

Commodore's Message

*"May your sunrises be memorable
Your crew affable
Your navigation reliable
Your breezes pleasurable
Your seas tractable
Your passages notable
Your harbors accessible
Your sunsets indescribable
Your Friendships desirable
And your goals attainable."*

My father, Jack Cronin, wrote this as his first President's message (as the role was titled back in 1977), and now I find myself in the distinguished position of Commodore of this Society, following in his, and my younger brother Wayne's (2009-11) footsteps, with the duty of carrying on the legacy put forth by them and the many past Friendship Sloop Society Presidents and Commodores. I, along with your new Vice Commodore Dianne Fassak, look forward to carrying the torch of leadership passed down by previous Presidents and Commodores so that we can leave a thriving organization for future generations to enjoy.

What is it about these boats that attracts us to them? Is it the grace and beauty, whether it be at anchor or underway? Is it the representation of history within the model? Is it the feeling of belonging to a family when you meet up with other owners?

For us it all began in 1968, when my parents bought **Tannis**, and shortly thereafter, joined the Society. In that time we have been drawn under the spell of the Friendship sloop and the extended 'family' that we enjoy meeting up with at the yearly regattas. We have seen many come into this 'family', and sadly, we have said goodbye to many. The same can be said for the boats, with the addition of new sloops, and, unfortunately, the loss of some. But the love and passion for these boats carries on regardless. Every year we have the opportunity to reunite with our extended 'family' at the Southwest Harbor Rendezvous and the Rockland Regatta, both of which have been run very successfully and have proven to be a lot of fun. We are always looking to see more of our 'family' at either or both of these events, so plan now to attend next season and join us.

Wishing you fair wind and tides always,

Jeff Cronin
FSS Commodore

2016 Annual Meeting Highlights

Nancy Toppan, Recording Secretary Commodore

Noel March called the meeting to order, welcoming all present and introducing the current officers. Noel recognized members who were attending for the first time or after a lengthy absence. These included Doug Riley, who is the new owner of **Eastward** #6, Bill Levandowski, new owner of **Integrity** #97, George Lupien, new owner of **Ansa** #211, the Majors family, who are the new owners of **Sazerac** #44, and Diane and John Fassek, the owners of **Westwind** #95, currently being rebuilt. Noel asked the meeting to remember FSS members who had passed away over the years, and there was a period of silence as many good people and fine sailors were recalled.

Treasurer Greg Merrill reported the Society to be in good financial health, in part due to both a strong membership response, and robust Yearbook advertising over the last several years. For 2017, the dock rental fee for the Rockland Homecoming will remain stable at \$1000. The budget for 2016-17 was reviewed and passed unanimously.

Rich and Beth Langton, longtime Yearbook publishers, reminded the group that they are still looking for someone to take on that job. Yearbook distribution is covering more area along the New England coast, and 2016 saw a good number of articles submitted and published, though more are always welcome and needed. Advertising revenues continue to surpass the expense of publishing and distribution, thanks largely to Peter Toppan and the fantastic job he has done recruiting advertisers in the construction industry.

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Division II sloops head for the first mark on a brisk afternoon in Rockland.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

2016 Annual Meeting Highlights

(Continued from front page)

Pete urged all members to seek out local businesses like marinas, yacht brokers, marine services, suppliers, and yacht clubs as potential advertisers. Rates are very reasonable and distribution covers all of New England with 4500 Yearbooks printed each year. Interested parties can contact Pete at toppan@verizon.

Webmaster John Wojcik reported that the FSS website continues to be updated regularly with sloop owner information and current reports. Older Yearbooks and Newsletters are posted, and the "Sloops For Sale" page continues to be the most visited. The hardbound edition of the book "Lasting Friendships" remains available for sale on the site, and efforts are still underway to have Chandlery items available for purchase on the website.

A new Trophy Committee will be formed to review existing trophies, and decide which are still viable and which need to be retired or updated. Marcia Morang and Penny Richards have done a superb job managing this task over the years, but they need a few more people to get involved and help out.

In the nominations department, Pete Toppan was pleased to report that Diane Fassek has agreed to become the new FSS Vice Commodore, working with incoming Commodore Jeff Cronin. Diane and her husband are currently rebuilding **Westwind** #95, and she is the daughter of longtime FSS members, the late Don and Dottie Huston (see Don's obituary on page XX of this issue).

Several items of new business were discussed. The Society had previously approved the idea of affiliating with the Maine Community Foundation so that donations to the FSS could be tax deductible. Noel March will form a committee to work on cementing that partnership to advance efforts in fundraising for repairs and restoration of historic, original sloops. Maine Boats, Homes and Harbors has expressed interest in sharing the Rockland public harbor-front with the Society during the FSS Homecoming in 2018. They currently have a weekend dedicated to their own programs and festivities. They are also interested in featuring Blackjack in their August 2017 event, if she is in the water.

Ted Walsh reported that he had been corresponding with a gentleman in Sweden who has built a model of a Friendship sloop, and published a small pamphlet (in Swedish!) along with it. Ted pointed out that spreading the word about our boats was one of the major reasons the Society published the latest book, and he was pleased to note that the word has reached Scandinavia!

The new officers for 2017 – 2019 were presented:

Jeff Cronin, Commodore

Diane Fassek, Vice Commodore

Greg Merrill, Treasurer (returning)

Nancy Toppan, Recording Secretary (returning)

Carole Wojcik, Membership Secretary (returning)

A plaque of recognition and appreciation was awarded to outgoing Commodore Noel March, and new Commodore Jeff Cronin adjourned the meeting. Drinks, dinner and the silent and live auction followed, and a truly fine and memorable time was had by all.



Gaivota #214 with owner Bill Whitney and crew enjoying a good breeze on a fine summer day.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

Donald L. Huston

(1927-2016)

Don Huston, of Peabody, MA, and formerly of Nahant, MA, died peacefully on June 7, 2016 at the age of 89. He and wife Dottie had celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary prior to her death in 2015.

Don was raised in Mansfield, MA, and before graduating from high school, had enlisted in the U. S. Coast Guard, assigned to the patrol frigate **USS Gladwyne**, PF62, during WW II. After returning home from the war, he completed his education at Storm King Prep School and the University of Maine at Orono, earning a degree in Civil Engineering. For many years, Don was employed as an Engineer and town Superintendent in Nahant and Swampscott, MA.

In 1964 Don rebuilt the 32 foot original 1915 Friendship sloop **Eagle** #53. A licensed captain, he sailed Massachusetts Bay and the Gulf of Maine for 45 years, racing and winning many trophies while participating in the Friendship Sloop Society's regattas. Don was the President of the FSS (1979 – 1980), and was past Commodore of both the Lynn and Swampscott Yacht Clubs. He also enjoyed summers in Dennisport, MA, at the cottage he and his father had built when he was a boy. He was an enthusiastic adventurer who traveled the world, sailed throughout the Caribbean, and spent the last 20 winters with Dottie in Luquillo Beach, Puerto Rico.

Don and Dottie are survived by their three children, Dennis, Dean and Diane, and their families. Diane Huston Fassek is the new Vice Commodore of the FSS.

Membership Report

Membership has improved slightly since last year percentage-wise, with 80% of our members paying dues in 2016, compared to 76% of members who paid in 2015.

The following table shows the activity:

Sloop Owners	92 / 115	80%
Full Members	27 / 37	73%
Co-Op Members	45 / 52	86.5%
Honorary Members	5	
Complimentary Members	5	
Total	214	

We have two new members who joined in July:

Mike Heath of Cotuit, MA, who sailed his Cape Dory 28 **Serendipity** with the Buzzards Bay fleet to Southwest Harbor and Rockland.

Roy Jenkins of Wiscasset, ME, builder of #149 **Fiddlers Green**, who re-joined after a number of years. Roy greeted the Buzzards Bay fleet when they sailed up the Sheepscot River to Wiscasset as guests of the Wiscasset Yacht Club.

I have received several notes from members who included them on their membership renewals:

From Anthony Cordasco & Julie Gerow of Chamberlain, ME, owners of # 115 Celerity:

“After 2 ½ years of restoration work, **Celerity** was finally launched in July, 2016. Too late for the Rockland regatta but we’ll be there next year.”

From Bill & Caroline Zuber of Friendship, ME, owners of #71 Gladiator:

“When we were in Florida, we sold the **Gladiator** to our son Andy and his wife Kandace. **Gladiator** will remain in Friendship in her boathouse in the winter, and Andy will be the responsible “Managing Owner”. He plans to fly back and forth to continue to participate in the activities of the FSS, with Bill and I as “Honorary Advisors”.

We bought **Gladiator** 50 years ago next March, and sailed her home to Friendship permanently in 1973. Since then, Bill has done all the maintenance, including a rebuilding in 1982 through 1987. So many happy years and friendships later, he decided it was time to really “retire”. All the Zubers are content that **Gladiator** will remain in the family, and the family with the Friendship Sloop Society.”

From Doug Riley of Essex Junction, VT, owner of #6 Eastward:

“Our restoration of the ex-Roger Duncan wooden sloop **Eastward** continues. We hope to launch into Lake Champlain during 2017. Tasks still to do going into November, 2016 include: re-creating the (missing!) electrical system, closing up the cockpit with its new steering and seating structures, rigging new bob chains and (most important of all) picking a color scheme for the trailboards!”

Registrar’s Report

There have been two changes of ownership since the early spring time frame:

Neal Parker has sold #191 **Annabelle**, the 22’ Muscongus Bay sloop formerly hung in Fulton’s Fish Market in New York City, to Freeland Eckert who will continue to keep the sloop in the Rockland, ME area.

#46 **Momentum** has been transferred back to Ron Esser of Blawnox, PA. The sloop was used by the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies of Erie, PA for marine studies. Ron will continue to use the Center as his homeport. **Momentum** was originally named **Dirigo** and was built by the Lash Brothers.

About a year ago we listed on the FSS website for free, a 22’ Ahern hull owned by John Anson of upstate New York. The sloop was turned upside down in a garden area, unfinished. John sent a note with a picture about a month ago informing the Society that he has cut up the hull since there was no interest. No sooner was the tragic deed done, when he received his first inquiry regarding the hull. The sloop was not registered with the Society.

I received a call from a Dick Usen regarding the status of the sloop **Smuggler** #33, built by Phil Nichols. Dick owned the sloop in the 60’s and raced in Friendship. **Smuggler** was last owned by Mike Mulroney of Kingston, RI. I provided Dick with Mike’s contact info and Dick spoke with Mike regarding the sloop. The sloop is no longer in existence, having been wrecked many years ago.



Phoenix #91 with owner Tad Beck (2nd from right) receiving tactical advice from chief strategist BB, shown wearing a PFD.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)



Racing at Rockland - 2016

By Dave Graham, FSS Race Committee Chairman

As we reported at the November 19, 2016 Annual Meeting, this year's Rockland Homecoming was one of the BEST! With ideal weather and wind conditions, the three-day regatta proved itself to be nearly picture perfect.

For the Race Committee, it all began with the fall 2015 Executive Committee meeting when we handed Commodore Noel March the mandate of selecting a committee to resolve the long-standing handicap/scoring problems which many of us had been wrestling with for the past several years. Noel wisely appointed past Commodore Bill Whitney, and Vice-Commodore Jeff Cronin to seek a resolution in time for the 2016 races at Rockland.

Bill and Jeff then appointed a sub-committee consisting of Dick Salter, Miff Lauriat, Dick Campbell and themselves. The sub-committee worked diligently, eventually determining that the best solution was to incorporate a five-year average of our participating sloops' seconds-per-nautical-mile (S/NM) as a basis for performance, and to use the calculated figures for Handicap Alley flag-rounding assignments. Thus, the 2016 Rockland Regatta was set up as follows:

- The handicapping/design of Handicap Alley for 2016 utilized actual seconds per nautical mile (S/NM) as taken from the past 5 years' records (2011 through 2015) -
- For each year, The Handicap Alley distances (in yards) were calculated by Division, based on the actual S/NM of the sloops that sailed each year -
- Then, each sloop's Handicap Alley distance for the 5 years was averaged -
- Each sloop that had not sailed during the last 5 years was assigned Handicap Alley yards based on the average distance of the next faster and slower Hamlin ratings -
- Handicap Alley was then designed by setting flag 1 at 50 yards, and flags 2 through 10 in groups that best fit each sloop's yardage calculation -
- For 2017, the Handicap Alley will be designed on the same basis, using the data from 2012 through 2016.

At the end of the day, skippers seemed well-satisfied with the new system, and I again want to express my deep appreciation to the fine men and women who serve on the Race Committee, in either the RC boat or in one of our two valiant patrol boats. Alphabetically, they are Dick Campbell, Leo Campbell, Fred Lincoln, Marcia Morang, Phil Pratt, Bob Rex (Chairman Emeritus), Penny Richards, Dick Salter, and Ralph Stanley. I cannot ignore our non-RC members who pitch-in with extraordinary efforts, Jack Cronin with his crew on **Effie M.**, and Bill Zuber.

I would also like to express my sincere and deep appreciation to Mrs. Janneke Neilson of Northeast Harbor, ME, the owner of our Race Committee boat, **Cinchona**, and to her skillful skipper, Norman Sanborn, of Cranberry Island, for their truly magnificent contributions to our Society's race effort. Newly appointed Rockland Harbormaster, Matthew "Matt" Ripley, a retired Coast Guardsman, has also strongly supported what we are all about, both on the water and at the town floats, making it all work smoothly. Finest kind, Matt! Without the strong efforts of these fine Race Committee members and support people, our Rockland race program would simply not exist!

Complete results of the 2016 Rockland Regatta can be observed on the FSS website: www.fss.org but here is a brief summary on the top 2016 winners:

Division 1:

- 1st Place -- **Salatia** #90, Miff Lauriat
- 2nd Place -- **Eden** #122, Scott Martin
- 3rd Place -- **Celebration** #227, Greg & Annette Merrill

Division 2:

- 1st Place -- **Gladiator** #71, Andy Zuber
- 2nd Place -- **Phoenix** #91, Tad Beck
- 3rd Place -- **Inherit the Wind** #156, Victor Goulding

Overall State of Maine Trophy:

Salatia #90 (Division #1) -- Miff Lauriat

On the subject of trophies, Marcia Morang and Penny Richards do a truly stellar job on a task that is never easy, especially tracking the "non-keeper" trophies that are handed out following each Homecoming Regatta at Rockland. Penny extends a reminder to those FSS members who were awarded trophies last July, to get your name engraved on your assigned trophy, where appropriate. Marcia and Penny also welcome your assistance and ideas in updating or replacing any trophies that are "too tired" to continue in service. Penny can be reached at pennyjrichards@gmail.com.

Finally, we invite any and all to return to Rockland in 2017, on July 20 – 22, for the next annual Friendship Sloop Society Homecoming celebration!



Miff Lauriat and wife Marge Russakoff with son Lane receive the well deserved State of Maine Trophy for finishing first overall in **Salatia** #90 at the 2016 Rockland Homecoming.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

Marlinespike Seamanship

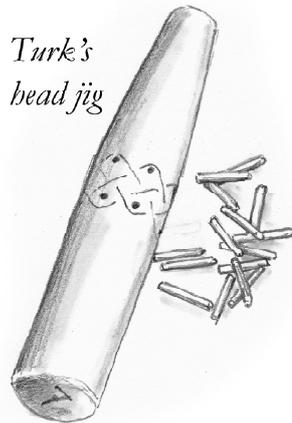
By Ted Walsh

Turk's Head Jig

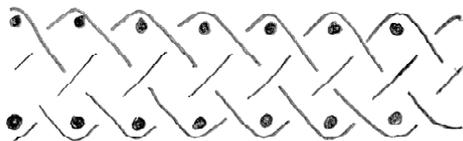
The Turk's head is perhaps the most recognizable of traditional marlinespike knots. There are numerous books and videos that will explain how to tie this knot, but the two key ingredients to having it come out right are getting it started correctly, and understanding how much the diameter of the knot will shrink as it is tied.

Starting the knot correctly can be really frustrating if you have not already mastered it. Even if you have mastered it, if you go a year or so without tying one, it is like learning to tie the knot all over again, at least it is for me. This is particularly true if you want to tie one of the more complex versions with three or more strands.

A Turk's head jig won't make the knot easy to tie, but it can eliminate some of the frustration and make tying the knot more efficient. I have several of these in different sizes. They are easy to make and can take much of the frustration out of tying a beautiful and useful knot.



Seven bight Turk's head pattern



The principle is simple; you need to make a cylindrical cone with a gradual taper. Mine are made of wood, but you could use cardboard in a pinch. The trick is to diagram out the actual pattern of the first complete pass of the knot and drill or poke holes where each outside bight is located in the pattern. Then put short, 1/8" pegs in the holes (I just cut up a 1/8" dowel), which gives you a three-dimensional pattern to tie the first pass of the knot around. Once you have completed the first

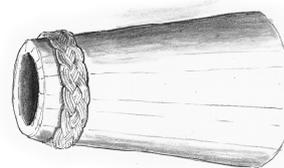
circuit, pull out the pegs and continue the knot by following the pattern you have set up with the remaining line, until you have the number of strands that



you want.

As the knot constricts with each additional strand, slide the Turk's Head further up the narrow end of the jig to accommodate the constricting of the knot.

One really nice thing about these jigs is that once you have set one up you are likely to be able to tie the knot the first time and have it come out well. Another is that if your objective is to tie the knot around something like a tiller, you can set up a jig, tie a knot fairly quickly and figure out how much the diameter



shrinks. Once you know that, you can easily start a second knot and adjust it to come out a little larger, or smaller when you start, by leaving a little more slack, or adding

tension. Once you have completed your first pass around the jig, and when you remove your pegs, slide the first pattern of the new knot off the jig and onto the object around which the Turk's head will be finished. Now complete the knot with some confidence that it will come out the correct size.



Southwest Harbor Rendezvous

Miff and Marge Lauriat

For the second year in a row, **Gladiator** #71, an original Friendship sloop built in 1902 and hailing from Friendship, ME, won the Southwest Harbor Friendship Sloop Rendezvous on July 16.

Besting 15 other sloops, **Gladiator** led for the entire race. The sloop, skippered by Andy Zuber, is owned by his parents, Bill and Caroline Zuber, of Friendship. Second place was claimed by **Endeavor** #196, skippered by Skip Fraley and owned by Betsey Holtzmann of Southwest Harbor. **Salatia** #90, owned and skippered by Miff Lauriat of Southwest Harbor, “took the bronze”.

24 years ago, Lauriat co-founded the race with Alex Forbes, owner of **Bucephalus** #251, and from its inception has billed it as “nothing serious, just a fun circumnavigation of Greenings Island: no entry fee, no handicaps, no trophies”. He has coordinated the event every year with his wife, Marjory Russakoff.

This year, boats from as far away as Buzzards Bay, MA joined with Boothbay, Lincolnville and Friendship vessels to cruise to MDI. In all, 20 boats gathered in Southwest Harbor for the event. Many thanks go to Will Ratcliff and Shane Dowsland of the Hinckley Company for kindly providing free dockage and moorings for visitors from away.

Jaaneka Neilson generously offered her lobster yacht **Cinchona**, captained by Norman Sanborn of Cranberry Island, to serve as Committee Boat and Race Committee, assisted by Captain Dick Salter of Manchester, MA, and Ralph Stanley of Southwest Harbor.

The race started off Sand Point, Greenings Island, just after 1 pm in a light NW breeze. The ebbing tide roaring out of Somes Sound at the first mark made for some tricky roundings and close calls. As the fleet headed toward Bear Island bell buoy with fair wind and tide, the sloops made a beautiful parade with the backdrop of perfect weather and spectacular Mount Desert Island scenery. A warm, Southwesterly breeze filled in and gave the fleet a nice little beat home around Greenings Ledge buoy to the finish.

All boats finished the 4.5 mile course within 30 minutes of each other. Some continued to sail into the near perfect afternoon before gathering at the post-race party coordinated by Marjory Russakoff and graciously hosted by Betsey Holtzmann and her son Abe Noyes at their Kings Point home, dock and beach.



Petrel #144, skippered by Bill Lundquist, enjoys her first trip to Maine. Bill single-handed the sloop all the way from Cape Cod.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

“Lasting Friendships” (always the perfect gift!)

The FSS published book “Lasting Friendships, A Century of Friendship Sloops”, remains available through the FSS website, fss.org, in the hardbound edition for \$45, which includes shipping. The paperback edition can be purchased through Amazon or other online booksellers.

The book tells the story of a family of boats, the Friendship sloop, and how these iconic boats have weathered more than a century of change and transition. The forward is by renowned historian and technical editor, Maynard Bray, and includes over 300 photos, plus line drawings and original illustrations. “Lasting Friendships” is a must have for any lover of Friendship sloops, traditional sailing vessels, and Maine history.



FSS Historian and master boat builder Ralph Stanley and wife Marion enjoy a quiet moment at a local restaurant in Rockland

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)



Sloops at the town dock

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

Friendship Memorial Scholarship Fund

By Phil Pratt, Chairman

Bill Pendleton's intent in starting this Fund in 1967 was "to assist a boy or girl living in the town of Friendship to continue his or her education beyond secondary school....The hope is that this fund will grow and that subsequent years will see much more available for annual awards".

2017 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Fund. Today, Bill would be extremely happy to see the results and condition of the Fund he started almost 50 years ago.

The Trustees of the FMSF are proud to announce the 2016 scholarship recipients:

Graduates Awarded \$1,200 Scholarships:

James Allan Vandett, University of Maine, Orono
Emily L. Wotton, University of Colorado, Bolder
Alexia N. Hilt, University of Maine, Orono
Joseph T. Campagna, University of Maine, Farmington
Riley J. McCollett, University of New England, Portland
Ducal K. MacLeod, University of Maine, Orono

Continuing Education, Awarded \$500 Scholarships:

Kristen L. Simmons, University of Maine, Farmington
Jennifer M. Delano, University of Maine, Augusta
The total dollars awarded came to \$8200.

The Trustees of the Fund have a goal of making larger annual awards to individual graduating seniors. A \$20,000 Matching Gifts Program will be initiated in 2017 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Fund. Every gift received by the Fund in 2017 will be matched dollar for dollar up to a total of \$20,000. This will grow the endowment by \$40,000. Members of the FSS and anyone with an interest in the community of Friendship, ME, should expect to receive a gift appeal in early 2017 for this worthwhile Fund.



#7 **Tannis**, skippered by incoming FSS Commodore Jeff Cronin, well over, with an enthusiastic young crew working hard to hold her steady.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)



Scott Martin presents the "Ray of Hope" award to Nancy Toppan at the awards banquet in Rockland.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

Blackjack Update

Captain Jim Sharp, the founder and Director of Rockland's Sail, Power and Steam Museum, addressed the FSS Annual Meeting in November with an update on the complete rebuild of the circa 1900 sloop **Blackjack** #19. She's come a long way since arriving at the Museum's workshop 2 years ago on the verge of collapse, thanks to an untiring crew of volunteers, the expertise of several local hired shipwrights, and relentless fundraising efforts.

Jim reports she has at last returned to her original elegant form, with new floors and all new frames, and fresh cement in the bilge. A symbolic "shutter party" was held in September to celebrate the placement of the final plank in the complete replanking job, featuring champagne, Meg Sharp's superb chowder, and an excellent turnout. The current project is the installation of the ceiling.

Discussion ensued about what the refurbished sloop could mean to the Friendship Sloop Society. Both Jim and exiting FSS Commodore Noel March feel strongly that **Blackjack** should become the flagship and ambassador for the FSS, promoting the sloops, the Museum's work in restoration, and the mission of the Society, by attending events, races and rendezvous, and locally chartering out for educational day trips. The effort will continue to have **Blackjack** become a National Historic Monument once completed.

Jim reminded the FSS membership that not only is financial support critical to the expensive restoration endeavor, but that membership at the Museum and visits all are crucial to the effort to rebuild **Blackjack**, and to keep the Museum at the forefront of Friendship sloop restoration and promotion. Jim and his crew have set an ambitious launch date of August 2017, and with the passion, enthusiasm and hard work that have characterized this project, **Blackjack** will likely find herself afloat in Maine waters next summer.

Dix Island Archipelago, Penobscot Bay

By Laurie Raymond (with input from Ted Walsh)

A beautiful anchorage on the southwestern edge of Penobscot Bay at the northeast end of the Muscle Ridge Channel, is that surrounded by Dix, High, Birch, and Little Green islands, sometimes referred to as the Dix Island Archipelago, sometimes as High Island Harbor.

Getting into this tranquil spot is strait forward. From the Muscle Ridge, head east between red nun "10" and the red day mark "12" on Otter Island, then leave Little Green to port and tiny Oak Island to starboard. Holding ground is mixed, but the areas just south of the old granite pier on High Island, and just north of the little beach on Dix are reportedly good. Avoid the 3-foot spot just west of High, and the submerged ledge north of Birch. There is ample room for about a half-dozen boats, and the anchorage offers good protection from all wind directions but north and northwest; perfect for settled summer weather.

(A word of caution here: the chart shows a 'Dix Island Harbor' south of the intended anchorage, and this may NOT be where you want to be. Ted Walsh, skipper of **Black Star** #247 writes on the FSS website, "...stay out of it unless you have a very shallow draft, excellent local knowledge, or nerves of steel. It is crowded with rocks!" We bumped into this "harbor" once, and it was indeed a navigational adventure.)

Once your anchor is set, there are good opportunities to get ashore to explore or to relax on a pristine little beach. High Island is open to visitors and can be approached by dinghy, either landing at the granite pier or at the small south-facing beach, which all but disappears at high tide. Rugged trails, piles of granite quarry tailings and rusted, derelict machinery and cables await the adventuresome, and at the western end of the island is the old, water-filled quarry. Dix Island, the largest in this group, is privately owned by six families. There is a trail that circles the island which may be open to guest use, depending on who is in residence. Check the sign on the small, north-facing beach for current trail status. The smaller Birch Island is owned by one of the Dix families, and day visitors are allowed ashore to wander, and spend time on several small, beautiful beaches. No camping or fires are allowed.

Spending any time in this low key, peaceful spot makes it nearly impossible to imagine that both Dix and High islands were once active, highly productive commercial quarries. In the mid 1800s, Dix was home to more than 2000 quarrymen and stone workers, primarily European immigrants, and had 150 buildings (including workers' boarding houses and a theater!). High Island hosted some 200 resident workers. Giant, sculpted pieces of granite were shipped by sail to Washington, DC to become the facings and columns of the US Treasury Building, and more were incorporated into the post offices in New York, Philadelphia and beyond.

We are fortunate today that the owners graciously allow visitors to share and enjoy the beauty and history of these alluring islands. It is an interesting and rewarding destination for either a day trip or an overnight visit.



Old Baldy #57, with owners Kathe Newman and husband Dan Walton on her first appearance at the Rockland Homecoming.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

2017 FSS Calendar of Events

(final schedule and dates will be published in the Spring Newsletter and Yearbook)

Winter Executive Committee Meeting

TBA

Buzzards Bay Fleet departure for Maine

Monday June 26th

Southwest Harbor Rendezvous, Race and Potluck

Saturday, July 15

Pulpit Harbor Rendezvous

Tuesday, July 18

57th Annual Rockland Homecoming, Rendezvous and Races

Thursday – Saturday, July 20 – 22
Rockland Town Landing



Anna R #93 cruising in her homeport of Rockland.

(Photo courtesy of Bill Finch)

The Mighty Staysail

By Bill Whitney

Looking at the typical 20 – 40 foot sloop-rigged production sailboats built from the 1960's to the 80's, there are very few rigged with staysails. Almost all of them employed big, overlapping genoa jibs to provide the sail power needed to drive their hulls. Larger schooners and world cruisers employed staysails but these faded from popularity as production boats. Now, decades later, we see a resurgence of the staysail, not only in new boats, but also in many refits of older production boats, as people discover the limitations of the single headsail rig. Heading upwind in a building breeze with a big genoa, even if it can be efficiently roller-reefed, becomes a challenge. Too much sail overpowers the boat and reefing a large jib upsets the balance of the sail plan by shifting the center of effort too far forward.

Designers and builders are now producing boats with either permanent or removable inner stays attached to the mast, with the inner triangle about 2/3 of the foretriangle area. Conveniently, this is about the same sail area as a reefed/furled jib. With a sail on the inner stay, the center of effort is moved aft, and provides much better balance for the entire sail plan. On a Friendship sloop, this inner stay is attached to the mast at the same place as the shrouds, and approximately at the center of horizontal thrust for the reefed mainsail, thus providing a strong, mechanically balanced structure. It's amazing that it only took modern designers 50-plus years to "discover" the staysail again!

The staysail is a handy and versatile sail, almost effortless to tack or jibe, and easy to set or strike from the cockpit if properly rigged. This small headsail generates considerable power on its own, and trimmed correctly, augments the mainsail, amplifies the jib, and balances the center of effort on many points of sail.

A clubfooted staysail has its foot secured to a boom, hence the name "club" commonly given to that spar. Its foot can be attached to the club with lacing, but more commonly it's 'loose-footed', attached only at its tack and clew. I have a short lanyard attached to the clew as an outhaul so I can give the sail minor adjustments for wind conditions. In light winds I slack off the outhaul to give the sail a little more curvature, or draft, and I tighten it up to flatten the sail as the wind increases.

Another alternative rig is to install roller furling, which offers an easy way to deploy, furl, and stow a staysail from the cockpit, and with some set-ups, a way to reduce sail area by partially furling, or roller-reefing. If the sailcloth is robust enough for heavy weather, and the sail is adequately protected from sun exposure when furled, a furling staysail may be a viable option.

In heavy weather, the staysail becomes the 'go-to' foresail, providing just the right amount of sail area and maintaining the same balanced center of effort under a double-reefed main as exists with the full rig. Back-luffing it can also be a big help getting on the right tack when sailing off the anchor or mooring, and when coming about in heavy seas. The staysail is at its best on any points of sail between a close reach and a broad reach, and the self-tending ability of the club-footed staysail is very useful in short tacking and single-handing.

Like all other sails, however, staysails have some limitations, wind range and points of sail to mention a few. When sailing downwind on a very broad reach, the staysail can interfere with the airflow to the jib, due both to the weight of the club, and the partial blanketing by the mainsail. I find that dropping the staysail can actually increase boat speed, thus the full jib moves the center of effort forward to counteract the tendency of the boat to round up. Similarly, on a dead run, a preventer or whisker pole which keeps the club 'winged' out on the opposite side from the mainsail, prevents the staysail from collapsing. The staysail and club can become a weapon during an accidental jibe. Clubs tend to dominate the foredeck, and can interfere with anchoring, keeping a bow watch on a foggy day, or storing a dinghy.

The design elements your sailmaker has to consider are the area and normal wind range in which you will be sailing, proximity to the mast and other sails, amount of inner stay sag on various points of sail, and desired location of the center of effort for the sail relative to the overall sail plan. One of the issues I have with my staysail is how much it disturbs the luff of the mainsail when close-hauled. The windward performance would likely improve with a smaller staysail, or by having my existing sail recut with some hollow added to the leach. If the staysail is too full, or the slot between leech and mainsail is too tight (because of poor sail trim or shape), it will disturb the airflow and efficiency of both the jib and the mainsail, particularly when sailing close-hauled.

Since the staysail often doubles as the heavy weather sail, robustness all around is imperative. The most failsafe staysail arrangement is a hanked-on, loose-footed sail that's stoutly constructed and that's sized and shaped conservatively. Its fabric weight should be equal to or greater than the weight of the mainsail cloth. Its corners should be heavily reinforced with multiple layers of sailcloth, extending along twelve to fifteen percent of the length of the luff, leech, or foot that they're supporting.

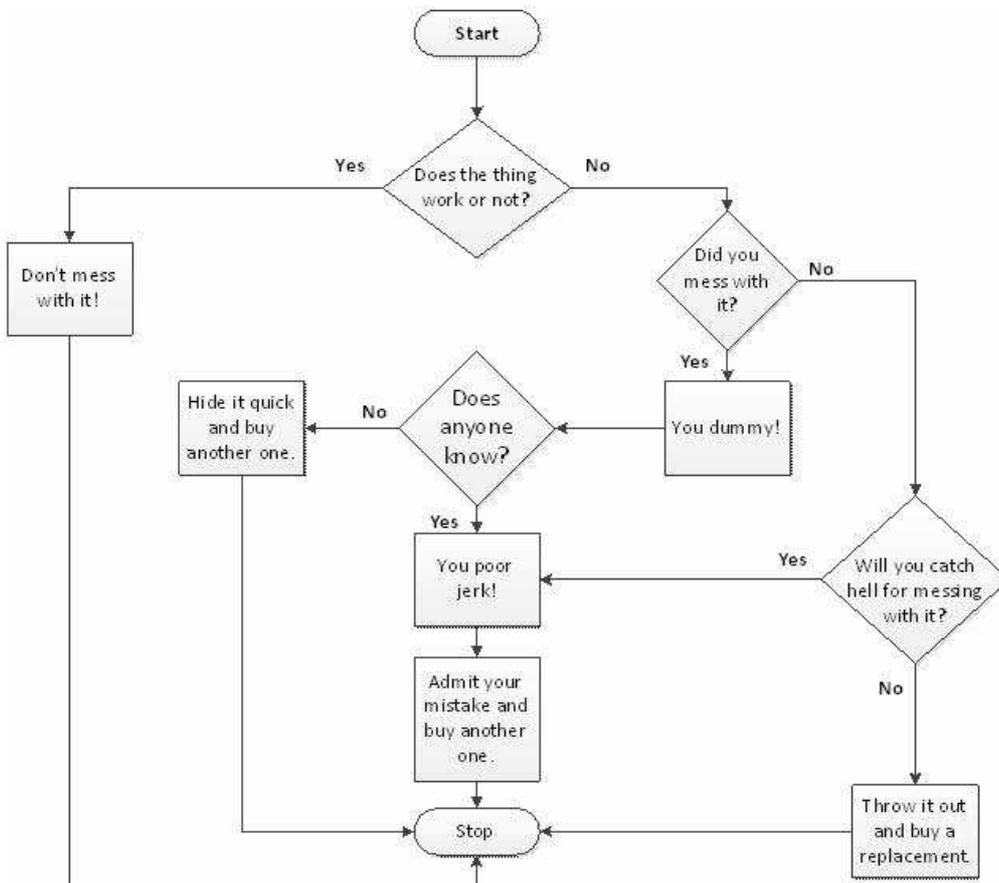
The corner hardware should be non-corroding bronze or stainless steel, built and installed to take the load of a 50-knot gust. Webbing reinforcement may be added to enhance the strength and flexibility of the corner rings. The type of jib hanks and the way they're secured to the luff of a hanked-on staysail, make a huge difference in the reliability, ease of repairing, and handling of the sail. Jib hanks should be bronze, reusable, and large enough to allow an easy run up and down the stay, with piston pulls all on the same side.

The venerable, valuable and versatile little staysail adds much to a sailor's options if it's built for the task, and the rig it's flown on is designed to maximize its performance. This headsail that consistently provides yeoman service, proves once again that good things do indeed come in small packages!

(Note: Much of the content of this article is a distillation of multiple sources, among them, "In Praise of the Versatile Staysail", by Carol Hasse, "The Sailmaker's Apprentice" by Emiliano Marino, and "Sails", by Jeremy Howard-Williams, and of course, YEARS of personal experience)



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Why Marine Chandleries Love “Do-it-Yourself” Boat Owners

By Bill Whitney

This is a typical decision tree, applicable to most boat owners, for deciding what to do when confronted with the probability of having to repair something aboard their boat. It has been derived through many years of personal experience.

As you can see, once you identify a potential problem, the retail world has an extremely high chance of separating you from your money. The best you can hope for is to avoid the personal embarrassment and/or less-than-endearing comments from the first mate.