



**Owner's Association**



***NEWS LETTER***

***JULY 2012***

### **Dickerson Sailors Honor Boatbuilders**

At its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on June 15-16, 2012, the Dickerson Owners Association (DOA) had a special Rendezvous at Oxford, MD saluting the owners, managers and skilled craftsmen who built these classic boats for 41 years on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This historic event re-kindled fond memories of the Dickerson boatbuilding era that began in 1946! Bill Dickerson, a World War II veteran, started to build wooden sail and work boats in his back yard at Church Creek, Maryland, and it continued until 1987 when the last Dickerson sailboat was built in Trappe, MD.

We were privileged to have the following boat builders participating in this celebration: company owners, Tom Lucke and Ted Reed, managers and skilled craftsmen, relatives of those that have passed on including Dan Brannock, Jon Davis, Rob and Peggy Griffin Begor, Nettie Hastings, George Hazen, Jim and Paula Karr, Paul Rybon, Alan Sleeper, Sam Webster, and January White.

These Dickerson craftsmen were the "Best of the Chesapeake". Preston Brannock could build a boat by eye, and as a hobby, built boats in his own back yard. It was indeed a different world of men and women who not only loved their work, but also came to work 30 minutes early every morning to make sure they were not "docked" pay. Can you imagine this happening today! Also, it was said, "If Bill Dickerson did not like you, he would not sell you a boat"! Owners Tom Lucke and Ted Reed, at a young age, were not just typical CEO's, they were people in love with the water and their boats, and built solid, classic wooden, and fiberglass boats that are sailing today. It is not uncommon to hear someone say, "Is that a Dickerson"? Today there are some 200-300 Dickersons sailing our coastal waters.

The 45th Rendezvous began on Friday in a gusty northerly breeze with a parade of 16 Dickersons, led by Kerry O'Malley's 59-foot wooden bugeye, "Chesapeake". The parade

of sails ran from the Choptank River Light up the Tred Avon River to Mears Oxford Marina.



Parade of Dickersons

After the parade, we all had a great time at the Captains Reception at Mears Marina with a record participation of 80 owners and guests. There were plenty of snacks and good cheer, but especially in demand was the potato salad graciously provided by boat builder, Paul Rybon.



### Captains Reception

The racing began at 10 AM on Saturday morning on a 3.5 mile triangular course in the Choptank River. The 15 Dickersons racing included a 30-foot chine sloop, 35, 37, 41 and 50 ketches, 36 and 37 sloops and a 59-foot bug-eye. These Dickerson boats loved the blowing 15-20 knot northerly breeze and not one of them had a reefed sail !





Start of the Race



Tom Lucke racing wooden Dickerson 35 "Irish Mist" that he built in 1969.

After a hectic two races twice around the course, we all got rested and cleaned up for the big night celebration and dinner at The Tred Avon Yacht Club. Commodore Bill Toth welcomed the over 100 participants- the largest ever in 45 years. Master of Ceremonies, Past Commodore Barry Creighton, introduced new members Kerry and Kris O'Malley, Hank and Denise Cope, and Tom and Joyce Pfeifer. He also welcomed



Dave Freal who came from Florida to race with his three brothers on “Rainbow”. Long time member and Past Commodore, Dave Hazen, recited the Dickerson Prayer.



The Dickerson Prayer by Past Commodore Dave Hazen



Joe Slavin gave a brief review of the new 16 page Dickerson History document which has been fully archived by the State of Maryland and is available on the Special Collection Section of it's web :<http://speccol.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/speccol/> The history is also now available as a glossy booklet with over 25 colored pictures. It is on the Dickerson Owners web site, <http://dickersonowners.org/> . This presentation was followed by a short Dickerson History Video.



Joe Slavin discussing Dickerson History



Master Boatbuilder Preston Brannock's niece Nettie Hastings receiving Collage made by Boatbuilder Paul Rybon

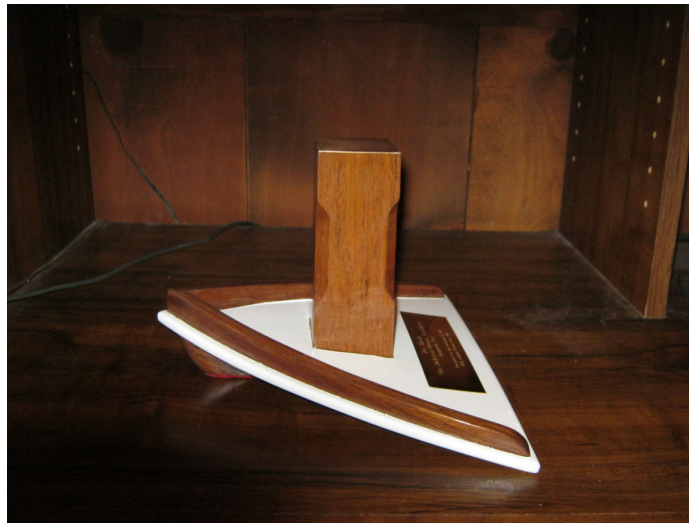


The panel discussion of the boatbuilders was quite lively and there were a number of stories about the good old days and some additional information on why the boats were built the way they were.



Panel of Boatbuilders

This was followed by an Awards ceremony by Commodore Bill Toth. Joe Slavin was given a very unique Sampson Post replica, made by Davis Boat Works, for his work in preparing the historical document and video, and in helping to organize the celebration.



Sampson Post

Racing awards were given to: John Freal "Rainbow", 30,35, 36 class; Barry Creighton, "Crew Rest" 37 class, and Pat Ewing, "Velamore", 40, 41, 50 and 59 class.



The overall winner and Commodore for 2012 is relatively new member Pat Ewing, an enthusiastic sailor who had his 40 foot wooden ketch winning both races.



Commodore Pat Ewing

Before we closed, we sang a hilarious Dickerson Ditty by Judy and Barry Creighton.



Songsters Judy and Barry Creighton

The evening ended with a moving tribute to past Commodore Dick Clarke and his lovely wife Karen who are selling their beautiful 37 sloop, "Imagine", and settling down in the Chicago area. All had a great time, and will remember a truly historic, memorable evening.



We will miss you Dick and Karen Clarke

Joe Slavin, Barry Creighton and Bruce Franz

### **Video Captures Magic of Dickerson Sailors and Boats**

Go to the Dickerson owners website, <http://dickersonowners.org/> to view a 15 minute video developed by Larry Moser of the boats, the sailors and the builders participating in the "Salute to Dickerson Boatbuilders" at our 45<sup>th</sup> Rendezvous.

Words cannot express the magic of our boats. This video is a quintessential sales tool that should be seen by every sailor inquiring about a Dickerson. After one sees a Dickerson under full sail, cutting through the water with beauty, grace, and ease, they can listen to the interviews at our Captains Party extolling the love for these boats that have carried their owners around the World, from the Great Lakes to Newfoundland, from Nova Scotia to Trinidad, from Venezuela to Guatemala, and to all points between Maine, Bahamas, and the Dry Tortugas. The background party and evening shadows paint a canvas resplendent with family, friends, joy, and adventures that perhaps, even Bill Dickerson, Preston Brannock, Ernie Tucker, and the "yard gang" never dreamed. Tom Lucke and Ted Reed lived the dream, and like many others with us, returned home to build more. I am so lucky.

Bruce Franz  
"Hemisphere Dancer"  
Dickerson 41 #19

## Attend Western Shore Round Up

Dickerson sailors are invited to attend the sixth annual Western Shore Round Up to be held at the West River Sailing Club in Galesville, Maryland on September 7 and 8, 2012. Last year's winner Sheriff Pat Ewing and organizers Randy and Barb Bruns promise that you will have a great time as evidenced by the past five years with 10 boats racing in 2010, **9 in 2011** and over 40 happy sailors at **our** dinners.

Activities begin on Friday early evening by joining in with the West River Sailing Club cook out which features delicious crab cakes, hamburgers beans, **other goodies**, and drinks. On Saturday the race will begin at 12 noon **at WR G1** and will be followed by a reception at the West River Sailing Club and a no- host dinner at the famous Pirates Cove Restaurant. Menu choices include prime ribs, crab cakes, salmon and chicken marcella.

**Limited dockage** is available at the West River Sailing Club and **also** at nearby Pirates Cove (tel 410-867-2300) There is plenty of water for anchoring **or mooring** off the sailing club.

We need to know of your participation by September 1, 2012 so we can block out the space at Pirates Cove Restaurant and give you the Race Instructions. All details of the race are being handled by Randy but Joe Slavin is assisting him in organizing the participation. Please let us know as soon as possible the following.

Your name, **crew names**, and boat name, **cell phone #**

If you will be arriving for the Friday Cook Out

The number of people for dinner

If you will be racing on Saturday

Send information to [jws2827@aol.com](mailto:jws2827@aol.com) or call us at 703 560 7250

## Conrad Neuf

The Dickerson Owners Association lost a longtime member when Connie Neuf passed away in March while at his beloved boat in Solomons, MD. My father purchased his Dickerson ketch in 1982, but his love of sailing began in the early 1950s when he and a group of high school friends purchased a ketch and started out on a long cruise after graduating from college.

They made it from the Chesapeake Bay to southern Florida before Dad was summoned home to help his father with the family hardware business in Butler, PA. Decades



passed as Dad got married, raised a family and we found ourselves in Loudoun County, Virginia where he worked for the U.S. Government.

As long as I can remember, a picture of Skoal, the high school buddies' ketch, hung on the wall in my father's study – seemingly a reminder of a road not taken. However, in the 1970s we began making an annual pilgrimage to the U.S. Sailboat show in Annapolis and after my sister and I were both out of college, my father purchased Reckless, a 35 foot wooden hulled Dickerson ketch.

He promptly renamed the boat Mon Bijou Gigi after a favorite dog and revived a part of his life that had long ago been placed on hold. My mother and father sailed Mon Bijou Gigi to Florida on numerous occasions and explored just about every part of the Chesapeake Bay during the 30 years he was a proud Dickerson owner. He was even able to journey back in time when one of his old high school friends joined him for part of the trip to Florida one year.

I have a lot of great memories of my father, but his happiness while on Mon Bijou Gigi will always top the list. Even as he aged into his middle 80s, I always knew to plan my visits around his every other weekend excursions down to the marina in Solomons where there always seemed to be some detail on the boat that needed a little attention.



So many people reach the end of their lives and wonder about that road not taken – I'm glad my father had the opportunity to find out where it led.

Conrad Neuf Jr.

## Perhaps This is How a Dickerson Race Should Go!

On June 27 some old salts and I managed to find our way by land to Fort Adams in Newport, RI to view the last Americas Cup practice races. I hadn't planned to go but changed my mind when invited by some friends. Wow! Was I glad I did. They were fantastic and it was a perfect day for sail boat racing and picture taking. The event was well planned and even had a turning mark within the length of a football field in front of the spectators on shore.



Hope you enjoy the pictures as much as I did taking them.

Al Sampson, "Wanderlust"

## We Want to Hear From You

We would like to receive write ups on your sailing adventures, latest Dickerson fix it jobs or just your thoughts and suggestions for future events and items we can include in our 46<sup>th</sup> Rendezvous next year. Please do not be bashful. Also don't forget to renew your Dickerson Owners Association Membership for 2012. Just contact us if you need a membership form.

Membership Committee, Joe Slavin, Barry Creighton and John Freal--Edited by Bruce Franz

