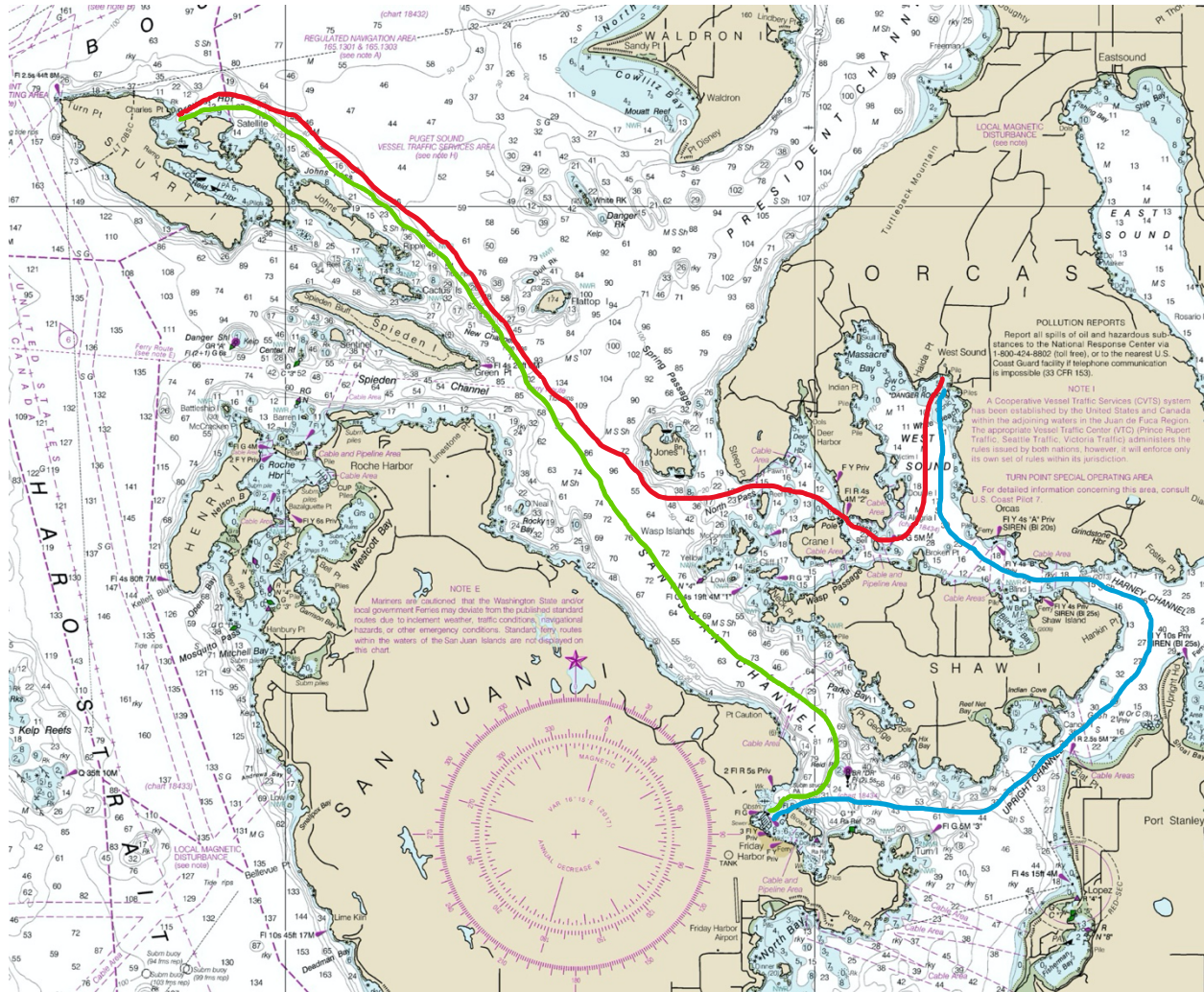


Voyage to Stuart Island and Friday Harbor in Sara E

July 2022



Legend:

- red line = first day (West Sound to Prevost Harbor)
- green line = second day (Prevost Harbor to Friday Harbor)
- blue line. = third day (Friday Harbor to West Sound)



Crew and Skipper, tilted



S/V Sara E (Desolation Sound, 2016)

Monday July 11:

Left West Sound Marina at about 11:45. Very light wind so this part of the trip was entirely by motor.



Through Pole Pass at 1200.



A little after 1300 we were south-west of Flattop Island, course north-west. By then we could see Stuart Island clearly. We continued past Spieden Channel and New Channel to the west. The current was in strong flood, and we began to experience the southerly counter-current along the east shore of Stuart. Our cruising speed of 4.5 kt through the water was sometimes reduced to 3 kt over the ground.



At about 1330 Mt. Baker appeared over the north end of Orcas.



We rounded Sattelite Island and entered Prevost Harbor at around 1430. Anchored off the county dock in the north-west corner of the harbor, in about 30 ft of water at half-tide, on 150 feet of rode. Wind continued light, mostly from the east.

We got Pip alongside, boarded him/her/it, and N rowed to the dock.



We walked the county road out to the lighthouse at Turn Point. Nathan spied on Canada.



The walk back to the dock went past the Boundary Pass Traders chest, where we picked out shirts to take home – you mail them a check. Unfortunately, N chose the wrong size. Fortunately, the Traders are going to sell us an adult-sized version of the same thing.

Back to Sara E. Nathan rowed around her by himself



We had brought dinner from home, rice and beans with chorizo sausage and chili. Good!

In the early evening we rolled quite a bit due to a wave train coming into the harbor from the east. Sara E has anchored in this spot a number of times in the last 15 years and never experienced this phenomenon before. Perhaps it is sloshing set in motion by big ships in Boundary Pass. Anyway, it died down around sunset and we had a quiet night.

Tuesday July 12:

After boatmeal, we left Prevost Harbor around 0945 and motored south along the east shores of Stuart and Johns Islands, across the east entrances of New Channel and Spieden Channel, and so to the shore of San Juan Island. The current was mostly adverse – for the first hour or so, we had the tail end of the ebb, then after that the beginning of the flood. We were in the wrong places in both cases – the ebb sets north along the east shore of Stuart, and the flood sets north in San Juan Channel. On average we lost somewhere between one-half and one knot.



There was enough wind after maybe 1100 to have tacked down San Juan Channel, but for two reasons. First, the crew was sound asleep below. Second, it seemed likely to be a good idea to arrive earlier rather than later in Friday Harbor, and that idea turned out to be correct. We tied up in slip G 10 in Port of Friday Harbor marina at 1315, and within an hour the guest slips were almost entirely full.



After fish-and-chips on Spring Street, we visited the bookstore and the toy store, then hung out on the boat. Nathan had a zoom meeting with his academic coach at 1700. We had another beans-and-rice dinner with raw red peppers for salad.



After blowing pretty hard out of the west all afternoon, the wind died down around sunset, leaving a very calm marina.



Wednesday July 13:

We started the day with muffins at a local coffee house, for a break from boatmeal.



Then we did some shopping in Friday Harbor, first for a hat for Nathan so his Mom and Dad would not come down on him like a ton of bricks:



Then Nathan decided that in fact he could afford the box of Magic cards that he was coveting in the toy store. This was a big success – many cards that he really wanted.

We made a not-so-great discovery too. Plan was to leave around 1100, which would be slack water in San Juan Channel and make gaining the entrance to Upright Channel relatively easy. However as we were preparing to leave, the boat next to us backed out and promptly ran aground halfway out of the slip! The minus 3.5 ft low tide was to blame – it was about the same time as slack water. The slips at the town end of the guest dock do not have enough water to get in or out at such an extreme low water, a lesson learned. It looked like we would have enough water to leave if we waited until sometime between 1300 and 1400, so we locked up the boat again and went looking for lunch. Found good Mexican food at Tina's.



Left Friday Harbor at about 1330. Of course, by then the flood was running full-bore, the biggest flood of the month. It might have been more sensible to sail north in the 5-10 kt southerly breeze in San Juan Channel, dodge out at Deer Harbor, through Pole Pass and on into West Sound, but the Skipper had it stuck in his head that he wanted to go south around Shaw Island. Getting from Friday Harbor to the south entrance of Upright Channel took a solid hour – at some points, losing 3.5 kt of our 4.5 kt to the flood, barely making headway.

Finally we got around the south-east corner of Shaw where the stream divides, and it started to help, also the wind was then free. Since the Crew was busy with his cards, the Skipper popped the jib and sailed north in Upright Channel, making good time in the peace and quiet after shutting down the motor.



Wind was light and variable at the west end of Harney Channel, between the Shaw and Orcas ferry docks, and at the south end of West Sound. Since the Crew was eager to get home and hour was getting late, rolled up the jib and started the motor as home came into view.



We tied up in our home slip in West Sound Marina at about 1740, to bring a successful cruise to an end and meet Mom and Grandma.

