

Piscataqua Maritime Commission

Newsletter

To Inform and Educate the Public About the
Maritime History of the Piscataqua River Basin

Spring 2011



Gazela under full sail

It's *Gazela* for Memorial Day Weekend!

Walk aboard the oldest square-rigged, wooden-hulled Tall Ship still actively sailing!

BY LARRY JOB
PMC VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mark your calendars for the Memorial Day Weekend. The barkentine *Gazela* will be visiting the Port City.

LATE BREAKING NEWS: Negotiations are in progress, as your PMC works very hard with the US Coast Guard to try and have one of their vessels join Sail Portsmouth 2011!

We are talking to other vessels, but for sure the barkentine *Gazela* will be in Portsmouth. Do please check our website pmcportsmouth.org for any late changes, but the Parade of Sail will start Friday morning, May 27, at buoy 2KR at 9:00 am. There will be a Welcome Ceremony for *Gazela* at 12:00 noon Friday,

2011 event moves back to the State Pier

Absolutely 100% of everyone involved loved the location last year at Peirce Island, and we will be back there whenever possible. But Peirce Island has two drawbacks. It can only handle up to two ships. More importantly, the depth there is only about 16 feet at low tide, then you hit granite ledge! *Gazela*, this year's ship, draws 17 feet, and we really don't want this irreplaceable 118-year old artifact bouncing off the bottom!

at the State Pier on Market Street, to which the public is invited. *Gazela* will be open there for tours Friday afternoon from 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm, and 10:00 am to 5:30 pm Saturday through Monday, May 28, 29, and 30.

As always, the PMC will have maritime-themed exhibits under our tent, and seafood, visit memorabilia, and sea chantey singers. Parking on-site is limited to handicapped folks and our Volunteers and Exhibitors.

Admission is \$9 for adults, children under 12 are free, and a family package is \$30. PMC members receive discounts on admission and merchandise.

The *Gazela* is not a replica – she is a survivor! An original Grand Banks (the shallow fishing grounds off Newfoundland) fishing barkentine. A barkentine is a three-masted sailing vessel with three or more masts; with a square-rigged foremast, and fore-and-aft rigged main, mizzen and other masts. She was the star of Portugal's White Fleet of cod-fishing vessels. *Gazela* is Portuguese for gazelle.

She was originally built in 1883, and, being a working vessel, modified through the years. Her full length is 177', breath 27', and she draws 17' of water. The tallest mast reaches 94' above her deck, and she displaces (unloaded) 652 tons. She has 12,000 square feet of sail.

In her fishing years *Gazela* had a crew of 40 men, of whom 35 doubled as fishermen, plus two cooks, two mates, and a captain. She would leave Lisbon, Portugal, in the spring with 35 fishing dories, nestled one into another like drinking cups, on her deck. She could average 100-plus miles a day, and made the 1900 mile crossing to the Grand Banks in under three weeks.

Her holds were loaded with tons of salt for ballast and for catch preservation. As the fish were caught; cod, flounder, halibut, haddock, and perch, they would be gutted, then salted. The cargo of fish gradually displaced the salt. The capacity of the ship was 350 tons, but fish tend to lose about 20 percent of their weight through dehydration so quite a good deal more than that was caught and stowed.

Fishing the Grand Banks was wet, cold, arduous, and dangerous work, with one lone fisherman handling a many-hooked line in each dory. Grand Banks' fishing is treated fictionally by Rudyard Kipling, in his classic *Captains Courageous*. On July 21, 1904, three dories failed to appear at the end of the day even though

See ***Gazela*** (p. 2)



Gazela entering port

the weather was clear and calm. It was never determined if the boats were lost or whether the men deserted.

What made this work so important was that the fish of the Grand Banks, notably the cod, represented a major source of protein for poor people, improving their nutrition, both in this country and in Europe, for hundreds of years. Amazingly, despite competition from modern trawlers, the *Gazela* continued as a working sail vessel until 1969, when economics finally caught up with her. Her working life spanned 86 years! She is currently owned and operated by the Philadelphia Ship Preservation Guild, opening a window into the bygone world of working sail.



Gundalow

The Gundalow

This year, the Piscataqua Gundalow, *Captain Edward H. Adams*, will also be an integral part of our festivities. A gundalow is a shallow-draft type of cargo barge, once common in the Gulf of Maine's rivers and estuaries. The gundalow is a fully-decked flat-bottomed cargo carrier, with a cabin and lateen sail that could be lowered to "shoot" under bridges. Gundalows were used to haul bulk commodities, often brick, lumber, granite, fish, or cordage. The non-profit Gundalow Company uses the gundalow as a focal point for education about local rivers & bays, and current environmental issues.



The Treaty of Portsmouth

Mr. Jim Fender, the well-known author of the *Geoffrey Frost*, *Mariner*, historical novels, and the Legal Counsel at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, gave a well-received talk on Thursday, 9 December 2011, on the Treaty of Portsmouth. Having carefully researched the various correlation and interactions that tied together different aspects of local history, the principals representing the Empires of Russia and Japan, and President Roosevelt, Mr. Fender wove a compelling description of why the two Empires went to war, and some major elements of that warfare.

He then described the stalemate that led to the negotiations, why and how President Roosevelt intervened, why Portsmouth; specifically the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, was chosen as the venue for the Treaty.

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Sail Portsmouth 2011 Sponsors:

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Sail Portsmouth 2011

promises to be another outstanding event for Exhibitors!

By **GEORGE DORAN**
PMC EXHIBIT COORDINATOR

New displays this year will feature the following;

Knot Tyers – A group that instructs man, woman and child in the fine craft of nautical knot-tying. They are part of the International Knot Tyers Guild, founded in the United Kingdom.

Pease Development Authority, Division of Ports and Harbors – Providing detailed information on the operation of the Port of Portsmouth and other areas of Seacoast responsibility.

Wood Island Life Saving Station – A most interesting update on a local crusade to save and preserve this historic facility.

Coast Guard Auxiliary – Providing information on their operation.

Blue Ocean Society for Marine Preservation – Alive exhibit of the creatures of local waters, including a tide pool.

Moffatt-Ladd House – Placing this famous Portsmouth historic landmark's role and history in perspective.

Other outstanding Exhibitors will Include Half-Hulls, the Gundalow Company, Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, the always-entertaining Pease Greeters, and Substructure, Inc. We are hoping that Kittery Historical and Naval Museum, and TIDE-MARK will also participate. All-in-all, we anticipate 16 Exhibitors.

No Tall Ship visit would be complete without a food Exhibitor, and this visit is no exception. Seaport Fish will, again, provide local fare for everyone's enjoyment. Whether it be fresh lobster rolls, chowder, fish 'n chips, or a burger or hot dog with fries, there is something for every palate. Just another reason for not missing Sail Portsmouth 2011!

In summary, the Exhibitors for Sail Portsmouth 2011 will provide a true learning experience and adventure for all those interested in maritime-related lore. Our Exhibitors add another dimension to the Tall Ship's visit.

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SPRING 2011

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Saving Wood Island

Mr. George Fox recently presented to the PMC Board his plan to save, and then renovate, Portsmouth Harbor's historic landmark Wood Island Life Saving Station.

The iconic building, circa 1908, has a storied career. As a station of the Life Saving Service, a separate service prior to its merger with the Revenue Cutter Service to form the U.S. Coast Guard, the station's personnel rescued countless distressed mariners. As a Naval observation post it was instrumental in thwarting WW II German U-Boat penetration into the Portsmouth Shipyard - anti-submarine nets were strung across the harbor and pinned to Wood Island.

The Station Building has been neglected now for 40 years. Currently owned by the Town of Kittery, the slated demolition of the Life Saving Station is temporarily stayed pending the Town Council's approval to dispose of it at public auction.

Town residents, and the surrounding Seacoast Community, overwhelmingly oppose both these tragic options. Instead, an alternative Citizens Initiative proposal is gaining traction: that a local non-profit group be formed to procure the property and commence a volunteer-driven effort to restore the aged structure, and revitalize the Island for continued recreational purposes.

To learn more, visit: www.savewoodisland.com or call George Fox at 207-475-4815.

Your Savings Can Send 20 Kids To Sea!

A donation from Fabulous Find Thrift Shop in Kittery will help the PMC fund the 2011 Anchorage Inns Youth Voyage! But we need your help! Marcy Philbook, Board Secretary of Fabulous Find, explains, "All sales each month, in excess of overhead, are donated to a local cause, and June sales have been dedicated to the Youth Voyage. Since opening last year we have donated over \$51,000 to local non-profits."

Fabulous Find takes donations of better clothing, home décor, kitchen and dining accessories, antiques, plus books, videos, and other items to offer for sale at thrifty prices. It is located just over the Memorial Bridge at 122 State Rd (Route 1), Kittery. It's a tan building on the east side of the road, halfway between Golden Harvest and the Kittery Traffic Circle. Hours for shopping and drop off are 10:00 to 6:00 Monday to Saturday, and noon to 4:00 Sunday. Learn more at [The_Fabulous_Find](#) on Facebook.

JUNE is your chance to shop great bargains and benefit the kids your PMC sends out on a 125-foot Tall Ship for a week. As you all know, sending these young people out on the ocean is expensive – but the results can be priceless! It's crucial for PMC members and friends to spread the word to both donate goods and shop from June 1st to the 30th to help raise funds for the Voyage cost. Grab your family and take a look! Ms. Philbrook continued, "We meet our expenses early in the month, then 100% of every dollar you spend goes directly to the Youth Voyage."

This is YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF 20 KIDS. Save your donations and shopping budget for June. Go early in the month, and go often; new items arrive daily!

Visit PMC Online!

www.pmcportsmouth.org

Please visit our website at www.pmcportsmouth.org for information about our events, photos, and more. You can also find us on Facebook by searching for Portsmouth NH Tall Ships, and follow us on Twitter @TallShipsNH.

Join

the Piscataqua Maritime Commission

Name _____

Business _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State & ZIP Code _____

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E-Mail _____

Membership fees help support our mission.
Fill out the coupon, clip, and mail with your check to:

PMC
PO Box 545
Portsmouth, NH 03802-0545.

Membership Options: Youth 15 and under ___\$5.00

Individual ___\$15.00 Senior 60 and over ___\$12.00

Family ___\$25.00 Senior Family ___\$20.00

I would like to Volunteer for Tall Ship Events

Other areas of interest _____

Members receive discounts on Event admissions and merchandise

Annual Membership Meeting

The Piscataqua Maritime Commission held its Annual Membership Meeting on Tuesday evening, 8 February 2010, was at the Rusty Hammer in Portsmouth, NH. The PMC provided food and refreshments. PMC Chairman Donald Coker presided.

There was a continuously-running video of last year's Tall Ship visit by videographer Stephen Smith. After the normal business meeting, various Board Members presented reports on the year's activities in their areas of responsibility and described the activities of the committees they chaired.

Our tentative plans for 2011 were discussed.

The slate of Board Members for 2011 was proposed; Neil Cohn, Donald Coker, George Doran, Carl Gurtman, Larry Job, Peri Lagassa, Nita Libby, Lisa Mills, Allison Peck, Carol Rodenberg, Kevin Rodenberg, Geoff Ward, and Ben Wheeler. They were unanimously elected.

Allison Peck

On the very day that Allison M. Peck was re-elected as a Director of the Piscataqua Maritime Commission, she had, unknown to all of us, died tragically young at the age of 51.

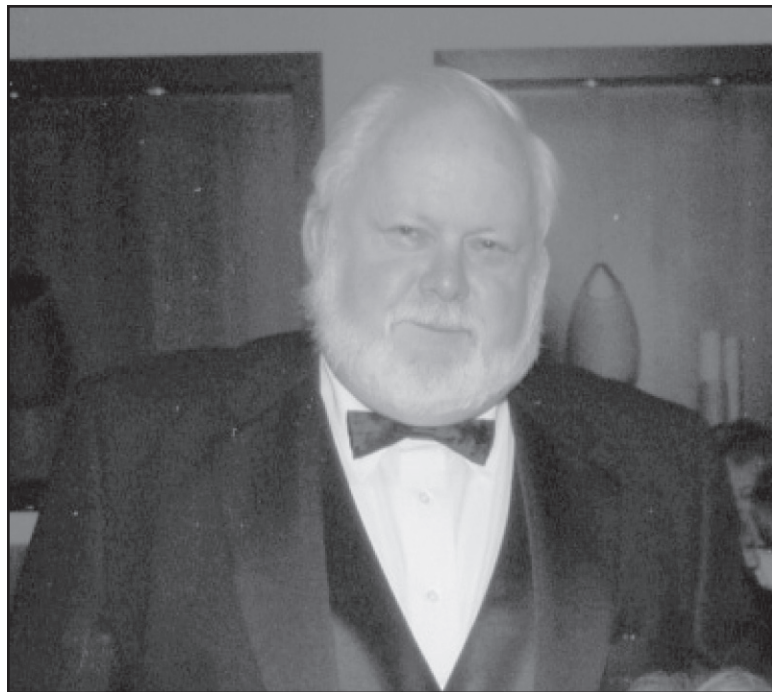
Born in Winchester, daughter of Jonathan B. Peck and the late Marian (Miller) (Peck) Woodbridge, she was raised in Topsfield and graduated Masconomet Regional High School with the class of 1978. She also attended Wheelock College in Boston.

Allison was an avid equestrian in her younger years. She enjoyed trips to the beach and was very devoted to children, especially her grandchildren.

She worked in the financial services field.

She is survived by her son, Andrew Lee; and her daughter, Megan Lee, both of Sandown; her father and stepmother, Jonathan B. and Marilyn Peck of Dataw Island, SC; a brother, Craig A. Peck of Miami Beach, FL; and two grandchildren, Phillip Lee, and Emma Marian Lee. She was predeceased by her brother, Andrew D. Peck, and her mother and step-father, Marian (Miller) and James Woodbridge.

Touchingly, her family had requested that in lieu of flowers, memorial donations be made to the Piscataqua Maritime Commission.



Captain Chester Hopkins

Maritime Accidents

Captain "Chet" Hopkins, retired Ship Master and French Lines Vice President of Marine and Terminal Operations for North and Central America, gave a talk on Thursday, 31 March 2011, on a variety of maritime accidents. His well-illustrated talk concentrated on those accidents involving container ships and bulk carriers, most caused by human error, but many the result of major storms at sea.

Captain Hopkins images showed some truly astounding examples of the power of ocean waves, the fatal results of mislabeling the contents of containers, and how unloading below-deck cargo before above-deck cargo can turn a ship turtle.

As always at PMC-sponsored talks, admission was free, and refreshments were served.

