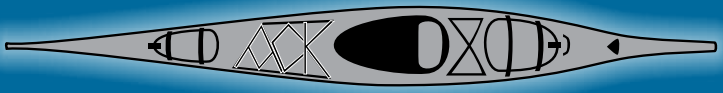


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November 2011
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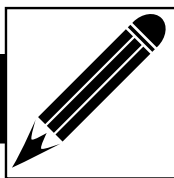
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Razor sharp ancient coral isles protect the inner lagoons of the Bahamas from the waves of the Atlantic. Photo by Herb Stein.

On The Cover: A perfect Bahamas campsite. Photo by Herb Stein.

Subscribers may go to our website atlanticcoastalkayaker.com, to see the full-color version of this issue! Email us at ackayak@comcast.net or dweden@atlanticcoastalkayaker.com for the password.



It was with great anticipation that I loaded Millie, a one-year-old Jack Russell terrier, into the rear hatch of my kayak recently, hoping I would have a brilliant kayak dog. I was psyched about my new marine mammal. Oh the adventures we would have!

Millie looked ready for the high seas in her find-in-the-fog neon yellow pfd and eager look on her face. The pfd rode up to her ears in a very non-Coast-Guard-approved fashion, but her former owner had assured me she loved to swim so I assumed she could float if we had a “Dog Overboard!” type of situation.

It’s a huge high tide, and launching is a snap, step out the car and into the boat, valet oceanside service. I put a boat seat in the kayak’s rear hatch and place Millie in, sure she will find it a snug, secure place. But voila, I turn around to get my paddle and Millie escapes up the bank and onto the road. I crawl up the bank, grab the handles on the pfd, pick her up and put her back in the boat. So far the pfd is turning out to be useful. I paddle quickly off, hoping a view of deep water will make freeze her in place.

She does stay in the rear hatch, but back paws only. She shifts from port to starboard to see what’s up ahead around my back, not wanting to miss any drama. My narrow Arluk 1.8 boat tips precariously from side to side, and my hips are doing the funky chicken to keep stable. Still, we’re right side up and moving forward toward our unknown destination (not sure how long this trip will last).

I haven’t thought any of this out. I decide if we’re going to capsize, we should do so in shallow water as opposed to the deep-

er channel so I head over the flooded marsh.

Mistake number one.

Millie can now see bottom and leaps out and starts swimming. I’ve got her by the leash, so we’re doing the equivalent of walking the dog in the water. Maybe I should let her tow me. Then she scrapes her paws on the kayak’s side desperate to get back in. Wayne Horodowich’s Technique column on how to help capsized kayakers comes to mind – don’t let them tip you over as they try to crawl onto your deck in a panic! OK she weighs only about a dozen pounds, and she’s about a foot long. How bad could it be?

I head to shore elusive from the super high tide. Somewhat grounded in the bushes and stable, I haul Millie back into the kayak and into the cockpit with me, thankful I left the sprayskirt behind. Augh, soaking wet dog sitting in my lap. Worse, wet shivering dog, paws resting on the cockpit coaming facing outward alert to ever non-present danger.

Is Millie shivering because she has hypothermia (do dogs get hypothermia with all that fur?) - the late September water in the marsh is still pretty warm, seems unlikely - or because she thinks kayaking is frightening? Banishing thoughts of being cited by the animal control officer for cruel and unusual punishment (he’s not kayaking out here is he?), I set off up river toward the nearby safety of a stable dock.

Bad idea – Millie could jump out of the kayak and run down the board walk, never to be seen again. No, I must keep her a prisoner in my cockpit, hoping she will warm up from my body contact, and start enjoying herself.

We head over to Witch Island (the wind behind it tends to die inexplicably, hence the name), a favorite swim spot. I’m back to idealizing the idyllic outing, pulling up in the kayak to the transition zone of golden-rod, aster, dry marsh grass at drumlin’s edge and happily leaping off the bank for a late summer swim – dog, owner, kayak.

Mistake Two.

The tide is so high, there’s no place to land except in the puckerbrush. Millie chooses that moment to evacuate. While I grab her leash, she winds herself three times

around a bush. I haul the leash, Millie, and the bush in one tug and grab her by the life jacket back into the boat.

We head out again. Millie is sitting in the cockpit and at last seems to be the mood for being a kayak dog. I have to hold my arms out really far, and Millie gets bonked in the head quite a bit. Should I get her a helmet?

Mistake Three.

We get back to the launch. Millie takes off at 90 mph down the road toward home. There’s no way she’s getting back in that boat. I start to run after her (it’s a busy road), then remember the kayak which is indeed floating away, haul it up on shore and take off after Millie at a full run, in my pfd and water shoes. Should I blow my whistle? Turn on the strobe? Millie is in a neighbor’s garden, I slap the leash on her, haul her back to the launch and lock her in the car. She’s standing up at the driver’s wheel watching, and I think she’d do better driving a car than riding as passenger in a kayak.

I have seen other kayak dogs. These dogs have paddler genes. They sit quietly in a basket mounted on the stern, they deftly wander over the hull, nimbly leap onto other kayaks when rafting up, or lay quietly on the rear deck, taking in the sights. Years ago, a subscriber bought a Necky double so he could paddle his two Irish wolfhounds to a deserted island for leash-law-free exercise.

Millie is locked in the car.

Still, Millie and I will keep working on the kayak dog part.

I will take any and all suggestions from readers with canine kayak companions.

Meanwhile, enjoy our annual warm water paddling issue and take some inspiration for flying to a second summer. And for those staycationing in colder waters, don’t forget a wetsuit or drysuit, and how quickly the sun goes down. Happy November paddling!

Correction: In the September issue I mistakenly called Tahe’s Greenland kayak a Greenlander. My apologies. Also, note there are three Tahe Greenland models with different specs. Go to the website to check them out at www.tahemarine.com

Letters From You



Achilles International

Let me say how pleased I was about the article in the September issue ("Eddylines"). The article was informative about the Achilles paddling team and showed the exact goal of our future. Thank you for recognizing an organization that I hold very dear to my heart and members I consider like family. The able paddling community has taken notice of our team and we only see success for the future.

On a disappointing note, I had the unfortunate job of having to call off the Intrepid Challenge in September in New York City. Due to last minute logistical issues and the weather not cooperating with us I sadly had to make the decision.

To end this letter on a high note, we have already started with plans for our 2012 Intrepid Challenge. I will have this race take place and achieve my goal of creating the largest able and disabled paddling race in NYC maybe even the world. I have high hopes!

Joe Traum
Achilles International
www.achillesinternational.org

Big Sur Challenge

The Big Sur Challenge has been met. Find out all about it at <http://tsunamirangers.com/2011/10/03/neptunes-rangers-complete-the-big-sur-challenge/>. I'd love to get your comments posted on this essay or any I have done.

Eric Soares
tsunamirangers.com

Need a Really Light Kayak

My kayak hauling car is a '95 Honda Civic with 248,000 miles on it. (It is also the most stolen model in the country! Seems it's used for street racing, something I know nothing about.) It is also about a foot lower than anything new. My beta model Pygmy Coho weighs about 38 pounds and I can toss it up and lift it down off the car. But, surprise! I'm not getting any younger. Or stronger.

About ten years ago, I did a write up in *Atlantic Coastal Kayaker* on a skinboat builder in Rhode Island. Do you know if he is still in business? The skinboats this guy made weighed all of 12 pounds. I should be able to toss one on and off an SUV when I'm 110.

So, not now, but in the not too far future, I'd like to get a much lighter seaworthy kayak.

Herb Stein
Washingtonville, NY

We are researching this. – Ed.

Long Island Paddlers

I have been a member of the Long Island Paddlers Club since 1986 (four name changes since 1986). The membership is now 300 plus and very active with trips, training, leadership, and indoor pool rolling and rescue training, books, video library, and much more. The club meets once a month at the Bayshore-Brightwaters Public Library, Bayshore, N.Y. Go online for more information.

I am glad you're back in print. Thank you for a very good instructional magazine. It gives me something to show and talk about to students; online edition left me flat.

Ernie Jochen
Mastic, NY

Send us your letters. We'd like to hear from you! ackayak@comcast.net





Tulum Temple in the Yucatan.

Island Expeditions Offers Trips to Hidden Yucatan

In addition to celebrating 25 years of travel in Belize, Island Expeditions (IE) is expanding into the Yucatan Peninsula in the south of Mexico. This area is still untouched by the tourists of Cancun and Playa Del Carmen and is located approximately 200 miles south of Cancun.

These seven-day trips offer lodge based sea kayaking, snorkeling, and diving trips centered on the Mesoamerican Reef and embrace the Mayan and Spanish colonial cultures of Mexico.

In addition, IE is celebrating its 25th anniversary of adventure travel in Belize. IE began back in 1986 when a few guides wanted to extend their paddling season and decided to head south from British Columbia Pacific Northwest waters to find a winter paddling paradise.

Now, 25 years later, they are still offering trips, from the sun bright coral reefs and cayes offshore Belize, to the hidden Mayan ruins, the untouched rainforests, and the extensive underground cave systems of Belize.

Trips vary in length from three to ten days and encompass a wide range of adventure travel and cultural interaction.

Along with guided trips, Island Expeditions offers kayak rentals and all equipment needed to develop a self-guided trip while in Belize.

Woven into each trip is the local culture of the Garifuna, Creole, and Mayan people. IE's local guides are paired with North American leaders to provide a wealth of experience and insight into the areas traveled.

For more information www.islandexpeditions.com; info@islandexpeditions.com; (800) 667-1630



A vet who lost both legs in Iraq prepares to kayak. Photo by Arthur Jones.

Wounded Warrior Trip

This November, Arawak Expeditions, St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, will again provide kayaks and instruction for a group of disabled veterans who are going to St. John to participate in a week-long program designed to provide adventure and healing to wounded service men and women and their spouses. The program is being organized and funded by Team River Runner, a Maryland based non-profit organization that specializes in helping wounded service members recover from their injuries through paddling activities. This will be the third year that it has brought a group of wounded warriors to St. John. Each trip costs \$30,000 to \$40,000, depending on the number of people who come, and it has already raised \$25,000 thanks to the fundraising efforts of John Schuld and his Chaotic Kayak Race. You can help make this program possible by donating to Team River Runner, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. To donate to TRR, go to <https://app.etapestry.com/hosted/TeamRiverRunner/OnlineDonation.html> or www.arawakexp.com for more information.



John Connelly.

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"We are committed to excellence in coffee roasting using exquisite beans from our favorite coffee growing regions around the world," said John Connelly, chief experience officer. "While on our quest to discover the world's best coffees, we're also on a mission to uncover the world's best adventures. And we're committed to sustainable practices and to giving back."

Fairbanks, Alaska outfitter, Arctic Treks, received the first shipment of Adventurous Joe Peruvian Dark coffee to fire up each day's adventure on an expedition down the Utokuk River. Expedition member, Will Manzer, Eastern Mountain Sports' CEO exclaimed, "The coffee was very enjoyable and had great character which was such a welcome surprise in the Tundra." Kay Henry, co-founder of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail said, "Starting each morning with a cup (or several) of Adventurous Joe was the perfect way to begin the day. And it made me feel good that this was Fair Trade, organic coffee - the real thing!"

For more information, go to www.AdventurousJoeCoffee.com.



Hurricane Hole in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Hurricane Hole Permit and Trip

Arawak Expeditions, St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands is pleased to announce that it recently received a much-coveted permit to operate in the Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument in Hurricane Hole on the eastern end of St. John. Only six of these permits

were issued to charter boats, snorkel tour operators, and kayak outfitters. Each permit holder is limited to three trips a week with a maximum of ten guests per group.

The Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument was created in January of 2001 by presidential proclamation by Bill Clinton. It consists of 12,708 acres of submerged lands in the federal waters surrounding St. John. The waters of the National Monument support a complex ecosystem of coral reefs, mangrove forests, and seagrass beds.

Arawak will now offer a kayak trip every Wednesday to Hurricane Hole. The trip will begin with a ride from the shop at Mongoose Junction in Cruz Bay to Haulover Bay in the safari-truck. It will go over some basic kayak instruction on the beach, then begin paddling into the Monument.

You will explore Water Creek, Otter Creek, and Princess Bay and discuss the importance of mangrove forests in protecting the shoreline and in providing habitat for juvenile fish. You will also snorkel in the mangroves, and get to see schools of juvenile snappers, barracuda, and starfish. For more information, www.arawakexp.com

Trail News

Businesses Lend a Hand to Youth

All Terrain of Sunapee, N. H., and Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI) of Seattle, Wash., have recently joined with other local businesses in the region to support the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT). Grants from All Terrain, a maker of natural care outdoor products, and REI, the large retailer of outdoor gear, will help

Northern Forest Canoe Trail manage the 740-mile water trail and engage rural youth in active outdoor pursuits.

A grant from All Terrain will assist the Northern Forest Canoe Trail in getting rural youth out on the ponds and rivers of the Trail through the Northern Forest Explorers program. This approach to youth engagement places rural youth from northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine



in week-long outdoor adventures that build a connection to and pride of place and helps encourage participants in becoming lifelong learners and leaders.

The Obama Administration in its 2011 America's Great Outdoors report highlighted the weakening of our nation's youth connection to nature as a trend that should be reversed. For more information, www.northernforestcanoetrail.org

Texas Paddling Trails

Last spring, Texas Parks & Wildlife and community partners launched seven new paddling trails in the Dallas-Fort Worth

area! That brings the total trails in the Metroplex to eight. Creating paddling trails in Texas is definitely on the rise, thanks to a special Texas program.

The Texas Paddling Trails is a program to develop public paddling trails and support these trails with maps, signage, and other information. The trails provide well-mapped accessible day trips in a variety of settings and for all levels of paddling experience.

There are currently 26 trails, with several communities in the process of applying for participation in this program.

With more than 3,700 named streams, 15 major rivers, and some 3,300 miles of coastal shoreline, Texas offers many opportunities for paddling of all types. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, kayaking participation nationwide doubled between 1998 and 2004.

The Lighthouse Lakes Paddling Trail, north of Corpus Christi on the Gulf, was the very first Texas Paddling Trail and is a series of four loops ranging in length from 1.25 miles to 6.8 miles. The trails meander through an extensive black mangrove estuary near the 1857 lighthouse on North Harbor Island. Paddlers can glide through mangroves and seagrass flats that provide outstanding bird watching and fishing in the maze of tidal channels and flats.

TPWD continues to seek partnerships with communities interested in developing a paddling trail in their area. For more information, go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/boat/paddlingtrails and click on the Future Trails section to learn more.

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Recharge Your Cell Phone With Boiling Water?

This one sounds like science fiction, but seems to be real. Japanese company TES NewEnergy has announced the set, Pan Charger “Hastuden Nabe,” which apparently includes a 16 centimeter cooking pot and a USB socket.

The set uses the excess, wasted heat of boiling, which creates an electrical output to charge a cellphone or other device. Looking like any small pot, except for the wire coming out of its handle, the Pan Charger has a bottom covered with strips of ceramic thermoelectric material: the temperature difference between the fire underneath, which can reach 2000 degrees F in a well-made campfire, and the 212-degree F water inside cause the material to create electricity, which is passed to the device using a regular USB connection.

Any device that can operate on roughly 2W/400mA and uses a recharging cord with a USB connector can recharge. Company CEO Kazuhiro Fujita reckons an iPhone

would take from three to five hours to fully recharge. The set is currently only available in Japan and costs \$300.

http://tes-ne.com/English/03_product_e.html



Small Robotic Sub Provides Undersea Viewing

Have you ever fantasized about skidding along the ocean floor in your own robotic submarine for a National Geographic special? Well, this fantasy is closer at hand than you would think. A new company called Aquabotix, New Bedford, Mass., has invented the HydroView. It is a ten-pound underwater robot with twin props, a top

speed of three knots, and a high definition camera with LED lighting that allows you to view the underwater world.

Aquabotix is marketing to the yachting community so captains can send HydroView down to see their dragging anchor. But it also wants to capture the marine biologist in all of us, as well as shipwreck and treasure hunter.

You control your HydroView (\$2,995) with your iPad, iPhone, Android phone, or laptop. Aquabotix uses special technology to translate the movements that you make with your control device into underwater action. Simply tilt the screen of your smart device in the direction that you want HydroView to go and the vehicle will respond. Tilt the screen to the left and the vehicle moves left, tilt the screen forward and the vehicle dives down, and so on. You may also drive the vehicle using your laptop's touchpad. The simple onscreen display makes it easy to control the HydroView's functions.

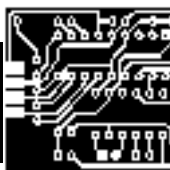
www.aquatbotix.com/hydroview.php



Modular SOT Grows With Your Family

No more roof racks with the Tequila! (The exclamation point is part of the name.) This modular kayak from Sweden's Point 65 comes with a patented lock system that allows you to assemble or take it apart in seconds. The basic solo unit retails for about \$800, while the center section which converts to solo to a tandem can be purchased separately for about \$400. Growing family? Just add more segments! One retailer claims that up to nine segments and paddlers have used the Tequila! without problems.

<http://www.point65.com/default.asp?page=kayaks>



Is Stand-alone GPS Dead? New Launch Site App for iPhones Available



Is GPS dying?

We have been hearing a lot of hype on the Web about the demise of stand-alone GPS units because of the growing number of positioning apps available for different smart phones for “free.” Cell tower triangulation, it is claimed, makes for more accurate mapping than satellites. Recently, we purchased a new cell phone package and we looked into the possibilities of joining the smart phone wave. This would give us access to a number of apps that could be useful for boaters.

The arguments for the new apps are as follows: more potential accuracy, “free” access to most current mapping information, more functionality than single-use GPS devices. As evidence of the decline in the usefulness of stand-alone units, Bob Rankin points out in his tech blog that Garmin units retailing for \$250 have been seen on Amazon.com at a 60 percent discount. However, an item’s popularity does not necessarily indicate its quality or usefulness. Remember the loss of higher sound quality when the 8-track tape lost out to the cassette in the 70s (although cassettes are much better now than either were back then)? The more I looked into smart phones, the more convinced I was that they are not yet the all-round solution that will make me get rid of my GPS.

First off, there is no such thing as a free lunch, and this is especially true with smart phones. The data access fees run \$40-\$50 over and above the basic service fees for the packages I looked into, and that is a *per unit*

charge. With five phones on our contract, that adds up to \$2400 a year, hardly free. Second, there is nothing to indicate that the reception of the smart phones is any better than that of my regular cell, which means that the places I would want to really know where I was are usually in areas of poor or nonexistent reception. I live within 30 miles of a major U.S. city, and my cell is useless in many areas around home, not to mention what happens when I am in the mountains or at sea. Other disadvantages include a smaller screen and poor mounting options, making it harder to use in “combat.” Finally, fully water-resistant GPS stand-alones are easier to find and obviously a big advantage to anyone in the outdoors.

The main disadvantage of the GPS units, besides their limited functionality, is their use of fixed map databases, with fairly steep update charges. It comes down to a matter of personal choice as to which you prefer, but I’m not getting rid of my GPS anytime soon. None of the systems that I have seen so far are failsafe enough that I will trash my chart and map collections, or run out and update to a smart phone. The truly tech-savvy paddler will use a combination of methods to pinpoint her position, although I think it is fair to say that few of us will be carrying a sextant along!



New Launch Site App

The “other” ACK - Austin Canoe and Kayak - together with Phunware Designs, have

announced the release of their new ACK Kayak Launch Points app for iPhones and iPads. The Phunware site declares, “Attention all kayakers! Kayak launch points is an essential tool for every paddler. Loaded with 14,000+ marked kayak and canoe launch points, this app will allow you to create your own favorites list, rate the launch points, and add and share your launch points with friends, family and colleagues via Facebook, Twitter, email alike.”

For those who have not succumbed to the iPanic, you won’t have to wait long. Roland Jimenez, the ACK marketing director, emailed me to say that the Android version is being released October 5, so you will be able to get it by the time you read this.

It looks as if the number of launch sites listed is growing, as I have found websites where the number is advertised as 13,000+. Not having an iPhone, I can’t comment on the use of the app. The comments I read on the ACK Facebook page are largely very positive. One user wrote, “It had more than I expected. It was easy adding a launch point.”

The database that the apps use is available online on the Austin Canoe and Kayak website. There you can see the existing launch points and upload and share your favorites, or not! The information, at this early stage, is necessarily a bit spotty. I checked out our own hometown and found a couple of good launches, and several public sites not listed. (My own favorite private site is thankfully yet unlisted.) No new sites for those with local knowledge and a limited selection for those without. As another user wrote, “This app already has a lot of launch sites, but it’s really for the kayak community to build it.”

The sites in Ipswich are located with digital lat and long values and not much other info for out-of-towners. Still, it’s a good start. Visit www.austinkayak.com/launchpoint to check out the app.

Flying to a Second Summer: Paddling Exuma

Story and Photos by Herb Stein



A snowbird floats over the incredibly clear water of the coral sand shallows in the Exumas. Credit Greg Pflug.

It was getting cold in the fall when I received an email from my friend, Greg Pflug, owner and operator of Adventures in Florida, inviting me to join him for a week of paddling in the Bahamas in February. As the first snowflakes swirled outside my New York window, that sounded great! We emailed back and forth and I decided to fly down a day early for some serious defrosting.

Friday, Feb. 18, found me at JFK, boarding a flight to Miami and, after a short layover, one to Georgetown. Once past the Florida Straits the Bahamas came into

view: golden islands in turquoise water, surrounded by the deeper blue of the deeper trenches between the islands.

I landed in Georgetown on Great Exuma just in time for the first shower in weeks. A taxi dropped me off at the hotel. The view was obscured by the rain, but the restaurant/bar was open so that is where I met Greg and the other paddlers.

We spent Saturday idling about, enjoying the weather (sunny, low 80s, pleasant breeze), looking at all the sailboats anchored at Stocking Island to the east for the regatta into the Caribbean, and stocking up

for our trip. When the other paddlers had arrived we had great bbq with local beer and Guinness.

Sunday morning we separated that which stayed behind from that which went with us. A van took us to the outfitter where we picked up our paddles, tents, pads, and pfd's. He followed us north with his Necky kayaks – six singles and a double for Greg and whomever, to our launch site at Berraterre at the north of Exuma.

There are two chains of islands going north from Exuma, one to the east and the other to the west. Our trip plan was to head



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Another day in Paradise. Credit Greg Pflug
north up the eastern islands, then cross over and head back south down the western group.

We packed and paddled northeast on the turquoise but choppy waters as a head wind made us work. But we soon made landfall on a barrier island that protected us from the Atlantic's storm surge. If watching the immense waves on the other side of the island wasn't warning enough, a blow-hole sent spumes soaring over our heads 20 feet into the air. After looking at that, and at the waves crashing and hurtling through a narrow channel, we continued for a few more miles to our first night's campsite with plenty of time, after pitching our tents, for swimming and snorkeling, all before Greg's great supper.

Next morning dawned calm and clear so we took off after breakfast for an easy paddle north along this western strip of islands, always staying on their sheltered west side, away from the open ocean. For a while we had a strong current pushing us along at a great clip – maybe six knots! We stopped for lunch at one island and then continued, with calm waters but no help from the current, to our night's stop. No sooner had we landed than a greeting committee - of iguanas - came rushing up. But as we had no fruit or fresh veggies for them they soon left. We set up camp, snorkeled in the warm waters watching the brightly

colored fish, had supper and then watched satellites and meteors, one of which ended in a spectacular explosion, in the now dark sky.

We had an easy paddle next morning to Norman's Pond Cay. That was an abandoned salt works – the high tide was let in,

then blocked from exiting. It soon evaporated in the heat and the salt was harvested. Now there was a small rise that let the high tide into the acres of mangroves around the shallow lakes.

After setting up our tents some of us snorkeled, some walked, and some paddled



Is this the remake of The Night of the Iguana?



Getting ready to snorkel in a shallow bay behind the barrier islands.

up to the lakes. We saw many fish of different sizes, colors, and species slipping among the mangrove roots but none were both confiding or big enough to shoot and eat. In the open water away from the salt works we found huge hermit crabs cramped in conch shells as well as live conchs that made a great appetizer leading up to another good supper. That night we watched more satellites overhead, and went to sleep in the cooler evening – mid 70s.

The temperatures stayed the same throughout the trip though the wind did vary from dead calm to quite strong. It was almost always sunny with only occasional clouds.

Next morning we paddled to the east chain of islands to head back south to Exuma. On the way we stopped at a small island with an even smaller one just north of it. This small island was in about seven feet of water, full of fishes and other sea creatures. A small shark, Lionfish, bright yellow, green-spotted sea slug, conchs, snappers, groupers, and other tropical fish abounded. A large sting ray watched us from only 20 feet out. A ten-pound red snapper made the mistake of getting too close to Greg and so became a delicious supper. We then continued to Gold Ring Cay where we camped for

the night.

Although the waters were full of fish and we saw Ospreys successfully fishing we saw no sea birds – no gulls, terns, pelicans, etc., during the entire trip.

Next morning a short paddle in a dead calm sea took us to New Cay where we set up camp in a shallow bay, swam and snorkeled. Some of us decided to paddle around the cay. Once we left the shelter of the bay we were hit by a strong wind from the southwest from the across the open Florida Straits. Paddling south into it was easy, but as we turned east into the channel between Gold Ring and Brigantine Cay the waves bounded and rebounded into three-foot seas and made this an interesting passage to work through. Once through we had the winds rapidly push us to the north cut which, being narrower and angled more to the north, was calm. Then we paddled back upwind to our camp. Minnows swarmed around us while walking in the shallows near the mangroves while little eight-inch-tall crabs waved their claws at us standing on their tippy toes. We had a restful afternoon and evening, another good supper with conch in the cool of the evening.

The wind was still blowing in the morning as we packed up and started back



Greg is amazed by his red snapper catch.

to Berraterra (spelled differently on each map consulted!). Our heavy boats successfully paddled through the cut and into the calm bay, sheltered by the island. As we continued our ten-mile paddle, we ran out of the wind shadow and soon were fighting bigger and bigger waves coming at our rear quarters. But then we were back in the wind shadow of Exuma itself and had a calm run into the Berraterra harbor. We unloaded the boats but before we could carry them up to the parking lot the local kids – six to eight years old - hopped into the boats and paddled them about. Greg had to rescue one who had gone out to sea and then we were able to carry the boats to safety.

The van showed up, we loaded up, stopped for a cold beer and were driven back to the hotel. We collected our gear, showered, shaved for another great bbq washed down with a variety of local specialties.

The next morning we flew out to our cold, grey, world.

To keep up with Greg Pflug, visit <http://www.whereisgregtoday.blogspot.com/>

Herb Stein lives in the Hudson Valley where he paddles his beta Pygmy Coho. He has paddled widely, from Newfoundland to Florida to Baja to Montana.



Rebuilding a Yost Sea Rover Skin on Frame Kayak

Story and Photos by Ralph Heimlich



The finished Yost Sea Rover Greenland skin-on-frame kayak.

I've always admired the sleek, skinny Greenland skin-on-frame (SOF) boats some paddlers in the area have built, especially those built or mentored by Dave Isbell, one of the area's premier Greenland aficionados (see <http://community.webshots.com/user/daveqajaq>). I never really seriously considered investing the time and effort in a classic wooden framed Greenland because a) I didn't have the time, and b) I'm not particularly skillful as a craftsman.

However, when James Song posted an item on the Chesapeake Paddlers Forum saying he was going to haul a load of aluminum tubing currently shaped as a Yost Sea Rover frame to the recycler unless someone paid him \$50, I knew I couldn't let that opportunity slip by.

Tom Yost has been designing and building what I call "post-industrial" Greenland style boats for years and has online manuals for several designs on the web

at <http://yostwerks.com/index.html>. James Song had built his Sea Rover as a folder to take to the Greenland rolling competitions in 2006, but the vinyl skin used on folding versions did not prove satisfactory for an efficient boat. James had started to convert the folder to a fixed frame boat by lashing the joints with cord, but had gotten too busy with other things to continue. After a quick trip to Centreville, Va., I had a new project for the rest of the winter (and spring). James, I hope you aren't too appalled by what I did to your boat.

After getting the frame, I consulted with Dave Isbell about how to proceed. If you don't know Dave, he's a big, bluff retired Coast Guard officer who has developed a passion for Greenland paddling style and tradition. Unlike many devotees, while Dave pursues a rather pure line on Greenland boats himself, he tolerates those of us who are less orthodox. He invited me to



Looking aft along the deck ridge. Note broken frames.



Cockpit rim and floor boards.

bring the frame down to the Annapolis Canoe and Kayak shop where he works (call that work!) for a look-see.

While most of the major kayak designers and manufacturers make at least a bow in the direction of Greenland or Inuit kayak designs, the need to use modern materials and industrial methods means that only the bare outlines, at best are retained. Yost basics are half-inch aluminum tubing longitudinals with high density polyethylene (HDPE) frames or offsets. His designs use classic Greenland lines, but they have been transcended to modern materials, while still retaining the basic SOF construction

techniques. The Sea Rover frame is 17.3 feet long and 18.5 inches wide with a semi-ocean 24x16-inch cockpit and very low (six inches) back deck.

Dave examined the frame minutely and suggested that the lashed joints were likely to cause problems as the nylon skin “worked” over them. Classic wooden frames are often lashed, but the lashings are worked through holes drilled in the wood and don’t contact the skin very much. He suggested I use screws on the joints. His other suggestion was to insure that the frames be carefully cut back so that a straight edge passed along the tubes did not touch the frame at all. In this way, the skin would be totally supported by the smooth longitudinal tubes and would work against the frames as little as possible.

Returning home with the frame, I set to work removing lashings, drilling holes in the tubes and using stainless steel screws to secure the tubes to the HDPE frames. I intended to move through the frame, rebuilding each part sequentially, but soon ran into a problem. The HDPE frames forward of the cockpit started to crack as I worked to screw the tubes to them. I don’t know if these were from a different source of plastic than the aft frames, had been exposed



Floor board and rim detail, Note riveted aluminum angle irons to support the boards.



The foam blocks installed in the bow.

to more UV light, or weakened from stress or some other cause, but only the forward frames failed in this way. I decided to take the breaking frames out and face them with plywood, rather than replace them with new HDPE. That added a bit of weight, and made the frames a little wider, making it easier to screw on the tubes. Once cut from the pattern provided by the old frames, the plywood was glued to the old frames with Gorilla glue, heavily clamped, cleaned and sanded, and then coated with two-part polyester epoxy.

Once all the frames had been completed and screwed to the tubes, I checked the frames for clearance with the skin and sanded areas that protruded beyond the outline of the tubes. I also constructed a pair



The Sea Rover half in its nylon bag.

of floor boards from quarter-inch luan plywood, secured to the frames with aluminum angle irons and pop-riveted in place. These were also coated with two-part polyester epoxy to prevent them from getting water-logged and retard rotting.

With the frame completed, I turned to another challenge presented by the Yost folder design. Because the boat had been designed to break down and be stowed in a bag about three feet by one foot, the bulkheads just aft of the cockpit and just forward of the paddler's feet were solid HDPE. In addition, the design had two tensioning longitudinals on either side and one centerline support underneath the forward and after decks that precluded use of inflatable float bags (mandatory for safety in SOFs that don't have watertight bulkheads). When used as a folder, float bags could be wedged in the bow and stern before the removable skin was fastened on, but when I skinned this boat, those areas would not be accessible. I decided to sacrifice weight for safety (after all, a piece of cloth and a bunch of aluminum tubes would sink like a rock if the boat started to leak) by using styrofoam building insulation sheets to build up flotation blocks that would be sealed inside the skin. This involved roughing out the "layers" of the cake and gluing them together with Gorilla glue "icing" inside the frame, then trimming the excess with a serrated kitchen knife (apologies to my wife) and a Surform shaper. The flotation added about five pounds to the design weight of 35 pounds for the Sea Rover.

Another task was to construct a cockpit coaming for the boat. Traditionally, these are made by laminating thin oak stripping. Yost recommends either HDPE or plywood coamings glued up in several layers. I opted for something unusual, using white PVC moulding strips from the hardware store glued inside a plywood coaming face.

Once the frame and cockpit were complete, I asked Dave for permission to join his ongoing SOF workshop. This group of boat builders (Laurie Steele, Steven Jahncke, and Jim Zawlocki) had been laboring through the winter, cutting aromatic cedar pieces, steaming ribs, and constructing their much-more artistic wooden frames. They were now at the point of sewing on their skins, just as I needed to do. Dave gracious-



Keep on keeping on. Sewing the skin on was an all-day project.

ly admitted me to this select group, and they welcomed me to the skinning party at Laurie's house, despite the post-industrial provenance of my SOF. Bob Pullman even fed me with his delicious soup, just like one of the gang.

One thing that all Greenland kayak builders agree on is that the ancient tradition of seal "skins" for the boats is a nonstarter! Canvas, PVC vinyl, and other synthetic textiles are now the preferred skinning material. Dave uses nine-ounce ballistic nylon for his boats, which must be sewn on during humid weather so that it tightens when dry. The three wooden boats used a technique that secures the cloth after it is drawn tightly around the bottom and across the decks using push pins driven into the wood gunwales. Obviously, that wouldn't work with my aluminum gunwales, so Dave helped me set up a lacing system using light cord to draw the edges of the cloth together across the deck like a lacing a shoe. Once the skin was firmly sewed using whipping cord, the laces would be removed leaving puckered holes in two rows down both sides of the fore and aft decks.

With the wetted nylon material firmly drawn around the frame and laced tightly, I began sewing the edges together. Some more traditional builders sew their skins with a "wandering" seam that simulates the look of pieced together seal skins. After all, as Dave says, seals don't have straight lines. However, being a post-industrial boat, I tried to make my seams as straight as I could. The sewing process takes quite a bit of time, since nearly 16 feet of deck must

be sewn using stitches of about one-quarter inch or less. After the first seam, which draws the edges of the cloth together, the cloth is trimmed and the flap is folded under and secured with a second line of stitching that is even finer. After working nearly all day, the two seams were completed.

The last step in the skinning process was to lash the cockpit coaming onto the



The finished bow seam. I sewed the seam using a curved upholstery needle.

skin. In Greenland boats, the coaming "floats" on the frame, only held on by stitching through the vertical part of the coaming. Dave and I worked together to pull the fab-



Though out of sequence, this image shows the steep angle of the cockpit rim.

ric up through the inside of the coaming and lash it through holes drilled in the coaming using artificial sinew made of polyester fibers. This step was pretty arduous since the skin was already very tight from the previous sewing, but we at last lashed the last hole and tied off the sinew, completing the cockpit.

Sewing the white nylon fabric onto the kayak transformed it from an ugly spider-work of metal tubes to a sleek swan that glistened softly from the warp and weft of the cloth. Pretty as it was, the cloth is porous, and launching the kayak at this point would send it straight to the bottom. The next step is a bit of modern chemical alchemy that the Inuit could never imagine. Before this “kite” of cloth and aluminum



The Sea Rover with the coaming installed.

could become a boat, it needed to be coated with something to make it waterproof to the waves and waters.

Oddly, water and sunlight were the immediate needs to tighten the skin further before it could be coated. Nylon slackens perceptibly when wetted and shrinks vigorously when dried in the sun. The skin needed to go through several of these wet-dry, slack-shrink cycles before I could coat it. After taking the kayak home and treating it to water and sun over several days running, I was nearly ready to begin coating. Before that, however, I also tied cord for paddle parks and toggles fore and aft and sewed the nylon webbing for bungees in front of and behind the cockpit. Some people think rigging spoils the beautiful clean lines of these boats, but I opted for function over form, and needed someplace to stow my paddles, pump, and paddlefloat and something to hold on to in the water. The toggles are strung through narrow plastic tubes inserted in holes in the fabric just under the gunwales and glued into place. Now I was ready to begin coating.

Dave recommended several different kinds of coating. The one I chose was Famowood’s Duratuff polyurethane coating (see <http://www.biosafe-inc.com/duratuff.htm>) which is not inexpensive at \$126 for 4 quarts, delivered. You can add various colors to the clear coating, in powdered or

liquid form. I had some leftover graphite powder from a skid plate project, and used that. The first coat applied to the white nylon skin left the boat a mottled gray color. Dave’s advice was to put the first coat on, which would seal up small holes, and then apply the Boat Life Marine Caulk (see <http://boatlife.com/life-calk-sealant-tube-3oz.html?SID=88a3ee685741e3852777815af6af6077>) to completely seal the sewn seam and the lacing holes. I did this, but had to leave the boat like this for a couple of weeks under the press of other things. Normally, you would do all four coats in rapid order to get the best adhesion. When I finally got the caulking done and was ready to apply the remaining coats, Dave advised me to lightly sand the first coat and wipe it down with lacquer thinner to improve the adhesion of the succeeding coats.

On Memorial Day weekend, I went to work putting on three more coats as quickly as they dried to tack (about two to three hours between coats). As the successive coats went on, the color deepened to a glossy black from the graphite powder mixed in the coating. The first coat had used a full quart, but each successive coat used less and less, so I had about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a quart left when I had finished the fourth coat, including coating the cockpit coaming and the inside of the cockpit as far as I could reach.

For final touches, I constructed a simple foam seat pad, gluing it plexiglass to provide additional structure, padding the back bulkhead where the tube ends protruded, and adding a simple backband. I also padded out the front bulkhead two inches to give me better support in lieu of footpegs.

The Sea Rover’s maiden voyage took place in Annapolis on June 15. I was anxious that after so much work, it might be too tight for me. Floating the kayak off the beach and using a paddle brace, I sat on the back deck and straight-legged into the cockpit. While snug, I fit reasonably well, and even had plenty of room for my size 10.5 feet. I brought a little water into the cockpit from my paddling shoes, but there weren’t any leaks. So far, so good.

I joined the others for a paddle down South River and got used to the skinny, swift kayak. I’m looking forward to playing in this wicked looking boat, and felt a sense of accomplishment in my “post-industrial” boat building exercise.



Thurseve Paddle Report

By John Boeschen



From the comix page of Joe's site, thurseve.com. Well worth a fun visit! - Ed.

It could've been Laura Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie*, but there were no golden waves of grain blowing in the wind. Fact is, there was no prairie, either. What there was was a wide smile of beach heavy with shiny green seaweed, the little house tucked up against the cliff at the smile's north corner.

It could've been the late 19th century, too, no power lines running to the house, no TV dishes, no cars or trucks parked out front. Those omissions aside, the Mayor, David, and I landed on the beach in the early 21st century, Saturday, 24 September 2011.

The second day of a BASK (Bay Area Sea Kayakers) outing to Mendocino, Calif., we'd launched with a laidback group of paddlers from the mouth of the Albion River, not all that far from the little house. Big water keeping us away from the cliffs and rock-gardening close to shore, we stayed a quarter mile out.

Half an hour into the paddle, a freeway-wide lane of quiet water paving the way to the little house's beach sucked us ashore.

We didn't spot the house until we landed, the structure a quarter mile away at the north end of the beach. The little kid playing in the big surf-rounded rocks outside the slatted front gate didn't spot us, either, not

until we came ashore.

Once he did see us, the kid bolted through the little compound's entrance into the fenced yard, the gate swinging shut behind him with a loud thunk.

The Mayor, David, and I were what scared the kid off, unknowns all three of us. The fourth member of our paddle, Mary Ann, wasn't part of the scare, she opting to remain in her boat 100 yards offshore, out of sight. Mary Ann didn't come ashore because of something she saw—and we didn't—standing just inside the gate.

What Mary Ann saw standing just inside the gate was probably the kid's father, what might've been a long broom in his hand, the butt of it resting on the ground next to his foot. That the broom-like object might've been something other than a broom is why Mary Ann stayed in her boat.

Long story short, the Mayor, David, and I never saw the guy or the broom-like object the 15 minutes we stayed ashore. Didn't see the little kid again, either. What we did see was a young woman, probably the kid's mother, opening the gate and venturing out into a field of rounded rocks near the house, the gate closing behind her.

The woman, dressed in a late-19th-century-like long skirt, was probably checking us out, though she kept her distance, her

man nearby with a broom. Then again, it might've been that our arrival coincided with her regular foray for collecting firewood, which she proceeded to do, tossing the tinder in a small wood pushcart.

I wouldn't've devoted so much digital ink to the little house on the beach if I hadn't talked with a commercial seaweed harvester-processor later that night at BASK's potluck extravaganza. Not a long conversation, the lady saving her words for a 6:30 AM workshop the next morning, a workshop I knew I wasn't going to leave a warm sleeping bag to attend.

The heart of our short conversation was a question I asked and the answer she gave. The question: "Are any of the varieties of local seaweed toxic?" Her answer: "No."

That brief exchange is why I spent so many bytes describing that little house on the beach, a beach thick with harvestable seaweed.

The parallel between Laura Wilder's 19th-century family living off the bounty of the land, and the little house on the beach, its 21st-century family living off the bounty of the beach, was too much for me to pass up. So it goes with literary license.

Despite the weekend's big water, only one boat was damaged during our three days of limited rock gardening, a watery collision with an immovable rock knocking four inches off the boat's bow, the boat's captain suffering no personal injury. Fact is, no stitches had to be given and no bones had to be set for any of the weekend paddlers.

As for the various parties that filled the non-kayaking hours at Van Damme, give your imagination free rein.

Trip Stats

Date: Friday-Sunday, 23–25 Sept. 2011.

Distance: Not so much.

Speed: Very little.

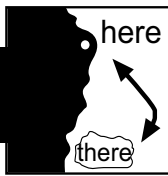
Time: Never enough.

Spray factor: Way too much.

Dessert: Lots.

Comix: www.homepage.mac.com/jboeschen/comiclfe/2010/

John Boeschen writes the Thurseve Paddle Report weekly from the San Francisco Bay area.



Poplar Island: Out of the Spoils into the Spectacular

By Kathy Reshetiloff



Using dredged material from Bay shipping channels, Poplar Island is steadily being rebuilt. Credit: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Once a haven for wildlife, Poplar Island, in the mid-Chesapeake Bay region, was slipping away at a rate of more than 13 feet a year because of the rapid erosion brought on by sea-level rise and land subsidence. The island was well on the way to becoming just another sand shoal.

Maps and records from the 1600s describe Poplar Island as more than 2,000 acres. By 1990, the island had been reduced to remnants totaling less than 10 acres.

The Paul S. Sarbanes Ecological Restoration at Poplar Island began with the goal of restoration within the historic island footprint.

Using dredged material from Chesapeake Bay shipping channels, workers are steadily rebuilding the island and restoring its habitat. Poplar Island is now 1,140 acres and will be expanded by an additional 550

acres. The project has also restored Poplar Harbor, a 300-acre protected embayment on the leeward side of the island. It is hoped that by restoring that area of calm, shallow water, local beds of submerged aquatic vegetation, or SAV, will recolonize to historic levels.

Restored salt marshes on Poplar Island fall into two distinct areas, low marsh and high marsh, divided by the elevation and associated plants. The low marsh zone is dominated by saltmarsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*). The high marsh zone consists of saltmeadow hay (*Spartina patens*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and high-tide bush (*Iva frutescens*).

During monitoring, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists were pleased to discover saltmarsh periwinkles (*Littorina irrorata*) using the newly restored wetlands

on Poplar Island. Periwinkles are snails commonly found in the intertidal zone of brackish and salt water marshes. Because they are air breathers, periwinkles are often found during periods of high water above the waterline on stems of saltmarsh cordgrass.

They are a crucial component of the ecosystem, feeding on detritus (decaying matter) and algae, and are an important source of food for waterbirds, crabs and fish. This was an exciting find as saltmarsh periwinkles are an integral part of a healthy salt marsh, indicating that the wetlands restoration efforts at Poplar Island are successfully re-establishing the lost island habitat.

SAV is considered an indicator of the health of the Chesapeake Bay. SAV monitoring in the shallow waters around the island has been ongoing since 2002 and oc-



The least tern is one of 25 bird species nesting on the island. Credit: Leo Miranda.

curs in May, July, and September each year.

Two dominant species have been found in Poplar Harbor: horned pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) and widgeon grass (*Ruppia maritima*). Poplar Harbor has continued to display increases in SAV coverage and density.

Biologists have also been using Christmas trees to provide shelter and nesting areas. Each year, roughly 250 trees are hauled on boats to Poplar Island and strategically

placed on habitat islands located in created wetlands. These are meant to provide both cover and nesting sites for colonial waterbirds such as the snowy egret (*Egretta thula*) and cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*).

Christmas tree debris piles are also placed in the newly created wetlands in an effort to attract other bird, mammal and amphibian species. Small rodents such as meadow voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) and white-footed mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*) have also been observed within the debris piles. There are several smaller islands close by where mammals like deer and muskrat can swim back and forth. Many of the smaller mammals, such as voles and mice were still on the remnant of the island and have done well with the added habitat. Some small mammals may also have moved onto Poplar when machinery was transported.

Stumps and discarded Christmas trees placed in the marshes and upland areas also provide cover and nesting habitat for waterfowl such as American black duck (*Anas rubripes*).

The American black duck, one of North America's wariest waterfowl, is a target species for the project. Small islands and isolated marshes are the last stronghold for American black ducks nesting in the Bay. Only a few, small, nesting islands remain.

Commonly observed birds include: osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), double-crested cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), as well as

colonial waterbirds, shorebirds and waterfowl. Since the restoration began, more than 170 bird species have been recorded at Poplar Island, 25 of which have been nesting. In 1996, ten species of birds were observed at on the Island, two or three of which were documented as nesting; further evidence of the successful ongoing restoration efforts at the present site.

At completion, Poplar Island will be half upland habitat and half wetlands. Trees, shrubs and grasses in uplands will support terrapins, birds and mammals, including squirrels and deer.

The wetlands, a combination of low marshes and high marshes, will provide habitat for a wide range of animals including, fish, shrimp, crabs, shorebirds, wading birds and mammals. Poplar Island, once on the verge of disappearing, is now an international model for the beneficial use of dredged material and wildlife habitat restoration.

For information about the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecological Restoration at Poplar Island, visit www.nab.usace.army.mil/Projects/PoplarIsland/Intro.htm.

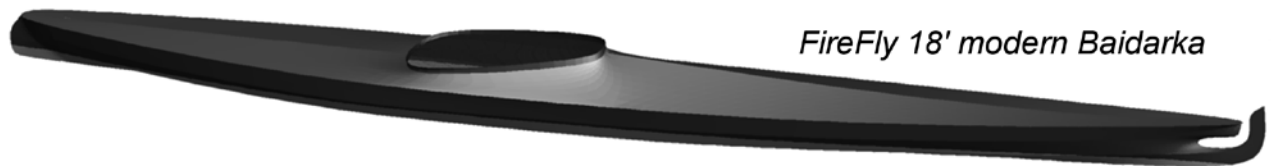
Kathryn Reshetiloff is with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Chesapeake Bay Field Office in Annapolis.



Restored low salt marsh. Credit: Leo Miranda / U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

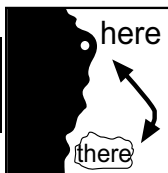
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There's Peace in Friendship: The birthplace of the famous sloop has turmoil in its history, but now it's a prime midcoast spot for protected paddling.

By John Christie



John Christie paddles by Friendship Long Island, which shelters the waters off the midcoast town. Credit: Gregory Rec/Staff Photographer



New Destinations! Remote islands! Trip planning guides!

Join the Maine Island Trail Association! Current members enjoy access to Trail properties for day or overnight use in return for observing low-impact techniques outlined in MITA's annual 250-page Trail guide – included with membership. View the guide online at <http://guide.mita.org>. Established in 1987, the Maine Island Trail Association is a membership organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the wild islands of coastal Maine. With 191 trail sites and over two decades of community-building, stewardship and education, the organization developed a model of sustainable recreation while creating America's first recreational water trail, extending 375 miles from the New Hampshire border to Machias Bay.

www.mita.org



It's hard to believe, on a quiet September morning in a kayak in Friendship Harbor, that this was the same place that was raided twice during the French and Indian War in the mid-1700s, where settlers were killed and scalped as they sought refuge in a fort on Garrison Island.

Or that this picture-perfect coastal Maine community bustled in the late 1800s, with a population not much less than its current 1,200 or so people, and featured two shipbuilders, two gristmills, a shingle mill, three sawmills, and assorted manufacturers of sails, carriages, boots, and shoes.

It was those shipbuilders who incorporated the lines of Gloucester fishing vessels into the world-renowned Friendship Sloop. The early sloops ranged in length from 20 to 50 feet, with the average running between 30 and 40 feet. They shared the same elliptical stern, and most had a clipper bow and were gaff-rigged. The one thing they all shared was a preset formula: the beam equaled one-third the overall length, and the length of the mast equaled the overall length plus half the draft.

So did Muscongus Bay earn a special place in the eyes of fishermen and sailors for the abundance of this now-classic craft. At the turn of the last century, they were used in seining for herring, hand-lining for

cod, sword fishing, mackereling and, of course, lobstering.

I can only imagine what it must have been like to haul and bait traps while managing the sail and staying off the rocks with a boat that drafted about five feet.

On a recent morn, I paddled among some of these classics as well as modern-day lobster and cruising boats, as I drank in the beauty of the harbor, the village, and the islands. Although it was "thickafog," in the lobstermen's vernacular, the ghosts of Friendship's past appeared as I paddled past, not the least of them being *Gladiator*, a still-beautiful sloop built in 1902, lying on her mooring.

Kayaking Friendship and Muscongus Bay is a special treat, regardless of the weather, and it's easy to get there. From the south, it's only about a dozen miles down Route 220 from Waldoboro, and about the same distance down Route 97 from South Warren/Thomaston if you're coming from the north.

When you reach the center of the tiny village, take the Bradford Point Road at the Hahn Community Center for about a mile to a public launching site, where one can walk to Garrison Island at low tide. I like launching there, instead of the town landing on the harbor, as this gives you a wonderful



Christie passes a Friendship Sloop moored in the harbor. The boats were used for fishing in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Credit: Gregory Rec/Staff Photographer

view of the harbor as you pass either inside Garrison Island when the tide's in, or out around it if it's out.

Friendship Long Island provides great protection, so you'll often find placid paddling even when the seas outside are run-

ning a little high, and exploring its entire perimeter is a half-day of some of the best coastal Maine kayaking you'll find anywhere.

Ospreys circle and cry, seals bask and other sea birds fill the air. You'll see lob-



Cormorants gather on a float in Friendship Harbor. Credit: Gregory Rec/Staff Photographer

stermen at work, pulling traps or unloading their catch and taking on bait at the Co-op.

Out around the south end of Friendship Long, you'll pass inside Cranberry Island and back along the east side to your launch site.

If the seas are favorable, and you're up for a little more serious ocean kayaking, you might consider paddling six miles out to the Franklin Island National Wildlife Refuge. The 12-acre island, part of the Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge, supports nesting gulls, eiders, black-crowned night herons, Leach's storm petrels, and ospreys.

But note: You can only go on the island during daylight hours between Sept. 1 and March 31, as it's off-limits from April through August, the seabird nesting season. So plan an early spring or fall trip to this natural treasure.

After enjoying your cruise in the kayak, it'll be time to spend a while in the village soaking up the ambience of a quintessential small coastal Maine community.

A stop at Archie Wallace's Groceries and Provisions in the middle of town is a must. It juxtaposes the feel of an old-time country store with a modern deli offering choice meats, cheeses, and about everything else you'd expect in a market bearing the descriptive name. I don't know how many places in Maine claim to serve "Maine's best lobster roll" - far too many, in my book - but at Archie Wallace's, they don't make such a claim, they just do it.

Lying as it does on a peninsula jutting into the Gulf of Maine between Muscongus Bay and the Friendship River, the fact that some 55 percent of the town's 31 square miles is water says a lot about the place.

It's connected to the sea in a very special way, and a day in a kayak exploring its various hidden nooks and crannies should be on every kayaker's schedule.

John Christie is an author and year-round Maine explorer. He and his son, Josh, write in the Portland Press Herald "Outdoors" about places to enjoy the beauty only Maine has to offer. He can be contacted at: jchristie@fairpoint.net

Reprinted by permission of the author from the Portland Press Herald (Maine), Sept. 26

How Far Can You Go?



Boomer and Turk Circumnavigate Ellesmere



Kokatat ambassador Erik Boomer and Jon Turk recently became the first team to circumnavigate successfully Ellesmere Island, the northern most island in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and the world's tenth largest island. Boomer and Turk skied, paddled, and trekked over 1,500 miles over 104 days before completing their journey Aug. 19.

“The circumnavigation of Ellesmere Island is one of the most complex and physically demanding polar expeditions in modern times,” said Boomer. “It was reassuring to know that with all the uncertainty of weather and the terrain changes of firm ice, slush ice, and open water, that we could depend on our Kokatat gear to keep us dry, comfortable, and safe.”

Kokatat equipped the expedition with Ronin Pro and OutFIT Tour personal flotation devices (PFDs) and GORE-TEX® TecTOUR Anoraks to keep the team warm, dry, and protect them in the cold and hostile Arctic waters.

On May 7 the team launched from Grise Fiord, the only civilian settlement on Ellesmere. For the first six weeks Boomer and Turk traveled on skis, pulling their kayaks. In late June they navigated a kaleidoscope of interlocking floes, before encountering a stretch of unstable ice along the northeast coast, where Ellesmere and Greenland squeeze together. For almost three weeks the team made little headway, before the water began to open up and they were able to don their Kokatat PFDs and dry tops and paddle the last 500 miles in walrus, polar bear, and ice-congested polar seas.

For a recap of the expedition visit Turk's blog at jonturk.net/content/Blog.



Turk and Boomer off the coast of Ellesmere Island, 2011..

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To submit an event for consideration, send to "Calendar" ackayak@comcast.net or ACK Calendar, 224 Argilla Rd., Ipswich, MA 01938. For full listing of sea kayak clubs and outfitters, go to www.atlanticcoastalkayaker.com

NORTH ATLANTIC

SYMPOSIA & SHOWS

March 23-25: Paddlesport 2011 Show

Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset, N.J. A kayak, canoe, and outdoor show, put on by The Jersey Paddler. Exhibits include manufacturers of kayaks, canoes, accessories, sportswear, paddling clubs, professional instruction and expeditions. Lectures and video/slide shows of trips and expeditions. Film festival. For more information, call (888) 22-KAYAK or visit www.jerseypaddler.com

RACES

Nov. 6: The Great Potato Race. Connecticut River, Hadley, Mass. New England Canoe & Kayak Racing Assn. annual banquet follows the event. www.neckra.org

Nov. 20: D&R Canal Canoe & Kayak Race. 10.5 miles with three short portages. Sunday before Thanksgiving. For more info, www.real-world-systems.com/dandr/

Go to www.neckra.org for more fun and noteworthy races.

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MID-ATLANTIC

SYMPOSIA & SHOWS

Nov. 7-10: Paddlesports Pro 2011

Conference and trade show sponsored by The Paddlesports Industry Association and the Trade Association of Paddlesports. Kahlari Resort, Sandusky, Ohio. www.paddlesportsindustry.org

SOUTH ATLANTIC

SYMPOSIA & SHOWS

Nov. 3-6: Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival

Off the beaches of Fort Myers and Sanibel, southwest Florida. Festivities include competitive canoe/kayak races, fishing tournament, paddling clinics and demos, seminars, family activities, archaeological and environmental events, guided tours, and more celebrations along the Great Calusa Blueway.

Events at public parks, resorts, campgrounds along the 190-mile Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail. Sponsored by Canoe & Kayak Magazine. www.CalusaBluewayPaddlingFestival.com

Dec. 5-8: Cabretta Surf Camp

Paddle Georgia Coast. 15 miles to Cabretta and exploration of Cabretta Island. www.seakayakgeorgia.com

16th Annual Sweetwater Kayaks Symposium

ACA IDW/ICE Level 1-3: Feb. 17-20, 2012
BCU Week: February 21-25
Kayak Symposium Weekend: February 25-27. 13060 Gandy Blvd., St. Petersburg, Fla. Classes: with world class coaches. Evenings: dinner & slide shows. Kayak: sheltered lagoon or the Gulf of Mexico. Geared to the beginner to the experienced.

Coaches include Nigel Foster, John Carmody, Don Thompson, Steve Maynard, Tom Nickels, Greg Stamer and many others. For details and registration go to www.sweetwaterkayaks.com; email jean@sweetwaterkayaks.co

SYMPOSIA & SHOWS

April 20-22, 2012: 22nd Annual East Coast Canoe & Kayak Festival

James Island County Park, Charleston, S.C. One of the premier kayak events of the year. Lectures, on-water classes, and demonstrations for the novice to experienced. Four classes run at the same time throughout the three-day event.

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www.cprcevents.com

RACES

Nov. 5: PaddleFest 2011. Hunting Island State Park, Hunting Island, Beaufort, S.C. 3 and 6 mile kayak and canoe races begin and finish in the Lagoon at Parking Lot J. Cookout and Awards Ceremony. www.HigherGroundBeaufort.com.

March 3, 2012: Ultimate Florida 2012

Circumnavigation of Florida. This Ultimate Challenge is an expedition style adventure race for kayaks, canoes, and small sailboats.

The race circumnavigates Florida and covers roughly 1,200 miles including a 40-mile portage connecting the St. Marys River to the Suwannee River.

There are five stages with the first stage being the Everglades Challenge. There are special rules that apply to the portage for class 4 boats so all WaterTribe classes and divisions can participate.

March 3, 2012: WaterTribe Everglades Challenge

Unsupported expedition of 260-300 nautical miles depending on your course. It follows the southwest Florida coast from Fort Desoto, Tampa Bay, to Key Largo. Time limit of eight days but winners will do it in two to four days. This challenge is a qualifier for the Ultimate Florida Challenge.

March 3, 2012: WaterTribe Ultra Marathon

A 68-mile course from Fort Desoto, Tampa Bay, to Boca Grande, 35-hour limit. Winners can usually finish in 24 hours. Weekend warriors, take note! Registration for all events at www.watertribe.com

Klassifieds



Klassified ads for personally-owned gear are free to subscribers; \$0.25 per word, per issue for all others. Photos are \$5 each. We will run your ad for two issues. Deadline for ad submission is the first of the month before the issue of publication.

NECKY ARLUK III Touring Kayak, fiberglass in good condition, 18x21". Teal over cream, \$1500.

IMPEX – MONTAUK Touring kayak, fiberglass used, 16x23", needs skeg cable replaced, Green over white, \$500. Both located in St. Johnsbury, Vt. Contact, nbrodien@gmail.com

NECKY LOOKSHA SPORT. A 14'4" red hull with black straps/deck lines, comes with an inflatable seat, two bulkheads, factory rudder, paddle and critter cover. Well used but extremely seaworthy. It tracks very well but is highly maneuverable due to slight aft rocker and very short water-line length in a lean turn. It is great for both open water and for rock gardens/caves.

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Please call for more info or to try the boats out. Cat Radcliffe 508-369-3028 catherineradcliffe@earthlink.net (9)

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Making a West Greenland Paddle *Article by Chuck Holst*

Carving the Greenland Paddle *Video by Matt Johnson*

Reviewed by David Eden



Fig. 1. East Greenland paddle.



Fig. 2. West Greenland paddle.



Fig. 3. Storm paddle.

An illustration from Holst's article. I made West Greenland style and storm paddles.

For many years I have wanted to build a Greenland-style boat, but have been intimidated by the amount of hand work involved in crafting one using traditional materials and methods. I have come to realize that there is no moral or aesthetic validity to the sort of argument that sneers at using plastic and aluminum to frame out a traditional kayak. After all, no one uses seal hides to cover kayaks any more, and as soon as you cover a kayak with nylon or fiberglass or even canvas, you have lost the aesthetic high ground.

Since a kayak is a big project, I thought I would start my movement towards Greenland paddling by making a paddle or two. In the case of paddles, using traditional materials (if not methods) is cheaper and easier than any other, so I decided to carve the paddles out of wood.

But how to do it? Without knowledge or mentor, any such project is hard to start. Thanks heavens for the web! I just typed "How to make a Greenland paddle" into Google, and immediately discovered two very valuable resources that I would recommend to anyone interested in the project. Both are free for downloading.

The first is a fabulous PDF by Chuck Holst, *Making a West Greenland Paddle*, available from the Qajak USA site (www.qajakusa.org/QK/makegreen2.pdf). The instructions start with a short history of the paddles, with a discussion of the differences between the West and East Greenland versions. The instructions are for a Western-style paddle.

Holst also describes how to use the paddle, with a short discussion on stroke technique. He is adamant about the need to learn Greenland-style paddling to go with your Greenland-style paddle, going so far as to write, "Remember: if you can't paddle Greenland style with it, it's not a Greenland paddle."

I found the instructions very clear and quite easy to follow. The illustrations are

helpful and plentiful enough if you are familiar with wood-working tools. For neophytes, he includes a short section on working with wood.

For those who want a more visual set of instructions, download Matt Johnson's video, *Carving the Greenland Paddle*, available for download or online viewing at <http://www.carvegp.com>. Johnson meant his video as a companion piece to Holst's PDF, and it works very well to flesh out that document with spoken instructions and a video record of the process to help you visualize what the paddle should look like as you work along.

My thumb-to-middle curve measurement, which determines the width of the widest part of the blade, is almost exactly 3 1/2 inches, so I was able to go with 2x4s, if I could find good ones. I decided to go with fir, heavier, but with a tighter grain than pine. I was able to find several fir studs, eight feet long, on sale at Home Depot for only \$2.50 each! I combed the pile for straight, straight-grained studs with pin knots only or no knots. I bought four, a can of tung oil and 0000 steel wool for finishing, several sheets of various grades of sandpaper (#60-#200), and white epoxy and epoxy-fortified paint for the "bone" tip. Total expenditure for materials for four paddles (two full-sized and two shorter "storm" paddles) was around \$50.

Following both Holst and Johnson I marked out my blanks and started to cut. I began by using a hand saw for the first cuts, but this was very tedious and slow. I then tried a table saw, but, unfortunately, the blade was not large enough to resaw (cut along the wider dimension) the 2x4, and I had to make two passes for each cut, with less than perfect results. One has to admire the native craftsmen who created these paddles from driftwood with stone crude metal tools only. I would recommend using a bandsaw and saber saw for the roughing-out cuts. The part I enjoyed most was the planing and finishing anyway.



Front row L-R: Finished storm paddle, paddle blank, blank with marks for planing. Back L-R: fir 2X4, finished paddle.



Matt Johnson. Screen shot from his video.



The tools. Left to right, back to front: saber saw, orbital sander, hand saw, epoxy-fortified paint, tung oil, combination square, medium rasp, block plane, mini plane.

I had really hoped to find a spokeshave to help with the trimming of the paddle. This double-handled, cut-on-the-pull tool would have been great to use, but a sweep of all the local lumber and hardware stores turned up nothing. I would have to rely on what I could find in the tool box.

Fortunately, a lifetime of handyman-ship had left me with all the tools I needed, except the bandsaw. Also, if you need a wider paddle than 3 1/2 inches (although none of the historical paddles that researchers have examined exceed this width), or want to use larger board widths to increase your choice of wood, access to a table saw would be very useful.

A total of eight hours per paddle, from first cut, through marking, rough cuts, planing and sanding gave me my first two results, a storm and a cruising paddle.



The ivory handle of an old, broken letter opener, let into the loom. Now the Seal Spirit will go before me wherever I paddle.

Planing the fir was a sensual delight. The tight and straight grain and a sharp plane made the curls of wood slide off like soft butter on a hot muffin.

Tung oil, steel wool, and a certain amount of elbow grease gave me a beautiful, silky surface that is a joy to feel. As a

finishing touch, I let into the loom (the middle section of the paddle) an ivory seal from an old letter opener my mother bought years ago in Alaska.

Thanks to Holst and Johnson, I now have some beautiful new paddles to use and share!

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