



NORUMBEGA CHAPTER ~WCHA

The Southern New England Chapter of the
Wooden Canoe Heritage Association, Ltd.

March 21, 2020

Spring Newsletter

Steve Lapey, Editor

Spring has sprung, the robins have returned, the chestnut tree has started to bud and the Coronavirus has arrived in full force. We have scheduled events in April and May which may go off as planned, but in the interest of everyone's safety we will monitor the situation and make changes or cancellations as necessary. With that said, a good way to keep away from infected people is to get into your canoe and spend some time well away from shore and enjoy paddling.

Norumbega's Winter Meeting

Our annual Winter Meeting was held on a perfect late winter day, Sunday, March 1st at Veasey Memorial Park in Groveland. We had an enjoyable time in the "Veasey Suite", three large rooms, one with a large stone fireplace putting out a warm glow.

Lunch was provided, **Ted Harrigan** made the stew which didn't last long as the 24 hungry members and guests kept dipping in the pot for seconds and a few thirds, sandwich makings were available as well as salads and desserts provided by members.

The door prizes give-away went fairly smoothly, **Alan Svenson** won a water proof case for his smart phone, **Peter Doherty** got the paddling video by Caleb Davis and the big prize, a copy of "Canoes", a book by Mark Neuzil and Norman Sims went to **John Fiske**.

Show and tell is always a popular part of the meeting, this year we fell into a canoe seat theme and we looked at and discussed several styles of canoe seats, spending more time than necessary talking about the correct way to weave the cane in Old Town seats that do not have corner holes. Where else than at a WCHA event would such a topic ever arise?



Photo: Steve Lapey

A poorly repaired Old Town stern seat that generated lots of talk. The Bow seat was no better.



Photo: Steve Lapey

Norumbega members socializing at the annual Winter Gathering

Up-coming Chapter Events

A schedule of events for 2020 was discussed and agreed to at the meeting, as follows:

Saturday, April 18, 2020: We will schedule the “Ice Breaker” paddle on the lower Concord River, from the Lowell Road Bridge in Concord to the River Street bridge in Billerica. This will be a warm up trip for our Father’s Day paddle on the Sudbury and the upper Concord.

Meeting time at Lowell Street will be 8:30 am, we will have to set up a car shuttle and with luck we will be paddling at 9. Bring a picnic lunch and remember, in April PFD’s must be worn! For further information, contact Steve Lapey at 978 374 1104 or stevenscanoe@gmail.com

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 29, 30, and 31 2020: Doug Deyoe has suggested that instead of a Spring Wilderness trip we gather at his family’s cabin on Suncook Lake in New Hampshire. The cabin is rustic, has water and plumbing can sleep up to six inside with plenty of outside space for tenting. This will serve as a base camp for canoeing on Suncook Lake and other lakes in the area. Any one attending will be responsible for their own sleeping bag, tent if you are tenting and your own food. Arrivals can start any time Friday afternoon, stay until Sunday afternoon or anything in between that fits into your schedule. We will have an update on this in early May with driving instructions and any other info you will need.

Saturday, June 6, 2020: Mass Audubon’s Nature Festival: This event is held at the Audubon’s facility in Topsfield on the Ipswich River and is attended by hundreds of area birders as well as other outdoor enthusiasts. Last year was our first time showing canoes at this event and we received a lot of interest from the attendees, so we have been invited back for 2020. Again, we will have a bulletin with the details prior to the event where we will have a bunch of canoes out on the grass to attract people’s attention and then chat with them, maybe finding new members for the WCHA. For more information contact Gary Amirault at 978 573 0063 or gjamirault@comcast.net.

Also, the same weekend, Saturday and Sunday, June 6 and 7, 2020, The Maine Canoe Symposium, Bryant Pond, Maine, a new location for 2020.

Established in 1986, the Maine Canoe Symposium is a volunteer-run, non-profit, weekend event. The Symposium encourages participants of all ages to develop an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of North American canoeing heritage and to develop canoeing and related skills through educational workshops, presentations, and hands-on instruction.

For complete information on the Maine Canoe Symposium, check out their web site at www.maine canoe symposium.org

Sunday, June 21, 2020, Father's Day on the Sudbury and Concord Rivers. This annual event always attracts a big crowd, let's make this the biggest crowd ever! As we have in the past, we will meet at Sherman's Bridge on the Wayland/Sudbury line in time to arrange a car shuttle and then launch at 9:00 am for a 10 mile paddle to the Old North Bridge in Concord. We will have a picnic lunch at the National Park and then have a short paddle to the final take out at the "Cow Pasture" boat launch on Lowell Street, Concord. For additional information and driving instructions, contact John Fitzgerald at 978 371 2438 or jmbfitz@hotmail.com

Tuesday, July 14 through Sunday, July 19, 2020- - The WCHA Assembly. Once again, the Assembly will be held at Paul Smith's College in the Adirondack's. This year the featured canoes will be those made by WCHA co-founder Tom MacKenzie and other solo canoes. We always have a good time at Assembly – if you have not attended in the past, why not put it on your calendar now? You can Find the program of events and registration forms on the WCHA website; www.wcha.org/annual-assembly, beginning on April 20th. The program and registration forms will be included in the Spring, 2020 issue of *Wooden Canoe*, which will be mailed in mid-May.

In July or August Mike Parr will try to get us a tour of the Essex Peabody Museum in Salem, MA primarily to see their canoe related artifacts – they have several birch bark canoes that are not usually on exhibit that we may get a chance to see. We should be able to have firm information on this for our June Newsletter.

Saturday and Sunday, August 1 and 2, 2020, The Salem Maritime Festival. Another annual event where we show off wooden canoes to impress the public and look for new WCHA members. The National Park Service sponsors this event and provides us with a booth and lawn space to set up a display and they give us a cash stipend for attending – the cash goes into the Chapter Project fund so we will be able to have another big project like this year's Old Town for a future assembly. We need canoes to display and members to attend and do the necessary meet and greet with the attendees. For more details, contact Steve Lapey at 978 374 1104 or stevenscanoe@gmail.com

Saturday, August 15, 2020: Tully Lake time! Another opportunity to paddle at one of the prettiest areas of the state. We will paddle up the East Branch of the Tully River from the canoe launch to Long Pond and beyond up the river until we get tired of beaver dams and then return to Long Pond for a picnic lunch. It is about an hour west of I-495 on Route 2 to Athol, so, it really isn't that far away. For additional details, contact Steve Lapey at 978 374 1104 or stevenscanoe@gmail.com

Saturday, September 12, 2020: Labor Day will have come and gone, fall will be coming fast and the leaves will have actually started to change color Don't let another season end without a trip on the **Nashua River**, from the boat launch in Groton to the dam in Pepperell and return. It is all flat water behind the dam with no obstructions which makes it a perfect river. This area is a birders heaven, a few years ago on this trip we were joined by dozens of Mute Swans and Great Blue Herons. Bring a camera and a picnic lunch. Start time will be 9:00 am. Again, for additional details, contact **Steve Lapey** at 978 374 1104 or stevenscanoe@gmail.com

Chapter Dues are \$10.00 per year

Our Chapter Dues are \$10.00 per year, due in March. Thanks to all who have paid in advance and those who paid at the Winter meeting.

Others may send a check to our Treasurer, **Ted Harrigan at 49 Greenwood Avenue, Needham, MA 02492**. We have a Pay Pal account if you wish to pay by credit or debit card, contact Ted or the editor and we will send an invoice so you can return the payment that way.

Norumbega's 2020 Chapter Project Up-date

On Saturday, January 18, 2020 we got back into the restoration of the 1911 Old town Ideal for the 2020 Assembly auction. 8 volunteers; Gary **Amirault**, **Bob Berggren**, **Paul Charos**, **Doug Deyoe**, **Stuart Fall**, **John Fiske**, **Bob Gorman** and **Jeff Morrill** braved the cold weather and gathered at the Canoe Shop in Groveland.

We milled out the new outwales from the long piece of Mahogany that we scarfed together back in September. That involved planing the wood to 7/8-inch-thick and then using a ½ inch radius round-over bit at the router table to match the profile of the original outwales. The final operation was on the table saw where the cut out for the canvas and the planking was made.

With the outwales made and set aside for another shop session we all pitched in with sandpaper and smoothed out the filler that had been curing since the first of December, cleaned the dust off and applied a coat of Pre-Kote primer.

On Saturday, January 25th, the canvas was trimmed carefully at the sheer line and the new outwales were test fitted and the keel was attached.



Photo: Bob Berggren

Steve Lapey, Bob Gorman, John Fiske, Gary Amirault, Stuart Fall, Jeff Morrill and Doug Deyoe applying the Pre-Kote primer on the 1911 Old Town Ideal

On February 1st, we had another full house! **Gary Amirault, Bob Berggren, Paul Charos, Peter Doherty, Stuart Fall, John Fitzgerald, Bob Gorman, Steve Hodge, Paul Kelly and Alan Svenson** all squeezed into the shop first to mount the outwales, mark for screw holes before drilling on the drill press. They were then clamped in place to be secured in the center section of the hull. The ends were left loose so they could be steamed and bent to the curve of the shear line at each end.

The steaming and bending went well – nothing cracked.

On the following Saturday, February 8th, we had an abbreviated session to glue and clamp the outwales where we had cut a saw kerf to facilitate the bending. While the joints were drying, we spent the rest of the session drilling and polishing the stem bands and mounting the two thwarts.



Photo: Bob Berggren

Creative clamping of the outwales. One cannot have too many clamps when working on canoes!



Photo: Bob Berggren

Stuart Fall, Bob Gorman, Gary Amirault, Peter Doherty, Paul Charos, Steve Lapey, Paul Kelly, John Fitzgerald, Steven Hodge and Alan Svenson – all ten men working on installing two outwales.

This photo by Bob Berggren appeared on the front cover of the March issue of *Messing About in Boats!*

On Saturday February 22, 2020 **Gary Amirault, Paul Charos, Doug Deyoe, Peter Doherty, Stuart Fall and Bob Gorman** came to sand the gunwales with 100, 150 and 22 sandpaper, then applied a coating of VAR Dark Mahogany stain to all surfaces.

Finishing up work will include varnishing the trim, installing decals and stem bands and a final coat of dark red paint

New Members for Norumbega

We have been fortunate to have had several new members join our Chapter recently, **Bob Berggren** and **Paul Charos** both from Wakefield, MA, **Peter Doherty** from Framingham, **Bob Gorman** from Groveland, MA and **Max Mattoon** from Pittsfield, MA. Welcome to the WCHA and the Norumbega Chapter!

Bob Gorman has a 20 Grand Laker, he was spotted one day driving over the Groveland Bridge and your editor had to make a quick U-turn to chase him down at the local boat launch where we got into a good conversation about wooden canoes in general and Grand Lakers in particular, Bob has jumped right into Chapter activities and has been a big help on the Old Town project.

Bob Berggren has an interesting collection of Old Town canoes, most of them with sponsons and he also has a 1920 Model T Ford with an old-fashioned trailer that he enjoys taking on camping adventures. Bob has sent some pictures to share.



The Yellow one is a 1920 HW recently found in Rhode Island, the Green HW dates back to 1906 and the one with no canvas is an OTCA from 1944, a nice group of Old Towns!

In addition to collecting canoes Bob has been to almost every session working on the Old Town project.

Paul Charos is an active canoeist, with a collection of canoes, both wooden and composite. One of the wooden canoes is a 14 ½ foot “Merigold Marvel” that was built at the 1999 WCHA Assembly at Paul Smith’s. He purchased it from the daughters of one of the builders of the canoe who took it home with him that year.

Paul serves on the Board of Directors of the Ipswich River Watershed Association and is an active supporter of Ducks unlimited.

He too has been helping with the Old Town project, here are some pictures of Paul’s canoes



Max “Chris” Mattoon is the former owner of Berkshire Wooden Boat in Pittsfield, MA where they were a full-time pre-WWII specialized wooden boat restoration shop for almost 20 years.

Now Max keeps a small restoration shop in Pittsfield where he does part time restorations for long-time clients/friends.

Over the years he has collected many projects, a Wiswell, Fay and Bowens, Penn Yan CZT, Beetlecats, Wianno Seniors and some canoes that he is now moving to get into. Recently he picked up an early 18 ½ foot E.M. White that has been in the same family since 1920 when they bought it from a Maine trapper.

Peter Doherty is an active wooden canoeist, he is from Framingham, MA and has several canoes including one wood and canvas one. Peter has been a big help on the Ideal project.

Chris Donaldson from Lincoln and **Curt Rudge** from Millbury both are new to the WCHA and joined us at the winter meeting for their first Chapter event.

Once again, welcome aboard!