

The Quebec International Sail Training & Tall Ships Conference 2016

I really appreciated the opportunity to attend the Sail Training Conference in Quebec, Canada, when I was staying at the hotel Chateau Frontenac, in Old Town, over the 27th to 31st of January, 2016. A big thank you is given to AUSTA and the SHF, and also to those that supported my application for a bursary to attend. The bursary funding assisted towards my substantial costs. I was away for a month in Canada and India with some sightseeing and historical focus, then a focus on sailing followed by a focus on a Buddhist historical tour along with some observations on nautical differences throughout.

At the Sail Training Conference, participants and sailing programme advocates from around the world had many differences in focus. It was good to see how different training organisations approached things, how ship crews organised activities, and how issues of importance like health & safety, community engagement, engagement with new clients (such as engagement with Arabic countries), training, and bullying in the workplace were developing or issues being addressed. Individuals and groups from training organisations came from many countries but predominantly Europe (West and East), Scandinavian nations, Canada, and the United States but there were representatives from other nations such as Australia and New Zealand.

I flew out from Sydney on the 21st of January heading for Vancouver on an Air Canada flight. Having experienced fatigue during long distance travel previously, along with conjunctivitis in the eyes, I stopped over in Vancouver for a restful day near the airport in a comfortable hotel with an in-house restaurant with long service hours. It was amusing to leave Sydney in the afternoon of the 21st and arrive early in the morning of the same day. It was winter but only mildly cold and my Gore-Tex jacket and thermal hat took care of the coolness and light rain. I enjoyed Canadian fare in another nearby restaurant and, after a sleep, the next day I flew to Montreal and then Quebec but was caught out a bit by having to pay additional luggage costs for internal travel by Air Canada. I stayed in an old multi-story guest house in Old Town Quebec on the night of the 22nd and found out what an enchanting place Quebec is. After checking in and getting a key from another guest house cum-hotel I was soon enjoying a hot spa on the third story rooftop with snow drifting down and with the ghostly rooftops and window lights creating a splendid atmosphere (the temperature at this time was about -8 degrees Celsius but after my departure from Canada on the 1st of February it dropped down to more normal winter temperatures of around -20 degrees). After the spa I went for a walk around streets with snowdrifts and found the Saint Alexandre hotel with a band group playing live blues music. A conversation ensued with a group of women and another guy but I didn't hang around too long instead opting for a cosy room and sleep in the guest house. On the 23rd of January I repacked and took a taxi to the Chateau Frontenac

which was to be the Sail Training Conference venue the following week. I checked in my large suitcase with the hotel, with my numerous SHF leaflets and the intended free SHF publications (including but not limited to the Steam Tug Waratah history, Fleet Calendars, and souvenirs) and clothing (sailing caps) I had purchased to give away to delegates within as a friendship and public relations exercise, and then had lunch in the splendid restaurant facing the St Lawrence River, a river of ice and snow. It was enchanting watching the people walking past the Chateau, others tobogganing down a ramp, the historic gazeboes, and the ferries plying their way through the platforms of ice and snow (later, after the conference, I took a ferry across to Levis, on the far off opposite bank, and enjoyed the small village feel, a mile from Old town Quebec across the frozen St Lawrence but though it be a mile or so it felt like fifty or sixty years back in time what with old Rock & Roll music drifting around the café I drifted into that cold last day of January).

After lunch at the Chateau Frontenac on January 23, I headed out to the airport in a taxi paying the set rate cab charge (\$34 or 35 Canadian dollars) but giving a small tip to the informative French driver anyway. The tip wasn't 'be good to your father' but was Canadian dollars (I ended up with five different currencies on the trip ~ Aussie dollars, Canadian dollars, US dollars, Euros and Indian rupees. From Quebec I flew south to Pearson Airport near Toronto in the gathering dusk looking down upon waterways with mysterious illuminated structures here and there. In Toronto, after getting the efficient Airport Train into Union Station downtown, I got another train a couple of stops and was soon checked into my accommodation and over the next day and a bit enjoyed local bluegrass music, got high in the CNN Tower (for a few months it was the tallest building in the world and has the massive Rogers Stadium down below it with gigantic moving covers for all weather sport), looked around the pet museum with numerous displays of pets saving the lives of humans along with live pet handling, and took numerous photographs of some old sailing and commercial vessels. From Toronto I went in a limousine with a couple to Niagara Falls and checked into Sheraton-On-The-Falls. It was a good time to visit with few tourists but great vistas and imposing falls. To get an overview of the area I had booked a helicopter flight with the longest serving helicopter tourist operation in the area, which was rather short but exciting and did give an idea of the local geography. After looking around Niagara Township I rested and next day I took a Behind The Falls tour down below the imposing Canadian Falls taking a lift down then traversing old alleyways around the falls and frozen ice sculptures which gave an impression of a primeval scene from the Ice Age. The falls have been moving over the years through the erosion caused by billions of gallons of water. In the past they have worn back as much as three feet per year but the rate has slowed a little in recent times. The United States blocked their falls on one occasion for quite a long period to see if they could do something to stop the erosion but gave up on the vain exercise of pitting engineering against the full force of nature. The falls at Niagara used to freeze over regularly but these days a barrier is put up where the lake water channels in (it is put in place on a certain day in December or when the water temperature goes down to a certain level). Because attempted

daredevil feats were so much a history of the falls `performers' once in a generation are allowed to nominate a feat to be performed. But only one of the numerous ideas is accepted. Before heading back to Toronto and on to Quebec for the Sail Training Conference, I took a surface tour with another tourist and a very informative limousine driver. We gained some insight into the power stations and early history of conflict with the United States to the south. It seems the Canadians held their own very well which to me was a surprising snippet of history. The small Canadian towns near the border are delightful.

I then travelled back to Toronto with ground transport to Pearson Airport and flew to Quebec arriving late in the day, on Wednesday the 27th January. On the flight I met some delegates bound for the Sail Training Conference. Jeffrey Parker, the Tall ships chair from Wilmington Harbour Enhancement Trust and I share a taxi to the Chateau Frontenac. As he had American (US) dollars and I had Canadian I paid the driver and gained some US currency in repayment from Jeffrey. Soon I was checked in to the Chateau and started mingling with like-minded maritime people. Strangely, when picking up my registration materials the next day the organisers put my double payment on to paying for a colleague's symposium debt instead of making a repayment to me. There had been some problems with the organisers using one payment system when enrolling delegates initially in 2015 and then changing to another system later. Anyway, the delegate in my debt transferred some funds to me.

On Thursday 28th January there were several presentations available to early attendees. There was a Safety Under Sail Forum, Educators & Administrators Forum, and the Sail Training International Ships Council (STISC) Meeting. I guess in Australia we could organise a Safety `Downunder' Sail Forum.

Safety Under Sail Forum

Scheduled topics were:-

Changing Global Weather and Climate

Qualification, Certification, Verification, Paperwork, Administration: The Making of Tall ships

The Designated Person Ashore

Educators & Administrators Forum

Scheduled topics were:-

Safe At Every Level: Anti-Bullying Workshop

Not Just Ships at Sea, Not Just Sail Training for youth

Fundraising successes Explained

Pitch Camp

Sail Training International Ships Council (STISC) Meeting

Scheduled topics were:-

Small Ships Forum

Tall Ships Forum

Safety and Tall Ships – Sharing Best Practice

Sail Training Ships Council Plenary

I attended the Anti-Bullying Workshop with Alix MacAulay. It is recognised that it is a problem in every workplace as there are always those that think it okay to try to dominate or abuse (psychologically or physically or sexually) others rather than working in a cooperative manner. I hope to develop another short report on this issue using material from Conference presenters, from others, and using my own insights and experience.

I, along with most delegates, attended the Welcome Reception on the Thursday evening after a busy day. The Friday evening tended to be a bit freer with delegates availing themselves of refreshments at local restaurants and hotels. The Gala, on the Saturday evening after the workshops and presentations were over, brought almost everyone together.

Listed Presentations on Friday 29th January included:-

Sail Training Programme Showcase

Bridge Resource Management: What is in a Word?

Closing Gaps for Foreign Ships in North America

Recovery Under Sail

Marketing Sail Training

[Some of the Marketing Sail Training key aspects in content marketing included 'finding your story', that '70% of customers are more likely to buy something when content about it is shared by a friend'. Apparently people share for three main reasons being 'to look cool or smart', that 'it helps others', or 'because they believe'. The presentation was listed as being by Sally Titmus and Michael Byrne].

From Crisis Communication to Crisis Conversation: Social Media during Panic Mode

Host Port Panel: Creating a Memorable Event through Experience, Trial and Error.

RDV 2017 Event Workshop: Part One

Research into Sail Training and Related Experiential Education

Safety Management Systems: Moving Beyond the Checklists

Tall Ships and Tiny Boats: Leadership Strategies for Everyone

Host Port Support for Sail Training

RDV 2017 Event Workshop: Part Two

Listed Presentations on Saturday 30th January included

Tall Ships America Annual Meeting & Tall Ships Challenge

Sail Training International Ships Council: Small Ships Forum

Trainee Placement by host Ports

Host Port Feedback – Session 2

Connecting Sail Training with Mainstream Education

Accident analysis: Using Case Studies for Crew Training

Organisational Succession Planning and the ‘Founders Trap’.

Planning a Successful Tall ships Event

Storytelling through Events

[This was a fascinating presentation by Emily Smith in the Laval room].

Green Practices Showcase

Safeguarding, Welfare and Safety of Trainees

Effective Youth Mentoring

How to Run a Successful Kickstarter Campaign

Running a Tall Ships Event on a Budget

The Tall Ships Races 2017 – Preview

** Contacts for these presentations can be found within the programme booklet. Information can be obtained from Sail Training International and Tall Ships America, and, of course, from the various delegates, training providers, numerous companies, groups sailing vessels etcetera.

Sail Training International, Charles House, Gosport Marina, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1AH, United Kingdom

www.sailtraininginternational.orgoffice@sailtraininginternational.org

Tall ships America, 221 3rdStreet, Building 1459, Newport, RI 02840

www.tallshipsamerica.org asta@tallshipsamerica.org

Closing Plenary session in Salle de Bal [filmed, as were quite a number of the presentations].

Gala Drinks Reception

Gala Dinner

The dinner, with lights, then dancing, was quite an impressive undertaking in the ball room.

On the Sunday there were still quite a few delegates around but they were getting thin on the ground later in the day. Perhaps they had taken to boats but more likely they had taken to planes. I did a few unusual things like ice fishing (holes are drilled and you attempt to fish... igloos to provide shelter and privacy are more expensive) and made my way to Levis, through the ice, on the ferry across the Saint Lawrence. The next day, the first of February, I checked out of the marvellous Chateau Frontenac and took a train to Montreal then was winging it myself to Munich and then Delhi on Lufthansa flights. After a night at the Lohmod Hotel in Delhi I flew to Bodhgaya on Air India. Getting to the hotel in Delhi in a taxi was an experience in itself with the driver using both sides of the road and going up against the flow nearing the Lohmod. That resulted in a sideswipe to the taxi but after the drivers conferred with one another we were soon heading to my digs for the night. People seem to get by tooting and beeping politely rather than sticking to defined road rules in India. I doubt whether people would cope with that in Australia. I stayed a few days there in Bodhgaya on the new third floor of a cold monastery (the days from 10'Oclock or so were warm but not the nights, I needed my thermals more there than Canada but I was probably missing the central heating). I used my mosquito net hat and was glad for my costly inoculations and

injections and pills, and pharmaceutical drinks for everything including tetanus, typhoid and rabies etcetera but excluding Yellow Fever. I was still taking malaria tablets for a week after my return (but I know I mistook a travel sickness tablet for a rabies tablet at least once ~ maybe that means I won't be seasick and I won't bite!). After a few days in Bodhgaya, the group of 19 Buddhists, some in the monastery, some in a hotel, headed off by coach to Nalanda, Riggir, Kushinager and Varanasi before returning to Bodhgaya. In Nalanda I stood on the lecture stage of the 5th Century University & monastery (the oldest university I'm ever likely to visit). At Vultures Peak, where the Buddha used to meditate, an Indian guy helped push me up the steep slope so I bought some things he was trying to sell me. There were some highlights and they generally involved boats. What a Valentine's Day in Varanasiit was on February 14th! The Buddhist group went to Buddhist sites, museums, etcetera and went on the Ganges River (Ganga) in the evening. During a break in the morning we enjoyed chi or masala tea, or a hot yoghurt drink (lassa) before going to the fantastic Archaeological Museum with fascinating relics going back to BC but that which is now termed BCE (before common era). After rounding up stray group members we returned to the Hindustan Hotel for lunch (Hindustan was the old name for the Indian Subcontinent). The afternoon city tour fell through, as it was thought too long by many, and so I walked around the pungent streets full of life and drama taking photos of many subjects as I went. A tailor caught my gaze here, a tea seller there, the animals rummaging in the streets for morsels of food elsewhere. Of course, there were always tuk-tuk drivers and rickshaw peddlers trying to get me to use their services. I chatted as best as able to the tea seller, a military man at his post outside a run-down barracks, and various shop-keepers throughout my wanderings. During the excursion I watched kids playing cricket along an alley where I had taken photos of local graffiti and then ended up at the Mehrotra Silk Factory shop and haggled with three men, behind curtains which were ominously closed behind me, for silk scarves. They thought I must have seen them in a Lonely Planet guide but it was purely fate. I discussed silk, how to identify it (it is organic so if you burn a bit it smells like burning flesh), looked at many silk items, and discussed their aged relative portrayed in a photograph above the doorway (he was the great grandfather to the young man who was haggling with me), then I had black tea with them, and was given a gift, a man's black scarf. Then I returned to the Hotel Hindustan, Varanasi, avoiding the tuk-tuks and rickshaws, before then going in a tuk-tuk to the opulent Taj Hotel with Grahame and Sue. The expansive grounds with swimming pool and lounge seats, and the building, were in stark contrast to the austerity and poverty of life outside. We met up with some of the others and had coffee and shared cake with them at an exorbitant price. Then it was back to the Hindustan before the group headed on tuk-tuks down close to the Ganges (the Ganga) before walking through chaotic crowds, beggars, vendors, and street hasslers. At the Ganges, in the night, we boarded a boat, called a Neaya (sp?) apparently; viewed funeral pyres for nine departed souls, and then joined thousands of craft near the shore near to dancing and festivities. The boats didn't have lights, there was no port or starboard or masthead lights, no navigation aids. They generally had a motor encased near the

aft section with a crank handle to start them up and a throttle cable to propel them along, to accelerate or stop them. Guys were generally aft on tillers controlling the direction of the craft. There were some larger craft though. They all bunched up together as close as possible to the shore where there were colourful dancers and other entertainment. But with thousands of vessels it was hard to get close for a good look. It wouldn't work at sea or on the road in Australia but it works in India because the drivers are polite and they are constantly signalling to each other. The drivers or peddlers of the tuk-tuks, rickshaws and vehicles make good use of horns and bells though there is no obedience to road rules. It was all very dramatic. So much chaos, so much smell, so much drama, it was so wonderful... It was good to have the Canadian & Indian contrasts and see different kinds of vessels for real and in illustration at The Quebec Sail Training & Tall Ships conference.

Some of the Personnel and Organisations

Captain Paul Compton paulcom@uwclub.net

Jeffrey Parker Tall ships Chair, Wilmington jeff643422101@gmail.com

The Nautical Institute

Shirley Roberts Executive Director Bay Sail Appledove Schooners
Shirley@baysailbaycity.org

Bowdoin Centennial Campaign Maine Maritime Academy
mainemaritime.edu

Publications

The Voyages of Arthur Blackwell Mitchell by Priscilla BaggDonham and David Van Voorhis Wood, Capt. US Coast Guard (Ret.). Master Mariner.

David Wood, 29 Frost Lane, Topsham, Maine, USA 04086

Festival / Regattas [TALL SHIPS RACES]

Royal Greenwich Tall ships Festival 13-16 April, 2017

Part of Rendez-vous 2017 Tall ships, 150th Anniversary of Canada.

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www.sailtraininginternational.org/events/2017-Canada-150-tall-ships-regatta

The Tall Ships Races 2016, 60th Anniversary of the Tall Ships Races

www.vistantwerpen.be

www.tallshipslisboa.com

www.cadiz.es

North Sea Tall Ships Regatta Blyth 26-29 August www.tallshipsblyth2016.com

Gothenburg 3-6th September www.tallshipsgothenburg2016.com

Vessels Included

SSV Oliver Hazard Perry ~ Experience the Adventure, America's Newest Tall Ship.

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