



Wooden Canoe Heritage Association

NORTHWEST CHAPTER

Northwest Chapter WCHA

Fall Newsletter

October 2019

Happy Fall! It's been a busy season for Northwest Chapter members, amid a range of northwest weather alternatives. Between summer trips, the Port Townsend/Northwest Seaport Wooden Boat show, the Fall Meet at Manning Park, and the Seattle Wooden Boat show, people have been busy having fun with their boats!

The Port Townsend Wooden Boat Show in early, sunny September was again generously hosted by Michael Davidson and Ginger Fortier's friends Jana Allen and Bruce Tipton, and Port Townsend Foundry owners Pete and Cathy Langley, at the front yard of their business, within the boat show grounds. Michael and Ginger, Craig Dupler, Scott Christianson, Vern and Janet Heikkila, Chip Asbury and Mark Swenson helped work our display, which included Michael and Ginger's red 1928 Old Town with gold leaf striping, Vern and Janet's 12' Huron, and of course, the beautiful new raffle canoe, the 18' Thompson "Hiawatha" built by Martin Ferwerda. The display was ideally located, and very busy.



*Willow Kaestner and Craig Dupler with
"Hiawatha" raffle canoe Davidson photo*

The winning raffle ticket was drawn the last afternoon of the show, pulled before an excited crowd, and after vigorous stirring by one of Michael and Ginger's houseguests, seven-year old Willow Kaestner, of Karrotha, Western Australia,. The lucky winner, Bud Barber, was contacted by phone, and quickly arrived on a Segway scooter! A former Alaska resident, he has recently relocated to Port Townsend, and was thrilled to win the lovely canoe. Craig was able to deliver it to his home that afternoon. The raffle canoe was built by Martin Ferwerda as a donation to the chapter, using wood donated by Joy and John Bielenberg, and earned \$3,460 for the chapter! Thank you, Martin, Bielenberg family, and the many ticket buyers!



*Raffle Winner Bud Barber with
Craig Dupler at Canoe Drawing
Davidson photo*

Fall Meet at Manning Park, BC



Northwest Chapter Fall Meet 2019 Manning Park. Livdahl photo

Beautiful Manning, with good boats and good friends! Despite a wet weather forecast, a core group of NW Chapter members gathered September 12--15 to camp in RV's and rain-tarped tents at Lightning Lakes. Fortunately, the group enjoyed some glorious sunny canoeing days, as well as the expected rain, which mostly held off until time to pack up.

A number of guests added to this Meet's festivities, including Michael Davidson's nephew Ray Kaestner and family from Western Australia. With his wife Bonnie, children Aiden, Willow and Ollie, plus Grandpa Midge Ryder, the family was on a 6-week US visit, and enthusiastically picked up paddling skills. Another Australian's visit home coincided with the Meet, and Ruth Ann Garry joined her parents, John and Eloise Garry, with their Chestnut canoe. Meanwhile, Claude Delisle's brothers Craig and Jason planned a surprise birthday rendezvous at the Meet to celebrate their mom Lucille's birthday, bringing Craig's daughter Chelsea, Jason's wife Laura and kids Oracle and Indigo, plus a luscious birthday cake and food for all to enjoy. Happy Birthday, Lucille!

Interesting and beautiful boats lined the shore of Lightning Lake. The Ellsworths brought their first-ever wooden canoe, a 1923 Old Town Charles River, originally purchased by a Scout camp in New Hampshire. Repaired at the factory when damaged at camp, the canoe's original green paint and jaunty yellow pin stripe is now under several protective layers of varnish, making a sleek, fast hull. Marlene and Steve Stein brought a new addition to their fleet, a 16' Greenwood, with that builder's characteristic scalloped and crowned decks. Bill Greenwood built canoes and kits in the Vancouver, BC, area between 1934 and 1975—sometimes 300 boats a year-- but did not put his name on unfinished boats or kits. This canoe was personally finished by the builder, as attested by the "Greenwood Watercraft" name on the deck.



Joan and Steve Ellsworth with Ryder in 1923 OT Charles River. McElroy photo

Geoff Harvey came with a boat purchased at a previous Meet—an 18' 1957 Old Town sailing canoe-- and brought a sailing friend, Skip Truescott, to help fine-tune the sailing rig. Geoff has repaired rib fractures, had a new lug sail made, repainted the boat, and has plans to recane seats and add a seat for solo paddling. The boat will be based on Hayden Lake, where he hopes to sail often during the summer season. The elegant canoe seemed to effortlessly cross the lake! Pete Pride purchased his 15' Old Town 50 # as a project boat at the International Assembly. The 50 # canoes are built on Old Town's "Trapper" mold, but with lighter woods and thinner ribs and planking. Originally at a Scout Camp in New Jersey, this 1930 canoe needed new decks, 5 ribs replaced, new planking and multiple rib end repairs. The nimble canoe was a delight to paddle.

Two canoes were beginning new chapters in their lives at the Meet. Boudi and Joyce Van Oldenborgh's 17' 1969 Chestnut Prospector "Fort" will make its next home with Colleen Hovey and Claude Delisle. Purchased new from Chestnut dealer "Dinty" Moore in Burnaby, BC, in 1969, the canoe has traveled many miles and seen many waters during its first 50 years, but attentive care has kept it in good condition, ready to embark on new adventures with Claude and Colleen during its next 50 years.



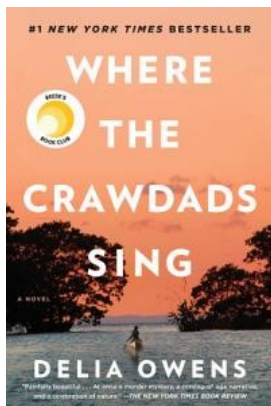
Skip Truescott sails Geoff Harvey's 1957 OT Sailing Canoe. M. Stein photo

Mike Elliott brought Mary Norton and Joe McElroy's 1905 Rushton "Indian Girl", which he has been restoring for them as part of research for his next, nearly completed book, *This Fancy Old Canoe*. The book will be a companion volume to his first book, *This Old Canoe*, and will include information on specialized repairs such as long decks, sponsons, and (illustrated by the "Indian Girl"), closed, rabbetted gunwales. The canoe was found submerged in a Seattle lake in 1951, purchased for 50 cents, and used intensively. After several re-canvassings, it was fiberglassed in the 1970's, but eventually went into severe disrepair. The owner was pleased to trade it for a functional fiberglass canoe Mary and Joe had been given. Now, it was exciting to actually paddle the "Indian Girl" for the first time—with new stems, decks, multiple new ribs, rib ends, new planking, gunwales, canvas and floorboards, and its cherry trim contrasting with the sleek new paint. The graceful canoe (now aged 114) looked ready to fly across the water. And, that's how it felt! Thank you, Mike!



Mary Norton and Joe McElroy admire 1905 Rushton Indian Girl, restored by Mike Elliott. Livdahl photo

Book Club



This Meet's book club discussion of Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees* was organized by President Craig Dupler, in the absence of co-leaders Ursula Paine and Laura Schmidt. Talk led beyond the interesting book's insights and research on trees to the roles of trees in our lives, and the importance of time spent in nature. The author, a German forester, has also written other intriguing ecological books including *The Weather Detective*, *The Inner Life of Animals*, and *The Secret Wisdom of Nature*.

Our next book club selection, for discussion at the Spring Meet at Camp Bishop, will be Delia Owen's *Where the Crawdads Sing*, a fiction choice this time. Set in a small southern town, the book focuses on the story of a young woman living alone in the deep marsh country. Read it before the Spring Meet!

Programs

Two eclectic and interesting talks highlighted this Meet's programs. Friday evening, multi-talented Mike Elliott gave an introduction to **the sport of fencing**, complete with demonstration! Introduced to fencing as a teenager, Mike's quickness, height, arm-reach and left-handed skill enabled him to rapidly advance to the Canadian Junior National team, then the National team, where he was National champion for multiple years. Fencing's three divisions, sabre, foil and epee, have long historic roots in combat and dueling in France, Germany, Italy and eastern Europe, and Mike specializes in epee. The three types been Olympic sports since 1896, and the action is so quick that contacts for scoring have



Mike Elliott demonstrates fencing with volunteer Ruthie Garry. McElroy photo

been recorded electronically since the 1930's. Mike went on as a coach and trainer for the National team, which involves building extreme leg strength and endurance as well as technique. Interestingly, fencing choreography for film is almost a specialty of its own, and one of Mike's own teachers has done the swordfight choreography for many popular movies, including Star Wars, Zorro, Pirates of the Caribbean, Lord of the Rings, etc.

Mike gave a fencing demonstration with the help of volunteer Ruthie Garry, herself an athlete and former Australian National rollerderby champion. When the two crossed swords, Mike's action seemed effortless and too fast to follow visually. Curiously, when Ruthie shut her eyes, and defended at the feel of his motion, she was finally able to make a successful parry. What an interesting sport!

On Saturday evening, Ray Kaestner, another Australian guest, talked on one of his interests, **gold prospecting in Australia!** Now "addicted" to gold-hunting, Ray tries to go prospecting at least a day every two weeks. Northwestern Australia is very dry, often over 100 degrees, with poisonous plants and insects, so it isn't a very family-friendly environment, and the prospector may dig for months without finding gold. Prospectors can dig holes 2 meters deep, and continue trenching while examining all the dirt with a metal detector. Australia has three types of gold—alluvial, crystalline—found in crystal substances like quartz-- and rarely, wire gold, formed by a geophysical process where the gold is pushed through a low pressure point in the earth's mantle. Ray searches in a sedimentary area, an old ocean bed, and what he and his partners usually find is similar to South African gold—mostly hard nuggets. Others have found nuggets that are very large.



Michael Davidson introduces Ollie, Willow and Bonnie Kaestner to canoes. Livdahl photo



Mike Livdahl in Old Town Otca. V. Coquet photo

When a potentially rich area is found, the prospector may “peg” or purchase a lease on the area. Unfortunately this may take 24 months to process, and a rich area can’t be left alone, as “seagull poachers” fly the area looking for increased activity and may try to occupy the area themselves. Ray has pegged three leases that he has sold to Canadian mining companies. He passed around a small, surprisingly heavy vial containing many small gold nuggets—a small sample of what he has found in the last few years. Good hunting, Ray!

Chapter Meeting

President Craig Dupler chaired a brief chapter meeting prior to Saturday’s potluck dinner. A surprise presentation was first on the list: Craig had ordered beautiful insulated drink cups inscribed with the NW chapter logo to give to people who have helped make the chapter function. Joan Ellsworth (treasurer), Mike Livdahl (photographer), Mary Norton and Joe McElroy (newsletter) were present to receive their cups; Sue Cross (postcards) and Martin Ferwerda (website) will get theirs at Camp Bishop.

The group voted to again hold our **Fall Meet at Manning in 2020**, and Boudi Van Oldenborgh will facilitate the arrangements. Craig presented Boudi with a NW Chapter cup for his Meet organization. **The Spring Meet will be at Camp Bishop, May 7,8,9,10, 2020.**

Treasurer’s Report from Joan Ellsworth: our present bank balance is \$7607. The Thompson “Hiawatha” raffle canoe built by Martin raised \$3260, and this Meet’s auction raised \$1116.



Michael Davidson, Colleen Hovey, Claude Delisle. Livdahl photo

Colleen Hovey gave a report on the **40th Annual International WCHA Assembly in July**. She, Joe and Mary, Mike Livdahl and Mike Elliott attended from our chapter, and were made very welcome. **Colleen is now the WCHA Vice**

President, as well as the WCHA board's chapter liaison. The Assembly was held at Paul Smith's College, a small 4-year school on Lower St Regis Lake in New York's Adirondack State Park. Assembly goers can stay in the dorms surrounding the lake, and take meals in the college cafeteria. A large open field, "The Green" borders the lake, and about 300 canoes were on display there. This year featured 100 year-old canoes, and about 50 of them, from many builders, and many types of construction, were there. On campus at the same time were the Adirondack Club, whose members were hiking, canoeing and kayaking daily, and the ACA's Free-style canoeing championships, so there was a lot of canoe activity. The Assembly program was so busy one had to pick and choose what to attend—talks, hands-on workshops and building projects, canoe and birdwatching trips, etc. WCHA Board member Deborah Gardner (whom we met at Camp Bishop this spring) and husband Greg Nolan generously made their brand new Jerry Stelmok canoe available to us northwesterners, so we also enjoyed canoeing the lake as well.



Steve Ellsworth. Livdahl photo



Ruthie Garry, Vera Coquet, Mike Monks and Ivy Winterbottom enjoy the sun. Livdahl photo

Around 300 people attended the Assembly, many with families. First-time attendees were given colored names tags so others would introduce themselves, and the friendly group made it seem much like a larger, busier version of our own meets. Deborah Gardner showed the video she had filmed and produced, "Forty Years of the WCHA", with interviews by many members, including several from our NW chapter. On Saturday evening, many canoes participated in the "Paddle-By" where the canoes individually passed and saluted onlookers on the balcony overlooking the lake, while descriptions of the canoe and its history were read.

The Assembly fundraising auction raised \$16,000 for the WCHA, and included a silent auction, live auction, and a raffle-like auction where bidders could place purchased tickets—as many as you wanted—towards an item. When the winning ticket was drawn, that person won the item. Each year, quilters in the group create a themed quilt, which is also raffled. In honor of the 40th anniversary, a number of beautiful past quilts were on display, brought for the show by their lucky winners. A large number of donated project boats—some needing only new canvas—were also auctioned, at bargain prices.



Geoff Harvey in 1957 Old Town. Livdahl photo

As first-time attendees, we very much enjoyed both the Assembly and the surrounding Adirondack Park, appreciating the opportunity to hike in the area and to visit some of the interesting museums and attractions in the area. We hope to attend again.



Craig Dupler, Joe McElroy and Mike Elliott. Livdahl photo

Colleen also relayed **news from the WCHA board**; much decision making took place during the face-to-face meeting time the Assembly afforded. Finances are a large concern, as the group lost approximately \$5,000 in 2018. Several policies are being adopted to alleviate this. Dues will be increased slightly. Since most of the membership fees go to producing the journal, the journal will change from 6 issues per year to 4 larger issues. There will be a “donate” button on the website, and an annual fundraiser will be held. Members can utilize Amazon

Smile to donate to the WCHA when anything is purchased from Amazon: go to [amazonsmile.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) to set this up so it is automatic when you order. The board plans to also set up company matching donations and estate planning opportunities.

The WCHA board is recruiting a new webmaster—Benson Gray is temporarily filling in—and is also looking for a new journal editor. The board is also actively pursuing the issue of liability insurance for chapters to utilize at local events. The board meets electronically on a monthly basis, and face-to-face twice yearly, at the Assembly, and in February. Thank you, Colleen, for representing us with tact, good ideas, and a Northwest viewpoint!



Claude Delisle and Ollie Kaestner in Peterborough Mermaid. Livdahl photo

Auction 2019



Steve Stein in Greenwood Canoe. M Stein photo

Our fundraising auction was held Saturday evening before the potluck, in the warm shelter building under electric lights, thanks to Des Winterbottom's nearby motorhome. Auctioneer Claude Delisle and young assistant Willow Kaestner glibly worked the crowd to sell an interesting assorted collection of donations to new owners. Items included Morris Elliott's WCHA canvas jacket, beautiful paddles from Pete Pride and Mike Elliott, and an official cold-war era Canadian Civil Defense canteen, as well as tools and canoe materials. The auction-topping item, a stunning and unique piece of art, was created jointly by Australian artist Bonnie Kaestner and Michael Davidson. Delicate scrimshaw engraving by Bonnie on a piece of mastadon ivory from Michael was mounted on a block of polished ebony, and highlighted by a shiny gold nugget. The beautiful piece will grace the home of high bidder Craig Dupler. The auction earned \$1116 for the chapter. Thank you to donors, bidders, Claude and Willow!

Potluck!

Following the auction, the group gathered for the traditional Saturday night potluck dinner, including our favorite fresh corn from Des and Ivy Winterbottom, and this year, a Happy Birthday! celebration for Lucille Delisle. Delicious food kept everyone busy as they tried to sample all the delicacies offered, and the candle-lit birthday cake made the whole meal festive. Thank you, everyone, for all the good food!



Pete Pride loads his OT 50 #. Livdahl photo



Des Winterbottom. Livdahl photo



Bob Moore loads his Morley. Livdahl photo

Rainy Sunday!

After a night of light rain, campers awoke to a downpour!

Walks and dawn patrol were abandoned as people began to pack up wet gear. Joint efforts helped load slippery canoes, and quick damp goodbyes were said as people headed home. Special thanks to the crew who helped take down our forgotten rain tarp, tied with many, many tiny rain-swollen knots . . .

See you at Camp Bishop, May 7–10, 2020!



Steve Ellsworth. Livdahl photo



Craig Dupler at CWB Wooden Boat Show, with Ferwerda Thompson "Hiawatha" and Atkinson Traveler. Norton photo

Center for Wooden Boats Show, Seattle

Cool windy and wet weather somewhat dampened the participants and crowds at the CWB's Wooden Boat Show Sept 28 and 29, 2019. Despite the low turnout, Craig Dupler, Scott Christianson, Dave Nelson, Mary Norton, and Mike Livdahl set up a NW Chapter WCHA display under Scott's rain canopy. Those at the booth enjoyed sea chantey and old time music, a delicious exhibitor's lunch, visiting with next-door Hvalsoe boat friend Mark Swenson, and a chance to tour the many other show activities. Craig's Atkinson Traveler and Mary's Ferwerda Thompson "Hiawatha" were greatly admired, but the attendance at the show was somewhat disappointing. Thank you to Scott and Craig, for organizing our display!



Marlene Stein, in Greenwood canoe. S. Stein photo



Pete Pride in Old Town 50# canoe. McElroy photo

President's Message

The Northwest Chapter continues to be healthy in every way possible. I wish all of you could have been with us in Pt Townsend when we had the drawing for our raffle canoe! A very sweet little girl relative of Michael and Ginger's who is visiting them with her family from Australia, reached into the box and stirred it vigorously. Then out came her hand with a somewhat crumpled ticket. I asked her if she was absolutely certain that this was indeed the lucky ticket and she assured me it was. And so I read the name of our winner: Bud Barber. The contact information on the ticket was a cell phone with an Anchorage area code, but when called, he answered. Bud was at the show and in fact had recently moved to Pt. Townsend and lived just short distance from Michael and Ginger. He said he would be right over - so we waited.



President Craig Dupler in Atkinson Traveler. Livdahl photo

Now, I do have to say that there were some disappointed faces in the crowd at this point, but Bud did not disappoint. He came tooling up to claim his canoe riding on his - Segway! Now you may recall when Segway inventor Dean Karmen was being all secretive about the exact nature of his invention while raising money for his startup company, he used the code name "Ginger" for his then secret product. The crowd at PT. Townsend was thrilled by Bud's arrival, and I had the pleasure of helping him load it on my truck and deliver it right to his house. I think we may have a new member.

Our fall meet at Manning turned out to be a bit damp around the edges, but nature cooperated and Saturday was as perfect of a Fall canoeing day as one could imagine. And, as is so often the case in our little group, an un expected talent was on display as former Canadian national fencing champion Mike Elliott demonstrated that we definitely want him on our side when the other guys come charging over the seventh hill.

We have an unusual program in the works for the Spring meet, and I am looking forward to seeing everyone once again. Do have a wonderful Fall and Winter, and remember to dress for the water temperature when paddling.

Cd

For Sale! Bill Dengler's 1909 Carleton 17' canoe, restored at the Old Town factory in the late 1960's, and purchased from them in 1971. Always stored indoors; in beautiful condition.
\$3500 360 379 0836



Peace River Paddle, by Mike Monks

July 2019

At the Manning Park meet I was asked if I could give a brief talk about a 12-day canoe trip that Vera and I had made with two others in another canoe. I agreed, but the chats going on around the shelter's tables seemed to be completely engrossing everyone, so I opted to continue chatting in our little group.

Our trip did not include any wooden canoes (GASP!!) but was enjoyable none-the-less. Dave and Ian drove up together, while Vera and I drove up with their canoe and some of their gear.



The put-in was Peace River, Alberta, about 1500 km north-east of our homes in the Vancouver, BC area. Take-out was at Fort Vermilion, a 436 km paddle away.



It took most of two days to drive to the put-in. Dave had scouted out the terrain the previous summer and determined where we could park and put in, right across the street from the motel we would spend the night in.

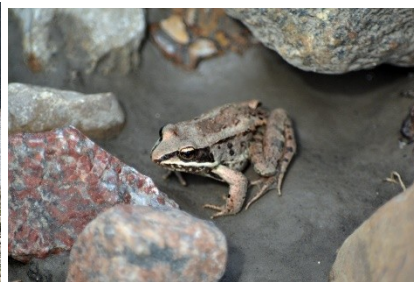
Alas, conditions then were not the conditions now. In the morning we drove to the launch point and discovered that the higher-than-normal water level had caused a thick layer of mud that made launching impossible. We walked along the shore hoping for the best ... in vain.

Eventually, we found a local who suggested that there may be another boat launch further down the road near a pump station. We found it and sighed in relief. Parking would be on the street, but in a residential area, so we hoped for the best ... with the nagging knowledge that Alberta and BC were in the midst of a nasty political battle over an oil pipeline. Perhaps our BC plates would leave us open to some vengeful actions.

We loaded the canoes and pushed off in water that would put Big Muddy to shame. Everyone we met before and during the trip told us that they had never seen the Peace River so brown.



Our first few days had us finding camping on islands with small, rocky beaches. Landings were easy and footing was good. The colours and variety in the rocks made for interesting wandering, too.



Sadly, such lovely landings ended about half way through the trip, to be replaced by mud and even a bit of quicksand. We had to find ground that looked dry on the surface. If it looked wet, then we may sink to our knees ... and did!



The colour of the water did not take anything away from the rest of the scenery, fortunately.



The rain on the third day, however, ...



This was the only day that weather kept us off the water. It poured from bedtime to mid-afternoon ... so we stayed pretty close to the tarp. On another day a thunderstorm chased us off river and passed right over us as we sat on the shore hoping that we weren't the tallest things in the area. There was another storm to come ... but that's later.

The water also did not deter the local wildlife.



We also paddled through burnt out areas of forest from the High Level fire that eventually burned over 375,000 hectares.



For two days we paddled past scorched trees and finally reached healthy forest again ... only to find that the fire was still raging further north on our route.



Helicopters began to dominate the landscape - and soundscape - in the quest to douse the inferno. Vera got the best shot ...



On our last night on the river we were camped on an island where we watched helicopters dropping buckets of water onto the fire ... and then a thunderstorm raged through and we watched several strikes spark new fires only about a kilometer from us. A procession of helicopters doused them almost immediately, as they were already in the area. It was a sight to behold.

We experienced a very heart-warming experience at the LaCrete campground that our guide book had set as the end of the day's paddle. We arrived and found that the steep bank was comprised of thigh-deep mud, making a landing virtually impossible. As we sat in our canoes 15 meters (50 feet) below the campground a lady called down asking if we needed help. I told her that we would drop down to a boat launch further down the river and hope that we could access the campground from it.

When we landed it looked like a horrendous task to carry all of our gear up the road and into the campsite. We got to the top of the road and found that there was no camping to be had there and the campground was still a fair distance away. I returned to the canoes while the others continued to explore.

A man with a few fish to clean arrived and we chatted while he went about the process at the river edge. Shortly thereafter, a friend of his with a pickup truck arrived. Soon some families arrived. A few minutes later the other three of our party arrived back at the canoes ... carrying plates of food. "You must be tired and hungry," said a woman as she handed them over to our group.

Andy, the fellow with the pickup truck volunteered to carry our gear and us up to the campground ... and then back the next day!

We had lucked into a reunion potluck dinner being held by the local community members of LaCrete, mainly Mennonites, who had been displaced by the fire to the campground, one of the few places in the area to be missed by the fire. One would be hard pressed to find a friendlier, more welcoming group of people than we met that day. And they can cook! We paddled away the next day with a small audience and many good wishes.

Soon we arrived in the small town of Fort Vermilion where we met the fellow who would get us back to our vehicles. Thus, the sun set on our trip through some remarkable landscapes and even more remarkable people met along the way.



Spring Meet! May 7, 8, 9, 10 2020 YMCA Camp Bishop, Shelton, WA

northwest.wcha.org

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