

# GLOUCESTER MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER

The Newsletter of the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center • Gloucester, Massachusetts • Fall 2002

## Foundation Gifts *Lady Grace* to GMHC

On September 27, 2002, the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center became the new owner of the *Lady Grace*, the steel hulled swordfishing boat that played the role of the ill fated *Andrea Gail* in Warner Brothers production of *The Perfect Storm*. The vessel was donated to GMHC, along with an endowment of \$25,000 a year for three years, by the Legal Foundation, LLC, which is managed by Roger Berkowitz, president and CEO of Legal Sea Foods.



The gift of the *Lady Grace* is particularly valuable because it comes with the financial resources necessary to cover the cost of berthing and maintaining the vessel over the next three years. The funding will also support the development of a plan to utilize the vessel for educational and scientific purposes.

"This is a tremendous boost for the center," said GMHC president Geoffrey Richon. "It will help us move to a new level in terms of the opportunities we can offer to community members and visitors from around the world. We can use it to teach people about the realities of commercial fishing and we can use it as a research vessel."

Often referred to as the heritage center's "movie star," the *Lady Grace* was built by the Eastern Shipbuilding Group in Panama City, Florida, the same shipyard that built her sister ship, the *Andrea Gail*. The vessel was purchased by Warner Brothers for use in the movie. Legal Sea Foods, which had purchased fish from the *Andrea Gail*, bought the *Lady Grace* from Warner Brothers through an eBay auction in July of 2000.

"I'd love to see the *Lady Grace* become a major attraction," observes Roger Berkowitz, "and have it serve as a reminder of the dangers of fishing. I'd like to see it used as a means of creating an appreciation of what people go through to put fish on our plates.

"The *Andrea Gail* brought a lot of attention to Gloucester," he continues. "It's nice to have the *Lady Grace* as a symbol in memory of the *Andrea Gail*, the people lost on that boat, and what the boat represents for Gloucester. We view the *Lady Grace* as an icon representing the trials and tribulations of the fishing industry."

### A Message from the GMHC President...

The "we seem to get what we need" theme continues to resonate with me as I see the progress we are making. The other day, Nancy, Harriet and I were in the office and the phones were not working. I looked out the window and saw Mike Dailey, recently retired after thirty plus years with the phone company, standing on the dock. The phones were fixed in minutes. Thanks, Mike.

It seems to be a matter of seeking what we need without restricting ourselves in terms of how we are willing to approach the solution.

We are explorers at GMHC, exploring our future and how best to use our resources to carry out our mission. We are open to exploring opportunities for cooperation with other groups and institutions who come forward to discuss their ideas and needs. We recognize that such partnerships can strengthen the overall impact of what GMHC will mean to Gloucester and beyond. This is a very exciting time to be part of GMHC. I welcome you to come down and explore for yourself.

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Geoffrey Richon,  
GMHC President

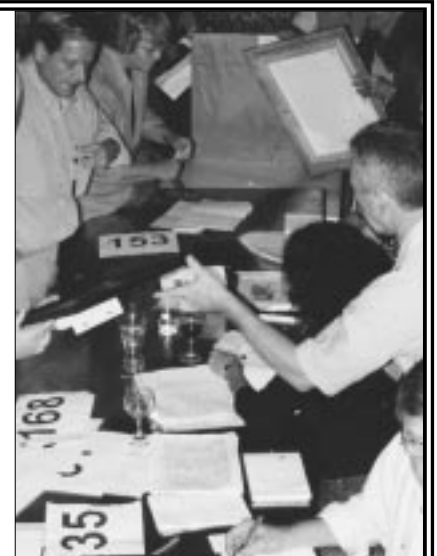


## Vincie N. Auction a Great Success

"\$400! \$500! \$550! Who will give me six? Going once, going twice..."

Commandeering the attention of the packed crowd gathered on the deck of The Studio Restaurant beneath a full moon on a perfect September evening, auctioneer Michael March sold off 87 lots in under two hours. The bidding was enthusiastic, the crowd jovial. In the end a mad dash five week long effort, which began when local artist Jeff Weaver suggested a marine art auction to raise funds towards the preservation of the *Vincie N.*, netted \$16,700 for the Save the *Vincie N.* Fund.

The *Vincie N.* is the last of the transitional boats remaining afloat, representing the period when fishing boats were moving from wind to engine power. Built in 1936, she has been owned and fished by the Novello family for over 50 years. The boat has long been a favorite subject for the many artists who make Cape Ann their home. "It was a great opportunity for the artists to show an outpouring of support for the fishing community," comments *Vincie N.* fan and artist Patty Sullivan, "and they really did come through." *continued on next page*



## Auction a Big Hit

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The auction was organized by the Save the *Vincie N.* Committee, an ad hoc group determined to assure the vessel's future by raising the funds necessary to provide her with a home at GMHC. Members include Weaver, Sullivan, Kathy Weaver, Bill and Denise Bacon, Susie Field, Bob Heineman, Peter Wostrel, Barbara Gannon and Bob Sullivan.

Lena Novello took responsibility for feeding the auction crowd, preparing an enormous mound of lobster salad and hundreds of fish puffs, along with other delicious hors d'oeuvres. She was ably assisted by Diane Novello, Grace Novello, Sally Olson, Connie Condon, and Bernadette Anderson.

Much of the success of the event goes to Michael March of Blackwood & March Antiques in Essex who gave the committee a whirlwind lesson in how to organize and manage an auction. Enormous

thanks as well to Frank Ahern, owner of The Studio, who donated the use of the restaurant and the run of his kitchen, two ingredients which added immeasurably to the festive nature of the auction. GMHC and the Save the *Vincie N.* Committee also express appreciation to the volunteers who helped out on the night of the auction, issuing bidding numbers, serving as runners, organizing the silent auction and just doing the million jobs that had to get done.

Lena Novello has independently raised almost \$15,000 in contributions, bringing the Save the *Vincie N.* Fund to over \$30,000. Because of the robust rate of the fund's growth and the commitment of the committee members, on October 16th GMHC voted to accept transfer of the *Vincie N.*'s ownership from the Novello family to the heritage center immediately. The committee will continue to raise money until it has raised at least \$40,000.

"We're a stalwart crew and we're with her all the way," comments Bob Heineman, "We'll do whatever we have to do to make sure the *Vincie N.* stays in Gloucester. She has what it takes and so do we."



## Vessel Rehab Course Offered at GMHC

The *Pocket Gopher's* got problems, big problems. Every system is stuck as tight as a Yankee's wallet. The diesel calls for attention, the steering and controls are frozen, the 12-volt system won't electrify anything. The heritage center plans to use the opportunity to transform her into a working boat as an excuse to launch its long planned boatbuilding/boat maintenance program.

Master mechanic Steve Waldron of Marine Mechanicals and Brian Chapski, a master mechanic with obviously too much time on his hands, have volunteered to bring the boat back to her former glory. The two are teaming up to offer a four-week long course on Tuesday evenings from 7:15 p.m. - 9 p.m. in the GMHC boatshop, beginning November 5th. Tuition for the course is \$175 (\$150 to GMHC members) and enrollment will be limited to 6 participants.



If you sign on, Waldron says, "You'll be expected to wrest reliability from the jaws of disuse so you need to have a desire to get dirty and you need to be flexible (mentally, anyway)." It also helps to know the stern from the bow; a working knowledge of hand tools wouldn't hurt either.

Waldron and Chapski are donating their time to teach the course. Tuition will support the purchase of materials and any outside services required to return the *Pocket Gopher* to useful service.

To register, call GMHC at 978-281-0470.



## Happy Birthday, Joe Garland!

*A crowd of 200 friends and family members gathered at GMHC on October 5th to help Gloucester historian Joe Garland celebrate his 80th birthday.*

## Join Us!

**It's not too late to become a GMHC Charter Member!**

GMHC launched its first membership drive in the summer issue of this newsletter just three months ago. Those who join in 2002 are charter members and their names will be permanently displayed at the heritage center. We are delighted to announce that we already have 284 members, including 13 corporate memberships. To join up, call the center at (978) 281-0470 or drop by. Let's make it 300!

## A Note from the Executive Director

Credibility. It's one of the qualities funders look for in grant applicants and it's a tough nut to crack for new nonprofits like GMHC. Our applications slide across the desks of grantmakers faced with a sea of worthy choices. We can imagine them wondering to themselves as they review our requests: "Looks interesting. But will these folks still be here in a year? Can they really pull off this project?"

Committing grant money to a young organization is an act of faith. I want to express my gratitude and that of our board to these four funders for investing their trust and their resources in us over the past six months:

### The Massachusetts Foundation for the Arts and Humanities

\$4,925 for an oral history project focusing on the stories of those who worked on the Burnham Brothers Railway beginning in the 1920s.

### The Davis Conservation Foundation

\$5,000 towards the planning, design and construction of our Gulf of Maine Niche Aquarium project.

### The Bruce J. Anderson Foundation

\$7,500 towards equipment acquisition and exhibit fabrication for our Gulf of Maine Niche Aquarium project.

### The Unity Foundation

\$2,500 as a matching grant towards funding a boatbuilding program for teenagers.

Also, thanks to the Massachusetts Development and Finance Agency for awarding GMHC \$41,000 to pay for environmental assessment work, enabling us to remain in compliance with the timetable set by the DEP for remediation of our site.

As our complement of individual supporters grows, so too does our base of private foundation and public agency supporters. As we move from infancy into the next stage of our development, it's great to know they're cheering us on. Together, they make us a stronger, more credible organization.

*Harriet Webster*

Harriet Webster, Executive Director

## GMHC Holds Community Open House

Despite heat in the 90's, nearly 400 people attended GMHC's Open House last August. The event was held to encourage local people to discover the heritage center and what it has to offer, and they responded with enthusiasm.

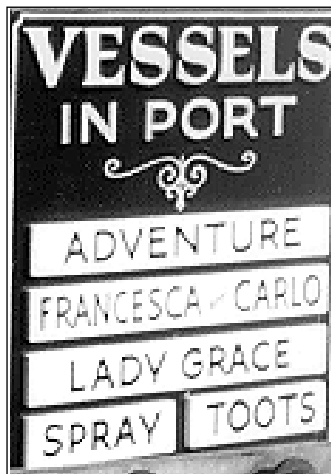
Dory rowing was the most popular activity with over 100 people setting out to explore Gloucester Harbor, accompanied by members of the GMHC Rowers. For many, it was the first time they viewed the city from the water.

Another "first" was the opportunity to check out a working commercial fishing vessel. Sam Novello docked his 60-foot stern trawler the *Captain Novello* at the GMHC pier and welcomed visitors aboard throughout the day.



Out in the boathouse, Peter Marston and George Thompson entertained visitors with sea chanties and foot stomping music. Geoff Thomas, grandson of *Adventure* skipper Gordon Thomas, shared stories about his grandfather, the schooner, and Gloucester history. Up in the office building, Rich Arnold, former skipper of the *Phyllis A.*, showed films shot aboard the vessel in the 1970s and John "Let" Sutherland showed film footage of the action in Gloucester Harbor in 1912. Down in the basement, GMHC vice president Nancy Sullivan let young visitors handle the live creatures in her touch tank and Paul Harling shared his collection of diving equipment.

Out on the pier, GMHC volunteers ran a map and compass workshop and provided visitors with drawing materials so they could try out their artistic talents by sketching the same views that Fitz Hugh Lane painted. Throughout the day and all over the property kids - and parents too - participated in a marine themed scavenger hunt.



**The Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center** champions the preservation of Gloucester's maritime industrial history and traditions. It serves as a resource for the study of maritime history, industry and ecology.

### Board of Directors

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Harriet Webster, Executive Director

The Newsletter is produced by the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center  
 Editor: Harriet Webster Design: Michael Ronan Graphics

## GMHC CALENDAR

### November 5

*Pocker Gopher*  
 Rehabilitation Course Begins

### November 20

Board of Directors Meeting, 7 p.m.

### December 18

Board of Directors Meeting, 7 p.m.

### January 15

Board of Directors Meeting, 7 p.m.

For more information  
 please call, 978-281-0470.



## Looking for Holiday Gift Ideas?

How about a GMHC T-Shirt?

Adults.....\$15.00 Kids.....\$12.00 Tank Tops.....\$13.00

Available at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center Office



# A Salute to Two Outstanding GMHC Tour Guides

GMHC welcomed approximately 9,000 visitors from forty-six states and 33 countries between Memorial Day and Labor Day of 2002. GMHC board member Damon Cummings and GMHC volunteer Sue Fehrman served as weekend guides throughout the summer, sharing their knowledge of the heritage center, the vessels that dock here, the fishing industry, and Gloucester history.

From Fehrman's perspective, visitors divide into two distinct camps. Some follow the maritime trail and want to learn about Gloucester history. Many others come specifically to see the *Lady Grace*.

"The second group wants to know how *The Perfect Storm* was made," Fehrman explains. "They want to know where the Crow's Nest is, both the one in the movie and the real one. And a lot of them ask if I saw George Clooney. I tell them he was real skinny and he had a great smile."

"But people are interested in the history of fishing too," adds Cummings. "They're interested in seeing the dories. They want to know about the different fisheries and they want to know how long the boats go out for and where they go."

"They're also interested in the railway itself," Cummings continues. "They want to know why it's called a railway and why it's under water and why we need it."

"A lot of people have never seen a working waterfront before," Fehrman adds. "Here they get a bird's eye view of the harbor. That's one of the big attractions, just going down to the end of the pier and looking at Gloucester Harbor. They're amazed that Gloucester Harbor has been able to retain its industrial edge in this age of waterfront residential development."

Of course, you can't satisfy everyone. "One couple came down on a beautiful day," Cummings recalls. "They said 'where's the harbor?' I pointed to the water and said 'the harbor is here. The fish auction is there. The Coast Guard Station is over there, we have boats over here.' They said 'but where's the harbor? You know, the shops?'"



Above, two of our dedicated guides, Damon Cummings and Sue Fehrman.

Most visitors are much more knowledgeable and appreciative. "I've talked to fishermen from the Gulf coast of Florida, from Oregon, and California," Cummings observes. "They share their stories and they're very interested in how things are done here."

Fehrman rates a class of Asian architectural students at the top of her list of favorite visitors. "They were sent to Gloucester for a week and their assignment was to get a feel for the community through observation and through drawing. When I first stumbled on the group, several of them were sitting on the dock drawing a dory – and nothing is more representative of Gloucester than a dory. Instinctively these kids knew what to draw."

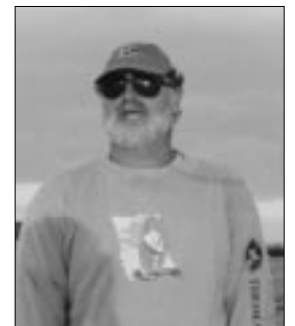
After leading thousands of visitors through the property, Cummings and Fehrman are firm in their conviction that the heritage center fills a need visitors have to make real contact with the industrial harbor. "Some people are a little shy about coming in," Cummings muses, "but once you start to explain the site to them, they love it."

## Thank You!

GMHC depends upon the good will, generosity, and energy of its supporters to get things done. We wish to express our thanks to Keating Willcox for donating trips aboard *The Formidable* to all our charter members and to Jay McLaughlan for giving us *Pocket Gopher*.

Our gratitude goes out to board member Jen Fahey and her crew of intrepid mailing and membership processors: Marianne Hautala, Pat Hadley, Elizabeth Hadley, Beth McDonald, Kim Normand, Pam Sweet, Gloria Parsons, Amy Healey, Peg Leeco, Karen Shebel, Jan Holmes, Laurie Hagar, Ann Banks, Barbara Keon, Isabella Keon, and Nan Andrew.

To Kay and Tom Ellis, we extend our thanks for providing us with a free trip aboard the *Lannon*, which we used as an opportunity to express our gratitude to 49 of the original donors who made it possible for GMHC to purchase the property at 23 Harbor Loop.



On Board *The Lannon* . . . Our Thanks to Kay and Tom Ellis!

