

CONN YAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

October 2000

TALL SHIPS BY KAYAK

Mel Tulin

I awoke on Wednesday, July 12 with mixed feelings. I was so excited about OpSailCT 2000 and the prospect of witnessing the Parade of Tall Ships from the proximity of our kayaks. But there was a persistent element that marred our expectations. Would we be able to see the tall ships at all? Would we be turned away?

We decided to go out with ConnYak, our kayaking club. There were 29 of us in all, so we had our own little parade. We all met in Groton at Bluff Point, still not able to let our elation take over... still unsure. Little did we know that we would have the "best seats in the house" to view this historic day. As we paddled out and we saw what lay ahead, I felt a rush... a feeling that I been holding back... a real anticipation of what was to come, for the Coast Guard had placed yellow channel markers on either side of the route, no more than 100 yards away from where the magnificent ships were to pass. We were able to kayak within a yard or two of these buoys and then wait for the spectacle to begin. There was no one in front of us. The armada of pleasure boats would not intrude.

As I had frequently sailed in the Thames River from the Thames Yacht Club Invitationals when I was a child, being in the river brought back many lost memories. I was very young when the sea be-

came my first great love. My parents had a vacation house at the shore in South Lyme, CT where I spent my childhood summers. When I was about seven years old, I started sailing lessons at Niantic Bay Yacht Club. Throughout my early years, sailing was the most unforgettable time in my life. But then my brother went to college, I started to work in the summers and we ended up selling the boat. Of course I missed sailing, cruising the water with the wind blowing in my face.

Four years ago, I met my future husband who also has a passion for the sea that stemmed from many years of surfing. We started out by canoeing, sailing in his Monocat and even surfing at the Cape. I had been kayaking a few times and was really drawn to it. He had always wanted to. So, we went to one of the "demo days" at a local kayak shop and we tried out some of the new kayaks. It was instant bonding. Then it was time to decide. Sitting next to the Farmington River, eating a tuna fish sandwich, we decided to take the plunge and bought two kayaks.... and one rack! We knew this was now a long-term commitment. (Who would get the rack?!) We spent the next 3 years exploring the Connecticut shore and Cape Cod in our kayaks. Again, we fell in love with the sea but in a different way. We were more in touch with nature and the wildlife which displayed itself. At times it was breathtaking... Great Blue Herons and Snowy Egrets. To paddle out with the seals at Monomoy Island off of Chatham was an experience we'll never forget.

Last year, we decided to elope and get

married at sunset, barefoot on the beach, in Maui. Again, it was awesome! We spent our honeymoon kayaking with the humpback whales and six foot sea turtles in Maui. We also kayaked along the shores of Kauai where only kayakers can go because of the shallow waters and reefs that won't allow other boats in. It was paradise.

So here we were, all 29 of us on the Thames River waiting for the parade to unfold. We weren't talking much, our eyes steady on the horizon. And finally, like apparitions, we saw the tall ships starting to assemble. One by one, led by the United States Coast Guard Eagle, each was saluted by the U.S. Coast Guard Orchestra as it entered the Thames River. In the background, were thousands of spectator boats, many with binoculars, to witness this incredible spectacle. Each tall ship, whether it was 371 feet or 40 feet long was dignified with its own special song played from the floating bandstand at the mouth of the river. When The Star Spangled Banner, in honor of the Eagle, burst through the air, it brought chills. I sat in my kayak - the wind blowing in the sea air, watching them take their places, one by one, and almost float down the river. Most were in full sail, their crew standing in formation when they sailed by. The Amistad brought tears to my eyes, as I recalled kayaking at the Mystic launching in March. That story alone was worth the wait. The Esmeralda from Chile was the largest at 371 feet and the most spectacular. The Gloria made its debut by answering the orchestra with a song of its own which the crew sang loud and clear as they stood perched proudly on the 10 huge booms, locked arm in arm, dressed in red shirts and white slacks. It was an impressive sight.... and one I'll never forget. The Guayas from Ecuador sailed by majestically while the Sagres from Portugal was distinctive with red crosses on its sails. As the parade was winding down, many spectator boats began to leave due to the strong winds and a potentially congested harbor. I made the decision to stay. One of the best of the tall ships was saved for last and I didn't want to miss it! The HMS Rose, from the United States, approached with its brilliantly painted hull and sails in full regalia. As it swept by, I couldn't help but think, "OpSailCT 2000 did exceed my wildest expectations." The



Tom Maziarz and Patti Klindienst practice rescues.

grandeur was all mixed up with memories of sailing on the Thames with my brother in our little Blue Jay so many years ago. Was it still being loved and used? As we landed on shore, ready to fight the long lines of traffic to go home, I could hardly wait until tomorrow so that I could come back to New London and see the tall ships up close and be able to go on board... a whole new experience.

Chris Duff Slide show & Talk

North Cove Outfitters in Saybrook is having Chris Duff who circumnavigated New Zealand last year. We had Chris at a ConnYak lecture in the past - he's a very colorful speaker and great photographer as well as a courageous adventurer. The lecture is being held at Old Saybrook Middle School, 60 Sheffield St. on Tuesday, October 10th, at 7 pm. A \$3 donation (admission) will go to "Save the Sound". Contact N. Cove Outfitters for further information. 860-388-6585.

EAST LYME'S BEST KEPT SECRET - POWERS LAKE

Last week I had the delight and surprise to find in my back yard a wonderful lake called Powers Lake in East Lyme just off Route 1 Boston Post Rd. The Lake is about 153 acres in size and is owned by Yale University.

The lake is opened to the public but seems to be under used. On a given day you might find 3 or 4 people at most using the lake. When I was there I saw one other kayaker and 2 couples with canoes. It is nature at its best.

The lake is not too large and is best for smaller kayaks in the 9 to 12 foot category. However, it's a great place to paddle for fun or practice your rolls because it is so private. (no one will laugh at you)

I started my paddle around the lake to the right of the launch area. I passed the Yale compound on the right which was the last site of anything man made. Heading up the right side of the lake I passed a small clearing up on a small hill that was perfect to pull off and get some sun.

I then paddled around the peninsula to the other side of the lake and found a small, private inlet with a large rock on which to pull up and sit on to have lunch. I proceeded around and down the left side of the lake and came to a clearing with a swimming hole with a sandy bottom. Of course I stopped again to take a refreshing swim. All this time I did not see anyone in the area that I was paddling. So if you like privacy and a clever little lake to investigate, do try this little gem.

Directions: Rt 1 in East Lyme (head toward Old Lyme from Flanders Four Corners) to Scott Road (just past Scott's fruit stand on the right) go down the road to the end and look for the boat launch sign on the left and turn left. Follow this road a few miles to the Powers Lake launch sign on the right. There is room for about 20 cars but I have never seen more than 3 at one time.

- Carmin Cimino



Check the bulletin board for other impromptu trips listed by members - www.connyak.org

L.L. Bean Kayak Symposium

I attended Bean's 19th annual Kayak Symposium in Castine, ME on July 14th. I rank myself between a beginner and intermediate paddler, so I felt this was an opportunity to update my technical knowledge, take an on-water class and see some new kayaks.

Castine is a 7.5 hour drive from Stamford. The village has a population of 1,500, with several inns and small shops and an attractive waterfront on Penobscot Bay. The Maine Maritime Academy was used for vendor displays, classes and meals with the on-water activity at nearby Wadsworth Cove.

For housing, you have three choices; you can camp, stay in the dorms, or find your own housing. I chose to stay in the Castine Inn which is located about a half-mile from all activities. The dorms are more convenient, but can be hot and stuffy.

I would recommend the meal package for the symposium which included a lobster dinner on Saturday night.

The symposium can be divided into three main elements. The first is the vendor displays. Of interest to me was the "Kayak Cover Company". They sell a sack-like bag you can use to cover your kayak. It is made of a coated breathable

polyester material in a variety of covers. A sixteen-foot cover costs \$245. I plan on purchasing one to replace the tarp I use now. Check out their web page at www.kayakcovers.com.

The second element was classroom sessions. These included technical subjects like "Wind and Water for the Paddler" by Ken Fink and "Wilderness Medicine/ Medical Kits" by Tony Simpson.

Mike Perry of LL Bean gave a class titled "Kayaking 101: Getting Started". There were about 100 people in his session. He covered the basics of selecting a kayak and related gear. You may think this was unnecessary, but I estimated that 90% of attendees were there for the first time and were raw beginners.

The other classroom sessions were about trips. The two most notable were a session about paddling across the North Sea by Derek Hutchinson and a travelogue by Olaf Malver. You may have heard Derek's story before, however, every time it's a little different.

Olaf Malver spoke about the "Seven Wonders of the World" - by kayak!. He is a PHD biologist and previously organized kayak trips for Mountain-Sobek Travel. He is forming his own travel company to be called "Beyond Adventures".

Accompanied by slides, he recounted his

trips to northern Panama, Greenland, the Georgian Islands (Antarctica), Portugal, Vietnam and Burma. There was standing-room only for his presentation.

The third element was the on-water classes. I took a class in rescues. We had two instructors from LL Bean and ten students. We got an opportunity to either participate or observe a T-rescue and paddle-float rescue. I was the "rescued" in a T-rescue. Yes, the water was cold. I have done this before in warm water, and was surprised how much the cold affected me.

There were also classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced paddlers. In addition, Perception, Boreal, Old Town, Poseidon and Current Designs were there with their kayaks. This was a great opportunity to try out different models. I developed a serious attraction to a kevlar Perception Eclipse that weighed 44 pounds. What a difference between my plastic Sea Lion at 62 pounds!

Teva had a huge display of their new line of "water shoes". Take any pair and try it out on the water.

Would I go again? Yes, but we would spend more time on the water.

- Art & Anne Layton

55 attend Rescue clinic

The perfect August day complimented our 1st rescue clinic with full sunshine and warm water temperatures. We'll continue to make this a yearly affair and hopefully the added contributions by many paddlers will make it a learning experience for all skill levels. There's so many different ways to do various rescue techniques that a forum type of situation can benefit everyone.

In hindsight, one major thing we failed to address is the use of a paddle leash for staying with your kayak during self rescues as well as keeping your paddle in tact during group rescues. Many people who roll regularly don't like the added cord on their paddle and feel it's more of a danger. However, you can keep a cord coiled under the bungees on your deck for use when you need it. This is the kind of thing that gets personal and could benefit from the opinions of various paddlers in a forum type of session.

Dick Gamble also mentioned how he couldn't empty a kayak without bulkheads due to the massive weight. We calculated that the front section of a 15 ft. kayak without bulkheads could weigh 300 lbs. when flooded. (that's 500 - 600 lbs total) The first half is easy since the water comes pouring out - especially if the victim pushes down on the back of the inverted boat. The second half traps the water. I once encountered the same thing and need help from my brother to finally lift one for a complete drain. Sea kayaks without bulkheads can be brutal to lift and drain even with float bags. This is an area that we could have spent more time on and allowed experienced paddlers to try it if they haven't experienced it.

Quite a few paddlers flipped over when turning their bodies over on the paddle float re-entry. It answers the question of inflatable paddle float v.s. a styrofoam pad etc. The inflatable paddle float has about 10 times the buoyancy of the foam pads and allows you to put a lot of weight on it insuring you won't flip over.

We made a good step in the right direction with the clinic and with a little more planning can turn it into a real unique experience for paddlers of all skill levels.

The sharing of experiences from paddlers who have done these things can also raise it to a more personal level than the typical "by the book" instruction that the training institutions preach.

I want to thank Dean Bertoldi who originally came up with this good idea and sat on the sidelines patiently as I demonstrated. I really wanted to get as much input as possible from any paddlers who wanted to contribute, like Dean, Jim Mathews, Phil Warner and others ...who are quite capable and have pulled off some tough rescues in real situations. We have a lot of diversified experience in our club that we can all learn from. - Jay Babina

55+ attend Picnic

We lucked out with the rescheduling of our picnic with a perfect warm sunny day. Our location was as ideal as it gets with an abundance of picnic tables under the shade of soft pines with a perfect sandy beach for launching only 30 yards away. You just couldn't get a better location in your wildest imagination.

West Hill Pond is just large enough to make it interesting for paddling and has clear pristine water which everyone took full advantage of with roll practice (or attempted rolls), reentries and whatever.

An abundance of food was brought by most of the paddlers which made it a giant buffet for everyone. We gave away a few raffle gifts as well as ten sets of the coveted Don White pro-series (instant roll-up) Nose Plugs. Thanks to everyone for making it a really nice sharing event.

connYak Meeting

**TERRY BACKER - LONG ISLAND SOUNDKEEPER
FRIDAY, OCT. 20, 7 PM, ESSEX TOWN HALL**

Terry Backer, the Long Island Sound Keeper will be the guest speaker at our October meeting. Terry, a long time advocate for protecting the sound has been compared to an old time English River Keeper. This promises to be an interesting and informative evening.

DIRECTIONS TO THE ESSEX TOWN HALL

Approaching from the North on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left and go under the Route 9 bridge to the light. Turn left at this light on to West Avenue.

Approaching from the South on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp turn left and go to the light. Turn right at this light on to West Avenue.

The Town Hall is about a third of a mile up the hill on the left at the corner of West Avenue and Grove Street. Turn left on Grove Street - parking is in the back of the building.

T's for articles

All articles will run. With the popularity of our T's for articles campaign, we did get an massive influx of contributions.

Note: All paddlers are responsible for their own safety, including dressing for immersion. You must wear a CG approved PFD and a spray skirt. The boat and equipment must meet CG requirements, including an appropriate signaling device. Beginners must have taken a basic course and be proficient in performing a wet exit, paddle float re-entry and carry a pump. Kayaks without bulkheads should have floatation installed. (always carry extra dry clothes, food and water) Paddlers are expected to show a sense of awareness as far as staying with the group.



OCTOBER TRIPS

HADDAM MEADOWS - CT RIVER

SATURDAY, OCT. 7 - HADDAM (N)

Paddle up river and back.

DIRECTIONS -

Northbound on Rt.9-Exit 7 off Rt. 9 - go to the end. left on 154. 3 miles to Haddam Meadows - watch for entrance to park on right.

Southbound on Rt.9, take exit 10 to southbound Rt. 154 to Haddam - watch for entrance to park on left.

Inland from East Hampton side of the river - cross bridge at the Goodspeed - 1 mile to junction and a right on 154.

In the water by 10:00 a.m. (pack a lunch)

BRANFORD HARBOR

SATURDAY, OCT 14 (N)

Out the Bfd. River, across the harbor and head toward E. Haven - Granite Bay.

DIRECTIONS - I-95 to exit 54-Branford. South to Rt

1. Cross Rt 1 - through the light to the stop sign (library on the left). Take a Rt. proceed to the light. Left on Monroe St. Thru stop sign, over RR tracks (bridge) to next stop sign. Left on Harbor to stop sign. Left on Goodsell Point Rd. Launch site is on the left 200 yards.

In the water by 10:00 a.m. (pack a lunch)

ESSEX - HAMBURG COVE

SATURDAY OCT. 21 - ESSEX (N)

In the water by 10:00. Paddle to Hamburg Cove with lunch on Knott Island.

DIRECTIONS -

From Exit 3 off route 9, go to stop light and go east on West Avenue in to Essex Center - to the rotary at the head of Main Street and then go north (left) on North Main Street for 1 short block and turn right onto Bushnell Street. Just before entering the Dauntless Boat Yard there is a dirt road to the left, leading a short distance to the boat launch and parking area.

In the water by 10:00 a.m. (pack a lunch)

CONNYAK TRIP RATINGS

Any trip can change dramatically due to conditions - as in all sea kayaking.

(N) Novice: Novice paddlers are expected to be able to keep up with the leisurely group pace or will be turned back.

(I) Intermediate: Fully capable of self rescue, confident paddling stroke and braces.

(A) Advanced: A dependable roll, able to rescue others, strong, experienced paddler.



CLASSIFIED

Wilderness Systems Alto with rudder. Yellow Skirt and floatation bags. \$650/obo. Call (203) 457-9983.

Kayook plus with rudder. 8 months old, like new, \$900.00. 860-526-1410, 860-663-2069

Ocean Kayak Frenzy with backrest-1 year old \$325 and Ocean Kayak Yak-Board \$250. 203-235-6721 after 6

Current Designs Slipstream 16' X 22", Glass, one year old. Day hatch, skeg.-spray skirt. \$2,000. Men's XL Gore-Tex drytop, one year old, \$250. Call 203-256-1913

Diriego, 17.5' Sea Kayak, Kevlar/Fiberglass w/wood trim & rudder. \$1,200.00 203-734-4452 kck@ashcreek.net

Nautraid One Expedition (foldable) 15'3" red & black \$1800. or best offer. 860-521-6070

Solstice GT, Current Designs. Fiberglass, red over white. Excellent condition, used 2 seasons. Norwalk, (203) 855-9707, \$1700.

DAGGER MERIDIAN KEVLAR 43 lbs. 16' x 22". Yellow / white. Spray skirt and cockpit cover. \$1600. Call David at (860) 388-4991, or email dmiller04@snet.net

Stripper canoe, 18'x36", western red cedar hull, ash thwarts & gunnel, cane seats, spray decks. Excellent condition. \$1,000. Call (860) 653-5899..

Necky Arluk 1.9 kevlar 17'x22" 45lbs new in 1996 ex. condition. Call 203 656-0946. mmarkb@juno.com

Necky Looksha kayak-poly. 17 ft. two neoprene hatches, bulkheads, rudder, multi-chined hull, spray skirt included. \$700. Call 914-967-3164

Wold Ski Custom Terminator, Surf Kayak, Kevlar, 29 lbs, gr/ yel. \$500 W (860) 441-8416 H (860) 535-8416

Wilderness Systems Pamlico double-2 person \$500. Jim 203- 345-0090

Wilderness Systems Tchaika, fiberglass w/rudder, neoprene sprayskirt yellow/white used 4 times. \$1,500 (203)483-7705.

Old Town Canoe. 17' OTCA, wood/canvas, 1968 vintage, refurbished. \$2900.00, trade/cash for high end Kevlar kayak 203-458-3666 or RichBEC@aol.com

Touring/Surfing Sea Kayak: Sun Maximum Velocity 13' x, 25" in Xytec seamless plastic - 46lb., with bulkheads & hatches. \$675. SurfKayakers@aol.com

P&H Sirius(s) Chinese Red/White, skeg - \$1650, 1997 in excellent condition. Call 860 767 0696.

Sealution - Wilderness Systems. 16' 6" x 22" fiberglass, light gray with black trim. Rudderless with compass, spray skirt, VCP hatches - \$900.

Bob (860) 521-9054 (before 10 pm)

Red Perception Spectrum Expedition (rudder, bulkhead, hatch, spray skirt and cockpit cover for \$549. Exc cond.

Yellow Perception Keowee 2 with spray skirt for \$499.

Also...Hand carved wood kayaks - earrings, zipper pulls and display to 18". xmas tree decor. \$15.

860 434-9785 or ckayakers@worldnet.att.net

Necky Looksha IV Sea Kayak - Poly. 17 x 22.5 - yellow (easy for boaters to see) - with rudder. Double hard chines provide great stability and turning. Bought-April and in great condition - \$950. Dave (860) 767-2149

Necky Tesla-NM, Used Once. 17', Kevlar, Mango / white, blue trim, large cockpit, rudder, Ckpt. cover. Two Werner paddles. \$2,500. 1-860-526-3344

INSTRUCTION

Learn or enhance your skills with the art of Greenland style paddling and rolling. BCU Coach and ACA Certified Greenland Style instructor Fern Usen can be contacted at fernusen@aol.com for private or group workshops.

KAYAK SKILLS & ROLLING

Urban Eskimo Kayaking

Mike Falconeri/Nancy Lovelace

Skills Workshops: Sept 16, Oct 21, Nov 11, Dec 2

Safety & Rescue: Sept 17, Oct 22, Nov 12, Dec 3

Rolling: Oct 28, Nov 18, Dec 16 & 17

Sheehan High School pool in Wallingford

Call for specifics - Nancy at 860 228 0105

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:

Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net

7 Jeffrey Lane, N. Branford, CT 06471

203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136

TO JOIN CONNYAK...

ConnYak is a non profit club that is open to all paddlers interested in sea kayaking from any location. ConnYak annual membership fee is \$15.

Send inquiries to: Ed Milnes

35 Hampton Park, Branford, CT 06405

E-MAIL: CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG

WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG



c/o Ed Milnes 35 Hampton Park
Branford, CT 06405