
Mainsheet

Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

October, 2006

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, October 3, 7:30 pm
at Red Dragon Canoe Club

There has been a change in the order of the subjects for the next two meetings. October 3 is just a few days before the MASCF XXIV at St. Michaels. The group at the September meeting agreed that we needed another rehearsal before the Sea Shanty Demonstration.

The October 3 meeting will be devoted to a rehearsal of the Sea Shanty Sing, and to the nomination of officers. There will be another rehearsal at St. Michaels Friday night at nine. We won't listen to skeptics, who claim not that we don't need rehearsal, but that rehearsal just doesn't make us sound much better.

The November 7 meeting will include the election of officers. That was to be Paul Skalka on wood and boatbuilding, but will be pushed back to allow for Captain Frank's showing his award winning Guideboat and giving a class on the mechanics of wood strip construction. If you are dreaming of a strip built kit boat, as I am, this class is a must.

Frank's boat is a kit from Adirondack Guide-Boat. He found building it involved a lot of sanding, but the results speak for themselves for all of us who saw her at the Messabout. Over to you, Frank.

Notes from Cap' n Frank

This past August, my wife Mary and I visited the Lake George region of New York State. While in the area we took a day trip to the Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake. We had wanted to visit the museum for some time because of the good reviews we had received from friends who had visited it in the past; we were not disappointed.

One building of the museum is dedicated to the boats of the Adirondacks. Central to the theme of this exhibit are the canoes and guide boats that were used on the lakes and the people who used them. Not only were the boats used

as tools to earn a living, but they were used as recreation. Just plain fun!

In one room was a wall-sized photograph of people among their guide boats and canoes alongside the shores of a lake. The photograph was from the early 1900's. The people were well-dressed; men in starched shirts and hats, women all wearing dresses. The caption stated that the participants were having a party and enjoying their boats. Mary suggested that what they were really doing was having a messabout. She is absolutely correct. Those people from long ago were having a great time being with their friends and their small boats.

On September 9 we had our own Messabout on the shores of Union Lake. While we aren't as well-dressed as the people a century ago, it is safe to say that we are continuing the tradition of getting together with our friends, our boats, and having a great time. I can't wait until next year.

(MW) A wonderful book on the boats of the museum is still in print. It is *Boats and Boating in the Adirondacks* by Hallie E. Bond, the curator of the museum. (Syracuse University Press, 1995). It includes descriptions of the 200 boats in the exhibition as well as line drawings of IDEMA, the decked canoe NOMAD, and a sailing St. Lawrence skiff. There are ten fascinating chapters on the traditions of boating in the North a century ago. Not quite as good as being there, but a close second. If you read the book before planning your next vacation, you will be sure to end up at Blue Mountain Lake.

September Meeting Minutes

The Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival will be held at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on October 6-8. On October 5, there will be a camp-cruising sail to Wye Island and back before the festival begins. This is a good outing, although, in the past, there has either been too little or too much wind. There will be a crash boat along for safety.

Our annual Marion Day had a small turnout of boats but beautiful weather and light breezes. It was just perfect for

Harold and Andy's MacGregor canoes, the Tuckup, and THOMAS EAKINS.

Everybody had a good time at the Messabout. Good sailing weather, good singing, good rowing and paddling. The children were all above average.

Tom Shephard is planning another row/paddle trip down the Maurice River this fall. October 21 looks good depending on tide and availability.

Our chapter is looking into sponsoring a Coast Guard Auxiliary class in January or February so our members can meet the new boating requirements. A CG flotilla already meets at the Red Dragon, so that might be the best place.

The Delaware Valley RC Club won't meet on October 1 as originally scheduled. The Steamboat Association will hold a meet on Lake Nockamixon October 14. September 23-24 will be the Tuckerton Decoy Show with railbird skiff races on Sunday.

Pete Peters displayed a 2.5 horse four-cycle outboard and talked about the advantages of four-cycle. Soon they will be the only ones legal to manufacture. They are less smelly, easier to start, and a lot cleaner. They weigh a bit more than two-stroke, but small engines are adequate to move small boats with good speed. On its first outing, Pete's new motor was stolen. He advises immediate spray painting to make it look used and easier to identify. When they are not in use, lay them on their side with the handle up and they won't leak gasoline in the cockpit.

Other Clubs:

The DV-TSCA had a strong turnout at the 2006 C-Class Canoe National Sailing Championship at Lake Sebago.

Bill Covert had the best results of our group with a seventh place, in spite of a DNF caused by a capsized. He could have recovered and carried on, but he had forgotten that the ACA rules allow you to still compete even if you get assistance in righting your canoe.

Marilyn Vogel was eighth, Chuck Sutherland was ninth, and I was eleventh. I don't wish to complain, but you see, every time I got close to the mark, the wind either shifted dramatically or died altogether. It didn't do that for the other people.

Sebago is a beautiful little lake in Harriman State Park, smaller than Union Lake, just north of Mawah NJ. The wind is shifty, but the natives are very friendly. Should you be interested in canoe sailing but infer that national level

racing is too competitive for ordinary folk, Marlyn and I are always promoting an open class racing for sailing canoes that don't quite fit the rules for cruising, ACA, or C-class canoes. It's a lot of fun and very instructive. Marlyn also holds regular practice sessions in Pennsylvania or New Jersey. Watch this space.

Letters to the Editor:

Tom Jones needs little introduction to readers. He is our revered, resident small boat designer and expert on all things nautical. He designed John Guidera's Melonseed and Andy Anderson's Tuckahoe 10.

Dear Mike,

I found your synopsis of Phil Maynard's talk in the September Mainsheet interesting. A gasoline marine inboard, such as Volvo used to sell in America, was a much better choice than a lawnmower engine and about half the price of a diesel. Fear of gasoline in boats wiped it off the market about twenty years ago.

My 1992 book, Low Resistance Boats, discusses a five horse, Honda stationary engine I installed in two different boats; they had 2 to 1 reduction and centrifugal clutch, both handy for watercraft. They cost about 10% more than lawnmower engines. Bobby Graham, who owned the boats, consecutively, understood engine maintenance, and they never faltered for him. However, they weren't marine materials, and the second owners treated them to maintenance only after things got stuck.

Besides Phil's Melonseed model, the only other one in two scale model is a whaling ship in New Bedford. She makes an impression but somehow doesn't satisfy. Perhaps there is an ideal size for models, not an ideal scale.

Fair Winds, Tom

For Sale

I just spoke to Jim McKelvey, whose lovely Sharptown Barge made such a splash at the Messabout. She would be such a perfect vehicle for anybody considering some of the European style Raids that are cropping up on both coasts of this country these days. How about stately cruising with a choice of four sails to set? Didn't she look fine on Union Lake? 302 369 8711, 302 743 7801, or jimmckelvey@comcast.net.

Longtime loyal and active member, former President of the DV-TSCA, Ron Gryn is moving to Florida and is keen to sell an immaculate 1987 Capri 18, beam 7'7", draft 2'4", displacement 1500 pounds. This is a great big little boat that sails well and is very forgiving; a fine starter boat. Interior sleeps 2 adults and 2 children. Closed cell foam is laid throughout so she is non-sinking in case of capsize or other emergency. She is fully equipped and located at Lake Nockamixon. He is asking \$4995. For a flyer with complete details contact 215 348 9433.

In addition to the Capri 18 Ron is selling:

Maine Lobster Trap with glass top coffee table.
Sword Fishing harpoon.
19 ft Granta two man folding kayak with sailing rig.
Rubberized canvas over laminated ash frame.
13 ft Eastwind Sloop and trailer.
Six Hour canoe built of 6 mil okoume.

For full details consult our website or boatmanron@verizon.net.

Ned Asplundh is once again offering up his Ducker, only to currently-registered members of DV-TSCA. Price has been reduced for a quick sale: **\$1300**, includes trailer and custom Linthicum hull cover and spar bag. (Price will be in effect only through December 2006).

Editorial:

Christmas is coming. You can tell because of all the catalogs that come in the mail. One that especially caught my attention was from *WoodenBoat*, because it was full of books about sailing, boats, and boatbuilding. Excellent bookstores are in Philadelphia, the Pilothouse, and the Mystic Seaport Museum.

Are you ever at a bookstore and pull a book off the shelf only to realize that you already have it at home, or is that just me? How about books you are saving up to sell at the Bid & Buy Auction? I have just decided to send away to *WoodenBoat* for a reprint of W.P. Stephens' *Canoe and Boat Building*.

All this is leading up to a question. Is there interest in Book reviews in the Mainsheet? Many books that would interest us are reviewed in *WoodenBoat*, *Water Craft*, or *MAIB*, but if you have an opinion of a book others would like to read, please send it along to us. (MW)

Book Review:

The first book I would like to cover is the book that really started me with boatbuilding, and has a special place in my heart. I had built one boat from a kit, but the process was fraught with anguish. Then I discovered *Ultralight Boatbuilding*, by Tom Hill.

It is sold by *WoodenBoat* and published by International Marine Publishing Company, 1987. It was perfect for me because Tom goes into exquisite detail in step by step direction, building glued-lap plywood rowboats and canoes.

Using only this book, I was able to complete a lovely sharpie skiff to a Steve Redmond design, WHISP, with a minimum of time spent in the moaning chair. That was twelve years ago, now, and she still hangs in my garage looking good and making her builder look pretty good, too.

Other boats covered are a heavier and more stable flatiron skiff called FLAPJACK and an exquisite ultralight solo canoe. It would be urgent to have this book, regardless of your experience level, should you contemplate building Joel White's SHEARWATER or almost any other glued lap boat. Tom revolutionized a construction method that makes the whole process, especially cutting planks, really very simple.

New Members:

At the September meeting at the Red Dragon and at the Messabout was new member Carl Weissinger and his wife, Teresa. Carl has a recent, wooden, Melonseed he built, but it wasn't ready for Union Lake, so he leaned on his cousin to bring his fiberglass Crawford boat for the race. Cousins agreed that the Crawford was certainly quicker to get operating than Carl's boat, and probably cheaper, too. Sounds like blasphemy to me.

Messabout 2006

Didn't we have a good time? I got there early bringing two boats. Then the rest of the crowd started arriving and setting up. What diversity we have in our boats, new and shiny, or old and patina'd.

One of my highpoints is the interview as owners tell the story of their boat, and how they came to be. There were so many boats, the bigger ones had to anchor off instead of pulling up on the beach.

The wind was mild enough that we had to rearrange the schedule so there would be enough wind for the sailboat race. It was so mild you could relax while sailing in the Tuckup. The wind gods decreed there would be no capsizes. I got a chance to sail Dan Noble's Cartopper while he sailed my canoe.

The organization was smooth and seamless as we sailed through the singing, the trivia contest, the rowing, paddling, and sailing races. Then the awards were presented and we hoisted the boats back on their trailers for a quiet drive home. It was all worth it.

Messabout Memories



One of the more unusual craft in attendance was this 1962 German-built amphibious auto, the Amphicar. The owner was quite knowledgeable and friendly in demo-ing the vehicle.



John Guidera in his Melonseed looking for a decent breeze.



Mike Wick in his Bolger Gypsy, BLUEJACKET, with windsurfer rig.



THOMAS EAKINS and MARION BREWINGTON sail in company. Pete's boat is not reefed; that's his new sail cut to keep the boom from catching water to loo'ard.



Harold Bernard sails his recently-completed MacGregor canoe.



It was quite a day for MacGregors. Above, Andy and Jenny Slavinskas set off in hot pursuit of Frank's Shellback Dinghy. (Not pictured was Mike Wick's MacGregor, DYLAN).

Other Articles...

Do you dream of building a Melonseed? I love my Bolger Gypsy, but wouldn't it be heaven to build and have your own Melonseed? Being a Melonseed *aficionado* without Melonseed, I was excited about an article in *Messing About in Boats*. It was a workshop in Norwalk, Connecticut that would help you to build an Eric Schade design kit boat. One of the boats offered is a Melonseed. So I went for a visit and was very impressed with the whole operation.

The shop is not far from the train station in Norwalk, Connecticut, so traveling back and forth by train is workable

You start with a pre-fabricated kit where each plank has been cut by a computer controlled router, and you build the boat in their Norwalk shop with tools, supervision and even a dust free area for spray painting. One of the principles of the program is that they not build the boat for you but show you how to do a good job of it yourself.

I found the builder, Peter Hess, was very knowledgeable and would be an easy person to work with.

Sandbagger Days

A number of DV-TSCA members recently trekked to Tom River for a rare opportunity to sail in a replica sandbagger.

Sandbaggers were sail-powered 19th century work boats, strong and simply built, and could carry a significant cargo

of oysters or other products. Despite the fact that they were work boats, the sandbaggers were casually raced. Initially, cargo moved to windward offered better performance, later it was sand bags, hence their name. Water bags are typically used today.

In recent years sandbaggers of all different sizes have been built for general recreation, racing, and historical purposes. They were built at a number of locations, and are generally found in the Midwest and Eastern portions of the country. Most recently, stockbroker Peter Kellogg, inspired and funded the building of two sandbaggers, BULL and BEAR, at the Workshop on the Water in Philadelphia's Independence Seaport Museum. The plans were drawn by John Brady, who also led the building project helped by shipwrights Newt Kirkland, Bob Ranson, and Sean Corson.

More info at www.sandbagger.org.

Below are some photos of that memorable occasion by Andy Slavinskas.



The sandbagger BEAR at anchor.



The sandbagger BULL under a full cloud of canvas.

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BULL shows her skirts on a close reach.

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