

GLOUCESTER MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER

The Newsletter of the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center • Gloucester, Massachusetts • Summer 2003

Nearly 400 Attend GMHC June Opening

Oh, what a night!

Following more consecutive soggy weekends than anyone cared to count, the sky began to brighten early in the afternoon on Friday, June 20th. At 4 p.m., with dozens of volunteers still painting, hammering, weeding, sweeping, and installing signs, we threw caution to the wind and decided to scrap the two tents standing by in case of rain.

Meanwhile, out in the newly renovated boathouse, Jen Fahey established her base of operations. She and her team

of assistants methodically applied the final touches to the hundreds of hors d'oeuvres previously prepared in kitchens all over town. They arranged flowers and set up tables laden with fruit and cheese and beer and wine overlooking Gloucester Harbor. At 6:30 p.m. sharp, with the first guests arriving en masse, a small army of volunteers (including graduates of the Teen Boatbuilding Class and the Mural Project, along with summer interns from Sea Pocket Lab) embarked from the boathouse carrying platters of savories.

Munching on smoked salmon, prosciutto, sushi, shrimp, and miniature quiche, guests young and old explored the spruced up Heritage Center, admiring GMHC's stunning new aquarium and brand new Visitor Center. Many also marveled at the freshly paved uplands and the new pilings and decking evident on the east pier, before breaking for formalities at 7:30 p.m.

Introduced by GMHC Executive Director Harriet Webster, Congressman John Tierney, MassDevelopment Deputy Director David Slatery, State Senator Bruce Tarr, State Representative Anthony Verga, Mayor John Bell, and Harbor Implementation Committee Chairman Abdullah Khambaty extended greetings and congratulations, while GMHC President Geoffrey Richon expressed his pleasure and astonishment at all that has been accomplished.

Following the speeches, the party continued on the wharf and throughout the site. By the time the sun set on the eve of the longest day of the year and every morsel of food had disappeared, nearly 400 guests had toured the Heritage Center. Many of them left promising to return, delighted to know that now there's truly a place where they can bring their friends and families to learn about the connections between Gloucester's maritime heritage and the coastal resources that define this city's character, past, present, and future.



GMHC President Geoff Richon and Board Member Jay McLauchlan enjoy the opening night festivities.

A Message from the GMHC President

This is a tale of two couples, Nancy Sullivan and Steve Kent and Tim and Cheryl Thurman. Exceeding expectations has been a common occurrence at the Heritage Center but the last eight months were extraordinary.

Steve Kent converted a sow's ear into a spacious boathouse which can accommodate a variety of projects. Anyone who has ever worked with Steve knows the steady direct progress toward a goal that his thoughtful approach brings to bear. Simultaneously his wife Nancy Sullivan's vision for the Sea Pocket Lab was being created by Tim and Cheryl Thurman and crew.

Had you visited the aquarium days or even hours before our opening you would not have believed that it could be done. Tim's calm exterior demeanor made everyone confident and Cheryl's salt marsh mural is so realistic you can hear the greenheads. The Sea Pocket Lab is a miracle of vision and execution, converting a former wasteland into a lively interactive experience where visitors can see and touch the creatures that live in Cape Ann's coastal waters. Adjacent to it, MIT's Fin Fish Hatchery is a perfect complement to our aquarium. Now that Sea Pocket Lab is operational, you can find Nancy there day or night tinkering, adjusting and tending her baby.

Other people who were pivotal to our latest flurry of progress include John McGlennon, who pushed hard to complete the Visitor Center which opened on time with wet paint on the walls. George and Mike Ketchopoulos far exceeded expectations. Roy Spittle Associates connected everything, Unis Plumbing piped it, and Old Yankee Fuel heated it with a boiler donated by Capco Energy Supply.

No party would be complete without the finishing touches and overall image created by Jeff Weaver. And thank you Kevin for your patience and endurance. Gratitude as well to Edwin.

In addition to these huge accomplishments, we paid off our mortgage to the Gloucester Marine Railway, made major wharf repairs and met our remediation deadlines with the DEP for the uplands clean up.

This is a great time to come down and check out the progress we've made.

Geoffrey Richon,
GMHC President

A Grand Opening ...



Off to a Great Start!

Some familiar Heritage Center supporters showed up on opening night to help kick off the festivities.



Congressman Tierney



State Senator Tarr



State Representative Verga



Down to the Wire!

Just minutes prior to opening, the sound of hammers and the smell of wet paint still filled the GMHC. Somehow it all came together just in time.



Students Build Banks Dory



GMHC began its after school youth program in the depths of winter with a Teen Boatbuilding Course taught by Geno Mondello. The course met Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. from the end of January into early April. The six participants ranged in age from 14-18. They gained hands-on experience in laying out, lofting, making full size patterns and pieces, and assembling an 18' Banks Dory. A second session of the course began in late April and will continue into July.

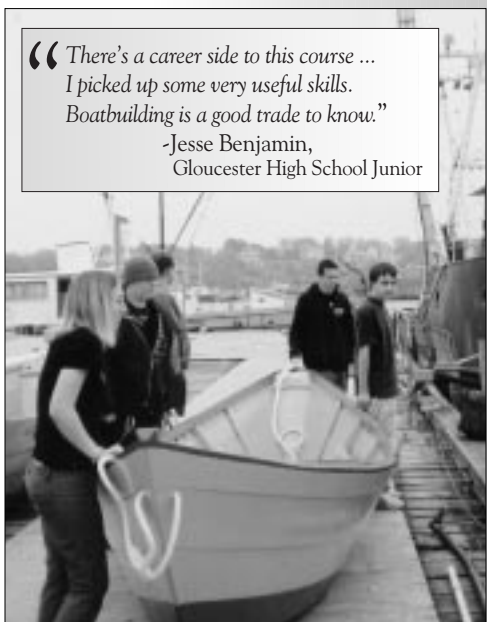
The first group of students launched their dory, which they painted colonial green and yellow, in June. Along with the dory currently under construction, it will be used for the Teen Dory Rowing Program, which began in mid-July.

Dylan Phillips, a senior at Rockport High School, enjoyed the experience so much he continued on to help with the second class. "This is different than an every day school class," he observes. "You're actually building something. And the size of the group is really easy to work with."

"There's a career side to this course," adds Jesse Benjamin, a junior at Gloucester High School. "I'd worked with tools before, so I thought it would be good to learn a different style of woodworking. I picked up some very useful skills. Boatbuilding is a good trade to know."

"I've learned a lot about boat building," agrees Phillips. "If you do something wrong, Geno makes sure you know it. Then he shows you how to do it right."

“There's a career side to this course ... I picked up some very useful skills. Boatbuilding is a good trade to know.”
-Jesse Benjamin,
Gloucester High School Junior



A Note from the Executive Director

The two young faces appeared in the port holes in the fence overlooking Sea Pocket Lab just after dark. Those of us down below were busy moving dozens of starfish, crabs, and snails into the touch tanks in anticipation of the opening of Sea Pocket, less than 24 hours away.

"What're you doing?" one kid asked.

"Looks a lot better than last week," muttered the other.

We stared up at them, hesitating. It was Anne, our education director, who spoke up first. "Hey," she said, "want to come take a look?"

Within seconds, the two boys – maybe 13 or 14 years old – descended the stairs. They spent the next half hour helping fill the tanks and asking questions. When they left, after promising to bring us some interesting specimens for our tanks, we felt like Sea Pocket had already begun its work: helping youth develop a knowledge and appreciation of the plants and animals that inhabit Cape Ann waters.

Here at GMHC we are committed to preserving Gloucester's maritime industrial heritage, the web of traditions, skills, and history that forms our city's cultural bedrock. How better to preserve that culture than to pass it on to succeeding generations? By introducing young people to the natural history that has always played a leading role in our city's story, we can help develop an informed constituency that's ready to grapple with critical questions determining the future of the Gulf of Maine and the coastal communities whose economies are tied to it.



In June (before the opening of Sea Pocket Lab), we welcomed school groups totaling 420 students. They took site tours, went dory rowing, and participated in marine science and physics workshops. As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, young people have been hard at work at GMHC since last winter building dories, painting a huge mural, and helping out in Sea Pocket Lab. This month we'll begin our teen rowing program. By next fall, we expect to offer interdisciplinary after school programming focusing on marine science, history, and an exposure to the traditional skills associated with a working waterfront.

Our commitment to serving youth grows with each experience. We see how kids respond to this place and what it has to offer, and we know that it is our responsibility to develop experiences that help them discover that their voices are crucial in determining the future of the coastal habitats so dear to those of us who make Cape Ann our home. It is a responsibility we embrace with enthusiasm and optimism.

Harriet Webster



The Vincie N. To Celebrate 67th Birthday

The Vincie N. Committee proudly announces its second annual Vincie N. Art and Artifact Auction. The event will take place at the Heritage Center on Saturday, August 23rd, at 7:30 p.m. In honor of the Vincie N.'s 67th birthday, the Vincie N. Committee is planning to usher in the auction with a daytime celebration complete with music, refreshments, and free birthday cake, as well as the opportunity to preview the items that will go up for sale that evening.

Last year Cape Ann artists donated \$25,000 worth of paintings and marine related art to help secure the Vincie N. a permanent home on the Gloucester waterfront. While the vessel's future is not presently in jeopardy, more funds are needed for her maintenance, so that she can eventually be transformed into a lively dockside interpretive exhibit.



Based on the success of last year's event, this is likely to be an entertaining and rewarding evening. If you would like to donate artwork or artifacts to the auction or to help with the logistics of the event, please call Bill or Denise Bacon at 978-281-1335.

GMHC Awarded Education Grant

The Essex National Heritage Commission has awarded GMHC a \$7200 partnership grant to support the development of educational programs that tie in to the unique features of the GMHC site including Sea Pocket Lab, the MIT Fin Fish Hatchery, marine railway, wharves, dory shop, dive exhibit, and boathouse. These features will serve as launching points for activities that explore marine science, environmental science, physical science, the history of industrial development, and changes in land use.

The grant has enabled GMHC to hire Anne Ogilvie, an experienced marine educator, as its Education Director. In addition to developing the Sea Pocket Internship Program (see related story to right), Anne will be developing interdisciplinary field trip modules for students in grades K-12 and after school programs for children in the upper elementary and middle school grades.

GMHC's initial educational programming will acquaint youth with the plants and animals that live in the sea, currents and tides, the natural

An Evening with Joe Garland and Tamsin Venn

On Friday, July 25, the eve of the Blackburn Challenge Race, the Gloucester Gig Rowers will host an Evening with Joe Garland and Tamsin Venn. The event will be held at the Heritage Center at 7:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$15 and the price of admission includes chowder, sandwiches, brownies and coffee. Beer will be available for purchase.

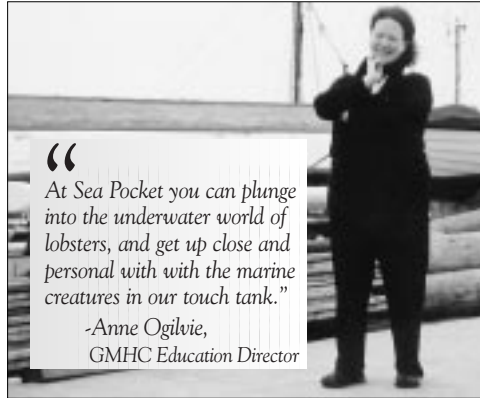
Garland will share stories about Gloucester legend Howard Blackburn and will read from *Lone Voyager*, the book he wrote about Blackburn's adventures. Venn, editor and publisher of "The Atlantic Coastal Kayaker" and author of *Sea Kayaking Along the New England Coast*, will present a slide show and lecture. The evening should supply a wealth of inspiration to those who intend to compete in the round the Cape race the next morning. Plus, there will be plenty of opportunity to mingle with fellow paddling and rowing enthusiasts.

For further information, call 978-281-0470.

Wish list

Here are some items we could put to good use at GMHC. Can you help?

- Small refrigerator
- Window air conditioner
- 2 park benches
- Small CD player



“
At Sea Pocket you can plunge into the underwater world of lobsters, and get up close and personal with the marine creatures in our touch tank.”
-Anne Ogilvie,
GMHC Education Director

and human forces that bear on the sustainability of ocean resources, and their own role in assuring the future wellbeing of the Gulf of Maine. When teachers from Essex County and beyond bring their classes to Gloucester to learn about the fishing industry, they almost never see, touch, or smell a live fish. Our program will begin by filling that simple void. It will go on from there to forge a missing link – the connection between life in the sea and the story of our city's industrial and social heritage.

GMHC CALENDAR

July 25

An Evening with Joe Garland and Tamsin Venn

July 26

Blackburn Challenge Race

August 20

GMHC Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

August 23

Vincie N. Antique and Art Auction

October 11

Gloucester Maritime Heritage Day

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

GMHC Facilities Available for Special Events

So you're getting married?
Got a special anniversary in the works?
Or a totally significant birthday?

For a truly memorable, elegant and joyful event, consider holding your celebration in Cape Ann's newest and most unusual intimate setting: Sea Pocket Lab at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center. For larger parties, the Main Pier at the Heritage Center is also available for rental.

For more information call 978-281-0470.

Sea Pocket Interns

GMHC is offering summer internship opportunities in the new Sea Pocket Lab. With supervision and support from Anne Ogilvie, GMHC's education director and aquarium manager, interns will interpret exhibits to the public, deliver educational presentations on marine science topics related to Cape Ann's coastal habitats, and participate in the care of aquarium exhibits.

"This is a fantastic opportunity," Ogilvie observes. "We're looking for creative, enthusiastic people with a strong desire to share their passion for the marine environment with our visitors."

Interns are expected to contribute 10-20 hours each week, with some weekend hours required on a rotating basis. Twelve interns have already been selected but additional opportunities are available. If you are at least 15 years old and would like to explore interning in Sea Pocket Lab, please call Anne at 978-281-0470 for more information.



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.

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