

Mainsheet



Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter, TSCA

March, 2007

Next Meeting: March 6
Three Decked Sailing Canoes: Andy Slavinskias, Harold Bernard, and Mike Wick talk about their MacGregor Sailing Canoes. The time will be 7:30 P.M. and the place will be the Red Dragon Canoe Club.



This is the finishing stages of the MacGregor canoe that Chapter member Harold Bernard made last year. He and Andy will tell of their building these sensitive craft for sailing and paddling.

These modern replicas have a long history. They are the direct descendant of the canoes that began the canoe movement. John MacGregor wrote about sailing these canoes all through Europe and the Middle East. They were called "Poor Man's Yacht" and were used for extended passages. Their length was limited to fifteen feet so they would fit inside contemporary railway carriages.

The canoeists would set up tents and sleep aboard while they were traveling. On waking after a night aboard, the campers would often find a "MacGregor Line" across their foreheads where they had moved and banged their heads during the night.

Having sailed my canoe through a thunderstorm on a Union Lake Messabout, I prefer milder adventures on more

protected waters. That day my canoe surfed me back to the Club beach under jigger alone.



While Harold's and my canoes are ketch-rigged balance lugs, Andy and Jenny's canoe is a sliding gunter main and small jib. Their canoe is open but decked with a tight-fitting, Sunbrella sailing cover. We hope to present information to the Chapter about the history and the building of these replicas.

A Sailor's Valentine was the subject of the last meeting on February 6. Ron Gryn and Pete Peters were the presenters. Pete brought a sample that belongs to his mother, an antiques dealer. She had kept it upstairs. The intricate shellwork may have come from a cottage industry in Barbados rather than being the work of the sailors on their off watch.



This is Boatman Ron holding the shell box valentine from the turn of the Twentieth Century and the internet notes he used in his lecture.

Notes from Cap'n Frank:

In the January 2007 issue of *Soundings Magazine*, I read a story of a rower from Maryland who spent thirteen days rowing from Troy, New York to Baltimore, Maryland. He raised \$17,000 for a scholarship at the school where he teaches English.

On first reading, I thought his effort was commendable. And I thought the guy was nuts! He spent twelve hours each day, rowing. He traveled on the Hudson River, under the Verrazano Bridge, down the Intracoastal Waterway to Cape May, up the Delaware, through the C & D Canal, down Chesapeake Bay and up Baltimore Harbor. *All this in an Adirondack GuideBoat.*

Now this may sound like fun to many, but not me. I have a GuideBoat. They are nice and comfortable, up to a point. For me that point is about two hours. After that my rear feels like it should be in a nice easy chair with Mary massaging my overworked muscles. He can keep his Marathon Row. It is commendable, but not for me.

Chapter Member's Projects:

Phil Maynard: I am using my original melonseed spritsail and the CURLEW jib. This will give me an additional two square feet of sail and the same balance point, but with a lower center of effort.

Since the stayed mast will sit on the forward end of the centerboard case, this will free up the bow. Here I have added a bulkhead with a watertight access door for dry storage/buoyancy. The forward end of the rowing thwart will be the station where the shrouds attach to hull. I'm adding reinforcing side ribs tied into the thwart and diagonal braces running down to the centerboard bedlogs.

The original design calls for a full width rear seat, and I'm adding two latchable icechests either side. Without buoyancy near the stern, a swamped boat with an eighty pound outboard would float with the bow sticking maybe four feet out of the water.

I will have twin kickup rudders on a rope or wire yoke to keep the center clear for the outboard. This is the system in John Smith's boat.

Mike Wick: This is the new rig I built this winter. The spar is hollow, bird's mouth, Douglas Fir and is eighteen feet long. It is two and three quarters inches, tapering to one and a half inches

The sail is from a Sailrite kit. It is eighty square feet of four ounce, Egyptian Dacron, leg o' mutton with one set of reef points.

My plan is that I will use the rig in both the Gypsy and my new melonseed. If anybody would like to try his hand at

sailmaking from a kit, you are welcome to borrow my heavy duty machine.



Other Chapters:

In January, I drove down to Cambridge to give a presentation for the Eastern Shore TSCA at the request of Mike Moore. He has been very busy getting that chapter organized and off the ground. They have a venue at the Richardson Maritime Museum in Cambridge.

Of course, my ulterior motive was to find more partners for beachcruising in Assateague and the Virginia Barrier Islands, but the subject of my talk was "Community Boatbuilding." I was very relieved to find that Greg DeCowsky and Doug Oeller had come to shill my talk, and they were great help whenever I appeared to be floundering. It's great to have friends.

There is a fine Richardson Draketail in the process of a lengthy rebuild in the Museum. Workmanship in the reconstruction is wonderful.



Sugar Island:

Sugar Island is in the Thousand Islands near Gananoque, Ontario. The 47-acre Island is privately owned by the American Canoe Association and is available to members for year-round use. The island is one mile from the Canadian Mainland; you can depart from Misty Isle Lodge, which offers a water taxi service. Contact Mrs. Gayle McBride at 613 382 4232.

The island has numerous ground campsites. Choose one, relax and enjoy being off the grid in a world apart. The island is rustic with no modern amenities. Staying there is real time camping; you are off the grid. It is an opportunity for all members of the American Canoe Association to enjoy a canoe/kayak/sail vacation. The night sky is aglow with stars; light pollution is minimal. The air is clear; the water is clean. When it is calm, you can watch the bottom of the river as you paddle along; it is common to be able to see twenty feet down. Swimming and snorkeling are best in the summer.

For a real endorsement, talk to Chuck & Marilyn. They go there every year for the sailing canoe racing and will fill you in on all the details. It is one of many advantages of belonging to the ACA.



Chuck and his kevlar canoe



Chuck, Marilyn, and Bill

Assateague Trip:

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 Verrazano 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.

Boundary Waters Canoe Area:

Jean and I went on that trip to the Boundary Waters that I wrote about last spring. You will remember that I had dragooned my neighbor and friend Ron North into leading us on an expedition to canoe-camp in Northern Minnesota. I am saving the complete story for a time when I am really desperate for news, but here is a picture of us on portage. I am in the flannel shirt with the axe; Jean is carrying the birchbark canoe.



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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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