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# Mainsheet

Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

July, 2006

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, July 11, 1930 hours  
at the Red Dragon Canoe Club.  
This is the Picnic & Chantey  
Sing.

Wednesday, July 12 will be the  
Barnegat Bay Sail starting at  
1000 hours from Berkeley  
Island State Park

The reason we have moved the meeting from  
the first Tuesday in July is the fourth of July. Too  
many of us would be away for the weekend. We  
need a volunteer to bring a grill and somebody  
to bring sodas. Any who feel inclined should  
bring potluck deserts.

Pete Peters is leading the Barnegat Bay Sail  
which will sail from Berkeley Island to Tyce's  
Shoal for an open ocean swim then return for an  
informal restaurant gathering after everybody's  
boat is back on its trailer. I have gone on the last  
three of these daysails and always had a  
wonderful time. The first was my first outing in  
my MacGregor Canoe which promptly capsized  
and taught me that I was in the wrong boat for a  
long day trip, but the last two times were in the  
Bolger Gypsy and were very happy. Generally  
there are sharpies and catboats, cruising in  
company, and the weather is fine. Come if you  
can.

At the boatyard is a substantial ramp for the  
larger boats, but I have launched at the state  
park beach without a problem and plan to do so  
again this year.

Exit 80 off the Garden State Parkway, travel four  
miles south on Route 9, make a right on 617 at  
Cedar Beach, there is a sign for the park, The  
road is well marked and generally follows Cedar

Creek to the Bay. If you are still on route 9 when  
it enters Lanoka Harbor, you have gone too far.  
Coming from Philadelphia I take route 70 and 37  
toward Tom's River and then Route 9 South  
soon after it passes beneath the Garden State.  
Follow Route 9 South through Bayview and  
Pinewald, turning at Cedar Beach, again.

## **THE JOHN GARDNER SMALL CRAFT WORKSHOP AT MYSTIC SEAPORT**

This weekend workshop at Mystic Seaport has  
always been a "must" for our chapter of the  
TSCA. It doesn't have the same turnout of our  
own local autumnal gathering at St. Michael's,  
but, having the National annual meeting and  
being a fine collection of good boats and people,  
we have always had a fine turnout. This year  
was no exception.

Some perennial favorite people were missing  
this year. Tom Shephard and John Guidera, Ned  
Asplundh, and Dan Noble had other obligations  
and were unable to show up, but the stalwarts  
gathered at the Seaman's Inn on Friday night.

Round table were Frank and Mary Stauss, Greg  
DeCowsky, Doug Oeller, Bill Covert, Pete  
Peters, Ron Gibbs, Mike Wick. After a fine  
supper most of us turned into our own bunks on  
the JOSEPH CONRAD for a fine dry night. That  
was about the last dry there was.

Lots of rain and no wind. That was Saturday.  
Andy Anderson had a new John Michilak  
rowboat and lots of family to help show it off.  
Doug Oeller's Marsh Cat COMFORT showed  
herself off as about my favorite boat. Ron had  
his canoe which kept us in mind of the theme of  
the regatta, double-paddle minimal canoes  
modeled after Pete Culler's BUTTERNUT.

Another theme of the weekend was alternate  
methods of propulsion. Ken Tweed had brought  
up Tom Shephard's trusty railbird skiff. Peter  
Vermilya wanted to have a workshop on poling.

Tom was too busy to come but Pete and Ron did their best to show off the arcane skill that usually depends on more shallow water than is available at Mystic. They did their best but were not quite the experts that Tom is: Tom had planted a shill without telling anyone. Tim Rominik piped up out of the audience and said: "Could I have a try?" What he didn't know about poling wasn't worth knowing, and he made that railbird skiff dance. He even explained the fundamental principle of poling; "If the choice between pole and boat become inevitable, choose the boat."

Saturday afternoon, right before the real rain, Peter Vermilya had scheduled a three legged race; First, a Le Mans start to your boat, one leg sailing, one leg rowing, and one leg either or both, upwind. We had lots of members in the running but few ended up in the money, but it was a good innovation. As the rain settled in we held the members' meeting of the TSCA. I was replaced as Secretary as I rotated off the board, and Bill Covert was promoted to Vice President. Many of the new council members are from the West Coast, and the annual Meeting will take place in San Francisco next June rather than at Mystic.

Saturday night was a new catered chicken dinner in the tent by the boathouse. Pete had brought some beer to keep our members in our best singing voice, and the entertainment was a slide presentation by John Tichenor. John had built a Wineglass wherry outfitted it for canoe camping, and in a series of two week vacations spaced over five years and one heart attack, sailed, rowed, and outboarded his boat from Jersey City to Key West.

The gist of his presentation was the important lesson that while super athletes can strive to achieve something that nobody else has ever been able to accomplish, John is an advocate for "Striving to be Second". He isn't the kind who lets his job and his family suffer for his ambition, he modifies his achievement so that it can be accomplished by an ordinary stiff. Of such stuff at least my heroes are made.

On Sunday mornings in the past I had always been busy with TSCA business, but this time I was able to tour the Museum's small craft exhibits of the boats that were seldom on

display. This is an extraordinary place filled three and four boats deep with the most extraordinary collection of small boats from the last hundred years or so assembled in a cavernous warehouse.

The focus of my quest was the 18 foot canoe yawl HALF MOON I had read about in Ben Fuller's book of plans. In truth she is a little large and heavy to be of much use on Union Lake, but a fellow can dream. Just seeing her really made my day.

It was a good thing, because it was time for me to load BLUE STOCKING back on her trailer, meet my wife, Jean, at the train station, and head for home. There was wind and no rain finally on Sunday Morning so I got some sailing in around the harbor even though I missed the rowing trip down to Mason's Island.

Mystic isn't St. Michael's, but it is a wonderful bean feast; completely non-commercial. I want to put out a plea to all our members to keep up our memberships, and come back to Mystic to support the Seaport people who have been doing so much for the National for so many years. This is a job the Delaware Chapter can do for sailing.

## Volunteering Opportunities

A Park Ranger at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area writes that he is looking for groups and individuals interested in volunteering to cleanup and protect the natural resources in that important area that has suffered from recent flood damage. If interested, contact [Johnny\\_carawan@nps.gov](mailto:Johnny_carawan@nps.gov).

## For Sale

Yakima "One man cartop Boat Loader" Clamps to existing roof rack. Excellent condition, will deliver, was \$202 new, now \$85. Contact Bob Doordan (610) 566 3985. Pete Peters said he is also looking to sell a roadworthy Cox trailer that needs new lights for \$125. [Keriset@netcarrier.com](mailto:Keriset@netcarrier.com)

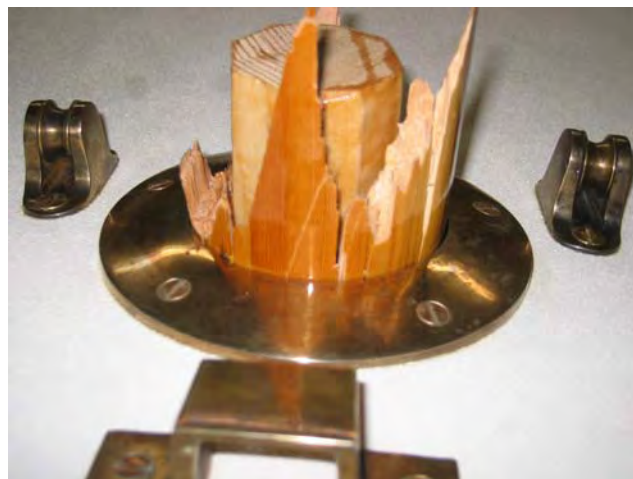
## Another Tuckup Launched



John Van Slembrouk, of Stoney Creek Boat Shop in southeastern Michigan, has just launched his Tuckup. Here's a report he sent to Stuart Hopkins of Dabbler Sails:

Had the opportunity to finally launch the Tuckup this past Tuesday evening. It was very successful as you will see from the photo I sent (above). Your sail looked beautiful and the rig worked extremely well. I just had a minor issue with a little twist in one of the halyards aloft. No big deal, I just need to get it strung up right through the blocks next time.

From the other pictures (below) you will see that I did encounter one problem. After a delightful two-hour sail in light winds the mast snapped like a twig right off at the deck. Thankfully no one was injured, we did not capsize and the sail had enough wind in her to throw the whole rig off into the water without as much as a scratch to the boat. We were within about 300 yards of the dock and were kindly towed in by a fisherman, I treading water next to the boat keeping the rig gathered and clear of the boat. A successful launch *and* rescue. I had hoped to simply send you news of the former alone but that's OK.



Now I am to learn a bit more about mast making. I am anxious to build her a new mast but am seeking all the information and counsel I can before I bare up my planes and spoke shaves. It seems that the solid block that I put at the base of the mast acted as a sort of fulcrum contributing to the snap at this high stress area. Stuart, there couldn't have been more than a 5 mph breeze at the time it happened, if that!



I am planning to go with Sitka Spruce over Doug Fir and am considering a solid mast or at least a whole lot more thought about the blocking. At this point I am weighing (no pun intended) the balance of the strength and flexibility of solid spar to the weight reduction of a hollow spar with the proper blocking. Any input from you or directive to someone that might is appreciated.

# *Mainsheet*

Monthly Newsletter of the  
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