
JOHN GARDNER TSCA NEWS NOTES

The Latest from Around Our Chapter

We continue our issuance of informal “News Notes” as a way of keeping in touch during these times of COVID Restrictions. Connecticut and surrounding states continue to improve our numbers which allow us to gradually return to more usual activities. Earlier this month we reported people getting out and about on the water. Here the last day of July we are pleased to report a collection of current activities as well as some upcoming plans. Stay tuned!

Reporting from Building 36

Phil Behney reports that we have a new Dory in the fleet: a Swampscot Dory donated by Mr. William Corkhill of Groton. It is in good structural shape, needing only some updated maintenance. Thank you, Mr. Corkhill. Phil further reports: “Bill Armitage and I are doing Dory maintenance with Brian Cooper dropping in for a to do list. So once the three Dories that are in for repairs and paint, fixes, etc. are done, I hope we will get the Swampscot in the shop in September. Also we plan to remove some bamboo and weeds around our dory racks at Mystic Shipyard East where the boats live most of the year.” Members having an interest in assisting, please reach out to Phil. I have his contact information you need it.

A New Sail

Brian Cooper sends photos: “Drying the new the sail after a trip to Rainbow Reservoir. Next step will be to shorten the spars a bit. The sail was made from a spinnaker I found washed up on Napatree Beach a few years ago. I did some research on-line and decided that the balanced lug rig would be the sail to make. First I made a sail from



a tarp with a 50 inch luff. After using that sail I figured that I needed a little bigger sail so I scaled it up to a 62 inch luff. I made that sail and then a new mast and two spars. I made the spars a little long so I wouldn't end up being an inch short. I made the sail in the living room and used Judy's sewing machine. The spinnaker had "US" and a 5 digit number on the sail. The 55 you see just happened to be part of cloth that I used.”



Good News for Brian: He has been accepted by Mystic Seaport to be a presenter at “A Way with Wood Weekend” August 29th & 30th. He will be demonstrating carving a Greenland Kayak paddle. Let’s plan to attend and cheer him on. He has been volunteering one weekend day a week at the Seaport’s Boathouse. On his first day he was able to get two youngsters rowing; he demonstrated first, then turned the oars over for them to practice while he sat in the stern, being rowed around. It’s tough being a Volunteer.

A Kayak Trip and a Presentation

Amanda Keenan combined a kayak trip and a presentation to the **Quonochontaug** Historical Society (Q. is a small village in Washington County, RI, technically part of Charlestown). Amanda reports that “It is pronounced Quon-a-kon-tog. I had to have one of the locals spell it out for me! I did a lecture about their Lifesaving Station to their historical society July 8th and it's on Youtube now (https://youtu.be/_eFWaDB69g4). The station was there from 1892-1938. I bet you can guess what happened to it in '38! Barry and I did a short kayak to check out its former location (it's where the stone wall is along the pond area in the panorama). It was fun to get out on the water and see the original site. Best wishes, Amanda”



A Report on a Wednesday Night Dinghy Race

“By the time the race was supposed to start, fog had rolled in so thick we could not see the boats around us. In fact, I thought the wind had changed until I pulled up the compass on my phone and confirmed that René was right, it was still from the SSW; we could not see the breakwater until right on top of it. For some reason they called the race. We had wind, or at least a breeze. Peter Vermilya was out cruising around in his Beetle Cat with the snow-white sail. Our arch-rival felt it necessary to chase us down(!) to tell us the race had been cancelled. So we cruised around the Harbor listening to the birds, the bell buoys, the gong buoys, the whistle buoys and the rumble of the fishing boats’ engines. It’s amazing how your sense of hearing and smell are heightened when you can’t see. Then, out of the swirling mist came this large, long, low, classic old cabin cruiser, straight out of the 20’s. In beautiful shape with mahogany cabin and bridge over a smooth, pure white hull. We expected it to vaporize into the ether, but instead it maneuvered around and backed into Breakwater’s pier (the old Skipper’s Dock) for dinner. Its bow stuck out a good 20 ft. past the end of the dock. After that excitement we drifted back to our mooring as the fog slowly, slightly lifted. When furling, the sail it was wringing wet, as if it had rained.”

A Quote for Our Times

This from David Wyman, from Castine, Maine, our new National TSCA President: “I had a great row out into the harbor this morning, it is easy to keep an oar’s distance from every

one when in a small boat.” A good plan these days; we look forward to working with you, David, in your new position.

The Latest at Mystic Seaport

At Mystic Seaport Museum the Boathouse and Liberty launch Boat rides are free with admission this weekend; Breck Marshall Catboat rides \$8. New Hours August 1st (tomorrow!) are M-F 10:30 am - 4 pm; Sat-Sunday 10 am-4 pm. Hours are gradually expanding. For the week of August 3rd additional spaces are opening both on ship decks and indoors. Mark your calendar for August 15th and 16th for the 29th annual Antique Marine Engine Exposition at Mystic Seaport Museum. “Collectors from around the country will show off full-size and miniature 19th- and early 20th-century marine engines and inboards, outboards, gasoline, diesel, electric, and naphtha engines. This is one of the oldest major marine engine shows in the nation with more than 150 engines, which will be exhibited in the Henry B. duPont Preservation Shipyard and around the grounds. Many will be operated for your viewing and listening pleasure. A large selection of marine models will also be on display to delight the young at heart. Join us for this noisy, greasy, fun event.”

The Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers (MSSM) will be there: Coordinator Hans says, “Hi All, This is just a reminder that we will be at the seaport for the Antique Marine Engine Exposition.” Often, they operate from a model pond in the Shipyard. Hans says “Hope to see you there”. Here is a wonderful photo from MSSM’s July 11th gathering by the Sabino Dock of a miniature “Martha”, a Chesapeake Bay Draketail cutting across in front of the Seaport’s ROANN. The photo was taken by professional Ship Photographer Olya Batchvarov. Thank you for sharing it with us. Her husband is a professor of Maritime Archaeology at UCONN Avery Point and is interested in learning more about our Traditional Small Craft Association. Welcome to our newsletter.



Father-Daughter Boat Build

John Hennings often attends our Workshop and Pilots Programs here in Mystic. Due to this Spring's restrictions, daughter Dana's competitive rowing team was sidelined, so what to do with all this available time? Build a racing scull of her own. Here is an update just in from John: "Time has become odd here, but Dana and I are well into our build and are enjoying it. She has done more than half the work and been involved in every aspect of the build. I've taken the lead when it comes to sanding; she's too young to enjoy the peace of the longboard.."



And the photo on the lower left has only 28 clamps; "You can never have too many clamps...."

And the Mayflower Sails Again

The big news in all the papers this past week has been the “Mayflower” moving on down the River after completing a three year rebuild. Not to be outdone, thanks to Sharon Brown and a friend of Bill Littell’s we have photographs of our own to share: one before she left, one on the way and one under way in Fisher’s Island Sound. Godspeed.



And remember to button down your watercraft Sunday evening for Monday’s Thunder-boomers and Tuesday’s storm “Isaias” (Pronounced phonetically, the National Hurricane Center says it is “ees-ah-EE-ahs”). My weather App predicts gusts varying from 41 to 46 mph. It may be a bit more than just another breezy day on the Sound....Be Safe, Be Well.