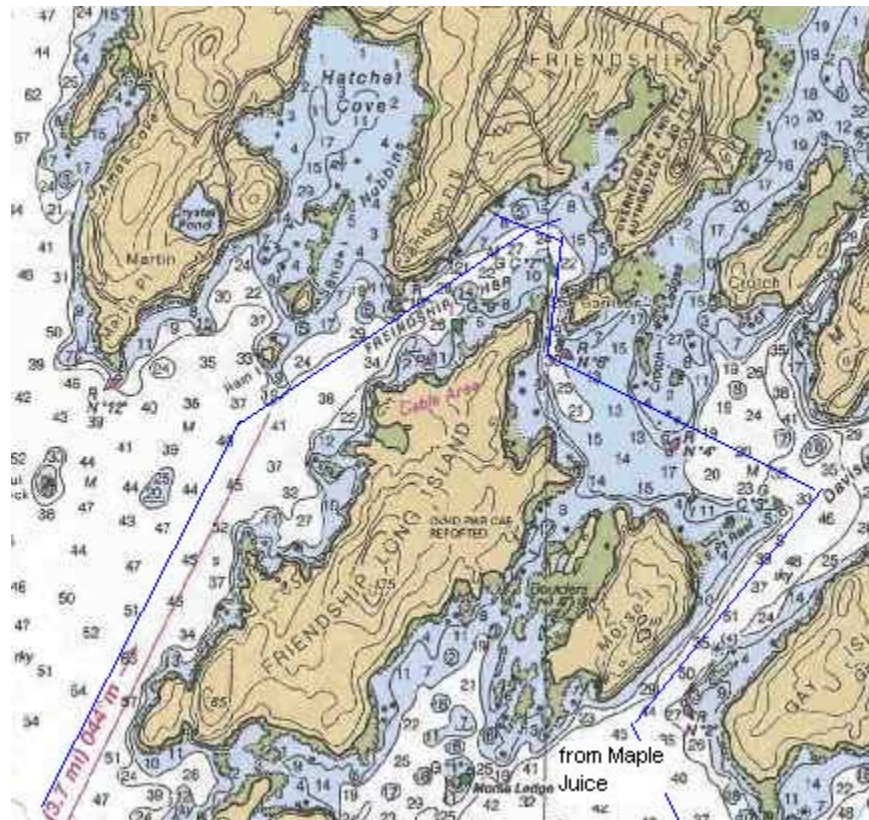


Part 4--Friendship Harbor--return to Round Pond

Our original plan had been a long sail south around Otter Island or beyond and then west, turning north to enter Friendship Harbor from the west. Since the wind was so light, and weather mediocre, we took a shorter path, sailing around Gay Island and then north to Friendship Harbor. It was a slow sail down the St. George River. Fog rolled in from the ocean and then back out, as visibility and wind waned and then slowly came back. Friendship Harbor is a long U-shape tucked between two points on the mainland and Friendship Long Island. There are many lobster boats and several lobster pounds, and the town itself sits up on a height of land above the harbor, with the town center about a half mile east.



We tied up at the town dock and shed our foul weather gear, since we wanted to find a place to get rid of our garbage (meager though it was) and re-supply with water. As we got ready to set out, an old codger arrived in an old fiberglass motor boat. He was about 5 and a half feet tall, with a knit watch cap on, long full beard, and wearing a $\frac{3}{4}$ length dark green jacket that had seen a good deal of use. He was skinny even with the jacket on. Dick asked him if he knew where we might get some water, and he said there was no public place nearby, but all the people on the street were very friendly and he was sure any one of them would be happy to fill our container. We discovered the only reason he had come ashore was to start his car and make sure it still ran. Several times he offered to take us out to his house on the island, and we could get water there, and he'd bring us right back, no problem. A very friendly fellow, and maybe he wanted some company, but we decided to try our luck up the road. It was good to stretch our legs, and the walk up the hill from the harbor to the main street woke our legs up. We completed our chores, getting water from a friendly woman who was chatting with a passerby, and rowed out into

the harbor and picked up an empty mooring between several larger sailboats, and settled in for the night, a bit damp in the muggy evening air, but happy there had been no more rain.

The weather improved over night, so that as we finished breakfast the sun was coming out and the sky was clearing. However, at sea level there were banks of fog shrouding the islands, rolling in from the ocean in intervals. We sailed out of Friendship Harbor and headed south for Harbor Island, and contemplated sailing around Allen Island further southeast from there, if the wind and fog proved cooperative, after which we planned to sail north to Hog Island, which is near Round Pond. We had reasonable wind, between 5 and 10 knots, and as I helmed Dick plotted various waypoints in the GPS, as a backup to our dead reckoning should the fog become really thick. For most of the day it teased us, at moments thinning away and at others thickening so that visibility was down to 75 yards or so.



Most of the time, except when fog became dense, there was a pretty blue sky above, even with banks of fog covering islands and shore line. We kept a wary eye for shoals and ledges as we made our way to Harbor Island and sailed on to Franklin light (see map in Part 1 for course sailed).



After heaving-to and having lunch at Franklin light we decided there was not enough wind or time to make it around Allen Island, so we then turned west and headed for Western Egg Rock, a navigation hazard masquerading as a small island, and the southern most feature in central Muscongus Bay. About half way there we could just see the green can marking the rock in the distance. Shortly after seeing the can more fog rolled in and visibility dropped, though not to pea soup. We stayed on the heading and eventually the island itself emerged from the fog. This marked the time to turn north so we headed towards the southern end of Louds Island. We sailed between Louds Island and Marsh Island and then northeast inside of several other picturesque smaller islands on the east side of Louds Island, making our way north to Hog Island. We were planning on finding an anchorage among the coves behind Hockomock Point. The sun was out and once again we had the wind mostly behind us, so it was a pleasant warm cruise after the previous day of rain and the morning of fog.

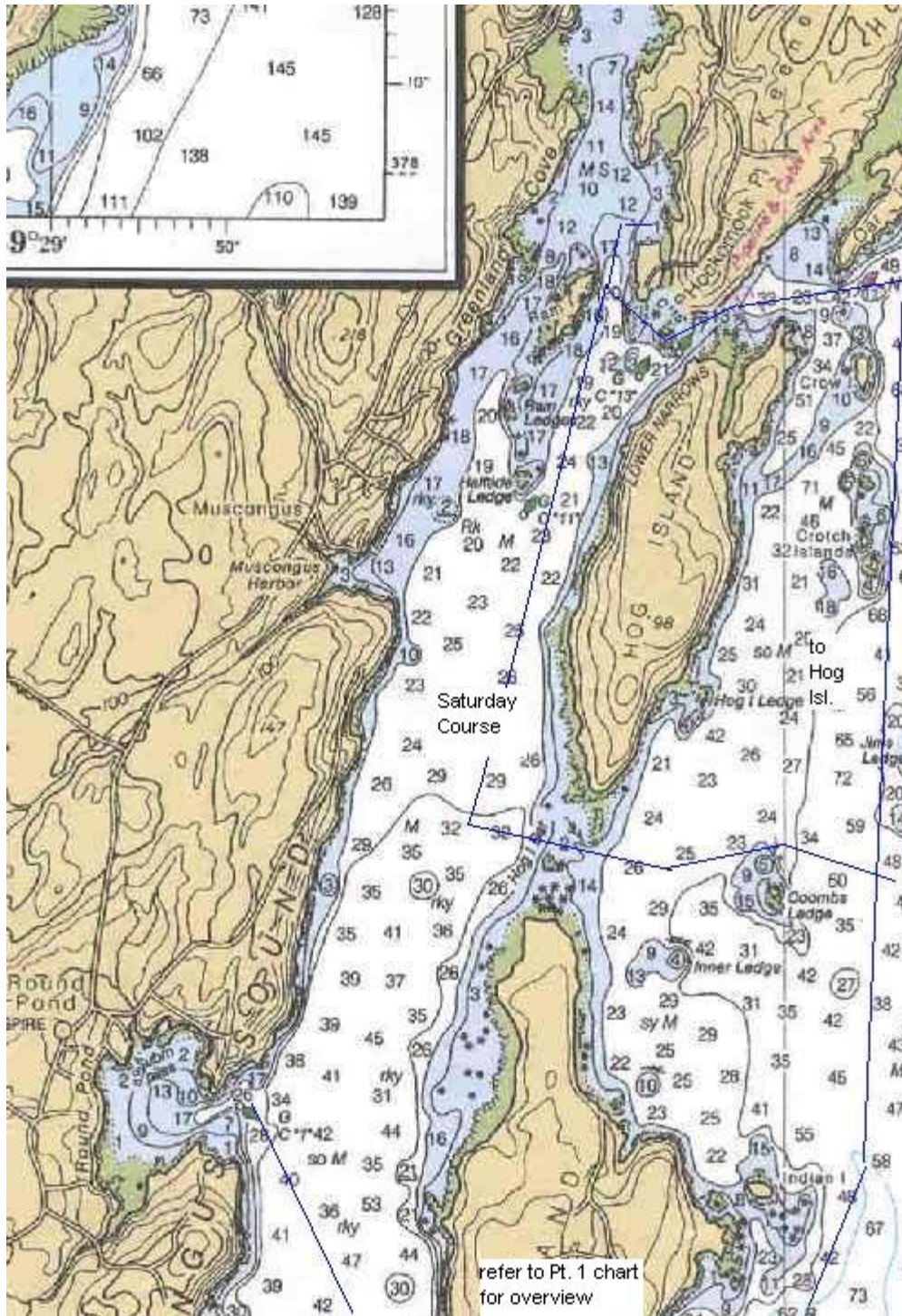
Our penchant for fresh seafood overcame us again, even though overall the meals had been quite fine regardless of surf, turf or one-point delights. As we sailed along we kept our eyes open for an opportunity to hail a working lobsterman and try to intercept him at work and buy two lobsters fresh from the water. This is a hit-or-miss proposition unless you want to make an afternoon of chasing lobster boats around, because at a given moment the lobster boat that seems like it will be on your course, a moment later has finished and quickly moves on to another pot that may be well out of convenient hailing or sailing range. We got lucky, and a lobster boat pulled up to a pot just ahead of us. Dick quickly hauled in the sails and headed to the boat, and after a series of quick maneuvers we ended up tucked under his lee and in conversation with the lobsterman. He was a burly fellow, working alone, and very busy with his work. These guys work hard, and are not given to long discussion or digressions from their labor. But this fellow was friendly enough. "Can we get a

couple of lobsters? You have any money? How about two for \$10? Across came two lobsters, then, as if he had finally detached a bit from his work and took the scene in, he said "I can't charge you \$10 for just those two, here take another." So we ended up with three very nice lobsters. Another Blue Mist encounter, a bit of chance and planning, and opportunity realized and appreciated—especially later as we ate dinner and enjoyed the fruit of the sea.

Our progress to the evening anchorage was steady, except for a minor navigation oversight that meant a short stretch of backtracking, (quick tacking against the current), followed by the natural question of 'How did I miss that buoy?' and a bout of analysis of not missing any buoys in the fog, and then missing one in the clear afternoon. It reminded me of bushwhacking gone awry when backpacking in trail-less areas with topographic map and compass.

We sailed into Greenland Cove, anchored in pleasant small corner, and settled in for pre-dinner anchor dram, followed by our 3-lobster dinner and several hours quiet conversation and absorption of the evening activity about us. Birds feeding, fish jumping, the sun setting and the cool of darkness surrounding us.





About five days into our week-long cruise, I turned to Dick and said, “ready for another week?” to which he answered affirmatively, elaborating that with a bit of shopping and some laundry, he was ready to go. Now it was Saturday and the end of the cruise arrived, and we were not going to sail another week. But we did have the better part of a day, to plan a day sail leading to take out and the drive back to Boston. We hoped for a good wind so we could cover lot of water in the 4 or 5 hours

we had. But, the wind was mostly light and somewhat variable in the morning, so we sailed south on the west side of Hog Island and then through the passage between Hog Island and Louds Island into the bay. We made our way across the bay to Cranberry Island and then turned south to head out into more open water and get some sense of the open ocean before turning up into Muscongus Sound and then on to Round Pond. The wind picked up and dropped off before finally holding at a very nice 12 knots or so as we headed up the sound. Larger rollers were just starting to move in, possibly a consequence of Hurricane Fabian that was just finished pounding Bermuda. These rollers created impressive breakers crashing over the ledges in the sound, made all the more dramatic by our own closeness and relative size. It was a fine sail back to Round Pond, and though I had been on Blue Mist just about 24 hours a day for the week, it would be great to have kept on sailing to another anchorage. Family and amenities were waiting, but the rhythms of the wind and water provided their own lure and bond.

