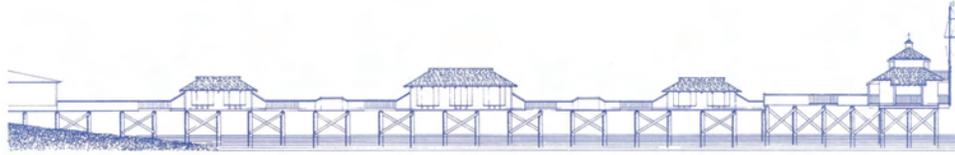


SOUNDINGS



NEWSLETTER FOR THE COWICHAN WOODEN BOAT SOCIETY JULY 2011

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Newsletter Editor: Sue Weinberg

CHANCES COWICHAN: The Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre is grateful for the support from CHANCES COWICHAN. The funds are crucial to our ongoing work.

Letter From The President

As Bob Dylan once wrote, "the times they are a-changing," and indeed they are. Just take a look around the Maritime Centre and you can see that much has changed. However, the more things change, the more they stay the same, and one thing that has always stayed the same is the support from our volunteers.

In this newsletter issue Suzan is asking the membership what they would like to see in the way of programs and events, and I hope that many of you will come forth with your ideas; and in order for any of these ideas to become a reality, we do need a strong volunteer base. You may think you have nothing to offer but we all have something that is of value when it comes to volunteering. Societies such as ours rely on volunteers to make such changes and events a success. For example, the necessary maintenance around the new centre is easier and more fun with a work party, not to mention that it is a great way to meet other members. The more people that come out to volunteer means the smaller the workload and the more fun can be had. If any of you think you would like to help, even if just for a few hours a month, please contact Suzan so she can create a contact list for future needs.

At this point I would like to send a hearty thanks to all those volunteers that have, and continue to turn out at events to help make what we do a success.

In the meantime the new building is rapidly developing, if you haven't had the chance to see its progress, come down and check it out. A grand opening date will be announced soon.

As mentioned earlier Suzan is compiling a list of events and programs that will span over the next 12 months. If you have any

SOUNDINGS



NEWSLETTER FOR THE COWICHAN WOODEN BOAT SOCIETY JULY 2011

suggestions as to what you would like to see, then please contact her.

I have been enjoying the better weather and winds by shaking out the sails on the *Murrelet* and having some relaxing sails around the bay, if any of you would like to join me, but if you don't have a boat, check out the selection of vessels we have for sale. *Do we have a deal for you!*

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter.

Dave Knott – President.

A Creative Piece From a CWBS Member

CWBS member, Lorraine Murray, was the winner of last summer's raffle down at the Maritime Centre. Her prize – a beautiful wooden boat! Thanks Lorraine, for sending in this photo of you and your prize, and for submitting this beautifully written childhood memory.



For The Love of Boats

*M*y first time in a wooden boat

was in Boothbay Harbour, Maine – it was a small wooden skiff hand built by Manley Reed,

the local carpenter whose ropy-veined hands had built most of the cottages on Juniper Point. It was a summer afternoon. My friend Stevie and I had set out in the skiff from the dock at Harbour Fields, where his parents rented a rambling white cottage, into the calm waters of Back Cove. Two eight year olds in puffy orange life jackets, we often spent the afternoon rowing, sometimes drifting, splashing our oars, telling elephant jokes, dangling our hands over the gunwales. Cozy in each other's company we were content to let the sea steer our course.

We passed the two-masted wooden schooner, *Vela*, whose white hull graced the middle of the little cove. Farther up the cove was a harbour seal – as usual, he was draped on the seaweed-covered rocks of Miracle Reef. His whiskers held the afternoon sunlight, his wet nose gleaming. Stevie shipped the oars and we lay down on the thwarts and let the sun warm us. Staring at the sky, we let the dreamy afternoon drift along.

Only we didn't get far. The boat had stopped. We looked over the gunwales. We had run aground. The tide had gone out and we were wedged in the sea mud. Looking over the side I could see poky bits in the sea floor and the sideways scramble of little green crabs and hermit crabs.

"You get out and push Stevie."

"I always get out."

"I hate those crabs - they've got those little pinchy claws."

"Just keep your sneakers on."

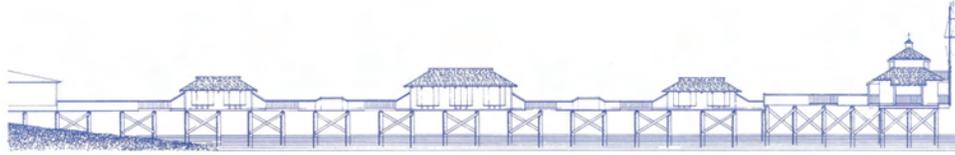
"I don't want to get them wet."

"Okay Lorraine," he conceded.

Only it sounded like "*Lowayne*". At 8 years old, Stevie had not yet mastered the "R" sound. "Hi I'm Stevie. I'm from *Bwonxville*," was how he used to introduce himself.

It didn't matter to me – I was ready to go through life with him, with or without the letter R. Earlier that summer in the afternoon's

SOUNDINGS



NEWSLETTER FOR THE COWICHAN WOODEN BOAT SOCIETY JULY 2011

trailing light, prompted by our two older sisters, I had been instructed to cross the living room in the white cottage and kiss him. We had one choice - to keep our eyes closed or not. Peeking, through half-open eyes, I stepped slowly towards Stevie until we stood opposite each other in the middle of the room. We kissed, once. Then my sister flicked the lights. He was the first boy I ever kissed.

Since that summer of rowing with Stevie I have mucked about in all sorts of wooden boats. I used to sail and race in the *Nonsuch*, my 10 foot red wooden turnabout, with a spinnaker the size of a handkerchief. I learned my knots, how to gybe in strong winds, how not to let the spinnaker halyard shimmy up the mast and how to right a boat in the chilly Atlantic. There's nothing quite like being out on the sea – it makes you hardy and puts you right.

Since moving to the west coast I have been without a proper row boat. So when I was visiting Cowichan Bay in June, I decided to wander up the road towards the Maritime Museum. There I spotted the wooden Acorn Lapstrake Dinghy looking poised and polished in the parking lot. My mind, dimmed by the summer heat, I thought - should I buy a ticket? I decided - yes and bought 4 tickets for a total of \$20.00.

Five weeks later, August 2nd, late afternoon, I was listening to the message on my answering machine: "This is Suzan Lagrove from the Cowichan Bay Maritime museum. We had the draw today and you won first prize. You won a 10 foot Acorn Lapstrake Dinghy."

Jubilant, I leaped and shouted. "I won a boat. I won a boat."

I ran outside to tell my roommate, Monica.

"You won a boat?" Monica yelled back.

"I won a 10 foot Acorn Lapstrake Dinghy." I ran back into the house and phoned my other "roommate", my 27 year old son, and told him the news.

"Can I live on it?"

"It's ten feet long."

Through the generous help of Len Mayea, my boat arrived on Thursday, August 5th, ready for launching off Sidney public dock. Len waved from the dock as Monica and I rowed my very own wooden boat out towards Port Sidney Marina. Painted dark green on the outside with a creamy white oak interior, it was roomy and seaworthy. The boat slipped smoothly through the whitecaps along the Sidney shore.

Exultant, we rowed it into Port Sidney Marina where a kind neighbour had found us a place at the dock. As I rowed by, people on their big fibreglass yachts looked up to check out the newcomer to the marina. "I won the boat from the Cowichan Bay Maritime Museum." I kept yelling to everybody in range.

"It's a beauty."

"It's gorgeous."

"It looks really seaworthy."

This boat is pure gift. A gift made possible by the hard work and vision to keep wooden boat building alive by the Cowichan Bay Maritime Museum. I would like to thank, particularly, the boatbuilding class of summer 2010, Len Mayea who painted the dinghy and instructed me on its care, and Suzan Lagrove who arranged everything. Since my summers in Maine when I used to hang around Blake's Boat Yard I have always liked being around boats and people who work on them. Already I have learned important things from some of the volunteers at the museum on how to maintain it.

One boat builder, Lew Penney, told me: "You can keep it in the sea for 1,000 years

SOUNDINGS



NEWSLETTER FOR THE COWICHAN WOODEN BOAT SOCIETY JULY 2011

but don't let fresh water sit in it or you are in trouble.”

I love it so much – I hope it lasts a thousand years. My love of boats carries me back on the incoming tide to the sweetness of my childhood - to my summers in Maine on Back Cove.

-Lorraine Murray, September 2010.

Island Boys Make Trip of a Lifetime



From left, Mark Stevenson, Chris Balfe and Cory Nelson.



Mark Stevenson, Chris Balfe and Cory Nelson, three young men from the Comox Valley, recently completed the trip of a lifetime. The trio began their voyage over a year ago in a sailboat named “the Mojombo,” with little more than the packs on their backs, food and supplies, and of course, an above-average-amount of sailing expertise. The trip spanned thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean to destinations including Tonga, The Marquesas, The Cook Islands, Fiji, Tahiti and Vanuatu. Incredibly, the boys landed in Brisbane, Australia, looking for work only to find themselves caught in the middle of the recent floods that quickly devastated that part of the country. Twenty four year old Comox native, Cory Nelson, just so happens to be CWBS director Bob Weinberg's grandson, prompting the notion that a love of all things nautical seems to run in the veins, and is passed down from generation to generation. Cory's first hand account of Tonga, as well as Mark Stevenson's account of the devastating situation in Brisbane can be read in full in the *Comox Valley Record*. Below is a link to the article:

http://www.bclocalnews.com/vancouver_island_north/comoxvalleyrecord/entertainment/120238299.html

Thanks to director Bob Weinberg, for submitting this story.

From the Editor

Thank you all for the contributions to this edition of the CWBS newsletter. Contributions for the next issue can be emailed to Sue at weinbergmy@yahoo.ca