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## **CHANNELS -- SPECIAL E-MAIL EDITION**

**December 1996**

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Channels is the newsletter of the Sailing Club of Washington. The E-mail edition is an edited text-only version of our hard copy monthly publication.

### **COMMODORE'S LOG**

(Declan Conroy, Outgoing Commodore) Next year promises to be a really good one for SCOW, with an excellent incoming board led by Anne La Lena and including Vice Commodore Stuart Ullman, Secretary Victoria Hampton, Treasurer Paul Carrow and directors Denise Derry, Dick Dyer (in charge of maintenance once again), Mike Geissinger, Larry Gemoets, Jim Metcalf and Lee Spain. I would like to wish Anne and the new board all the best for 1997 and I hope they enjoy their SCOW activities as much as I did this year.

I would also like to thank the outgoing board for their excellent work. We managed to have fun and get the job done, which is the proper goal of a volunteer recreational organization. Perhaps we were lucky in that we had no major disasters to deal with, although snow-storms in the early part of the year --and floods more recently--led to some anxious moments.

Very many thanks to outgoing Secretary Cathy Cook, who will hopefully remain in this area in her new role as a manager for Boat U.S. (currently in the Rockville store). Cathy is among that core group of SCOW members, many of them former board members, who grease the wheels that keep the club going.

Extra special thanks also to outgoing Social Director Jerry Seinwill and to Sally Seinwill for a truly outstanding social calendar this year. We simply "lucked out." And many thanks to Susan Berman for doing a splendid job in organizing the Hail & Farewell. Finally, I would like to thank all SCOW members for their contributions to making SCOW what it is, THE Sailing Club of Washington.

Thank you all for a very good year!

### **SOCIAL WRAP-UP... HOLIDAY RAFT-UP**

(Jerry Seinwill) You don't need a boat. You don't need a skipper. You don't need off-shore foul weather gear for the last raft-up of the 1996 season!

Our final 1996 social event is a land-locked raft-up; all you need to bring is you and your favorite holiday dish to share. Non-nautical types might even call this a potluck supper!

The day is Sunday, December 8; the time is 5 to 9 p.m.; the place The Colonies at McLean. Take the Beltway to Tysons Corner, Exit 11A, Route 123, Chain Bridge Road to McLean. At the 1st light, turn right onto Old Meadow Road. Go 1/4 mile to left entrance to The Colonies.

SCOW provides roast turkey and drinks. (The inspirations for this tradition are lost in time...) SCOW sailors bring a salad, or veggies/starch or desert to share. Bring your dish ready-to-serve, with utensils for serving, when you come at 5. We'll eat as soon as we have a quorum (of food).

If you didn't sign up at the October or November meetings, or you forgot to volunteer to help set up or clean up, please call Jerry or Sally Seinwill, 202-546-4893, any reasonable time of the day or night until, say, noon Friday, December 6.

And, the cost is Zero!

## **BLANKFIELD'S BAY BANTER**

(Carrie Blankfield) [My last article as Bay Coordinator is dedicated to Al Blankfield and Jack Teidemann.]

The last of the events of the Bay sailing season for SCOW ended on a very high wave--you thought I would say note. The final SCOW Bay raft-up, organized by Allen Lewis, was held on October 26th and 27th. We sailed to the Wye River to see thousands of geese migrating south. The weather was spectacular. While the first day offered little in the way of wind, the second day made up for the first.

A raft-up in Cove Creek included Allen's boat, LADY IN RED, the Carious on QUIET TIMES, Ted Shad on DULCINEA, Dave Snellen on ENCHANTE, Don Deese on CARPE DIEM and Carrie Blankfield skippering SPINDRIFT.

The evening of the 26th was filled with observing thousands of geese congregating at sundown and SCOW members congregating over various libations and nourishments. Discussions of official leadership and past excursions filled the air.

Sunday morning dawned with spectacular sun and blue herons on the shore. I will only briefly mention a grounding of an unnamed boat and only to praise the efforts of Captain Shad who dislodged one of the SCOW boats and made valiant efforts at dislodging a second. But this was a grand raft-up and one tiny mishap will not diminish the fun.

The very final sail for SCOW on the Bay was had by members of the Board, Declan Conroy, Cathy Cook, Jerry (and wife Sally) Seinwill and Carrie Blankfield on SPINDRIFT for a final Board sail on November 2 from the West River to Harness Creek in the South River and back. Fifteen to 20 knots with gusts to 25 and 30 did not discourage this brave Board. Hot soup from Cathy really helped.

BRAVO Declan and Jerry. They close hauled and tacked with ease. Carrie did the easy part and took the boat on a run back. Trip from South River to West River slip was done in a little over an hour---but who's bragging?

I thank you all for a great sailing season and for the shared fun of sailing with captains and crew who made this a great Bay season.

## **THIS WAS THE BAY**

(Robert C. Woodside) Hark ye back to the early summer of 1938. World War Two is still in the future. Edgewood and Aberdeen are mere villages. NO bridges span the Chesapeake. It's a month before my 18th birthday.

My roommate in prep school, Steve Williams of Bel Air, was a Sea Scout of some standing. Steve invited me to join him and his crew for a week-long cruise in the Sea Scout ship HARFORD out of Bush River, Maryland.

An hour after sunrise of a Saturday, Mr. Williams, Steve's dad, drove us to the HARFORD pier. What a sight! HARFORD had been a Navy 50-foot wooden motorsailer, but the Scouts, with parental help, had removed the engine, propeller and shaft, fuel tanks, and thwarts; decked her over at the gunnel; stepped two masts with yards, and a bowsprit---made her into a brig. The Scouts had sailed her for two seasons. I was ecstatic! Just like the ships of "Captain Hornblower," the first five books of which I'd just read!

I knew most of the rest of the crew. The only three names I can now recall are Steve Williams Dick Munikuysen and Bob Stevenson.

We all stood around waiting. Our gear and food was aboard and stowed, bunks claimed, and we waited. The tide started ebbing, a nice northwest breeze ruffled the Bay, and we waited. About 10 o'clock, the Skipper's car, his wife driving, came to a stop at the pier. The door opened and the Skipper staggered out, clutched his right side, and collapsed. Dr. Stevenson, Bob's dad, got him back into the car and took him straight to the hospital. Appendicitis was serious.

Was the cruise off? The boys clamored and begged. The parents finally acquiesced. But who was to be the leader? I don't remember the details, but somehow I was elected. (I think the parents knew their own kids, and figured they could blame me.)

Finally, ready. Mr. Williams got our attention and stated, "You boys be back here at 5 on Sunday, a week from tomorrow. But if you have any trouble, call me."

We shoved off, set the jib, spanker, and foretopsail, and with families shouting farewells, stood out into the Bay. Soon all the cars were gone. We were alone!

The northwest breeze invited and we set more sail. All of us wanted to see the southern part of the Bay, so we ran southward with the wind. Soon we passed Poole's Island and waved to the

people there. I remember, as we passed Annapolis, how I hoped and prayed I'd be a Midshipman next year.

We sailed until the wind died just before sunrise, then we skinny-dipped before the wind came back a little after dawn.

Memory is blurry, but a day or two later we were off Norfolk. Everyone wanted to go out into the Ocean. We did. Sailed out to the Chesapeake Light Ship, which we reached just at sunset.

We came about to sail back into Norfolk, but HARMON wasn't good to windward, and sailed better on the port tack. Dawn came, and no land in sight. That evening, still no land, no lights, nothing but the cold starlight and the black Atlantic.

Next day, still and empty horizon, and on we sailed. At sunset, we spotted a lighthouse. We recognized Cape Henlopen Light and threw all pride aside. Out went the sweeps (big, long oars) and we rowed into the heaven of the breakwaters, getting there in the cold gray light of dawn. Morning brought a southerly breeze, and we sailed up Delaware Bay to the eastern end of the Chesapeake-Delaware Canal, then rowed through the canal, getting to Turkey Point just after sunset. We anchored and slept.

Well after sunrise, we awoke. A breeze was starting from northwest, so we weighed anchor and set sail. Everything up, even the studding sails which had never been set before. What a sight we must have made! A cloud of white (well, almost white) pulling the proud little HARMON along at almost 6 knots! Beautiful!

Too soon, the entrance to Bush River was on our starboard bow. We started dousing sail. The last sail was down and we coasted up to the landing. Mr. Williams was there, pocket watch in hand.

"You're 10 minutes late," he announced.

None of us had a watch or time piece. Nor a compass. Nor a chart. It wasn't until the summer was over that the families heard the full story. They just shrugged and said, "That's Skill, spelled L-U-C-K."

What if we'd tried that today? What charges would we face? What would the Coast Guard have done?

### **CAN YOU CREW IN THE BAHAMAS THIS WINTER?**

(Ron Heilig) We're heading to the Bahamas for the winter, and we're looking for some company. Our course will cover Tampa to Miami via the Ochachobee Water Way, then over to Nassau. Once in the Bahamas, we'll go down the Exuma Chain to Georgetown Great Exuma. Our current plan is to leave Tampa in the first week of January, 1997, and return to Florida in April or May, weather permitting.

Interested? Contact Debby Jonas at home 703-916-9386 or at work 703-287-8357. Or Ron Heilig in Florida, 941-748-6447.

### **KARMA CORNER**

(Melissa Ennis) Send your Giant and Safeway receipts to me, if you're not collecting for your favorite school kid. I'll pass them on to Gunston Middle School in Arlington.

Gunston's using sailing skills and stories as part of the science, English, and social studies curriculum. (Not my idea. I'm thrilled to see how well it's working.) They can use the help. Just stuff your receipts in an envelope and send them to Melissa Ennis, 4627 South 36th Street, Arlington, Virginia 22206. The program runs through March.

### **NAVAL INTELLIGENCE**

A recent letter to Ann Landers, from Windsor Canada contained a "guaranteed, fail-safe solution for seasickness." Put an aspirin in your belly button. Hold it in place with a piece of adhesive. A band-aid would work. So would duct tape... But consider the Worst Case Scenario. What would the Coast Guard say to your next of kin?

### **TIDES OF THRIFT**

(The Frugal Sailor) Grab the 1997 Weather Guide at Giant Food. With a year's worth of local tide tables, it usually sells for ONE DOLLAR, which goes to charity anyhow.

### **ANNAPOLIS PARADE OF BOATS**

(Nikki Horton) A Parade of Boats specially rigged and lit for the holidays is a memorable way to spend an evening with friends. Somehow, what's tacky on a lawn is gorgeous on the water. (Which is true of so much...) Not a SCOW function, but fun anyway. Bundle up and bring a picnic.

December 7, 6:00 pm, Annapolis Harbor and Spa Creek. For details, call 410-263-0415.

### **REMEMBER SOCIAL NO-SAILS**

We meet every Thursday evening for Social No-Sail at The Potomack Landing Restaurant, Dangerfield Island Marina. Everybody's welcome. Drop by after work Thursday, after supper, or for supper. It's casual. It's fun -- a support group in a hostile world full of non-sailors.

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