

CONNAYAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

August 2002

15 Skin Boats and counting!

GLOSSARY

by Pete Strand

SOF - Skin on frame.

TULIEG - Native (or re-creation) paddling outfit - hood, torso and skirt all in one.

PHEROMONE - a sexual attractant carried in the air.

GREENLAND PADDLE - Any item with narrow non-feathered blades that looks like it won't work as a paddle.

21 Kayaks total - I surprised myself when I counted. Fifteen of the boats have been skin on frame boats, the first of which I built during my 8th grade summer. I had a cousin who moved to Unalakleet, Alaska after he got out of the Navy at the end of WWII. Through the '50s and 'early 60's I was enthralled with his stories of the Inuit and their dependence on the Kayak. That time was really the beginning of the introduction of outboard motors and aircraft so the stories changed from spearing game from a kayak or umiak to shooting from an outboard powered umiak and airboat. After Ice Out, the families would still head off to summer fish camp, all stuffed under the decks of their kayaks. If the boat was good; they came back three months, if it was not; they were never seen again. Mechanix Illustrated had a set of plans for an 11ft 9in canvas covered kayak constructed like a non-folding FolBoat

with plywood frames and spruce stringers all glued and screwed together. This was my first attempt at boat building and it turned out pretty good. I cheated death many times in that boat, summers going miles offshore into Cape Cod Bay and springtime running ice choked rivers, no coaming, no skirt and no PFD. (Yes, I have had a near death experience and am guilty as charged for being anal about water safety now.) I built 2 other kayaks that summer, one of which still survives today, 41 years later.

Today my Kayaks are constructed with a frame of Pine and Oak. The Deck Beams are pegged and lashed to the Gunwales. The Stem and Stern are lashed to the Gunwales. The Ribs are pegged into mortises and the Keel and Chines are pegged to the Ribs. The Frame is finished with Boiled Linseed Oil and Turpentine. The 8-ounce Ballistic Nylon Skin is sewn around the Frame and to the Coaming, shrunk tight and finished with varnish.

Synthetic braided marine line is used for the deck lines, no elastic. The deck lines are arraigned traditionally with a pair in front of and behind the cockpit. Sliders on the lines allow you to clamp items securely. Clamping the end of a paddle as an outrigger under the sliders gives a very stable platform, allowing activity that would normally capsize in.

The Cockpit Coaming is smaller than

mass produced boats, even smaller than the "Ocean" cockpit. Like a properly fitting shoe, it is large enough to let you slip into the boat and contact the beams and sides without extra padding but not so small as to be constricting. Once you are in, you are very comfortable. The smaller opening allows far less water into the boat if the skirt seal fails. I can roll the boat with no skirt and only pick up about a gallon of water. Inside are float bags.

The 8-ounce Ballistic Nylon skin is very resistant to impact but is vulnerable to abrasion. Damage can be easily repaired with seam sealer and, if necessary sewn. Temporary repairs may be made with duct tape. The nylon skin can be easily replaced if necessary. Ballistic Nylon is superior to Rawhide and Canvas because it resists rot and mildew well.

When my grandson was 2, I decided it was time for him to have his own kayak, so I built an 8 ft boat similar to the lines from Harvey Golden's boys' boat of 1889. Now 4, He is still very proud of his own boat and will tell you so. I have built 5 of those for other people.

I really enjoy "Traditional Kayaking" because of its simple beauty. The boats are Spartan yet elegant. The performance can be amazing, and they fit. When someone asks me why people roll kayaks I say "it's the only boat that can be rolled at will, so why not." My first traditional skin boat made rolling so easy that



Pete Strand sporting the very fashionable neoprene Tuliek.

15 skin boats continued.

it felt like cheating. I must admit I was a little afraid of the boat for about 4 months. I spent a lot of time in secret shallow coves bracing and working my confidence level up just like Jay shows in his video. The advantage of Skin on Frame boats is you can make modifications easily, sometimes without removing the skin. If you want something entirely different, in 2 weeks you can make one from scratch. The joy of skin boats is after two hours of paddling they still weigh 30 pounds when you hike them up onto the roof rack. The beauty of skin boats is they exude pheromone.

Jamestown Circumnavigation

by Wayne Smith

The weather forecast was too good to be true for the Jamestown Circumnavigation: Light winds from the southeast building to 10 knots, and seas one foot or less. Considering we had to round Beavertail Point, this was welcome news since it was foggy.

We launched from Fort Wetherill a little late, and headed out towards the open ocean. We crossed the channel coming out from Mackerel Cove, and headed down the Jamestown shoreline towards the point. There was a small swell coming in, which led me to believe we may see some action at Beavertail. We got within sight of the point, and it was running. Nothing major — 4 foot dumpers on the reef just off the point, but they

were breaking well inside the buoy. If we crossed the reef halfway to the buoy, it'd just be good fun. Part of the group was playing in the swell and reflected waves off the cliffs and rocks, and cut the point a little too close. I was about 20 yards further out, and knowing that the waves were getting bigger on the reef, I kept my distance. Well, Beavertail Point decided to remind us of its reputation: one quick slap of the Beaver's tail, and we have a paddler in the water. He got a dumper across his beam, and tried his best to just ride it out, but to no avail. The wave was just too big. He got separated from his boat, and was pulled out of the surf zone by another paddler. Nick went in after the boat, which had washed up on the rocks, and towed it out. It suffered some minor damage near the bow, and had to be duct taped to finish the trip. No injuries and a lost hat was all that happened beyond the boat damage. It was a good reminder of why headlands should be approached with awareness and caution.

We got back together, and headed up the west passage of Narragansett Bay to Dutch Island, with the current pushing us along. My GPS said we were averaging 4.8 knots along this leg. And then, the sound of a sonic boom...we were paddling right into the Quonset air show. Lots of fun to watch. The Blue Angels were doing their show, and there was also a small plane doing aerobatics. We watched the show through our first stop, and all the way to Conanicut Point on the north end of the island. We also were treated to a couple of kite skiers playing

in our immediate vicinity.

We rounded the point, and immediately realized that the weather forecast was off — there was a 10 -15 knot wind blowing straight up the bay, moderate chop, and we had 8 miles of paddling into this ahead of us. We took our next break about a mile down on a beach. We set off again, at a slower pace. It was now almost 3:00 PM, and the people who routinely paddle for distance would become apparent in the last leg. Phil and Nick were at the front of the group, I was in the middle, and we had a sweep at the rear that I traded off with every half hour or so. We all kept in contact by radio. The decision was eventually made to split the group by speed, and the faster paddlers went ahead. I hung with the slower group, and kept in touch by radio with the faster group, letting them know we had the situation in hand. Nobody was in trouble, they were just a little slower now.

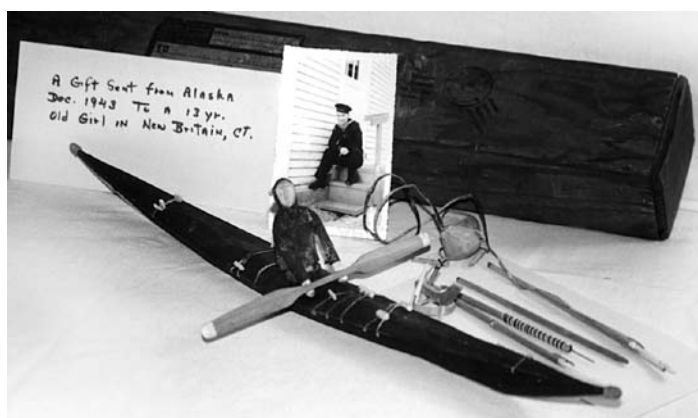
As we paddled across Jamestown Harbor, Phil called me on the VHF, and asked if we were the kayaks he saw. He was at the town dock, checking on us and I told him and we were heading for Fort Wetherill and a cold beer.

Trip summary: 18 nautical miles (20.7 statute miles), average speed was 4.8 knots on the west side of the island, and 2.6 on the east side paddling into the wind (On my GPS). One swimmer, one damaged boat, a Blue Angels show, and 14 tired paddlers at the end of the day. what can happen while paddling.

1940's Seal Skin Kayak Model

ConnYak member Donald Clark is the owner of this unique Greenland Kayak model that came with various hunting spears, paddler, paddle and a wooden box with the original label. The skin of the kayak seems to be real seal skin. It was sent to his wife as a present in 1943 from a friend (in picture) who was stationed in Alaska while in the Navy. Don's wife Theresa received it when she was 13 years old and it's estimated that the kayak is at least 59 years old. She didn't play with it much, just admired it as a collectors

piece. Don is currently looking for a home for it in a museum so it can be shared with the public for years to come. During the winter club meetings he will bring it to a club meeting for anyone to see.



Building a Greenland Kayak

ConnYak member Mark Starr is the author of the new instructional book on building a SOF Greenland

Kayak. Mark is the instructor for SOF building classes at Mystic Seaport and brought one of his beautiful boats to our winter meetings.

It's a very thorough manual - 120 pgs. and can be purchased at the Mystic Seaport Bookstore for \$24.99. Or... on line at www.mysticseaport.org. 888-95SEAPORT

Congratulations Mark!
That's 2 boatbuilding authors in the club.



Skin Boat Gathering

The ninth annual Skin Boat Gathering was held this year on June 22nd and 23rd at Pleasant Bay, Chatham, Cape Cod. Bill Low of Willow Kayaks was the host of this very informal event and a great time was had by all who attended. The water in the bay was warm, the sky was clear both days with a southwest wind was blowing at about 10 to 15 knots.

There were about 20 skin-on-frame kayaks represented, with more than half of them baidarkas. The West Greenland, "Inuit" style skin boat has hard chines and fewer ribs and stringers than the Aleutian Islands baidarka so I am guessing that the frame would go together quicker. Most people build their SOF with very low (make that extremely low) volume to facilitate easy rolling, but I went for comfort with the two West Greenland style kayaks I have built. I can actually get in and out of mine without a struggle.

Last winter I built my first one and tried it in the pool. It was much too "twitchy" for me, so in the spring I built another one with the chines placed further outboard for improved initial stability. It worked. Since then, I have cut the floor boards out where my rear end sits, on both boats, to lower my center of gravity, and now they are both very comfortable stabilitywise. On Saturday we tried each other's boat out and played around in the beautiful Pleasant Bay all day and then most of us went to dinner in the evening at the Binnacle restaurant in Orleans. They make a delicious margarita, and oh yes, the food was good too.

Then Sunday morning 9 of us paddled out to and around the north Monomoy Island, 10 or 12 mile trip altogether. At one point we were in the midst of about 100 gray seals who apparently live there year round. Those are the really big ones. Nobody got bumped so they must be gentle creatures. We went through a couple of areas where the waves were kicking up enough to get a feel for my boat's tolerance for such stuff, and I felt pretty good about the way it handled. We had lunch on a sand dune at the south end of the Island and traded lies. We got back to the put in about 3:00 PM and home to Connecticut about 7:00 PM after a weekend well spent. Bill Low was a fun host and a thoroughly nice guy. I learned a lot and plan to do it again next year.

- Dick Gamble



Dick Gamble in his new and improved 2nd skin boat.

Connyak Rescue Clinic - Aug 10th

Not on the 17th as previously written.

The Annual ConnYak Rescue Clinic will take place on Saturday - August 10 - at Bluff Point State Park. This is a forum type of affair with demonstrations of various rescue techniques by instructors, would-be instructors and anybody who would like to share experiences and knowledge. We'll show the typical "T" Rescues, Scoop, Paddle Float and others. Any paddlers who would like to demonstrate something or be involved in some way please let us know. The water

should be quite warm and there will be plenty of experienced paddlers there to answer any questions or help people with these techniques. We will start at 10:30 am. If people would like to paddle prior to or after the event please do so, or.. you can come as a spectator as well since the demos will be right there on the beach adjacent to the parking lot.

If you're having problems with your roll, there will be a lot of help available on that as well.

EVENTS

RESCUE CLINIC - AUG 10

LORD'S COVE
ESSEX LAUNCH - (N)

Sat - Aug 17

Novice lunch paddle of 6 to 7 miles. Launch at 10:00 am. Out CT River to explore Lord's Cove and area for lunch and back.

NORWALK ISLANDS

WESTPORT, SAUGATUCK RIVER LAUNCH - UNDER I-95 BRIDGE (N & I)

Sun - Aug 18

Intermediate / advanced. Circumnavigation of the Norwalk Islands. Trip length 16 miles and will cross several busy channels. Thunder storms and winds of 25 MPH will cancel.

Sat - Aug 24

Novice paddle of 6 to 7 miles. Launch under thruway bridge in Westport at 10:30 am. Short paddle up the Saugatuck River than out to Cacine Island for lunch.

2 INTER-CLUB PADDLES BY NORTH SHORE PADDLERS - MA

September 14

The North Shore Paddlers Network (NSPN) is proud to host an inter-club trip for the New England sea kayak clubs.

The plan is for NSPN to coordinate 3 trips of different distances and put-in locations to arrive at Misery Island @ noon time and have lunch. The trip levels will be Level 2, Level 3, and a level 4/5. Our website gives details on our rating system. Go to "Trip Ratings" on our main page <http://www.nspn.org/> The Level 2 trip will depart from the Manchester Harbor MA area. The Level 3 trip will depart from Devereaux beach in Marblehead MA. The Level 4/5 trip would depart from Gloucester MA. Details - next month - 2 trips lead by ConnYak.

Check the bulletin board for other impromptu trips listed by members - www.connyak.org
We need paddles listed by members this year to avoid overcrowding launch sites.

CLASSIFIED

Derek Hutchinson Toksook paddle new 230 Kevlar . New \$330 now \$225 or best offer. 860-561-4415 work 860-635-1979 email: bobyak2@aol.com

Dry-tops. Stohlquist. One new, one used. \$100 & \$65. Both mens medium. Tom 413-593-6167.

Old Town Castine Kayak 14' beginners kayak. red, 2 hatches, paddle and skirt. \$600. 860-985-6893

Valley Skerray, Fiberglass, Blue over White, with skeg and Chimp Pump. Great condition! \$1700 203-854-9713 brianenichols@aol.com

Valley Skerray XL, Fiberglass, Turquoise over white, with skeg, two hatches, chimp pump, and compass. Immaculate condition! \$1795. Contact (203) 840-0156.

Aquaterra Double - Gemini, poly, tandem, wide beam, great for the kids or lake. Asking \$600.00 or best offer. Call 860-388-2464 Sharon.

Perception Eclipse 17'2" X 22.5". Poly, yellow/red. Rudder. Cockpit cover. Excellent, purchased 10/01. \$1075. 203-750-0362 or e-mail obloch@optonline.net.

Old Town Nantucket - 1 year old - \$500.00 yellow poly, rudder, thigh braces, adjustable hip pads Pete 860-749-0471

Nigel Dennis Greenlander, new \$1600 - too many boats in the barn - will sell for same. Dennis (860) 873-1884

Padding partner wanted M/F, intermediate skills - CT shoreline or rivers - Phil Goodsell 860-436-4507

Two Werner paddles for sale; one left hand control San Juan and one right hand control Camano . Both in Fiberglass . \$175.00 each . Call 203 226 9674 days or 203 454 2278 eves .

Wilderness Systems Shenai, Red over white, Kevlar. Very light, fast boat. \$1400.00. P&H Sirius (S), all white, glass, skeg. \$1200.00. Both boats in good condition. Phone 203-270-9134

Janautica Anadyr - Fast, seaworthy coastal touring kayak - Excellent boat for motivated beginners, intermediates or experts. Fiberglass, 17.5' X 21.25", adjustable seat and footpegs, 2 rubber hatches, bulkheads rigging and more. Brand new - \$1599. E-mail ritey@lycos.com or call 917 567 9430

Perception Pirouette White Water kayak: Float bags, drain plug, blue and white \$450 B/O. 860-613-0622 or Bkahuna@snet.net

Heritage SeaDart 14' 2" - Greenland style sit-on-top, n poly, 2 years old. List price \$829, will sell for \$550. AquaBound paddle also available (with kayak only) \$75. Will deliver in CT. Kerry 203-481-0500 ext.120 (days)

Stearns Self Bailing inflatable kayak; life jacket, pump, paddle and storage bag. Used one season, great shape. Lists new for \$479. Asking \$300. Elizabeth Montgomery 203-878-8336, elizmont36@aol.com.

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.

Membership includes monthly newsletter, paddles, functions, etc.

Send inquiries to:

ConnYak, P.O. Box 197, Ellington, CT 06029

E-MAIL: CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG

WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG

T-shirts for Articles

Authors of articles for the newsletter get a free T-shirt. If you have written an article and haven't received your T-shirt, please speak up at one of the paddles. The club officers usually have them at the paddles.

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:

Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net

7 Jeffrey Lane, Branford, CT 06405

203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.



ConnYak
CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

P.O. Box 197, Ellington, CT 06029

