
CHANNELS -- The Newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington

August 2001

August Membership Meeting

Join us for adventure on the high seas at the monthly membership meeting Monday, August 13th when our own Mike Geissinger will talk about his recent sail to the Azores. Mike is a fabulous photographer and great storyteller so you won't want to miss his talk. The program begins at 7:30 PM but come early for food and fun starting at 6:30 PM at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street, (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), in Old Town Alexandria.

Commodore's Log

I periodically get emails or phone calls from members whose busy schedules keep them away from club events. Hmmmm, imagine that -- something more critical than sailing? Well, for all of you (and you know who you are), here's a brief recap of what you've been missing. We've had a busy year so far, and the Board does not intend to slacken the pace! So, although you may have missed some of the fun, there is plenty of sailing and socializing left this year.

One of the greatest things about SCOW is the fact that you can qualify to be a skipper on our club's boats. At this writing, we have 107 members who are skippers. Of those, 72 are qualified to skipper only the Flying Scots, 12 are qualified to skipper only the cruising boats, and 23 are qualified to skipper any club boat. More important to me is the number of people getting checked out for the first time. This year, 21 members have become new Flying Scot skippers and 1 person has become a new cruising boat skipper. Congratulations! Was becoming a skipper one of your goals this year? Well, it is not too late. Contact Skipper Coordinator Joan O'Kane for information. Thanks to Joan and to all the check-out skippers for helping so many members become skippers.

We've also conducted two basic sailing classes and two cruising boat classes this year. Thanks to Training Director Judi Campbell and, especially, to our trainers, for all of their work in putting on excellent land and water classes for our members. If you have taken a SCOW class, you will appreciate how hard our volunteer trainers work. Judi will be announcing some special training days on various topics, so watch Channels and your email for details.

With all that use, our boats require regular repair, and Maintenance Director Sergey Tagashov has been busy. Maintenance is a job that you really only notice when it is not done, or done promptly. Since much of what Sergey does is "behind the scenes," you may not realize how diligently he has been looking after our boats, but among the tasks Sergey and his maintenance crew have done so far this year are: repairing all three Flying Scot trailers; repairing the mast and forestay on Danschweida; repairing the roller block and jib halyard on Susie Q; putting new PFD's on all three Scots; purchasing new outboards for the cruising boats; and performing

various repairs on the cruising boats. When something has broken, Sergey and the maintenance crew have made needed repairs quickly, which means that you have been able to use the boats when you wanted.

The Tuesday evening Flying Scot races have been a huge success, with an average of 15 to 18 people showing up each week. Thanks to Race Captain Bill Bernhards for his hard work organizing this effort and special thanks to the many members -- normally members who are racing the club's cruising boats -- who have volunteered their time to run one or more of the Scot races. Thanks also to the Flying Scot skippers who have come down every week to make certain all three boats could go out.

"Swingin' Social Director" Matt Gaston has been busy. Not only has he overseen all of the social events on the club's original schedule, but he also scheduled some new ones and has overseen those as well! The first "unscheduled" event was the visit to the crab house a month or so ago, which 30 members attended. Upcoming is a visit on August 19th to Smith Island. In addition to Matt's efforts on the social front, Erica Vey and Ben Lesser have been doing an excellent job of recruiting and cajoling members to volunteer to host social sails. Thanks to Matt, Erica, Ben and everyone who has pitched in to make social events such a success.

River and Bay Director Jon Allen has been busy, too. Our monthly river cruises have been well-attended, and the Smoots Cove raft-up was a great success -- at least until the thunderstorm chased all of us home. Jon has also been actively working with the members of the Bay fleet to increase attendance at Bay events. Thanks to Jon, and to the many skippers who have helped him with both river and Bay events.

There are still plenty of fun events coming up. The Flying Scot races will continue every Tuesday evening through September 11th. Social Sails will continue every Thursday evening until October 4th. The next Bay raft-up will be August 11 - 12th, and Bay activities will continue into the fall. The Smith Island outing is coming up on August 19th with more social events to follow into the fall, culminating with our annual Hail and Farewell black-tie gala. So, there is plenty of sailing and social fun awaiting you!

Fair winds and following seas!

Racing News

Bill Bernhards

I would like to thank several club members who have served as race committee for the Tuesday night races: Dave Scheuermann, Chuck Hollister and Barry Dunsmore. I hope to see you guys there for some more races before the season is over.

Several people, including committee skippers, have asked me how to conduct our informal races. To answer this I have put together a binder, which I have placed, in the sail locker that explains our Tuesday evening Scot races. The following is taken from this binder:

The objective of Tuesday night Scot racing is to promote racing in an informal and stress-free

way. At the same time it's to teach new members how to sail, rig our boats properly, think safety and have fun.

As a skipper you are in charge. Get your crew involved by getting the boat ready, let everyone take a turn at the helm and have them put the boat away. Many club members have already learned a great deal about sailing by racing on these nights. Encourage them to continue attending the Scot race nights and our club will be better for it.

There should be a skipper every Tuesday who is assigned as the race committee skipper. These skippers are the big boat skippers or crew who have won the privilege of racing our big boats in the DICF series on Tuesday nights. He/she will decide on where the race will be and the course. Most nights it will be in the lagoon, although several courses have been on the river. If the committee person does not show up, then the skippers who are present can decide among themselves the course, etc.. Just keep it simple and safe. The race committee person has the choice of using the dock as the starting line and signaling the race from there, or he/she may act as skipper or crew on one of the boats. Again, these are informal races and it is up to you to decide what to do.

Non-club members may race with the club if they sign the permission forms found in each boat's binder, the same way it is done for Thursday social sails. However, if there are club members present and not enough room for everyone, club members should get precedence over non-club members.

In order to help the racing director get an idea of how well (or bad) each Tuesday race goes, please have each skipper sign in and if possible e-mail the race director the following day with comments. E-mail to: race@scow.org

I hope this will answer some of your questions.

Bill Bernhards
Racing Director

The Sailor's Bookshelf

With SCOW planning an August 19th outing to Smith Island, you might want to pick up a copy of *An Island Out of Time* by Tom Horton. Smith Island is home to about 150 watermen and their families, who live in three towns -- Ewell, Tylerton and Rhodes Point -- each within view of the others but each with its own personality. Published in 1996, the book tells about the island's traditions of oystering, crabbing, hunting, churchgoing, and confronting the police and other authorities. The story is told both by Horton and by many island residents in their own words in interviews with and stories told to Horton. You get an outstanding insight into a very different, and very difficult, way of life. During crabbing season, the men rise at 3 am each day to go out to work, and return late in the evening, tend to the "peelers," (crabs about to shed and become softshell crabs) and go to bed only to do it again the next day. Most of their wives make extra money picking crabmeat. Money has to be made in the season, and winters can be very hard and

lean. Nonetheless, they love their jobs and are proud of their way of life. If you are going on the Smith Island trip, or just are curious about how folks on Smith Island live, pick up this book.

Training

Judi Campbell

Congratulations to all those who completed the second offering of Basic Sailing on June 23! Thank you to the following instructors who contributed their time and talent to making that course possible:

Liz Bruening
Larry Gemoets
Dan McClafferty
Declan Conroy
Jim Metcalf
Stu Robinson
Monica Maynard
Randy Glantz
Neil Shepherd
Jan Metten Van der Meer
Stuart Ullman
Dick Dyer

Barbara Ullman and the Training Committee are continuing a comprehensive look at refining the Cruising Boat class--the next one starts August 1. Thanks to Barbara for her leadership and focus and the Committee for the expertise they bring to bear on all aspects of training.

Thanks to Thom Unger for taking the lead instructing the Capsized Class on July 14. The next offering is August 18 and that class is full.

Suggestions for special training sessions include Navigation, Life Sling, Crew Overboard and Docking. Look for more information on these as I get them on the calendar by electronic mail.

In the meantime, let's get on those boats--don't want to see any of them hanging around the marina this month. Later!

River

Jon Allen

Bad, Bad Boys what ya goin to do when the Maryland Natural Resources comes for you.

Well, you just grin and get your picture taken while getting a citation for registration, or lack there of. The raftup at Smoot's cove was really a blast - lots of swimming and water gun fights. Hey, it wouldn't be a party if the police didn't show up, right?

We had 7 boats:

Psycho, Rebecca, Tamarisk, Need a Breeze, Christy D, Clayton's Mako and 2 Flying Scots. All had current registration except for my boat - Christy D.

Next, we had the River Cruise on July 6th. Psycho, Rebecca, and Need a Breeze went out. I was making sure that the rest of the boats were between me and the DC Harbour Patrol, because my registration was still unsettled.

I should be registered by the next river cruise, so come out and have some fun.

Next river Cruise: Sept. 7th

Bay
Jon Allen

We should have a really good raftup on August 11-12. We have changed the North Fleet to Dun Cove on the Choptank.

Labor Day raftup (2 night)

N. Fleet: Shipping Creek, Eastern Bay

N. Fleet: second night at St. Michaels -Leeds Creek.

This will enable a link-up between land and sea. I invite SCOW members to come down and have dinner with those rafting up with the Northern Fleet.

Contact social for further details on dinner in St. Michaels.

S. Fleet: Great Wicomoco River

S. Fleet: 2nd night - at MikeG's place in the Coan.

October 6-8th will be the next raftup. The sailboat show should be under way as well.

Infamous Quote

"When anyone asks me how I can best describe my experience in nearly forty years at sea, I merely say, uneventful. Of course there have been winter gales, and storms and fog and the like. But in all my experience, I have never been in any accident ... of any sort worth speaking about. I have seen but one vessel in distress in all my years at sea. I never saw a wreck and never have been wrecked nor was I ever in any predicament that threatened to end in disaster of any sort."

Edward J. Smith, 1907

Captain, RMS Titanic

(struck iceberg and went to the bottom just five years later)

Thanks

Thank you to July's speaker, Captain Fred Wilson from the Friends of Belle Haven, for shedding some light on the National Parks Service action that could potentially shut down the Belle Haven

Marina. If you're interested in keeping up with the process, check out the Belle Haven website, (saildc.com). Also if you have strong feelings about keeping the marina open, you are urged to write and tell your representatives: Cong. Tom Davis, 306 Cannon House Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20515; Sen. George Allen, 204 Russell Senate Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20510; Sen. John Warner, 225 Russell Senate Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20510; Cong. Frank Wolf, 241 Cannon Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20515; and Cong. Jim Moran, 2239 Rayburn House Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20515.

Stay tuned here for information about more great monthly SCOW programs, and email me at vice@scow.org with your programming ideas.

Scintillating SCOW Social Happenings

This month, we've set up a new event for SCOW members -- a day trip to Smith Island on Sunday, August 19. We'll leave from Point Lookout, Maryland and take a 90-minute cruise to Smith Island. Here's what their website had to say:

"After your optional buffet or ala carte lunch, you can explore the island by bus, bicycle, golf cart or foot. Visit the gift shops, the general store, the tiny Post Office and the Smith Island Center where you can learn about the way of life in this extraordinary community. Smith Island is Maryland's only inhabited offshore island accessible only by boat. See for yourself the rugged beauty and simple charm of its three villages, Ewell, Rhodes Point and Tylerton.

Smith Island lies roughly twelve miles west of Crisfield, Maryland. When he came ashore here in 1608, Captain John Smith wrote in his log, "Heaven and earth seemed never to have agreed better for man's commodious and delightful habitation." Your cruise across the fabled Chesapeake Bay will take approximately one hour and 30 minutes from Point Lookout. Stroll the lazy one lane streets and talk to the Islanders about the land they call, simply, home."

Sounds pretty cool, huh? Since this is a first-time event, please sign up as early as you can, by e-mailing me at <mailto:social@scow.org>social@scow.org, or calling me at (703) 838-0645. If we get 15 or more people, we'll get a group discount on the cruise -- only \$25 per person. In addition, the buffet lunch at the Bayside Inn will also be on a group discount -- only \$13.99 per person. The boat will be leaving at 10:00 a.m., and returning at 3:30 pm to Point Lookout. I'll send directions and other specifics to those who sign up. And feel free to organize your own carpools to Point Lookout.

Deadline for Smith Island sign-ups is at the SCOW member meeting on Monday, August 13.

Also, keep an eye out for details on our day trip to St. Michaels, MD in conjunction with the Labor Day Raftup. We'll head across the Bay Bridge and check out one of the Eastern Shore's most charming towns. There, you'll find the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, shopping, restaurants, or just sitting outside, enjoying your favorite beverage and watching the boats go by. In addition, we'll try to meet with the folks rafting up on the Bay for dinner at one of St. Michaels' many fine restaurants.

If you're interested in going, or even better, helping organize this trip, please let me know by e-

mailing me at social@scow.org.

Your Swingin' SCOW Social Chair,
Matt Gaston

Skipper Coordinator News

Joan O'Kane

Renewing Skipper Privileges

Just a reminder to last year's skippers: You have until March 31, 2002 to pay your skipper fees and keep your skipper privileges current. If you let your privileges lapse and decide to renew after April 1, 2002, you will have to take the water checkout again. Please call me at 703-379-9869 or email me at skipper@scow.org if you need renewal forms. Be sure that you have also renewed your SCOW membership. You must be a paid-up club member in order to renew your boating privileges.

Reserving Boats

The number of skippers has increased from 88 to 107 in the past two months!

Since the number of skippers has grown so rapidly and we've had a few mix-ups recently, I'd like to update the suggestions from earlier this season for keeping the reservations process running smoothly:

1. Don't try to reserve a boat unless you already know the lock combination and don't argue with the marina staff if they say you're not on the skipper list. The only people who have the combination and are on the skipper list are those whose skipper fees and membership dues are current. If you think you're a skipper but you don't know the combination, then there's a problem with either your skipper membership or your membership. Please call me at 703-379-9869 or email me at skipper@scow.org as soon as possible so we can straighten it out.
2. If you call the marina to reserve a boat, ask the person who answers the phone if it's a good time to take a reservation for the SCOW boats. Most of the time there is only one person in the store to tend the cash register, wait on customers and answer the telephone, so it can get hectic. If they say it's not a good time, call back later.
3. When making your reservation by phone, ask about the availability of a specific boat instead of asking which boats are available. The marina keeps a separate calendar for each boat, so asking for a boat by name should help speed the reservations process. Every skipper seems to have a preferred boat, so it shouldn't be too hard to ask for it by name. If your favorite boat seems to be the most popular, think about which one is your second favorite.
4. When making your reservation in person, make sure you are on the correct calendar page. As mentioned above, the marina keeps a separate calendar for each boat. Making sure you are

reserving the right boat for the right month, day and time will eliminate some of the confusion discussed in the next item.

5. Take the boat you signed out. If the marina office is open, take a minute to look at the reservation book to confirm that your name is on the calendar for the boat you want at the month, day and time you want it. Several times recently skippers have taken the wrong boat out. In each case it was due to a misunderstanding, but that didn't make it less frustrating for the other skippers who got to the dock and found the boats they had reserved were gone. Or for those of us who had to handle the irate phone calls and emails.

6. If you can't keep your reservation, call the marina and cancel it. It's unusual for all of the boats to be reserved at the same time, but it's also aggravating to find out that a boat you thought was reserved by another skipper sat on its trailer or in its slip all afternoon. Be considerate of your fellow skippers.

Considering the number of skippers we have, our reservations process works amazingly well. But we're all human and mistakes happen. With a little care and consideration, we can keep those irate calls and emails to a minimum.

If you have any problems or concerns with the reservations process (or suggestions for making it even better), please let me know.

Membership Meetings

On the second Monday of each month (except December) at the American Legion Hall, 400 Cameron Street (around the corner from Gadsby's Tavern), Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. Socializing starts at 6:30 p.m. downstairs, and our meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. upstairs

For information about club activities

Visit us at: www.scow.org

Write us: info@scow.org

Call: 202.628.7245 (That's 628.SAIL)

Submissions to Channels:

Just type or paste your article into the body of an email message.

Don't send your articles as (or with) attachments.

Put a **title** on the first line,
your name only (not "by") on the second line,
and launch right into the article.

I know this is hard for you to resist doing, but-

**IF you include words in all caps, multiple tabs, indents, attachments, or extraneous notes,
your article will look kinda silly, or even totally unreadable.**

We will format (but not remove formatting, see above) your article, adding emphasis, aligning tabs, and doing all manner of things to present your article in it's assigned place.

Submit articles to

channels@scow.org

within one week after the monthly meeting.

ChaNNels

can also be read at:

<http://www.scow.org>

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(I dress up the electronic edition too)

That's all, folks.....