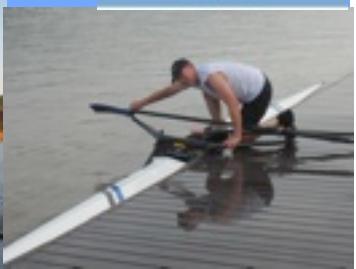


Blue Blades



The Mid-Hudson Rowing Association Newsletter

October 28, 2013 Volume 2, No. 4

Annual Meeting at the Boathouse, November 7 at 6:00 PM. Please sign up!

What's Your Opinion?



This year all members are being sent an on-line survey which we hope everybody will take a little time to complete before the annual meeting. This is a new approach to getting feedback from members on how

we are doing. We are hoping that reviewing the survey results at the annual meeting will provide us with valuable member input.

In fact, the survey is being sent to past members as well to get their input. We are trying to focus on things we can do to increase our membership. So far, the most effective recruiting tool has been word-of-mouth from enthusiastic members. You can help by talking the club up to your friends and co-workers. Please bring your ideas on other ways to promote MHRA to the annual meeting.

Annual Meeting

This year's annual meeting will be held on Thursday, November 7,



at 6:00 PM. There will be pizza and soft drinks provided. Please be sure to sign up on the Rowing Practice page of our web site if you can attend so we will know how much pizza to provide.

Members can bring their own beverages if they wish. Please bring along something to share for dessert.

All members have been sent the meeting agenda in the mail along with a ballot to vote for three candidates, each for three year terms on the board of directors.

There are also two changes to our By-Laws which must be voted

upon. One is a proposed change to our mission statement. There is a brief explanation of why the directors felt the change was appropriate. Ballots must either be returned by mail (preferred) or brought with you to the meeting. No ballots will be provided at the meeting.



Head of the Fish

John Dux said he could "hear the boat sing". He was in seven seat of the Mid-Hudson masters mixed 8+. Not everybody in the crew has his keen sense, but all agreed that the boat felt surprisingly good and was raced well. The corrected result had us 8th in a field of 12, but it looked like victory on the faces of those who raced.

Thanks are due to coxswain Hai Longworth for keeping things interesting for 14 minutes and 9 seconds, and to stroke Kurt Quackenbush for setting a pace allowing all to row as a team.



Linda and Liza

Head of the Fish (continued)

Mike Griffin raced early on Saturday in the veterans 1x and later he and Warren Buhler turned in an "epic" performance under windy conditions in their masters double. (They can explain).

Racing late in the day, Warren and Lori Alphonse looked good in the masters mixed 2x. Mike put in a long day sticking around to help the mixed 8+ crew and load the trailer. Saratoga Rowing Association kept events on time and John Rapp was heroic in finding seating for 12 in an alternative restaurant when we were too early for our reservation at the Circus Cafe.



Mid-Hudson Crew



Mid-Hudson Masters Mixed 8+
(after finishing)



Lori Alphonse and Warren Buhler

Eden Decker - In Memoriam

At the September 16 board meeting the directors voted to rename our new (to us) eight oar shell the *Eden Decker*. Eden, who recently died in a motorcycle accident, was a fondly remembered member of Mid-Hudson Rowing who was very active after its rebirth in the 1990s.

The idea came from Candy Davies and her words supporting the idea said it best:

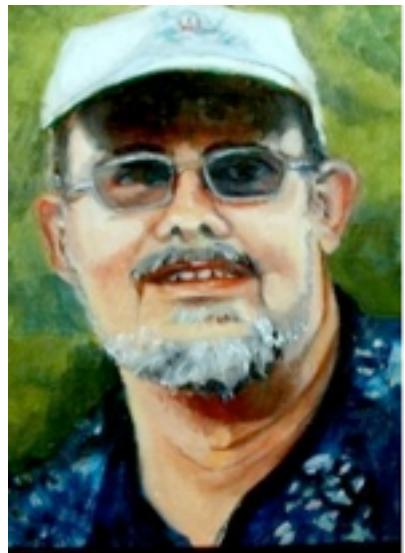
"Eden had a booming voice, ready laugh, and was often on hand to volunteer as coach, coxswain, or rower. He and the late Randy Harwood were the initial "learn to row" coaches; both men would teach anyone who was interested in learning, and he typically encouraged novices to just "get in the boat and give it a try".

"I recall his cheery, booming voice calling out "swing from the

hips" as he coached. He initiated our LTR technique of "rowing at the dock." One day, when we were at Quiet Cove and it was too rough to take the novices on the river, he instructed them to put the boat in the water at our dock by the small beach there, and the newbies practiced their skills in the boat at the dock. It has been a useful technique for us since that time."

John Mylod, past president and our longest serving member, added:

"He had an exuberance for being at the river, for camping, helping others, riding his motorcycle, being in the woods, going to regattas, having fun. He, like Randy, was quick to volunteer and do things that needed doing. Naming a boat would be a fitting legacy and touchstone for an important time in MHRA's history."



Eden Decker

We will plan on changing the lettering on the eight and having a naming ceremony in the Spring.

Back-to-Back Events with Rondout Rowing Club

Two of our annual inter-club events with Rondout Rowing were held in close succession this year with the Mills Mansion Row on Saturday, September 14, and the Moonlight Row the following Tuesday. Both events were a lot of fun for those that attended from both clubs. Four of our members joined RRC the following Saturday for their Saugerties Saunter (see a separate article by Linda Rapp).

Mills Mansion

The long distance row to Mills Mansion and rendezvous with RRC has become a MHRA tradition. Mills Mansion is located in Staatsburg and, for history buffs, was the home of General Mills who was father to the Mills Brothers.



Those who participated this year were rewarded with sightings of a heron, two eagles on the wing, the *Half Moon* and the *Clearwater*. Before setting out we were faced with predicted winds and only 1 and 1/2 spare rowers to swap in for a single eight. (The 1/2 spare was Anita Kiewra; we'll let her explain.) RRC showed up with an eight and a four.

The water was a little choppy at times but, for the most part, quite row-able. The wind, when it finally came, was at our backs for the return trip.



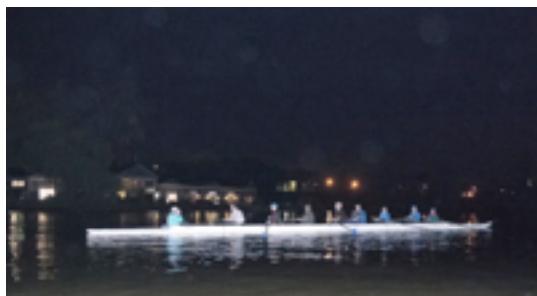
Rondout had a shorter trip home but were facing both wind and current. (As it turns out, RRC have proven their mettle when it comes to rough water rowing. More of this from Linda.)



Moonlight Row

With the help of 9 rowers from Rondout Rowing Club we managed to put our two eights and one four on the water with three spare rowers.

The moon was near full and well over the trees by the time we pushed away from the dock a little after 7:00 PM with not a cloud anywhere in the sky. There was a very light breeze and only small ripples on the water. As the sun set, it lit up the sky behind the hills on the west shore for quite



a while. Before too long it was only the big moon with its reflection dancing on the ripples and a few lights on the boats to keep the darkness at bay. With two launches, the rowing shells were never very far from a launch and more eyes to keep things on the safe side. A big three cheers for the coxswains, attentive crews and those who lit the docks for the uneventful landings at the end.

After the boats were put away, there was a social time crowded around the snack table in the light from the bay. People seemed to enjoy the whole experience and the opportunity to share it jointly with rowers from both clubs.

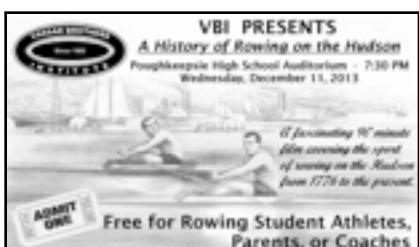
VBI Screening

Our film, *A History of Rowing on the Hudson*, will be screened by the Vassar Brothers Institute as part of their 2013-2014 Travel and Adventure Series. The film will be presented on Wednesday, December 11, at 7:30 PM at the



Poughkeepsie High School Auditorium. Tell all your friends who may not have seen the film to put the date on their calendars. Grab a brochure in our bay at the boathouse to hand to them. You might want to attend yourself even if you have already seen the film.

VBI is making a special effort to get this locally produced piece of local history before the public eye. We are working with the Poughkeepsie Journal to get an article featuring rowing history published shortly before the screening date and planning for a side bar that makes it easy for people to know how and where to attend.



Special tickets have been distributed to the rowing coaches



5 Mile Singles Championship at Newburgh

of the two local colleges and local high schools giving free admission to rowing student athletes, their parents and coaches.

VBI's hope is to fill the auditorium. General admission is open to the public for \$5 per person. People can become VBI members for \$35 which admits two people for the entire series of 10 presentations. You will find details for the entire series of presentations at www.VassarBrothersInstitute.org.

Newer MHRA members may not be aware that this full length film was produced by Mid-Hudson Rowing as part of a grant from the Hudson River Improvement Fund. It was premiered in March of 2011 at the historic Cornell Boathouse on the Marist Campus and later that year at a rowing history forum at the River and Rowing Museum in Henley-on-Thames, England.

The film is entirely the work of MHRA members under the leadership of Bill Davies, then president, and includes countless hours of skillful film editing by Rick Longworth. Even the background

music was performed by MHRA members, family and close friends at special recording sessions.

There is a Facebook page for the film which we hope will get people interested in rowing history and appreciate the Hudson River as a great local resource for recreation. It is also intended to help spread the word about the upcoming screening in December and on-going opportunities to purchase DVDs through MHRA. [History Film Facebook Page](#)

Mid-Hudson will be selling DVDs of the film, our "Oars of the Hudson" pint glasses, and the popular "heron" mugs at a table before the show and during intermission. The purpose of these sales is to raise money for the HRRA Boathouse and the seven high schools who use it for their rowing programs.

We will need a few volunteers at the table to help with the crush of people who will want to take home a souvenir or a gift for somebody special just in time for the holidays.

Saugerties or Bust!

by Linda Rapp



Saugerties Lighthouse

What better way to say goodbye to summer than to spend a beautiful last-morning-of-summer rowing? As in ALL morning. On Saturday September 21st, Liza, Linda, Hai and Rick accepted the kind invitation of the Rondout Rowing Club to join them on their second Saugerties Saunter, a 14-mile, 3 and ½ hour row from Kingston to Saugerties. This Saugerties Saunter was the vision of Renno Budziak, longtime RRC member, who organized and participated in the first event about 10 years ago. All totaled, two eights, two launches, and about 25 people thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful sunny day and our lively river.

Arriving at the Rondout waterfront about 7:30AM gave us time to join RRC and get the boats onto carts they use to transport the eight's through the waterfront streets to the docks on Rondout Creek. By 8:30 we'd set off in the quiet waters of the creek past the colorful moored boats and the lighthouse, and out into the breezes and waters of the Hudson. Rough water and rowing against the tide could not dampen spirits, as the warm sunny day unfolded. Near the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge, about the halfway point, our boat pulled over in a small sandy wooded cove for



White Caps!!!

a 'bio' break, giving us all a chance to relax for a few minutes and soak up the sun. Then it was back into the boat for a lively river crossing (and some impromptu bailing), just in time to see the river do its chameleon thing and calm down for the last two or so miles of the journey.

About noon we rowed past the Saugerties lighthouse and into the inlet where we would sidle up to the dock....or so we thought. Surely there couldn't be more new experiences. 'Landing' isn't the right word to describe the unique approach we took: bow pointed perpendicular to the concrete sloped boat launch area. A few people on land awaited our arrival, and walked down the ramp to hold the bow as we unlocked our oars, floated them to the ramp, then crawled off the boat one by one, bow first. As rowers collected on the ramp, we lined up, lifted the bow out of the water, threaded ourselves along the boat lifting the rest of the boat out of the water. Cleaning and derigging followed, with loading the boat onto the trailers next, right? Not so fast...the trailer needed to be moved sideways on the narrow road. You guessed it: Coach Scott Johnson coxed as all of us laid hands on it, picked it up, and moved it sideways. Then we loaded the boats.

And now, finally, it was time for brunch at the Diamond Mills Inn. You never saw so much food disappear so fast! Then on to Rondout to get the boats off the trailer and safely back onto their outdoor racks. Back to Poughkeepsie by 4PM. A most memorable day, the essence of which was captured by our fearless videographer, Rick Longworth, who braved the bouncing of the launch on the waves to bring us a video viewable on the MHRA Facebook page:

[MHRA Facebook link](#)



Saugerties Saunter Crew

Memories made ...

Friends made ...

A good day!

Fall Into Rowing '13....MHRA's First Taste of Rowing Event

By Linda Rapp

MHRA has just completed its first *Fall Into Rowing* event, a 2-day ‘taste of rowing’ program designed to introduce people to the sport who may have missed our spring LTR classes, or who simply are not ready to commit to a full LTR class without a sampler to see if they can do it. We can truly say this was a big success thanks to the planning, quick marketing, and volunteering of many of our members. I now have a very long list of potential candidates (over 30) for our spring LTR sessions.



Over the weekend of October 5th and 6th, six participants enthusiastically found out that yes, they can do this, enjoying a tank session on Saturday, followed by on-river rowing on Sunday. The river behaved nicely for our Sunday afternoon session, providing flat water, and the flattest high-tide ramp we've seen. Promised high winds never materialized. Recreational boaters provided a legendary number of wakes, and the previous night's rains swept along a forest of debris, all serving as a good introduction to rowing on our lively river! By the end of the southward row, we even had all 6 novices rowing.

Afterwards we took time to ask them what they thought about this 2-day idea as a lead-in to our full LTR program. All agreed we're on the right track, and asked to be kept on my list for upcoming announcement of LTR plans. Lots of good questions, too.



Most expressed an interest in ‘what’s the next step’ to be able to row with the club. Their comments included things like what do they do all winter while waiting for the spring LTR classes, and how about offering this 2-day thing right before the spring LTR’s. Our



response to them, and to all of you who may have interested friends, is to stay tuned, and over the next few months we'll be talking about perhaps something in the tanks over the winter, another

2-day event just prior to the spring LTR’s, or (insert your idea here and let me know).

Many thanks go out to our coaches, Bill W. and Mike Griffin, our publicity committee, as well as our volunteers who marketed this new idea on short notice, showed up to assist with the sessions, photographed the event, and even provided coffee and muffins on Saturday (Hai): Amy, Joan, Liza, Hai, Rick, John R, Dottie, Mark. Hey, we're letting the secret out!

Linda, your LTR Coordinator



First “Taste of Rowing” Crew

Fleet News

This summer we were busy making updates to our fleet of rowing shells. After the MHRA board agreed to purchase a newer Vespoli 8+ from Marist, Mike Griffin found a sweetheart deal on a second hand Peinert single in Lowell, MA.

It was in pristine condition; a single-owner



Mike with the green Peinert

shell which was always stored indoors. Now, in addition to the Maas 24 and the Rec singles, we have three Peinert singles. The latest addition, being green, complements the earlier red and blue Peinerts. It arrived in time to get a lot of use during our Coached Sculling sessions.

Mike Griffin was a key player in finding both of these new purchases and in delivering the green Peinert to us from Lowell. Mike also made repairs to the *Bill Davies* prior to advertising it on row2k and then dealt with negotiating a fair price. Thanks to his effort we were able to sell the *Bill Davies* and put \$1,400 back into our capital fund; just about enough to buy a new launch.



The *Davies* went to the Saint Charles Rowing Club. In the rowing world, all roads lead to the Head of the Charles in the Fall. Mike arranged for the *Davies* to travel on the Marist trailer to Head of the Charles Regatta where it was switched to another trailer headed to Chicago and ultimately to Saint Charles. It took a lot of coordination to assure the boat wasn't left in Cambridge. Mike was there personally to scrounge together enough people to make the transfer.

The Saint Charles Rowing Club is a recent start-up club on the Fox River in Saint Charles, Illinois.



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