



THE WORKSHOP ON THE WATER



On February 5th we met with John Brady at the Independence Seaport Museum's Workshop on the Water in the presence of two large cat boats and the smell of cedar. Though two unfinished hulls dominate the floor, John spoke about three boats in the works; a sneakbox, an A-cat, and the B-cat SILENT MAID.

The sneakbox is an educational John Gardner Fund restoration project. Most of the wood on this 15' day-sailer is to be replaced. About twenty percent, mostly planking, will be retained. These boats were mass produced, and it only took John a few moments on the phone to find an appropriate candidate for restoration. This boat was originally built at Beatons to be competitive for racing on Barnegat Bay. There are about 10 boats that still actively race on the bay.

The sneakbox was not always associated with recreational racing. According to Howard Chapelle in

American Small Sailing Craft, the original boat was built in 1836, the design was fully developed by 1855 and primarily used as a gunning skiff. To be successful at such, the boat was specifically designed to be shallow and sit low in the water so as to be readily hidden. John Gardner describes in *Building Classic Small Craft*, that it is this shallow, wide hull that gives the sneakbox one of its distinctive traits—the planking at the bow doesn't end in a stem rabbet, rather all planks beginning with the garboard follow the bent keel up to the sheer to meet the deck.

Another interesting trait Gardner mentions is that, "all hull cross-sections in the body plan are, in outline, parts of the same master curve." As Gardner explains, the ability to laminate the frames over a master form meant a considerable savings in labor.

In addition to the two books mentioned, further information on the sneakbox can be found in W.P. Stephens' book, *Canoe and Boatbuilding for the Amateur*.



The sneakbox showing its distinctively planked shallow hull.

The A-cat is John Brady's 5th, (his 4th at the ISM), and with an anticipated launch on Memorial Day, much of the activity in the shop is devoted to its completion. The boat, to be named SPYDER, is modelled after a Charles Mower design.

The exterior of the boat will maintain the traditional appearance associated with the class, such as mahogany staving around the cockpit and raised panel doors, but her interior will show she's built for speed.

These boats are sailed hard: 605 sq ft of sail on a tall bow-stepped mast works in opposition to over 1000 lbs of live ballast riding the rail. These forces tend to twist the hull. Energy that is used in racking the hull is energy lost in forward momentum, but as A-cat racing is so competitive, John is constructing SPYDER to minimize the hull's tendency to yield to these forces. In addition to the traditional use of bronze strapping, overlapping box-sections will run through the hull forming a rigid connection from mast-step to cockpit.

In *WoodenBoat* #171, George Petty asks why the owners, builders, and sailors of these boats are willing to depart from traditional specifications or craftsmanship to gain a little speed. The article is a good read



John discusses the construction of the A-cat SPYDER. In addition to her visible diagonal strapping, her interior is to be fitted with overlapping rigid structures to minimize twist.

on the association's constant struggle to police themselves, to which John Brady's thoughts are included in a side bar. The answer to why each boat is allowed its own personality within the class may be found in a quote from Peter Kellog at the end of the article, "With other classes, when you ask who won, they tell you the name of the skipper, but with the A-cats, they give you the name of the boat."

More on A-cats can be found in the book by Gary Jobson and Roy Wilkins, *A Cats: A Century of Tradition*.



The B-cat SILENT MAID. Her dimensions can only be appreciated when one realizes that a full scale staircase and bandsaw occupy only a fraction of her volume.

SILENT MAID, the B-cat, is a boat of dimensions that demand attention. She is a Francis Sweisguth design, 33' LOA, 12'6" beam, 2'6" draft and carries a single sail of 900 sq ft. The original SILENT MAID, built 1924, was brought to the shop for restoration. After comparing her hull to existing drawings, she was found to be too much out of shape to effectively restore. It was decided to build her anew.

As much as the A-cat is being built for performance, SILENT MAID is being prepared for her owner as a "yacht." From 100' away she will not only look like she's from the 1920's, but her interior will abound with high-end carpentry. Though

she's intended to honor her early days, changes will be made to increase her longevity; the ballast originally held in her skeg will be shifted amid-ship and her massive mast will be built hollow with carbon fiber reinforcement. Both adjustments will help extend the life of her attractive sheer and keep her from hogging in the future.

I am sure I speak for all of us when I thank John for staying late and welcoming us into his shop. For those who were not able to make it to the meeting, two web-cams are trained on the workshop: www.woodboatbuilder.com. Progress can be seen on all three boats, but be sure to focus on SPYDER and watch, as her competitors will, the highly engineered centerboard drop in.



TSCA members enjoying an evening at the ISM.

SAVE THE DATE

John Brady also mentioned that the ISM will host ELF, the subject of our next meeting, and the sandbaggers, BULL and BEAR, from the 29th of May to the 16th of June. At least 4 ISM Boats will be in the water then: a sneakbox, two sharpies, and a sailing garvey.

TSCA memers are encouraged to bring their traditional small craft to the ISM for a messab-out in conjunction with an open-air exhibit scheduled for the 14th of June. A crane or fork-lift will be on hand to assist in launching.

Details to follow.

NEXT MEETING:

**Tuesday, March 4th at 7.30 pm,
Red Dragon Canoe Club.**

Rick Carrion and Bill Hamilton will talk about ELF, the 1888 35' Lawley-built racing yacht being restored in Earleville, Maryland.



Both editions of the 2008 TSCA calendar have sold. The club raised \$70 and sold more copies this year than last.

BULLETIN BOARD

2008 DUES ARE STILL DUE

For those who haven't paid yet, send your check made out to TSCA to:

Ron Gibbs
107 Orchard Rd
Paoli, PA 19301

April 8th Bid-n-Buy

The April meeting (to be held on the **second** Tuesday of the month) will be our annual Bid-n-Buy, a great chance for the Club to raise money and for you to clean that old, no-longer-used boating gear out of your garage and basement.

There's a new e-zine on canoe sailing. Check out www.canoesailingmagazine.com. Contributing editors include Benson Gray, Dan Miller, Steve Clark, Todd Bradshaw, and Hugh Horton. The current issue discusses reefing and kick-up rudders as well as offering a review of the 2008 IC Worlds and excerpts from historical works on the subject.

THE SPRING, THE SUMMER, THE CHESAPEAKE...



Any interest in an excursion to Wye Island this spring or summer? Greg DeCowsky hopes to organize a 3-day, 2-night trip around the island, going half-way around each day. Pictured is the Hooper Strait Lighthouse in St Michaels, nearly 5 nautical miles south of Wye Island, but don't wait until MASCF to make the effort. Greg hopes to launch at Wye Landing and make a comprehensive tour of the island's edge and day-hike the interior. Make sure you talk to Greg at the next meeting.

A NEW MEMBER

Michael Bill may have just joined our club, but woodworking and boats have been in his blood for at least 30 years. He built his first boat in 1976, an FRP canoe with spruce stringers. Since then he's restored a Sunfish, a canvas canoe, and a number of cars. His latest was a 1940 Buick two-door sedan.

Michael's current project (pictured at right) is a 15'6" Whitehall/Rangeley boat. She's strip built of cedar and fitted out with oak, walnut, and cherry. All of the wood used was sourced from trees he has cut and boarded over the past 20 years. The boat is set for an April 19th launch.

He plans on exhibiting the boat alongside the car at regional shows and promises to mention the TSCA in the construction albums he'll have on display.



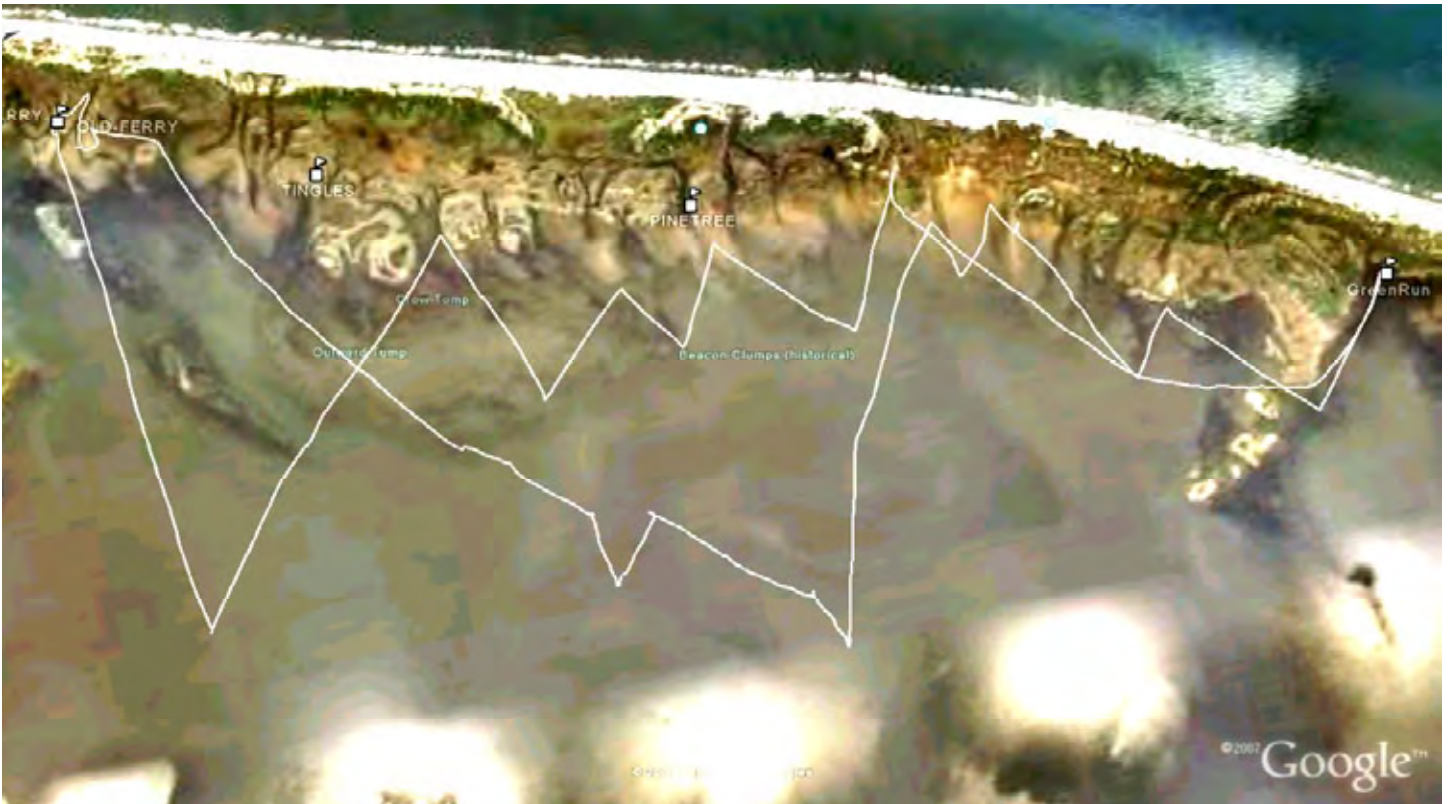
USING GOOGLE EARTH TO TRACK A DAY ON THE WATER

Phil Maynard

With Google Earth and a Garmin or Magellan GPS (I have a Garmin) you can superimpose a GPS track into Google Earth. The Google Earth Plus account (for a \$20/year subscription fee) allows you the ability to save tracks. Once saved, you can email a link to anyone with Google Earth loaded on their PC. The whole process is not particularly user friendly, and Google Earth will have trouble running on an older PC as it needs a decent graphics card to render the display. I use it on a 700mhz Dell laptop which is OK.



I download the track into the PC using the Garmin MapSource software that came with the GPS. I edit the track, remove fragments, edit way points, and then use the combine track feature which stitches the track into a single continuous track (rather than leaving it in the many smaller tracks running end to end which is usually how it actually looks when first downloaded from the GPS). There is a link in MapSource to view the track in Google Earth. I could also download the track directly to Google Earth from the GPS but I find it better to edit it first in MapSource. Once opened in Google Earth it can be saved and then emailed or printed. The functions are very basic. I can not select different paper sizes or do any photo editing. To do that, I capture a screen shot and paste it into a photo editor and then I adjust contrast, print, etc.



Here is a track which Mike Wick and I sailed from Old Ferry to Green Run on 8-27-07. I enhanced the image to bring out the contrast and the shallows. The print is rotated to a landscape orientation, north is approximately 8 o'clock position. On the way back the wind died, and we were many miles from Old Ferry in 90+ degree heat, high humidity, directly in the sun, and no wind; and the mosquitoes on shore were simply amazing. We rowed two stints of 30+ minutes and then the wind picked up and we sailed back. You can see these towards the center of the image, just prior and in between rowing we were headed across the bay (almost straight down in the picture) and making no headway at all towards Old Ferry. After getting home and plotting the course, it was interesting to notice our lack of our progress in the vanishing wind versus our progress when rowing.

The GPS track has time and speed information which does not show in the Google Earth image. Starting with that longest tack across the bay at 8:53AM, we tacked towards Old Ferry at 9:54. At that point we had sailed for 1 1/2 hours without getting any closer to Old Ferry (actually we were further away). From 10:18 to 10:54 we rowed. We then sailed two short tacks until 11:53, when we started rowing again. At 12:29 the wind picked up enough to get us going again, and we made good time back averaging 3.5 knots the rest of the way back. At the end I chose the inland approach to Old Ferry; Mike took the more direct route and got there ahead of me.



The image at left, from 4-21-07, is printed directly from Google Earth without any enhancement.

MAINSHEET

Monthly newsletter of the
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