

## **Underground Lunch**

**By Bob Newbert**

**USCG Master Captain, AP-IN**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Adventure Cruise of the year was an “Underground Lunch.” We weren’t literally underground but we were off the grid and undercover -- like going underground.

We weren’t hiding from the authorities. Nor were part of a “deep cover,” underground network of spies. We were simply enjoying the solitude of a hidden creek wrapped in silence so very different from the clamor of regular boatways.

Our refuge, minutes from the ICW, felt like we stepped back in time to a slow-paced life governed only by tides. Certainly, our little creek must have been a favored foraging spot for Native Americans whose lives pulsed with nature’s rhythms in days gone by.

Our one nod to the present was a single house in the far distance. All around us was the estuarine marsh exactly as it was before European colonists inhabited the region. Making it all the more remote was our location next to a wildlife refuge which connected us to an idyllic past.

So let’s go back to the past.

In the beginning, the island adjacent to our sanctuary was merely an oyster shoal and a small one at that -- less than one acre in size. Over time, it grew to 100 acres and a National Wildlife Refuge that is “off limits” to visitors because it is a critical spawning area for horseshoe crabs and a sanctuary for migrating birds to rest and forage.

In other words, it’s the perfect setting for ABCHH to “rest & forage” and connect with nature, and each other, in a raft up over lunch. And that’s we did as you see in the following photos of our Thoreau-like retreat in a secret, Lowcountry creek.

Notably, publication in OCEAN BREEZE must mean we “surfaced” -- like spies coming in from the cold. Perhaps so. But remember, we were most assuredly off the grid; but unlike spies, never underground.



**FORMER COMMANDER** Craig Loomis (left) with Ted Witman and Ed Berry at our hidden anchorage to “rest & forage.”



ERIC & SUSAN SUTHERLAND signal Captains Newbert and Loomis to raft on.



**NAILED IT!** Three boat raft with the Sutherlands as anchor boat; Craig Loomis on starboard and "mystery captain/rafter/photographer" on port to capture the moment.



**TRAFFIC JAM** as four boats maneuver for rafting.



**CAPTAINS JOHN FITZGERALD (top) and JIM IANNACCINO (bottom) coming in hot for the raft.**



**"HOUSTON, WE HAVE CONTACT."** Capt. Russ Collins (orange shirt) reports in as Jim Iannacchino comes alongside.



**BABY BEAR, MOMMA BEAR & POPPA BEAR** in a creek that was “just right” for a retreat with friends.



**MARILYN SOBWICK** (right) enjoys lunch with her guests in a secluded anchorage that’s “so close yet so far away.”



***JAMES DICKIE looks skyward "shooting the sun" with his sextant to establish ship's position for Capt. Lucia Rosenblatt (pink hat) while Beth Ann Dickie looks on. It was reported that he aced it and successfully navigated back to home port. Not bad for a 1<sup>st</sup> time ABCHH cruiser!***

Photo Credits: James Dickie, John Hooker, Bob Newbert and Lucia Rosenblatt