

Mainsheet

Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

February, 2007

Next Meeting: February 6
For Valentine's Day — A
Sailor's Valentine. The time
will be 7:30 P.M. and the place
will be the Red Dragon.

We all have a mental image of our sailors busy with piles of seashells making the traditional sailor's valentines while they are off watch and looking for something to do. But that may not be the case. Apparently, there was a thriving industry in Barbados, and the ship's crews may have stopped off there before going home, just the way we sometimes stop off at the airport shops in Philadelphia Airport and pick up something for our families at the last possible minute. Which is the true case? Come to the Red Dragon and listen to the presentation by Ron Gryn and Pete Peters on February 6. Is there still time to fly to Barbados?



Paul Skalka was the presenter at the January meeting. He used an overhead projector and lots of hand motion to give us as comprehensive lecture on the properties of wood and how it should be used in boatbuilding projects.

Paul explained how to choose and treat wood to make sure that we build a strong and long lasting vessel. Hew took us through softwood and hardwoods; quartersawn or plainsawn; warp, wind, twist, and cup.

Years ago, our boats spent most of their time at a dock or mooring, swelling up as the season went on. Then when winter came we hoisted them out of the water and they dried under a winter cover. Now they spend their lives on a trailer and in a barn or a garage; only occasionally getting wet.

Selection and treatment of the wood is what determines their longevity under these new circumstances.

During the meeting, Chuck Sutherland reported on the progress of his recent work on the Hypothermia Pamphlet. Chuck had applied for a grant from BoatUS to cover the costs of printing and distribution, but his request was turned down because BoatUS said they already had printed material that covered the topic.

Chuck feels their pamphlet is outdated and too tepid for this urgent subject. He is applying for another grant that should be decided in September. The cost of printing is small, and it may be possible that the Chapter could help defray some of the costs so this important project can be produced.



Our Boatbuilding Lady, Wendy Byar, has begun a project building the Tuckahoe Ten at Philadelphia College of Art.



This boat was a design from Chapter Designer, Tom Jones. The Chapter is considering building a fleet of these portable and ingenious racing boats. Geoff McKonly, Director of the Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory, has offered the Chapter space to hold our winter boatbuilding

project in their shop. We are hoping there will be enough interest for this to be our winter project.



Doug Oeller makes a new friend at the camping section of the Assateague Island National Seashore.

October at Assateague

I know I've told you before, but John, Phil, and I went sailing down at the National Seashore. We stayed at the Bayside Campground; they stayed in John's camper while I set up a tent. Three in a camper can be tight. I had been there two weeks before, and the mosquitoes were miserable. Only a headnet made it possible. But by mid-October the bugs were mostly gone.

We launch at Old Ferry Landing and sail our dinghies around ground them for the night on the lee side of Bayside, in sight of our camp. That way they are ready early each morning, as soon as the onshore wind starts.

We brought our usual boats, but Phil brought his Redmond WHISP with a spritsail rig from his Melonseed. Mostly, the wind was light, but Saturday afternoon was a single reef breeze just to get us wet with spray and our blood pumping. We daysailed in Sinepuxent Bay, Chincoteague Bay, and Newport Bay.

It is 150 miles south, but you can pack in a lot of sailing in a weekend. The shallow water can quickly pick up to quite a chop, but it keeps outboards, jet-skis and other pests away. Canoes, kayaks, kite-surfers, and shallow draft sailboats are your only company.

I love camping at the remote campgrounds south of the National Seashore Campground. I told a Ranger of the mosquito problem, and he suggested I keep my boat at the Pope's Bay campsite and backpack over to the State Line campsite on the beach side. Now it is cold enough so I don't need that ploy, but next summer...

April in Assateague

Dave Soltesz is planning a messabout there on April 20, 21. Small boats launch at Old Ferry Landing, but there is a better launch ramp immediately to the North of the Verranzano Bridge that has deeper water and a hard surface. Overnight, boats can be drawn up on the beach

immediately North of the Bayside Campground. In addition to the Bayside Area, there are a string of remote campgrounds stretching South toward Chincoteague Island. These can be reached only by boat or by walking in.

NJ Safe Boating Requirement

In order to operate a boat under power in the state of New Jersey, all boaters must prove they have attended and passed a Safe Boating Course. This includes sailboats if they are equipped with some kind of engine.

We have scheduled a **one day class** on March 3, 2007 at the Red Dragon.

Contact Frank and send him a check for \$50 and made out to CG Division 3 sent to Frank at 25 Pine Run Drive, Sewell NJ 08080; Fstauss@aol.com; 856 589 7605 or 856 582 7302.

Long Distance Boat Building, II

By Doug Oeller

I studied those plans in detail and tacked a copy of the sail plan on my office wall. Later that summer I got in contact with Doug Gray and arranged a visit to see JANE. She is an exquisite boat. The craftsmanship is evident at first glance, and as Doug pointed out some of the smaller details, I became even more impressed. He knew just who should build her. Keith & Pat Nelder, Big Pond Boat Shop, in Cape Breton.

Summer slipped by, and my chance to sail a Marsh Cat didn't come until the MASCF in October. I arrived on Saturday, and, who should I see but Doug sailing in JANE. We spent the next hour sailing around the harbor while he gave me lessons in handling a catboat. It is easier than I expected. She is light on the helm and tacks with a minimum of fuss. No jib sheets to worry about, it is all very calm and civilized. On our sail, we met Pete and Gretchen Peters in Obadiah. I sailed that afternoon with Pete and was impressed the boat didn't feel crowded with five people aboard. I returned home with my decision made; time to order a Marsh Cat.

Those of you who enjoy building boats may wonder why I didn't just build her myself. I had the plans; I had the garage. Truth is, I feel I don't have the talent. Some things I do well; boat building doesn't appear on that list. I had built a kit, lapstrake, plywood canoe and learned an important lesson. After doing many things twice, and spending countless hours sanding away my mistakes, I learned the important lesson. For me the joy is in the sailing, not the building.

I chose Big Pond Boat Shop for many reasons, mostly that I was impressed by the quality of the work on JANE; and, it

would give me an excuse to visit Nova Scotia. We agreed to some changes:

- Tabernacle mast
- Seats aft of the centerboard
- Endplate on the barn-door rudder

Keith mailed my contract. Quarterly payments as work on the boat progressed. I returned the first invoice with my signed contract; the final payment would be paid on delivery. We set the completion date for 1st of June.

Photographs arrived after Christmas showing molds and ribbands set up. Photos continued every couple of weeks. I copied them onto my work computer screensaver, and people began dropping by to follow progress. By mid-January the hull was upright. February was slow as Keith and Pat took a mid-winter break, but early March the hull was fiberglassed and primed; floors and frames were installed. By June I could no longer concentrate on my work if the screensaver was up. The catboat was essentially complete and a thing of beauty for me and all my co-workers. Meg and I scheduled our vacation for June 27.

I had already purchased a trailer in Maryland. We hooked it up to our Subaru Forester. Carly loaded a stack of magazines and her iPod into the back seat. We were off to Nova Scotia.

It was still early when we arrived. Keith walked out to greet me. He led me to the shop. The first view of my boat was breathtaking. She was perfect. The blue paint had a mirror shine, the varnish glowed, teak floorboards gave off a wonderful aroma. I just stood there and grinned. Here was the fruition of my dreams; it was a moment to remember.

We christened the boat COMFORT the next day at the launch ramp on Bras d'Or Lake. Pat nelder took us out for the maiden sail. With four adults and a teenager aboard, COMFORT lived up to her name in a ten to fifteen knot breeze. Pat and I took turns at the helm; there were smiles all around.

That is the story of how I built a Marsh Cat 15 using the internet, telephone, a small piece of plastic, and four sheets of paper. I have since changed the traveler around and lowered the seats so they are more comfortable. It would have been better and less expensive to have visited Nova Scotia during the construction and had it done while she was building. I have sailed her for a year, now, and the grins still keep coming. I would not hesitate to recommend either the design or the builder.

Member's Boats and Projects:

Phil Maynard wanted a boat that would sail but also motor since his immediate cruising ground is on the Delaware River, where the tide can run strong. He chose the Steve Redmond BLUEGILL, and he is coming along very well with the project. Knowing Phil's past projects, she will certainly be ready by spring. You can find information about the design in Tom Hill's ULTRALIGHT BOATS; she is a sharpie skiff with enough bearing aft to take a 15 horsepower outboard. She carries an 82 square foot, leg o' mutton, sliding gunter rig with a sprit boom. Phil has built in two latching ice chests for comfort and flotation.

When preparing for the Melonseed Project Meeting, I e-mailed Carl Weissinger and asked him to bring plans and photographs of his 16 foot John Brady Melonseed to the January meeting; she is very similar to the Cortez Melons. He agreed to do that, but he told me he was ready to sell her to make room for his next project, a 15 foot Sinepuxent skiff.

Since I have always lusted after his beautifully built JOLLY CODGER, we quickly agreed on a price. I won't tell the price, Ned is already jealous enough. She is now hanging from my garage ceiling on five straps waiting for the weather to get warm enough for me to try her out. I plan to trailer her to Florida for Cortez and Cedar Key.



Tools and their Proper Use

Found on the Internet by Greg De Cowsky.

DRILL PRESS: A tall, upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, splattering it against the freshly painted part you were drying.

WIRE WHEEL: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprint whorls and hard-earned guitar calluses in about the time it takes you to say \$#*&?!!.

ELECTRIC DRILL: Normally used for spinning pop rivets in their holes until you die of old age.

PLIERS: Used to round off hexagonal bolt heads.

VICE GRIP PLIERS: See above. If nothing else available, they can be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH: Used almost entirely for setting various flammable objects in your shop afire. Also handy for igniting the grease inside a wheel hub you're trying to get the bearing race out of.

WHITWORTH SOCKETS: Once used for working on older British cars and motorcycles, they are now used mainly for impersonating that 9/16 or 1/2 inch socket you can't find.

TWEEZERS: A tool for removing splinters, especially Douglas Fir.

EZ-OUT BOLT AND STUD EXTRACTOR: A tool that snaps off in bolt holes and is ten times harder than any known drill bit.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER: Used to stab the lids of old style oil cans and squirt oil on your shirt; can also be used, as the name implies, to round off the interiors of Phillips screw heads.

HOSE CUTTER: Tool used to cut hoses 1/2 inch too short.

HAMMER: Originally a weapon of war. Now used to locate expensive parts not far from the object we are trying to hit.

MECHANIC'S KNIFE: Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door; works particularly well on boxes containing upholstered items, chrome-plated metal, plastic parts, and the hand not holding the knife.

For Sale:

Kevin Brennan of Baltimore telephoned Pete Peters with the news that he wants to sell his seventeen foot sharpie ketch, CINNAMON GIRL. She is a veteran of several

outings to Tyce's Shoal and is a beauty, and would be a fine addition to the Chapter fleet. (410) 666-8958.

Plywood Bluejay class racing sailboat designed by Olin Stevens. Complete with trailer, \$500. Tom Shephard, (856) 691-4053.

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