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Cover: *Dan Kenefick concentrates on sculling* Captain Hook, *the pulling boat from Eastport, Maine, built ca. 1920.*
(Photo by Sharon D. Brown)

SIGHTINGS

With my first reading of this issue of *The Log*, I was struck by the unusual absence of "outside" authors. Upon closer examination, I took particular satisfaction in noting that not only was this issue written entirely by staff members, it was in fact written by what might have been referred to at one time as the "distaff" staff – the women of Mystic Seaport.

In the pages that follow, Jennifer "Shep" Johnson, the Seaport's cataloger, transports the reader to New York harbor; Marifrances Trivelli, of the Library's Sound Archives, focuses on an influential sailmaker; Sharon Brown, who supervises The Boathouse, describes the personality of that operation; Sandy Oliver, former full-time staff member and now historic foodways consultant, discusses traditional variations on a popular condiment; and Leslie Gifford, Associate Editor of *The Log*, contributes several items.

The editorial character of this issue can't help but challenge a common perception that Mystic Seaport is a museum for men and boys. In fact, this museum – with its broad range of exhibits, village activities, educational programs, and visitor experiences – has long appealed to entire families, offering elements of interest to all. The staff here at the Seaport has been equally balanced. It is because of the Museum's well-rounded constitution and universal appeal that specific segments of the population are rarely singled out. This *Log*, then, is unusual in character, and presents us with the unique opportunity to consider for a moment the substantial and longstanding contributions of women to Mystic Seaport.

As Trustees, Pilots, volunteers, donors, members, advisors, committee members, and staff, women have consistently influenced the progress of this museum from its earliest days. Launching this tradition was Trustee Mary S. Harkness, who in 1931 gave the Seaport its first building. It would be impossible on this page to properly cite and salute the thousands of women who have participated since, but a few examples will confirm the influence.

Marion Dickerman established the Seaport's Education Department in 1947, and managed it for the next 15 years. Hundreds of capable women have added their own strengths to the department, which for the past 14 years has been guided by Jane Keener, who is now Vice President for Curatorial and Educational Programs. Today, the Education Department in its new configuration is managed by Jan Larson, and benefits from the expertise and commitment of many female staff associates and Education Committee members.

Higher education – established at the Seaport in 1954 with endowment given by Trustee Cora M. Munson – was importantly enforced by women from the start. Today, Dr. Janie Wulff is the Williams College/Mystic Seaport Maritime Studies Program marine scientist; Dr. Mary K. Bercaw Edwards teaches the literature of the sea. Two years ago, Dr. Lisa Norling became the Program's first post-doctoral fellow in maritime history. Women have consistently comprised the majority of the Williams/Mystic student body.

The Mystic Seaport Museum Stores was instituted with the steady guidance of Trustee Beatrice Fox Auerbach; all but one of its departments currently are managed by women.

Throughout the Museum and the Stores, in virtually every department and at all levels, women continue to play an increasingly important role in Mystic Seaport's operations. It is appropriate and at the same time reassuring to me that I cannot think of a single gender-specific job – other than those related to roleplaying and other theatrical characters – within Mystic Seaport. The staff is at this time equally representative of men and women. Of the 67 people in management and supervisory-level positions at the museum, just under half (31) are women.

Men and women admittedly have not enjoyed equal representation either in senior management or on the Board of Trustees, and we are now making encouraging progress toward correcting these imbalances. Liz Gwillim and Jan Larson have been named Department Directors, and their skills and perspectives have already contributed greatly to the management of the Seaport. Last year, Rose Dana and Elizabeth Meyer joined the Board of Trustees, which welcomes their expertise.

Overall, the Seaport has benefited from a long and rich tradition of female participation institution-wide. This considerable involvement is reflected in the writings that follow. I am confident that increasing contributions of women at the leadership level will only strengthen the Museum further.

J. Revell Carr

A Year in the Life of New York Harbor:
The Photographs of Richard Pratt Sylvia

JENNIFER SHEPHERD JOHNSON

The year 1950 was one many still remember well. Americans were concerned about widespread inflation and the threatening expansion of communism in the United States and abroad.

President Harry S. Truman sent American troops to Korea and ordered the development of the hydrogen bomb. The Supreme Court barred segregation in two southern universities. General Motors reported the greatest net profit of any U.S. company in history, over $600 million. And for New York baseball fans, the year offered a boon when the Yankees won the World Series in four games against the Philadelphia Phillies.

New York Harbor in 1950 was a bustling port filled with much of the nation's commerce. Richard Pratt Sylvia's photographs of shipping there capture a moment in the long history of the United States' principal port. The images also document a recent, though important, chapter in American maritime history.

Richard Pratt Sylvia began his career as a newspaper photographer and reporter, and by 1950 he was an editor in New York City. Sylvia's passion for photography continued, and he read sailing lists published in the *Herald Tribune*, describing arrival and departure times for commercial vessels. When he had time, Sylvia arranged to meet the ships in order to photograph them. The result is a group of over 500 well-documented negatives, most of which were taken in 1950. Sylvia recently donated this collection to Mystic Seaport.

Sylvia photographed a spectrum of working watercraft, including everything from freighters, tankers, and liners to New York City harbor dredges and local sewage disposal vessels. Many of the ships Sylvia documented regarded New York as just one of numerous ports of call around the world. Other vessels worked exclusively in New York waters, keeping the city's infrastructure and transportation services running smoothly.

In 1950 some familiar sights looked much as they did at the turn of the century. Steam engines were still common, and side-wheel steamboats still made trips up the Hudson River. And many ferry routes, such as the Staten Island-Battery run, ran the same regular trips they had for decades. But in many ways New York in 1950 would have been nearly unrecognizable to a 1900 eye. In 1900, the Brooklyn Bridge was the only major bridge into Manhattan, but in less than ten years there were four new bridges and the first tunnel. With the opening of the Holland Tunnel in 1927, the George Washington Bridge in 1931, and the Lincoln Tunnel in 1937, commuters took these routes across the Hudson and abandoned many ferry routes. Bridge and tunnel construction continued until, by 1950, Manhattan resembled the hub of a spoked wheel with rails and roads joining the island to the mainland and to other islands. Local waterborne commuter traffic was on the decline, but more than 45 million commuters were still using ferries by 1955.

While commuters turned to new modes of travel, many aspects of New York's maritime commerce were thriving. The liner trade was booming, and in 1950 over 450,000 passengers arrived on passenger ships at New York. On one peak day, 23 August, more than 7,800 people arrived from overseas. Cargo imports into New York Harbor also took a dramatic turn for the better in the early 1950s. In 1950, over 22 million tons were off-loaded at New York.

But by 1950 many observers were concerned about the future of the port. Before his resignation the same year, Mayor William O'Dwyer appointed a committee to examine declining waterborne trade. Between 1948 and 1949, the volume of trade had decreased by nearly four million tons, valued at over $700,000,000. Many blamed pier rentals in New York that were three times higher than those in Philadelphia and Boston and 50 percent more expensive than Baltimore's rates. Others saw New York's decline as parallel to, but less severe than, declines in other U.S. ports. Though 1950 saw some improvement, many could not explain the gains and were worried that New York's recent upturn would be short-lived.

New York led all other United States ports in both imports and exports, and broke records in 1950 for imports, but the competing ports of Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, Galveston, and Houston were expanding and beginning to close the gap. One obvious reason for concern was that so many of New York's piers were not on the mainland. Over time, ports in northern New Jersey accepted much of the commerce that had formerly been handled on the New York side of the Hudson.

In the four decades since these photographs were taken, American shipping has continued to decline, and New York's traffic has echoed the national trend. The liner traffic to Manhattan dwindled until, in 1986, only three piers for passenger ships remained along "Luxury Liner Row" on the west side of Manhattan. By 1960 airlines were successfully competing with passenger liners for transatlantic travel. The growth of rapid air travel, combined with high labor costs and expensive fuel, drove most of the remaining liners out of transatlantic routes and to southern ports appealing to the Caribbean vacation cruise trade.

Much of what remained of New York's tanker and freighter commerce moved across the Hudson River to less expensive and less congested ports in northern New Jersey. Sylvia's photographs were taken on the eve of the dramatic change to containerization, which revolutionized the shipping industry. The 1950s and 1960s saw the advent and widespread acceptance of containers, and the emergence of the pure containership. Nicknamed "box-boats," containerships carry standardized units that are eight feet square

by either twenty or forty feet in length. These "boxes" are lifted off a truck chassis and stowed in "cells" aboard the ship. Containerships are sized according to how many TEUs (Total Equivalent Units, small containers each measuring eight by eight by twenty feet.) they carry.

Container terminals were established in Brooklyn, Port Elizabeth, New Jersey, and Howland Hook on Staten Island, allowing cargo to move faster, more cheaply, and in much greater quantities than was possible before. A containership might arrive in port in the morning, transfer thousands of tons of cargo, and sail by nightfall. Today, containerships like the *Nedlloyd Hudson*, which is over 900 feet long and has a capacity of 2,241 TEUs, can be seen threading their way up New York Bay to the container docks in Elizabeth (Howland Hook failed in the 1980s).

The shipping innovations in the last 40 years have been double-edged swords. As containerization accelerated, the handling of "break-bulk" cargo, which is carried in small uncontainerized units, declined. Faced with the rising costs of fuel, personnel, insurance, and rent, many docks in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and New Jersey closed. As vessels grow in size, there are fewer arrivals and departures, though the tonnages moved are still substantial. The number of ships arriving and departing has declined, and the busiest days this year pale in contrast to 1950.

Sylvia's photographs are valuable not only as documents of individual ships, but also, taken as a whole, as a portrait of the port. The images capture New York Harbor in its twilight. Within a few years of 1950, the romance of the side-wheel steamboat and the steam ferry would leave New York forever. Sylvia may not have anticipated that his photographs would be treated as historic data in such a short time. But New York has changed radically and permanently over the last 40 years, and Sylvia's photographs are already useful evidence of our recent maritime past. As 1950 slips farther into the past, and the vessels represented look less familiar and more outdated, Sylvia's photographs will become more and more important as keys to the past.

The Meseck Line passenger steamship Americana *passes under an East River bridge, possibly the Williamsburgh Bridge. She was built in 1908 at Buffalo on Lake Erie and was used as a passenger ship there for 20 years before being brought around to New York. As a New York excursion steamer she carried 2,700 passengers. For several years in the 1930s the* Americana *worked as a showboat with evening trips featuring music, dancing, and a "Broadway Review," all employed to attract passengers as the line noticed numbers declining.*

In the early 1950s the Meseck Line operated two passenger steamships from New York, the Americana *and* John A. Meseck. *But many more people were taking automobiles on trips for pleasure and fewer were traveling on excursion vessels. The* Americana *disappeared from the shipping register in 1953.*
(M.S.M. 91.76.41)





Below, *the Sandy Hook pilot boat* Wanderer *slides into the Upper Harbor against a brisk northerly. Beyond the* Wanderer, *two loaded tankers are awaiting berths or lighters in Stapleton Anchorage off Staten Island.*

The 123-foot Wanderer *was built at the J.F. James & Son Shipyard at Essex, Massachusetts, in 1923 as a schooner yacht for R.W. Allen, the owner of Allen A. Hosiery Company. After a short time Allen sold the* Wanderer, *and she worked as a fishing schooner out of Boston for about ten years. In 1935 she became a New York pilot boat for Gedney, Inc., which still operated her in 1950. After almost twenty years in the pilot fleet the* Wanderer *returned to fishing. She burned off Puerto Rico in 1955.*

Shorn of her schooner rig, the Wanderer *is still a graceful sight. Her two pilot canoes or yawls (small boats used to transfer pilots between the pilot boat and an inbound or outwardbound ship), stowed amidships, are still propelled by oars. In the nineteenth century, there was a limited number of New York Harbor pilots, and there was intense competition between boats. Pilots might travel tremendous distances in search of work, and it was not unheard of for New York pilot vessels to sail to Newport, Rhode Island, while cruising for business. Those days were long gone by 1950. The* Wanderer *would either anchor or slow-steam in the approaches to New York, putting pilots aboard inbound vessels and picking them up off outbound traffic. The New York/New Jersey pilots were commissioned by either state and required by law to be carried aboard all foreign vessels and U.S.-registered vessels.*

Even beyond the demands of guiding a vessel around the shallows in New York Bay, piloting was an extremely hazardous occupation. One blizzard in 1888 wrecked nine of the thirty pilot boats serving the port of New York/New Jersey. Weather sometimes forced pilots to remain aboard a ship leaving New York, and at least one pilot made a crossing to Germany. New York is one of the few U.S. ports that still maintains a large pilot boat "on station" continuously. Today, the Sandy Hook pilots use the pilot boats New York *and* New Jersey.
(M.S.M. 91.76.175)



Left, *the Circle Line sightseeing steamer* Traveler *is on the Hudson River, passing Palisades, New Jersey, near the George Washington Bridge in the summer of 1948, probably on the circle route around Manhattan. The Circle Line was founded in 1945 and continues to run many of the same routes around New York Harbor today.*

Originally built by Pusey & Jones at Wilmington, Delaware, as the private yacht Viking *for banker George F. Baker, Jr., in 1909, the 156-foot* Traveler *was converted for sightseeing on the Circle Line about 1947. Like the* Traveler, *Circle Line vessels need to be relatively low to pass under the low bridges over the Harlem River.*
(M.S.M. 91.76.26)

Below, center, *the deeply-laden motor tanker* Esso Little Rock *steams inbound past the quarantine station on Staten Island. The* Esso Little Rock *was just one of 53 tankers the Esso Shipping Company operated under the U.S. flag in 1950. Built by Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Company at Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1940, she was 521 feet long. Aside from her 7,500-horsepower diesel power plant, in contrast to the famous wartime T2 tankers with their steam turbo-electric engines, she was a typical tanker of the early 1940s. The* Esso Little Rock *might be considered a lucky vessel, having survived four years of war in which tankers were a preferred target.*

The Esso Little Rock's *cargo capacity was 153,704 barrels (well over six million gallons) stored in 27 cargo tanks. When loaded, she drew approximately 30 feet. Unlike freighters, tankers are subjected to tremendous longitudinal stresses and are, therefore, designed with a lengthwise framing system that allows for greater flexibility. Structurally, tankers have changed relatively little since 1950. However, they have grown in size, the accommodation is now located aft in one house, and the crew size has been reduced to little more than half of the 44 people serving aboard the* Esso Little Rock.
(M.S.M. 91.76.174)



Right, *with a crew of six, the harbor tug* Reichert Bros. *was one of nearly 700 vessels in New York's towboat fleet that provided the brawn of New York Harbor, towing and positioning larger vessels and moving barges across the Harbor. To perform a variety of duties, harbor tugs were designed to be fast, powerful, and maneuverable. As many as 12 tugs might be required to bring a large liner into a dock. The 78-foot wooden-hulled* Reichert Bros. *was built as the* Socony 24 *at Milford, Delaware, in 1920. Her single-cylinder engine produced 250 indicated horsepower, enough to push her charges around the harbor.*

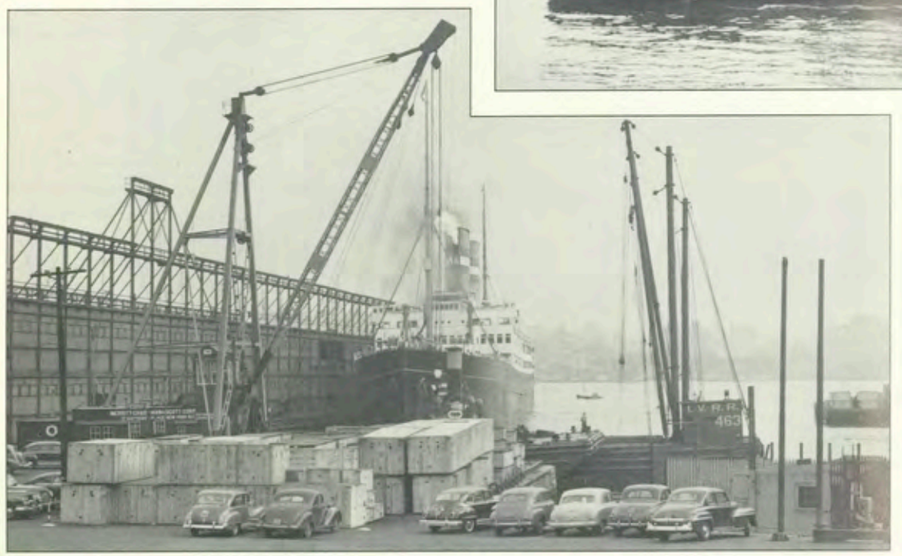
General harbor tugs such as this one usually worked around the clock, seven days a week, with three crews sharing duties, two of which were always on board. In this image, the Reichert Bros. *is working on the Harlem River in 1950. The building in the background is a coal-fired Con-Edison power plant. In a city like New York, which was (and is) so dependent on electrical power, an essential but unsung role of harbor tugs was shunting coal barges to and from the ravenous power plants.*
(M.S.M. 91.76.157)



Right, the Army Corps of Engineers power barge Driftmaster is under way at the Narrows in the summer of 1949. The Corps of Engineers vessels were used for channel improvements and harbor maintenance. As bigger ships were needed and built, the channels into New York Harbor had to be widened and deepened. This dredging continues today, and this spring the Corps of Engineers and Great Lakes dredges are dredging Kill Van Kull between Staten Island and Bayonne, New Jersey.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was formally established in 1779, but was mustered out of service in 1783. In 1802 it was reestablished and has been in existence ever since. Harbor and channel improvements are just one aspect of the Corps' many duties. Over the years, the Corps of Engineers has built highways, bridges, canals, reservoirs, power plants, military bases, and, in recent years, has been involved with space programs.
(M.S.M. 91.76.252)





Above, Sylvia photographed the Holland-America liner Veendam in 1948 at the Fifth Street Pier in Hoboken, New Jersey, across the Hudson from lower Manhattan. Two years later at this same pier, the Veendam was caught in a longshoremen's and harbor workers' conflict. In July 1950, 200 longshoremen began a work stoppage that left the Veendam stranded. While other vessels were diverted and unloaded elsewhere, the Veendam was stuck, loaded and late for her next port of call. Passengers were able to leave the ship, although their luggage was not unloaded for them.

The years following World War II were years of friction for New York Harbor shoreside workers, and many conflicts arose between labor and management. While various issues led to conflict, the hiring practices, called the "shape-up" by longshoremen, were considered outdated and abusive to labor. Shape-up described the system in which a hiring agent chose individuals from an assembled group of dock workers. Many considered the practice corrupt and biased, and some felt that men were hired unfairly in a system that often involved favoritism, unnecessary competition, and discrimination against qualified workers. Throughout the early 1950s, work stoppages and wildcat strikes at many piers increased and continued until the harbor was nearly at a standstill. Finally, after President Truman's attempts at intervention failed to solve the problems, a board of inquiry was established to investigate and to establish a permanent system for handling future disputes.

Built in the Harland & Wolff Shipyard at Glasgow, Scotland, in 1923, the Veendam was 575 feet long, with four steam turbines generating 8,000 shaft horsepower. The liner was captured by the Germans during World War II and was used as a submarine tender in the Baltic. When she returned to passenger service in 1947, the Veendam was outfitted to carry 223 first-class and 363 tourist-class passengers. In 1953 she was sold for scrapping at Baltimore.
(M.S.M. 91.76.63)

Below, center, the A. H. Bull Steamship Company freighter Suzanne is inbound past Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island at the Narrows. The 441-foot steel freighter was built in 1944 at Wilmington, North Carolina, as the Woodford. Powered by a steam turbine generating 6,000 shaft horsepower for her single-screw, the Suzanne carried a crew of 55. This general type of freighter was called a "break-bulk" vessel because each item of cargo had to be handled individually. General cargo could be anything from locomotive boilers to pallets of writing paper. Nicknamed a "stick ship," because of all of the booms and cargo-handling gear, this form of freighter is virtually extinct today, having been replaced for the most part by containerships.

The Suzanne sailed with an early form of radar, which is visible above the bridge. Though naval ships used radar during World War II, it was not until about 1950 that it had widespread use on merchant ships. The tops of her kingposts and booms aft of the stack are painted black to hide the soot from the stack.

During World War II the Bull Line operated over 90 vessels for the War Shipping Administration. After the war the Bull Line purchased 13 ships from the Maritime Commission, including five C-2 vessels, three bulk carriers, and five liberty-type ships. The Bull Line primarily served Atlantic coastal and Caribbean ports.

Many freighters coming into New York in 1950 faced politically active longshoremen's unions. Aside from disputes within the hierarchy of the unions, the communist threat affected their handling of cargo. In August, dockmen refused to unload a cargo of canned Soviet crabmeat that arrived from Great Britain, and later they refused to load cargoes bound for Gdynia, Poland.
(M.S.M. 91.76.242)



Bottom, in this photograph, taken 8 August 1950, the Cunard-White Star liner Queen Elizabeth departs New York for Southampton, England, leaving Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, on her starboard side as she passes through the Narrows. Her starboard anchors are backed clear of the hawsepipes, ready to lower in case of an emergency. She still has a pilot on board to guide her past the shoals of the Lower Bay until she reaches Ambrose lightship. The Queen Elizabeth was easily recognized by her oval funnels spaced some distance apart. The orange and black bands of the Cunard liners made identification even easier.

The Queen Elizabeth was launched on the Clyde in September 1938 and made her secret maiden voyage, escaping U-boats to arrive in New York Harbor, in March 1940. She worked for the Allied forces during World War II, transporting over 800,000 troops. After the war, the Queen Elizabeth began her commercial career alongside the slightly smaller Queen Mary.

Passenger berths on both the Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary sold out a year in advance during this heyday of New York's liner trade. In 1949, the two liners earned over $50 million in profits for Cunard. The Queen Elizabeth sailed with 823 first-class, 662 cabin-class, and 798 tourist-class passengers on Atlantic crossings that lasted five days. The Queen Elizabeth sailed for eighteen more years, making a total of 907 Atlantic crossings and carrying 2,300,000 passengers. She burned and was scrapped at Hong Kong in 1972.

If this view was photographed today, the Verrazano Narrows Bridge would take up most of the image.
(M.S.M. 91.76.397)





Right, this Central Railroad of New Jersey tug is under way, moving two carfloats loaded with freight cars. She is probably transferring cars between the New Haven Railroad yards, either at Oak Point, the Bronx, or on the Harlem River, and the Central Railroad of New Jersey yards in Jersey City. The closest railroad bridge across the Hudson River was 75 miles north of New York at Poughkeepsie. Instead of that roundabout route, many railroads and shippers chose the more direct routes through New York. Several railroads maintained sizable marine departments, and their tugs worked continuously, transferring cars between the various marine terminals. In 1928, the New Haven Railroad alone transferred 774,324 cars across the Harbor, an average of over 2,100 cars per day.

Railroad tugs typically have taller pilothouses than most harbor tugs, to provide better visibility over the freight cars. Carfloats, which carry approximately 20 freight cars, are barges with rails laid on deck. The cars were pushed directly aboard by locomotives at the interchange dock. Because of great wind resistance to the cars, and strong currents in New York Harbor, railroad tugs such as this one had to be powerful enough to control unwieldy barges that could weigh 2,000 tons. This configuration, with the tug positioned aft between two floats, forming a "V", is a preferred means of transferring carfloats.

Since 1950, the revolution in trucking and the expansion of highways has jeopardized the existence of many railroads. Many of the great rail yards around New York Harbor have been abandoned, and cargo transport on carfloats has declined greatly in New York Harbor.
(M.S.M. 91.76.554)



Left, the ferry Knickerbocker was built in 1931 on Staten Island for the City of New York. Ironically, she was built the same year the George Washington Bridge opened, which brought an end to many New York Harbor ferry routes. The Knickerbocker was built specifically for the run from St. George on Staten Island to Whitehall, near the Battery in Manhattan. She was one of three Dongan Hills-class ferries built between 1929 and 1931, all with two tall stacks. After working for more than 30 years, she was sold for scrap in 1965.

The combination of Depression-era cutbacks and new bridge and tunnel construction ended most of the municipally-run ferry routes, but the St. George-to-Whitehall run remained. When many passengers abandoned ferry service and opted for bridge and tunnel transportation, the ferries carried a smaller and smaller percentage of New York's growing population. In 1925 New York Harbor ferries carried 91 million passengers on twelve routes; by 1955 this number had dropped to 21 million on six routes. Many ferries continued to operate though, and the Battery-to-St. George route is still very much alive. Today, 70,000 passengers take the 22-minute Staten Island ferry ride every day, and 90 percent of them are commuting to work.
(M.S.M. 91.76.177)

Below, on 27 June 1950, the American Export Lines liner Excalibur sailed from her berth in Jersey City to begin a 43-day Mediterranean cruise. At the same time, the Scandinavian-American Line freighter Colombia was inbound into New York Harbor. On her way to the Narrows, the Excalibur favored the east side of the channel because her captain wanted to salute his home in Brooklyn. The Sandy Hook pilot aboard the Excalibur sounded the "two whistle signal," indicating to the Colombia that the ships would make a starboard-to-starboard passing. When the Excalibur's pilot did not hear a response from the Colombia, he sounded one blast, indicating the usual port-to-port passing. In the next minutes, the Colombia turned in anticipation of a starboard-to-starboard passing, but the Excalibur was now poised for a port-to-port passing. Finally, the Excalibur failed to sound a danger alarm, which might have averted a collision, and her erratic maneuvering assured a collision. The Excalibur crushed the Colombia's bow, and immediately started taking on water through a 15-foot hole in her port side. Surprisingly, no one was seriously injured in the collision. Both the Coast Guard and the courts agreed that the Excalibur's captain and pilot were at fault and that their mistakes endangered both ships and directly led to the collision.

In this photograph, a Merritt-Chapman & Scott salvage barge and two harbor tugs work on the Excalibur after she had been purposely run aground in shallow water on the Gowanus Flats to keep her from sinking. The salvage barge worked out of Staten Island, and probably carried pumping and hoisting equipment that could refloat the Excalibur. Such occasional collisions, as well as groundings, fires, and other marine accidents, kept Merritt-Chapman & Scott's salvage fleet busy around New York Bay.

Built by Bethlehem Steel Company at Sparrows Point, Maryland, in 1944, the Excalibur began her career as the U.S. Navy troop transport USS Duchess. The 473-foot ship was purchased by American Export Lines in 1947 and renamed Excalibur. She was one of American Export Lines' second class of vessels called the "Four Aces," named Excalibur, Exochorda, Exeter, and Excambion. The original "Four Aces" were passenger ships that were converted to troop transport ships for World War II. Only one, the Exochorda, survived the war, but she did not return to American Export Lines. After World War II, American Export Lines purchased four different transport ships from the Navy and converted them to passenger ships, naming them after the first "Four Aces." Of these, only Excambion survives today, renamed Texas Clipper, a training ship for Texas A&M University.

The Excalibur sailed for American Export Lines until 1965, when she was sold to the Atlantic Far East Lines and renamed Oriental Jade. She sailed under the Liberian flag for the next nine years, primarily between San Francisco and Asia. In 1974 the Oriental Jade was scrapped in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
(M.S.M. 91.76.213)



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The Boathouse at Mystic Seaport Museum

SHARON D. BROWN

Perhaps you've entered the Seaport on one of those rare summer mornings, with cotton clouds passing overhead and a dry, clean breeze from the northwest. Glance up and you may notice it, the triangular peak of a gaff sail sliding shark-like above the roofs of the waterfront buildings. Or maybe you look to the left and see her, close hauled and heading for the bulkhead before threading the needle inside the dolphin off the *Sabino* wharf and tacking as an appreciative crowd gathers. Follow her along the waterfront and you'll see her round up and glide to a stop at a float in front of the Noyes Building, near the *Australia* exhibit. You'll see a sign on the building announcing The Boathouse, and flocking around that same float you'll see an amazing assortment of pulling boats and small sailboats, most of them in use.

While museums are usually hands-off collections of artifacts, the Seaport's Boathouse is a hands-on, labor-intensive, people-oriented exhibit which seeks to promote traditional small craft, their variety in design, construction, and function, by exposing people directly to their handling characteristics. Opened in the spring of 1988, this old-fashioned livery offers the visitor a choice of water-related experiences including the interpretation of heritage small craft, a chance to row or sail, and opportunities to take a sailboat ride with a licensed captain, or take a boat-handling class, or race a sailboat in the Tuesday night summer series.

The flagship of The Boathouse is the 20-foot Crosby catboat *Breck Marshall*, which you watched showing off the surprising handiness of a catboat. The *Marshall* was built in 1986–87 as part of the Museum's efforts to document the construction techniques used by the Crosby's of Osterville, Massachusetts, at the turn of the century, a project that is detailed in Seaport boatbuilder Barry Thomas's book, *Building the Crosby Catboat* (published by the Museum in 1989). She is a reproduction of a working Cape Cod catboat used for inshore fishing of all types.

A U.S. Coast Guard-licensed skipper can take six passengers on each of her half-hour trips, and over the last two years the *Breck Marshall* has carried more than 5,000 per season, totaling, remarkably, more than 22,000 since 1988. Various able skippers have shared the helm responsibilities, all under the seasoned eye of her most experienced skipper, Captain Doug Butler, whose forte lies in making catboat sailing appear easy. To land a boat displacing about 5,000 pounds on a small dock in fluky summer airs in heavy channel traffic, on schedule, time after time, requires skill and concentration. The boat and her crew have earned the respect and admiration of staff and visitors. A showstopper, this catboat is not only beautiful to the eye, but is also completely functional. The *Breck Marshall* is testimonial to a long tradition of design evolution where hull shape, rig, and use were integral, and a working twentieth-century tribute to the skills of those who designed her, who built her, and who fished her.



Passengers enjoy a half-hour excursion on board the Breck Marshall, *a 20-foot Crosby catboat reproduction, with Captain Doug Butler at the helm.*
(Photo by Sharon D. Brown)

On board the *Breck Marshall* that morning were a couple from Florida and a first-time New Englander from London – seasoned sailors all – as well as the boat's builder Barry Thomas, Captain Doug Butler, and a writer for whom the experience was new and quite thrilling.

We were lucky to have a solid breeze and strong incoming current. Everything was fresh and alive and in motion. And strangely tranquil.

The gentle swoosh of the bow wash, the tap-tap flapping of the cotton on cotton above, and a lazy, unassuming creak, all came together to serenade passengers into that certain state of willingness that only a sail on a traditional wooden boat can evoke. None of the clang-clang of metal on metal, or the fwip-fwip of nylon sails, or – dare I mention – the uhuhuhbbmmMMMBRRRRRRRRMMM! of an outboard engine.

We left the livery dock at 10:30, and Butler guided us out expertly. The ease with which he handled this 20-foot craft – with her 392 square feet (!) of sail – was tribute both to his exceptional ability and to the design and careful craftsmanship behind this Crosby catboat replica.

The boat was crafted by Seaport boatbuilder Barry Thomas, who built her in the traditional methods of the Cape Cod-based Crosby boatbuilders, having worked closely with a veteran of the yard.

The Crosby catboat was a working vessel, with a large cockpit and minimal cabin space. The *Marshall* is gaff-rigged, and the mast is so far forward that a good wind will depress her ample bow.

Initial conversation among the three paying passengers and their captain centered on the single-sailed catboat's "notorious" weakness – as compared to the Marconi or Bermuda rig, with higher aspect triangular mainsail and no gaff to sag off to leeward – in terms of pointing, or sailing close to the wind. Butler, however, was quick to defend the *Marshall* as an exceptionally strong pointer, especially when "pinched" into the wind. We were later to witness just how precise this craft can be.

Butler was clearly enjoying his job as he played in and out and up and down the Mystic River, especially vibrant this morning with the colorful sails of the *Joseph Conrad* summer program's Dyer Dhows flitting back and forth in pursuit of nothing apparent.

His passengers cheered when he first headed straight for the *L.A. Dunton* and veered off – between the vessel and a nearby piling – just in time. They applauded his deftness at a complete turnaround. And they held their collective breath when he expertly rode a gust of wind back once more through the *Dunton* slalom adventure.

The captain again demonstrated his skill – and the boat's agility – in the landing, which he handled smoothly and single-handedly.

As the one group was leaving the dock another was headed for the boat. Their faces reflected their inexperience on the water.

The writer signed on for a second passage, and indeed found herself to be the seasoned sailor in the crowd (with the exception, thankfully, of the captain). A couple from Queens, New York, a mother and daughter from Long Island, and another couple visiting from Atlanta admitted to having little to no experience aboard a sailing vessel of any type, let alone this splendid craft of wood.

Despite a slight unease at heeling – one of the women from Long Island kept mouthing "level, level" – the group really enjoyed themselves. Just as the Seaport's views of the river are spectacular, so too are the river's views of the Seaport; the Museum takes on a totally new perspective when seen from the water. And the group – each of whom had visited the Museum the day before – found quickly that they had not yet seen all there was to be seen.

Butler was wise to his passengers, and played the voyage accordingly. No racing toward the *Dunton* this time. We went, but slowly.

He took care to demonstrate the craft's agility and precision, while at the same time giving his passengers more to think about than the fact that they were doing something totally alien to them. He achieved this fine balance by putting the vessel through her routine while pointing out various sites along the river, and describing some of the Seaport activities we were witnessing. A fail-safe recipe for relaxation, and it worked.

– *Leslie Gifford*

The route of the *Breck Marshall* changes during the day depending on wind and tide. From her spacious cockpit, passengers have a view of the Mystic River from Interstate 95 down to the Route 1 bascule bridge in downtown Mystic, including the Seaport's picturesque waterfront and varied New England watercraft. You may hear a horse-drawn carriage rattle over the cobblestones, the ring of the shipsmith's hammer, a chanteyman leading a group in song on the green, or the demonstration squad hollering commands aloft on the *Charles W. Morgan*. These sights and sounds are backdrop to the quiet, smooth movement of the *Breck Marshall*. The lapping of the water against her cypress topsides, the luffing of her canvas sail, the snap of the mainsheet block as it reaches the end of the run across the traveller during a jibe, and the boil of her wake are all accentuated in the cockpit. The skipper fields questions about the boat and interprets the Museum, and passengers share experiences. It is an intimate exchange, and for many people, especially children, it is their finest time under sail.

In different conditions, under reefed sail, you gain an appreciation for the power of the wind and the work of the skipper, whose forearms bulge while holding the tiller to windward, all the while maintaining a smooth verbal delivery and a worry-free ride for passengers. It is not unusual to look back to the Seaport grounds and spot people standing, just to watch the boat sail or perhaps photograph her. Even upper-deck guests on 100-foot yachts tied at the Bartram Dock point cameras in the *Breck Marshall's* direction.

A weary skipper marks the end of the day with the evening ritual of putting the catboat to bed, furling the sail, washing down the cockpit, deck, and topsides, and securing extra bow, stern, and spring lines for the night. Camaraderie between skippers is strong. They engage in friendly rivalry to carry the greatest number of passengers in a day, and usually check their head count with the records before leaving.

On a weekend, The Boathouse can be a daunting scene to the unwary. There are phone inquiries from all over the country and reservations from as far away as Texas. Some people wander in, while others seek out The Boathouse with purpose, pulling up to the dock in handmade boats. In addition to selling more than 80 *Breck Marshall* tickets, there may be more than 40 people accommodated in various rental situations, with a record one day total of 99 people assisted into rental boats. Neither the casual visitor nor the person seeking detailed boat information and desiring a written follow-up are included in this count. Whereas the *Breck Marshall* may be the only option for some Boathouse visitors, experienced boat-handlers have a fleet of traditional small craft to choose from, including twelve rowboats, one double-paddle canoe, and six sailboats, all accessioned components of the collection.

To start the rental process, prospective boat-handlers offer oral evidence of their skills and complete a form that includes a waiver. They are then briefed on right of way and safety rules, shown the rowing or sailing areas (which are within sight of The Boathouse), and fitted with a personal flotation device (PFD). During a short on-the-water test drive, rowers have an opportunity to try out the unfamiliar boats, oars, and oarlocks, and to demonstrate their rowing ability. If their skills are adequate for the conditions, they return alongside the dock, pick up their waiting party, and embark on their rowing adventure. Rentals are on a half-hour or hourly basis, with members enjoying a discount. It is a hands-on activity and attractive to everyone, including those who merely wish to bump around in a Pete Culler skiff, the sophisticate who wishes to compare a Whitehall with a peapod, and the family of four who return to the dock engaged in banter about dad's waning rowing skills. Rowing has universal appeal and participants are



Boathouse volunteer Jim Guli checks out Greg St. Amand of St. Catherines, Ontario, in the Seaport-built Whitehall tender. Greg purchased plans for this boat from the Museum's Ships Plans Collection and subsequently milled and cured the lumber to build his own.
(Photo by Sharon D. Brown)

quick to share positive comments on their return. Young people try the oars in sheltered waters west of the navigation channel for the first time, or tow toy boats, or perhaps collect feathers and other flotsam. Repeat customers bring fishing rods, umbrellas, cushions, and snacks.

Some clients have favorites. Peter Price, who is considering building a Herreshoff double-paddle canoe, has put many happy miles on *L. Francis*, built by George B. Kelley of Hyannis, Massachusetts, and donated by him specifically for use in the livery. Greg St. Amand, of Newcastle, Ontario, fancies building a Whitehall and twice drove from his home to obtain plans and check out the 14-foot, 10-inch Whitehall tender built in the Boat Shop in 1974. Steve Smith, who is considering construction of the 17-foot sailing Swampscott dory designed by John Gardner and built by him and Barry Thomas in 1974, was surprised to discover that this boat circumnavigated Long Island under the name *New Glory*, a rowing trip of some 300 miles by three men in 1980. Others are smitten by *Captain Hook*, with her shiny black topsides and attractive wineglass stern, which has been the site of at least two wedding engagements. Her handlers are usually amazed to learn that this classic 12-foot hull was built in Southport, Maine, in 1920. A frequent guest, John Parker of Houston, Texas, rows in the whole fleet and currently favors the lapstrake Rangeley Lake boat replica, *Nelson B.*, built in the Boat Shop in 1978. Members of the George Hess family, when not sailing a Beetle Cat, like to row together, pulling a double set of oars in the *Green Machine*. This modified Herreshoff/Gardner pulling boat, sometimes referred to as the "livery Cadillac," has a following of aficionados who keep abreast of her growing acclaim on the East Coast racing circuit.

Russ Smith and Sean Bercaw practice in the 17-foot Herreshoff/Gardner pulling boat, the Green Machine *built by John Gardner in 1978. They won the 20-mile Howard Blackburn challenge at Gloucester in 1991 in this plywood planked livery boat, and sparked renewed interest in her construction.*
(Photo by Sharon D. Brown)



The range of customers also includes groups such as Elderhostel. Last spring fourteen students from the Hopkins School of New Haven who had been reading Jerome K. Jerome's classic, *Three Men In A Boat*, rowed through the morning with their headmaster, Thomas Rodd, and teacher Peggy Vermilya, who introduced them to the livery. The very next morning Captain Martyn Clark brought trainees and crew from the visiting West Coast training vessel, *Pacific Swift*, to sample small boats on the Mystic River where he and his wife honeymooned 23 years ago. In the pouring rain on the last Sunday in May, a busload of 37 students from the Townsend Harris School of Queens College, New York, enroute from a Boston field trip, found solace in rowing down to the highway bridge. Hair and clothing dripping wet, they cheered each other on to master the oars. Meanwhile, the chaperone, surrounded by their valuables, curled up with a book in front of the window and glanced up occasionally to note their progress. No one wanted to come in off the water, and we were late closing up.

The screening process for sailboat checkouts is more demanding of staff. As one prospective customer put it when queried as to whether he knew how to sail, "No. But how hard can it be?" Sailboats are rented by the hour, and there is a one-hour minimum charge regardless of the outcome. For the Beetle Cats on the moorings the visitor rows to the boat, rigs it based on instructions received at the dock, drops the mooring and demonstrates the proper mooring pickup, or "fails" and is towed back. The Beetle Cat is ideally suited to these waters. Some sailors return often to enjoy this unique opportunity and perhaps reflect on the simple pleasures of life while sailing in a wooden boat that has been in production since 1921.

Other options for sail include the Woods Hole spritsail boat, built by John Gardner and Sylvester Costelloe in 1973 and named *Sandy Ford* after Syl's hometown in Ireland. Captain J. Bolton of Essex, a sailor licensed for much larger vessels, has enjoyed sailing *Sandy Ford* with his young family. The boat is stable, roomy, and excellent for teaching. The sloop-rigged Swampscott dory carries a leg-o'-mutton main and a rudder with yoke and tiller lines, which hasn't prevented some inventive helmsmen from roll tacking. The 16-foot lapstrake Boston ship chandler's Whitehall, *Elysea*, built in Maryland in 1973 by Samual McQuay, has a small spritsail. With the resistance of her full-length keel and centerboard, it can be a challenge to jibe and round up into the wind alongside the dock using the tiller

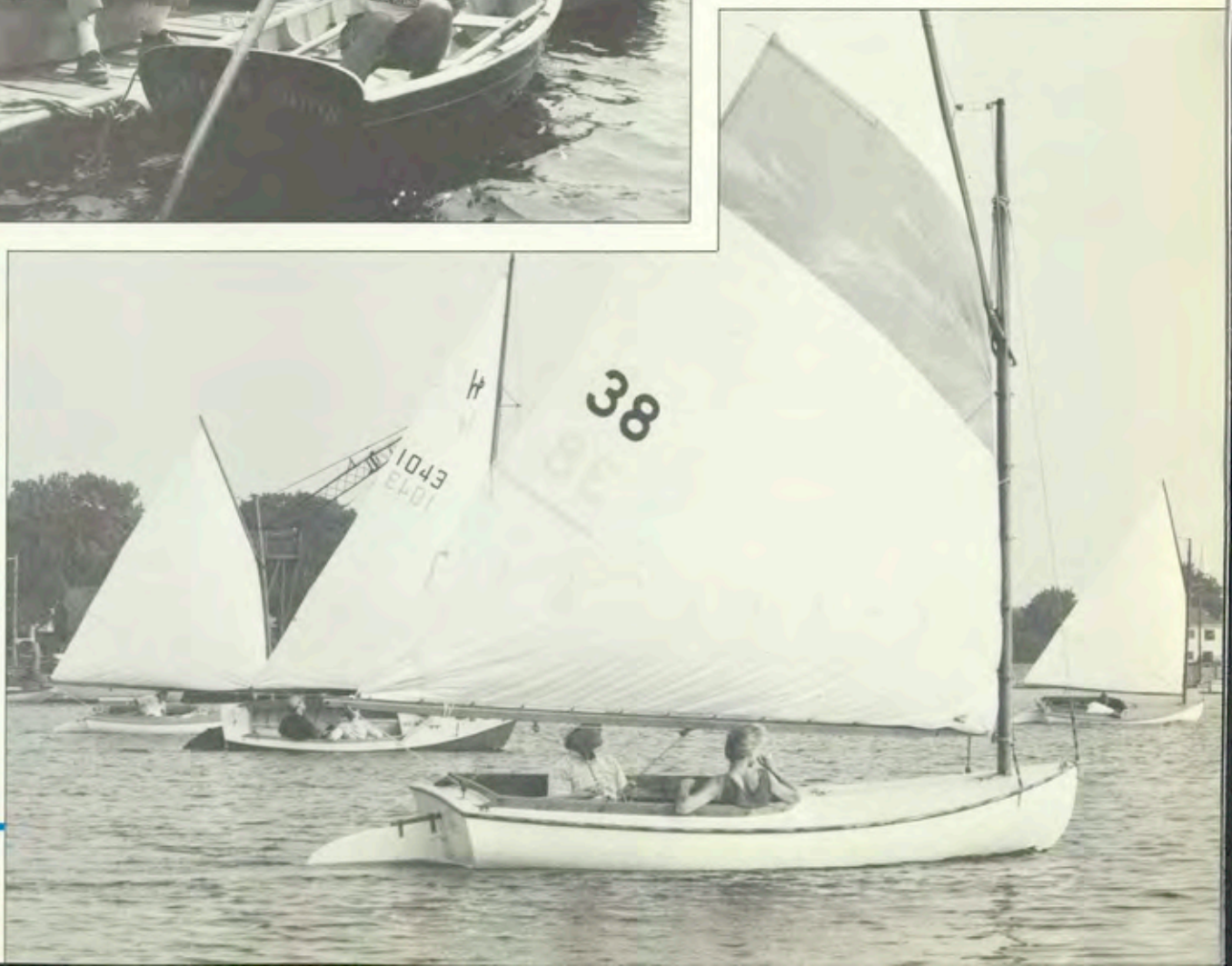
lines. The 14-foot Seaford skiff reproduction built by Paul Ketcham of Long Island in the late 1940s offers a more relaxed sail for the solo helmsman, and is ideal for children. Proficient adults like to sail the Willits Ansel replica of the 15-foot sharpie-skiff, *W.B.*, built at the Museum in 1979. Volunteer Sandy McDonald sails her regularly, and Peter Johannsen, a Williams-Mystic alumnus who studied sharpies while here as a student, is building a replica from plans he obtained through Helen Packer's office in the Seaport's Ships' Plans Collection. He returns to sail her when he can in preparation for his own sharpie cruising adventure to start soon in Florida.

Inside The Boathouse, in front of the wide observation window, anxious personnel share the binoculars, keeping track of rowboats and watching sailboats ground out on the mud flats, sails luffing, or worse, sails drawing. Novices may overestimate their abilities and are not always appreciative of the time and practice that skills take to develop. Sometimes it is necessary to row out and offer instruction or, when coaching fails, assist the client to the mooring with the chase boat, *Dr. Livingstone*, a lapstrake tender built by William Dyer of Warren, Rhode Island, and powered with a Universal Atomic four-cylinder engine.

In addition to these daily Boathouse activities, one-day traditional boat-handling classes are held on summer Fridays. The emphasis is hands-on, with introductory discussion of construction and model types and their history, oars, hardware types, knots, and the basic mechanics of good rowing style and safe boat-handling. Classes are limited to six students of every experience level and age. Everyone has an opportunity to row all the pulling boats before lunch, and assess their handling idiosyncrasies. After a break, students learn to scull, often with the help of boatbuilder Bill Sauerbrey's visually dramatic tutelage, and then each sailor solos the sprit, gaff, and leg-o'-mutton rigs. Novices share the helm and everyone receives individual instruction.

The day ends on board the *Breck Marshall*, where class members may take the tiller and feel the resistance of the helm as the boat rounds up in a puff, or the sensation of coasting when the hull carries through the water, sail luffing. Exhausted participants leave with a sense of accomplishment of rowing skills honed, or sculling mastered, or the sprit demystified. In a world of one-size-fits-all marketing strategy, they have a new respect for, and understanding of, the great diversity of traditional hull shapes and rigs that they have only begun to explore.





Above, *all eyes are on Bill Sauerbrey, teaching sculling during a traditional boathandling class at The Boathouse.* (Photo by Sharon D. Brown)

Right, *Beetle Cats and a Wood Pussy beat to the windward mark in the Tuesday night racing series sponsored by The Boathouse.* (Photo by Sharon D. Brown)

The Boathouse also sponsors a ten-week summer racing series for traditional small craft including a Beetle Cat class and a Portsmouth handicap class. The Tuesday evening start at 6:00 P.M. has attracted a loyal following over the past four years, and an increase in the number of privately-held boats in the Beetle Cat fleet. From any vantage point the races are beautiful to observe. They are a kind of ballet of traditional sail, with a Marconi-rigged Phil Rhodes-designed Wood Pussy, the sprit rigs of the *Sandy Ford* or the Seaford skiff, or a modified Oughtred design interspersed with the gaff-headed Beetles. Crews may include old friends, wives, children, or even Chester, the beloved black Labrador. Boathouse sailboats may be chartered for the series by members, and last season Holt "Jack" Vibber, skipper of the *Leo J. Telesmanick,* received the charter as a Father's Day gift from his family. Final standings are announced at the end of the season, and winners share a place of honor on perpetual half-model trophies carved by John Gardner and Jack Vibber.

The Boathouse and staff are supported by a dedicated group of about 50 small-craft enthusiasts, the volunteers, who contribute over 2,000 hours of service to the program each year. The youngest enjoys sculling and often returns in the evening to treat her mother and grandmother to a row in her favorite boat, the Chamberlain dory skiff, *Harry Williams.* The saltiest volunteer is well into his 80s and still enjoying his own sailboat. It is a cooperative operation, and everyone brings a unique skill to the job. Aside from the daily routine, they maintain the oars and oarlocks, make wooden bailers and turn thole pins, assemble toy boats for youngsters, participate in Photo Weekend and Members' Day, and pitch in wherever needed, as when everyone worked to finish Bob Watt's demonstration model of the *Breck Marshall.*

The Boathouse is a natural outcome of John Gardner's vision and leadership. It works because of the support of people who care, staff and volunteers alike, and because there are simple pleasures of nature, accomplishment, and fellowship derived from using traditional small boats. Since his arrival at Mystic Seaport Museum in 1969, John has been a strong advocate of the hands-on approach to preserving our maritime heritage through the teaching of boatbuilding, the construction of replicas, the adaptation of new materials to traditional designs, and the actual use of such boats. Twenty years ago he wrote these words under the title, "Small Craft Preservation For Use," presented at the First International Congress of Maritime Museums of the Atlantic Basin, held at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England: "Our small craft heritage is a living thing. It still lives on, but its continued survival depends squarely on continuing use. Unless traditional boats continue to be built and used on the water as boats, they must soon lose relevance, not long to become esoteric relics, curios with no more than passing interest for any except a few specialists. It is not enough to collect antique boats and to store them away, or merely to exhibit them." He expressed similar thoughts in *The Log* in 1988, the same year The Boathouse opened: "There is only one way to preserve heritage small craft, which is to continue using and enjoying them." The Boathouse is one working exhibit of the Museum that reflects this modern philosophy and complements other small craft programs supported by the Boat Shop and Ships' Plans.

"My son and I spent a wonderful half hour rowing." "The boats are great." "Best exhibit in the museum." These are visitor testimonials from the pages of The Boathouse Log and Guest Book. Dow Hoyt, an Elderhostel participant from Menlo Park, California, was inspired to write, "This was a great experience – your boats are outstanding and I am going to build a whitehall like the one I used." After spending three hours sailing the Beetle Cat *Elvira G. Tucker* with his daughter Emily on her eighth birthday, Paul van Niewerburgh of Campbell Hall, New York, wrote, "Putting people out on their own in historical wooden boats is a great way to spend an afternoon." And Howard Johnson of Rhode Island added, "Great rowing for grandchildren." These remarks simply but eloquently reflect the pleasures derived from simply messing about in small boats on the Mystic River.

Operating from the south end of the Noyes Building and adjacent dock, near Lighthouse Point, The Boathouse is open between mid-May and Columbus Day. It is open seven days a week, 10:00 A.M. through 7:00 P.M., during the busy summer weeks, and weekends only until 5:00 P.M. in the spring and fall. Come join us on the water.

Under a double-reefed mainsail, the Crosby catboat Breck Marshall *reaches across the Mystic River with a full passenger complement of costumed staff and volunteers on photo weekend. Captain Ted Stanton is at the helm.*
(Photo by Sharon D. Brown)



Wind Rose®
A MYSTIC SEAPORT CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Thar She Blows!

The eighth annual *Moby-Dick* marathon reading, honoring Herman Melville's 174th birthday, will begin at noon Saturday, 31 July, and finish up the same time next day. South Street Seaport Museum's Jack Putnam will get the reading started, reciting chapter 1, "The Loomings," in the character of Melville himself. Carrying on what has become an annual tradition, members of the National Theater of the Deaf will read and sign chapter 9, "The Sermon."

At times this dramatic reading is enhanced by chantey singing and costumed roleplayers, and loyal participants return year after year to recite their favorite chapters in this unique literary event.

Members and visitors will be encouraged to take turns in the reading—to be held either on deck or in the fo'c'sle of the *Charles W. Morgan*—during museum hours, and the 24-hour celebration will conclude with the cutting of the Great White Cake! Members may call 572-0711, Ext. 5035 for additional information.

And Speaking of Whales . . .

For those of you who have yet to see the participatory play "A Tale of a Whaler"—and for those who have but still haven't played the part of a Greenhand—here's your chance. This fun bit of theater returns to the Seaport for its third season this summer, and members can see it for free.

The play will be presented four times each day during the summer season, which extends from 28 June to 6 September. Check your *Today* for exact time and location.

This play—performed expertly by the City Stage Co. of Boston—was scripted to answer the most frequently asked questions about whaling, whaleboats, and whalemen. It tells the tale of a New England woman who signs on a whaleship and goes to sea—disguised as a man, of course—in search of her faithless lover. This is educational theater at its best, and it's a lot of fun. So join the cast this summer. Learn, and enjoy.

Small Craft Movement Honors One of Its Own

The 24th annual Small Craft Workshop, to be held 5 and 6 June, will celebrate the work of Robert "Pete" Culler, a noted boat designer and builder. In addition to working for the Concordia Company in Padanaram, Massachusetts, the designer worked during the 1940s and '50s out of his own Hyannis, Massachusetts, shop, the tools from which are now part of the Seaport collection.

Together with the Seaport's John Gardner, Culler was instrumental in reviving widespread public enthusiasm—in the 1960s and '70s—for building traditional small wooden boats using the standard tools and methods.

Each year, the Seaport's Small Craft Workshop brings boaters and nonboaters together for a weekend of boat trials, informal excursions along the Mystic River, informative workshops and telling discussions relating to small craft, a rare tour of the roughly 350 craft currently in storage, and weekend admission to the Seaport.

Members interested in participating in this year's Workshop weekend are encouraged to call for information and registration at 572-0711, ext. 5028.

Taste of History Goes Lite

The Taste of History returns to the Seaport this summer, in a trimmer, tighter body. This event will be shorter than last year's but will still be packed with the historical spice that separates it from the contemporary Taste of [Location] food festivals that have become so popular with grazers everywhere. At the Seaport festival, you'll sample the best of nineteenth-century fare, and you'll learn about it as well.

And if you can't make it to the festival in August, catch us at the capital. The Seaport was invited to participate in this summer's Taste of Hartford festival, and we'll be there, serving up nineteenth-century food, from 10 to 13 June.

The Taste of History cooking demonstrations and historic foodways interpretation give the visitor a good idea of the types of foods that were eaten, by whom, and under what conditions. The evening meal aboard the *Charles W. Morgan*, for example, would have differed greatly from that served at the Greenman House. Come see how and why, and enjoy your fill of such taste treats as blueberry pudding, fish chowder, corn soup, hermits, and scouse.

This year's festival will take place 5 through 8 August on the South Green. A hearty selection of hot foods, cold beverages, and desserts will be offered, at modest cost. Food will be served each day from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. You may call 572-5315 for additional information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

Springtime Hours continue. All exhibits are open 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., through 27 June.

Outdoor Demonstrations of maritime activities include whaleboat demonstrations, sail handling, fish splitting, and more. Full schedule available at gates.

A . . . B . . . Sea: An Illustrated Dictionary of the Sailors' Own Language continues in the R.J. Schaefer Building. The letters A to Z are all represented – some more than once – with objects, images, and activities. Come explore the mysterious lingo of the sea, and discover the meanings and origins of such salty expressions as "scuttlebutt," "monkey's fist," and "baggywrinkle."

21 ***Steamboat*** **Sabino** begins her 1993 season of daytime and evening tours. Half-hour cruises daily on the hour 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. One 90-minute cruise begins at 5:00 P.M. Schedule changes during summer hours. Season runs through 11 October. Please call 572-5331 for information and reservations.

22 ***The Boathouse*** opens for the season, weekends only through 28 June, from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Please see story beginning on page 10, and call 572-5341 for details.

28–31 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** Cost is $450. Please call 572-5323 for details.

29–31 ***Lobsterfest Weekend.*** Enjoy succulent and modestly priced lobster in the rough prepared and served at Lighthouse Point by the Mystic Rotary Club, from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. daily throughout this Memorial Day Weekend. Please call 572-5315 for details.

31 ***Decoration Day.*** Special historical reenactment on grounds recalls the "Decoration Day" of the 1870s. A parade and wreath ceremony are highlighted, and active Military are admitted free. Please call 572-5315 for details.

JUNE

4–7 **Brilliant *Weekend Sail for Adults.*** Cost is $525. Please call 572-5323 for details.

5–6 ***Twenty-fourth Annual Small Craft Weekend.*** Please see page A in the centerfold, and call ext. 5028 for details.

10–13 **Brilliant *Weekend Sail for Adults.*** Take part in Off Soundings. Cost is $525. Please call 572-5323 for details.

10 ***Members' Preview Concert*** for Sea Music Festival. Please see inside front wrap, or call 572-5339, for details.

11–13 ***Sea Music Festival.*** Please see back wrap, or call 572-5315, for information.

12 ***Mystic Martime Gallery hosts artist John Atwater,*** who will be in the Print Shop to discuss his latest work, from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. Please call 572-8524 or 800-344-0675 for details.

12 ***Interpreter for Visitors with Hearing Impairments*** will be available, at times posted in the Visitor Reception Center.

20–25 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** **Sold out.**

27–7/2 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** **Sold out.**

28 ***Summer Hours*** begin. Mystic Seaport will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., through 29 August.

28 ***"Kidstuff."*** Free drop-in activities for children on the grounds and in the Children's Museum. Consult your very own *Kids Today* to locate the action. Kidstuff runs through 6 September.

28 ***The Boathouse*** begins 7-days-a-week operation, from 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., through 29 August. Please call 572-5341 for details.

28 **Sabino *Summer Schedule*** begins, to run through 5 September. Daily half-hour excursions from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. One 90-minute downriver tour at 7:00 P.M. Please call 572-5341 for information.

29 ***Small Craft Racing Series Practice*** begins at 6:00 P.M. Series begins 6 July. Please call 572-5341 for details.

30 ***Skywatcher's Guide.*** Planetarium program and outdoor observations with telescope, Wednesday evenings at 8:30 P.M., through 1 September. Please call 572-5355 for details.

JULY

4 ***Fourth of July*** celebration of a traditional 1870s Independence Day, complete with parades, picnic, and patriotic exercises. Music, speeches, and children's games. Please call 572-5315 for details.

4–9 **Joseph Conrad** Summer session, level 1. This program offers a basic introduction to small boat sailing, terminology, safety, and seamanship, as well as museum tours, rowing, and knotwork. Enrollment is limited to 50 students ages 12–16. Cost is $450. For information and registration, please call 572-5323.

4–13 **Brilliant *Sail for Teenagers.*** **Sold out.**

5–9 ***"A Sailor's Life of Long Ago" Day Camp.*** Explore life at sea and in port in the days of sail. Campers ages 8 and 9 will enjoy exploring the rigging and tossing a whaleman's harpoon, making hardtack and splitting a codfish, learning about sea traditions like "Crossing the Line" and the "Dead Horse Ceremony," doing scrimshaw, singing chanteys, and acting out a play about "Old Salts." Cost is $100. Space is limited, so please call 572-5322 today.

6 ***Small Craft Racing Series*** begins. Traditional small sailing craft races to be held Tuesday evenings at 6:00 P.M., through 7 September. Livery boats are available for rental at $14 per hour, or bring your own. Cost is $4 per night, or $25 for the series. Please call 572-5341 for details.

9 ***Traditional Boat-handling Classes*** are conducted from The Boathouse every Friday, from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., through 27 August. Please call 572-5341 for details.

10–11 ***Horse and Carriage Weekend.*** Please see page D in the centerfold, or call 572-5315 for details.

10 ***Interpreter for Visitors with Hearing Impairments*** available, at times posted in the Visitor Reception Center.

11–16 **Joseph Conrad** Summer session, level 2. This program is for accomplished beginning sailors who want to improve their skills. Instruction focuses on boat handling, seamanship, and safety. Enrollment is limited to 50 students ages 12–16. Cost is $450. Please call 572-5323 for information and registration.

12–16 ***"A Seaport Child's Life of Long Ago" Day Camp.*** What was it like to be a child in the nineteenth century? Campers ages 8 and 9 will enjoy the quiet crafts and hands-on activities like making old-fashioned toys and playing yesterday's games, putting



A Seaport Profile:

Dean and Ed Seder

Keeping Florence *in the Family*

LESLIE GIFFORD

Dean (left) *and Ed Seder take a moment to stand with a newly restored* Florence. *The father and son team were responsible for returning* Florence *to power.*
(Photo by Claire White-Peterson)

Dean Seder was having dinner with his folks one night, and happened to mention a bit of a jam he'd gotten himself into. "It's about Florence . . . ," he began.

No, *The Log* has not taken to telling tawdry tales. Seder was referring to the 1926 dragger the Shipyard had been restoring. The restored fishing vessel would be an important addition to the Seaport's collection for two key reasons. She was built locally, at the Franklin G. Post yard down the river, and being a power boat, she filled an evolutionary gap in the Museum's collection of fishing vessels. Seder had been doing *Florence*'s rigging right along, outfitting her with both a swordfishing rig for summer use and a dragging rig for the winter months. He'd been aware of the fact that there were no plans to return her forties-era Graymarine 6-71 diesel engine to *Florence*, and he hadn't really given it much thought. But when he went to install the swordfishing stand – which enables the person throwing the dart to sneak up on the fish by distancing him as much as possible from the noise of the engine – he realized the engine really did need to go back in, and added the project to his list.

When a mail campaign and a complimentary advertisement in *New England Coastal News* failed to turn up either a Lathrop or a Bridgeport engine of the specific model *Florence* had carried early in her career, Seder settled for second best and decided to see whether the diesel that had brought her to the Seaport in 1983 was still useable. He says he took a look at the engine with Seaport friend and mechanical wizard Jimmy Creem, who was encouraging. The rigger admits he knew little of diesel engines at the time, and only slightly more about internal combustion engines. But he figured that if he could take it apart and clean it up, he could certainly put it back together again and go from there.

He had just gotten started when he mentioned the undertaking to his father – a mechanical engineer by education and a self-proclaimed "internal combustion engine buff" – and invited him to take a look. Ed Seder, for many years a Seaport Pilot, soon found himself volunteering nearly full time.

It was a project the Seders senior and junior would work through together, and which would culminate in *Florence*'s traveling – under her own power – to the 1992 Blessing of the Fleet in nearby Stonington Harbor.

But first they had to get the engine up and running. And the work was tedious: taking things out and cleaning them up and putting them back together again. Dean says his father was "so precise. He would take something out of the engine and before putting it down he would look at one side of it, then turn it over and study the opposite side. He would look at the piece from every angle, and you could just see him memorizing every part so he would know just how to put it back in."

Once they had cleaned, reassembled, and run it, the two men faced the real challenge of getting the engine – weighing in at about a ton – back into the boat.

To the novice, the process of tucking the heavy engine in and under sounds like a feat comparable to hiding a grand piano in the coat closet. But Dean, whose rigging skills were crucial to the operation – and who really is quite unassuming about those skills – takes an "oh it was nothing" attitude: "We just kind of picked it up with the fork lift and took it down there and put it in," he says.

The task, Ed says, required "someone with a good knowledge of how to move heavy things, and that's what riggers do. Watching Dean rig this thing into the hull and the way he can get things secure and rig slings and get leverage and so forth is a real pleasure," he says. "The average person has very little feeling for how to handle something that's too heavy" for him to lift. One of the things riggers seem to do easily is to immediately know how it can be rigged – how it can be handled with blocks and tackles and 'come-alongs' and other tools of the trade – so you don't need the muscle, you just need the know-how to get things where you want them, and safely."

Dean learned his rigging skills on the job. He first came to the Seaport in the summer of 1975, having spent an unfulfilling freshman year studying naval architecture at the University of Michigan. He knew he wanted



Dean Seder seizes lookout hoops into place aboard Florence.
(Photo by Nancy d'Estang)

to work at the Seaport that summer, and when he was told no staff positions were available, he offered to volunteer. His interview with Maynard Bray, who ran the Shipyard at the time, went something like the following:

Bray: "Do you like to climb trees?" Seder: "Well, sure." Bray: "Well, then, I think we could use another rigger." A career was made.

He was asked to join the staff that fall, and except for one year – he spent 1978 making sure the family manufacturing business was not for him – Seder has been in the rigging loft ever since. During his first few years he worked closely with "an old fellow named Charlie Andersen who had been leading the rigging department at the time. . . . He had a lot of knowledge, and he was able to give me a lot of training before he retired."

Today, Dean is one of three Seaport riggers. While Gary Adair has been pursuing an independent project of documenting traditional sailmaking methods, Dean and Karl Robinson maintain the rigging on all the Seaport vessels. It's a huge job, but they seem to have it down to a smooth system of regular upkeep and minor repairs. When the weather is right, the two men can usually be seen aloft on any one of the vessels. ("You can't be afraid of heights," Seder says.) The winter months are spent for the most part in the loft, tackling one major project and a number of smaller ones. The loft is an efficient jungle of tools and materials and gadgets systematically hanging from the ceiling and walls. This winter it was filled with the rigging for the *Charles W. Morgan*, which in the fall had been hauled for her scheduled maintenance.

New ventures are always in the works, and many are borne of the riggers' own initiative. When Adair and the Australian sailmaker Don Lucas made new sails for the *Emma C. Berry*, for example, Seder and Robinson wanted to take the project one step further, bending the sails onto the vessel, making the necessary adjustments, and, with Seaport staff, sailing her.

It was this sense of initiative that compelled Seder into the engine project. And it was his skill as a rigger that compelled that engine back into *Florence*. It went in stern first, then down, then forward. They picked it up with two slings coming to the forklift. On one of the slings Dean attached a "come-along," a practical contraption on the order of a winch, which enables the rigger to make angle adjustments to the object being lifted. They got the engine over the boat and lowered the aft end, put it back-in, then took up on the aft end to get it level again, and set it down flatly. "It was pretty tricky," Dean admits, adding, "it was very close getting it through that hatch. But we didn't have to saw out anything. It fit, which tells you the hatch was built to the right dimensions."

Once the engine was in, they were anxious to test it out. "So even before we had the steering in," Ed recalls, "Quentin [Snediker] and Roger [Hambidge] and Jeff [Pearson] said, 'Come on, we've got to take it for a ride.' Dean was down below operating the gear shift. I was down below operating the throttle . . . There were no steering cables so we

Tucking the heavy engine down and in took more than a little rigger's intuition.
(Photo by Claire White-Peterson)



had both Roger and Jeff steering back by the tiller, and Quentin was captain. I started up the engine and Quentin would signal Dean down one side to put it in forward or reverse, and then he'd tell me, down by the engine at the front end, whether he wanted throttle to go or not . . . So we went out into the river and up around the north end and she ran just fine . . ." The two men laugh as Dean finishes his father's sentence: " . . . but it took one two three four five people to do it."

The carpenters had put the engine beds back to their original dimensions during the restoration, and the Seders had to "shim up" this ca.-1943 engine – which is considerably shorter than the original – so it would line up with the propeller shaft. "Dean had done some eyeballing and calculation of what these new spacers would have to be," says Ed, "and had cut them and put them in."

"I made the shims beforehand due to the heavy weight of the engine," Dean explains. "I wanted to have them in place when we put the engine down. They were loose but I figured we could tap around with the hammer and because they were tapered I thought we might be able to just drive them one way or the other and have it raise and lower and line up."

Wishful thinking. They got close, but finally had to take new measurements, make up a new set of shims, lift the engine one side at a time – using hydraulic jacks – and make the switch.

With the engine in and aligned, the men started thinking about connecting it up. When *Florence* came to the Seaport, her deckhouse was not as it had been originally, and the exhaust came straight up through a vertical fitting rather than out through the hull. Despite knowing that the current engine never did exhaust through the hull, Dean says he was "pretty insistent" about exhausting where the original engine had. "It was sort of a compromise: we wanted to keep the profile of the earlier boat while getting an engine in there that would work."

Of course, the decision to go out through the hull created space problems, because they had to provide an exhaust loop – to prevent water from coming into the engine should the boat take a wave broadside – and that loop had to be positioned above the manifold but still underneath the deck.

And then they didn't have a muffler. To purchase a new one would have been prohibitively expensive, and Dean didn't think it would be right anyway. So he did some research into exhaust mufflers, and said, "Geez, I think we can make one of those." He consulted with Ron Anderson, the Shipyard's smith and welder, then found a piece of pipe about 10 inches in diameter and "started cutting and welding on it and came up with one that works for the most part." Ed refers to the new piece as a "beautiful big steel muffler."

The steering system offered yet other challenges. When the boat came to the Seaport, the steering wheel was facing the way it would in an automobile. But the early sketches and photos describe it on the side of the tiny pilothouse, in such a way that the helmsman would rotate the wheel forward and back. The Seders say they had no choice but to put it back to the original.

It all came together as the deadline approached, and *Florence* proudly participated in the Stonington Blessing of the Fleet. And though the two men would like to run *Florence* again – they really would like to take her fishing – she will not likely return to the Blessing. "It's really designed for people who go out and risk their lives on the water," explains Dean, "and I would feel uncomfortable about going every year."

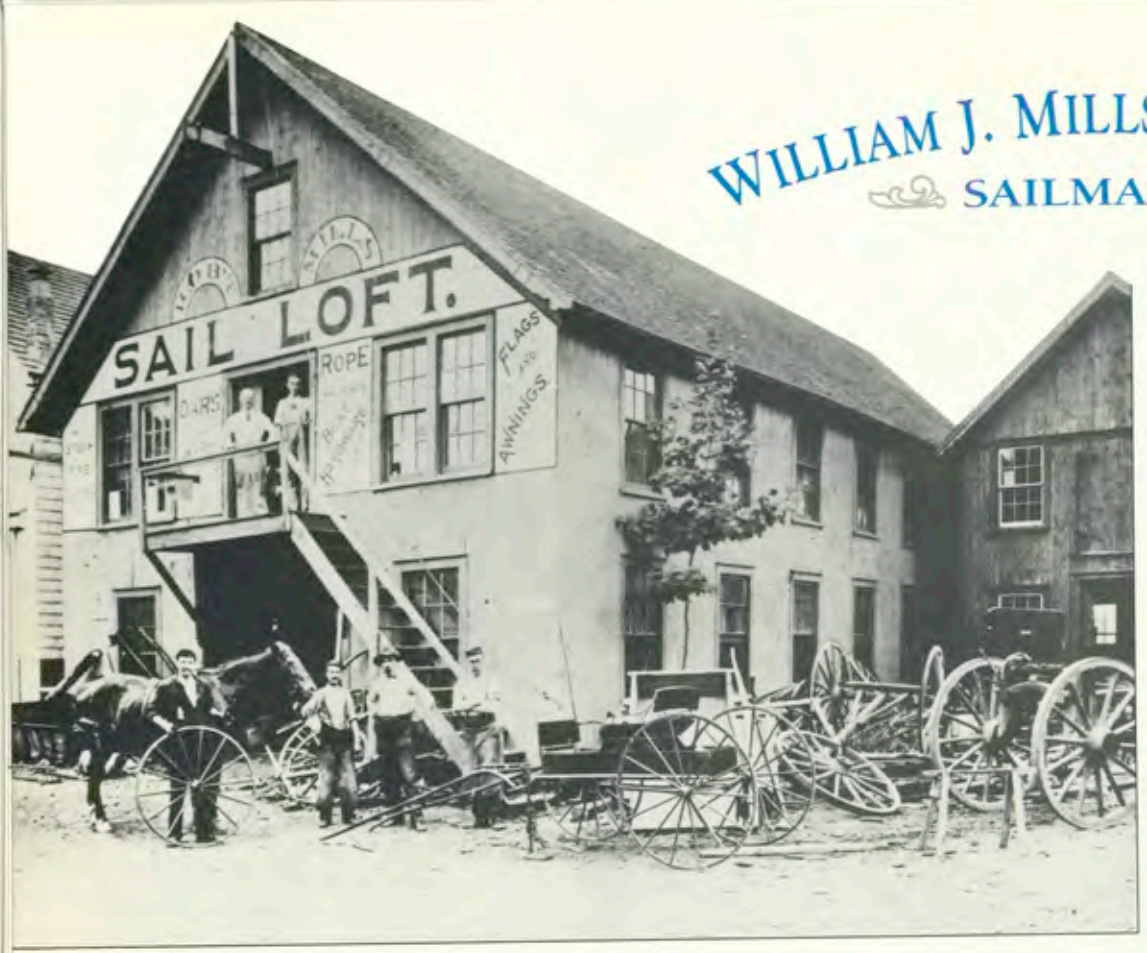
It is a posture he has taken throughout the project, a commitment to doing things right. Taking part in the Blessing was a goal well met. It was a proud moment for the Seders and for the Seaport. And *Florence* has her engine back. ■



Florence *dressed and ready for summer swordfishing.*
(Photo by Nancy d'Estang)

WILLIAM J. MILLS & COMPANY
SAILMAKERS

MARIFRANCES TRIVELLI



The Robert Mills Sail Loft at Glenwood Landing on Long Island's Hempstead Bay. William J. Mills reportedly left this loft in 1880 to establish his own business in Greenport. Notice that this sail loft shared the building with a blacksmith and that a sailmaker in a small port might also make flags, awnings, and steam pipe covers, as well as dealing in rope, oars, and boat hardware.
(Courtesy William J. Mills II)

Thursday, 24 October 1872, was an important day at the Smith & Berrian shipyard in Greenport, New York. After months of work, the 400-ton three-masted schooner *Mary Freeland* "slid down into the water splendidly" to join the vast fleet of schooners that carried bulk cargoes along the Atlantic coast.[1] Her hull was made of oak, perhaps some of it native Long Island oak, and her canvas sails were provided by the Fordham sail loft of Greenport. While the shipwrights framed and planked the vessel, the Fordham sailmakers had taken the dimensions of her proposed rig and designed her sails. In a book of sail plans, they recorded the dimensions of every sail and the dates on which they had been cut and stitched.

Eight years after the launch of the *Mary Freeland*, the Fordham sail loft and its contents were sold to William J. Mills, formerly of Glenwood Landing, New York. Mills and his descendants continued sketching and sewing sails where Fordham had left off. The Fordham and Mills sail plans (or draughts) are currently part of the Ships Plans Collection at Mystic Seaport. The vessels represented in their pages serve as a chronicle of the maritime industries of nineteenth-century Greenport and eastern Long Island.

New York historian Benjamin Thompson, in his 1849 history of Long Island, described Greenport as "the most populous, compact, and prosperous village in the town, . . . conveniently and pleasantly situated at the head of Southold Harbor, a part of Peconic Bay."[2] Given its sheltered position in an area long dependent on waterborne transportation, it was inevitable that shipbuilding would become one of Greenport's most significant industries.

By the 1860s Suffolk County had no less than 25 shipyards, building smaller craft on the shallow southern bays and heavier vessels in the ports on the north shore.[3] The nation's merchant marine was near its peak, with a large sailing fleet on the high seas as well as prosperous fishing and coastal freighting fleets operating nearer shore. Although its coastal fleet would continue to grow, the country's deep-water merchant fleet would begin its decline with the Civil War.

At the same time, an increasing population in urban areas and outports meant an increased demand for fish and fish products. In such areas as New England and Long Island, an increasing number of fishermen depended upon schooners, smacks, sharpies, and catboats for their livelihood.[4] Until the twentieth century, this large fleet of working sail was dependent on local sailmakers to keep it mobile. Greenport's location between the forks of Long Island, on the verge of fertile fishing and shellfishing grounds, kept it prospering longer than many Long Island ports. Perhaps the promise of steady work induced a young sailmaker named William Mills to leave a loft at Glenwood Landing on Hempstead Harbor, 25 miles east of New York, and move 90 miles east to purchase the Fordham loft on Main Street in Greenport.[5]

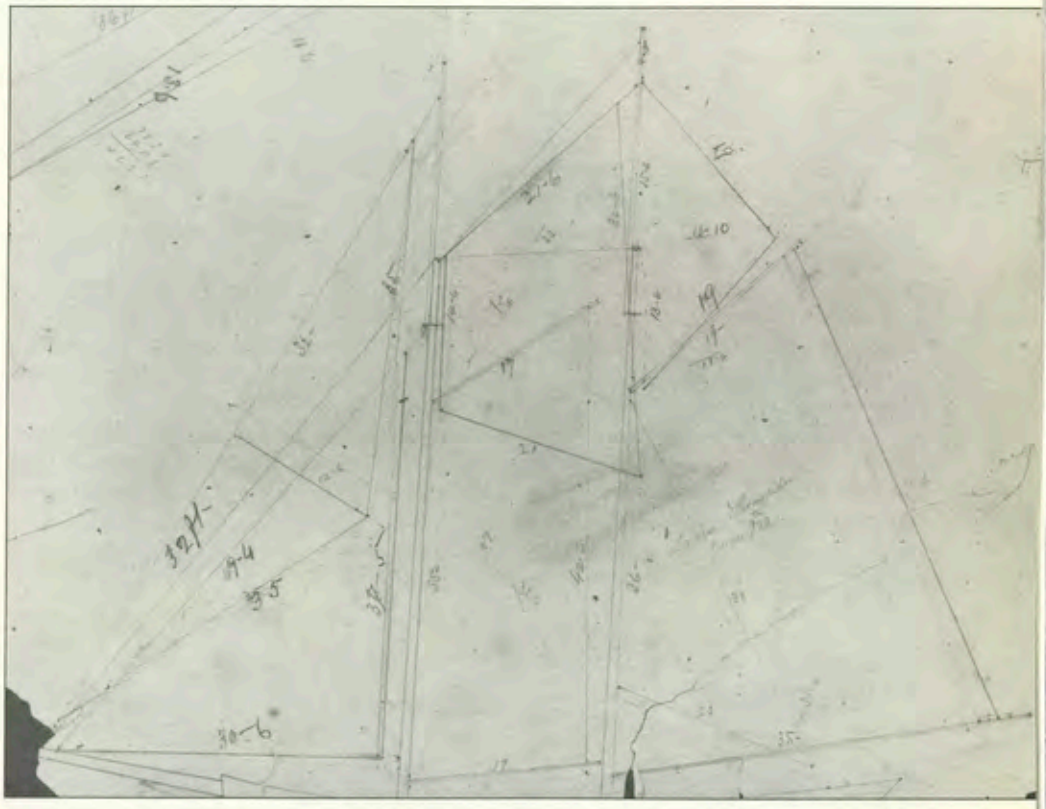
Little information about William J. Mills's early years has survived, yet the sail draughts he left behind reveal traces of his personality. They suggest that he was a hard-working businessman who did not believe in wasting materials. He took Fordham's book and filled its blank pages, even squeezing sail plans into corners of pages and covering the front and back covers as well. Torn plans were patched with old letters and Mills & Company stationery. Mills drew upon whatever was at hand: there are drawings on fine sandpaper, tin ceiling patterns, and on brown wrapping paper stamped "Long Island Express Company." One plan hints at professional competition among sailmakers. Beneath a sketch of an unidentified sloop, sailmaker P.B. Lynch wrote, "William Mills – this is my idea of a sail plan: beat it if you can!"[7]

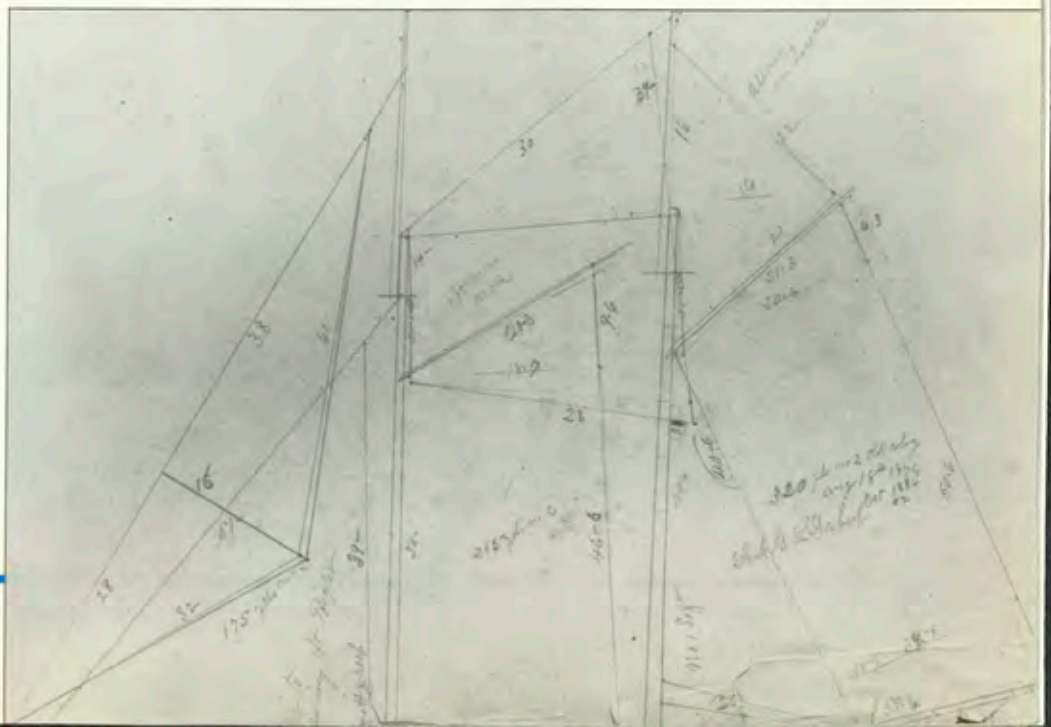
Regardless of the competition, eastern Long Island held plenty of opportunities for sailmakers to practice their craft. William Mills depended on locally built boats for much of his steady business. The Mills sail plans show that the schooner *Susan B. Franklin* was a frequent customer. Built at Greenport's Ketcham & Smith yard in 1868, she appears among the Mills & Company draughts through 1889. The two-masted schooner *Almira Wooley* was another Ketcham & Smith vessel for which Mills provided sails. She worked out of Greenport under the command of Captain Myron C. Rackett. The sloop *Ruby* was rebuilt at Greenport in 1888, and Mills & Company records show that her sails were altered the following year.

The commercial fishing industry was an important source of business for William Mills & Company. Even before its incorporation in 1838, Greenport had been a whaling port, but by the middle of the nineteenth century whaling had been superceded by fishing. Local fishing sloops and schooners worked Gardiner's Bay, the waters off Montauk, and even more distant fishing grounds, sometimes making use of Greenport's Long Island Railroad connection to ship the catch to market. The smack *Storm Child*, which Mills sketched through 1882, was probably typical. From April to October she caught lobsters and sold them in New York, spending the rest of the year fishing for cod off Nantucket. As the fleet grew, a number of fine schooners and smacks (wet-well vessels) built at Mystic and Noank were added to the Greenport fleet.[8]

The schooner *Saxon*, built by R. and J. Palmer of Noank in 1876, was later registered in Greenport, and her full sail profile appears among the Mills & Company draughts of June 1882. The 40-ton *Laura Thompson*, also built by the Palmers, was originally a sloop. Fishermen often found that a schooner was easier to handle than a sloop, with its big mainsail. According to a Mills sketch of January 1883, the *Laura Thompson* was converted to a schooner in Greenport. With a wet well in her hold to keep her catch alive, she ran lobsters to New York's Fulton Fish Market. Other Palmer-built fishing smacks that found their way to Greenport included the *G.L. Daboll* of 1872, which was pictured in the Mills sail plans through 1886, and the *Thomas C. Rackett* of 1883, which was re-registered at Greenport in 1885, sporting new sails from the Mills loft.[9]

James A. Latham & Company operated another important Noank shipyard, and one of the last vessels built by the firm was the schooner *George Moon*, launched in 1868. Working out of Greenport, she received a Mills replacement sail in 1884. The halibut and mackerel fishing schooner *A.A. Rowe* was built by George Greenman & Company on the site of Mystic Seaport in 1859. A Mills sail plan from about 1880 shows her full schooner rig. The Greenmans also built the notable fishing schooner *Empire State*, launched in 1849. Initially the Greenmans retained ownership, but by 1884 she was registered at Greenport, where Mills worked on her sails.





Top, right, *the schooner smack* Laura Thompson *was built as a sloop at Noank, Connecticut, in 1868. Mills drew this sail plan when she was converted to a schooner in 1883. Under the command of Captain Willard Rackett, the* Laura Thompson *ran lobsters to New York markets. She was last documented in 1910.* (Ships Plans Collections, M.S.M. 90.69)

Bottom right, *the sail plan for the Noank smack* G.L. Daboll. *As was the case for most of Mills's draughts, the dates of sail repair and replacement were recorded upon the original drawing.*
(Ships Plans Collection, M.S.M. 90.120)

Edible fish supported a significant Greenport fleet of small vessels, but the inedible menhaden was the economic mainstay of the region's fisheries. Menhaden school in great numbers in the eastern Long Island bays during the summer. Known for their value as a fertilizer by the Native Americans, they had become prized as a source of industrial oil by the middle of the nineteenth century. A review of the 1879 fishing season reveals that business was brisk: in that year 211 million menhaden were caught at Greenport, yielding 1,013, 350 gallons of oil.[10]

Menhaden were caught in huge purse seines, set by a pair of rowed seine boats. The seine boats were tended by carry-away boats – usually sloops – that transported the fish back to the processing plants. Several menhaden factories in Greenport hired William Mills & Company to sew sails for company fishing boats. Mills's draughts include a full profile of the *Jennie*, a 35-foot carry-away boat owned by the Falcon Oil Company of Greenport. The Mills loft periodically sewed sails for the Hawkins Brothers menhaden factory on Shelter Island, including a full set for the carry-away boat *Pelican*. The *W.T. Lervard* was one of the sloops owned by the Ranger Oil Company, and through 1886 she received several new sails from Mills & Company. In the 1880s steam-powered menhaden fishing vessels largely replaced the sailing carry-away boats. The industry became far more efficient, but it no longer provided much work for local sailmakers.

Unlike the menhaden industry, Greenport's scallop fishery yielded large catches only sporadically. Scalloping was reportedly an outgrowth of the oyster industy, first practiced on Peconic Bay in the 1850s. Like oysters, scallops were often caught in dredges towed by sailing sloops. The scallop season ran from October to April, and the work was "of the hardest and coldest sort. No one that has not the constitution of a horse could stand it. . . . the wages are not high."[11] Mills provided sails for several sloop-rigged scalloping vessels, including the *Horace Greeley*, *Walter Gerard*, *Annie Bell*, and *Emma Wilson*.

Among the Greenport fisheries, oystering exceeded all but industrialized menhaden fishery in profitability. "When fishing is dull," according to George Brown Goode's 1887 review of the Long Island fisheries, the fisherman "turns his hand and boat to oystering."[12] Large-scale oyster planting and farming was already underway in the 1840s. Oysters were usually shipped under sail, or else via the Long Island Railroad, to markets in New York City. The volume was so great that by the 1880s New York led the nation in overseas and transcontinental oyster shipments.[13]

The *Montauk* is an example of a typical oyster sloop. Built at Greenport in 1888, she was outfitted with a suit of sales by the Mills loft. After being sold to Captain Andrus Rackett, who modified her rig and changed her name to *Minnie T. Rackett*, she spent much of her later career sailing for the Fulton Fish Market.[14]



Robert Mills (far left) with friends on Plum Island, ca. 1933. Although Robert Mills purchased the Mills loft from his father in 1920, he devoted most of his time to running the Cedar Island Oyster Company. He retired in 1946.
(Courtesy William J. Mills II)

Another oyster vessel with a diverse history is the schooner *Grace Bailey*. Martenus Perry of Patchogue built her in 1882, naming her for the daughter of Edwin Bailey, Sr., founder of Patchogue's Bailey Lumber Mill. The *Grace Bailey* worked out of Patchogue until she was reregistered in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1918. William Mills made her a replacement sail that same year. Her name was later changed to *Mattie*, and by the 1920s she was fishing out of Belfast, Maine. In 1940 the *Mattie* joined Captain Frank Swift's pleasure fleet out of Camden, Maine. Restored in 1990, she is again known as the *Grace Bailey*, and she still cruises the coast of Maine.[15]

The Mills family recognized the lucrative rewards of oystering, for William J. Mills and his son Robert were actively involved in the Greenport oyster industry. When Jacob Ockers – "the Oyster King of Great South Bay" – built the first powered oyster scow in 1896, William J. Mills was part owner.[16]

By investing in powered oyster boats early on, William J. Mills proved to be ahead of his time, for by 1910 all oyster companies on Great South Bay owned at least one powered oyster boat.[17] As the twentieth century began, the newly perfected gasoline engine quickly became the power source for small fishing vessels. The gas engine was cheaper and easier to operate than a steam engine, and, unlike a steam engine, it did not require a licensed engineer on board.[18] The gasoline engine enjoyed such great popularity among commercial and recreational boat owners that in 1907 *Yachting Magazine* announced, "like the sewing machine and the telephone, [the gas engine] is truly a necessity."[19]

With the advent of safer and more economical oil (diesel) marine engines by 1920, the age of sail in the small-vessel fisheries was virtually over. In 1921 William J. Mills helped establish the Cedar Island Oyster Company, which owned only powered boats. It was also in the early 1920s that Robert Mills purchased the sailmaking business from his father, though his keen interest in oystering soon obliged him to hire a manager to supervise the sail loft.

The advent of the marine engine did not, however, make sails entirely obsolete. Sails still served as a means of additional speed

and as a steadying force in inclement weather. Sails also served a crucial role in case of engine failure. William J. Mills & Company continued to sew sails for converted vessels well into the 1930s. The oyster boat *Loretta*, for example, was a catboat built at Patchogue in 1888. By 1920 she was enrolled as a "gas screw steamer," although a plan for her auxiliary sail appears among the Mills draughts of that year. Numerous sail draughts of the oyster freighter *George S. Page*, dating between May 1874 and May 1931, illustrate the evolution from sail to power. The Fordham sail loft first sewed sails for her two-masted schooner rig in 1874—and an accompanying note informs the owner that a new topsail will cost $67.00. A 1907 sail plan from William J. Mills & Company shows only a gaff sail. By the final Mills draught of 1931, the *George S. Page* carried a 50-horsepower gas engine, but still required an auxiliary Marconi sail.

The decline of commercial vessels under full sail coincided with the rise of yachting in the Greenport area, and William J. Mills & Company benefitted from much of this activity. A few small yachts are represented even in the firm's early days. One of the oldest vessels among the sail plans is the sloop-yacht *Mary Sisson*, built at Greenport in 1867. She received a full set of sails from Mills's predecessor in 1871. In 1881 the sloop-yacht *Kansas City* required new sails. She had been built a year earlier at the Matthew & Fordham yard in Greenport.

Between the turn of the century and the 1920s, scores of yachts docked at Greenport. The Shelter Island casinos, just across the channel from Greenport, were a favorite stop for many yacht owners, and several yacht clubs included a visit to Shelter Island in their annual cruises.[20]

Mills & Company draughts reflect frequent business contacts with the Greenport Basin & Construction Company—known variously as Brigham's yard and the Greenport Yacht & Shipbuilding Company—one of the port's largest yachting centers. As Brigham's yard, it contracted with Mills & Company to provide sails for many of its new boats. During the "*Portland* gale" of November 1898, Brigham's boasted that its yacht basin "withstood [these] memorable gales without the slightest injury to a single vessel."[21]

The Mills loft made sails for local yachts, such as the 39-foot sloop *Martha*, built by Greenport Basin & Construction for Henry Coe, and the 28-foot auxiliary catboat *Altair*, built at Greenport in 1909. The *Altair* and others, including the *Dauntless*, *Puritan*, and *Sappho*, shared the names of more famous yachts. At times, visiting yachts required minor sail repairs. The New York auxiliary schooner *Blue Goose*, designed by William Hand, had some work done by Mills during a visit to Greenport in the 1920s.



William J. Mills (1862–1940) founded William J. Mills & Company at Greenport when he was 18. Between sailmaking, ancillary work, and his investments in oystering, he was very successful. Known for his love of baseball, Mills was a sponsor of Greenport's "twilight leagues," which played on summer evenings. This photo was taken ca. 1935, by which time he had turned the business over to his son and was spending most of his time in Florida.
(Courtesy William J. Mills II)

Although the Mills sail plan book in the Seaport's collection contains no draughts after 1931, the firm is still going strong today. Throughout its existence, the William Mills loft sought all possible sources of income. Oystering finally provided the most lucrative alternative, but boat covers and awnings supplemented the income earned from sailmaking. Having weathered both the decline of sail-powered vessels around 1900 and the shift to synthetic sail cloth around 1950, the business continues as a family-run sailmaking and canvas products business. In the late twentieth century, Greenport is best known as a quaint summer resort with only a shadow of its former fishing fleet. But the sail plans of William J. Mills & Company have endured, and their legacy is a rich visual documentation of the maritime history of a small Long Island town. ■

NOTES

1. William Watson, "Greenport Long Known for Superior Shipbuilding," *Suffolk Times*, March 1977.
2. Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island* (1849; reprint, Port Washington: I.J. Friedman, 1962), p. 251.
3. Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Evolution of Long Island* (Port Washington: I.J. Friedman, 1968), p. 128.
4. Ibid.; James M. Morris, *Our Maritime Heritage: Maritime Developments and Their Impact on American Life* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), p. 153.
5. Richard F. Welch, "The World the Shipbuilders Made: An Entrepreneurial Elite on Nineteenth-Century Long Island," *Long Island Historical Journal* 4:1 (Spring 1990): 39.
6. Some evidence in Mills family records suggests that William J. Mills was in partnership with a Robert Mills, who may have been his father. Information on the Mills family was generously provided by William J. Mills II during an oral history interview with the author on 10 November 1992 in Greenport, New York.
7. Ships Plans Collection, 90.131, Mystic Seaport Museum.
8. Fred Mather, "New York and Its Fisheries," in George Brown Goode, ed., *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the U.S.*, 5 vols., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), sect. 2, part 6, p. 359. For a history of the Mystic and Noank shipyards see William N. Peterson, *Mystic Built: Ships and Shipyards of the Mystic River, Connecticut, 1784–1919* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1989). For the *Storm Child* see Mather, "New York and Its Fisheries," p. 358.
9. The *G.L. Daboll* may have been named for the Noank shipbuilder Gurdon L. Daboll, see Peterson, *Mystic Built*, p. 126. The *Thomas C. Rachett* fished out of Greenport until 1913, when her port of registry changed to Providence, Rhode Island. She stranded off St. Vincent in 1919, *Ship Documents of Providence, Rhode Island*, 3 vols., (Providence: National Archives Project, 1941), 1: 1042–43.
10. Mather, "New York and Its Fisheries," pp. 353–54.
11. Ernest Ingersoll, "The Scallop Fishery," in Goode, *Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the U.S.*, sect. 5, vol. 2, part 20, pp. 577, 578.
12. Goode, *Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the U.S.*, 4: 25.
13. John M. Kochiss, *Oystering From New York to Boston* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press for Mystic Seaport Museum, 1974), p. 24.
14. Captain Eugene S. Griffing, "Battling a Gale in 1901," *Long Island Forum* 18:2 (February 1955): 29.
15. See Kochiss, *Oystering From New York to Boston*, pp. 113–14; "Old Patchogue Schooner," *Long Island Forum* 18:12 (December 1955): 233; Giles M.S. Tod, "Down East Windjammer Vacations," *Motor Boating* 95:6 (June 1955): 64.
16. William J. Mills II, interview with author, 10 November 1992, Oral History Collections G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum; Kochiss, *Oystering From New York to Boston*, p. 147.
17. Kochiss, *Oystering From New York to Boston*, p. 34.
18. Ibid., pp. 138–44; Frank Sterling, *The Marine Motor* (New York: Outing Publishing Company, 1915).
19. A.E. Potter, "The Evolution of the Gas Engine," *Yachting Magazine* 1:2 (1907): 82.
20. O.C. Erickson, "Recalls a Golden Age in Greenport," *Long Island Traveler-Watchman*, 4 August 1977; Ralph G. Duvall, *The History of Shelter Island, 1652-1932*, supplement 1932–1952 by Jean L. Schladermundt, (Shelter Island Heights: n.p., 1952), p. 185.
21. C. Pliny Brigham, *The Glory of the American Yacht: An Historical Incident* (Greenport: Greenport Basin & Construction Company, 1899).



Snug in their forecastle, warmed by the galley range, these well-fed fishermen chat while the cook balances against the heeling of the vessel as he delivers food to the table. Perhaps the tall bottle on the table contains a version of catsup to season their dinner. Drawn by Walton Taber.
(*Century Magazine*, October 1886)

Sea Catchup and Catsup at Sea

SANDRA L. OLIVER

"This catchup keeps well at sea, and may be carried into any part of the world," wrote Eliza Leslie, in her Directions for Cookery in Its Various Branches.[1] By providing a recipe for this seagoing condiment, she continued a tradition, evidence of which we find in a few older cookbooks, of supplying seafarers with instructions for a little something extra to take along to relieve the monotony of shipboard fare.

A few years later, during a whaling voyage that began from New Bedford in 1876, the captain's wife, Sallie Smith, penciled into the back of her shipboard journal a recipe for something she called "Worcestershire Sauce." With its major ingredient being a gallon of ripe tomatoes to which spices, sugar, and vinegar were added, it has every appearance of being catsup.

Who knows whether any seafarer ever took Miss Leslie's "catchup" on a voyage, or whether Sallie Smith ever cooked up a batch of "Worcestershire sauce" at sea. After all, that recipe was one of several she wrote down. Did she record them before the trip in case she had a chance to do a bit of cooking? Did she collect the recipes during the trip? Whaleships clustered on the whaling grounds and in port, and captains and their wives conducted a lively social life. It is easy to imagine that the conversation might have turned to food and the exchange of recipes.

Other questions might occur to you as you read the two recipes; questions about a tomatoless catsup, for instance, or what are these sauces, really, and what do we eat today that is similar? Let's take a closer look at the two:

Sea Catchup

Take a gallon of stale strong beer, a pound of anchovies washed from the pickle, a pound of peeled shalot or small onions, half an ounce of mace, half an ounce of cloves, a quarter of an ounce of whole pepper, three or four large pieces of ginger, and two quarts of large mushrooms –flaps rubbed to pieces. Put the whole into a kettle closely covered, and let it simmer slowly till reduced to one half. Then strain it through a flannel bag, and let it stand till quite cold before you bottle it. Have small bottles and fill them quite full of the catchup. Dip the corks in melted rosin.

This catchup keeps well at sea, and may be taken into any part of the world. A spoonful of it mixed in melted butter will make a fine fish sauce. It may also be used to flavor gravy.[2]

Worcestershire Sauce

To one Gallon of ripe tomatoes (illegible) add five tablespoonful of salt two of cayenne pepper the same of black pepper 1 teaspoon of mace one of allspice one of cinnamon one of cloves two large onion one tumbler of brown sugar one quart of good cider vinegar one tablespoon of mustard mix well in a stew pan and simmer four hours. Strain and bottle when cold.[3]

Let's untangle this catsup, sea catchup, and Worcestershire sauce mess. First, remember not all catsup was red. In fact, before the nineteenth century, *most* catsups weren't. In the eighteenth century, when catsups were becoming popular in Great Britain, the words "catsup" and "soy" (the Chinese sauce made from fermented and pickled beans) were applied generically to several sauces used along with, or added to flavor, other sauces and gravies. An *Oxford English Dictionary* citation for catsup comes from 1690, which describes it as a "high East India sauce."[4]

In the Amoy dialect of Chinese *koechiap* or *ketsiap* refers to the brine of pickled fish or shellfish, and the Malay word kechap refers to a fermented fish sauce.[5] The English ketchup/catsup is a garbling of both Asian terms and ingredients.

It did not take seafaring contact with the East Indies to introduce such sauces to Great Britain. England's Roman invaders brought with them *liquamen*, also called *garum*, a sauce made of fermented fish, usually such small oily fishes as mackerel, anchovies, sprats, and the like, which were mixed with the entrails of larger fish, salted, and allowed to ferment in the sun. The resulting liquid was strained off and added to sauces used for seasoning a wide range of dishes, much as soy sauce and catsup are used today.[6] While Britons ceased using liquamen after the Romans left, a taste for strongly flavored sauces and pickled fish and shellfish remained.

According to Anne Wilson, in Tudor and Stuart England, mushrooms, walnuts, and other vegetables and herbs were commonly pickled. The mushroom pickle, when combined with spices and vinegar or brine, turned a rich, dark color. The color and flavor resembled closely the imported Asian ketchups. Sometimes the mushrooms were discarded and just the liquid was used.[7] Hence, recipes for mushroom catsup, and its close relative, walnut catsup.

When the British imported increasing amounts of anchovies from the Mediterranean in the eighteenth century, the stage was set for a new old combination of fish and pickle to make rich sauces variously called catsups and soys. Early cookbooks, such as E. Smith's *The Compleat Housewife* of 1753, list "English Katchup" made with wines, spices, anchovies, horseradish, and "you may add to it the clear liquor that comes from mushrooms."[8] Mary Randolph of Virginia in 1824 included in *The Virginia Housewife* mushroom, walnut, "tomata," and oyster catsups. Mrs. Randolph also had a recipe for "tomata soy," which was barely different from the catsup.[9]

New Englander Lydia Maria Child flatly stated in 1833 that "The best sort of catsup is made from tomatoes."[10] Few modern Americans would disagree. Yet most of us have had some form of the older catsups with mushrooms or anchovies. Read the list of ingredients on the *modern* Worcestershire sauce bottle: "water, vinegar, molasses, corn sweeteners, anchovies and/or sardines, natural flavorings, fresh onions, tamarinds, salt, fresh garlic, cloves, chili peppers, and fresh eschalots." The ingredients—especially the anchovies, shallots, and spices—remind us of sea catchup. In this instance, the molasses provides the dark color that mushrooms and beer used to, and corn sweeteners please the modern sugar-loving palate. But, with apologies to Sallie Smith, there are no tomatoes.

As the nineteenth century wore on, homemakers needed fewer recipes like Sallie's and Miss Leslie's. Catsups and sauces were among some of the earliest manufactured food products.

Worcestershire sauce is named for the county in England where the sauce was manufactured for a while—Lea and Perrins were making their Worcestershire as early as the 1830s. In 1880, in her cookbook's marketing guide, Maria Parloa recommended that her readers purchase and keep on hand "a few such condiments as . . . Halford sauce, *essence of anchovies*, and *mushroom ketchup* [italics added]. These give variety to the flavoring, and, if used carefully, will not be an expensive addition, so little is needed for a dish."[11]

Miss Leslie's Sea Catchup is not difficult to make. Make some this week for your boating trips this summer. The following is Miss Leslie's recipe written in modern language. I halved the original. The product tastes like clove-flavored soy sauce with discernible anchovy influence, and is *not* thick.

Sea Catchup

2 quarts stale strong beer (preferably a dark beer, *not* a "lite" beer)
8 ounces anchovies, drained and rinsed in hot water to remove most of the oil
8 ounces shallots or onions, coarsely chopped
2 teaspoons mace
1 heaping tablespoon whole cloves
1 heaping teaspoon whole peppercorns
2-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
1 quart mushrooms, coarsely chopped

1. Open the beer and empty into an enamel or stainless steel pot with tight-fitting lid. Allow it to sit until flat.
2. Add all the other ingredients and, with the lid on, bring it to a simmer. Remove lid and let it simmer till "reduced to one half" (it took me 3 hours).
3. Strain it through a sieve lined with several layers of cheesecloth. Let it cool.
4. Bottle it. If you wish, dip the tops of the bottles in melted paraffin.

Yield: scant 3 cups. ■

NOTES

1. Eliza Leslie, *Directions for Cookery in Its Various Branches*, 40th ed., (Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1851), p. 178.
2. Ibid.
3. Sallie Smith, journal, bark *Ohio*, 1876–77, Log 399, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum.
4. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "catsup."
5. Ibid., s.v. "ketchup"; Joyce Toomre, ed. and trans., *Classic Russian Cooking: Elena Molokhovet's A Gift to Young Housewives* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 499.
6. C. Anne Wilson, *Food and Drink in Great Britain from the Stone Age to the 19th Century* (Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1973), p. 23–24.
7. Ibid., p. 295.
8. E. Smith, *The Compleat Housewife or. . . .*, 15th ed., (1753; reprint, London: Literary Services and Production, Ltd., 1968), p. 116.
9. Mary Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife*, Karen Hess, ed., (1824; reprint, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), p. 241.
10. Lydia Maria Child, *The American Frugal Housewife* (Boston: Carter, Hendee, 1833), p. 35.
11. Maria Parloa, *New Cook Book and Marketing Guide* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1880), p. 60.

NEWS & NOTES

Larson Recognized for Teacher-Training

Jan Larson, the Seaport's Supervisor of School Services, recently became the first recipient of the Robert G. Albion/*James Monroe* Award for excellence in the teaching of the sea and our maritime heritage. The award was presented to Larson on 5 January in New York City by the Maritime Education Initiative, which was launched last summer by the National Maritime Historical Society.

Larson was recognized for her work with teachers through the "Mystic Voyages in Learning" programs – made possible by funding from the Connecticut Humanities Council, Inc. – which bring teachers to the Museum for five days of discovering the many ways in which to use the sea and the Seaport to enliven their classroom teaching. Larson told the group that her goals for these annual Teachers Institutes are "first, to demonstrate the significance of America's relation to the sea and the richness of our maritime heritage, second, to enable teachers to use museums and museum teaching methods with confidence and enthusiasm and, finally, to build partnerships between classroom teachers and museum educators."

Behind these Institutes, she said, is the philosophy that "You can give a person a fish and feed him for a day or you can teach a person to fish and feed him for a lifetime." She wants to teach teachers to use the Museum and to help them incorporate maritime history and literature into their curricula. Teachers are immersed in the maritime experience during their first weekend at the Seaport. Their second and third sessions are spent exploring several exhibits with senior Seaport staff, and discussing in groups the various lessons to be learned from a particular exhibit or experience. On their fourth and final Voyage they share and evaluate the lesson plans and bibliographies they have created from their visits here. Larson makes all materials – both Seaport- and teacher-developed – available for educators' use. The more we can give to the teachers, the more they can take to the kids.

The Maritime Education Initiative was launched when Seaport trustee Walter Cronkite, Chairman of the Initiative, had grown increasingly concerned that history was for the most part being poorly taught. "How in the world is it possible," he said in remarks to those educators gathered for the Initiative's launch last May, "to teach a subject like history and not make it interesting? The conflicts of people as they meet to decide the future – how all these conflicts of ego, of personality, of all the things we are concerned about string together – why can't we teach that with some excitement? There is something desperately wrong with the system."

He believes that one of the best ways to get some excitement into history is to "dramatize it through our maritime history." The Initiative, according to Larson, has attracted museum teachers and administrators, shipsavers, classroom teachers, and directors of city recreation departments – a wide variety of people committed to learning and teaching about the ways in which the sea and our inland waterways affect our lives.

It is an honor to be recognized by such a group. Congratulations, Jan.

Challenge

On 11 January, Rich Wilson and Bill Biewenga left San Francisco behind and set out to beat the longstanding sailing record from that port to Boston. The 200-foot clipper *Northern Light* had covered the 15,000 miles in 76 days and 6 hours, back in 1853.

Wilson and Biewenga faced the challenge aboard a 60-foot trimaran, the *Great American II*. It was Wilson's second attempt, having tried in 1990 with Steve Pettengill aboard the *Great American*, which was lost in a South Pacific storm.

Wilson, who spoke at the Seaport's Adventure Series last fall, set out on the mission with two goals: to beat the world record, and to share the oceangoing experience with children and other adventurers. With the second goal in mind, he established Ocean Challenge, which provided telephone and computer communication with the *Great American II* and its two-man crew.

By calling 1-900-820-BOAT, callers were able to access the crew, which recorded daily reports as well as satellite conversations with onshore students, asthma support groups (Wilson is a severe asthmatic), and sailors. Proceeds from the calls, which cost 95 cents per minute, were used to support the American Lung Association, the Newspapers In Education program – which took part in the project – and the *Great American II*.

Seaport visitors enjoyed daily access to the challenge in the Planetarium, which established both telephone and computer hook-ups. In addition to connecting with the 900 number, the Planetarium was able to offer even greater access through PRODIGY, a computer information service that provided daily position, logbook entries, weather information, and more.

Editor's Note to "Challenge"

The *Great American II* completed the challenge successfully, knocking nearly a week off the previous record. Wilson and Biewenga covered the 15,000 miles in 69 days, 19 hours, and 44 minutes.

The hook-up required a sophisticated computer package, which in effect translates photographs onto diskette. The package – provided compliments of the Seaport's Chairman Robert Stone – will be useful long after the challenge is complete, for weather-tracking and other ongoing projects.

By now, the challenge will have been made or missed. We'll let you know.

What It Is . . .

The field of diamonds pictured in the spring issue is the new netting on the upper deck of the *Sabino*. Members who correctly identified it include: James Jewett, Muriel Benton, Betsy and John Butts, and Mrs. Robert Dunlop.

. . . *And How It Was Made*

As part of the 1991–92 winter *Sabino* servicing, veteran Seaport rigger Gary Adair was enlisted to replace the 1960s-era white vinyl-coated cyclone fencing aboard the vessel when the Seaport acquired it, with more traditional cordage. The following account will help readers to better appreciate the investigation and ability that went into the project.

Adair set out on his project by trying to locate examples of similar netting work, after which he would model his own. He started with a picture of the steamer *Eldorado*, which gave him a good idea of scale, and which depicted as well the way in which the netting was seized, or fastened, to the bottom rail.

A photograph of the steamboat *Cimbria* – located by Manager of Shipyard Research and Documentation Nancy d'Estang, in the Seaport's Merritt-Chapman & Scott Collection – showed the netting seized to the top rail as well. This photo also shed valuable perspective on the netting assemblage, as it was taken after an accident in which the *Cimbria*'s bow railings – with netting attached – had been broken.

Sabino's netting originally would have been made of natural fiber cordage – cotton, hemp, or linen. But good, hard-laid natural fiber cordage is no longer an off-the-shelf commodity, and a custom-made run would have required more lead time than the project could afford. It also would have been prohibitively expensive, and Adair was reluctant to use such expensive materials on his first attempt at making railing netting. He opted instead for easily available, relatively inexpensive, quarter-inch-diameter, three-strand spun dacron rope.

To begin building the netting, he anchored the cords, in pairs, on a side board of his own device, as he had located no information regarding traditional methods. He tensioned each cord – 20 to a panel and 46 feet in length – to 25 pounds, then marked them at 3⅜-inch intervals (the length of each of the diamonds' sides).

It was now time to settle in to making the crossings that would form the corners of the diamonds. Each of the hundreds of crossings in each panel required two tucks, wherein one cord passes through the other, and the second then passes back through the first. Just try to imagine pulling 46 feet of cord all the way through, twice per crossing, for more than 5,600 crossings! Fortunately for Adair, the cords grew shorter as the netting progressed, and the length of netting produced per hour increased.

Once the railing sections had been completed, Adair could install the netting. He screwed the starting side board to a stanchion at one end of the panel and temporarily lashed the netting into place with short lengths of sisal twine. He then stretched the netting taut by sliding these sisal ties along the rails. At the same time, he carefully adjusted the positioning of the upper and lower ties, to make the mesh's diagonal rows as straight as possible.

To finish off each panel of netting, he made another side board, similar to the starting one but with a wider dado, or groove, on the back side. He marked on each cord the point at which it should enter this finishing board, then put two palm-and-needle whippings on each cord just far enough away from the "enter" mark so the whippings would lie in the dado.

A small wood screw driven through each whipping fastened the tail ends of rope to the board. The finishing board was then clamped into place – no easy task, as the netting was now stretched quite taut – and fastened to its stanchion with wood screws.

Adair then drilled evenly spaced holes along the upper and lower rails and, with a crew of five, finished the project by fastening the top and bottom rows of diamonds to their adjacent rails, using sail twine.

Members will agree that the consideration, time, and effort Adair has put into the new railing makes it a very special addition to the *Sabino*. Next time you're aboard, take a moment to notice. And appreciate.



Gary Adair pulls through thousands of crossings to shape the diamonds in the netting on the Sabino's *upper deck.* (Photo by Nancy d'Estang)

Prize Article Contest Explained

Former Seaport Librarian Gerald Morris established the *Log* Prize Article Contest in 1980, to encourage research and writing on American maritime history.

Sponsored by the Fellows of the G.W. Blunt White Library, the contest–recently renamed after its founder the Gerald E. Morris Prize Article Contest–is judged by representatives of both the Fellows and the *Log* Editorial Board. The results have been impressive: prize-winning pieces have included a history of U.S. Life-Saving station architecture; a biography of nineteenth-century packet and steamship line entrepreneur Edward Knight Collins; a look at Lorenzo Dow Baker's contribution to the Caribbean-American trade in bananas; a study of the relationship between whaleship agents and whalemen's families; a discussion of the World War II antisubmarine picket patrol fleet of former yachts; and the explication of a Nantucket whale oil contract already being cited in legal textbooks.

Normally, the Prize Article would appear in this issue of *The Log*. But this year there is no Prize Article, as the judges were forced to agree that none of the otherwise worthy entries were ready for publication. It was a difficult decision, and one we believe reflects our commitment to quality and to supporting the Seaport's mission.

The *Log* readership is a diverse group: young children to established scholars, landlubbers to old salts. *The Log* strives to satisfy the needs of all readers, to help them toward a better appreciation of their Museum and of the sea's many influences on American history and on their lives.

Such a readership provides a tremendous challenge to the prospective *Log* author, who must strike an editorial tone that makes scholarship accessible and appealing to a diverse audience of some 24,000 members, each of whom has through membership indicated some interest in learning about the American maritime experience.

The editors encourage submissions of scholarly manuscripts that speak to such a diverse audience, and are hopeful that this clarification will assist future applicants to the contest. The deadline for submission to the Prize Article contest is 1 December.

Bulletin Board

The Seaport's 1991–92 annual report has been printed. Copies are available by calling the Development Department at (203) 572-5365.

The Membership Office asks that you please sign the backs of your membership cards as soon as you receive them. As we cautioned last year about this time, these cards are nontransferable, and gate attendants will ask you for additional identification upon entering. Please take no offense; we are working to preserve the value of your membership.

The Kidstuff Comeback

Now that you've had some fun with the sea creatures in your Corner this month, come and meet them in person at Sea Creatures Great and Small, a regular activity on the Kidstuff schedule. These critters all live in and along the Mystic River because this river is really an estuary, with part salt water and part fresh water, and tides that come in and go out. You'll get to know the creatures that float along the River, swim underwater, and cling to pilings, rocks, and the bottoms of boats.

Be sure to catch the other great Kidstuff activities, which you can locate by picking up a *Kids Today* at the Gate on your way into the Seaport. You'll tie sailor's knots in the Children's Museum; help out with the Dead Horse Ceremony aboard the *Joseph Conrad;* visit *Australia,* then come play at the beach and build Sandcastles Down Under; become a child of Neptune in the Crossing the Line Ceremony; Toy Boats! Toy Boats!; High Time in the Dogwatch; and much, much more! If you're a kid–and even if you're not–you'll love Kidstuff. We dare you to find a dull moment at Mystic Seaport this summer!

Sing Me a Story

Your friends in the Children's Museum are dreaming up new things all the time, and this summer they're inviting you to come and share the very last hour of the Seaport day with them. From 7 to 8 each evening, you can come to the Children's Museum for special stories of the sea, and songs, too. These story hours are made especially for members ages 3, 4, and 5, so put on your finest P.J.'s and bring along your very favorite teddy bear, to spend the best hour of the day at the best place in the Seaport. Your place.

The Seven and Under Crowd Celebrates in Style

The A . . . B . . . Sea children's opening last December was such a success that we've decided to have more young people's parties.

Your special Seaport spot, the Children's Museum, was closed for two long months this winter, and now it's chock-a-block full of brand-new exhibits especially designed for a special group of kids, the 7 and under set. If you're a member of that very special crowd, then you must come and see us.

We'll be throwing opening parties at the Children's Museum on 7, 8, 9, and 10 June, from 4:30 P.M. to 5:30 P.M., and we're planning for FUN, with games, activities, and refreshments.

Space is limited, so call your friends and make your plans now. Then call us at 572-5339 to let us know you're coming. You'll be glad you came . . . and so will we!

Kids' corner

Think about some of the creatures you might expect to see living in, on, or near the water. Now take a look at these riddles. Read each one carefully, then name the creature. Stumped? They're all pictured and named here, and the blanks below each riddle count the number of letters in the creature's name. How many can you guess??

Who Am I?

1. I have two long wings, I'm light gray and white, and I love to fly into the wind. I'm always hungry, and when I spot something good to eat (just about anything, really – I'm not fussy), I swoop down and grab it in my bill. If it's a clam or a mussel or something else with a hard shell, then I fly high and smash it open on a roof. I'll do anything to get to the yummy soft part in the middle. Oh, and I also like to taaaawwwk (!) a lot. Who am I?

— — — — — — —

2. I live underwater and crawl around the ocean floor. I have a good hard shell, big claws, and a sturdy tail. I'm often pictured in red, but I'm really a very attractive mottled green. I have very long antennae and cute buggy eyes. I'm told I'm delicious with drawn butter, but I don't pay any attention to such talk. Who am I?

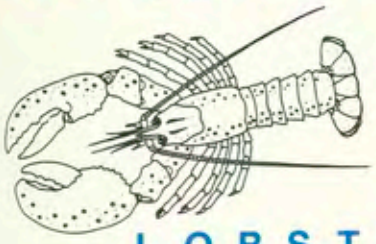
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3. I have two wings and I fly when I must, but mostly I like to paddle along in the water. I'm a family man, and I rarely travel alone. Sometimes you'll see me with a whole crew of little ones trailing behind. I'm so proud of my babies. We spend the day just taking it easy and looking for good things to eat. Sometimes, the nicest people feed us bits of bread. We love it so much we quack our thank-you's as loud as we can. Who am I?

— — — —

4. If you think I'm a snake, well, just you think again. I am long, smooth, and slender, and I glide gracefully through the water, deep down below the surface. Don't try to catch me, because I'm just too fast. I can wriggle and dart in and out of underwater grasses and I blend in so well you'll think I've disappeared. Who am I?

— — —



L O B S T E R

J E L L Y F I S H

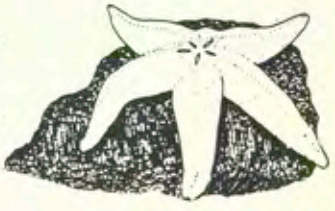


5. I'm a cold-blooded underwater swimmer, and I never come up for air. I have big fins and little fins that squeeze and pull and scootch me smoothly through the cold, dark, gorgeous ocean. I've heard tell that my kind is deliciously sweet to eat. I wouldn't know about that, but I bet you do. Can you guess who I am?

— — — — — — —



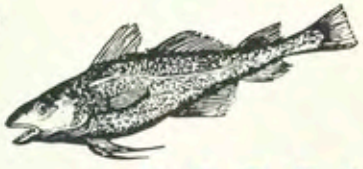
S E A G U L L



6. No one ever tells me to stand up tall or sit up straight. I couldn't do it if I tried. You see, I'm a squishy kind of sea creature. My dome-shaped body is practically see-through, and I have four pretty pink dots around the center of my top side. You might think I'll sting you if you swim too close to me, but we're not all like that. Do you know who I am?

— — — — — — — — —

S T A R F I S H



C O D F I S H

7. Ever thought how much more you could do if you just had a few more arms? Well, I have five arms, and I still prefer to take it easy. I love to hang out underwater, stretched out and relaxing on a rock. I love to eat oysters, but I dare you to find my mouth. Do you know who I am?

— — — — — — — —



D U C K

E E L



The Harvard-Yale Boat Race

It was the last day of June, 1911. As had been the case on this occasion for each year since 1878, the Thames River was lined with spectator craft, from rowboats to big side-wheel excursion steamers. Some of the nation's wealthiest families entertained aboard their grand steam yachts while local working families from Ledyard and Montville, New London and Groton sat in skiffs or on promontories alongshore. Excursion trains with special bleacher cars ambled along the riverside tracks, and this year a few pioneers found ways to view the spectacle from their new automobiles.

Late in the day the objects of their attention finally came into view. Looking first like spiders striding downriver they came, two eight-oared shells. As they approached the long, straight lane of water above the railroad bridge it was clear that the crimson boat of Harvard was far in the lead of the blue Yale boat. Greeted by the din of steam whistles, bells, and cheers, Harvard passed on, still stroking strongly and easily after four miles. At 22 minutes and 44 seconds they took the gun and the judges' flag at the railroad bridge as Morris Rosenfeld, high above, snapped the shutter of his camera. Nearly a minute later, as an airplane passed over and the team launches brought up the rear, the Yale crew struggled in, minus one oarsman. Again Rosenfeld snapped a photograph from his perch on the railroad bridge.

This day, so clearly documented in the Seaport's Rosenfeld Collection, was a disappointment for the Yale crew. But the ensuing 82 years have obscured the details of that race, until in the greater scheme of things it is but the fiftieth chapter in the oldest intercollegiate sporting event, just one set of results among the 127 since the race began in 1852.

Few people would suspect that boat racing inaugurated intercollegiate athletics, but before there was baseball, football, or basketball, boat racing was *the* college sport and attracted huge crowds of spectators. And it all began when Yale challenged Harvard to a race on New Hampshire's Lake Winnipesaukee in 1852. During the 75 years that followed, the competition between Harvard and Yale became a unique event within college crew competition. Although they rowed against other colleges at Worcester, Springfield, Saratoga Lake, and Philadelphia, the two schools developed their rivalry into an exclusive match race rowed over a grueling four-mile course on the Thames River above New London. By 1924, when Yale's crew won the race and went on to win an Olympic gold medal, rowing as a college sport had matured into the form it currently maintains.



Until now, the full story of this formative period in American collegiate rowing has not been told. But Mystic Seaport is proud to announce publication of *The Harvard-Yale Boat Race, 1852–1924, and the Coming of Sport to the American College*, a book that tells the whole story: the colorful characters who rowed and coached for Harvard and Yale; the great changes in boat technology, from heavy four-oared, fixed-seat boats to modern eight-oared, sliding-seat paper and wood shells with spoon oars and outriggers; the ongoing experiments with athletic conditioning and the comparative merits of English and American rowing styles; and the growing pains of college sport, as the universities struggled to define the role of athletics in a college education.

Having been associated with Yale rowing for more than 50 years, Thomas C. Mendenhall is uniquely qualified to tell the story of the race. But his book is not simply a narrative of races won and lost. Mendenhall was first and foremost an educator, with more than 20 years of experience in the history department at Yale and 16 years as president of Smith College. For him, the race epitomizes the way sport has become an integral part of college life and a defining element of university identity. Ask him, and he will tell you that the battles fought over Harvard and Yale crew in the last century prepared the way for the current role of football and basketball in American colleges.

Mendenhall's history contains more than 150 period images, many of them from the premier private collection of boat-race memorabilia, and these are a delightful visual counterpoint to the lively text. This handsome 380-page book is available in a red binding for Harvard supporters or a blue binding for Yale fans. Priced at $49.95, it is offered to Seaport members for $44.95 at the Seaport Stores Bookstore or from the Museum's Publications Department (for mail orders, please add $2.50 shipping and 6 percent sales tax for Connecticut orders). To order, call 1-800-331-2665 or (203) 572-5347.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Mary Anne Siets



Bill and Eileen Ames

Bill and Eileen Ames are no-nonsense New Englanders. They live simply, work hard, and get involved. Lovably cantankerous, prudently generous, and stoically passionate, this couple is precisely what Mystic Seaport's three founders had in mind when they established the Marine Historical Association as a community cause.

The Ameses first came to Mystic Seaport because of the *Charles W. Morgan*, a significant figure from Bill's childhood. When he was assigned to this area in 1951 as a Naval officer, Bill learned the vessel was here and promptly introduced Eileen to the Museum, where she signed on as a volunteer. They bought a house close by so Eileen – who did not then drive – could be independent about getting to and from work. The couple recently celebrated their fortieth year in the house, which overlooks the Seaport and enables them to keep an eye on the place.

Through the years, Eileen has excelled in a variety of staff and volunteer positions. She put in so many hours in Membership – working for Mildred Mallory, the wife of then Chairman P.R. Mallory – the department finally asked her to sign on as staff. Later, she became secretary to former Director Waldo Johnston, who referred to her, in tribute upon her retirement, as his "gyroscope." She has since established, and strictly oversees, the Mail Team, some 50 envelope-stuffing, stamp-licking volunteers.

Bill – a Trustee since 1981 – is active in the Gung-Ho Squad, which works hard for the Shipyard and Maintenance, doing "all the grungy stuff that needs doing but that you don't want to pay someone an arm and a leg to do." He launched the Ames Squad, which Eileen says he created by "rounding up husbands" of Mail Team members and putting them to work on various projects for Ships' Plans and the Yachting Committee.

Together, the Ameses have been hardworking Pilots since 1983. They have also provided the energy behind the annual Schooner Race, which they were instrumental in launching 25 years ago. Today, Bill still does the handicapping, Eileen still calculates the results, and they continue to oversee every aspect of the race. When they took on the community Carol Sing, saving it from an early demise, they did so because they believed it was important to the community.

Their financial giving – like everything they do – has been practical. Bill was instrumental in starting the Seaport's Pooled Income Fund, and he has added to that Fund through the years. He also established the William and Eileen Ames Unitrust.

Bill and Eileen are very special friends to the Seaport. Invariably committed, they keep us in line. And we thank them.

Mary Anne Stets



Members' children help make hand-cranked ice cream at the Seaport's Taste of History food festival.

There's always something exceptional for members and their families to do during the summer at the Seaport. Upcoming events include an opening celebration for the newly-refurbished Children's Museum, Decoration Day, the Sea Music Festival, Independence Weekend, Horse and Carriage Weekend, the Taste of History, and so much more!

Memberships begin at $35 for individuals and $60 for families. Please call the Membership Office at (203) 572-5339, or write Membership.

MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM®

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