

LAKE POWELL HOUSEBOAT IV

September, 2016

The participants were:
Dave Hustvedt, Marty

and Clark Strickland, Anna Troth and Gregg Goodrich, Jen and George Ottenhoff, Sue Hughes, Brian Hunter, Marsha Dougherty, Joy Farquhar and Harold Christopher. Everyone, members new to house boating with RMSKC and people who'd gone many times before, enjoyed the usual week of good company, paddling and food.

DAY ONE, Sunday September 11: The group motored about 40 miles up from Bullfrog, farther than RMSKC houseboats had ever gone, past Good Hope Bay to park the boat at Trachyte Canyon [A].

The land at the far end of the lake was flatter and more open than the canyons closer to Bullfrog. The water level had changed recently and the shores were muddier than any encountered on previous trips.

DAY TWO, Monday, September 12: Everyone paddled out into the main channel and up toward Hite Marina. A group split off and headed back. The others explored small but interesting canyons on both sides, but because of the wind did not go far enough to see the marina.



Paddling out of Trachyte Canyon



In the main channel heading toward Hite

The water in the main channel was more like the Colorado River than Lake Powell: definitely too silty to filter or make drinkable with a UV SteriPEN, but it could have been treated with the club's new P&G system for flocculating and purifying. [Read Brian's article about flocculation and the P&G product on pages 47-56.] Both groups experienced gusty winds and hard paddling to get back to the houseboat.

DAY THREE, Tuesday, September 13:

The morning was still windy. Dave decided to stick around Trachyte Canyon to fish. Marty, Sue and Jen paddled to the far end of the canyon, which wasn't as far as the map, which had been drawn at a higher water level, made it appear. It wasn't the fabulous Lake Powell canyon paddling that they were hoping for, and the wind made getting the mile or two back to the boat a bit scary and a lot of work, but they had a good time. A slight break in wind seemed like a good time to take selfies.



Marty



Sue



Jen

The rest of the group went across the channel to explore the right arm of White Canyon. Before going in they stopped at an alcove on the right which would be a great campground for houseboat and tenting with lots of shelves and level spots.



Rock Tower at the entrance to White Canyon

They were amazed as they entered to see some spectacular rock formations. The most notable was nicknamed "The Battleship" by Anna and Gregg. As they paddled farther up the canyon the water was thick with red mud and as they neared the end it became apparent that the wind waves were mixing the shallow water at the end. They heard a lot of thunder but didn't see any lightening. Round trip they paddled 10.26 miles.



Battleship Rock, White Canyon

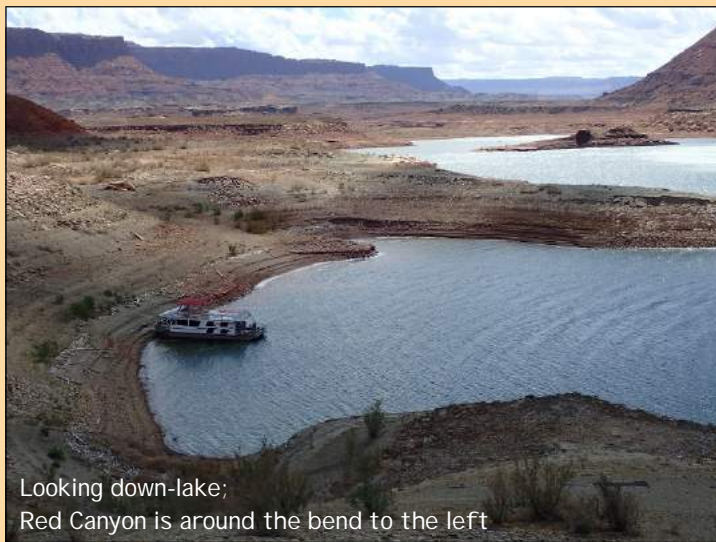


Joy admiring Battleship Rock

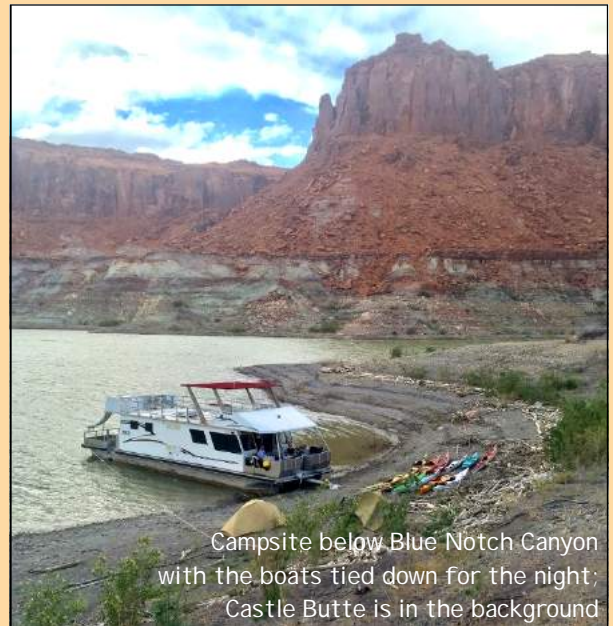


Looking across to Castle Butte

DAY FOUR, Wednesday, September 14: They packed up and moved the houseboat down around Castle Butte [B] at the north end of Good Hope Bay to moor in front of Blue Notch Canyon. There was a four-wheel drive road and campsites up on the hill; several people took hikes back into the area to explore or go birding.



Looking down-lake;
Red Canyon is around the bend to the left



Campsite below Blue Notch Canyon
with the boats tied down for the night;
Castle Butte is in the background

Marsha, Sue and George paddled south, out to see what was around the corner in this boot-shaped part of the bay. Some of the rocks were amazing, and there was lots of wave-print sandstone. Paddling home was a windy struggle, but the wind and the waves made for a few minutes of good surfing right before they reached the shore.





Ancient wave patterns captured in the sandstone



Then the generator went out. That meant they were really roughing it: no microwave for breakfast bacon and no blender for margaritas with their tamales. Brian used his DeLorme Inreach 2-way satellite communicator to get a message to his son to call the marina, but no repair boat arrived that day. They used his JetBoil to make the glaze for the evening's dessert and they sat out around a lovely fire after dinner.



Rum cake is a houseboat tradition



DAY FIVE, Thursday, September 15: The group decided to explore the shores going north from the houseboat toward Castle Butte but again, the map of the area showed more small canyons than there proved to be.

Anna, Gregg, George and Sue went back to look at the draws on the way to Red Canyon. They hiked a couple of miles into the canyon and found some petrified wood and more birds than they thought they would.



Gregg looking for a bird in Red Canyon, where some of the rocks weren't very red



Sue picked up trash and wondered about the chocolate-colored rocks.

The rest of the group paddled across the channel to explore Ticaboo Canyon.



Ticaboo Canyon



DAY SIX, Friday, September 16: The boat was moved again, past a pump-out station where the house boating newcomers learned about that process. Check out Gregg's video of Marty's energy working the pump: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByETq77Zd-xeZHNzcXFJQjVUMW8>

Unfortunately they clipped a propeller as they were pulling into their last campsite [C] on river right between Warm Springs and Sevenmile canyons.

They worked together to replace it: Harold in his kayak doing the grunt work at water level, with Marsha holding his boat steady and lots of advice coming in from above. The boat had come equipped with a replacement part, but not the tool needed to prepare it for installation, making the whole collection of engineers and bystanders frustrated and cranky.



Marsha, Harold, Dave, George and Clark

Brian made more calls to relay to the marina and almost everyone paddled off across the channel to explore Cedar Canyon, staying together like pros. Brian said, "Cedar Canyon was a scenic paddle of moderate length. It was short enough that several members went on to paddle Warm Springs Canyon just opposite Cedar on the way back to our boat. There were several houseboats parked in Cedar and we stopped briefly to talk to some people who were interested in my Greenland paddle. The group paddled at an easy pace and stopped to catch some shade



and hydrate under an outcrop. There was a towering butte at the end where we got a group photo taken by Harold. Gregg spotted a striped white and black moth floundering on the water that we photographed for him to try to identify back home.

Gregg wrote, "I remember Cedar Canyon because I was impressed with the safety conscious attitude of

our safety man, Brian. He had us cross the channel as a group so we were more visible to boat traffic. Then he had us go single file through the Canyon again to allow boat traffic clear passage.



Jen, Joy, Harold, Marty, Gregg and Anna



"Then he let me lead the group which I really enjoyed. I think it is a good thing to get members into the different roles of a group paddle.

"Brian rescued this pretty moth in the Canyon. Safety extends to our insect friends as well. Good birds on that paddle were Great Blue Heron, Rock Wren and Canyon Wren. Also Ann reminded me of the Spotted Sandpiper we had at the very end of the Canyon. We got a very cool up-close look at it."

Dave Leatherman, a birding friend of Gregg's, identified the moth. He wrote, "That looks to be the Hera Buckmoth (*Hemileuca hera*). Larval food plants are a couple types of sagebrush. Adults such as you found do not feed. Members of this genus are called "buck" moths because they tend to fly in autumn during deer hunting season. It is in the silk moth family, as are some of its bigger, better known relatives like cecropia, polyphemus, luna, etc. Beautiful creature, indeed. I like your idea of positioning it on a map where you found it." <http://bugguide.net/node/view/100806>

A smaller group followed the shore up to Sevenmile Canyon and explored back in both arms. The repair boat did not come while either group was gone, further frustrating the two who had remained behind to wait for it. When the main group returned the two who had been waiting, and a couple others, went around the corner to the end of Warm Springs. The legendary Lake Powell canyon paddling improved everyone's outlook. It also helped that the repairmen with the needed tools replaced the prop while they were gone.



Marsha, Dave and George went to Sevenmile Canyon instead of Cedar Canyon



George in Sevenmile Canyon

The moon was full that night, and they knew that nearby Warm Springs was a short canyon. It seemed ideal for a moonlight outing, and Anna Troth was convinced to bring her flute. Here's a recording of the music of the flute and the night sounds: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0ByETq77Zd-xeLTB2SDIYeHhSNIU>



The end of Warm Springs Canyon by day

The light from the moon, once it got down into the canyon, was bright enough to paddle without headlamps and the flute's echoes on the high walls were magic. Everyone who went said it was a bucket-list experience they were so glad they had been able to have.



DAY SEVEN, Saturday, September 17: The moon was still out when Sue, Brian and Joy got up early to check out Sevenmile Canyon. Everyone else took their time to pack and get ready to head back to Bullfrog.

It had been a different trip: more wind and mud than usual, and fewer deep-walled canyons to explore, but they all enjoyed the good-humored company, delicious dinners and the paddling as much as the people on earlier trips had.

DETAILS: They “traded” the cost of the broken propeller for the inconvenience of three days without electricity. The total for the boat rental, insurance, gasoline and the shared evening meals came to only \$327 per person for the whole week.

BIRD REPORT FROM GREGG: We had a total of 29 species with the highest numbers for species being American Coot at 318. Next were the Clark/Western Grebes at 61. We had 34 Common Ravens, 29 Turkey Vultures, 16 Double-crested Cormorants and 12 little Rock Wrens to round out the species that were in double digits. The bird of the trip for me was the Parasitic Jaeger that Clark and I saw on the way back from White Canyon, my second favorite canyon to Warm Springs.

Thanks to you all for helping us get on very cool birds right from the front of the boat as we were docked. Where I swore there would be nothing without trees, we had Yellow Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Spotted Towhee, Rock Wrens and Canyon Wrens! Thanks to Harold for the cool photo of the Osprey which we later found again on a paddle. In summary, good birding for a desert habitat.

The last morning they also saw a big-horned sheep! That was a first for RMSKC paddlers at Lake Powell.



Captain-in-Training Clark Strickland
with Captain Dave Hustvedt



Relaxing while the wash dried



Harold, Clark, George, Marsha, Dave, Jen,
Marty, Sue, Gregg, Anna, Joy, and Brian

Photos in this article
were taken by Harold, Marsha,
Sue, Gregg and Brian.

The map on the first page
was adapted from *Belknap's
Canyonlands River Guide*.