

# ERIE CANAL CRUISE POWER POINT SLIDE NOTES

- (1) A Cruise in the Past Lane, the name the Gill's have given this presentation, was a cruise on the Erie Canal from September 9th through the 16th, 2006 by John and Judy Gill, Judy's brother Skip and friends from Toronto, Norm and Lynda Beatty.
- (2) This map of NY shows the Erie Canal from the Hudson River to Lake Erie, the Oswego Canal from the Erie Canal to Lake Ontario, as well as the Champlain Canal going from the Hudson River North to Lake Champlain.
- (3) Planning the trip was much like planning their America's Great Loop Cruise, but far less work. Two companies which chartered canal barge boats were investigated: the Erie Canal Cruise Lines and Mid Lakes Navigation.

Even though the charter companies claim to have all the charts and guide books one needs, Skipper Bob's guide to cruising the Erie Canal and other guide books were purchased. They also bought their own up to date charts. They used all of them for planning their daily cruising schedule. They also explored the Internet and read several articles in boating magazines.

- (4) The canal boat was chartered from Erie Canal Cruise Lines because they offered a one way charter versus having to retrace the route. This allowed them to cover more of the Canal during the week. The boat they were assigned was called the Fair Dinkum which was boarded in Fairport, NY and dropped off in Seneca Falls, NY.
- (5) The Fair Dinkum is 42 feet long, her beam is 12 feet and a draft of 3 and a half feet. She has two staterooms with double beds and a sink; two heads; one shower; a fully equipped galley with sink, 4 burner stove & oven, full refrigerator with a small freezer; and microwave oven. It also had a complete set of dishes, utensils, pots and pans, coffee maker, etc.

- (6) The Dinette on the Port Side seats 6 persons and sleeps two additional crew members. Judy's brother Skip slept here.
- (7) This photo shows the Galley Sink on the Starboard side and the Steps up to the Aft Cockpit. A cooler was also brought for potable water because they did not trust the on board water tank.
- (8) Next to the sink is the Stove with an Oven, a Refrigerator and Micro Wave. The galley also had lots of storage space.
- (9) Looking Forward from the galley is the Companion Way Towards the Bow and staterooms.
- (10) The Aft Head is on the Port Side. It is towards the bow from the dinette, a small hanging locker and some storage shelves. This head has a 100 gallon waste holding tank and was considered the main head for the boat.
- (11) This is the Mid Cabin Bed on the Starboard side. There were four huge drawers under the bed for storage.
- (12) Across from the Mid Cabin bed is a small hanging locker, a private Sink and the Door to the shared Shower to the right.
- (13) On the Starboard Side of the Forward Cabin is another Double Bed with storage underneath. There also was a shelf above the bed.
- (14) At the foot of the Forward Cabin Bed are some storage shelves, the Door to the Bow deck and the air conditioner. Beneath the air conditioner is a crawl through door to a storage area under the bow deck. Here they found deck chairs, a portable propane Bar-B-Que grill and a place where they could store their soft side duffel bags.
- (15) Across from the Forward Cabin Bed on the Port Side was the Head for the forward stateroom. This head had a 65 gallon holding tank for a boat total of 165 gallons.

- (16) Next to the head was a small hanging locker and a private Sink. Left of the sink was another door into the shared shower from the forward stateroom.
- (17) Once all the gear was aboard, stowed and crew settled in, it was time to dress the Fair Dinkum by raising their Colors. The American Flag on the yard arm was provided, so both the United States Power Squadrons and Canadian Power Squadron Ensigns on the Starboard side were added , and the America's Great Loop Cruisers Association and Sassafra's River Yacht Club burgees on the Port side. In honor of the Canadian crew members, the Canadian maple leaf flag was flown on a Starboard bow rail.
- (18) Here are some important facts about the Erie Canal which one should know in order to appreciate this cruise. The Canal is 363 statute miles long - all fresh waters in the US are measured in statute miles. The Canal goes from Waterford, NY in the East to Tonawanda in the West. It was built between 1817 and 1825, quite an accomplishment in those days.
- (19) The Specifications of the Erie Canal are: Originally it was 40 feet wide but is now 125 feet wide. It was 4 feet deep but now 12 feet deep. It had 83 Locks where it now has only 35 Locks. The total Rise from the Hudson River to Lake Erie remains at 568 feet.
- (20) The benefits of building the Canal speak to its importance and history: It cut the shipping time from New York to Buffalo in half, which was very important in pre railroad days. It also cut shipping costs by 90 percent. The tolls charged paid for the costs of building the canal in just 10 years.
- (21) The weeks' cruise was started by first going West on the Erie Canal from Fairport, NY which is just East of Rochester to Pittsford and then on to Brockport, NY which is a little West of Rochester. For the first day, a short 7 mile trip was planned to get used to the boat and not have to do any locks.

- (22) The village of Pittsford is a nice little waterfront community with a few shops, two restaurants and free 15 amp electric which turned off sometime in the early morning. The electric cord had to be moved to the corner of the building in the morning to be able to make coffee.
- (23) This is another photo of the docks at Pittsford looking East.
- (24) These are the stores at Pittsford, right next to the canal docks. There was also a large flock of ducks near the docks which kept everyone awake at night.
- (25) It is now the second day and the Fair Dinkum is under way. It will go under the bridge and into the first Lock.
- (26) The newer locks have cables attached at the top and the bottom. They all have lines dropped from the top which were very dirty and the reason why gloves are part of the necessary boating gear. All locks also had Bollards or posts for larger vessels and barges.
- (27) Each lock was numbered and had signs with distances to other locks and instructions.
- (28) Cruising West on the Erie Canal. This part of the canal was quite muddy from the aftermath of hurricane Ernesto.
- (29) Here are Skip, Lynda, Norm and Judy on the Aft Deck and helm. John's taking the picture. Most of the trip everyone was up top-sides.
- (30) All along the canal there were series of Canal Control Gates which can be lowered to stop the flow of water and drain a lock for repairs if necessary.
- (31) Here is a close up of a Control Gate which was usually found at the upstream end of each lock.

- (32) The canal is still used for commerce. These Tow Boats were tied up along the bank of the Genesee River. Only one other was passed towing two barges. In order to cross the Genesee River a waver had to be signed at the lock because of the strong currents due to Hurricane Ernesto, however the currents were not too bad. The Genesee River flows right through Rochester, NY.
- (33) Part of the canal in this section is cut right through a shale rock formation.
- (34) As the town of Spencerport was approached the lift bridge had to be raised for us. This bridge raised straight up from both sides. The first thought was to stop here for the night but the decision was made to continue 8 more miles to Brockport to see what it was like.
- (35) Once at Brockport we were very happy that we had continued West.
- (36) The port of Brockport has built a nice pleasure boat friendly waterfront right in the middle of town with a beautiful bulkhead. The dockside visitors center included nice heads with showers and a laundry. The volunteers who staffed the offices were very friendly. Brockport is also the home of IVORY soap.
- (37) The next day our trip reversed course and started back East toward Lyons for the next three days. After Lyons the course headed South and then West on the Seneca-Cayuga Canal.
- (38) Here Judy is sitting at the Bow with the flags flying behind her and the canal ahead.
- (39) All of the crew took turns at the helm. However in tight spots it was either John or Skip at the helm. Judy did most of the navigation.

- (40) At one point our boat passed the competition - Midlakes Navigation. As you can see their boats are a little smaller, with basically the same inside layout, but only 10 and a half feet wide with a little gathering area in an enclosed bow.
- (41) Again, the town of Spencerport was passed, this time going East bound.
- (42) As bridges were approached their numbers were noted, to keep track of the charted position. The Gill's also took one of their handheld GPS units as part of the gear for positioning as well as to know the actual speed over the ground, which averaged around 5 to 6 statute miles per hour.
- (43) Beside most locks there was a spillway to take off excessive canal water. The water was high because of Ernesto. However, only one electric power generator plant was seen.
- (44) On the return trip back East, the town of Pittsford was again passed. These are the docks where we had stayed on our first night.
- (45) It was amusing to the entire crew that on various bridges including this Railroad Bridge there were big arrows showing the channel underneath.
- (46) This Sailboat and its crew was going South from Lake Erie for a warmer Winter in Florida.
- (47) There were many Beautiful Homes built along the Canal. The closer they were to the major cities, the more elaborate they were.
- (48) Alongside the canal there is a path, most of which was paved, that was used by many of the local residents. This pathway followed the original towpath alongside the canal. Here is a couple on a bicycle built for two.
- (49) There are many parks along the Canal such as this one. Many included boat ramps for small boat launching.

- (50) The Towpath was very popular for Cyclists and Walkers, including those with dogs.
- (51) Here are more beautiful homes along Canal banks.
- (52) We even saw canoeist and this Kayaker paddling on the Canal.
- (53) The next port-of-call was Fairport. Since the crew's cars were here they were able to replenish food and ice. Other boaters were also taken to the store. Being docked right downtown, the crew had fun going to the various gift shops and buying souvenirs.
- (54) Here is Skip is at the helm, Judy navigating and Norm looking on.
- (55) East of Fairport our first Channel Buoy was seen - before that the helmsman simply kept the boat between the right and left banks.
- (56) Further away from the Cities there are many clusters of Summer Cottages and fishing camps.
- (57) Here the Fair Dinkum is approaching Lock # 30. As you can see it will be locking up from a lower water level to a higher one.
- (58) Not too much wildlife was seen except several flocks of Canadian Geese and many, many ducks.
- (59) Palmyra was our next night's stop. This is a very old city. It's main claim to fame is that it is the only city in the USA that has a church on all four corners of the main street (Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist & Presbyterian).
- (60) After a hard day of cruising and sight seeing, this is how Judy found Skip, John and Norm relaxing dockside.

- (61) Since Skip was the only one with full rain gear, he was assigned Bow duty when locking through, when it rained.
- (62) In the town of Lyons, the volunteer Firehouse provided facilities for boaters, however the women had to use the showers in the men's rest room with a crew member posed as a guard outside the door.
- (63) On the lock walls approaching each of the locks there were signs listing safe locking procedures.
- (64) This is the sign giving information for Lock # 26 at Clyde, NY.
- (65) Here inside the lock the Fair Dinkum waits for the gates to open. This is the last lock it will traverse on the Erie Canal part of the cruise.
- (66) This is the spillway next to the Lock. One could really feel the current pushing the boat as it motored out below the lock.
- (67) It was a very rainy day. The days cruise took us 28 miles and through five locks because there was not a good stopping spot and the decision had been made to go to Seneca Falls for the night. Plastic sheeting was hung in an attempt to stay dry in the helm area. It didn't help much.
- (68) Past Clyde there was a sign on the New York Canal System that announced the approach to the Seneca-Cayuga Canal.
- (69) This is the junction of the Erie and the Seneca-Cayuga Canals. The Seneca-Cayuga Canal goes South and then back West to Seneca Lake.
- (70) Looking back toward the North from the Seneca-Cuyuga Canal you can see that it is a major Junction with an island in the middle.



- (71) This photo is amusing because you really would not want to go between the red and green day markers. Actually the Red day marker indicates the channel to the East side of the island going East on the Erie Canal and the Green day marker indicates the channel to the West side of the island going West on the Erie Canal.
- (72) The first part of the Seneca-Cayuga Canal is wider than the Erie canal.
- (73) This is the New York Canals sign at Lock # 1 on the Seneca-Cayuga Canal.
- (74) Here the Fair Dinkum is inside Lock # 1 with the control gate up.
- (75) Just after Lock # 1 is the channel going South to Cayuga Lake. Because of the weather it was decided not to go into Cayuga Lake, instead a 90 degree turn to the West was made into the canal towards Seneca Falls, NY.
- (76) The canal towards Seneca Falls was more narrow than the Erie Canal with very few houses or cottages except at its entrance near Cayuga Lake.
- (77) Under this bridge is the approach to Lock # 2-3 which is a double lock. A boat enters the first lock, is raised up and then goes right into the second lock.
- (78) Here the boat is entering lock # 2 of the double Lock # 2 - 3.
- (79) The Fair Dinkum is now Part Way Up Lock # 2 and you can see the gates for Lock # 3.
- (80) Now it is In Lock # 3 of the double Lock # 2 - 3.
- (81) This is at the Top of Lock # 3 with the Control Gate at the end of the lock.
- (82) Approaching Seneca Falls there is a beautiful church at the East end of town.

- (83) That night was spent in Seneca Falls. The next morning the decision was made to not believe the weatherman and a trip was taken West to Seneca Lake. The crew was were sure glad we did.
- (84) Along the way a Blue Heron was seen on the Lock Wall of Lock # 4.
- (85) This is the Spillway at Lock # 4. A wait of about 10 minutes for the lock to open gave the helmsman a tough time holding the boat in the middle of the canal in the very swift current below the lock.
- (86) Now the boat is secured in Lock # 4. The lock masters on the canals often called ahead to tell the lock ahead that we were coming. Flying the Power Squadron ensign and the AGLCA burgee told them that the Fair Dinkum was piloted by experienced boaters.
- (87) This is the entrance from the Seneca-Cayuga Canal into Seneca Lake.
- (88) Across from the entrance into the Lake is Geneva, NY. A short trip was made around the Northern section of Seneca Lake for about an hour before leaving to return to Seneca Falls.
- (89) At the North East end of Seneca Lake, at the canal entrance, there are several marinas with good size boats.
- (90) Returning back down the canal the town of Seneca Falls, NY was approached, which was the final cruise destination.
- (91) Overnight was spent at the town dock. In the morning, the crew packed up and bid farewell to the Fair Dinkum.
- (92) Cruise Statistics - The week cruise covered 118 Statute miles on the Erie Canal and 16 miles on the Seneca-Cayuga Canal and Seneca Lake. And, 16 locks were traversed.

- (93) Once again here is a Map of NY and the Erie Canal. The journey went just West of Rochester to just West of Syracuse, New York.
- (94) If you have any Questions please click on the underlined Contact Us line below to send the Gill's an eMail.

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