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## CHANNELS -- SPECIAL E-MAIL EDITION

July 1998

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**Submissions to Channels: Please! Just type or paste your articles into the body of an email message. We will format it for you. No tabs, no indents, no attachments, NO Kidding. Pony express, mail, etc are acceptable, but get it here (not just in the box) by deadline -ed.**

**Now, on to the the real stuff:**

**The big scoop:**

**Rye whiskey, rye whiskey and wild, wild weather: at the July member meeting Dewey Walston of the National Weather Service will tell us where the big winds come from, and where they go.**

**\*\*\*\*\* Selections from the SCOW Guide to Being Crew**

**A mini course on how to avoid aggravating the skipper even when you know the difference between the blunt and the pointy ends of his/her boat.**

**Being invited onto someone's yacht - any boat that has sleeping accommodations on board - is similar to being invited into their home. The same basic standards of etiquette, courtesy, and behavior apply. Observe these standards and you stand a better chance of being invited back. More basically, the objective of sailing is to have fun - and to do so safely. Knowing the "rules of the game" significantly improves your chances of being able to relax, be safe, and have the fun you came for.**

**Each skipper has his/her own way of doing things... Some of these are matters of the skipper's personal preference. Others are vitally important to the safe operation of the boat. Don't presume to know which is which until you've checked with the skipper - your safety may depend on it! Be flexible and observant. Ask the skipper how he/she wants things done before you do something.**

**One maxim that you should always follow on a boat is, "If you take it out, put it back where you found it; if you opened it, close it.**

**Treat an agreement to crew as a serious commitment. Others may be depending on you and the boat may not be able to sail without you. If a situation arises that legitimately prevents you from being able to honor your commitment, let the skipper know as soon as possible that you cannot make the sail. It takes time to recruit crew and the sooner you let him/her know, the more likely he/she will be able to find a replacement.**

**Be On Time. ... arrive in plenty of time to stow your gear and familiarize yourself with the boat before the scheduled departure. Timeliness is a basic courtesy for any type of sailing.**

**You are responsible for your own comfort on the boat. This means you have to protect yourself from both cold and the sun... crew should bring the right clothing and gear to insure that they are prepared for the expected (and perhaps, unexpected) conditions. This has to be balanced with the limited amount of space available for stowing gear aboard.**

**Bring your gear in a soft duffel bag, not a hard-sided suitcase - a soft bag is much easier to stow - and its safer if the boat is pitching about. Large zip-lock bags are very helpful both for keeping your gear dry in wet weather, and keeping your gear sorted out (underwear in one bag; T-shirts in another, etc.).**

**Securely stow personal gear so that it won't shift when the boat heels or gets tossed about in choppy seas.**

**The skipper will generally provide the boat, boat fuel, stove fuel, and ice and also pay docking fees. You should bring what you expect to eat and drink and should plan on sharing these with other members of the crew.**

**Good skippers take pride in a clean boat and appreciate crew who share this pride by keeping the boat clean.**

**There are a few practices observed on boats that "lubbers" may not know. One of the most basic is that you should request permission to board from the skipper before climbing onto the boat. If the skipper is not on deck when you reach the boat, you can get his attention by calling out his name. (Call him Captain and you'll really win points!) If that does not work, knocking on the boat's hull or deck - the same way you would knock on someone's door - can let the skipper know that you are there. Another protocol on SCOW raft-ups is to cross other boats across the foredeck rather than through the cockpits. Crossing boats in this way is less intrusive to the crew of adjoining boats.**

**Finally, when the sail or cruise is over, it is basic courtesy to help the skipper clean and secure the boat. This includes cleaning the cabin, galley, head, and shower; folding the sails; putting sail covers on; swabbing down the decks; securing dock lines; disposing of trash; storing tools and winch handles; and coiling lines.**

**Selections from Raft Tips or The Skippers Guide To Bay Cruising With SCOW**

**You should call the Raft Master to let them know you are coming, but if you can't get a hold of them, come anyway. It isn't hard to add an extra boat or two.**

**There is no requirement for any skipper to take crew from SCOW, so please don't be deterred from joining a raft-up because you have a small boat, or like to sail alone. The crew list is a great way to meet people though, and ... SCOW members usually make pretty good crew.**

Unless the crew member has sailed with you before, don't assume they will automatically know all of your idiosyncrasies. The Skipper they last sailed with may (almost certainly did) have different ones.

Once you have found the right anchorage, the easiest way to find the raft is to look for the SCOW pennant. You may also be the first to arrive at the anchorage so, if you can't find the raft, drop your own hook and relax. If you have a SCOW pennant and haven't done so already, hoist it up. There is a good chance that someone from SCOW will find you

A boat joining the raft is expected to provide one bow and one stern line and two spring lines. These need to be long enough to accommodate your boat alongside different size boats. The lines that you use to reach the pier may not be long enough to reach the bow of another boat. A good combination is two 25 foot (or longer) lines for bow and stern lines and two 40 foot (or longer) spring lines. 1/2 inch is a good size. A smaller size line may not be strong enough (remember, you may have to hold boats outboard you as well) and a much larger line may not fit the cleats of the inboard boat. ..You should also provide fenders. These should be large enough to keep your boat comfortably away from the other boat. Use at least three. You should also have one extra for your outboard side. Don't be cheap with your fenders, get the good ones. A Skipper won't be thrilled to see you coming alongside with nothing but old plastic 4 inch fenders between your boat and his/her pride and joy. Slowly approach your assigned position from astern. Don't make too steep of an approach. The boat you are approaching can't get out of your way. Your approach should take you close enough to hand lines over, but it's unseamanlike (and dangerous) to slam against the other boat, so it's better to error on the wide side. You can always make another approach. Pull up even with the raft, stop your boat, and pass your lines.

Before you leave the raft, check with the Raft Master and notify the Skipper(s) of the boat(s) next to you. Under no circumstances should you cast off any lines without the knowledge of the Skipper of the other boat. This is especially important when the raft is breaking up unexpectedly (e.g. the raft is dragging anchor or the weather deteriorates suddenly). You may be eager to get away, but if everyone on one side of the anchor boat casts off, it could be trouble for the others.

Finally: Remember, SCOW rafts have a lot of experience. Other skippers will be only too happy to help you if you have a problem or don't know how to do something. Everyone has been the new kid on the block at one time or another so don't be bashful about asking how to do something.

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### Commodores Log By Stuart Ullman

I spent the weekend on Robinson Terminal, manning the SCOW booth at the Alexandria Waterfront Festival. Directly in front of us, twenty yards away, was the tall ship HMS Rose, out of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Two days before its masts. It is, their brochure tells us, nearly an exact replica of the original HMS Rose, a Royal Navy sixth-rate frigate

constructed in 1757. It does have the antique feel, for the most part (although there is 8 feet of headroom on the gun deck, which, if what I hear is true, does not conform to the typical 18th century plan). Blended into the mustiness are a few more recent innovations: wooden spars and electric lights, tar, paint, and a modern galley, radio, and survival suits in bright red bundles stuffed between the wooden beams in the gun deck overhead.

Of course the real excitement was the weather. Its not the warning I wrote last month about the coming Washington summer. Nothing like what I had in mind then. But it makes a similar point: sail when the weather is good for sailing, because the weather keeps changing. The weather this year is completely confused, and cant maintain the same mood for very long. Today, Monday, it has rained the whole day, not hard and without much wind, but constant, and in the afternoon we had lightning. Saturday, just as the afternoon began to get busy, a front came through, quick and wild, with thunderstorms, heavy gusts, and rain drenching and thick. In front of the storm was a strange sky. I've never seen one like it before. There were fat smears of green, dark and dirty but clearly and dramatically green, mixed into the clouds, among long braids of grey and black. It was an ugly sky, bitter, bad mannered, resentful, mean. A sky like a swaggering thug looking for someone to hurt.

Just to the west it had delivered a tornado, and torn up a bit of countryside; we knew that. But we stood in the open on the flat concrete of Robinson Terminal, using the tent as a huge umbrella while the wind blew the rain in every direction and doused us sideways. We must have looked pitiful, because the crew of the Rose came jogging over to invite us to go below on their ship for shelter---an offer we would have gladly taken even if there were no storms. But it was good. Shelter was good. Across town at a concert at RFK Stadium the sky found its victims: lightning struck the concert audience. Several people were hospitalized, at least one in critical condition.

Between these two dismal, dangerous days was a clear sunny Sunday, windy and cool. One of the most beautiful days for sailing I've ever seen. There were sails all over, as far up and down the river as I could see. The sailors under them knew that the days before and after are irrelevant: when today is good, you might as well sail. If you miss these good days, days like Sunday---well, what good days are you waiting for?

On Robinson terminal thousands of people came to see the Rose, and hundreds stopped by to talk to us at the SCOW booth, or to admire Ms. Elli sitting on the trailer beside the tent. Most of these walked away with a SCOW membership form, and an invitation to come see us at social sail. Some of them who didn't know our name had heard of social sail anyway. Isn't that interesting? Several people came up to our table to ask: are you the club that has sails on Thursday? We are that club, and I was glad to be able to tell them so.

At one time or another over the two and one half days of the festival a dozen or so SCOW members came by to help man the booth. Len Zuza, Denise Derry, Jeff Laufle, Wilson Varga, Dan McClafferty, Joe DePoorter, Barbara Ullman, Gaile Swider, Hope Andruss, Joan Olmstead, Kristie Smith, and Jeff Elder all spent time at the booth. Several of these people are new members themselves: Kristie Smith joined SCOW at the member meeting

**the Monday before the festival weekend. To all of these, thanks for the help and the company.**

**This month, with the Fourth of July raft-up-and-social well along in the planning stages, we wanted to focus on the Bay, on cruising and rafting. This is a hard topic to approach, there is so much to say, and different things to say to different groups. Long time bay skippers know all about rafting, and all about the bay. They know these things far better than I do, so to them I want to say: we have a lot of new members this year, fresh and eager crew. Take them sailing. Take them out on the bay. Show them at least one of the bays thousand anchorages, and one of the million moods. And having made that request of you, I think about those on the other side of that equation, the new members, new sailors, and even new bay skippers, and about what it will be like for them over the next few months, and the next few years. What it will be like learning to see the bay from a sailboat.**

**New crew, and new skippers, have a lot of great experiences to discover. They also have new skills and culture to discover before they feel comfortable out there. I hope the article on the front page, condensed from much longer documents, will help those who are new to either role enjoy the possibilities they have. Possibilities available now, to them, that only a tiny fraction of the people on Earth will ever get.**

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### **June 13 Raftup Carrie Blankfield**

**The June weekend brought every range of weather for the crews of Spindrift and Dulcinea who rafted at Leeds Creek on Saturday evening, June 13.**

**While the day started fairly mild and with very light wind for crossing the Bay, about 3p.m. in the afternoon the Thunder Storm that hit the Baltimore area with heavy winds and hail stones, descended upon the Eastern Bay and caught up with Spindrift, skippered by Carrie Blankfield with crew, Sandy Clover, Larry Gemoets and Dick Dyer and with Dulcinea, skippered by Ted Schad with crew, son-in-law Scott and future son-in-law Greg. While Spindrift was just heading into the Miles River when the storm hit, the expert skill of the crew kept the boat on a true course and landed them in the Creek safely but soaking wet. Dulcinea angered under extreme winds.**

**However, the spectacular view of the storm moving across the Bay with sunlight behind, was nearly worth the fear of lightning and heavy winds and waves. It was all followed by a clearing sky of pink sunsets and a night of bright moon and stars. All this was made more special by the hot rum toddies and congenial conversation.**

**Sunday dawned sunny and clear with winds of 10 to 15 knots out of the Northwest. Dulcinea took off early, but Spindrift took a leisurely start and tacked across the Eastern Bay having the wonderful experience of sailing from the Miles River into the West River with only about forty-five minutes of motor time. Dick Dyer had his first Bay raft-up and**

managed to have an opportunity to use his racing inclination to keep Spindrift apace and finally passing a Saber heading up the Bay.

As usual, food, drink camaraderie and good sailing skill made for a grand weekend. \*\*\*\*\*  
**COME TO THE CRAB FEAST!**

SCOW will be having a crab feast on Saturday, August 15, at the Washington Sailing Marina picnic area. We will have freshly steamed crabs, corn on the cob, beer and sodas, and the usual picnic fare. The crab feast will begin at 3:00, and will cost \$15 per person. Advanced reservations are a must because we have to order crabs ahead of time. For more information or to volunteer, call Allan Lewis, the event coordinator, at (202)-244-5516 (H) or (202)-358-5155 (O). Allan is in the process of moving, so please send you check to Victoria Hampton, 2010 Winged Foot Ct., Reston, VA 20191. The August 10 membership meeting is the deadline for reservations. Hope to see you there!

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**Membership is Up! - Cathy Hess, Secretary**

As of early June, the number of SCOW members had reached nearly the same number as we had as of the end of last year - close to 300. If new members keep joining at the pace that they have been, this could be a record breaking year!

I want to thank a number of folks who have helped reach out to "old" - maybe "veteran" is more diplomatic wording- and new members. Victoria Hampton, the 1997 Secretary, continues to help with correspondence, including helping me mail all the original renewals. Anne La Lena and Donna Thurber also helped on that mailing, and as New Member Coordinator Donna has been a wonderful, enthusiastic resource to folks calling SCOW. Hope Andruss, Mary Bashore and Ruth Connolly are pitching in to contact 1997 members who haven't renewed to let them know we miss them. Thanks to all of you.

Everyone can continue to help ensure that ours is a vital, active club with plenty of fresh faces, ideas, and volunteers by spreading the word to colleagues and friends. Suggest they call the SCOW phone line, or check out our great looking web page. Thanks are also due to Jeff Teitel for maintaining the web page; its definitely playing a big role in member recruitment.

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**Training Scott G.**

First, let me congratulate the April/May Basic sailing students for successfully completing the course. Thanks to the weather, the students this year didn't get an unexpected capsized course however. Speaking of capsized courses, there will be two held this year. The first is on July 18, and the second is on August 15. Both classes are from 10-4. Since this course tends to fill up early, interested people should reserve a spot as soon as possible. You can do that

by mailing me a check, made payable to SCOW, for \$20. Those that already sent in their check to me for the July class are Sandy Clover, Larry Gemoets, Kathleen O'Keefe, Cathy Hess, Peter Hirschman, and Jenny Luray.

There are plans to have an intermediate sailing course in August. This course is intended for those that already know how to sail the Flying Scots but would like an opportunity to learn more advanced techniques that will help them to be better sailors. The class is scheduled for August 26 and 31, 7:30 in the WSM chart room. The water classes are on August 29 and 12, 8:30-12:30.

Also, a bay navigation course is scheduled for the Fall. This class will allow students to learn the basics of navigation, as well as have an opportunity to sail on a member's boat on the bay. The land class is on Sept. 16, 8:00, and the water class is on Sept. 19. The cost is \$50.

As a final note I want to thank all of the trainers involved this year for their efforts. SCOW appreciates their enthusiasm and sacrifices in making the training program as successful as it has been.

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#### New Members

Jeff Elder, Chris Farthing, Jane Farthing, Robert Feuerstein, Edward Fluhr, Matt Gaston, William Herald, Lee Istenes, Jeff Laufle, Thomas Lebrun, Alberto Navas, John Raspen, Kathryn Scott, Randy Scott, Kristie Smith \*\*\*\*\* Group Checkout Success! (Next one will be 25 July) Denise Derry I've got good news! Nine folks qualified on the Flying Scots, on the first group checkout day of the season, 30 May. Winds were fluky to say the least. The lack of wind threatened to becalm the morning checkouts, but by the time the boat was rigged, the wind was gently filling in. From my lawn chair office in the shade of the grove, I watched as Joe DePoorter, Declan Conroy and Marty Crowson ran the skipper candidates through the paces. I'm fortunate to have a cache of checkout skippers who are amenable to group sessions. I have not yet lost one due to fatigue, and I'd rather not! I really appreciate the time these three skippers donated to make this such a successful day. We operated under an ambitious schedule, with candidates assigned to boats and timeslots earlier in the week. After their checkouts, we gathered on the lawn for a debrief of the sail; folks were welcome to stick around, and by mid-day, the group was a nice mix of new & old skippers. I came prepared with a cooler full of drinks, chips, and sandwich fixings for the crowd. I was introduced to my first "Cap'n Joe" sandwich (alternatively known as the "DePoorterhouse"): peanut butter and cucumber. It's not as bad as it sounds! The next group checkout sail is slated for 25 July, conveniently positioned two weeks after the last Basic Sailing Class. Although this day is open to anyone working on their skipper ship, it is a great opportunity for the students to follow-up with their checkouts while their training is still fresh. If your schedule does not permit you to attend this day, do not despair. These group days are an invention to conveniently test several candidates at once. The checkout skippers usually perform checkouts individually. To be included in the next group

**checkout day, I need to receive your written exam at least 10 days prior to that Saturday, by 15 July. If you do not yet have an exam, contact me for details. Since I'm moving (yes, again), the easiest place to reach me (or leave voice mail) will be at the office: 202-863-2680, ext. 217. I offer my congratulations to SCOW's newest crop of Flying Scot skippers: Heather Callahan, Dave Hatcher, Peter Hirshman, Tamra McCraw, Nancy McNamara, Ernie Nussbaum, Carl Redenbo, Stu Robinson, Jason Stevens, Kevin Teitel, and David Wolfe. Look for them at Thursday Social Sails soon!**

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