

# RIVERSWEST NEWS

Winter



2013-14

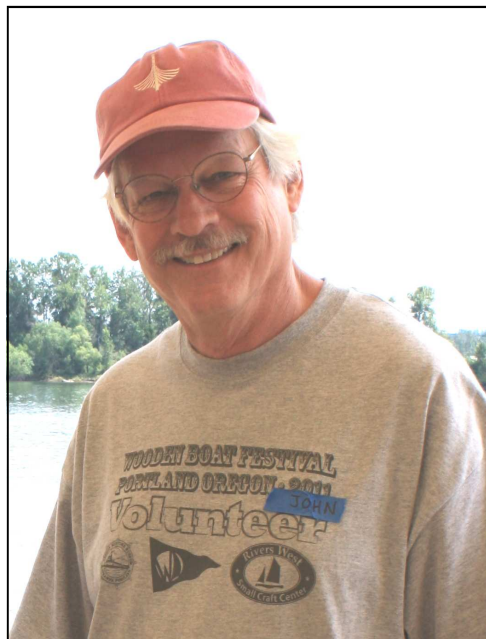
[www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org)

RIVERSWEST IS A SMALL CRAFT CLUB, WHOSE MISSION IS TO ENCOURAGE A MATURE INVOLVEMENT IN THE RECREATIONAL BUILDING AND USE OF LOW-IMPACT BOATS.

## *President's Corner*

*John Bouwsma, Rivers West Interim President*

This has been a banner year for RiversWest. We have expanded our Maritime Skills Workshops, and held another highly successful Family Boat build in which 12 families participated and all launched their boats on the last day. We have kept all our rental bays full all year, and have had excellent attendance at First and third Saturdays. Our membership is holding even or slightly rising; we have over 50 paid up members at last count. Some of the new members have been quite active already, which is very good.



We have made great strides towards cleaning up our shop and getting rid of unwanted and unneeded items. Our housekeeping has improved so the shop always looks tidy and inviting. We scheduled several cleanup weekends, and will schedule more in the coming year.

In June we held a picnic at Hagg Lake; in spite of marginal weather several of us got our boats in the water. Luckily we had brought along a large canopy to cover the eating area, and we ate very well.

Our lease expired and we have negotiated a new one with a slight increase in rent, which will begin on January 1. Our rent is relatively low because of the threat of the new I5 bridge over the Columbia River. It probably doesn't make sense to call it the Columbia River Crossing any more, but there is still a possibility of a new bridge being built. If so we will be forced to find a new location.

**The Portland Boat Show is January 8-12. This is always a lot of fun, and as usual, we will need quite a few volunteers. The signup sheet will go out in an e-mail before Christmas.**

This was a major topic of discussion at our Annual Planning Meeting this year, and is discussed on page 2 as a separate article .

Upcoming activities include the Portland Boat Show January 8-12. This is always a lot of fun, and as usual, we will need quite a few volunteers. The signup sheet will go out in an e-mail before Christmas. Working in the Boat Show is a wonderful way for new members to get acquainted, and to learn about all the things RiversWest is involved in. After that we will have our Annual Meeting, exact date still TBD.

## Annual Planning Meeting

The primary dilemma facing RiversWest at this point is the possibility of a new bridge being built across the Columbia River, right on top of our current location. Luckily this does not seem imminent; however just because the Columbia River Crossing appears to be dead does not mean that a new bridge will never be built. Thus our planning session focused on how we can position ourselves to be ready when and if this occurs.

In general the attendees agreed that we need to grow, since most likely we would have to pay a much higher rent somewhere else. To do this we need to maintain higher visibility in the community. This will help us expand the membership, and may lead to other fund raising opportunities. Several strategies were discussed to achieve this:

First, we should work to develop partnerships, or at least cooperative arrangements, with other organizations, like what we have done for the Family Boat Building with the Oregon Maritime Museum and the Willamette Sailing Club.

Second, we should expand our Mari-

time Skills Workshops, try to get more people leading them, possibly do some of them at the sites of other organizations, and thoroughly document each one on the web site.

Third, we should start a systematic program of fixing up our classic boats, so we can show them at various events, to raise awareness and interest in wooden boats.

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Finally, we should do whatever we can to stimulate the city, and possibly a private investor, to use the Crater Lake Boats that we have been storing, to develop some kind of ferry system.

Peter Wilcox spoke regarding the Crater Lake Boats. He believes that the political climate in the city govern-

ment is right for developing a ferry system, and will be attending some meetings to push this. Various members volunteered funds to help pay the cost of storing the boats for the next year.

Specific proposals from Mike Simmons for the workshops were that we hold 8 workshops each year, one per month, excluding January, July, and December. On alternate 1st and 3rd Saturdays we can have work sessions, fixing up the classic boats, such as the Lake Oswego boat and the Sauvie Island boat. We will be revamping the fees charged to provide an incentive for people attending them to join RiversWest.

The meeting was capped off by a proposal from Sal Digrande to try to work toward developing a Maritime Center here in Portland. While this is a long term project too big for RiversWest to handle alone, it might be possible to generate interest in the city government, other water-related organizations, and/or private industry.

*John Bouwsma, Secretary*

# Portland Boat Show

January 8-12, 2014 Portland Expo Center

Look for a Boat Show  
email coming soon!

**Booth volunteers get free exhibitor passes and paid**

## Time On an English Narrowboat

Story and photos by *Chuck Stuckey*



To paraphrase an old saying, time spent boating will not be subtracted from your life.

And that means any kind of boating.

On a recent trip to Europe, my wife and I chartered an English narrowboat on the River Wey navigation system in Surrey, south of London. The navigation system is part of a larger conservation effort similar to our National Historic Registry. The river system is narrow at points and crossed by a fair number of low bridges. Further the locks which make travel possible are quite narrow.



**To accommodate these two features--low bridges and narrow locks--a unique boat has evolved. Our boat was 45 feet long and six feet wide, with a coach roof only about five feet above the water-line.**

She had a well appointed galley, nice double berth, and comfortable salon complete with TV. We actually watched the first episode of Downton Abbey four months before it's available in the US.

The charter was only for five days, but that was long enough to get the full experience. It was possible to tie up each evening at a riverside pub for a meal and a pint. One can also tie to the river bank using metal stakes driven into the ground and mooring lines fore and aft. We did some of each. Also spent the better part of one day in the town of Guilford--lots of history and good food.

The system is more than 400 years old and made navigable by locks.

In our part of the system the locks are operated by the boaters themselves. After a brief instruction by the charter company, we were left to ourselves.



**The opening and closing takes a little muscle (but not much) and a precise sequence of steps. If done correctly, the boat rises or falls pretty as you please.**

Except for regular maintenance, it's a system unchanged for 400 years. I highly recommend the experience if you find yourself in England and looking for something boatie.

## Building the Kayak, Newt

Story and photos by Steve Najjar



We have the good fortune to be living on the Tualatin River where we have a dock and a few canoes. I got the idea for building a pair of kayaks for my granddaughters from an article in *WoodenBoat's* "Small Boats 2011", *Building the Newt*. After reading the article, studying the photos, and a bit of the plans, I decided that building a pair of these would be perfect for them. One boat could be built from 1½ sheets of plywood – two from three sheets.

The simplicity of Warren Jordan's design and plans promised a straightforward and easy build. Since the hull sides flare out 15 degrees, the parts for the frames, chines, and outwales are similarly cut at that angle.

Because I was going to build two kayaks, I fabricated the pieces for both at the same time as I went along. Parts for the second kayak would be ready to go later on. I began by cutting the plywood as directed, which gave me parts for the sides, bottom, butt blocks, and paddle blades.



Using 6" wide butt blocks, I then connected each narrow 8' piece with a narrow 4' piece to



form the sides. Next I built a jig to build the three frames for each boat – one for the center, and one each fore and aft. Cutting the parts for the frames was straightforward, using the 15-degree angle I mentioned above. I also fabricated the stem pieces at that time.

Because I planned to varnish the interior, I applied coating epoxy to the side panels and the frames "on the bench" before I began actual construction. I like to do this because it waterproofs the wood, and is the equivalent of two or three coats of varnish or paint. I also sanded the panels and frames, so they would be ready for varnishing later on. I then set up the kayak's frames on the ladder frame as per the plans, and dry-fitted the side pieces and the stems in place, to be sure all the pieces fit properly. They did, and I glued everything together.

I then fabricated the chine pieces from a flat-grained piece of clear 1 x 4 fir (so that they would easily bend around the kayak sides), again using the 15-degree angle. After trimming them to length and shaping them, I glued them in place. I used a block plane with a straight two foot piece of 1 x 4 fastened to the side of the plane, to make sure that the chines on both sides were flat and on the same plane.

I marked the bottom panels, leaving a bit extra outside the chines, and trimmed them accordingly. As I did with the side panels and the frames, I applied coating epoxy to the inside surfaces. With both panels temporarily clamped in place, I trimmed and fitted the 6" butt block inside to connect the bottom panels together. This was a bit tricky, because I had to take into account the curve of the hull shape and the 15-degree flare of the side panels. I fastened the two panels together, and then, using virtually every clamp in the shop, I glued and fastened the bottom panel to the chines. After removing the clamps, I trimmed the bottom panel flush with them. →



Finally, it was time to flip the boat right side up. It is a special moment, because one can see the interior for the first time. I invited the girls over to help me out. They were impressed. After they left, I spent some time cleaning the drips and runs on the inside of the boat using a heat gun. Next, I had to trim the tops of six frames to a uniform quarter-round shape. I recruited the help of a machinist friend to make three beefy aluminum pieces with that shape. The dimensions of the center frame are the same, but the fore and aft frames are beveled, so the outward faces are smaller than the inward faces. I clamped the pieces in place, and used a saw and a belt sander to trim the frame tops to shape. It worked like a charm.

Next on the agenda was to fabricate

and install the outwales. The procedure was similar to that of the chines, again using that 15-degree angle. Fitting the decks fore and aft was tricky, as I had to account for the curve and bevel of the sides, and the size of the inner face of the stem piece. I used mahogany for the outwales, decks, and stem pieces to complement the varnished interior.

Another important moment is painting. The girls went to Lowe's to choose a color of exterior latex paint. For the first of the two kayaks, Lela chose a nice shade of yellow, and we had a painting party for the first coat. I cleaned things up, and gave it a second coat. I then gave the interior and trim pieces two coats of varnish. The varnished interior and trim contrasting with the yellow hull looked great. I

installed the seat, and we were ready for the launch – the best moment of all.

We launched the kayak in mid-July. Despite its simplicity, the kayak is beautiful. My granddaughters and many others have thoroughly enjoyed exploring our stretch of the Tualatin. What is extremely gratifying for me is seeing in them the sense of freedom and exploration that I felt as a boy alone in a boat -- a captain of one's own ship. There's nothing like it!

*Initial article:*

<http://jordanwoodboats.com/perch/resources/smallboats2011newt.pdf>

*Plans from the builder:*

<http://jordanwoodboats.com/>

## 2013 Family Boat Build

*Chuck Stuckey*



For the fourth year in a row, we hosted the Family Boat Build at the Portland Wooden Boat Festival held in the Willamette Sailing Club. After a very nice dinner, provided by the Oregon Maritime Museum on Friday evening and a get oriented session, twelve “families” gathered on Saturday morning, on the edge of the WSC parking lot and began assembling their Salt Bay Skiffs. They worked steadily until about 4:00 in the afternoon. Everyone seemed to have a great time.

RiversWest members acted as stand-

by boat-wrights to help with any questions or problems. I think we had as much fun as the families. With great support from various sponsors and our two-partners – Willamette Sailing Club and the Oregon Maritime Museum – this year's Family Boat Build was another great success. On Sunday the rest of the Wooden Boat Festival provided a festive backdrop for the launch. There was good food, live music and a huge crowd. And yes, we'll be doing it again at the 2014 festival, July 11-13, 2014. See you there!



*RiversWest file photos*

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**Membership Form**

**RiversWest is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to encourage personal involvement in the construction of small recreational wooden craft and their accessories.**

- Members will receive quarterly editions of the RiversWest News
- Have access to the RiversWest boat shop (add space rent for project)
- Access to all RiversWest educational programs
- Invitation to all RiversWest boating and social functions
- Right to vote for RiversWest officers and board members
- Chance to be involved with RiversWest board if you so desire
- Opportunity to volunteer and help with activities
- Discounts at Crosscut Hardwood

Our main support is the dues and donations from our members. Whether or not you are active at the shop or in our other activities, we hope you will want to support our advocacy for wooden small craft and their construction in the Portland area. Check out our web site at [www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org), where you can find sage advice as well as plans and materials for your next project.

**Please return the following with your check to the address above.**

**You can also join on our web site, and use PayPal to pay your dues.**

New member  Renewing member  Change of information  Additional donation

Name..... Home phone.....

Address..... Day/Cell phone.....

City/ST/Zip..... E-Mail.....

*Dues:*  Youth (17 and under) \$30.00  General Membership \$50.00

*Donations:*  \$50.00,  \$100.00,  \$250.00,  other \$.....

**Memberships run for 12 months, starting when the dues are paid**

**and will expire at the end of that month a year later.**



[www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org)

**P.O. Box 13782**

**Portland, OR 97213**

***Please check your membership status; RiversWest needs your support.***