

SEBAGO CANOE CLUB E-BLADE

The official electronic newsletter of the Sebago Canoe Club in Brooklyn, NY kayaking, canoeing, sailing, racing, rowing February 28, 2006 Issue 1

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It's Hail Sebago

The publication of this E-Blade, on schedule and full of articles and information about the Sebago program, says a good deal about what makes this club function and grow. Our members see a need, step forward, and use their skills and efforts to make things happen. We owe Ann, Beth, Elizabeth and Holly a big thank you for taking on this effort to present in article, calendar and comment, what Sebago is all about.

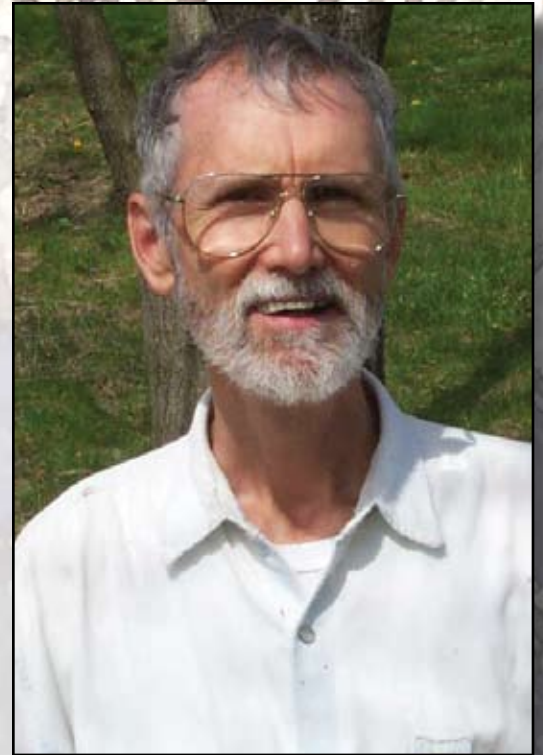
The days are longer, but hardly warmer, as planning for the on-water season begins. Join your activity committee as the opportunity allows. You will find a way to get involved, take part in the leadership, and share the enthusiasm. Thanks also to those members who write of continued skill building pool sessions or distant trips. They support the spirit.

This club year will see the completion of Phase 1 of our reconstruction of the Brooklyn site under the leadership of Phil Giller for the Planning Committee, Pete Peterson, Vice-Commodore and Beth Bloedow and Adele Adams for the Garden Committee. They bring continued energy and commitment to meet the obligations of our contract with the Parks Department. This generation of Sebago members have taken up a remarkable effort to transform a portion of New York City parkland built on landfill into an attractive and accessible gateway to the waters of Jamaica Bay. Thanks to Gordon Janis and all those who gave us this opportunity to fulfill.

The focus for each of us this season must be to both recruit a new member, and to retain a current member. Welcome new members to the activity of your interest, provide guidance, encouragement and where possible, mentoring in skill building. As we build gradually our core of active and committed members, we will grow ourselves out of any budget shortfall. Sharing the work obligations and operational costs among more of us, we all benefit.

Finally, pay your dues and fees in a timely manner, and find a work obligation that is something you like to do with a fellow member. These necessities can be met cheerfully, and with satisfaction that you contribute to an effort that is of value to you. And your club certainly needs the positive cash flow.

Yours, John Wright



Membership Committee

Winter is almost over and we can start thinking about making the coming year better. Although we didn't increase membership last year, we increased the membership committee by 600%. Jan Price is co-chair and Lisa DeFrancesco, Joe Illardo, Fran Pignatello, Martin Small, and Michael Strohbach have joined our team.

The first half of the season is the busiest for membership. In addition to answering questions about the club and sending out kits, we will participate in two big events:

- **March 11th: 3rd Annual Long Island Paddlesport Safety Symposium in Bohemia, N.Y.**

We will join the ACA, EMS, Red Cross, and Coast Guard in promoting safe paddling.

- **June 3rd: Sebago Open House at the Club House.**

We will be on hand to meet, greet, and answer questions. I would like to ask everyone to invite a friend to the Open House. We have 180 members. You can do the math.

Part of our job is to promote the Open House. If you know of any hiking, birding, outdoor, or cycling clubs that have a newsletter, we could use the contact info.

The brochures will be at the club soon. Please take a holder, place them and follow up to make sure they are kept full. You can also keep half a dozen in your glove compartment for when someone asks what that funny looking thing on top of your car is.

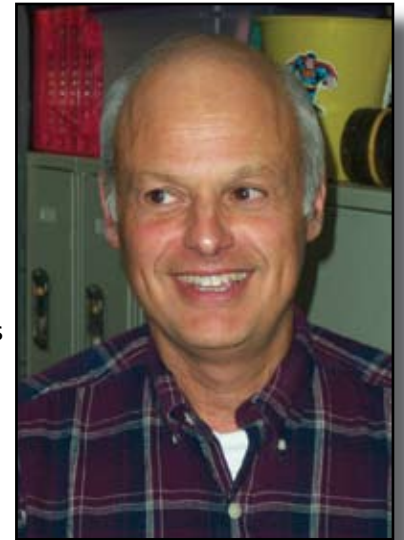
We are looking forward to seeing the conditional members become active this year. All of us on the committee are available to make your transition from conditional to senior member as smooth as possible. Contact us!

Safe Paddling, Tony Pignatello

Rowing Committee

In this capital with deep roots in history, the ancient sport of rowing is thriving. Some of my family and I are spending a few months in this fascinating city.

But that's another story. On one of our first days here in January, I was pleasantly surprised to see several sculls out on the Tevere (Tiber) river. There were singles, doubles, fours, and eights on different occasions. Twice I've seen scullers out with a coach accompanying them in a small outboard, and occasionally shouting instructions. I've also seen a few kayakers, two of them racing along with



the current in K1's. Along the banks of the river you can see racks of river kayaks stored in anticipation of a little warmer weather. I found out there are several rowing and kayaking clubs along the river. Some, I was told, are quite exclusive and require references to join. Whatever the case, as soon as I get a little more practice with Italian, I'll try to introduce myself as a representative of the very exclusive Sebago Canoe Club of New York, and see if they'll let me in.

From Rome,
Joe Romano

Gardening Committee

Now that the big pile of rubble is gone from the Paerdegat Avenue end of our club property, we have a large rectangle of land, waiting for spring. Our goal is to create a sitting area, complete with a canopy, surrounded by beautiful trees, shrubs and other green things. We are counting on your help for digging, amending and planting.

We have scheduled workdays during the weekend of March 18th and 19th for digging around the edges of a 30' by 40' area, and along the front of the fence, weather permitting. After that, we will need to spend another couple of workdays, possibly April 1st and 2nd, for adding some topsoil and compost to our planting beds. We have ordered plants from the Greenbelt Native Plant Center, a nursery which supplies the New York City parks with native species. These will probably be ready the week of April 17th, and we will schedule workdays once we have picked them up. Look out for workday reminders in your email!

We would like to invite everyone to a **gardening committee meeting at Beth Bloedow's house, on Sunday, March 12th, at 2 pm.** She is located close to the Brooklyn club, at **757 East 78th Street**, between Flatlands and Glenwood Avenues. Give a call at 718.241.9130 if you need directions and to RSVP. This will be an opportunity to meet the other gardeners at the club, take a look at the list of plants we have chosen, and see the garden plans.

In addition, consider attending the annual Making Brooklyn Bloom event at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens on March 11th, from 10 am to 4 pm. There are always interesting workshops on subjects helpful to city gardeners, whether you are dealing with a brownstone backyard, community garden or city park. There are usually four workshops, and admission is free, but you must arrive at 10 am to register. You can find more information at www.bbg.org.

Beth Bloedow and Adele Abrams

Kayaking Committee

You're probably lazily reading the Blade, all cozy in your flannel jammies waiting for spring to come and some kayaking action to happen. But did you know that for Sebago paddlers who plan the summer activities for our Kayak Committee that this is the busy season? We've been brainstorming and planning: reconfiguring the Open Paddle Program (Saturday morning and Wednesday evening paddles), designing a special program for Conditional members and working out the details for regional trips and BCU training classes. You can get all the news at the spring Kayak Committee meeting - we don't have a date yet but you'll receive a notice and I hope to see you all there.

Since this is a time of planning, please speak up if there are things you're especially interested in seeing in your kayaking future. This could be a paddling workshop, a specific type of training, a trip idea or anything else that you have in mind. Send your ideas to me at feil_jennifer@yahoo.com.

And if you have your own boat, are braving the cold and getting out on the water, please remember that this is an extreme endeavor and potentially lethal if done incorrectly. Don't gamble with your life, follow at least the very minimum safety guidelines:

WEAR A DRYSUIT (with appropriate layers underneath) when water is 50o or colder. Jamaica Bay water temperatures reach 50o around May 1, so until then wear that drysuit.

DON'T PADDLE ALONE Go with at least one or more fellow paddlers and stay within 10 feet or so of each other.

I highly urge every paddler at the club to visit the Atlantic Kayak Tour website for an expert briefing on cold water paddling safety. I use this site for my personal safety guidelines and we heavily consult them when formulating the rules for Sebago paddlers. Go to 'www.atlantickayaktours.com,' then click on the Expert Center button and follow it to the cold water safety section. Any Sebago member who wants to use club boats before May 1 must contact me first.

Now is also the optimum time to begin workouts to build strength and stamina with longer Jamaica Bay and regional trips in mind – yes, this is the year that you could actually paddle to the Salt Marsh Nature Preserve at Gerritsen Creek! Coupled with a stretching regimen, you'll be good to go. I got back on the elliptical trainer yesterday...ugh. I can't wait to see you all at the spring meeting and then on the water when warm weather rolls around!

Jennifer Feil



Capital Improvements

What a great winter we are having, (except for the past Sunday snowfall). I wanted to do some digging at the club to finish up some of projects. The only thing stopping me is that while the air is warm, the ground is still frozen.

I would again like to thank everyone who helped us last season with any aspect of our Capital Improvement program. There was a tremendous amount of work to be accomplished and we got about 80% completed.

Let me give everyone an update on where we are, where we are going and what we will be doing this summer.

As most of you are aware, Sebago received \$58,000 in grants from the J.M. Kaplan fund and Independence Community Bank foundation to start our Capital project in 2005. Some of the highlights of what you the members accomplished:

- Over 25,000 lbs. of industrial debris, 3,000 lbs. of aluminum, 1,000 lbs. of concrete was removed. Old trailers buried in the ground for over 30 years were excavated and removed.
- We were able to salvage 5 old containers and purchase 8 new ones for storage. They were relocated on the property and the roofs were painted with a heat reflecting paint and the sides in various shades of green with a touch of blue.
- The old broken chain link fence was removed and a new strong attractive fence with an artistically designed pedestrian entrance was erected.
- A path was dug for a wheelchair accessible path leading from the street to the dock.
- A 6' wide plastic walkway was constructed and partially installed.
- A parking area was created just inside the fence near the containers.



- Landscape design and strategy was initiated and the planting began around our new fence..

We expect to complete most of the remaining work in May & June and NOT start any other major projects until September.

WHAT WE HAVE TO DO:

- We have received permits from DEC and hope to finish digging the path starting first week of April once the ground is a little softer. We will also finish building the sections of path needed to complete the walkway.

• We will be planting along the front fence and new groundsel trees will be planted on the shoreline.

- The parking area will be developed and lines for cars marked on the ground.
- Planting beds at the edge of the parking area will be created
- Outside boat racks, new & old will be moved to their permanent position along the fence with Diamondpoint.

We will be scheduling workdays at the end of April and in May. Please check the E-Blades and the group list of dates. With everyone helping, the work can be completed in this month period and then we can ALL enjoy the water this summer.

CONGRATULATIONS SEBAGO

Sebago has received a \$10,000 grant from the NYC Environmental Fund to help fund the Wednesday and Saturday open paddles. Details at the next kayak meeting and in the next Blade. This should really ramp up our program this summer. We look forward to everyone's involvement and help.

Phil Giller



E-BLADE AND BLADE PUBLISH DATES 2006

Blade publish date:	May 15	Submissions due:	April 17
E-Blade publish date:	July 10	Submissions due:	June 26
Election Mailer & Blade publish date:	Sept 8		
Submissions due:	Aug 28		
E-Blade publish date:	Dec. 15	Submissions due:	Dec 1

SPECIFICATIONS

Articles: send word docs or plain text files or copy and paste text into an email

Pictures: .jpg, .gif, .tif, .eps, psd image files accepted. Color or black and white (absolute max image size 2310 x 3300 pixels)

Send text files, images and all inquiries to: publications@sebagocanoclub.org

OTHER RELATED DEADLINES

Website updates due April 17 for seasonal update: pub2@sebagocanoclub.org

Left to right: Jerry Dunne, Cheri Perry, Greg Stammer, Freya Hoffmeister, Chris Russo and Turner Wilson.



Kameras For Kayaks, Part 2

By Andy Novick

It is an exciting time for photography this month. According to Nikon, they are ending a market for film cameras. So is Kodak. "Film photography is rapidly becoming a special interest niche," according to David Pogue, tech guru for the NY Times. What this means to you, the consumer is to either hold on to your older Nikon film cameras, or forge ahead to digital. I prefer to hold on to good film cameras for their indestructible nature, and at the same time embrace the high-end digital camera. However I don't think high-end digital cameras do well in kayaks. They are too expensive and become too bulky with a housing. You will lose the moment if you stop, reach for your waterproof case, open and shoot. I prefer the film camera that is always ready to go. My favorite is the Nikonos, a totally waterproof diving camera. It is virtually bullet proof. Last September I was out for a paddle with my diving camera, a Nikonos III. Before I left the dock, I reached for my paddle and the camera was knocked off the dock and sunk like a stone. After over an hour of dredging with different makeshift tools, I asked fellow club members to help, as their luck must be better than mine. Five different people tried and failed to raise the camera. The camera remained underwater for 2 days as I tried to get a scuba diver to retrieve the camera. Finally John Lutz jury rigged a tool and got the camera out in less than 15 minutes. It was covered in slime, I wiped this off and took a photo of John and the workings of the camera were 100% fine.

If you can't get a hold of a diving camera, then look at the Canon Elph Sport, a film camera rated to 16 feet depth. It is sharp and can be reloaded with film, if they still are making film, and sells for about \$125. Also look at the Fantasea, an inexpensive film camera also rated for 16 feet. It sells for about \$20. What a rating of 16 feet means is if you catch it as you drop it off you kayak, it will survive a dunk, but forget about it working after being under water for a day or so. Sealife makes a more expensive (\$70) camera, but it is good for a depth of 100 feet and has a viewfinder more like a dive camera so you can hold it at arms length and still get a good shot. All the cameras I mentioned can



change film, (not disposable.) And you can always get a fine film camera for a great price now, and take in with you in the kayak without a housing, just keep it in a Pelican case, and take it out as needed. It will stand up to more water

than a digital camera, and if it does go for a swim, a replacement will be less expensive than any digital of similar quality. Just check eBay and you will be amazed at prices for top quality Nikons and Canon film cameras.

building a chesapeake bay crabbing skiff-part 1

By Jim Luton



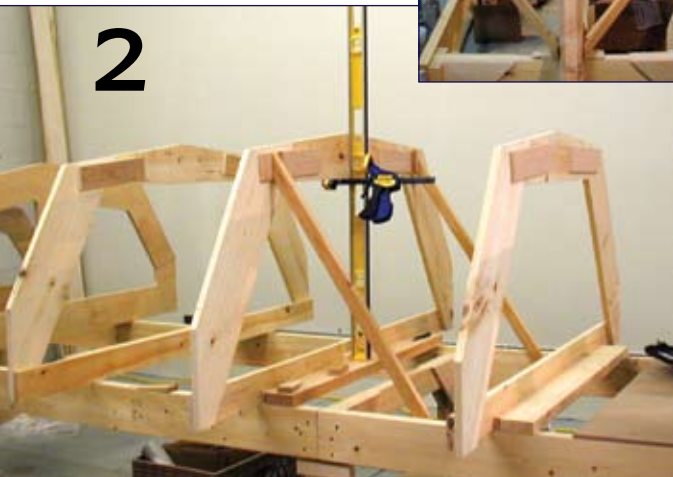
1. Strong-back and molds are leveled with a laser.

2. Molds are plumbed and braced.

3. The keelson and stem-liner have been fitted, and the chines are going on next.



2



The history of the skiffs, sharpies, and bateaux that worked the Chesapeake waterfront is well documented, most notably by Howard Chapelle, who measured hundreds of hulls over many years and recorded sail plans and working data from some of the older watermen still alive in his day. Chapelle is now long gone, but he left us his rich legacy of working drawings. The skiff that I am building represents a type that was used primarily for dip netting soft crabs in summer, and tonging oysters in winter. These skiffs make very nice pleasure boats if built lightly. They sail very well, are fast and handy, and work to windward in very shallow water. The deep skeg and large rudder are designed to carry a fair amount of the lateral plane, so the skiffs will resist leeway with only a small amount of centerboard down. This feature alone is an advantage in Jamaica Bay, or in any shallow water. That deep skeg will also keep the boat on course downwind, with no tendency to broach or spin out like a racing dinghy. The freestanding mast and simple rig are perfect for single-handing.

There are two yacht designers that have done a lot of work with the original Chapelle drawings, and have published several updated designs to the traditional type. Ruel Parker is one, and his *The Sharpie Book* is an invaluable text on skiff design and construction with modern materials. Karl Stambaugh is a Maryland designer with a whole range of sailing skiffs in his "Windward" series. Karl's *Windward* 15 very closely suited my needs for the skiff, and is a beautiful example of the type. I happened to see the first boat built to this design several years ago in Brooklin, Maine. We were visiting the Wooden Boat campus when Karl's nephew rolled up with his new boat. I talked with him for a few minutes, and watched him rig and sail off in just minutes. The boat was very fast. He later camp-cruised that skiff all over the Chesapeake.

So I bought a set of plans from Karl. The first thing I did before laying down the lines was measure the freight elevator in my building to see exactly how much boat I could fit in (I'm on the third floor). I knew I could go larger than fifteen feet on deck, so when I lofted the hull, I increased the station spacing by two inches and ended up with 16' 2" on deck. I did not alter the body plan at all. At the end of the day, I need not have lofted the hull full size, for the offsets from Karl's drawing faired in perfectly, even with the increased spacing. The lofting however, later proved valuable when I got concerned that I could get the boat out of my doors with that deep skeg on. I sawed out the profile view from the full-size lofting and checked that it would indeed fit, and was much relieved. Imagine the horror on delivery day if it didn't!

As I said, I did not alter the lines at all, but I did change the sail plan and I changed the construction method. I feel like I have the experience both building and sailing to make changes in a design to suit myself. I don't do this lightly, and in no way do I hold anyone but myself responsible for any possible shortcomings. Most skiffs and sharpies carry a sprit boom, which rides up the mast higher than the clew, and which utilizes a snotter to tension the foot of the sail. This setup is extremely light and simple, and is self-vanging. But, there is only one option for sheet arrangement, and on one tack the sprit interferes with sail shape. I prefer a "conventional" boom, which goosenecks to the mast. This allows a variety of sheeting possibilities, and I've always preferred a mid-boom sheet. I will have to fit a vang, but at least I can adjust sail shape on the fly. I also increased the sail area a bit. I think the boat at fifteen feet could handle more than the seventy feet that Karl put on her, and at sixteen feet definitely. So I increased the area to about eighty-five feet, and put in a single deep reef for an area of about 60 feet.

This boat, and most like her these days, is built of good quality marine plywood and epoxy with light framing. They can be built stitch and glue, but that is a method I don't prefer. Karl specifies setting up permanent frames and floors as molds, and then bonding the longitudinal members to them. The plywood skin is then fitted and bonded on. I hoped to eliminate some of the framing, and substitute watertight plywood bulkheads for frames where possible. I was able to save a little weight at the same time. I built mine in much the way that Ruel Parker builds his. I set up temporary molds on the stations, which were notched for the permanent longitudinal members. These are the keelson, chines, and sheer clamps. The stem liner and transom were also set up, and the longitudinal members were later fitted and permanently joined to them. I never worry about finding full-length stock for these longitudinal

members. It is usually easier to scarf two shorter pieces to length, and this is what I did for this boat. The whole business was erected on a carefully leveled strong back. I used a laser to level the strong back, and again to true up the molds relative to the waterline, which I marked on each one. Each mold was then plumbed square to the waterline, and braced securely. The keelson, chines, and sheer clamps are glued permanently to the stem liner and transom, but must be temporarily attached to the molds. I use small blocks for this, which are screwed to the molds, and then likewise to the longitudinal. These screws are later removed when it is time to free the boat from the molds.

Once all the framing is in place, the whole setup must be carefully faired and beveled. This hard-chine hull has no athwartship curvature. That is, all cross-sectional lines are straight. This greatly simplifies the beveling process. The centerline is marked out on the keelson, then a pair of lines are marked either side of the centerline to the thickness of the skeg and gripe. The keelson is then beveled on each side from that line toward the chine, which is also beveled. That bevel is constantly changing, as the deadrise angle changes from almost flat forward, to a fairly steep angle aft. Quite a bit of wood has to be removed in some places, so I use a drawknife, and power-plane to work close to the lines. I finish up with a long piece of 1-1/2" aluminum angle, with some 80 grit "stikit" paper bonded to one face. By rubbing this back and forth across the faying surfaces, I get a perfect bevel. The fairness of the longitudinal lines must be constantly checked during beveling, to make sure no dips or hard spots develop. Learning to trust your eye is important here.

The boat is now ready to plank. Plank patterns must be made, and the planks cut out and scarfed up to length. We will take up that whole process in the next installment!

Sailing Committee

Even with two feet of snow on the ground, I know it is time to gear up for the new sailing season. We've got a lot of work to do to get the boats ready. Last year we spent most of our energy building our new sail house, so the boats themselves were a little neglected. But they will get the attention they deserve this spring. We still need to build new storage racks, and set up our new trailer area, for the growing fleet of Lasers and the new 420.

We've created a tentative calendar that we will be discussing at our early spring **Sailcom meeting on Tuesday, March 14 at 7pm at Jim and Holly's house at 570 20th St. Brooklyn (Windsor Terrace area)**. We hope all sailors can attend to discuss our next season. We'll be shifting the focus of our program this year and focusing on improving our sailing skills and hoping to include a regular schedule of racing.

A big thank you to Ann M. Fullilove (and Al Miller) for their recent contribution of a 420. It should be an exciting boat to try out.

Give us a call if you need directions to the meeting: 718.633.5844, Jim Luton sailing@sebagocanoecub.org





California Kayaking

By Anthea Beckler (e-mail acicchino@aol.com)

I was a J-Bay devotee. I loved the wetlands, the birds, even the powerboats.

Getting used to the ocean off Southern California took a while: sailboats were under sail - and there were always swells. I gulped when they snuck up to lift the stern, then bow of my boat.

And coastal Southern California has space, so much of it. After Jamaica Bay, the time between visual cues felt endless. In time, I reset my scale and learned to look for other things. I was ready to enjoy the California Coast.

SURF

I already mentioned the swells. Well, those swells end up breaking on the beach or bluffs. WAVES make beach launches and landings skills a must. Even beginners are soon learning to read wave patterns.

I think surf's the reason Southern Californians love plastic boats of all lengths. You'll see them on Venice Beach South, especially in wintertime when waves are bigger. Whitewater kayakers show up too to stay in shape.

WILDLIFE

Most amazing about Southern California are the many marine mammals. You start to take them for granted. They're short and easy paddles away.

Sea lions trawl after fishing boats and lounge on buoys. Pods of "common dolphin" will ride along with you for miles.

It takes more work, but you can also see Grey Whales as they migrate to Mexico for the winter. An enclosed body of water like Jamaica Bay simply doesn't invite this kind of wildlife in.

Southern California has its birds too: brown pelicans in big, stinky colonies; mew gulls; eared grebes. There are also faces familiar to J-Bayers - the egret and the cormorant.

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

In early summer on Anacapa Island, acres of gulls stand guard over their young chicks. It's an incredible sight - and smell.

Anacapa is one of Southern California's eight Channel Islands. A chain that stretches from San Diego to Santa Barbara, most are now protected within the Channel Islands National Park.

Anacapa Island, Santa Cruz Island, and Catalina Island are popular with kayakers. Regular ferry service helps, as does the fact that they're not very far away. An open water crossing to Anacapa can be as short as eleven miles. To Catalina it's usually no longer than twenty-six.

Anacapa has limited and awkward camping. Come for the day and explore its leeward coast - there are dramatic arches and rock gardens for kayakers to wiggle through. Clear waters showcase thick kelp gardens like those found near Santa Cruz and Catalina.

Absent wind or other stormy weather, crossing to Anacapa can take just a few hours. You'll buzz an oil rig or two - including one named Gina - along the way.

Santa Cruz Island, just north of Anacapa, features a lovely interior and some challenging caves. A camp at Scorpion Bay welcomes day visitors and overnighters, although reservations are required. Santa Cruz was owned for many years by a private family, which still has a home there. You can hike into the hills and see

the ruins of other parts of the estate. A crossing to Santa Cruz is twenty-one miles, from Ventura.

Finally, south of both Anacapa and Santa Cruz is Santa Catalina Island. It's the biggest of the three. Once owned by the Wrigley family, Catalina's been well-protected despite the wild boar and buffalo that once overran it.

In 2004, I spent three days circumnavigating its fifty five-mile coast. We stayed both nights at the island's isthmus, Twin Harbors, where the walk between leeward and windward coasts takes about six minutes. The isthmus also has historic Banning House Lodge, which weary kayakers (including myself) sometimes enjoy.

The last day of our trip took us along Catalina's western coast. We were pushed along by twelve-foot swells and twenty-knot winds. My furiously breaching Anas Acuda scared the heck out of me, but my colleagues in nineteen-foot touring boats with rudders were laughing all the way.

A BURGEONING BCU

This last bit about Southern California: when I started talking about BCU training three plus years ago, folks thought I was crazy. This is ACA country. But eventually I discovered the annual BCU symposium held north of San Francisco in Bodega Bay.

I've attended this week of classes and testing for the last few years. It's not a bad intro to California paddling.

I've even seen some AKT coaches there. And you know what: this past fall an ACA coach famous on the West Coast attended. He was learning - what do you know? - to train teachers in the BCU style!

SOME LINKS

Channel Islands National Park:

<http://www.nps.gov/chis/>

Northern California BCU Skills Symposium:

<http://www.riptidesandrapids.com/bcucalifornia/>

BCU Outfitter in San Diego:

<http://www.aqua-adventures.com/>



Delmarva Retreat 2005 – Exceeding Expectations

By Arthur Christopher Russo

Each year as summer ends Greenland kayak enthusiasts from across the country, and often from across the world, gather at Delaware's Rehoboth Bay for a weekend of fellowship and instruction. The guiding concept is simple: anything that helps maintain and develop the Greenland kayaking culture is welcomed. Anyone who has a skill is encouraged to teach it, and anyone desiring to learn a skill will find more than enough kayaking "elders" eager to pass on what they know.

For first timers, the experience can be a bit unnerving. At least it was for us six Sebagoans – Ann Barry, Jerry Dunne, Steve Heinzerling, Steve McAllister, Susan Piper, and me. We shared modest expectations of learning to paddle, maybe learning a roll. Some of us wanted to try our hands at paddle making and working with neoprene. But by evening of our first day we all realized how naïve we had been in setting our goals so low. There was much more being offered than we had dreamed of.

First, the talent was world class, including Greg Stamer, president of QAYAQUSA and winner of two gold and two bronze medals at the Greenland Championships, as well as internationally known Greenland rolling experts Cheri Perry and Freya Hoffmeister. In the past, such notables as Maligiaq Johnsen Padilla, John Heath and Harvey Golden attended.

Second, the lectures and demonstrations were incredible; the following examples do not do full justice.

It seemed most appropriate that our lecture series began with Duncan Winning's account of how one man's journey to Greenland influenced so much of later recreational kayaking. In 1959 Ken Taylor traveled to Greenland, returning with a kayak custom built for him by an Inuit. It was from this Igdlorssuit kayak that Duncan drew construction plans which later influenced the design of over thirty recreational kayaks, including the highly successful Anas Acuta. We had the impression that without this one kayak, kayak development would have been delayed and we would be paddling Jamaica Bay with Rob Roys. It was an honor to meet these two men who had unintentionally revolutionized the sport.

Later that evening we were also introduced to the multi-talented, inimitable Dubside. Imagine crossing a Greenlander with an elf, giving him dreadlocks, then clothing him in a black jumpsuit and bandana. Then imagine putting him in a Greenland kayak, only to discover that he can roll it with ease (notice that we didn't include a paddle). Then imagine putting him in a beamy sit on top and watching him do the same, and the same again when put alone in double and triple kayaks. We had the impression that if he could be strapped in

securely, he could probably roll a garbage scow.

Not to be outdone, Cheri and Freya gave their rolling demonstrations the next evening. What a pair, it was like matching classical ballet with hip hop. Cheri gracefully demonstrated most of the thirty capsized maneuvers she performed at the Greenland Championships. Watching her do a hand roll was amazing, watching her do the same roll holding a stone and then following this by rolling with her hands folded across her

chest was incredible and classically beautiful. Freya's style was clearly influenced by her gymnastics training. While matching Cheri on most rolls, she was peerless when it came to balance. Did she really go from sitting in her skin-on-frame kayak to a full headstand follow by a split, using her paddle as a balance beam? You had to be there.

Third, the workshops were competently conducted and covered everything from learning to make a Greenland paddle with Don Beale, skinning a skin-on frame with Wine Radolan, yoga with Cheri, kayak dressage with Cheri and Dubside, and working with neoprene with Shawn Baker.

One favorite was the Greenland rope gymnastics, allunaariaqattarneq in Greenlandic, with Dubside. The assembly was deceptively simple, consisting of little more than two ropes loosely suspended between two posts. But from this humble setup the Inuit had devised a complete program for strength training and balance, with an emphasis on performing rope maneuvers that paralleled similar muscle maneuvers needed for rolling.

Fourth, the on-water classes were exceptional, clearly the heart of the program. In typically Greenlandic fashion there was no registration or bureaucratic nonsense. Anyone wanting a class simply showed up at one of seven color coded sites that were graded from rank beginner to advanced. The first two classes covered the basic skill set of paddling, bracing and the traditional Greenland roll, similar to the Euro-style pawlata roll. The remaining five classes focused on the more advanced and esoteric rolls. Since classes were two hours, switching classes every hour was encouraged.

Greg Stamer taught basic strokes, covering everything from choosing and sizing a paddle to low braces. But his focus was on the forward canted stroke. Unlike the techniques for using a Euro-blade, many Greenlanders hold their paddles at an angle, with the top edge of their paddle canted forward. There are several benefits to this. The catch seems gentler. Since the blade is canted

And yet, there is only one great thing
the only thing;
To live to see in huts and on journeys
the great day that dawns
and the light that fills the world.
(Inuit Song)

forward, it wants to submerge so the paddler needs to make less of a conscious effort to get the full blade in the water. Second, there is less trunk rotation and the stroke tends to be longer. Third, the exit is well behind the paddler's waist. While many coaches advise lifting a Euro-blade out of the water as the paddle nears the hip, Greenlanders carry the blade well back of this. The reason is in the blade dynamics. A Euro-blade exiting behind the paddle simply lifts water without adding anything to forward momentum. A Greenland blade exiting behind the paddler continues to drive the kayak forward, due to the water deflecting off the canted blade as it is lifted and the resulting Bernoulli Effect.

Our second class focused on the sculling brace and the standard Greenland roll. Again, a difference in Euro and Inuit philosophies were evident. First, the Greenlanders tend to ignore the high brace due to its potential for injury. For an Inuit, any injury preventing paddling could result in an ability to hunt and feed his family. Second, the Inuits seem to have a more congenial relationship with the water itself. As Greg Stamer repeatedly stated, "it's not battery acid, it's simply water." Rather, than something to stay out of at all costs, water is used as a support, and the Inuit have developed several static and active braces that allow them to rest on the water. Again this makes sense given the Inuit hunting culture and Greenland's rocky coastline. Hunting often meant long days at sea without any nearby land areas on which one could stop and rest. If an Inuit tired at sea, he could simply side scull with his back resting on the water, a technique called innaqatsinek. More advanced paddlers didn't even need to scull. Manasse Mathaeussen, Inuit hunter and kayak expert, would often nap on the water after a long day at sea by using this simple back brace (see Heath et al, 2004).

As our weekend ended we reluctantly packed for the journey home, stalling to talk with our teachers and savor what we had experienced. I believe we came back changed. In small part we had certainly learned some skills. But more, we had met and been moved by so many gentle and generous new friends, friends who had internalized the Inuit core values of pijitsirarniq (the concept of serving and recognizing that each person is a valued contributor to the community), pilimmaksarniq (the concept of skill and knowledge acquisition so necessary for surviving in a harsh environment), and piliriqatigiingniq (the concept of working together for a common purpose). We left with a deep sense of gratitude and a commitment to return the following year.

The Great Sea has set me in motion
Set me adrift
And I move as a weed in the river.
The arch of sky
And mightiness of storms
Encompasses me,
And I am left
Trembling with joy.
(Uvavnuk, an Igloodik Inuit)



There are many excellent books on Greenland kayak construction, design and evolution. See the qayaqusa.org website for a list. One particularly good one by John Heath is: Heath, J. & Arima, E. (2004) Eastern Arctic Kayaks: History, Design, Technique. University of Alaska Press. A collection of articles beginning with an extensive chapter on the evolution of the qayaq and qayaqing techniques by the legendary John Heath. Greg Stamer has an excellent chapter on using the Greenland paddle.

VIDEO/DVD (AVAILABLE ON THE WEB)

Amphibious Man – This is a professionally made documentary that covers not only the 1995 Greenland kayak championship, but captures the spirit of the competition and life in Greenland from the perspective of a world class kayaker. This is a beautiful video. If you want to see a sliding forward stroke performed by a master, you'll find it here. Unfortunately, it's only available on videotape.

Forward Paddling, Nigel Foster Sea Kayaking Series, Volume 5 – While Foster tends to focus on Euro style paddling, this DVD includes a section in which Greg Stamer demonstrates Greenland paddling technique.

Greenlanders at Kodiak – John Peterson, three time Greenland kayak champion, demonstrates many of the maneuvers done in competition. Only available on videotape.

Kayak Klubben – Filmed at the first national training camp in 1986, this video shows how Greenland kayakers are trained to roll. It's a bit repetitious and the quality is only fair to good, but it's encouraging to discover that we all make the same beginner mistakes. Only available on videotape.

Rolling with Maligiag – In 1998 then sixteen year old Maligiag Johnsen Padilla won the kayaking championship, the youngest kayaker to ever win this honor. In this video he explains the canted forward stroke and demonstrates most of the thirty capsize maneuvers used in competition. Only available on videotape.

WEBSITES

The web has numerous sites with video clips of Greenland technique; just do a Google search or see the following:

<http://www.qajaqusa.org>- Probably the single best web site on Greenland style kayaks and paddling, replete with video clips of technique and an extensive list of related links.

<http://www.seakayakermag.com>-Sea Kayak Magazine occasionally has articles on the history and construction of Greenland kayaks and paddles.



Founded 1933
Opened to women 1960

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On February 15, 2006 the air temperature was a balmy 60 degrees. The water temperature was 44 degrees. The day before, all the local New York television stations were bellyaching about a blizzard.

Winter Fun at Sebago!



The weather men were stretching the truth and trying to break any record they could with how many inches they had.

"My snowfall is bigger than yours!" declared one reporter.

"Oh yeah," replied another station, "I got more inches than you!"

"Lets go and get a ruler out and measure it!" said a third weather reporter.

While all this grammar school bathroom measurement was going on on the networks, a few kayakers from Sebago decided to really look at the numbers, and went out for a springtime paddle, with lots of snow to reflect the sun, and get a tan.

Here we see Joe Glickman with the proper attire for paddling in 60 degree F weather after a "record blizzard" in New York City!

All views expressed in the E-Blade are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Sebago Canoe Club.