

Readin' Both Pages

A membership publication of the Sail, Power & Steam Museum



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Spring 2009

Rekord ~ A Fascinating Freighter

Continued from Volume 1, Winter issue 2008.

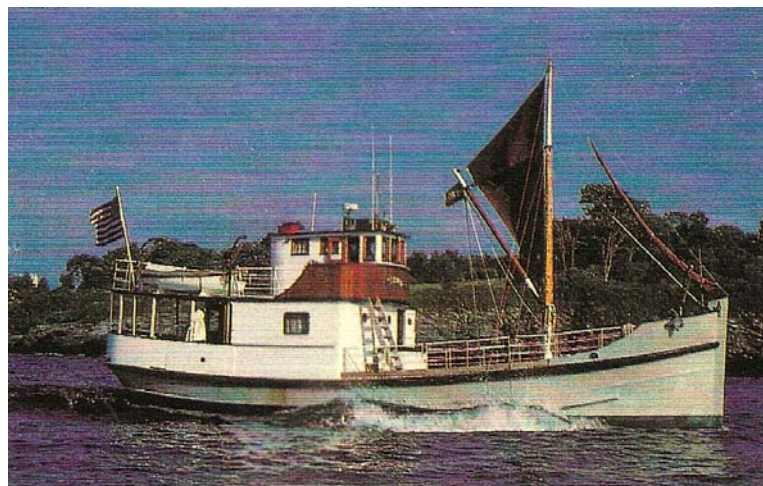
From the Memoirs of Capt. Jim Sharp

Now the problem of learning to run the old thing presented itself with no prior realization or forgiveness of her hidden idiosyncrasies. With all the diagrams, instructions and labels in Norwegian and cross over controls that turn with both right and left hand threads, trying to maneuver the Rekord became a real challenge. Remembering the technique cursorily explained by Captain Elmer, thinking quickly, turning the right control the correct direction, doing it without a flaw almost got me in trouble more than once.

My closest friend and business partner, Captain Orvil Young and his wife joined us for the maiden cruise, and as soon as the old skipper had shed his long winter underwear in the 90-degree heat of the men's room at the airport, we went aboard and got down to work. Armed with hopes and fears, we confronted that Brunvoll, the gray matter of our two heads against the knobs and levers of those two mammoth cylinders. The first time I belted the starting air to her, she started backwards. The second time, she just rocked.

We finally got her purring, and we headed to our first "perfect paradise Virgin Islands" anchorage. We were chugging along confidently, jiggy-jig, and as the anchorage opened up in front of us, I saw our reams of a secluded cove quickly but surely evaporating. It was beautiful all right, tranquil and lined with palms, but there must have been 50 boats snuggled in there for the night.

We squeezed or heavy, 60 foot freighter through the fleet of little 30-foot yachts that were anchored too close to each other. I rolled the pitch out of the prop, carefully turning the crank in the proper direction, and cut back on the throttle, opposite direction, other side...but oops...a little too much, she's dying...catch it before she stalls. That was a close one! She is still running. But the vessel was stopping...I checked; yes, the pitch was still cranked in forward. I gave her a little more just to keep her moving. But, whoa...the vessel started backing up! Geezz! With anchored boats all around us, we were losing steerageway! Then it occurred to me! The engine had almost stalled—could she possibly have stopped, rolled backward, and restarted herself in the other direction?



It seemed inconceivable. Quickly I rolled reverse pitch in...Yes, she started ahead...so there was the solution. She had taken it upon herself to pause and restart backward, just to be ornery.. Okay, Brunvoll, since it makes no difference to you, we'll then use forward for reverse and vice versa. We anchored without further incident. Then and forever more I would remember—there is no stop on the throttle Cut her back too far, and she will die. And, since there is no start button on the dashboard, the only way to restart is a panic trip two decks down and five minutes of prep time.

Almost every harbor or cove in "paradise" was overcrowded. We love the open space in Maine where you can anchor without 50 neighbors with their blaring radios, screaming kids and barking dogs. After five weeks, I decided "paradise" here, as in the Bahamas of my memory, is a misnomer. I swore that would be the last time I cruised the U.S. Virgin Islands where the anchorages are too much like living in a tenement.

On our first night, we discovered the old boat's cockroaches. Never have I seen so many up close and intimate. These uninvited bedfellows suddenly appeared by the hordes, traveling their nocturnal route over near-naked bodies perspiring in the hot bunks. When I flipped on the light, I observed an army of a hundred thousand of them in full dress, marching up and down the walls... "Now Hear This!" (they stopped and all stood at attention) "When the Maine winter sets in, me boys, all you guys will be history!" I saluted to the hordes and shut out the light.



Readin' Both Pages is published four times a year if we can get around to it, by The Sail, Power & Steam Museum, a non-profit organization based in South Rockland, Maine on the shores of Owl's Head Bay. The Sail, Power & Steam Museum was founded in 2007 with a mission to enrich the lives of visitors, volunteers, and the general public through hands-on, interactive, and educational experiences with historically significant sailing, power, and steam driven vessels, ships, and small boats while providing instruction as to their origins, construction, and original commercial and recreational purposes.

A subscription to *Readin' Both Pages* is a benefit of Museum membership. Membership categories include: Individual (\$25), Family (\$50), Contributor (\$100), Sponsor (\$250) and Benefactor (\$500). For further information on these and other membership categories, as well as the Museum's current schedule of events, please see our website or contact the Museum.

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www.sailpowersteam.org**

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A Fascinating Freighter (continued from page 1)

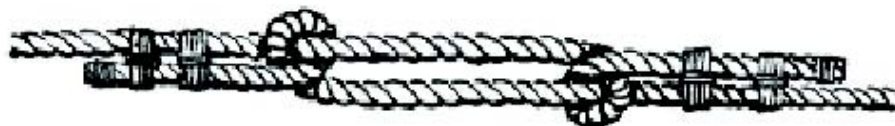
After a month's cruise, I arranged for Captain Elmer to enter the *Rekord* into the U. S to get a duty-free document. The vessel's use was listed as "fishing" but there was a hint, only a rumor, mind you, of trading "flowers" to the Lesser Antilles. A clear title was a condition of the purchase and, recognizing the ability of the seller to pull strings and do things in the islands that frequently raise inquiring eyes, I insisted on delivery to U.S. waters.

Home in Camden, the *Rekord* nestled into Sharp's Wharf where we rafted her outside the Adventure and Roseway, and my crew and I went to work on her as well as all the rest of the flotilla tied there.. I found five curved-glass tugboat windows at Witte's salvage yard in Staten Island and built them into the new curved saloon on *Rekord*;s main deck, installed a new center-island galley with a tiled counter, and paneled a new luxurious master's stateroom. Then we hewed and stepped a mast with a working boom on the foredeck and got the winch rigged for hoisting heavy loads.

The middle of the 1970s had ushered in the fuel crunch. The cost of fuel went through the roof and the offshore fishermen of Monhegan, Matinicus and Isle au Haut were switching to the less expensive coal for their houses, thus enabling them to save some extra bucks for the fuel for their fish boats. Here was an opportunity to give the old *Rekord* some wintertime work. I rigged that hand-hewn mast to handle 55-gallon drums filled with pea-coal and to do it all with just one man---me. I could throw a turn on the winch and whisk them up, swing them ashore, and land them in a lobsterman's pickup truck, all from stand in on deck. He would then zoom home, dump them into his coal bin, and return the empty to me. *Rekord* shone at this occupation. Working alone, I could easily load 25 barrels of coal on the foredeck and, with her autopilot steering for me, chug to the islands in about four hours, land at the wharf, and with the old Brunvoll ticking over and holding *Rekord* on a spring lie, I would swing off the barrels. Buying my cargo and reselling same to the fishermen circumvented the marine freighting laws and kept it simple.

Old *Rekord* and I became good friends, and the engine, just as old Otto Brunvoll had preached, sounded as if it would go on forever. The old boat was a positive joy to run and own. She turned heads all over the bay. She was a honey of a vessel and a near perfect freight boat, but I was still leaning more towards towing. Tow boating, with the obvious exception of sailing a large engineless windjammer, is the most challenging kind of maritime work. Sadly, I put the *Rekord* up for sale. I just couldn't keep all the wonderful boats in this world and give them all the attention and maintenance they deserve. Being forced to make choices, I turned to tow boating.

(This was an excerpt from chapter 19 "With Reckless Abandon by Captain Jim Sharp, Devereux Books, Marblehead, Ma., 2007)





MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich the lives of visitors, volunteers and the general public of the state of Maine through hands-on, interactive, and educational experiences with historically significant sailing, power and steam driven vessels, ships and small boats while providing instruction as to their origins, construction, and original commercial and recreational purposes.

Two free admission passes for guests the Museum Store Spring 2009

STUDENT \$15

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(for two adults and children under 18)

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• Basic Benefits • Invitation to special sales and promotions at the Museum Store.

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• Basic Benefits

(for two adults and children under 18)

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• Basic Benefits • Invitation to special sales and promotions at

• Six admission passes for guests the Museum Store

• 25% discount on admission for accompanying guests • 50% discount on admission for accompanying guests

• Recognition on Plaque in Museum Library

Calling All Volunteers!

Volunteers of the Sail, Power & Steam Museum are a dynamic and exciting group who share many diverse interests such as nautical history, boat building and steam engines. There are many opportunities for Volunteers—something of interest for every interest.

The Sail, Power & Steam Museum salutes, recognizes and celebrates our volunteers as well as volunteers at the local, state and national levels. We encourage anyone interested in learning about volunteering to contact the Museum.

America has a proud tradition of neighbor helping neighbor, and today this volunteer spirit is needed more than ever before. Studies show that people who volunteer their time live longer, healthier and happier lives, and the satisfaction of a job well done is always an enjoyable feeling. Many thousands of retired individuals have found that they are not only welcomed, but needed in the carrying out of the day to day workings of organizations worldwide.

Please contact the Museum to find out how you can help us successfully meet our mission and bring history to life on the shores of Penobscot Bay.

The Sail, Power & Steam Museum

75 Mechanic Street ~ The Old Snow Shipyard

Rockland, Maine 04841

207-594-2230 • www.sailpowersteam.org



‘Been an old fashioned winter in your neck o’ the wood? ‘Twas freezing cold here with the gage confessing between 25 and 30 below... snow up to the windows and the raw cold is still hanging on. So it is in Maine.

Come on into my little pilot house and slam the door behind ya. When I get my feet thawed out, I’ve got to tell you of the incredible work the SPS crew and noble volunteers all accomplished this hard old winter. In the fall, after the floats were struggled out of the bay, we drained the ancient back hoe, buttoned up all the doors and windows, already shivering at the thought of the price of fuel, and started putting shrink-wrap covers over our flagship, Rekord and other boats stored in the yard....

The Sail Power and Steam Museum surely got off the ground and, though she wasn’t jumping too high, we did have nearly a dozen programs through the fall, right up until the first week in December. Programs so interesting, we were all on the edge of our chairs being regaled by ‘round the world sailors, ballast rock geologists, Arctic explorers, Halloween spooks, and a most festive folk music evening with a house packed to overflowing, setting up a very acceptable ruckus of whistles and applause. It was a great nest of presentations inspiring us to add more of same to our educational series and even more of the musical “Sounds of the Sea” with local musicians.

Renovation has been the name of our game during the hibernating months. We constructed arches through out the Museum until the passageways looked like Swiss cheese, only then was the Fire Marshall satisfied with escape routes. Then he dropped a bomb on us with what seemed like a casual after thought: “How about a 5/8

ceiling between the floors before you rent the downstairs.” Wow, what a project that turned into. A whole new ceiling in the entire lower floor-- around sprinkler systems, plumbing, heat, lighting, door ways, closets and so on. Fortunately we made great friends with some fantastic, very generous *volunteers* who donated time, energy and muscle to inspire us to even greater heights. Then lady luck really smiled and we connected with the Coastal Children’s Museum who amazingly, was looking for a permanent home. Great news, they are going to establish themselves down stairs in the same building and we will be able to help each other with promotion and programs. They are patient, understanding and psychologically adapted to handle children, so I figure they will be able to put up with a bunch of boat nuts banging around on the next floor. Alas, we will soon have the squeal of happy children resounding from wall to wall.

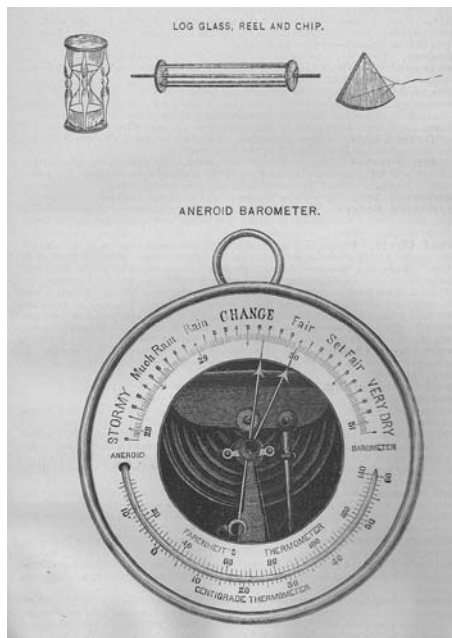
Lobstah will dominate the little restaurant this summer. We added two cookers and will be serving lunch and dinner with the red critters as our main thrust, but the char-burgers will still be my favorite. With a donation of a permanent awning, we will be able to sit outside and enjoy the most magnificent view in the City of Rockland, encompassing the lower bay all the way to the breakwater light.

I sit by the mail box waiting for my stimulus package to arrive but imagine I’ll be too old to open the package by the time it comes. Meantime, I revel in the accomplishments of the crew at Sharp’s Point South and the hard working, enthusiastic volunteers pulling together to make this museum thing happen. The gang, under shipwright Dennis’ watchful eye is laying a new, richly finished wooden floor this week, making the conference room regal and ready. All hail and bow to Tom & Connie, Marshall, Rolly, Lew & all the talented volunteers, first rate people, one and all. It just wouldn’t get done without them.

The displays are next and we will need all the help we can get. Can you spare a little time to lend a hand for your down home museum? Can you help rig a schooner model, organize the library, sell tickets or CDs or a toy lobster trap in the museum gift shop, hang a picture or wash and polish a model T Ford? Have you a nautical jewel hidden in the barn? Wouldn’t it make a lot of sense to display it in a place where all of Rockland and the world of tourists could ooh and ah over your very own exquisite, historic treasure and read your name as loaner or donor in large print just below?

It is, after all, your museum as much as ours!

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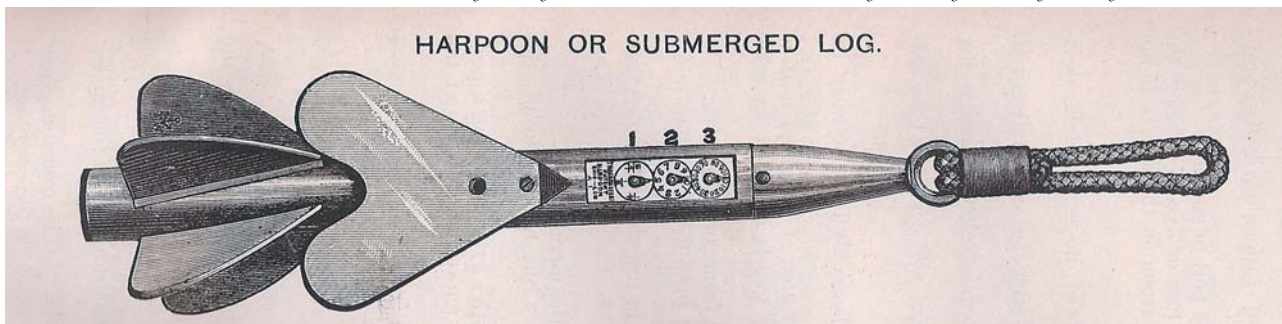
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Events & Activities in 2008 include

The First Annual Sail, Power & Steam Museum Family Fun Days, was held in early July. There were demonstrations of traditional boat building skills, hands-on activities including the wildly popular Under-A-Foot Regatta, tours of historic vessels and much more at this two-day gala event.

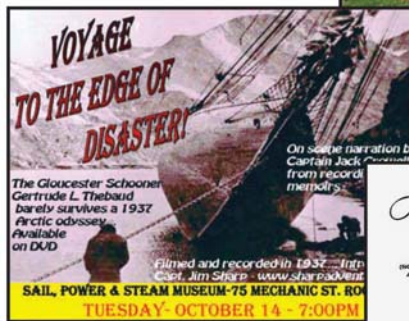
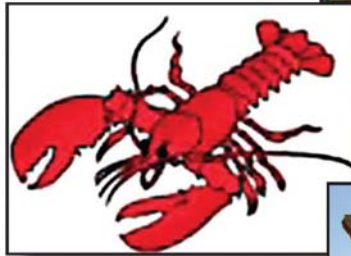
There were several Schooner-Style Lobster Bakes held as fundraisers for the Museum throughout the season. Sharpie's Shack hosted the events which included great food, live music and tours of the *Rekord*. It proved so popular that in 2009, this is planned to be a weekly event!

In July the staff and volunteers of the Museum erected a full-scale model of the center frame from the historic clipper ship Red Jacket alongside the Boat House. Currently on loan from the Penobscot Marine Museum, the frame model is now available to view seven days a week, year-round.

The Museum's Educational Event Series included a presentation and viewing of the amazing story of the Gertrude L. Thebaud by Capt. Jim Sharp. Other presenters included noted historian Gil Merriam speaking on Rockland's south-end working waterfront, and David Hoch recounting the history of the area's once-great lime industry.

The *Rekord* headed out on several harbor cruises, but circumstances and weather did keep her at the dock on a few occasions. The restoration process wasn't slowed though, and she is looking better than ever now at her homeport of Sharp's Point South. Come by soon to see for yourself!

Make sure to check the schedule on the back of this issue and the Museum website: www.sailpowersteam.org to update your 2009 calendar—there will be something of interest for everyone!



2008/2009 Schedule of Events

Remaining 2008 Events

November 18th “Wanderbird in the Arctic”
Presentation 7PM With Capt. Rick &
Karen Miles

November 21st “Music Night at the Museum”
Music 7PM With Nick Apollonio, Bob Stuart &
More

December 4th “Circumnavigating by Sail”
Presentation 7PM Jack Williams tells of his trip on
Appledore

Please join us for coffee prior to
each evening event at 6:30PM

Coming this Winter: **“Movie Night at the Museum”**
Featuring screenings of classic nautical themed films.
Stay tuned for more details!

Museum Grand Opening!

Please make plans now to attend our Grand Opening Celebration on July 18, 2009 at the Museum. There will be activities for all ages, tours of historic watercraft, food, music and lots of fun!

The Second Annual Family Fun Days will be held in 2009, so stay tuned and plan to bring the family down for some good, nautical fun!

The Museum’s complete 2009 Schedule of Events will be posted in future editions of Readin’ Both Pages, but you can also check our website for up-to-date information by visiting www.sailpowersteam.org or by calling 207-701-7626 or 207-701-7627.



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**Sail, Power & Steam
Museum**



75 Mechanic Street
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The Museum’s flagship, the sail-assisted motor vessel Rekord, is as unique as she is distinctive looking. She is one of the smallest vessels listed by the World Ship Trust—which places her in such esteemed company as the USS Constitution. Originally built in Norway in 1914, she was designed to serve as an inter-fjordal ferry, carrying both passengers and freight.