

THE JETTIES



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2001 - A RECORD YEAR FOR MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Ron Booth, VFC

The numbers have grown every year for the past several years and 2001 has been no exception, in fact it's been another record breaker! Flotilla 38 has added nine new members to the ranks and as of the last Boating Skills and Seamanship Course, I have applications that were completed by five more membership candidates. Well done to all who have contributed to the recruiting efforts this year.

Keep things going at "flank speed," recruiting is a mission for all Auxiliary members. Talk to your friends in the boating world, do they know what the Auxiliary does? If they are already experienced boaters, bring them to a meeting, if they're not, tell them about the Boating Skills and Seamanship Course that we offer. The BS & S classes are the best place to start talking about the Auxiliary, the enthusiasm we show at these sessions is catching. The students are there because they've already decided they want to acquire or enhance boating skills. So, they've already got one foot in the door, all we need to do is coax them the rest of the way through. This is one of the reasons we need the flotilla membership to help out at BS&S. The more the merrier, the one-on-one attention we give to students is the best way to recruit new members.

Its worth noting, that because of our web site, I am getting about three to four e-mails a week about the Auxiliary and active duty Coast Guard. If this keeps up, with the great job Mike Keslof is doing with our web site, and the efforts of members at the BS&S classes, 2002 will be yet another banner year for membership growth.

NEXT FLOTILLA MEETINGS

WED 5 December 01 at 1830

***NOTE: starting 1 hour earlier for the annual
Holiday Party at Starboard Galley Restaurant***

THUR 3 January 02 at 1930

Plum Island Boathouse



(Pictured from left to right)

New members, Jim Cate, Bill Ford and Peter Connery take the Auxiliary membership pledge at the October flotilla meeting. Officiating are Bob Johnson, RCO-N 1NR, who administered the pledge, and CAPT George Matthews, USCG, DIRAUX 1NR, who read the preamble.

WELCOME ABOARD!

(Photo by Steve Noyes, FSO-OP)

PORTSMOUTH LIGHT

Matt McDonald, FSO-PB

I am sure many of you recall reading about the Portsmouth Harbor Lighthouse in a past issue of *The Jetties* (Volume 19 Issue 9). Now for those of you interested in the rest of the story please read on.

During colonial times the British established Fort William and Mary to protect the entrance to the strategic harbor of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Each night a keeper hoisted a small lantern to the top of the flagpole on the grounds of the fort in order to help guide ships safely into the port.

When the revolution began the fort and its rudimentary navigational aide threatened the very colonists they were intended to serve. Hearing that the British intended to send ships with troops aboard to reinforce the garrison of Fort William and Mary, Paul Revere quickly rode from Boston, Massachusetts to warn the local militia companies of the imminent threat. The patriots in and around Portsmouth acted quickly by organizing a raiding party and seizing the fort's gunpowder stores to keep them out of British hands. This proved to be one the first overt acts of the Revolutionary War. It would be followed in a few months by Paul Revere's more famous ride and the "shot heard round the world" fired by patriot forces at Lexington Common, followed by the battle at Concord Bridge.

Once the former colonies won their independence from Great Britain, Fort William and Mary was renamed Fort Constitution, and the State of New Hampshire built an official lighthouse there to mark its only port of entry. In 1789, according to Tim Harrison and Ray Jones, authors of *Lost Lighthouses*, the United States government took charge of the Portsmouth Station along with all American lighthouses, and soon thereafter, President Washington paid the new federal facility a visit. The president was pleased with the light station but not at all pleased with the keeper, Titus Salter, a former sea captain, who was dismissed from service shortly after Washington's visit.

In 1803 a new lighthouse with an octagonal wooden tower was built just outside the walls of Fort Constitution. Harrison and Jones note that it was not a peaceful station because of cannon blasts from the nearby fort. This was practice for the crews I would imagine, but it would often rattle the windows and crack the walls of the light station. Nevertheless, the wooden structure survived until 1877 when it was replaced by the cast-iron tower, which still stands today, adjacent to USCGSTA Portsmouth Harbor and the remains of Fort Constitution .



*Portsmouth Light, wooden structure 1803-1877,
Photo courtesy US National Archives.*



*Portsmouth Light as it appears today,
Photo by Frank Keslof, DSO-PB INR*

FLOTILLA COMMANDER'S REPORT

Steve Tudal, FC

This is my last article as your flotilla commander. Congratulations to Ron Booth, Flotilla Commander-elect and Roberta Shippee, Vice Flotilla Commander-elect, the flotilla will be in very good hands. I wish both Ron & Roberta, great success and luck during their terms.

Thank you to everyone that helped me. In particular, extra thanks to Ron Booth, Frank Keslof, and Frank Swain for their help and guidance. Thanks to Dolly Thomas, Fran Hunt and all rest that help make Flotilla 38's PE missions such a great success. Thanks also to Anita Rossi, Bill McGoldrick, and their team that made the revival of the Coast Guard ball an overwhelming success. Thank you all other staff officers for your efforts and thanks to all the members without whom nothing would be accomplished.

All of us know what Flotilla 38 is capable of. It is very rewarding to see our members and the flotilla receive recognition for their hard work and dedication. I have said on many occasions, that I felt very fortunate to have joined our flotilla. I truly believe we are the best. We have a great webpage, we have an outstanding newsletter, great PA coverage, continuing success in PE, member training, new membership and many other items too numerous to mention. However, I feel I must include the fact that we are part of an excellent division and district both of which have fine newsletters that are made possible by people from our flotilla.

The only reason that 38 is the best is the members. You most definitely are great people, with great attitudes, and are great friends. I'm truly proud to be a member. Once again thank you to all. I wish everyone safe and happy holidays and a great year in 2002.

GETTING DUE CREDIT; DON'T MISS THE BOAT

Roberta Shippee, FSO-IC

This is a reminder that ALL paperwork to claim credit for mission hours and other activities must be submitted to the flotilla staff officer-information services, NO LATER THAN 20 DECEMBER. Please send to: Roberta Shippee, FSO-IS, PO Box 957, Amesbury, MA 01913.

All of our personal membership information and flotilla records have been maintained in a computer database system known by the acronym "AUXMIS." After the first of the year, this system is being replaced by a new system that has been christened "AUXDATA". Because of the scheduled changeover to this new system, information about missions and other activities in the year 2001 cannot be entered after 31 December.

Personal data like addresses, phone numbers, etc. can be updated but mission data, once it is entered, cannot be changed. So make sure all your figures are correct, and make sure that you and the flotilla are getting credit for all the things you did in 2001.

Because of the holidays I am asking for your information to be to me by 20 December so it can be processed and sent up the chain-of-command to the division information services officer on time. Remember, having the missions and hours you contributed recorded is not only a benefit to you and Flotilla 38, it also of great value to the Coast Guard on a national level. When strategic plans are made and budgets are submitted to the US Congress, the commandant must have the data to show that the Auxiliary is a vital part of Team Coast Guard. This all starts when forms are filled out properly and submitted to the flotilla staff officer – information services.

PUBLIC EDUCATION UPDATE

Dolly Thomas, FSO-PE

The fall BS&S course was completed on 6 November with 19 students successfully completing the course of study. Thanks to the following members for their assistance: Fred Beaulieu, Ron Booth, Jim Carter, Wayne Cedres, Bill Graham, Paul Hazel, Fran Hunt, Terry Kalil, Frank Keslof, Rick Kilborn, Jim Maranto, Charlie Pencinger, Anita Rossi, Arthur Smith, Dave Stickney, Frank Swain, and Dan Zoeller.

The winter 2002 Boating Skills and Seamanship (BS&S) and Basic Coastal Navigation (BCN) courses are scheduled to begin 15 January. Classes will begin at 1900 and end at 2130 in the Pentucket Regional Middle School in West Newbury. As always, certain class sessions require additional instructor aides, so please join us if you can. Help is especially needed for the following sessions:

**15 January - welcome and registration,
12 and 26 February – piloting,
5 March - lines and knots,
12 March – final exam.**

MEMBER PROFILE:

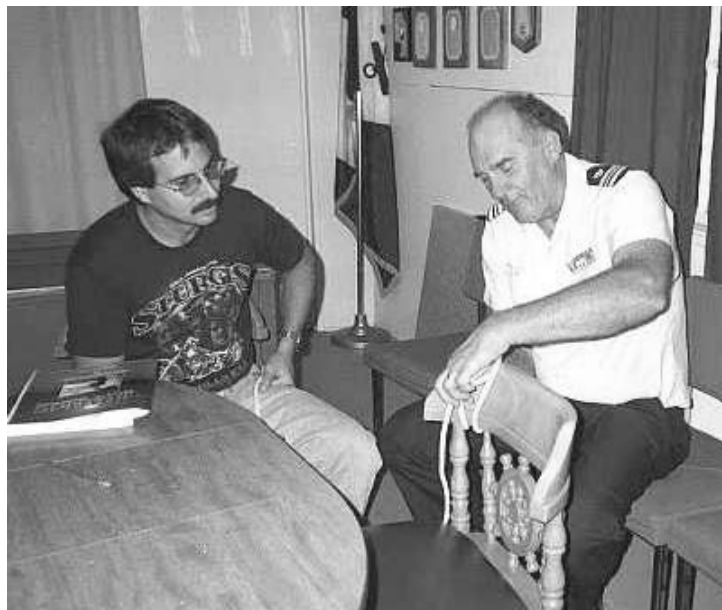
William Graham # 221

Interview by John McDonald, ADSO-PBR INR

The Merrimack River Flotilla 38 member profile for this edition features William “Bill” Graham. Bill recently celebrated his twentieth year as an Auxiliarist. He grew up on Plum Island and recalls spending a great portion of his summers at the old Coast Guard station, which at the time, was located by the south jetty. Bill recalls getting to know the crew at the station and recalls seeing the regulars speeding by his house on their way to handle distress calls. He came to join the Auxiliary in a way familiar to all. That is, he wanted to learn more about boating and decided to join an organization that would allow him to do so. He enrolled in a Boating Skills and Seamanship class and the rest is history.

Bill served nine years in the Air Force as a nuclear weapons technician and was discharged in February of 1964. He returned home to Newburyport and acquired a United States Coast Guard 100 ton Master’s license. For fourteen years he ran sport-fishing charters on his 36-foot vessel, *My Mistress Two*. One of his most enjoyable experiences as a charter boat captain was the annual fishing trip with children from “The High Hopes Foundation.” Charter boats from the Newburyport area would each take a group of children and their parents out for a day of fishing and fun on the water. The children had life threatening illnesses and Bill stated it was a wonderful thing to be able to give the children and their parents a day to have fun and put their problems on hold, if just for a bit. He stated, “It would also make you put some of your own problems in perspective.”

Bill was also active in the Auxiliary operations program and did many patrols on another vessel he owned, the 20-foot *My Mistress*. He related that most patrols were routine. However on one occasion, together with his son Jonathan, and active duty Coast Guard personnel from Station Merrimack as crew, they took a boat in tow. The boat had run out of fuel and was in imminent danger of hitting the rocks at the North Jetty in 4 to 6 foot seas on an outgoing tide. While the crew was trying to rig the tow, the disabled boat rose on the crest of a wave and hit *My Mistress* in the stern. Fortunately no catastrophic damage to either boat occurred and *My Mistress* and crew safely returned the disabled boat to its homeport. Bill says when he finally sold the boat, the dent in the rub rail on the stern was still there.



Bill Graham (right) demonstrates practical skills to a student after giving the lecture on marlinspike seamanship at a Boating Skills & Seamanship class

I asked Bill to relate some interesting experiences from his Auxiliary career and he noted that he has had many over the years which included serving in elected and appointed offices. He did state, however, that it was especially rewarding when he was elected Flotilla 38 commander to be able to do a lot of remodeling on the boathouse where he had spent so much of his time as a youth.

Ann Graham, Bill’s wife, took this opportunity to remind him of a particular patrol some years ago that was rather interesting to say the least. It seems that Bill was on a patrol accompanied by another flotilla 38 member as crew, RADM Ray Wood, USCG (ret.). They had just begun their patrol on the 20-foot *Auxiliary Facility My Mistress* and were nearing the #7 buoy when they heard a distress call from a boat that had just run aground. From the radio transmission it sounded to Bill and Ray like the distressed vessel was behind them close to the Salisbury side of the river in the area near the campground. As the tide was running out pretty fast they wanted to get on scene as soon as possible. Coming about, they began steaming toward the grounded vessel whereupon Ray stated, “It appears to be getting a little shallow here doesn’t it?” To which Bill replied, “No, we have plenty of water, years ago I boated all through this area.” As fate would have it, no sooner had Bill uttered these words than they were aground themselves. Bill sheepishly turned to Ray and said, “Well admiral, I guess I know who’s going into the water to push us off.”

As they were getting themselves re-floated, the 21-foot vessel then being operated by USCGSTA Merrimack River, approached the scene. Ray, seeing that they were about to suffer the same fate, got on the radio to advise the Coast Guard vessel that they were headed into a shallow area. He advised them that *Auxiliary Vessel My Mistress* had just been there, “and had lightly touched bottom.” Bill related that he was thinking, *lightly touched bottom?* I’m soaking wet and exhausted from pushing us off! The radio call was too late and the Coast Guard 21-footer also ran aground, but it was a very diplomatic radio call by Ray. The merciful end to this incident came when a civilian boater came along and refloated the boat that had started all this while the 21-footer worked to free itself.

Bill’s youngest son, Jonathan, was also a member of Flotilla 38 and spent time at Station Merrimack, which resulted in his joining the gold side. Jon spent nine years on active duty serving from Rhode Island to Florida as a boatswain’s mate and was discharged from active duty as a Petty Officer 1st class. Currently, Jonathan is a member of the reserve unit at USCGSTA Burlington, Vermont, resides in Springfield, Vermont and is a trooper with the Vermont State Police. Bill’s older son, Bill, Jr., was also in the Auxiliary but he took a different path that led him directly into a law enforcement career. Currently Bill, Jr. is a trooper with the New Hampshire State Police.

We still count on Bill as one of our most valuable instructors in our public education mission and I know I speak for the entire flotilla when I say “*Bravo Zulu,*” Bill, for your first twenty years of service.



Talk about a small world, since he’s our neighbor up here in Vermont, we just happen to get a photo of Jonathan Graham (in state police uniform however, not Coast Guard).

(photo courtesy of Vermont State Police.)



Top vessel examiners from Division 3 were treated to a cruise aboard USCGSTA Merrimack River’s 47-foot motor lifeboat. Among those examiners who conducted a large number of vessel safety checks this year were (left to right) Dick Muir, from Flotilla 33, Wayne Cedres from our own Flotilla 38 and John Swenson from Flotilla 37. (Photo by crew USCGSTA Merrimack River)

SWORDFISHING THE NEW ENGLAND WATERS

Matt McDonald, FSO-PB

Recently I had the opportunity to read an account of the 1929 sword-fishing season on Block Island. This was given to me by Dub Barrows, a friend who spent his working life chasing swordfish all over the Atlantic Ocean. I found several noteworthy things mentioned in the work.

For example, I found it interesting reading an account of what the crew ate. Frederick Benson the author of *Swordfisherman of Block Island* noted that they almost always ate three full meals a day. With items that you might expect for breakfast, eggs, pancakes, juice, hot cereal and so on and for lunch, soups and sandwiches, but with unexpected dinner entrees including roast beef, roast lamb, pork chops all accompanied by gallons of hot coffee and great portions of apple pie with cheddar cheese. The crew would certainly need all that sustenance as they faced the harsh weather conditions of Georges Bank. Some things never change.

Because of the weather conditions and the fog, vessels often relied on one another for help with navigation. It seems they would simply yell to a passing vessel and ask where that vessel came from. From this tidbit of information, coupled with a bit of celestial navigation, they would concoct a fix. This left me to wonder when VHF and single sideband radios became common onboard boats? Perhaps one of you can tell me in a letter to the editor that we can publish.

Benson notes that the swordfish became one of the most popular choices of fish sometime in the early 19th Century. It did not command a very high price at that time, but as it became a popular dish, its value skyrocketed. It reached a price of \$8 per pound on Block Island in the years in which he was active. He also comments that there has been overkill and that the swordfish are becoming much harder to find. He states “They (*swordfish*) have been taken in large numbers over a period of years, by harpooning. It was discovered that they could be taken on long lines so called, these being trawls, hooks set about 90 feet apart and of course baited.”

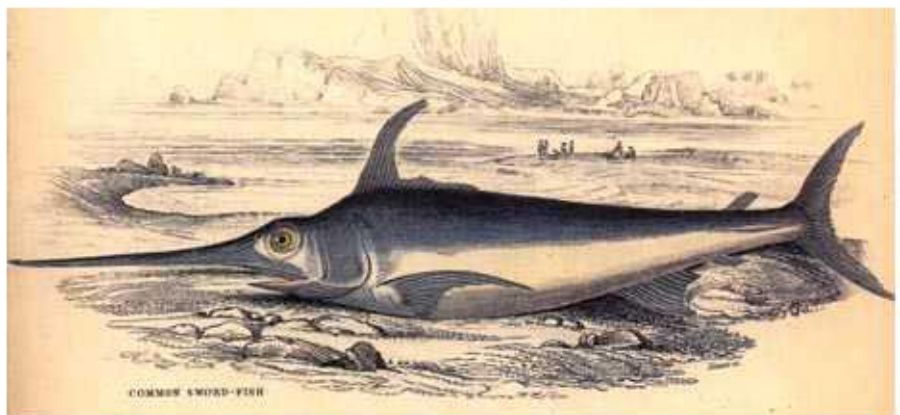
Previous to reading this account I thought long lining was a much more recent way of swordfishing than this, but it seems that fishermen were employing it quite some time ago. He goes on to

mention that large numbers of swordfish have been taken on the outer half of the Continental Shelf, off Block Island, and Southern Massachusetts, the offshore part of Nantucket Shoals, and Georges Bank. The gully, between Georges and Browns Banks, seems to be where most fish are caught.

Swordfish grow to a great size. The heaviest definitely recorded, at least by 1929, had been caught on Georges Bank in 1921. When weighed at the Boston Fish Pier, it topped the scale at just over 1,100 pounds. The sword on the beast was over five feet long and the body was between 15 and 16 feet. The general run is much smaller, averaging between 150 and 300 pounds. Benson maintains that they are a warm water fish, favoring waters with a temperature above 60 degrees. They do not school, but are always seen scattered, or occasionally in pairs.

Since 1929 was during prohibition, the Coast Guard was involved in law enforcement and the account describes how the crew sees a rumrunner with Coast Guard vessels hot on their trail. I don't have much knowledge about this period of Coast Guard history, and research on this article has peaked my interest. You will probably read about prohibition and the Coast Guard in an upcoming issue.

Captain Benson summed up the 1929 season as follows: “The season of 1929 was a record breaker for the *ANNA*. She made a few new records. Most fish in a day – 44; largest catch for a trip - 169 fish; individual shares paid to crew (15 August) - \$860.97; engine takes a full share as well as a boat share \$1904.66. In short 1929 was a good year for the crew of the fishing vessel *ANNA*.”



30 YEAR CELEBRATION

Since our last edition, there was a dinner party/celebration at the boat house to honor Frank Swain and Bill McGoldrick, who have each completed over 30 years of Auxiliary service.



Presentations from the flotilla were made by Wally Lesynski, our veteran with over 50 years of service. In photo above, (from left to right) Frank Swain, Steve Tudal, Wally Lesynski and Bill McGoldrick.



Photo at left, two special guests at the 30-year celebration dinner were (from left to right) BMC Don Holcomb, USCG, Supervisor, Station Merrimack River and CWO3 Bruce Schneider, USCG, Commanding Officer, Stations Gloucester and Merrimack River.

Photos below show some of the 60 guests who enjoyed the celebration dinner at the Plum Island Boat House.

(Photos by Steve Noyes, FSO-OP)





Now that the winter holiday season is upon us, here's something to bring you back to the boating season. Ron Booth, our flotilla commander-elect on patrol aboard the Auxiliary facility "Stealth Cat" on a hot and sunny afternoon off Plum Island.

(Photo by Steve Noyes, FSO-OP)

The Jetties is the official publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 38, 1NR, Newburyport, Massachusetts.

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