

SCOON

The Newsletter For
The
Nova Scotia Schooner Association
Volume 1 Edition 3. March 2K3



ATTENTION ALL STATIONS!
BE ADVISED THAT THE SPRING MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY APRIL 12TH. IN THE MEETING ROOM OF THE GALLEY RESTAURANT.
Gather at 1330h. Call to order at 1400h.

Words from Comm. Tom.

I recently received the following letter from Bill Gilkerson, addressed to the Association. Since we contributed to the project discussed, (\$250.00 June 23rd. 2001) and are now involved in yet another attempt to work with the Mahone Bay Wooden Boat Festival, I feel that it should be passed along. I can attest that its contents are entirely true and that the author has been very fair in describing the circumstances.

To all contributors.

In the spring of 2001, you generously supported a fundraising event sponsored by a number of people on behalf of the Mahone Bay Wooden Boat Festival of that year. Our common vision was expressed in the event's advertising: Traditional schooners and wooden craft of the region laying at wharveside floating docks, making a close contact between ships and shore. Your donation, as ours, went towards building these docks, altogether bringing some \$9000.00 to the cause.

More than a few of you later pointed out that the results were disappointing, with the docks (the three that got built and launched) used for other purposes than advertised. Most notably, for a large, loud, fibreglass tour boat. An enterprise with commercial concerns far removed from the purpose for which we contributed. Further, the promised indenture of your name in a plank did not happen, nor was any credit for your generosity ever published in the MBWBF annual publication. Other, much worse insensitivity's resulted in the 2001 MBWBF festival's co-sponsor, Wooden Boat magazine, abandoning the event before it ended, along with the exodus of the real traditional artisans, owners and sailors in the craft from which the Wooden Boat Festival takes it's name.

In February of 2002, Kerstin and I filed a complaint in the Small Claims Court in Bridgewater, petitioning for the return of our \$250 each contributions, on the grounds that the money we gave was manifestly not used for the purpose for which it was solicited and given. The case was heard on March the 11th. During the 2 ½ hour hearing, all of the points mentioned above were aired (along with photo's of the tour boat), and testimony from supporting witnesses. Defence testimony did not challenge the salient points of the complaint. Nor did the adjudicator himself when, eventually (eight months, and another Festival later) he rendered an opinion. Noting that he found no fraud on the part of the MBWBF (None was charged!), he dismissed the complaint, remarking: "people who serve volunteer organisations generally do the best they can with what they have to work with."

Hence, our efforts toward redress for all of us who have been left with the feeling of having been used have been without success. Kerstin and I have been advised that we have very good grounds for appeal, but that is not our intention. Please accept our heartfelt regret for shared frustration.

The letter is signed; Bill & Kerstin

As Commodore, I am at the mercy of the will of the Association, and so listened with sympathy to Joe Graves impassioned advocacy of the Festival at our fall meeting. But I have grave concerns. (Pun intended). Joe, like the rest of us, loves the idea of a festival who's purpose is to honour, promote and display classic wooden boats, the craftsmen and artisans who build and repair them and the custodians who sail and care for them. However, those of us who have experienced more than a few of the Mahone Bay Festivals have good reason to be concerned.

Here are the problems as I see them.

1. The interaction between Festivalgoers and the classic wooden boats is, in a word, non-existent.

I have attended famous wooden boat festivals in Newport, Nantucket, Antigua and New York City. All of these events go to great lengths to accommodate the classic boats in places of honour where they can be seen and appreciated by the public. Mahone Bay does not. Unless a classic boat is lucky enough to get a mooring where she can be seen from the wharf, she might as well not be there at all. Perish the thought that she might go for a sail, the harbour is so congested with everything *but* wooden boats that the whole thing is a potential shipwreck. The nine grand that was raised by the Gilkersons and others, was supposed to begin to address this problem It didn't. Why? I just don't know. I urge the present committee to address this.

2. Our Race Week, the bedrock of the association, is built on fellowship and fine sailing.

Both of these are made difficult by the congestion, noise and confusion of a festival who's organisers seem unwilling or unable to take control of the harbour which is the venue for the gathering from which it takes its name. When you add to this the fact that every time we've taken the races to the Festival, we've had to do more runnin' around lookin' for someone who knows what's goin' on than a fella'd think necessary, and had less fun than normal in the process. (Not that anything at Race Week should be considered normal!) It's difficult for me to imagine that things will get much better.

3. If our mission is to foster respect and interest in wooden boats, especially schooners, should we not treat our boats with the respect we believe they are due? Every time I have taken Avenger to the Mahone Bay Festival, she has suffered damage to her topsides from various dingbats who don't know how to handle their boats. This, I'm sad to say, includes the drivers of the Festival Launch, though I'll admit, they seem to be getting a little better. This is related to my previous point and should also be addressed by the committee.

4. If our reason for trying, yet again, to get something going with the Festival, is our love of wooden boats. It would be wise to notice that Wooden Boat magazine, which gave the Festival thousands of dollars in free advertising, and organised an exhibits tent in 2001. And then, because of their poor treatment, did not even mention the Festival in 2002. Wooden boat magazine is more important to the craft we love than *any* festival. From what I have observed, the boats from which the Festival takes its name are the last things that the organisers of the Festival are thinking about. The boats should be the first priority. I implore the members of the new committee to make sure that our concerns are being taken seriously.

It came a gale of wind the morning after the Opera House Cup in Nantucket. Voyager dragged down on us. No problem because the boats were anchored logically, Big ones nearest the channel which had been kept wide and clear, and both of us were keeping an anchor watch. We put out fenders, she came alongside long enough to raise

her fore, backed it, then sailed off for the Vineyard. We then shortened up our rode, raised our fore and sailed off the hook. Ticondaroga and several others followed even though it was really nasty. The point is, there were too many boats in the harbour for things to make sense, but because of the way they were anchored, and because, AT THE BEHEST OF THE ORGANIZERS, ALL OTHER BOATS WERE ANCHORED, MOORED OR TIED UP WELL CLEAR OF THE CLASSICS, there was nothing even close to a problem. Just some boisterous sailing for a bunch of good sailors. If the same thing happened in Mahone Bay, I'd be in peril of losing Avenger. I don't want to lose my schooner. It's wise to remember that this was Nantucket, well south of here. We can have summer gales too.

So, there it is. If these concerns can be addressed, further conversation is warranted. But I am chastened by past experience, and want all of you to know why. If the Festival cannot make the care and feeding of wooden boats and their owners their primary concern, then we are working at a serious disadvantage, and putting our boats in a dangerous situation. Fair Winds. **Tom.**

Treasurers Report: Current Financial Status.

Current Account (chequing) Balance at February 28 th 2K3	= \$1203.52
Savings Account Balance at February 28 th 2K3	= <u>\$1331.49</u>
Working Balance February 28 th 2K3	= \$2535.01

USD Account balance February 28 th 2K3	= \$132.75 USD
--	----------------

Inventory of Regalia

42 Burgees (new)	@	\$25.00	= \$1050.00
7 Burgees (old)	@	\$25.00	= \$175.00
17 Blazer Crests	@	\$40.00	= \$680.00
18 Cap Badges	@	\$30.00	= \$540.00
18 Licence Plates	@	\$15.00	= \$270.00
Sub total			<u>\$2715.00</u>

Accounts receivable

2 Licence Plates	@	\$15.00	= \$30.00
1 Blazer Crest	@	\$ 40.00	= \$40.00
1 Association Tie	@	\$30.00	= \$30.00
Sub total			<u>\$100.00</u>

Fund Raising Strategy.

Sprinkled across the province are a number of boating associations, canoe clubs, yacht clubs, etc, each aspiring to different degrees of grandeur. Some could not care less how their members present themselves as long as an atmosphere of cordiality is maintained. Then there are a few who will send out a letter of reprimand if you don't put the lid on yer paint can according to their interpretation of protocol. Different as these organisations are, they all have one thing in common. That, of course, is the need for a financial resource from which to fund their various activities. Many of these operate from budgets of tens, even hundreds of thousands of bucks. *Thank God that we're not among them!*

However, we do require a fund that is in the realm of a few thousand, which has to be obtained somehow. It's okey to solicit donations from outside organisations for special events and, if those organisations derive some small benefit from their generosity, so much the better. We have some wonderful members who have been more than generous, in some cases with their time and effort, and others with substantial financial contributions. I don't think they need to be named, most of us know who they are.

The Primary source of funding for anything we wish to do as a group is, and *should be*, from our membership dues. I believe that this is where, as a group, we should concentrate our efforts. If we can't support ourselves,,,,,,well.

Over the years, I've noticed a number of people, non-members, who return year after year to help sail our schooners. Make no mistake, this is an observation not a criticism. *They are welcome, appreciated and needed!* (maybe no one has ever suggested that they join.) Doug Oxner used to bring this up to me at every race week but it took me a long time to "figger out" what to do about it. In order to address this, I urge *all* of our members, but particularly the skippers, to promote membership among their crews. After all, twenty bucks is small price to pay for the opportunity to sail these beautiful boats for even one day. Not to mention the even more remarkable opportunity to spend some quality time in the company of the crusty old farts who love 'em!

N

Cruising Rules. (Blatantly plagiarised from a book of the same name by Roland Sawyer Barth)

Rules of etiquette, which have evolved, and, in fact, are still in the process of evolution.

They determine whether we return to port cordially, angrily, separately, together – or indeed, at all!

The Comfort Factor

Having spent many more years than I care to admit messin' around in various kinds o' boats. The awareness of one peculiar phenomenon has gradually seeped into my alleged consciousness.

In any society of boatin' types, there will always be a percentage of individuals to whom sailing means not merely doin' it, but *over* doin' it. They're often testosterone overloaded individuals, not necessarily of the same gender, who reveal the Mr Hyde side of their personalities when sailing conditions become challenging. This is manifested by screaming colourful epithets at each other as they push vessel, crew, guests and themselves well beyond their capabilities until there is a breakdown. Sometimes mechanical but more often, interpersonal. A psyche. major might use the term "Testing the limits"?

During my early days of sailing I noticed that some of the sails were adorned with two or three rows of bits of rope. What *could* they be for? It took at least a full season to learn what they were and how they worked.....And at least another to learn how to do it. Of course then there're the years gettin' over the disdain. Heelin' to 50 degrees, lee rail under to the deadeyes, half a ton of water in the cockpit.

Hey man that's sailin!

I don't remember how long it took to overcome the disdain and actually do it! I'm referring, of course, to the reef points. After bustin' a boom in an emergency gyb to avoid a bunch o' rocks that were where they were not supposed to be, along with a few other, (How would Tom put it?) boisterous sailin' experiences, I made the most amazin' discovery. If, when the forecast predicts rough conditions, one chucks in a reef er two, she stands up straighter, feels stiffer and way more comfortable. What's more; Holy Shit! She goes faster! A natural offshoot from this is what I refer to as the "**Comfort Factor.**" When faced with the decision as to whether to set out, stay out, grope around in the dark, fog and rain, reef etc, I find myself considering the comfort factor. In the close quarters of a small (Sometimes not so small) vessel, rough conditions, which can be predicted by no weather forecaster become apparent. At these times, a metaphorical reef er two can have an equally calming effect. This leads to the necessity for: -

Cruisin' Rule # 12 In order to maintain the spiritual and physical equilibrium of vessel and crew.

Reef early and reef often.

I've been told by sailors who are far more experienced than me that if you think that it's time to reef. It is.

It is notoriously foolhardy to think that you can control Mother Nature but you, sure as hell, can control your sails. (And maybe yer testosterone.)

I challenge the reader to submit any sailing related anecdote which may have had a more pleasurable outcome if a cruisin' rule had been devised to cover the circumstances in play at the time. I further challenge the reader to devise and submit the appropriate cruisin' rule in light of those circumstances.

Floppy disc if possible, or e-mail:- nev_389@hotmail.com

Nev Layton, RR#1 Thorburn, Pictou Co. B0K 1W0 NS Canada

N