

Mainsheet

Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

January 2007

Next Meeting: January 2, 7:30 PM at Red Dragon Canoe Club.

Paul Skalka will be the presenter, and the subject will be WOOD: its care and its use. That's a big topic, and we are looking forward to Paul's class.

I don't wish this newsletter to be the messenger of too much bad news, our role is to report on the positive aspects of our chapter, but the reality is that the new year is the time for annual DUES.

You should make your checks for \$20 to DELAWARE RIVER -TSCA and send them to Ron Gibbs, 107 Orchard Rd. Paoli, PA 19301.

The last meeting, of course, was:

The Christmas Party

On December 5 we had the annual Christmas party at Café Gallery, High Street, Burlington. There was a fine turnout with glamorous wives and sweethearts in attendance.



Above: Marilyn Vogel, Chuck Sutherland, Tom Etherington. Below: Craig and Teresa



Pete Peters, left, led us in a stirring Christmas sing of *Rolling Down to Old Maui*, and John Smith became the new recipient of the PLUNGER Award for his exploits in Barnegat Bay. When he saw me

with my wounded thumb, John may have had hopes of being preempted in the honors list, but it was too late. His gracious acceptance of the great honor was inspiration to us all.

There was none of Ol' Shep's Honey Grog on the menu, but everything else was wonderful.

After all his past projects, Phil's video film of the trip to Barnegat Bay was much anticipated, but the reality of SANDBAGGERS was unique. I felt like I was there. It is hard to believe that one person with a single hand-held camera could edit and produce such an exceptional film. It was really riveting to watch. How do you do it in so many different fields, Phil?



Above: Wendy Byar, John Guidera, Pete Byar. Below: Ron Gryn and Frank Stauss.





Above: John proudly shows off his Plunger award to Karen and Bill Rutherford. Below: Jenny Slavinskas, Geoff McKonly, Andy Slavinskas



Rudolf the Drunken Sailor, lyrics by Dave

Rudolf the Drunken Sailor,
 Had a very shiny nose,
 And if you ever saw it,
 You'd swear that gin blossom glows.
 And how the other sailors,
 Used to call him crude names,
 They never let poor Rudolph,
 Join any foul, disgusting sailor games.
 Then one foggy Christmas Eve,
 With the ship foundering o'er the bar,
 Cap'n hoisted Rudolph from out of his bunk,
 Which was an empty barrel of tar...
 And pleaded with him...
 Rudolph with your nose so bright.
 Won't you pilot our passage to harbor tonight.
 Then how the other sailors,
 Raised a bumper of Shep's honey grog,
 And shouted out with glee,
 "cuz the only thing goin' by the board to Davy Jones' locker
 that night, would be their pee.

Notes From Cap'n Frank...

Well, the end of December is here; before you know it, 2007 will be arriving. I was reading my Mariner's Book of

Days; it is chock full of entertaining nautical information. Included are many quotations from seafaring people.

- ***Good boats result from rational thinking.*** Olin Stephens. If anyone knows what he is talking about, Olin does.
- ***Just because small craft are small does not make them any less a joy.*** John Gardner. I have owned both large and small craft; small boats are more fun.
- ***The builder is generally a gentle and sensitive man, and very much an artist.*** L. Francis Herreshoff. I like this quotation He hit the nail on the head, but it should read sensitive man and woman.
- ***Merry are we, merry are we. There's no one on earth like a sailor at sea.*** I don't know about you, but I'm merry when I'm sailing.
- ***The faster the mile, the more it costs.*** Pete Culler. Anybody who has raced knows this is true.
- ***A tourist remains an outsider throughout his visit, but a sailor is part of the local scene from the moment he arrives.*** Ann Davidson. Whenever I sail at St. Michaels, or Mystic, I do feel like I am part of the local scene. It is a good feeling.
- ***Boats, like whiskey, are all good.*** Pete Culler. Had Uncle Pete tasted Shep's Grog, he would have rephrased that.

Saint Nicholas is patron saint of sailors. What's with the sled and reindeer? I think a boat with seahorses would be much more appropriate. Happy holidays, see you in the New Year.

Breaking News: Anybody to Build a Melonseed?

We all know Roger Allen from Saint Michaels and from when he was a Delaware River member. Most of us have heard about his work in the Florida Gulf Coast TSCA.

With boatbuilding help from him and David Lucas, that chapter has built a run of five sixteen-foot melonseeds from the form, pictured below.



They felt that the interest had peaked and they had saturated the market in that area. David announced that he was ready to break up the molds.

When I heard this, I e-mailed David and begged him not to destroy the molds, but to deed them to our chapter.

After checking with Roger, he agreed that we could take the molds and use them up here as soon as they were through with them. John Guidera volunteered to drive down to Florida with me to pick up the molds.

That was last week. Tom Shephard and John have tentatively agreed to make boats for themselves, and I, of course want to do my own copy.

I have been in touch with Mike Moore, of the new Eastern Shore Chapter of TSCA, and there is considerable interest there, too. I am scheduled to make a presentation to their weekly meeting at Richardson's Boatyard, Cambridge, Maryland on January 16, as well as our Chapter meeting at Red Dragon, January 2.

I hope we can find enough interest in the two chapters to make the project worthwhile. If you are interested in any or all parts of this endeavor, let me know.

Other Organizations

Every reader is aware of the weakness both editors of the MAINSHEET have for sailing canoes. You can just imagine how excited I was to open my copy of Marilyn Vogel's wonderful CANOE SAILOR and read that John Summers of the Antique Boat Museum, Clayton, NY and boatbuilder, John Sutherland, of Sutherland Boat and Coach, Hammondsport, NY will lead a workshop for those who would like to build their own replica of an early 20th Century Decked Sailing Canoe. You will remember from St. Michaels, Scott LaVertue's APACHE, and Dan Sutherland's CATTAWAMPUS.

Until now, the only way an enthusiast could acquire a true decked sailing canoe of batten seam white cedar planking over steam bend oak frames was to find and restore an antique or build a new one from scratch. Not easy options.

In 1991, ABM's John Summers had collected a hard-chine 16- 30 believed to be built by the Gilbert Boat Company for the Gananoque Canoe Club in the early 20th Century. He wasn't able to measure and document until 2004. From measurements, photographs, and field notes, he lofted the boat full size and brought all the information back to Clayton. John is on a quest to make this exciting boat available to a wider audience. In the spring of 2007 he and Dan Sutherland will lead a workshop for those who would like to build their own, by contemporary stitch and glue construction. The cost of the workshop is \$3500 and it runs from March 24-30 at the museum. What an opportunity!
jsummers@abm.org.

I was immediately tempted to join up, dreaming of skylarking around St. Michaels the way Scott does. No

matter to me that he is a little younger and fitter than I am or that there is barely room in my basement and garage for the boats I already have (three sailing canoes). Would it interfere with the Melonseed project I have just begun? Reality set in when I slept on the idea, but when I e-mailed John that I couldn't take part, he kindly promised that there would be other chances in the future and that he would continue to send me photographs. He wasn't going to let me off the hook that easy.

Bid and Buy Auction:

Speaking of basements, there is a long winter ahead. Wouldn't you like to have lots of room for all the new stuff you are going to cart home from the May Bid and Buy Auction? How about making room for Tom's rowboat that Carol Jones has promised us would be up for auction?

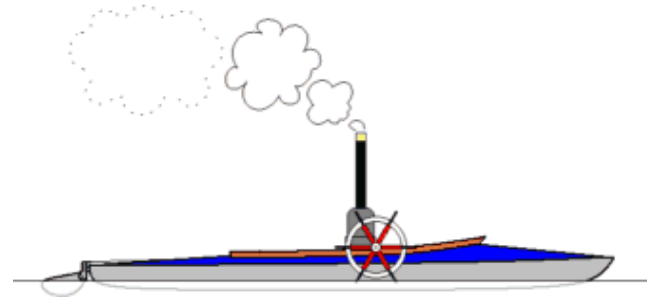
Now that it is too cold to work outdoors, it is a perfect time for all of us to decide just what we really need and what we can cart to the auction when May comes around. Whatever you do decide to put up for bid, please let me know so I can tell all about it and get others excited and eager to run up the price.

For example, I have this cradle that is just waiting for a good home. This will be its third auction. Even if you aren't awaiting a happy event, it is ready in case you change your mind. Meanwhile, it is a wonderful accessory to store magazines by the fireplace. Come to the Bid & Buy and bring it home.



Heiko's Collapsible Steamboat

Translated by Jean Mercer



On April 1, 2001 a collapsible boat lover reported to us about a RZ96 with steam drive. We thought at the time that the thing was possible, and the contribution was so artfully

done that we were immediately taken in by the April Fool's joke.



This time it's no joke. Heiko is a machinist in Leipzig. After working on model airplanes he became interested in historical modes of propulsion.... He had an inflatable dinghy on hand, and, when his interest in steam engines became known, a friend joked. "so, build a steam engine on it."



The inflatable dinghy was eliminated as a vessel because it responded badly to the hot engine. He had more confidence in his POUCHER RZ 85. The first trip under steam was September 5, 2004.



The boiler, which stands amidships, was in a previous life a propane bottle. It is heated underneath by a wood fire. Gas heat would also work but would be an anachronism.

More information, in German with additional photos, is here: <http://www.faltbootbasteln.de/fbb-dampf-faltboot.html>.

Long-distance boat building: the story of the Marsh Cat COMFORT

Dr. Doug Oeller



In October of 2003 I decided that I wanted a more family-friendly boat. I had been rowing and sailing a Swampscott Dory for the previous two years. The dory was beautiful to behold, but didn't sail very well, and was crowded with three people aboard. I spent many happy hours during the winter of 2003-2004 looking at pictures of beautiful small boats on the Internet. I started at the *WoodenBoat* Magazine Forum website and followed dozens of links from there.



My criteria were that the new boat had to be:

- beautiful
- safe and easy to sail single-handed
- comfortable for day sailing with 4 adults
- trailerable (able to step the mast and launch single-handed)
- able to accept a small outboard motor
- roomy enough to sleep 2 people in camping conditions, and
- small enough to fit in a single-car garage.

At some point, I stumbled upon a photograph of a Marsh Cat 15, designed by Joel White. The photo was on the My Wooden Boat website. The boat was JANE; the owner, Doug Gray, lives in Maryland not very far from me. My first impression was that here indeed was a beautiful small boat that seemed to fit most of my needs. But I had never sailed a catboat, or any boat with a gaff rig. And I had some reservations about being able to launch and retrieve the boat and sail her single-handed. I wrote "Marsh Cat" on my short list and kept looking.

When spring arrived I had my list down to four boats: Marsh Cat 15, Core Sound 17, Pathfinder, and Chebacco 20. The Chebacco 20 wouldn't fit in my garage, but I like many aspects of the design.

In June, Meg and Carly (my wife and teen-age daughter) and I took our dory to the John Gardner Small Craft Weekend at Mystic Seaport. While standing on the dock admiring many of the boats, I struck up a conversation with another enthusiast. We talked about favorite designs and the fact that I was trying to choose a better family boat. I mentioned my list of candidates, and, much to my surprise, he told me that he owned a Marsh Cat and I definitely needed one too!

Somehow, I had crossed paths with Pete Peters. No one had introduced us. And I had no clue that he owned a Marsh Cat. I guess that bears mention in the "small world" category. Pete and I talked several more times over the course of the weekend. I introduced him to Meg and Carly and he wasted no time in telling Meg that our family absolutely needed a Marsh Cat. There was no question in his mind. It was a simple fact.

By the time we left Mystic, the Marsh Cat was first on my list. When I got home, I ordered a set of plans from the *WoodenBoat* website.

To be continued....

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