in North America still in use. Wikipedia

It was hot inside and out. There was little to no breeze tonight. We walked the hill to get ice cream, check out the general store at the Big Chute Marina. We explored all around the area. There are informational displays and exhibits on-site to learn all about the history of the marine railway. It was so cool. I am not much of a history buff, but this was very cool, unique and I found it very cool. Unfortunately, the flies were on the attack, so we did not stay out long. We got back to Valkyrie, ran the a/c and charged her batteries, and enjoyed our ice cream.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Anchorage in Lake Couchiching @ 7:57 am

Arrived at the Big Chute @ 3:04 pm

Hours traveled: 7hrs 6 mins

Days cruised: 35 Days on the loop: 49

Nautical Miles Traveled: 28.16 for the day (887.32 total miles)

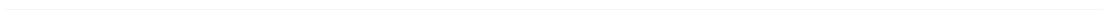
Average Speed 4 knots

Weather: Sunny in the 80's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: anchorage was peaceful, great swimming, local favorite as evidenced by the number of boats here upon arrival.

#of locks we went through: 2 (72total locks)

We did not consider the Big Chute a lock because it is a marine railway, but the TSW counts it as a lock, so I guess that means we did 3 locks today for a total of 73 locks.



Our Great Loop
Big Chute Free Dock to Beausoleil Island Anchorage

Wednesday, July 16, 2025
12th day on the TSW

7:25 am – Mark started the engines, and we were off. We left the free wall at the Big Chute Marine Railway. Today, @ 10:00 am, we locked through our last lock on the TSW! Lock 45, Port Severn. Woohoo. What an accomplishment!



Welcome to Georgian Bay!
This morning did not go without its challenges; we had a fast current coming out of the lock and some narrow and winding passages with strong current and lots of rock.

We anchored next to Beausoleil Island, the home of Canada's smallest national park, but also the largest Island within Georgian Bay.

Fun Fact:

The [Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve](#) in Ontario, Canada, encompasses the world's largest freshwater archipelago, known locally as the [Thirty Thousand Islands](#). Google.

The Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve comprises the largest island archipelago of the North American Great Lakes. Known locally as 'The Thirty Thousand Islands', it consists of a complex association of bays, inlets, sounds, islands, and shoals lying along the edge of the Canadian Shield bedrock, whose low lying hills and ridges characterize the adjacent mainland. This topography supports a rich mosaic of forests, wetlands and rocky habitat types with associated biodiversity. It is also noted for its extraordinary scenic views.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/mab/georgian-bay>

(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Now that we have completed the Trent Severn Waterway, we put the radar arch back up as well as the antennas and placed the grill back onto its stand.

We had a long day of chores, which included Mark washing the boat using our raw water washdown pump, laundry, and a few other smaller boat chores. The inside temperature rose to 95 degrees! We went swimming, cooked dinner on the grill, and eventually we ran the generator so we could charge batteries, but more importantly run the a/c to cool the boat down.



Dinner was sausage with cauliflower, zucchini, and onion, topped with mozzarella & tomato sauce.

I cooked the sausage links separately. Using a foil packet, I cooked the veggies with seasonings and olive oil. Once all was cooked, I cut the sausage, then divided the sausage and veggies into smaller foil packets, added spaghetti sauce, mozzarella cheese, and put them back on the grill to melt the cheese. Turned out pretty good.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Big Chute @ 7:22 am

Arrived at Beausoleil Island @ 11:14 am

Days cruised: 36 Days on the loop: 50

Hours traveled: 3 hours 52 mins.

Nautical Miles Traveled: 16.48 for the day (903.80 total miles)

Average Speed 4.2 knots

Weather: Sunny in the 80's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: dock at Big Chute was quiet.

#of locks we went through: 1 (73 total locks)

Our Great Loop
Beausoleil Island to Chimney Bay

Thursday, July 17, 2025

Mark moved us early this morning.

We were still anchored next to Beausoleil Island, but in a more protected cove. The winds were supposed to shift and get stronger.

This island, which is a national park, has public dock access. They are first-come come first-served serve and from what we can gather, there is no one monitoring them so as long as you paid your parks & mooring fees, you can stay as long as you want. Each bay that has these docks seems to have bathrooms, trash bins, and access to trails. There are boats that you can get from the mainland to bring you as a daytripper to the island. Transportation arrangements can be made on the Parks Canada website.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Beausoleil Island @ 6:40 am

Arrived at Chimney Bay @ 7:10 am

Days cruised: 37 Days on the loop: 51

Hours traveled: 30 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 2.51 for the day (906.31 total miles)

Average Speed 4.8 knots

Weather: Sunny in the 80's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: lots of room, good hold, lots of boats

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Our Great Loop Chimney Bay to Frying Pan Bay

Friday, July 18, 2025

Last night was a peaceful night's sleep. The weather cooled, and our room was finally a decent temperature.

Yesterday afternoon we had rain and wind. I worked all afternoon on videos, the blog, and answering calls. We had chili for dinner, watched a few episodes of Black List and hit the hay early because Mark had gotten up super early to move us over to Chimney Bay.

We slept in this morning until 7 am. I spent a few minutes at the computer, and then we decided to take the tender in and walk one of the many trails on Beausoleil Island. We met a park ranger early on who advised us to take the Fairy Lake Trail and stop at Honeymoon Beach for a beautiful view. She wasn't wrong.

The biting flies and mosquitoes were so annoying. They were in our faces almost the whole way. I broke down and had Mark spray me with bug spray, which I hate, but it worked. We saw a lot of people along the trail. I would say it was moderate level. My friend Janet would say it was easy, but I would not take my mom on it. The weather was low 70's sunny with a light breeze, perfect for walking.

11:44 am Mark weighed anchor, and we left to get fuel and then anchor at a different spot along this same Beausoleil Island, Frying Pan Bay.

We fueled up at South Bay Cove Yacht Haven. It was a little bit out of the way, but they had the best price.

Frying Pan Bay is a popular destination for locals. It is protected from bad weather, offers easy access to hiking trails, great for swimming, paddle boarding, dinghy exploration, and more.

The 3 blue arrows on the map indicate where we anchored.

Surrounded by granite rock, the smell of pine trees, and the clear and calm water, it is a truly special anchorage that draws local boaters and loopers in.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Chimney Bay @ 11:41 am

Arrived at Frying Pan Bay @ 2:44 pm

Days cruised: 38 Days on the loop: 52

Hours traveled: 3 hours 3 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 12.12 for the day (918.43 total miles)

Average Speed 4 knots

Weather: Sunny in the 80's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: protected, good hold, easy access to hiking trails, trash bin

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)



Our Great Loop
Frying Pan Bay to Unnamed Bay

Saturday, July 19, 2025

Cloudy, cool morning. This anchorage, which is typically very busy in the summertime, seems quiet and almost empty. The courtesy docks are full, and there are 6 other boats at anchor here. The Maple Leaf Marina came by in a small boat offering complimentary ice. Must be a regular service because I heard someone call out *the ice man is here*.

We took advantage of the peace. I read while sitting outback on the mezzanine, and Mark watched some TV.

2:30 pm – The wind shifted, so Mark reset the anchor.

Mediterranean Mooring is popular in these small, rocky anchorages, and we noticed several boats using this style here in Frying Pan Bay. In short, Mediterranean Mooring is using both a bow anchor and a stern line to secure the vessel. The stern line could be tied to many things, a tree, or a ring that is embedded in a rock, for example.

We experienced a hard time getting Valkyrie's anchor to set, so Mark got our spare anchor out of the chain locker in case he felt the need to use it.

After several attempts to reset, we could not get a good, secure anchor hold, so we moved. We left Frying Pan Bay and moved to a new anchorage. We called it Unnamed Bay anchorage because it was not marked on our chart. Captain Mark found a secure area a few miles away from Beausoleil Island, next to Stockings Island, and we dropped the hook for the night in a small cove next to several homes. By 6:40 pm, we were set for the night.

Burgers and chips for dinner. It rained, and we heard distant thunder.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Frying Pan Bay @ 5:28 pm

Arrived at Unnamed Bay @ 5:34 pm

Days cruised: 39 Days on the loop: 53

Hours traveled: 1 hour 6 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 5.16 for the day (923.59 total miles)

Average Speed 4.6 knots

Weather: Sunny in the mid 70's, evening rain

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: crowded, had trouble w/anchor hold, good swimming, easy access to hiking trails.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Sunday, July 20, 2025

Anchorage at Unnamed Bay near Stockings Island to Anchorage at Killbear Park

9:20 am – We left the anchorage with the plan to stop at Henry's Fish Restaurant. This restaurant is famous for its pan-fried pickerel (walleye), and Living Magazine has named it the #1 fish and chips restaurant in all of Canada. This location, Henry's San Souci location, is only accessible by water.

We estimated a 2-hour cruise. They opened at 12 noon, first-come first-served serve and that includes dock space.

We made it to Henry's in good time with ample dock space for Valkyrie. Loopers from another vessel that we met along the TSW were already docked when we arrived, and invited us to eat with them. We all had the famous pickerel; I had it pan-fried, Mark had it deep-fried, and both were excellent. I got a side order of gravy for my fries, yum! It was a very nice lunch. It was good to compare stories of our loop journey with our new friends. After lunch, we cruised to our anchorage in Killbear.



Our late afternoon arrival found this anchorage extremely crowded. After finding Valkyrie just the right spot, Mark dropped the hook. This is a busy cove with lots of boats, paddleboarders, and seadoos, etc. The nearby campground and local access beach meant a lot of sunbathers on the sandy beach shore and a lot of swimmers. This is a very popular spot for cliff jumping. We witnessed many people of all ages jumping into the water off the nearby rocks.

Bugs continue to be problematic. Every morning we are inundated with some sort of bug. Today it was Mayflies. Mark used the portable shopvac to vacuum them up.

Daily Summary:

Departed from anchorage next to Stockings Island @ 9:02 am

Arrived at Henrey's Fish House Restaurant @ 11:46 am

Departed Henrey's Fish House @ 1:52 pm

Arrived Killbear Park anchorage @ 4:03 pm

Days cruised: 40 Days on the loop: 54

Hours traveled: 2 hours 44 mins + 2 hours 11 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 17.67 + 13.63 for the day (954.89 total miles)

Average Speed 6.2 knots

Weather: Cool and windy. Sea temp has dropped to 73 degrees

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: we were the only boat. Good anchor hold.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Monday, July 21, 2025
Killbear Park anchorage

Mark saw some deer this morning on the beach. I was lucky enough to catch just a glimpse before they walked off behind some shrubs.

By 8:00 am there were several people already on the beach, anchored to their chairs.

I had a busy work day, so we decided not to go anywhere.

Mark took the tender to shore, disposed of our trash, washed down the shop vac (it had some sort of grease all over the hose), did one or two other minor things, and then spent some time on the mezzanine people/boat watching. He had quite the show when a 54' Searay came in and attempted to raft up with 2 other boats. The captain dropped his anchor and proceeded to do everything wrong when backing up to the other boats. His firstmate was back and forth from bow to stern trying to let more anchor chain out, throw lines to the other boats, but everytime she let more chain out she did not let enough out and the captain was still backing up, we could hear the boat straining under the anchor, which was doing its job by holding him in place, but the problem was he did not want to be in that place, he wanted to be further back. So then here comes the thrusters; we can't believe he did not burn a fuse. He at one point hit into the rafted boat with his stern, his tender, which is on a rack on the swim platform, is now all askew. He hit them good. Finally, the rafted boat hailed him off, and they went and anchored nearby, away from the other boats.

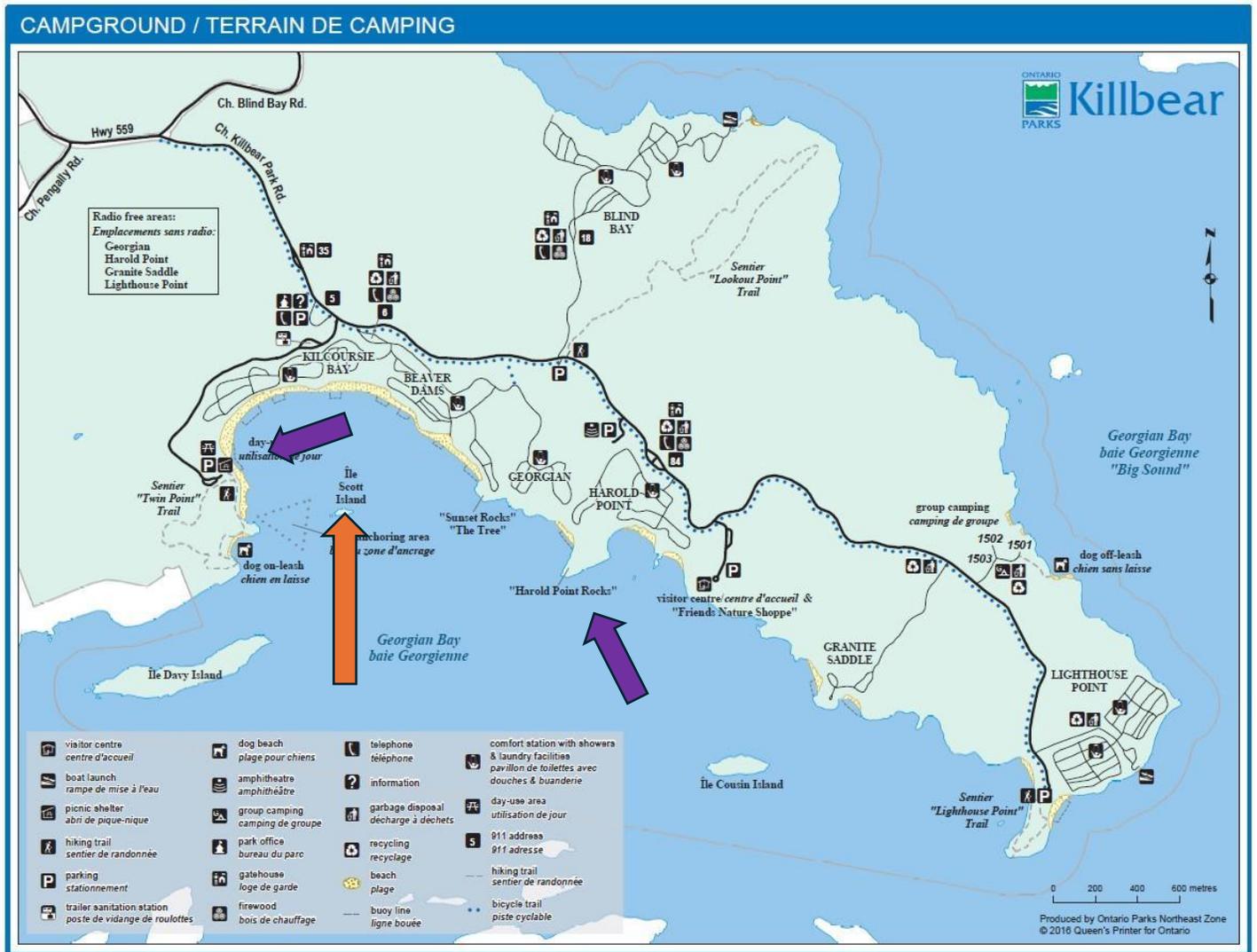
Yeycarumba! It was entertaining to Mark, mostly because it wasn't happening to us. Safety of your crew and vessel come first. Don't force a situation.

Today was a very cool day at 71 degrees.

After dinner, we took the tender to two different locations. One was a popular lookout, Harold Point; we took photos and watched some kids jump off the rocks into the water. No, we did not jump.

The next spot had a nice walking trail, Twin Points Trail. If you can handle the bugs that will attack you with vengeance, you will walk along boulders from the ice age.

One of the most unique and exhilarating activities at Killbear is cliff jumping at Harold Point. Please note this activity is not encouraged by park staff. You are jumping at your own risk. On a hot summer day it is especially enjoyable but take care and practice common sense. At its highest point, the jump is over 10 metres. Be sure to step out far enough to clear the ledge below. It's not as scary as it sounds. There are ledges below the cliff top so that even the kids can participate from a lower spot. <https://avrextravel.com/killbear-provincial-park/>



Twin Point trail: This pleasant 1.6-kilometre, loop trail provides great views of the entire Killbear Peninsula on Georgian Bay. Walk through forest, along sandy beaches and across bedrock ridges. Look down walking across the rock. Watch for scratch marks on the rock from boulders being dragged across the bedrock by the glaciers during the last ice age.

Map: Orange arrow = anchorage
Purple arrows = walking trails

Dinner was macaroni salad and meatball subs.

Daily Summary:

Departed from @

Arrived at @

Hours traveled:

Days cruised: 40 Days on the loop: 55

Nautical Miles Traveled: for the day (954.89 total miles)

Average Speed knots

Weather: Sunny but cool. Low 70's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: we were the only boat. Good anchor hold.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

Killbear Park anchorage to Hopewell Bay anchorage

We left Killbear and started cruising to our next anchorage. The last several days of cruising require the captain's full attention. Remembering this is the land of the 30,000 Islands. Weaving in and out of these rocky islands in some narrow and challenging channels is not to be taken lightly. One small mistake and you aren't hitting a soft, mucky sandy beach, you are hitting unforgiving granite rock.

We arrived at our first choice anchorage, a little cove next to Franklin Island, at 10:00 am; however, we did not have enough water to get in. It was a cute cove, already filled with several boats; however, on our way in, using the marked channel, our depth sounder quickly revealed "-- --" which means no water under us. There were no rocks visible underneath us. Valkrie kicked up some mud. The decision was made for us: go to the second anchorage, Hopewell Bay.

We cruised the inside passage along Franklin Island and anticipated arriving around 12:30 pm.

We took an amazing exploration ride on the tender in search of the Hole in the Wall, known to be a fantastic spot to swim, fish, and otherwise just soak in the awe and wonder of this hidden gem.



Mark and I have nicknamed Valkyrie Christine from Steven King's novel, Christine. Since we have been taking the tender out to explore all these amazing coves and inlets, every time we leave her, the anchor alarm (which is synced with Mark's phone) goes off, repeatedly, only to return and find she never moved. It became a joke between us that she is just so attached to us that she gets ornery when we leave her.



Visit this website to learn about the Shawanaga Island history and the efforts being made to preserve the native ancient culture, and the island. There are also videos and photos of the island and its many coves and inlets.

<https://shawanagaislandipca.ca/about/story-of-the-island/>



Daily Summary:

Departed from Killbear @ 9:00 am

Arrived at Hopewell Bay @ 11:50 am

Days cruised: 41 Days on the loop: 56

Hours traveled: 2hrs 49mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 18.95 for the day (973.84 total miles)

Average Speed 6.7 knots

Weather: Sunny but cool. Low 70's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Killbear was great. Lots of other boats, lots to look at, nearby hiking and swimming

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

Hopewell Bay anchorage to Bustard Islands anchorage

Today, we left Hopewell Bay and cruised along the north shore of Shawanaga Island and many smaller islands to the Bustard Islands.

One notable site along our way was the Pointe Au Baril Lighthouse

Photo credits: The lighthouse photo shown is from their website noted below.

The whiskey barrel photo is from @jaclay fb page

Dating back to the fur traders of the late 19th century who left behind an empty whiskey barrel that later came to be used as a marker by fishermen to guide them safely into harbour. In 1889, the government replaced the historic lantern-topped barrel with the present-day Pointe Au Baril Lighthouse. The tradition of the barrel continues however, with one being located a short distance from the lighthouse.

<https://www.thearchipelago.on.ca/p/pointe-au-baril-lighthouse-1>



The Bustard Islands is an amazing archipelago of tiny islands that sit several kilometers off the shore of the mouth of the French River. These islands beckon to be explored by tender, kayak, canoe, or other small vessel. There are so many hidden areas that await discovery.

We took on some waves in the Georgian Bay today. We were in the wide open, and the waves hit us on the beam. It was a little tippy. It has been some time since we have cruised outside in the open, so I took a walk around Valkyrie to make sure everything was secure. I had become complacent in my duties of double-checking that everything was secured before a day of cruising after all that time spent on calm inland waterways. Doors need to be latched, cupboards need to be shut tight, no loose items like cups, etc, should be lying about, and latch the refrigerator and mini fridge.

1:30 pm – arrived Bustard Islands. There were a couple of options for anchoring. Once the captain decided on which anchorage he felt suited Valkyrie best, we dropped the hook. We were in 20' of water with a 69-degree water temp.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Hopewell Bay @ 9:00 am

Arrived at Bustard Islands @ 1:37 pm

Days cruised: 42 Days on the loop: 57

Hours traveled: 4hrs 37 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 36 for the day (1009.84 total miles)

Average Speed 7.8 knots

Weather: Sunny but cool. Low 70's S SW winds at 14mph

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Hopewell Bay was great. Beautiful, good anchor hold.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)



Thursday, July 24, 2025
Bustard Islands anchorage

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

Quiet morning. We had some wind overnight. Mark woke up a few times to check the anchor alarm. We had South South West winds overnight up to 21 mph, gusting up to 38 mph. Valkyrie is anchored in a very protected cove, so we did not experience any effects from it. Today, we are anticipating squalls, so we are staying put.

Due to the nature of this anchorage, Mark put out a second anchor. There was not much room for Valkyrie to spin, and if she did, it would be into rocks. He used the tender to carry the anchor as far out as possible off the bow and set it.

Our predicted chance of squalls turned into Tornado warnings! The warnings came frequently, and we were in its path! As a precaution, Mark started the engines so that if we dragged, he could respond quickly. He also turned off all electronics, shut off all breakers to decrease our chances of being hit by lightning.

Once that storm went through, Mark changed the backup anchor from the bow to the stern because winds were expected to change from the south to the north, which would spin Valkyrie towards the rocks. The storm brought dark clouds that turned our day into night, winds, and torrential downpours. It was brief, and we were thankful the tornado turned away from our location. We discovered later that there was a confirmed touchdown nearby some other loopers' anchorages, but everyone was safe.

Mark changed the oil on the generator this morning after I did a load of laundry. The main engines will be due for an oil change in 2 more running hours, so he will plan to do that at our next anchorage.

Since arriving in Canada, we have been inundated with bugs. Every day it is a different bug, and they all bite. While in this anchorage, we had several loopers stop by and say hello while exploring on their tenders. Each of them had swatters with them, and bugs are often the topic of conversation. Recently, it has been spiders that have invaded Valkyrie. Huge spiders, and lots of them. We have never had spiders on board

Valkyrie, especially inside. Now it is a daily task to clear the spiders, and it is a losing battle. Mark uses the zapper swatter. Today, we had some of the biggest spiders yet on board our tender. Mark flung one off the tender into the water. It swam back! He flung it again, and it swam back again! Mark could see its fangs! Finally, after a third time of swimming back to the boat, he whacked it with a swatter and killed it, or at least stunned it enough that it was not making its way back to the tender.

Once all the bugs were cleared from the tender, and the storm had passed, we decided to do some exploring on the tender. We stopped by several loop boats to say hello.

Salmon and asparagus for dinner

Daily Summary:

Departed from @

Arrived at @

Days cruised: Days on the loop: 58

Hours traveled:

Nautical Miles Traveled: for the day (1009.84 total miles)

Average Speed knots

Weather: Storm today. Afternoon sun.

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Protected cove, good hold

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Friday, July 25, 2025

Bustard Islands anchorage to Bad River anchorage

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

8:00 am – weigh anchors.

We had two anchors out. The second anchor started at our bow as a backup because of the proximity to the rocks and the expected high winds. Mark moved it to the stern due to a wind direction change. That means twice the work this morning getting ready to go.

Short cruise today to Bad River. Mark's priority today was to change both engines' oil.

Finally, I could shut my phones off at 5 pm and begin the weekend. We sat up on the flybridge for a while this afternoon, watching boats come and go into this anchorage. Seadoos were coming and going up through the different coves/rivers that are all interconnected to Bad River. We had a birds-eye view from the flybridge of the boaters trying to navigate the entrance to the rapids. Some had success, some did not.

I cooked tonight's dinner, and then prepped a sweet potato salad for Saturday. Tonight was a skillet dinner with ground sausage, pepper, onion, garlic, a can of diced tomatoes, chicken broth, rice, worcestershire sauce, and shredded cheddar. It was good.

After dinner, we sat in the cockpit for as long as we could. Mark tried to fish, and we got a surprise FaceTime call from our friends back home. It was so wonderful. As the sun set, the mosquitoes attacked. The citronella candle offered no defense against the army of mosquitoes, so we had to retreat inside. Once inside, I vacuumed a few spiders that made their home in the wooden blinds in the salon, and Mark grabbed the zapper and went outside and killed as many spiders and bugs as he could reach.

We went to bed around 10:30 pm...still enough light in the sky to hide the stars, so I got up around 12:45 am and went out on the deck to see the sky. It was magnificent. There is no light pollution here; there were no clouds, and with just the light of the neighboring boats' anchor lights, I stood in amazement for several minutes.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Bustard Islands @ 8:17 am

Arrived at Bad River @ 9:55 am

Days cruised: 43 Days on the loop: 59

Hours traveled: 1 hour 38 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 5.67 for the day (1015.51 total miles)

Average Speed 3.4 knots

Weather: Sunny and warm, perfect summer day

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Protected cove, good hold

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Saturday, July 26, 2025

Bad River anchorage

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

Today, we took an epic tender ride all over the area. We did rapids and explored every nook of the area we could fit our tender. It was beautiful and exciting. I had been looking forward to this area the entire trip after watching a looper's YouTube video. We did not go through some of the rapids that those loopers did because they were a bit more extreme than we wanted to attempt. We are far away from home, it's the only dinghy we have, and we do not have the money to replace or repair it. Later, we found out that the water level is 1 ½ feet higher this year than in past years, which explains the difference in what we experienced versus what we saw in the video.

Once we returned, we celebrated the fact that it was 60 days of looping for us. We enjoyed the sunshine from the flybridge, had burgers and sweet potato salad for dinner, played a few hands of rummy, Mark flew the drone, and because the bugs are so bad, we retreated to the salon around 9:00 pm. It was cloudy so I did not get up to see the night sky.

This time of year, here in the Georgian Bay, it is dusk until about 10 pm.

Georgian Bay's scenery is a blend of ancient granite, sculpted by ice, paired with windswept vegetation and luminous water. It's both rugged and serene, stark and delicate—one of the most iconic landscapes in all of Canada. The granite is one of the region's most defining features. The pink-to salmon-red hues are part of the Canadian Shield, composed largely of Precambrian granite that often has rosy colors mixed with grays and black mineral flecks. Rounded granite has been smoothed and contoured by years of flowing water. In many areas, the rock has broken into ledges and cracks that have filled with moss, pines, and blueberries. Often, you will see pine trees that have grown sideways from the wind. Most of the islands are not inhabited, but several have cottages accessible only by boat. Carry in, carry out. The water is mostly clear with a turquoise color and is often described as Caribbean-like.

Here in Bad River, we saw Cranes! There are plenty of loons to be seen, and back in Hopewell Bay, we had a local cottage owner tell us that they had seen a 6' tall bear that morning just outside their door. Minx are all around, snakes, and of course, spiders! Hiking for blueberries is a frequent activity. Some are luckier than others to score fresh berries.

This is a popular anchorage, but large enough for many boats.



Daily Summary:

Departed from

Arrived at

Days cruised: 43 Days on the loop: 60

Hours traveled:

Nautical Miles Traveled: for the day (1015.51 total miles)

Average Speed knots

Weather: Sunny with light clouds at night

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Good hold, be careful, several boats dragged anchor and had to move and reset.

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

Sunday, July 27, 2025

Bad River anchorage to Killarney Bay anchorage

Weighed anchor around 9:00 am and departed Bad River. We were cruising towards Killarney with loose plans today. We thought we would stop in Killarney, a popular stop amongst locals and loopers. There are marinas here, plus a very popular restaurant that also boasts amazing fish and chips like Henry's. There are walking trails here, gift shops, a bakery, and more. No grocery store, but there is an LCBO. (Liquore Store)

By 12:30 pm, we arrived in Killarney, went to the LCBO (liquor store) and had lunch at Herbert's. Order at the counter, self-seating with tables inside and outside. We both had the same fish and chips. It was good. The coleslaw had a strong vinegar taste. Mark ate mine. The tartersauce unfortunately, was prepackaged Kraft brand, and it was not good. The wall-eye/pickeral is a good fish, but dry. Overall, we enjoyed the meal, but would I rate it the best? No. Happy to have stopped there and tried it.

There was no place to leave trash. We asked at the LCBO. The clerk responded that on Tuesdays, there is a dumpster that comes and the local businesses dump their trash in it, and it is taken away. There was no public trash disposal. One downside to not staying at a marina. We have

room for a trash can on the mezzanine, so we will store it until we can dispose of it.

Killarney is congested with boats of all sizes, marinas and docks on both sides of the channel, with not too many public docks for transients to pop a squat. On a hot summer day, like today, this area was packed with boaters.

After lunch, we left to go find an anchorage in Killarney Bay. Killarney is the gateway to the Northchannel which means we are officially in the North Channel. The water is gorgeous. A beautiful, inviting green. The mountains are stunning.

Killarney is home to 4-Lighthouses. Killarney East, Killarney West, Badgeley, and Bustard Islands. You can find out more about them here:
<http://www.municipalityofkillarney.ca/visiting-killarney/light-houses>

North Channel The **North Channel** is the body of water along the north shore of [Lake Huron](#), in the [Canadian province of Ontario](#) and the state of [Michigan](#) in the [United States of America](#).^[1] It stretches approximately 160 nautical miles (300 km) and is bordered on the east by [Georgian Bay](#), on the west by the [St. Marys River](#), to the north by the eastern [Algoma District](#) and part of the [Sudbury District](#), and to the south by the islands of [Manitoulin](#), [Cockburn](#), [Drummond](#) and [St. Joseph](#). At its widest point it is over 30 km (20 miles) wide.^[2]

In addition to Georgian Bay, the North Channel is connected to the main body of Lake Huron by the [False Detour Channel](#) and the [Mississagi Strait](#), which separate the above-noted islands.

The channel is recognized as one of the best freshwater cruising grounds in the world.

The only road crossings of the North Channel are at the [Little Current Swing Bridge](#), which carries [Highway 6](#) between [Manitoulin Island](#) and the mainland of [Northern Ontario](#), and the Bernt Gilbertson Bridge, which carries [Highway 548](#) from the mainland onto St. Joseph Island. The bridges are located at two of the narrowest points along the entire channel.

We arrived at our first choice anchorage around 2 pm, attempted to drop anchor, but a sailboater came out and told us we were too close, which we really weren't, but he was very cranky about it, so we moved on. It was a congested anchorage, but there was plenty of room for swing without being up someone's butt, so to speak.

2:18 pm – anchor dropped. We are around the corner from the original area we wanted, but we are still protected from the wind. It has turned out to be a hot, sunny afternoon. I liked this anchorage; we were tucked up nicely out of the wind, and we had the place to ourselves.

I went for a swim. Mark thought the water was too cold at 75 degrees.

This afternoon, we attempted to walk a nature trail that Mark found on Navionics. It turned out that it wasn't a fully groomed trail. After feeding many mosquitoes, we turned back. Nearby M/V Escape was anchored. We stopped by for a chat. We met back in Sylvan Beach, and then did a small portion of the Trent with them, including the Peterborough Lift Lock.

We saw a crane today, and two back in Bad River!

No dinner tonight – we had a big lunch at Herbert's.



Daily Summary:

Departed from Bad River @ 8:51 am

Arrived at Herbert's Restaurant in Killarney @ 12:23 pm

Departed Killarney @ 1:25 pm

Arrived at Killarney Bay anchorage @ 2:20 pm

Days cruised: 44 Days on the loop: 61

Hours traveled: 3 hours 32 mins + 55 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 25.27 + 4.3 for the day (1045.08 total miles)

Average Speed 7.1 + 4.7 knots

Weather: Sunny but cool. Low 70's S SW winds at 14mph

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Protected cove, good hold

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/0P6aU7UjsCY>

That is a wrap for this update!

Time is unrenewable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!

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