

SEBAGO CANOE CLUB E B L A D E

The official electronic & printed newsletter of the Sebago Canoe Club in Brooklyn, NY

kayaking, canoeing, sailing, racing, rowing

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FROSTBITE REGATTA & General Meeting

January 1, 2012
10 am - 4 pm

Join us on New Year's Day for our annual gathering,
which includes paddling and sailing*,
a nonstop potluck feast
and a club meeting.

Bring food and drink to share -
and stay for the general meeting at 2 pm,
to vote in new senior members
and hear brief reports on future activities.

**Folks with appropriate clothing and training for the cold conditions
can join up to go on the water in the morning if the weather is favorable.*



Commodore's Report – Winter, 2011 *By Tony Pignatello*

I hope everyone enjoyed the past season. I think it's the best season we've had in the last decade.

Just because the temperature drops doesn't mean activities come to a standstill. As long as you dress for the water we'll still be going out. We have a paddle and pot-luck lunch on New Year's Day. Every winter the cruising committee drives to Jones Beach to welcome the seals to New York. If 40 degree water isn't your thing you can always go to the pool in Flushing Meadow Park to brush up on your skills.

I'd like to thank everyone who made our remarkable year possible. We remodeled the clubhouse, had sailing and kayaking programs every weekend, ran a Youth Program, and revitalized the canoe program. We were able to do all this at a cost of less than 50 cents a day thanks to volunteers like you. You can't get a cup of coffee or a newspaper for that price.

I was able to attend several meetings this past year that involved the City and the Department of the Interior. Let me assure you that

they are both very committed to improving Jamaica Bay. Millions have already been spent and much more will follow. We have been here for five decades. It was Commodore Marilyn Vogel who was instrumental in getting the Clean Water Act passed in the seventies. My hope is that we can continue our leadership role as stewards of Jamaica Bay.

I didn't want to list a whole bunch of people to thank for fear of leaving someone out. I must however mention John Wright. If it wasn't for his indefatigable efforts we could not have accomplished so much. He has more energy than most people half his age. He is truly amazing.

For the next year we hope to set up better structures to enable more members to step up and volunteer. If you really want to get the most out of the club step up and start an activity that you're passionate about.

Sebago Canoe Club Archives Deposited at Mystic Seaport *By Charles Egleston*

On October 5, 2011, a cool fall day, the core archive of the Sebago Canoe Club was deposited in the G. W. Blunt Library at Mystic Seaport in Mystic, Connecticut. Sebago members Tony Pignatello (Commodore) and I presented the archive to Paul J. O'Pecko, Collections and Research Director of the library.

Mystic Seaport holds what is arguably the most significant nautical archive in the United States. But the primary reason that Mystic Seaport was chosen as the repository of Sebago's archives is because it already holds the American Canoe Association Collection, which includes material dating from 1881 to 1997. In Box 31, folder 10, of the ACA Collection are Sebago materials dating from 1949 to 1974 (<http://library.mysticseaport.org/manuscripts/coll/coll291.cfm>).

Sebago's archives document the club's human-powered water-sports activities at Lake Sebago and in the New York Metropolitan area in spite of the endemic pollution that characterized the city's waters from the end of the nineteenth century until very recently. And they document the club's contribution to the restoration of these waters.

Dating from the 1930s to 2009, with the bulk dating from 1967 to 2006, the Sebago core archive consists of "Commodore files" (essential governance materials: a list of all commodores, founding documents, deeds, contracts, etc.), files on significant events and persons, photographs, dvds, and a nearly-complete run of the club's newsletter, *The Blade* (founded 1964). The oldest materials in the archive are membership lists that are near-contemporaneous with the club's founding at Lake Sebago in 1933.

Within the archive are reminiscences of three of the seven founders. Of particular interest are original documents from Marilyn Vogel (Sebago Canoe Club Commodore 1980-1981), a leading activist in the struggle by the Sierra Club, the Sebago Canoe Club and others to force the City of New York to comply with the 1972 Clean Water Act. During the late 1970s and 1980s she involved the club in efforts to have the 1972 Clean Water Act implemented in the waters of New York City. (See the folder labeled "Chronological" for clippings and *Blades* from 1978 for club-mobilizing efforts). Her papers include correspondence to her and background materials on this issue. Commodore Vogel also led the effort to write a constitution and by-laws for Sebago, necessary documents for the club to be a recognized not-for-profit, and her papers include the original of the constitution.

Among the photographs are two that are iconic for me because their backgrounds have changed, one showing a person paddling alongside a junk car in Paerdegat Basin and another of a person paddling in the Hudson River alongside the Twin Towers.

At some point the finding aid for the core archive of the Sebago Canoe Club will be put online by Mystic Seaport. In the meantime, a copy is available at the Brooklyn Clubhouse.

To donate material to the in-house Sebago Canoe Club archive please contact me, Charles Egleston via email (archivist2@mac.com) or USPS (c/o Mercer Library, 65 4th Street, Garden City, NY 11530).

The core archive of Sebago, deposited 5 October 2011 at Mystic Seaport by Charles Egleston and Commodore Tony Pignatello, were received by Mystic's Paul O'Pecko (Tony Pignatello photo)



Sebago Canoe Club's Pool Sessions - 2011-2012 Season *By Steve McAllister*

Sebago Canoe Club is proud to announce the start of our winter kayak pool program at the Aquatic Center in Flushing Meadows Park (next to Citifield). It's an easy walk from the #7 train or free parking is available.

Some changes this year:

- Sebago Canoe Club membership is now required. Guests may be allowed only if a session is not fully booked by the Thursday afternoon prior to the next session.

- Attendance will be limited to a smaller number of people this year to avoid any chance of overcrowding.
- We will be offering some afternoon ACA instruction classes and possibly open afternoon sessions later in the season.

The sessions will take place most Sundays from 9 am to 11 am.

There will be some cancellations and rescheduling of sessions, determined by the pool management.

The schedule so far:

- **November 20 and 27**
- **December 18**
- **January 8, 15, 22 and 29**
- **February 19 and 26**
- **March 4, 11 and 25**
- **April 1 and 8**

Sebago will provide a mix of kayaks, mostly sea kayaks, but some white water kayaks as well. Paddles, skirts and other gear will be provided as well.

You are welcome to bring your own boat and gear, but rudders or any other protruding metal should be either removed or covered with foam before use.

Boats must be thoroughly washed before entering the pool area. A hose and sponge will be provided.

Swim caps are required for all participants. If you have one, bring it. If not, one will be provided.

Our program usually has at least two ACA/BCU-certified coaches as well as other experienced instructors to help with practically any kayak skill you need help with.

The program is for all skill levels, including beginners.

- For the beginner: learn how to do a wet exit, learn rescues, learn how to avoid capsizing. The pool is a great place to overcome any anxieties about kayaking.

- For the intermediate paddler: sharpen your bracing, sculling, rescues, and many other skills.

- For the more advanced: perfect your rolling and other skills. Have more fun and be safe the first time you get back into the water this spring.

SPACE IS LIMITED and RESERVATIONS WILL BE TAKEN EVERY WEEK.

You must RSVP by Thursday afternoon prior to each session!

There is no penalty for cancellation, but it is important to email Steve McAllister if you should have to cancel, even if it is late Saturday night or early Sunday morning. This allows others on standby to participate in your place.

SESSION COSTS:

Sebago members - \$20

Guests when space allows - \$30

The standard ACA insurance fee will be required for non-ACA members. (Sebago membership includes ACA membership.) Guests can also join the ACA at these sessions.

For those meeting at the Sebago Canoe Club to load boats and car pool, we will meet at 7:30 am. Others meet at the rear of the pool before 8:30 am to help move/prep boats and get ready for our time slot.

PLEASE be early; late arrival takes precious pool time away from others.

For reservations or questions contact Steve McAllister, preferably via email at brooklynkayak@gmail.com. If email is not an option, call 917 496 1523.

Visit www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/capital/parks/flushing_meadows_corona_park_pool_rink.html for info about the pool.

Visit www.nycgovparks.org/park-features/fmcp/aquatic-center/directions for directions. Be aware that we enter the facility from the rear entrance.



Trip leader workshop:







Sea Kayak Committee Report – Winter, 2011 *By Walter Lewandowski*

I looked ahead at the standing waves of at least two feet and watched three-foot ocean swells close in on an angle that reminded me of a zipper closing toward me. Bonnie Aldinger said “go for it; you guys are ready,” and I realized there was no turning back. The flood current had carried us into the break zone and the white water of the tide rip at the mouth of Fire Island Inlet. This was the climax of Sebago’s Level 4 “Tides and Currents” class.

Earlier that day Bonnie, an ACA Level 4 instructor, led a hardy group out into the inlet to teach us about paddling a sea kayak in tidal currents. It was an early fall class in what was the most successful year of instruction for all levels at Sebago.

The next morning we were back at it in the “Surf Landing and Launching” class with Tom (Quint) Klinger that found us playing in waves again. Tom is also a Level 4 ACA instructor. We learned launching and landing without getting worked by the surf, with a little bit of surfing a sea kayak on the way back in.

Both classes are a testament to the top quality of kayak instruction available here at the Sebago Canoe Club. Instructors certified from ACA Level 1 through Level 4 offer classes at all levels. Classes are open to the public but members of Sebago receive a substantial discount.

Over the winter we will have some classroom instruction on various topics at the clubhouse with videos and refreshments. And in 2012 we will offer on-water classes in topics such as “Strokes Refinement” and “Safety and Rescues,” designed to work with practice to ready students

for assessments at various levels. Keep a lookout for announcements.

In keeping with the topic of instruction, it is once again the season for Sebago’s Indoor Pool Sessions. We are fortunate to be able to use the Aquatic Center at Flushing Meadow Park, an Olympic-quality venue. The program consists of both structured class components and open practice. The pool is a wonderful place to work on everything from wet exits to rolling. It is a reassuring environment to do what I like to refer to as wet work. Sebago members are given preference for pool time. To avoid overcrowding, reservations are required. Reservations are available to Sebago members only until Thursday evening, at which time it is open to the public for the following Sunday session. Please contact Stevie McAllister at Brooklynkayak@gmail.com to make your reservation. This is a valuable resource for the club so please use it or lose it.

Sometimes it is the journey that is important and this past year we had some memorable trips. One of my favorites was the very successful club trip to Orient Point. Even though the campers experienced a historic deluge that wiped out our plans for Sunday and left everyone and everything soaked, many of the participants requested we do a return trip.

Winter is coming and so are our annual visitors the seals. We will do at least one club seal paddle. Get your cold water gear ready and please watch your emails for an announcement.

See you all at the Frostbite January First.



Pictures from Maine cruising trip.

Pictures from Sunken Forest cruising trip.





Above - Fall Foliage cruising trip.





What a busy 2011 season we had! Our events included the NY Power Boating Class, Tactics Training in May and September, the Annual Laser Regatta (May), the yearly Sailing Clinic (June - great class), the Kid's Relay (June), our monthly cruises, and of course casual, less-organized sailing. We finished up the official season with the Sebago Cup and the Fall Race Series. A special thanks to all of our sailors who helped the committee, ran our events and kept our fleet in running order.

During the Fall Race Series we played host to a guest who is a freelance writer. She plans to do an article about our race, the Sebago Cup, for Sailing World. In an effort to help her with this project we asked our sailors to write their impressions of the race. We all enjoyed reading the various accounts of the Sebago Cup from our sailors in the Sebago Sailing email list (sebagosailing@googlegroups.com). We have a compilation of all those accounts and if you're interested we're happy to share the full versions, but for now here are excerpts from those emails.

"... We set a record for the number of participants this year - TWELVE boats with fourteen people, two father/son teams. Your sailing chairs actually won the two main divisions - congrats to Holly and Jim! Thanks and congrats to all participants. We had a lovely potluck and brief meeting after the race. The food was wonderful, as usual."

Holly Sears & Jim Luton

"... I have never sailed in a race in dinghys that didn't go around buoys, one that is more like an ocean race than your usual windward leewards or trapezoid courses. When the "marks" in this race included Canarsie Pol and Ruffle Bar, I wasn't sure what would happen. The middle of Jamaica Bay is a maze of islands, marshes, wrecks (including sunken cars) and floating coconuts (from hindu ceremonies held seasonally). I was indeed daunted by the task of navigating some of this area around the northeast tip of Canarsie (which I had at least seen before when out racing), and the completely





mysterious back side of Ruffle Bar.

Ever since I've moved to New York, 14 years ago, I have looked at the veritable archipelago in Jamaica Bay on maps, invitingly painted the colour green as if it were a "park", and thought how cool it would be to see what was out there. Alas this area, the same colour as Central Park, part of the so-called Gateway Recreational Area, is frustratingly unreachable without a boat (unless we consider the mythical U train, as imagined by the artist Duke Riley). And now, not only was I about to sail and explore in amongst the islands but to do so at the same time as enjoying my absolute favorite activity, race a sailboat..."

David Cripton

"... It is, as I said, a long race, allowing plenty of time for the mind to wander and plenty of time for little lapses to add up for sailors of little to middling experience. After the race, James and I agreed that the race was just long enough for us to make every mistake in the book once, on top of which we ran aground twice (and at the same place -- the eastern edge of Canarsie Pol on the way out and the way back). Should I list them in the name of journalistic purity? Let's agree that next year, the list will be shorter

as we get more experience sailing and racing with the sailing committee of the Sebago Canoe Club."

John and James Decker

"... So what is there nice to say about bringing up the rear? Plenty! It's a great vantage point to see the racers ahead. And there is the peace you feel with the hours of solitude in a boat that sits you close to Mother Nature's sea water -- with the birds, the waves, the salty air. Endless sky. Winds of all kinds going all ways. And to the north is the New York City skyline. To the south, the beautiful Gil Hodges Bridge, and to the south and East, the stunning Rockaways and Broad Channel. And of course, the best part is getting back home to answer the question from my sailing buddies: "Mark! What happened to you this time?"

Mark Rand

"... The enjoyment of wildlife and unique scenery while circumnavigating the bay is a highlight of this regatta."

Chris Bickford



“...The Sebago Cup combines our great tradition of cruising Jamaica Bay with racing. Local knowledge of the bay geography, the landscape around the islands at various tide heights (not to mention the location of partially submerged car and boat wrecks and piers) and wind patterns is a definite plus in your sailing performance. I didn’t realize until recently when I have ventured out of our club to participate in regattas just how unusual cruising one-design racing dinghys, like a laser, is among sailors. For us at Sebago, cruising is a frequent activity. This race also welcomes boat diversity. All classes are welcome and in the past the winners have often been a surprise – sailing canoes out-sailing Sunfish, Sunfish winning over Lasers...”

Holly Sears

“Where else in the whole wide world can you sail around deserted islands, while 747s gently float down to a landing with wilderness in the background, skyscrapers on the horizon, horses cantering on the shore and model airplanes buzzing the brush...”

Don Campbell



We look forward to hearing about Sebago Sailing in Sailing World!
If you’re interested in sailing at Sebago, contact sailing@sebagocanoecub.org to join the group email list. We’ll be having our first meeting of 2012 in February to plan next year’s season. We hope to see everyone at the Frostbite Regatta on New Year’s Day.

Building the Matinicus Double Ender- Part 9 *By Jim Luton*

Thanksgiving is traditionally the time that I am able to re-connect with my boat building projects. The sailing season is pretty much done, though I have not put Cricket, my crab skiff, away for the winter quite yet. I look forward to turkey day and the beginning of the holiday season for the renewed energy and enthusiasm I always feel at the prospect of some real boat carpentry.

Mouse (as I've named the peapod) has been gathering dust for six busy months of fancy interior cabinetry, including two Manhattan kitchens since July, among other projects. I vacuumed her out and started back in where I left off. The interior had been painted, floorboards were installed and deck beams were fitted. I screwed in the seat risers and got out the Spanish cedar planks that will make up the thwarts and side benches.

I made patterns for the thwarts from particle board and scrap 3 mm poplar ply. I somehow neglected to photograph this step, but the ply is fitted to the side curvature and bevels were taken at the fore and aft edges of each thwart. I transferred the patterns to the thwart stock and sawed them out square first, then marked the bevels and sawed to the least angle on the bandsaw, then fine-tuned the bevels with a block plane on the bench.

After the thwarts were fitted, I installed hardwood blocks (cherry, in this case) underneath to carry the ends of the side benches. I also added an athwartship stiffener, glued and screwed to the center thwart, because the span at that location is too great to go unsupported. The stiffener is not really visible unless you look under the seat, and that suits me fine. You'll see a lot of steel screws in these photos. These will all be replaced with bronze and bunged before varnishing and installing the furniture permanently. The thwarts will be held in with knees, NOT screwed to the risers. They bear against a frame on one edge and are captured at the other by the side benches. So the knees hold them down, and the frames and side benches locate them fore and aft. This is traditional construction. I make patterns for each seat knee from scrap mdf or ply, and fit the notches carefully before laying out and cutting the curve that makes these knees attractive. The knees themselves are cut from straight-grained cherry, with the grain running diagonally from seat to rail.

When I planed the thwart stock to final thickness, I left the side bench stock a little thicker. I was worried about having to bend in a stiff plank to the riser's curvature. In retrospect I probably should have spiled the risers from a wider piece, making them follow a straight line from the aft edge of the center thwart to their aft end. Walt Simmons says this should be a straight line, but I couldn't make my riser stock do anything



Cricket in the marsh, tying in a reef. Photo by Chris Bickford.

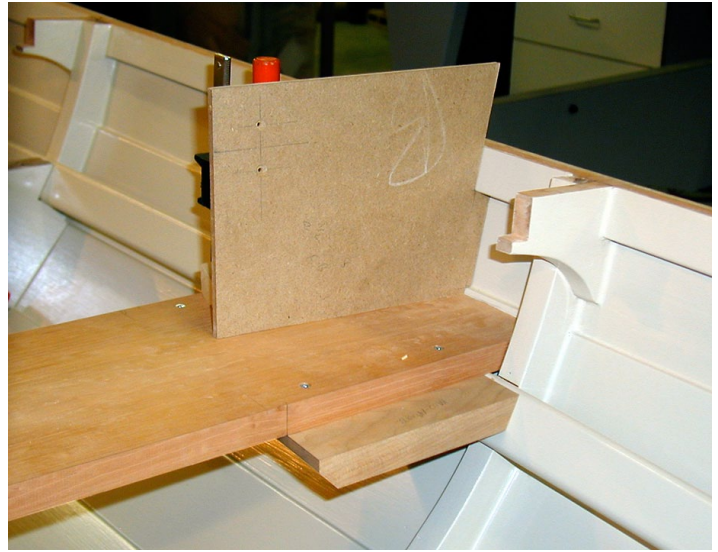
but follow a curve similar to the sheer curve. It was all I could do to get the risers at the correct height (for rowing) at each location. So consequently there is a bit of a dip along the span of the benches in profile. The outside curve in plan view, of course, is just sawn to shape to fit the plank's curvature. So I decided to resaw the bench stock and glue it back together with a little curve in it. I don't know if anyone else does it this way, but it makes sense to me. It took me about thirty minutes to resaw the stock and run it back through the planer.

I then set up a simple form with three sticks, the middle of which was higher by the amount of curve I wanted, and glued up a bent plank for each side bench. That's where we are now, on Thanksgiving Day. I will be fitting the side benches next and finish up the top of the daggerboard case. As always, the whole project can be viewed on my blog at <http://www.sailingskiffs.blogspot.com>.

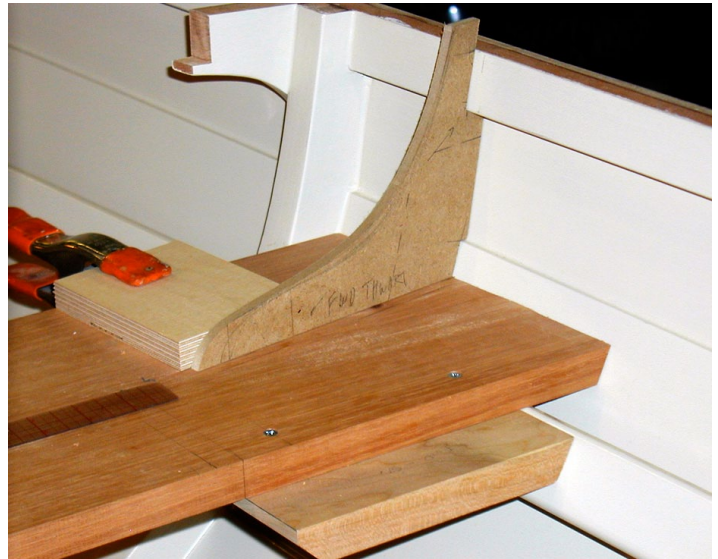
Stay tuned...



Bandsawing the bevel on a thwart.



Patterns are made for the thwart knees.



A boat-full of thwarts and knees. The aft knees have not been sawn to shape yet.



And the knee is sawn from cherry.





A finished knee. The small gaps will close up when the knee is fastened in.

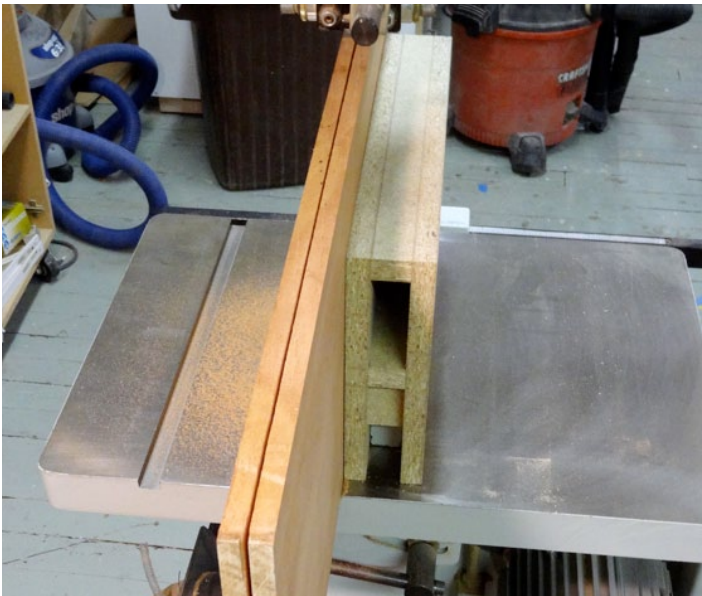


Gluing in a slight curve to the side benches.



Above - Resawing a 12" plank. Piece of cake for this Minimax bandsaw.

Below - An extra high particle board fence is slid over the fence casting to facilitate wide resawing projects.



Ready for side benches.



SEA GYPSY

Blue water, sky, dark distant islands
We slice the wavelets with oars
Her hair orange red, deep roots, magenta feathers green and purple
We laugh with nature and all beauty

Slap of water, whisper of wind
Purple gold her shirt, sparkling silver tiny jewels in her nose
We glide over blue frosting, under wooden bridges, around sea sculpted
rocks

Was it wisdom, or curiosity
Her question arrow
Is it all worth it?
My heart's answer:
I don't know, yet.

8/16/2011

By Sarah Lilly

Photos by A. Gail Bier
bottom - Canoe Baby in the Sebago Garden
right top - Door Out
right bottom - Fall Opening

Names to be published for senior membership:

David Rybstein

Frank Favia



EBlade:

Thanks to Editor: Beth Bloedow, Assistant Editor: Beth Eastman, Designer: Holly Sears, Photographers: Bonnie Aldinger and Chris Bickford, Walter Lewandowski, Tony Pignatello and all contributors.

All content in this issue is from individual contributors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Sebago Canoe Club.

Next Issue: Spring 2012

Sebago Canoe Club Board of Directors:

Commodore - Tony Pignatello

Vice-Commodore - John Wright

Secretary - Rochelle Rubin

Treasurer - Zachary Abrams

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Walter Lewandowski

Jim Luton

Mary Eyster

Denis Sivack

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