

LAKE POWELL
 HOUSEBOAT WEEK, II
 September 19-25, 2010

The RMSKC had another wonderful week of kayaking on Lake Powell trip this summer. Coordinated by Jud Hurd, twelve of us went about a month earlier than last year and enjoyed perfect weather, warmer water and a full moon.

On the way to Bullfrog Marina we stopped for melons in Green River and camped Saturday night at the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. We loaded and boarded the houseboat on Sunday; the dozen kayaks were hoisted up

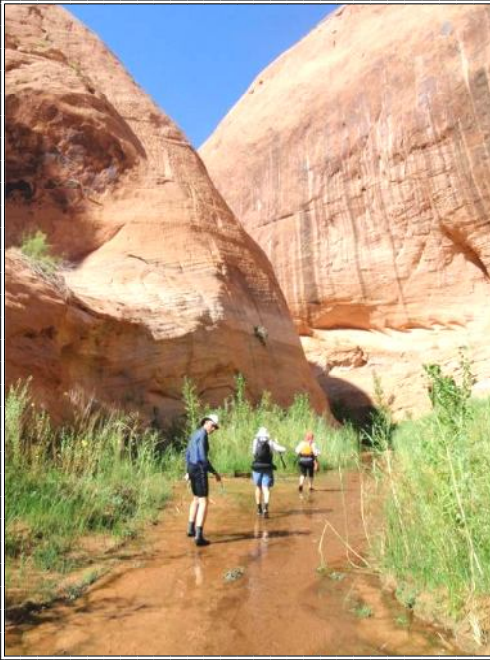


from the side of the boat with Brian Hunter's nifty sling invention. We then motored approximately 30 miles down to the Escalante River Arm. After scouting a bit we saw a speck of sand in the distance that turned out to be a very nice beach [A] on the north side of a cliff. It wasn't as spacious as those we enjoyed last year but we appreciated the shade and it was easily big enough for our boats and the ladies' tents.

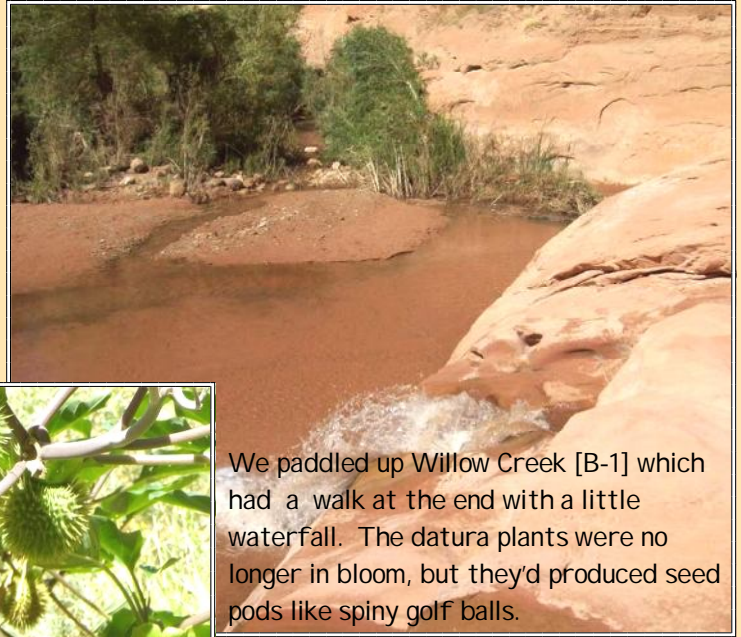
On Monday, some people went up

Davis Gulch, a 11.2 mile round trip [A-1] which had a nice walk back at the end. Others paddled in Clear Creek Canyon [A-2] and Indian Creek [A-3]. Everyone remarked on the water that morning. It was smooth as glass and the reflections of the canyon walls were spectacularly beautiful.





Tuesday we broke camp and moved our houseboat farther up the Escalante to the left fork of Willow Creek [B].



We paddled up Willow Creek [B-1] which had a walk at the end with a little waterfall. The datura plants were no longer in bloom, but they'd produced seed pods like spiny golf balls.



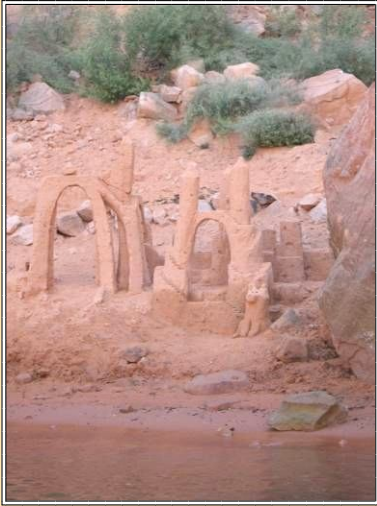
On Wednesday we paddled the other arm of Willow Creek and then out into the Escalante Arm and into Explorer Canyon [B-2]. In front of it was an island in the oxbow with a beach big enough for four or more houseboats, but the canyon entrance was narrow and almost hidden, guarded by a wonderful pair of matching monoliths. We saw an Anasazi granary.

When we came out it was a little windy and we split into two groups. One had a lovely time meandering back to the boat and the other went farther up the Escalante Arm toward Cow and Fence Canyons. But not very far. As Annette Mascia said, "Encountering log jams that totally obstructed passage in the watery canyons was a new experience for us this year. We ran into the first jam in the right fork of Willow Creek Canyon. Though the dead tree trunks were afloat, it was impossible to paddle through them because they had been so tightly packed by the wind. We poked and jabbed at them while Lou Ann attempted to plow a path along a side wall, but the logs closed in behind her as she inched along. A much larger log jam across the Escalante Canyon Arm thwarted our attempt to paddle up to Fence Canyon and Cow Canyon. It totally filled the wide river as far as we could see, not far above Explorer Canyon [B-3], and forced us to turn back. Who knew?"



Back at camp a brief squall, the only rainfall of the trip, hit with a booming, thunderous shot, barely giving the tent ladies time to get the flies on their tents. Afterward, we were rewarded with a stunning double rainbow display."

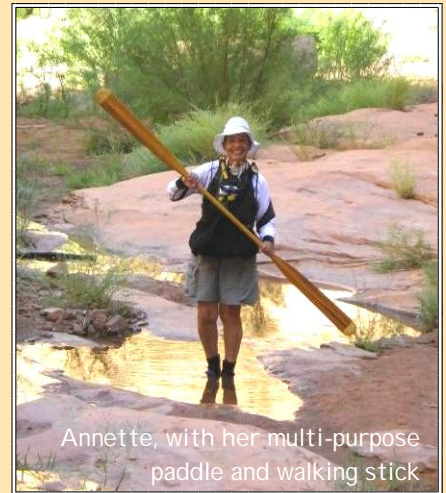
That night Anna Troth played her flute from her tent, as she often did. The notes bounced off the deep overhang even more than usual and she began improvising with her own echoes. Soon it sounded like two flutes answering each other. It was a magical, haunting concert we are all thankful to have heard.



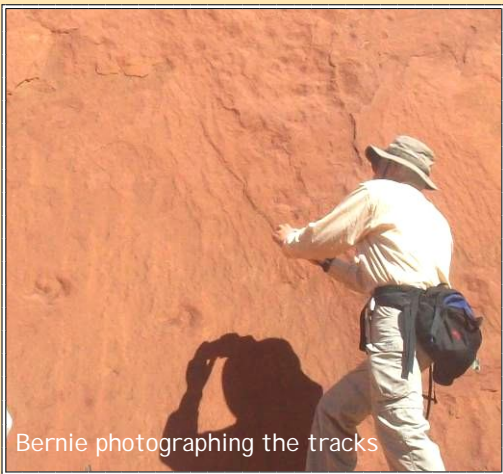
Thursday morning we packed, loaded boats and motored to the Rincon [C]. We set up camp and paddled out into the main lake and over to Iceberg Canyon [C-1]. We saw some great coves and a wonderful sandcastle.

On Friday many of us spent the day in Iceberg again, exploring the interesting coves and side canyons. Brian, Annette and Sue hiked up one of them looking for a rock slide, which the others found in a parallel canyon. Iceberg was a busy place that day, with lots of motor boat traffic making chop and waves that simulated the ocean, and the unforgettable "Houseboat From Hell".

Marsha Dougherty has a short video of them for the winter party. Depending on whose GPS you used, we paddled 16 to 18 miles.



Annette, with her multi-purpose paddle and walking stick



Bernie photographing the tracks

George and Jen, Bernie Dahlen, Lou Ann and Anna hiked around to the back of the Rincon bluff [C-2] to see the dinosaur tracks; Lou Ann and George hiked to the top to the road out.

Later that day we had some housekeeping to do: the holding tanks weren't designed for a seven day trip and they were getting full. The Rincon Pump Station was just across the bay and Annette recalls, "We motored over to empty out, but not without challenges. First, the station seemed to evade attempts to tie on until Captain Dave realized it was floating, not fixed, in the water. Once the lines were secured,

he had the dubious honor of attaching the waste transfer hoses...or not. After a frustrating half hour of trying every conceivable coupling combo and scouring the houseboat for the phantom coupler, Marsha emerged with the Holy Adapter and saved the day. With the hookup completed, Bernie, Brian and Jud got an unexpected workout pumping the tanks by hand. Phew! Why no mechanical pumps? Marsha again emerged from the boat, this time with disinfectant and gloves to reclaim, clean, and return the nasty adapter to its hiding place under the pilot's console. Who knew such a mundane task could be so...fun?"



Marsha, Dave and the adapter



On Saturday we headed back to Bullfrog, taking our time looking in side canyons to scout camping places for next summer and dawdling around because we hated to see the trip end. At one point we just pulled up to a lump of bare rock and got out and ran around like kids who didn't want to get back in the car.

Yes indeed, it was another good trip. We got excellent team work going with breaking camps, and boat loading and unloading. Dave, dead tired from the Four Mile Canyon fire, was as steadfast as last year with piloting and mechanical issues, and he spent

time helping Jud get ready to captain next year if necessary. Jud, the trip coordinator, did a smooth job of the arrangements, leading the evening discussions of what the possibilities were for the following day, and the post-trip accounting. Gary taught a bit of rolling and strokes, Brian developed the kayak slings and Lou Ann perfected hauling the boats to the top with ropes and carabineers. The shared meals were always good and, as Anna said, "Ending the day with someone else doing the cooking was a great treat!"



The sun shone, it was rarely too hot, the water temperature was 76° and great for swimming or bathing with biodegradable soap so we were clean campers, and the moon was full. What more could you want for less than \$300 for the week?

This report was written by Marsha Dougherty, with additional bits from Annette Mascia, Sue Hughes and Anna Troth. The map was prepared by Jud Hurd; extra reference maps and the photos were provided by Marsha Dougherty, Sue Hughes, Brian Hunter, Annette Mascia and Anna Troth.

The dozen participants included those folks and Bernie Dahlen, Lou Ann and David Hustvedt, Jen and George Ottenhoff, and Gary McIntosh.

