



# MAINE'S FIRST SHIP NEWSLETTER

Reconstructing Virginia  
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**TALL SHIPS**  
**WOODEN BOATS**  
**EDUCATION NEWS**  
**CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**  
**AUGUST 2015**



## TALL SHIPS PORTLAND 2015

Treasurer Dan Burchstead provided these beautiful images of the 284-ton barque *Picton Castle* a traditionally rigged and operated sail training ship based in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada, but best known for her voyages around the world.

Over the past decade, the ship has made six complete circumnavigations of the globe, as well as a year-long voyage around the Atlantic Basin, two trips to the Great Lakes and numerous runs up and down the East Coast of the United States and Canada. Along the way, she has introduced more than 1,000 people to the challenges and rewards of square-rigged sailing. As a training ship, all those on board work, stand watch, and learn the ways of a square-rigged sailing ship. Onboard workshops are conducted in wire and rope rigging, sail making, boat handling, navigation and practical seamanship.



The ship is outfitted to the highest standard with safety gear and equipment. She is a strong, seaworthy home afloat for adventurers devoted to learning the art of deep-water sailing. In 2006, Tall Ships America presented *Picton Castle* with their "Sail Training Program of the Year" award.  
(tall ships information source; tallshipsportland.com)



## TALL SHIPS PORTLAND 2015

Although we had some wind and weather the first day, conditions eventually improved and the festival proved to be a great opportunity to get the word out about our project. Our booth was well sited and fitted with the 1/8 scale Rigging model of Virginia and the stunning new banner backdrop created by Roger Barry for the Wooden Boat Show at Mystic (see related article). Featuring in this article just two of the dozen magnificent ships present serves just a taste of the overwhelming beauty of this fleet.



Photo Courtesy of Gail Smith

**The *Galeón Andaluía*** is a replica of a 16th-17th century galleon, the only one in the world that sails in present days. These ships were the type of vessel used by the Spanish Crown for maritime expeditions during the 16th through the 18th centuries. Galleons were intended to discover and then establish trade routes between Spain, America and the Philippines islands, and formed what was then called the “Fleet of the Indies”. For three centuries, these Spanish galleons crossed the Atlantic Ocean back and forth, sailed around the Caribbean Sea and the American coasts, and covered the Pacific route as well. They carried plenty of seamen, merchant traders and settlers, while their holds bore the fabulous loads resulting from American and Asian trade. It took three years to research the main historical and maritime archives in Spain and compile all necessary information about galleons’ shapes, details and measures so that this replica could be built. Essentially, this is a 500 ton galleon, with length overall reaching 160 feet and a beam of 32 feet. Four masts hold 6 sails which measure almost 11,000 square feet. Her average speed is 7 knots. Since her launching, a crew between 15 to 35 people has manned her across the seas and oceans around the world. She has navigated the Pacific and Indian oceans, crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and her wake has spread over the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the South and East China seas, the Aegean Sea, the Bosphorus strait, the Caribbean Sea and the whole East Coast of the US, covering thousands of nautical miles in an attempt to evoke her ancestors.



Thanks to all who staffed our booth, Beth&Jim Parmentier, Chuck Jouver, Gail Smith, Tim&Gayla Teague, RB Omo, Dan&Marie Burchstead, Ryan Liberty, Roger Barry, Allison Hepler, Rob Stevens and Jeremy Blaiklock



Photo Courtesy of Gail Smith

## SUMMER PROGRAM



On day one of the 2015 Summer Program, three eager students gathered for a three week program featuring marine carpentry, rowing and field trips to local business'. After a brief introduction to the history of Popham Colony and Virginia, Shipwright George Sprague immediately started the first student woodworking project. Beginning with a discussion on the properties of wood selection, within minutes students were working on making paddles, with a later project planned to create shallop half models.



A new student spends a moment at Virginia's stern with President Orman Hines (left) before heading back into the shop to lay out and cut the first woodworking project, making paddles.

Cutting through the Jargon, Understanding Current Educational Reforms  
By Eric Varney, MFS Director and Morse High School Science Department

When it comes to education, there is no lack of public opinion. Since virtually everyone has had some significant experience in the classroom, we have also formed our own opinions on education. These opinions are built from our own unique vantage point and often vary widely. However, agreement can be found on one front; there is no lack of jargon in education. Chances are, unless you are a teacher, support staff, or administrator, you find the jargon unnecessary and confusing. As we sit on the precipice of significant educational reform, it is important for the public to know what Maine educators are talking about: What is Proficiency Based Learning? How does Standards Based Reporting work? What is the controversy surrounding the Common Core? What is RTI and what do all of those other acronyms stand for? What is involved in the new teacher effectiveness legislation?

So parents, business community, tax payers, this one is for you. Please take a few moments and explore a "Reader's Digest" version of educational reform efforts that are underway in our schools and in the news.

1. Standards:

Standards refer to what teachers and schools want students to know and/or do in each unit. Standards are not new to Maine; the Maine Learning Results are standards that have been in place for several years. What are new, and controversial, are the national standards that have been adopted by many states. These standards (The Common Core State Standards) are as close to a national curriculum in English/Language Arts and Mathematics as America has ever had. Similarly, the Next Generation Science Standards are proposed national standards for physical and life sciences and were slated to eclipse the Maine Learning Results. Although these science standards were supported by the education committee, the house and the senate, Governor LePage recently vetoed their inception, leaving many science teachers confused as to which standards to teach. Other subject areas, such as Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, and the Arts continue to follow the Maine Learning Results. Education decisions fall under state jurisdiction, yet many instruction and curriculum decisions are made at the district level.

2. Proficiency Based Learning (PBL) / Standards Based Reporting:

These two terms really mean the same thing. There is a national move to clearly identify standards in which student performance will be judged. Lessons will build up to assessments (exam, paper, lab report, etc) that demonstrate a level of proficiency in that standard. When a student has demonstrated that they are proficient in that skill or knowledge, it will be noted on their transcript and report card. Middle and High School report cards will look more similar to elementary school report cards, where teachers report on individual skills or knowledge, rather than an overall grade based on averages of all of the work done in that class.

The purpose of this educational model is to improve communication between schools and families concerning the abilities and challenges of each student. Students will be expected to become proficient in all graduation standards before receiving a diploma.

3. Response to Intervention (RTI):

In a proficiency based learning environment, all students must demonstrate proficiency in all standards. No longer can students fail an exam, do well on the next exam, and bring their grade up to passing. So what do we do when students (inevitably) do not demonstrate proficiency in a standard? This is where a school will use its established Response to Intervention (RTI) system. Faculty members will identify a strategy that could potentially be effective in allowing the student to demonstrate proficiency, and try the strategy. If this does not work, a more invasive strategy is deployed. Interventions range from allowing more time for students to complete their work to referring students for special services. Many schools schedule time for RTI work during the school day.

4. Teacher Effectiveness:

The state of Maine legislature signed An Act to Ensure Effective Teachers and School Leaders into law in 2012. This law requires school districts to create a teacher effectiveness scale that includes student test scores, among other parameters, into each teacher's rating. This is largely controversial due to the volatility of student scores based on factors outside of teachers' classrooms. Districts are currently forming a committee to develop the model of teacher effectiveness rating for their district.

In my twelve years in education, I have never seen so much change occurring at one time. This is exciting, consuming, stressful, and revolutionary work that is underway in Maine schools. I urge community members, especially parents, to learn more about these reforms and ask critical questions as Maine schools work through these reform efforts. We all agree that Maine schools should be constantly reaching for excellence; we need to know whether we are reaching in the right direction. Reprinted by permission of the author, this article appeared recently in the Bangor Daily News



## BUILDING STAGING TO FAIR AND HANG THE SHEER STRAKE

Staging to support fairing gets underway with all hands cutting and joining pine for days on end. Working with the staging structure and the bilge clamp planks, staging grows along port and starboard sides and swoops up the transom as the staging climbs the curves of the clamp up the aft frames.

Volunteers: Roger Barry, Dick Forrest, Gail Smith, Paul Cunningham RB Omo and Dan Wood



## FAIRING



All fairing work now moves to the outer hull. Work continues from sheer to garboard to complete the preparation for planking. Above left, Gail, Jeremy, Tony and Chuck line up on the staging to apply planes and batten across multiple frames. While Dick applies shims and clamps (left)



Working high on the hull, with all four planers running at once the harmonics build until the entire hull buzzes like a swarm of bees. Working under the staging, hardhats are recommended as modeled by Dan Wood.



## JANE STEVENS LAUNCHES 2015 SAILING SEASON

On a murky morning in Maine, Jane Stevens takes to the Kennebec for her 2015 sailing season. After an uneventful launch, she spent a few days at the dock to have mast and leeboards fitted before being moved to her mooring off the Freight Shed.



Thank you to Jay Coffey for getting Jane fit for the water and setting up the mooring again this year!

Thank you to Edward Blaiklock for donating a fine rubber dinghy to tender Jane Stevens

Now we're ready for 2015 Star of Safety training – see Jeremy Blaiklock for more details on learning how to sail a shallop

## PEMAQUID RE-ENACTMENT

On August 2, 2015 several hardy shipwrights from Maine's First Ship joined the annual celebration of "Landing Day", the 1607 arrival of the English at Pemaquid. Preceding the August 13 landing at Fort St George, the colonial connection remains strong some 400 years later. Well before this event, our director of Programs Lori Benson assembled a seamstress team to create authentic period costumes for the participants. Special thanks to the ladies who were part of our "sewing bee". Shelley Little helped with the pattern for the shirts. Letty Race, Joanne Luneau and Lori worked on the pattern as well as sewing four shirts. Julia Lane created the slops (breeches). As you can see from Roger Barry's and Lori Benson's photos, the costumes were a great success!



Thanks to Tony Chodorowski, Roger Barry, and Orman Hines for representing MFS!

Some costuming notes from Jeremy's research, mostly for men (or cross-dressing women) just to give you all an idea of how much work went into this event. "In general, our time period was quite soon after the death of Queen Elizabeth, and clothes were very expensive. Then, as now, people were not always jumping on the latest trends, so fashion was slow to change. For example the Elizabethan ruff appears in paintings well into our period, even though the young dandies had largely abandoned it for something less formal, the cavalier collar. King James was portrayed in both. So late Elizabethan garb is always appropriate. The popularity of Renaissance Faires in this country means there is a large amount of info on the web regarding these clothes. In the same vein, many of the clothes from the English Civil War are also appropriate, so even though that was a bit later in history. (also a lot of info on the web from re-enactors of that period) In modern times think of jeans and t-shirts - not that different between the 60's and now. Since this is happening in August, sun protection is probably required, but no sun glasses! So big floppy hats of straw would probably be best. (N.B. being outside in just your shirt was actually pretty scandalous unless you were a peasant, partly because breeches and doublets laced together in the back and held your pants up. But I don't expect anyone to heed this bit of trivia!) Knee high leather boots look cool but were very rare and mostly restricted to the cavalry. As Lori noted, bare feet or shoes and stockings are the way to go. How to make appropriate "latchet" shoes from the thrift store <https://sites.google.com/site/stbrigidshearth/pennywisepeasantloafers>"



## HEPLER/STEVENS WEDDING

In the lee of Virginia's boatshed, in a ceremony as uniquely individual as the bride and groom, Maine's First Ship's secretary Allison Hepler and Virginia's shipwright Rob Stevens married on July 25, 2015. Although the presence of a fully loaded canoe sparked wild speculation of the honeymooners canoeing off into the sunset, the couple declined all rumors. Surrounded by family, neighbors, friends and volunteers, with Evan Goodkowsky, of Wiscasset officiating, the purpose of the canoe soon became clear. Item by item each bit of camping comfort was extracted and used to weave a story of true love in the Florida Everglades. Not a story of love at first sight, but of arduous adventure amidst the alligators, mosquitoes and nearly impenetrable swamp, a story of sharing the amazing discovery of "the one" you'll stand and face the world with for rest of your life. Most original and memorable vows ever!

At the conclusion of this delightful occasion, all hands enjoyed an informal luncheon and reception in the historic Bath Freight Shed.

Of note, this is the first recorded wedding between two MFS directors since our founding



Photos courtesy of Paul Cunningham

## MYSTIC WOODEN BOAT SHOW

Report by Vice President and Vessel Chair Jeremy Blaiklock

"I think our 1st effort at the Wooden Boat Show went quite well. We talked with a lot of folks, many from Maine, and taught them all about ship's knees and Virginia (both the ship and the territory). Sunday's visitors were a little sparse because of the weather, but that just allowed us to talk with other exhibitors and spread the word among the wooden boat world."

Ye ed notes: Jeremy hewed at a Hackmatack knee during the show and created flurries of wood chips and lots of



interest according to Beth and Jim Parmentier who helped staff the booth. Big thank you to all who made the trip and to Dr. Dan Wood for the photos.



HAIL AND FAREWELL:

**Welcome Dr. Daniel Wood**, stepping up from the advisory board to become a member of the board of Directors. Dr. Dan has become the focal point for the MFS Development Committee as the leader of the three-year Virginia Capital Campaign. Also active as a volunteer shipwright Dr. Dan is capable of articulating the project from a "hands on" viewpoint, a valuable fundraising technique.

**Fair winds to Director Bridget Healy** who is retiring to the advisory board. Many thanks to Bridget for her help in so many events and for providing the Freeport Connection. We are so very pleased to have you remain in an advisory capacity.

THANK YOU TO:

**Edward Blaiklock** for your generous donations of a rubber dingy for Jane Stevens and some finely milled black locust beams for Virginia.

**David White** weed eradication commando, for clearing the poison ivy and weeds along the boatshed and freight shed waterfront and inside the yard and the plank storage areas to prep for fireworks viewing on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Wearing full "battle gear" in steamy weather Dave worked for hours clearing around the site to make visitor viewing safer and more accessible-



**Editor's Farewell** – It's been an honor to be the MFS newsletter editor over the past several years, but it's time to give someone else a chance to sit in the editor's chair. Virginia "speaks for herself", but for Tim and me it has been largely about the people. The decision to resign has been tough; habits of 5 years are hard to break! But we have been blessed with a growing home based business that needs more of our time and energy every day. Turning our full time attention to managing this (much needed) income maker is long overdue. We wish all the best of luck in all our various endeavors.

**Tim & Gayla Teague**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**MAINE'S FIRST SHIP OFFICE IS MOVING UPTOWN AND UPSTAIRS!!! (week of 8/12-8/19/15)**

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**Virginia: Fairing and Planking the Sheer and on... plus rigging the main yard with Jim Nelson**

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We are soliciting nominations and volunteers for the board of directors, and committees. Particularly needed are docents, skills in newsletter, grants, marketing and membership.

Please call 443-4242 for more information.

FMI visit us online at [www.mfship.org](http://www.mfship.org)

Contact us at: [mfs1@myfairpoint.net](mailto:mfs1@myfairpoint.net) (207) 443-4242

Maine's First Ship

PO Box 231 Bath ME 04530

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Visit us at Bath Freight Shed 27 Commercial Street Bath Maine "When the flag of St. George is flying"



## **“DONATION INSPIRATION”**

### **FRITZ MUELLER MEMORIAL FUND TO PURCHASE SHIP'S KNEES FOR VIRGINIA**



**In honor of the late Fritz Mueller, longtime supporter of Maine's First Ship, and superlative Popham Colony archaeologist. Your donation to MFS will help us make one of Fritz's goals, the sailing of "Virginia" up the James River, come true.**

**Thanks,**

**Orman Hines, President MFS**

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