



'Cruising the Chesapeake'

A presentation by Richard Lawson, 23 November 2022

Report by Stephen Thomas

Richard Lawson is a long time Squadron Member and is actively engaged for the Club with the International Council of Yacht Clubs (ICOYC). 43 people attended Richard's very informative presentation on the ICOYC and Cruising the Chesapeake. Approximately 26 stayed for dinner in the Careening Cove afterwards.



Richard Lawson (L) and Cruising Division Chairman David Henry

The ICOYC was established in 2005 with the purpose of bringing like-minded yacht clubs together to discuss issues regarding the running and development of yacht clubs. RSYs joined in 2007 and was represented by past Commodore Rex Harrison.

Every few years, the ICOYC teams up with a member club to arrange a cruise, to which all are invited. Previous cruises have been held in Vancouver CAN, the Solent UK, Bay of Islands NZ, Seattle USA, Durban SA, Perth AUS, Hong Kong, San Francisco USA and Cork IRE. In 2015 Richard participated in an ICOYC cruise of the Chesapeake organised by the Annapolis Yacht Club, Maryland.



Richard is on the mailing list of the ICOYC newsletter known as “Currents” which he circulates to the RSYS Cruising Division committee.

Following this introduction, Richard turned his attention to the Chesapeake generally and the AYC cruise specifically.



Traditional Chesapeake lighthouse still in use

The Chesapeake is a watershed of 150 rivers extending from upper New York State to Virginia in the south, and is approximately 200 by 30 miles in area, and a place for blue crabs, Eastern oysters and many breeds of fish. It has very little tidal movement but is sometimes subject to storm surges which create higher than normal sea levels.

The colonial settlement of Annapolis on the Western shore of Chesapeake Bay was established in 1649 by Puritan exiles from Virginia. It became the seat of the Maryland Government and was the temporary capital of the USA under George Washington after the War of Independence in 1783.

Annapolis retains many of its historic weatherboard houses all of which are heritage listed and must be maintained to strict standards.

The 2023 cruise will start in Annapolis with a visit to the Naval Academy. Richard showed photos of the academy, and it is a must see during the cruise. This is followed by a passage to Dun Cove for a raft up and an outing to Cambridge, founded in 1684. It was the home of



James A. Michener when researching the book “Chesapeake”.

This is followed by a cruise to the second oldest town on Chesapeake Bay, Oxford, founded in 1683. (Annapolis is the oldest). There is a guided walking tour of Oxford followed by an informal sail race to the Tred Avon Yacht Club.



Traditional Chesapeake oyster gatherer

The cruise will visit St. Michaels which is home to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum which will be open to visitors. The cruise then traverses to the western side of the bay to the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Club, one of the oldest clubs on the bay. The cruise closes with the return to Annapolis and the opportunity to dine at a member’s waterside home.

Richard presented to the meeting the AYC burgee which was gifted to the RSYS cruise participants in 2015. The Cruising Division committee feels this burgee could be framed and added to the eminent yacht club burgee collection displayed in the entry stairwell from the carpark.

Richard then closed his talk with some advice for participants in the 2023 cruise.

- Take a RSYS burgee to present to the Annapolis Yacht Club
- Recommends all participants wear RSYS shirts with the anchor monogram as a uniform
- Bring some shirts to present to host families who may billet some participants.

There were several questions, and it was pleasing to see an engaged audience.