

~Log of The E.L. Thumper~

St. Louis Trip

With only 3 weeks to make our trip to St. Louis and back for the Marietta Regatta, it was decided to travel to Millcreek the weekend before and leave the boat with Dick and Melody Smith.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2nd - MILE 3.3 ALLEGHENY RIVER:

12:30 PM We are underway, the Thumper will not return until September the 16th, 7 weeks. The crew consists of Jack, Kathy, son John and his wife Karol. 1800 rpm - 8.7 mph. Vince (Katie H) and Dana on his houseboat left Thursday and will stay at Bill Price's Thursday night.

1:30 PM Called Emsworth Lock, Mile 6. The lock attendant called back addressing us as "that Mighty Thumper". I hope he knows something!

2:30 PM Called Dashiels Lock, Mile 13. So far things are going rather well.

4:00 PM Vince and Dana called. They are at Wheeling. Vince plans to try for St. Louis and Dana is still unsure where his houseboat will turn around. He's hoping to make Cincinnati.

5:00 PM Called Montgomery Lock, Mile 32.

7:45 PM Called New Cumberland Lock, Mile 54. Here's a switch! Jack is trying to be a deckhand and John is driving. 1870 rpm - 9.5 mph.

10:15 PM Tied next to the Criterion at Mile 73 for the night.

Left 12:30 PM.....mile 3.3 Allegheny River.....Tied mile 73 Ohio River

76 miles.....9 hrs. 45 mins.....7.8 mph average

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3rd - MILE 73 OHIO RIVER:

6:55 AM We're off! 1850 rpm-8.8 mph

8:07 AM A problem! Jack forgot to hook the cooling water to the rear end. It's now 250 degrees, normally runs about 170 degrees. Some quick work with buckets and towels and things seem to be OK.

1:00 PM Called Hannibal Lock, Mile 126. We have made this trip to Marietta many times, so everything is familiar. We have been to Louisville, Ky. once on the Thumper and Jack is looking forward to seeing new trees.

3:00 PM It's really hot, we are going swimming. Vince and Dana are at Marietta, Mile 173. We are at Mile 140. We plan on meeting at Newberry Island, Mile 195.

5:50 PM Leaving Willow Island Lock, Mile 162.

6:00 PM Vince and Dana at Newbery - 30 miles ahead.

9:22 PM We tie up with the "kids" at Newberry, Mile 195.

122 miles.....14 hrs. 27 mins.....8.4 mph average

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4th -MILE 195:

8:00 AM We sleep in and get a late start. We run slow to hit the lock together.

10:00 AM Out of Belleville Lock, Mile 204. 1860 rpm-9.0 mph

1:15 PM We pull into Millcreek, Mile 231. Dick and Melody are waiting and welcome us. Dana arrives followed by Vince and the Katie H. Dana plans on staying a while to make some minor repairs, but Vince stayed only long enough to pick up Jackie Wright and he's off to St. Louis.

3:30 PM We climb the bank and go back to Pittsburgh to spend a long week working 'till our big trip starts.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10th -MILE 231:

After all the loading and months of waiting and preparation, we are finally leaving on our trip to St. Louis. On board is Rick Burden, a "buckeye" from Ohio, Dick Smith, a "hoopie" from West Virginia and Jack Bedeck, an "asshole" from Pennsylvania.

6:50 AM We are backing out of Millcreek, Mile 231 - oops, forgot to raise the spud (a pipe that is lowered through the Thumper's hull to sink in the mud and hold our position).

6:55 AM Dick discovers he forgot some stuff that Jackie Wright forgot a week before when she left on the Katie H. The ladies, Kathy, Debbie and Melody will deliver the package to Racine Lock for us to pick up.

7:35 AM Called Racine Lock, Mile 238. New rules just went into effect. Pleasure boats can lock through only on the even hours. Also, since 9/11, the gates for entrance to the observation deck are locked and visitors, especially ones with packages, are not welcome.

8:00 AM Leaving the lock with our package, thanks to friendly lock attendants, Dick says they must have been from WV.

8:41 AM The trip is not moving along as well as I had hoped. We're at our first gas stop - Mile 242.5. It takes 190 gallons at \$1.69 to top off the Thumper. She holds 800 gallons or so. My calculations seem to indicate 1 mile = 1 gallon with both engine and generator running. Oh well, at least it's easy to calculate.

1:25 PM Call the Byrd Locks, Mile 279. They tell us to call back at 1:50 for a 2:00 locking. Rick fell asleep driving, it looks like this will be a nervous 3 weeks. Lock let us in early to wait for lockage.

2:09 PM Going out of Byrd Lock, boat running good at 1915 rpm, doing 9.1 mph. It's 62 miles to the next lock, we're hoping for a 10:00 lockage. A boat passed with 2 ladies without shirts. Dick and Rick showed their tits. I think our boat crew has bigger. It's really hot out and our engine room is well over 100 degrees; seems like I should have an exhaust fan. We cut a 12 x 12 inch hole in the front of the Thumper. It helps, but doesn't look too pretty.

5:37 PM Dana Dolfi called. He's on his way home after a week of traveling to Cincinnati with the Katie H. He wants to meet below Greenup Lock, our next lock. We still have 30 miles to this lock. 10:00 PM looking good. Dana is tied up at mile 353.

8:45 PM Called Greenup, Mile 341. Rule change - locking up and then us down. While we are entering the small chamber, the C.J. Bryant is going in the big chamber, Rick flashes our pilot house lights, blinding Jack our driver. Jack seems a little nervous.

10:43 PM Tied with Dana at Mile 353, not much of a visit. He's asleep, but gets up to say hello. Dana was the other expert on Junkyard Wars and is taking his first long boat trip with a wife, 2 small kids and a dog.

Left at 6:50 AM.....Mile 231.....Tie 10:43 PM.....Mile 353

122 miles.....16 hours, averaging 7.6 mph

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11th -MILE 353:

6:45 AM We say goodbye to Dana and family. Dick makes breakfast and Rick fixes the cooler, Rick put the ice machine off the Jenny B on the Thumper for our trip and it's working quite well. We're using river water so we call it Mexican ice, good to cool beer, but not much in a mixed drink. Rick also brought along the depth sounder, called a Fish Finder 400, off the Jenny B as the Thumper's died this year, and it's also working great too.

10:00 AM All work done for the day. Beer time! Rick and Dick brought along wood and plans to build lighthouses for the women - seems they promised to build these years before, but never got around to it.

10:30 AM Rick and Dick hold a meeting to discuss construction, but they don't do any actual work on Sundays. Maybe they will start later, nope! Have to do more ciphering, only have wood for 2 lighthouses. I guess Jack's out! No, add more wood to the food order.

1:00 PM At Maysville, Mile 409.

1:15 PM Wood cutting started.

1:28 PM Rain started with lots of wind, boys running all over. Seems the wood can't get wet. Let's see: first it was a tree, then in 1945, it became a phone pole and then in 2002 it was cut into boards, now it can't get wet!

3:00 PM Passed by a boat with some of the people helping to put on the first Wheeling Regatta on September 14th. Hope we are home for it. They said they stayed at Heck's last night and are going to Louisville.

3:30 PM Phoned the lock. Pleasure boats lock at 4:00. We are trying to make it. They lied! 4:00 a towboat locking, oops. They changed their mind. We are next. Jack has to hurry between the Super America and the Charley Stone with a DNR boat watching us run in the high wind and waves.

4:03 PM In Meldahl Lock, Mile 436 and tied, Yea!

4:30 PM Thumper taking waves over the bow. Our ropes float away, but get caught on a kevel and are saved. After 6 votes on where to tie up tonight, (all made by voices in Jack's head), we decide on going to Tom and Annie Sparks at Mile 447. Looks like a big storm coming too.

5:30 PM Vince called. He's at Owenburg, Ky., Mile 756 and they had a big storm. It's getting dark with lots of wind here.

5:40 PM Tied to trees at Tom and Annie's, Mile 447.

Left 6:45 AM.....Mile 353.....Tied 5:40 PM.....Mile 447

94 miles.....11 hours.....8.5 mph average

MONDAY, AUGUST 12th -MILE 447:

6:50 AM We're off. it's hazy, but no rain. We all were in bed by 9:30 last night and up since about 4:00. Boat is running 1865 rpm - 9.3 mph. Today's problem - used all our bread on hamburgers and burnt toast.

8:30 AM Work done! Rick loads coolers, Dick (Hazel) made breakfast and is doing dishes and other Hazel chores. Jack driving.

9:20 AM Downtown Cincinnati.

9:50 AM Beer time and wave at Bob Lemle.

11:15 AM Hoping to hit Markland Lock, Mile 531 at 4:00. 41 miles to go. Running at 1950 rpm - 9.2 mph.

NOON Ran into Wheeling crowd again. This time, they gave Jack a thong, this doesn't look good!

12:30 PM Transmission temp is usually 200 degrees F. It's up to 225 degrees, so Jack slows to 1850 rpm - 8.7 mph. Phoned Markland Lock, Mile 532. They are open at any time.

3:45 PM Called Lock. The doors are open. Hurry, they will wait.

4:15 PM Jack driving at the Vevay Towhead on the wrong side of black buoys. The motor slows and the boat squats, 4.0 ft. deep on the fish finder. The boat drags on the gravel bar making a lot of noise. Scares Hazel who is shaving and almost cut his throat. Phoned McAlpine Lock. They said they lock pleasure boats at 8, 2, and 8 if possible. It's decided we will shoot for 2:00 tomorrow. Lock is at Mile 607.

7:10 PM At Madison - Mile 557. Tying up below a boat dock to some trees.

Left 6:50 AM.....Mile 447.....Tied 7:10 PM.....Mile 557

110 miles.....12 hrs 20 mins.....8.9 mph average

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13th -MILE 557:

7:10 AM Trying to leave, but the spar (a hinged pipe on the side at the stern to hold the back of the boat off shore) is stuck in the mud. A little work with a come-a-long and we are off.

Note: About last night: Dick and Jack figured out the audio system and it got very loud. It also seems we forgot to eat dinner, which didn't help. Dick tried to fix his bed in the pilot house and nearly fell down the steps, only slightly damaging his legs. As punishment, Jack was made to cook breakfast, hard boiled eggs and an ice cream sandwich.

11:13 AM Lots of wind again!

NOON Phoned the locks, no tow boats around. Just go in the canal and call the locks on the marine radio.

12:20 PM Called McAlpine Lock, Mile 607. No problem, went right in (small chamber is down and they are only using the big one). Vince is at Mile 891. We are at Mile 606. He's 285 miles ahead. This is our first trip below Louisville. 100 yards below the lock, into new water for the Thumper. Rick takes the wrong side of some buoys. Fish Finder 400 says 10 ft. deep, then a big crash: again no damage we can find. Lots of head wind, has us down to 8 mph and lots of stuff blowing out the doors and windows.

3:30 PM Rain is here. Down to 7.4 mph. The front window of the Thumper leaks badly and everything is wet except the wood.

5:24 PM For the first time in 20 plus years of boat travel, we witness sex on the beach. It's the talk of all the passing tows.

7:35 PM Tied at mile 665

Left 7:10 AM.....Mile 557.....Tied 7:35 PM.....Mile 665

108 Miles.....12 hrs. 25 mins.....8.6 mph average

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14th -MILE 665:

6:50 AM While backing out, the chains to the paddlewheel are not smooth running. Rick tells Jack about his lack of maintenance and suggests grease for the chains. 1810

rpm - 8.6 mph. Dick having more trouble with the toaster and microwave. Burnt toast and raw hash browns for breakfast. He wants to buy both so he can throw them out.

8:40 AM Work done. Weather clearing up, no rain. 5 hours to the lock.

8:45 AM Light rain.

9:00AM Sunny out and the Fish Finder 400 quit, but Rick's on it. Vinny at Mile 938, just 251 miles ahead. Dana called. He's in Millvale, our home port.

10:00 AM The wind is back. Both our small flags are gone.

10:25 AM Rick and Dick still cutting wood.

12:24 PM We called Vince. He's at Paducah with the Mississippi Queen, Mile 935. We are at Mile 714. He's 220 miles ahead.

1:00 PM At the Cannelton Lock, Mile 721. To ease the load on our chains we are running with the trim tab all the way down. 1890 rpm - 8.8 mph. Below the dam, the water is only 9 ft. deep and an oil tow is tied up. We heard he hit twice and went to the bank.

4:30 PM Amazed and confused, some of our cell phones and the GPS change the time, 4:30 to 3:30. So we tell Dick to slow down supper one hour. We have to eat lettuce for supper. Dick can't find any vegetables on the boat and we're scared scurvy might be setting in. Called Kathy, veggies in the freezer. Dick never makes frozen, only canned so he didn't look in the freezer.

7:10 PM Called Newbury Lock, Mile 776. "Come right in", they reply.

8:08 PM Tied at Mile 779 to a tree.

Left 6:50 AM.....Mile 665.....Tied 8:08 PM.....Mile 779

114 miles.....13 hrs. 18 mins.....8.6 mph average

THURSDAY, AUGUST 15th -MILE 779:

6:50 AM We're off! 1800 rpm - 9.2 mph. About last night's meal. Dick forgot the onions to mix with the potatoes. Rick put the steaks on early, then got a phone call. Potatoes hard, steaks charred, but the corn was great. When Jack tried to sit down to crush cans, he discovered the 4 chairs from the front deck were missing. Add these to

our food order. Called Vince. He's on the Mississippi, going 3 mph with 2 big tows going up at 5 mph. He doesn't sound like he's having any fun.

9:25 AM Vince called back. He's on the Ohio. He said he went 11 mph down stream. He went less than 1.5 miles in 35 minutes.

11:30 AM Left chain still jumps. Jack mixing oils and grease. More big head wind on "lake Ohio".

1:20 PM At Mile 840.

1:40 PM Called Myers Lock, Mile 846.

2:30 PM At Mile 851. Two big waves break over the bow and send water over and through the pilothouse. Jack was measuring the fuel tanks and got soaked and had to quit. Rick is driving and refuses to get out of the wind. He was running 10.1 mph. Everything is wet!

4:27 PM At Mile 869, running 1860 rpm - 9.4 mph. Lots of buoys and wind. Jack's charts are 7 years old and don't always agree with the river. Vince called, he's going to Paducah tonight.

8:05 PM Tied to an island, Mile 901.

Left 6:50 AM.....Mile 779.....Tied 8:05.....Mile 901

122 miles.....13 hrs. 15 mins.....9.2 mph average

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16th -MILE 901:

6:47 AM We're off! 1840 rpm - 8.6 mph.

9:09 AM Coming out of Smithland, Mile 919.

9:40 AM We met Vince at Mile 926 going home and passed our package to Jackie Wright.

10:47 AM At Paducah, Mile 935. We stopped for gas - \$2.29 a gallon with a 10% discount, \$2.12 a gallon. 208 gallons - \$441.00.

12:15 PM Lock 52 said to wait close to the dam and he'll slip us in. So, Jack is riding back and forth above the dam.

12:51 PM Tied in the lock and notice that some of the wickets were down. It's really scary, all that water rushing through and us riding like idiots just above it.

1:50 PM Tied at Metroplis, Mile 944. Looking for the ladies. Seems they went gambling and Melody's winning and doesn't want to come out.

2:30 PM Ladies arrive and we discover that our stage is about 8 ft. from the bank and in about 1 ft. of water and 2 ft. of mud. Made for some interesting sights getting the ladies aboard with food, wood and chairs.

2:55 PM Leaving, 1810 rpm - 10.4 mph. Seems to be some water flowing.

5:09 PM Out of Lock 53, Mile 963.

6:13 PM We tied to a tree at Mile 971. When Rick got off to tie, he expected more soft mud, but hit really slippery mud and fell flat on his face in 1 ft. of water. Everyone enjoyed the show.

Left 6:47 AM.....Mile 901.....Tied 6:13 PM.....Mile 971

70 miles.....11 hrs. 26 mins.....6.0 mph average

This was our worst place to tie up yet. Big tows every 30 to 45 minutes all night long and the most mosquitoes we have ever encountered.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17th -MILE 971:

7:28 AM We're off, Mile 971, after checking and greasing the driveshaft (5 sections with 4 hanger bearings). The chains are still questionable, but seem to be getting better. Below Lock 53, we see something new for us - large groups of barges are moored out in the river, not on the bank, and there are tows everywhere.

8:40 AM We hit the Mississippi River, Mile 981. There are 2 tows up bound waiting for a down bound tow. After a debate with voices in Jack's head, we decide to wait.

8:50 AM Here we go! 1800 rpm - 4.3 mph. We can't seem to get out of the rollers from the tows ahead.

9:30 AM Going 2.8 mph.

9:45 AM Going 3.8 mph, yep, 4 mph. We can't catch the tow ahead and now we have one catching us. All the buoys look like they've been hit many times and lay down like the worst floods on the Allegheny River.

10:40 AM We are down to 3.8 mph, then 3.3 mph. A vote is taken and we turn around at Mile 8. Jack's nerves are about shot. Going down 1800 rpm, with the speed rising to a maximum of 13.1, followed by a sharp right in the boiling water. Enough! Can't steer, time to slow down before we miss our turn.

11:20 AM Back at Cairo with the champagne ready. When we stuck the Thumper's nose into the Ohio, the speed went from 11.4 mph to 6.2 mph in about 2 seconds. What a turn!

11:25 AM Up the Ohio, 1825 rpm - 7.1 mph. Well what now? The ladies were scheduled to stay 'till Thursday, Aug. 22. The Tennessee River seems like a safe trip. Up through Lock 52 with the 10,500 HP J.S. McDermitt, light boat.

7:31 PM Tied to the barge at Paducah, Mile 935.

Left 7:28 AM.....Mile 971.....Tied 7:31 PM.....Mile 935

72 miles.....12 hrs.....6.0 mph average

Even though we only went 8 miles on the Mississippi, everyone's happy. God bless Ike for traveling up and down this water. We can't imagine trying to tie up in the current at night.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18th -MILE 935:

7:35 AM We're off and headed up the Tennessee River. The only problem we can see is that we have no charts. How hard can it be?

10:43 AM Waiting at Kentucky Lock, Mile 22, for a down bound tow. The lock has a 40 ft. lift and fills fast.

11:23 AM Coming out. This really sucks! It's a lake with wind and lots of sailboats. A deckhand on a down bound tow waiting at the lock holds his heart and blesses himself when he sees us and our 9 inches of free board coming out of the lock. Jack shuts the Thumper's doors and prays.

11:46 AM Turning into a canal to the Cumberland River. Rick says it's a smaller lake and the waves will be smaller. Good idea! Jack's nerves are back and the voices in his head are getting louder.

NOON Tied to a tree someplace for lunch. The bank is all shells and lots of bugs and stagnant water. Another vote on staying or moving to another tree or continuing on to Nashville, Tenn. is taken.

2:16 PM Move to someplace else that's not so buggy, and also not as deep, but so what. It's here that alcohol took control. We aren't sure where Barkley Lock is for tomorrow's exit, so Jack calls a towboat, 'cause he can't find the door to leave'. It's also here that the Wheeling thong made an appearance along with Dick's black 'jockeys'.

Left 7:35 AM.....Mile 0.....Tied 2:16 PM.....Mile ?

Traveled 30 miles.....6 hrs. 41 mins.

MONDAY, AUGUST 19th -MILE ???:

8:03 AM Trying to get out of our cove. It's about 1/4 mile to the channel.

8:43 AM Going in Barkley Lock, Mile 31. It's Debbie's birthday. Let's party!

9:09 AM Out of lock. 1600 rpm - 10 mph. They are dumping some water.

10:30 AM Head wind arrives on schedule. The Cumberland seems down with many rock shelves showing. It looks like a hard place to spend the night.

11:30 AM Watched a pair of bald eagles - a beautiful sight.

12:35 PM On the Ohio, Mile 922.

4:53 PM Back at Paducah, Mile 935.

Traveled 50 miles8 hrs. 51 mins.

Vince is at mile 668. He's 267 miles ahead. We had a nice visit with my *Junk yard Wars* family leader, Myles and his wife, reliving his experiences as a TV star. Did some shopping for chain grease and got the ladies car from Metropolis. We had a big storm about 4 in the morning with all but Debbie up tying things down.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20th -MILE 935:

8:00 AM The ladies are off the boat going to gamble and then home while we are off to Marietta, Ohio. 1825 rpm - 7.4 mph. We still have a head wind, the ice maker is working, and we are getting back to our all male routine.

9:56 AM At Smithland Lock, Mile 919, waiting for a tow to get flat on the wall so a tow in the small chamber can leave and we can enter.

10:25 AM Going in the lock.

10:30 AM Wind is 15 minutes late today. 1870 rpm - 8.1 mph. Rick and Dick cutting wood. Oops, out of wood, cutting on the boat, but only a small piece. Jack can replace it later. Vince called. He's doing 6.0 at Mile 618. He's 287 miles ahead. Wind shifts to the stern, now we find all the leaks from this direction. The days all seem to be very hot, in the 90's. No swimming, we have a schedule to keep.

1:45 PM Sawing finally done. Rick and Dick have a beer but Jack's way ahead.

7:04 PM Call Myers Lock, Mile 846, running 1875 rpm - 8.4 mph.

10:42 PM Tied at Mile 821 to an old dead tree.

Left 8:00 AM.....Mile 935.....Tied 10:42 PM.....Mile 821

114 miles.....14 hrs. 42 mins.....7.7 mph average

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21st -MILE 821:

6:47 AM Picnic table is white with bird shit from the dead tree we were tied to. Must have been a 'bird motel'. I don't think the 3 of us could have covered it any better. 1860 rpm - 8.3 mph.

7:15 AM Table clean, coffee done, chains greased, coolers packed, bring on the day!

9:17 AM Rick is building lighthouses. Dick says he's too busy to help. He has a roast cooking, dishes to do, lunch to plan and be a deck hand, so there's no time to be a ship's carpenter helper. Sounds like a mutiny!

11:00 AM Winds 30 minutes late.

12:16 PM In Newburgh Lock, Mile 776. Vince at Mile 561, us at 777. He's 215 miles ahead. Seems we have so much time with nothing to do but drink, chase Vince and calculate now many times the paddlewheel goes around on a 2,000 mile trip (270,00 plus or minus revolutions). The chains are getting worse and the gas is getting low. Phoned a place, but they close at 7:00 and will not wait. We never did find out what time they were on.

6:40 PM Called Cannelton Lock, Mile 721. Passed a slow running tow complaining of only 9 ft. deep water.

7:05 PM Vince is 193 miles ahead. Called for gas. No answer. They have a boat tied at the gas dock. Oh well, off to the next gas dock. Dick's hanging up his life jacket and looking for his chef's hat. Phoned the gas dock at Brandenburg about his hours. What hours? "I live here" he says.

9:36 PM Tied at Rome, Indiana, Mile 701. Vince said he tied at Rome, but we can't find where. Turns out he stopped at Rome, Ohio. Vince is 173 miles ahead. The sun sets and rises on all 4 sides of the boat with all the river bends. At one point, Kentucky is north of the Ohio River.

Left 6:47 AM.....Mile 821.....Tied 9:36 PM.....Mile 701

120 miles.....14 hrs. 49 mins.....8.1 mph average

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22nd -MILE 701:

6:51 AM We're off! 1825 rpm - 8.2 mph. River was 8 ft. deep, now it's 60 ft. deep. Radio says 96 deg. today.

1:18 PM At Brandenburg gas dock, Mile 646. Put 423 gallons in at \$1.90/gal. \$803.00. We got 3 free hats, what a bargain!

3:00 PM Rick's asleep on the roof sweating like crazy until the wind shifts and the paddlewheel sprays him down.

6:20 PM Called McAlpine Lock - Mile 607. 2 tows ahead, wait, no make that 3 tows, 2 tows up - 1 down and a train coming, which lowers the railroad bridge so river traffic must wait. Vince at Cincinnati - Mile 470 - 137 miles ahead. Same tow as before, can't get on the wall: 45 mins. and he's still not in. Jack is looking at the chains to pass the time and finds a busted link (both pins) falling out.

9:35 PM A quick repair and we start in the lock.

11:30 PM Tied to the Winnie Mae - Mile 596.

Left 6:51 AM.....Mile 701.....Tied 11:30 PM.....Mile 596

105 miles.....16 hrs. 39 mins.....6.4 mph average

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23rd -MILE 596:

6:45 AM We're off, Mile 596. 1800 rpm - 8.2 mph. Passing the same tow we've been passing every day. Did the same thing going down. Rick thinks maybe a little prayer or a 'laying on of hands' is needed to fix our chain, grease alone not getting it done.

9:00 AM River like glass with a hazy sky. Rick and Dick now moved their wood shop to the pilothouse. I need a bigger pilothouse or smaller lighthouses.

11:16 AM At Madison, Mile 558. Dick's music party, but a lot quieter this time though.

2:15 PM Called Markland, Mile 532. Hit some drift in the lock and broke the shear pin on the Fish Finder 400. A piece of Velcro and we're back in action. 1870 rpm - 8.8 mph.

3:31 PM First lighthouse done. Dick now decides he'll take his home in kit form, something about Rick's quality control not up to his standards.

4:25 PM Second lighthouse done.

6:30 PM Mile 500, not halfway home, but getting closer. Things getting busy! Tows waiting up bound and we pass. It's getting dark. An 'A-frame' is coming down through all the traffic with no lights. Stopped by Bob Limle's and cut off the dock owner's boat trying to land. The wind is picking up, so we continue up the river.

9:45 PM Tied to a tree at Mile 474. Maybe not the best place! A passing tow called us stupid for tying here. Seems good to us. 2 tows are waiting up bound for a down bound tow. It comes, so does the Mississippi Queen up bound, 3 wide outside Dick's bedroom window. What excitement! Maybe this isn't a good spot. The radio is all abuzz about a big storm with high winds. Jack made Rick put out extra lines, but the storm never came.

Left 6:45 AM.....Mile 596.....Tied 9:45 PM.....Mile 474

122 miles.....15 hrs.....8.1 mph average

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24th -MILE 474:

6:47 AM Upon leaving, the Fish Finder 400 finds a big rock and is broken badly. Rick is loading a piece of driftwood for Debbie. Jack says no driftwood. Rick says he'll quit if he's not allowed to bring it aboard. Jack helps load the wood. What a night! A club across the river played loud music 'till late, then some loud boats left combined with tows, trains and planes passing all night.

7:20 AM Downtown Cincinnati has a big red sky as we pass. Cooler today and cloudy.

11:14AM Called Meldahl Lock, Mile 436. 2 boats ahead, it will be a couple of hours. Same boat as before that can't hit the wall.

11:25 AM Vince at Ripley, Mile 417. He's just 19 miles ahead.

11:45 AM Saw a wedding on the bank at a camping/trailer park. Put a tear in Dick's eye.

1:03 PM Going into lock. Lost about 1 hr. 45 mins., not too bad.

1:51 PM Jack and "Rick think Dick's done. He's asleep at the table.

2:25 PM At the Augusta Ferry, Mile 427. Taking waves over the bow. Vince is at Mile 404. He's only 28 miles ahead.

3:30 PM No boats wave back at Rick, so when he waves, Jack waves back. It's been a long trip. Dick's asleep in a pilothouse chair. Dick declares he's done. He quits! He's tired of running after dark. If we don't tie up at 7:30 tonight, he's throwing out all the food. Rick and Jack (Pete and Repeat) say, "Oh sure Dick 7:30".

7:31 PM Tied to a tree at Mile 384 and dinner's late.

Left 6:47 AM.....Mile 474.....Tied 7:31 PM.....Mile 384

90 miles.....12 hrs. 44 mins.....7.1 mph average

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25th -MILE 384:

6:40 AM We're off, 1830 rpm - 7.9 mph. Hazy with a little fog and not as hot. The repair of the Fish Finder 400 is a total failure. Just a black screen. Vince is 12 miles ahead.

10:10 AM At Portsmouth, Mile 356. Rick wants hard boiled eggs, colored like at Easter time, for lunch. Dick says OK, but only if you want purple eggs in beet juice.

12:08 PM Going into Greenup Lock, Mile 341. 1855 rpm - 8.3 mph. Rick got the TV to work for Dick, all he needs now is a couch.

1:15 PM Lighthouses both done again. Rick and Dick both asleep, bellies full!

2:00 PM A Vince sighting!

3:10 PM Passed Vince at Mile 318.

6:00 PM Talked to Steve Hutchinson at Mile 294. He recommended an island to tie, just up the river. It's not an island anymore, now it's a mosquito breeding ground. Dick looks scared.

6:40 PM Tied to island at Mile 290.

Left 6:40 AM.....Mile 384.....Tied 6:40 PM.....Mile 290

94 miles.....12 hrs.....7.8 mph average

MONDAY, AUGUST 26th -MILE 290:

6:33 AM Off, no fog earliest start yet. We all go to bed by 9:30. Dick started his day with a shit at 2:30 AM, followed by a mosquito fight 'till 6:30 AM. We think he napped too much yesterday.

7:45 AM Called Byrd Lock, Mile 279. We never slowed down until in the lock.

9:38 AM Dick's been packing all morning. I think Melody may be picking him up at any time. He's ready!

10:00 AM At Point Pleasant, Mile 265.

11:50 AM It's a stop for lunch at Pizza Hut, Mile 250.

12:35 PM Off again, but the generator will not start.

12:50 PM Generator working now, don't know what the problem was.

1:40 PM Stop for gas at Mile 242. 253 gallons, \$430.00 worth.

2:45 PM Called Racine Lock, Mile 238. A dredge is working in the small chamber approach. They are only using the large chamber.

3:45 PM We can fit in the lock with the boat we've been bitching about for days. He'll go in and tie and then we can come in and tie to a notch in his tow. Sounds like a plan! The dredge brakes its hose for the tow to pass, then tells me to move closer, so he can reconnect the hose and go to work. The tow starts in the big chamber with me waiting behind. A small towboat from the dredge goes between us and connects a cable to the

wall about 3 ft. off the water. The say just go over by the dredge and cross over the cable, then go left, then go right into the lock and slip up beside the big tow boat in the lock. It's the most excitement since the Mississippi. It all worked out. We were tied up before the towboat had 2 lines on.

4:36 PM Going out of lock. Lots of joy!

5:20 PM Going into Millcreek, Mile 232.

5:33 PM Tied to trees at the 'log cabin'.

Left 6:33 AM.....Mile 290.....Tied 5:33 PM.....Mile 232

58 miles.....11 hrs.....5.3 mph average

This part of the trip is over and we are still friends, 1 'buckeye', 1 'hoopie' and 1 'asshole'! Millcreek to Millcreek, approximately 1,566 miles traveled in 17 days. Not bad for a homemade 25 year old boat. Average 92 miles a day with no lost time due to mechanical breakdowns.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27th -MILLCREEK:

Rain half the day. This is to be a work day. While shortening the chains, Rick found another broken pin. Also made some other minor repairs. Vince should be here about noon. Dick took us shopping and out to lunch. He's happy he's home!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28th -MILLCREEK:

7:32 AM Jack and Rick leave Millcreek, Mile 232. Vince has about a 30 minute head start. We got out of the creek just as a tow boat was coming up the creek. 1750 rpm - 7.8 mph.

8:50 AM Passed Vince at Mile 222. It's only going to be 79 degrees today. A big change!

11:25 AM Call Belleville Lock, Mile 204. Had to wait with Vince 'till noon to lock through.

2:25 PM Picked up Gary Morton, captain of the Gambler, and went up the Little Kanawha River to visit with Heck Heckert, captain of the Dixie, (it's still sitting, high and dry, in Heck's lot).

4:30 PM Tied at Heck's house with the Give-a-Hoot and the Katie H for the night.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29th -HECKERT'S LANDING:

9:05 AM Leave Heck's. A problem! The 2 batteries for the generator are not holding a charge. Refill with water, about a gallon. May be the problem.

11:15 AM Tied to the docks at Marietta, Mile 172.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30th -MARIETTA:

Jack and Rick met up with Debbie and Kathy and go to Lowell to bring the Jenny B down. Not too much excitement, except it takes Rick a while to get used to slow and steady. We stayed tied to the public dock at Marietta until the Mississippi Queen departed on Saturday afternoon.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st -MARIETTA:

The boats are put in place on the levee in preparation for the Regatta.

While helping Jan tie the Katie H, Jack slips on the levee rocks and breaks at least one wrist. He'll have a doctor look at it after the boat is home.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd -MARIETTA:

We all go back to work, leaving Jan and Vince to watch the fleet.

Pain from the wrist don't go away, yep ones broke. Didn't look at the other..... need that one to draw with

SEPTEMBER 6th THRU SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th ----PARTY:

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th -MARIETTA:

2:00 PM After our race, we drop off our guests and head for Wheeling with the Katie H, Jenny B and Donna Rae. Our crew consists of Jack, Kathy and daughter, Mary Beth. We lost a board because of a sunken log during the Regatta, but it is not a big deal and will fix it later.

3:00 PM Called Willow Island Lock, Mile 162. The Give-a-Hoot is broke down in the lock chamber. The Rosa Lee will take him out of the chamber. The Katie H and Jenny B tow the Give-a-Hoot to St. Mary's, Mile 155, while the Thumper and crew tour Middle Island, swim and give tours. Somewhere around Grandview Island, Mile 143, we catch the Jenny B. Not good news! Seems it's time to change another rear end. The Katie and Thumper tow Jenny while Rick and Dick start the repairs.

10:30 PM Tied at the old lock at Mile 129.

43 miles..... 8 hrs. 30 mins.....5 mph average

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th -MILE 129:

7:45 AM Off to Wheeling with Rick in tow. Assembly of the new parts has started.

8:30 AM We go through Hannibal Lock tied together with no problem.

2:18 PM Rick and Dick have the Jenny fixed and we're untying at Bellaire, Mile 94.

3:00 PM Tied at Wheeling, Mile 91 and going home to work.

39 miles.....7 hrs. 15 mins.....5.4 mph average

SEPTEMBER 12th - SEPTEMBER 15th -----WHEELING REGATTA:

Thursday to Sunday, more party with a little repairs thrown in, fix the wheel wood and replace batteries.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th -WHEELING:

1:00 PM We can leave right after our race. No guests this time. I think they are getting tired of riding a losing boat! The crew for this final leg home is: Jack, Kathy, Bill Doyle (a good friend, now retired), daughter Laura and for the first time, granddaughter, Haley, not yet 2 years old.

1:39 PM Waiting at Pike Island Lock, Mile 84 for the Donna Rae and Jenny B. It seems the Muskingum River is closing for approximately 2 years and the Jenny B will stay at Pittsburgh 'till it's opened.

2:30 PM Going out of Pike. Haley has taken over the boat. Uncle Bill and Pap Pap are taking orders.

3:10 PM John on the Donna Rae announces to Debbie he is wearing his 'Wheeling thong' and models for her. The Thumper is too far ahead to see, which is probably good.

6:25 PM Going into New Cumberland Lock, Mile 54 with John and Rick.

8:10 PM Tying at Bill Price's landing, Mile 43 for the night.

8:30 PM Jenny B and Donna Rae arrive. This is John's home port, so the Donna Rae is home!

55 miles.....7 hrs. 30 mins.....7.3 mph average

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th -MILE 43:

7:30 AM Found another broken pin on the chain to the paddlewheel and repair it.

7:55 AM Leaving Bill's, Mile 43.

9:30 AM Tied in Montgomery Lock, Mile 32.

11:50 AM We call Dashields Lock, Mile 13. They are only using the big chamber and a wait is expected.

1:50 PM Going into lock, 2 hr. wait not too bad.

3:10 PM Tied up in Emsworth Lock, Mile 6.

3:35 PM At Pittsburgh, Mile 0. We have used all 3 Ohio River chart books on our journey.

4:43 PM Tied at Millvale, Mile 3.3 on the Allegheny River, waiting for our guest the Jenny B. The rear end on the Thumper is starting to make noise like a sewing machine, but we have all winter to repair it and replace the chains to the paddlewheel.

I never thought we would make St. Louis, so the trip is not a big disappointment. We did make the Mississippi River though - a once in a lifetime trip. I'm very thankful to Rick and Dick for all their help and for the souvenir lighthouse. Also, thanks to everyone who made part of the journey with us.

Before we left, I made a schedule for our trip. It called for 7 days out and 7 days back, Millcreek to Cairo 750 miles/107 miles per day. We were able to do this and I give all the credit to the mighty 'E. L. Thumper' as she was called by the Emsworth Lock attendant at the start of this great trip.