

BOAT BASIN BULLETIN

Issue 3

All the news that floats we'll print

April 2008

Happy 70th Birthday, Boat Basin!

Ed Bacon
S/Y Prelude

The Basin was opened on April 1, 1938 "without ceremony". Sad to report, on April 1, 2008, the Basin's 70th birthday was also observed "without ceremony".

Are you the missing "U" in our COMMUNITY? I need more feedback from "U" – articles, events, issues, photos, paintings and particularly e-mail addresses of other Basin users and Basin alumni. Send them to ebacon@nyc.rr.com This IS a community newsletter. Thanks to Lew Wood, Andy Sferra, Jim Marsten and Josh Goldberg for their contributions to this issue.

-ED-

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[logo lifted from Steve Manahan]

PAST

So, we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.

from The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald

W. 79th St Boat Basin History

April 1, 1938 - Day One of the Boat Basin. The New York Times reported "City's Yacht Basin on the Hudson to be Opened Today". Other items reported by the Times that day: Ex-President Herbert Hoover spoke against fascism and the "heart-breaking persecution of helpless Jews" yet advised that the United States not be drawn into the next great war Japan complained that U.S. naval maneuvers in the Pacific were a threat to Japan Ambassador Joseph Kennedy addressed British shippers and stated that "the United States did not intend to get into world shipping in a big way" Passenger Ship Washington of the United States Line arriving from Hamburg and docking at West 18th Street Joe Louis defended his title by knocking out Harry Thomas in the fourth roundthe rookie Slamming Sam Snead favored at the Masters Ansonia Hotel at 73rd and Broadway – furnished 2-room apartments with complete hotel service - \$75/month Steinway Grand Piano for \$885

To be continued ...

Life after the Boat Basin – Josh Goldberg

From Jim Marsten:

Someone in the BB, it may have been Les [Torgerson], suggested that we go see Lucy-Anne Goldberg, a book agent that had a houseboat on E-dock. Lucy -Ann kept her boat as a free living place for broke authors when they came to NYC. Lucy-Ann went on to fame as Linda Tripp's book agent when she suggested that Linda tape her conversations with Monica Lewinsky. The only Goldbergs I ever saw on the dock were her sons Josh and Jonah who were pretty good at helping boaters dock their boats. Jonah is now a pretty good political commentator. When Heather started going to Lucy-Ann she was told that father/daughter incest was so taboo a subject that no publisher would go near it. After shopping the book around for a year or so Lucy-Ann said that things had changed so much that she could not sell the book because now everyone was doing incest stories, even to the point of having TV series about it. So Heather became a has-been before she was a was. But in the end the book did Heather a lot of good because she got the story off her chest (poor choice of words), found a very sympathetic ear in Lucy-Ann, and got together with me as I was her proof reader.

A couple e-mails from Josh Goldberg:

Don't know if you remember but it saw the piece in the Time about a boat basin reunion be planned for the 12th of June. My name is Josh, my family had a few boats on E dock, the Cackadorn (Houseboat), the Bye Cracky (little 18 foot runabout a I would strafe the Circleline with and the Lucianne (a 28 foot Sportfisher that I used to charter back in the 80's." I used to work with Louis Terranova and for Eddie Tomenanek when he was dockmaster. Actually I worked the first summer that the Parks Dept took over in '84.

Anyhoo, I was just curios.

Regards,

Joshua Goldberg

P.S. Little about myself: Married 17 years, Chantal (b. Port-au-Prince, 1970). 40 y/o. working as a New York City Tour Guide (no complaints - - - worth listening to), living on the Upper West Side - - - like I would ever move away from home.

~~ _/) ~~

Thank you for getting back to me. Sorry about the horrendous text in that last e-mail but I wrote it at four in the AM and was not in good form after a 12 hour day with a bunch of German sightseeing architects I was showing around town [again, currently I am working as an official New York City Tour Guide.]

Anyway, I am gald you remember me/us. But to jog your memory a little, I mean a lot, more:

My folks first bought a houseboat on E-Dock (a Gibson we named the "Crackadorn") that used to have a large "Universal Joint" sign on the East side (the boat faced South.) I forgot the name of the woman that my folks bought the houseboat from but the deal maker/breaker was that she had to have it running by the time she sold it to us in 1980 - - - or was it 1979 - - - whatever. Last time I was actually IN the Boat Basin has to have been about 10 or so years ago

Among our next-door neighbors when we first got there were Charlie the oboe player and Doug the airline pilot; he spent half of his time in Nairobi. Across from us were the Ottovianos (sp?) - - - Tania (hubba, hubba) and her mom (her name is escaping my at the moment.)

Let me see, who else from E-dock: Michele and Simone the weird/funny Italians, Hubert the "Mad Mongolian," James [Bill] Riordan in his old but well kept Cris Craft, the Fitzpatrick's [Reenie Mintz?] son and their daughter-in-law [Ron and Linda?] at the time (both of whose names I forget at this wee hour), Jim Marsden who put huge outboard motors on his old houseboat, Dick DeBartolo(sp?) who had his little center-wheelhouse speedboat that looked like it was a junket gift from one of the boat magazines he worked for, and many others whose faces I remember but who are nameless in my mind at the moment.

Actually, at that time, you were docked at the end of either E-dock or D-Dock in the most practical of houseboats in the marina at the time. Your houseboat that had the yellow trim and actually had a high prow rather than a flat deck. I remember a lot of people jealously admiring that houseboat for actually looking like a, well, like a boat.

As I said in the last e-mail, after the houseboat, my family bought an 18 foot MFG speedboat. The next year we got a Penn Yan (tunnel drive) 28 foot sport fisher which was named after my mom: the

"Lucianne." That was 1983 when we were renting three different slips. The Lucianne was the boat I would "quasi-legally" charter from time to time.

By "quasi-legal" I mean that I would "rent" the boat to the client and then have them sign a contract stating that I had to be on the boat if they "rented" it. That was how I got around that whole pesky licensing/insurance thing. I just thank my "luckies" that nothing bad ever happened. So many things can go wrong when you think about it.

Actually, you were on the "Lucianne" numerous times. I would take it down to the concerts on pier 84, to fireworks shows [i.e.. the centennials for the Brooklyn Bridge and Statue Of Liberty, Fourth of July shows, etc.] and anything else that gave me an excuse to untie.

Also, back in the early eighties, Lisa was on the boat a couple of times to see the concerts.

I actually I had Robert DeNiro, as a guest of Jerome Gary, on the boat when I ferried him to the barge-house Jerome had across the river in NJ.: also I had Phil Donohue and a friend of his on the boat for a cruise around Manhattan. The rest of the business was interesting because, back then, people in NYC didn't think there actually were boats to charter in the Harbor. To a large extent they were right.

That is why I am very excited about what has been happening with regards to the NYC waterways during the past 15 years.

I used to go water-skiing under the GW Bridge back before the sewerage plant was built at 145 street. Considering how far the river has come since then makes me want to wretch thinking about what I was swimming through back then. For example, as you must know, on Dykman Street, by Tubby's Hook Marina, there is actually a beach where people go swimming. They have to wear shoes to insure that they don't get stuck with a hypodermic needle or a broken crack stem, but they are in the water and they can see their feet on the bottom. That is huge when you think about how the river was back before the 80's.

Another thing that goes fairly unrecognized is that NYC has almost every kind of water formation within 30 miles of Midtown Manhattan: The Upper Bay, the Sound, the tidal straight that is the East River, the Fjord-like Hudson River, The Great South Bay, the insanity of Hell Gate at rip-tide, the shipping canal at Spuyten Duyvel, The Kill Van Kull, Newark bay, THE OCEAN, the true river qualities that the Hudson takes on above Peekskill, the small rivers like the Bronx River or the Hutchison River, the various tidal basins around the Port of New York, the marshes of Jamaica Bay and the Meadowlands, etc., etc. Unless you want to count waterfalls and geysers and the Central Park "Loch," I think New York Harbor basically has it all or as much as can be found in one place.

ANYWAY:

Aside from E-dock I have a fairly good memory of names at the boat basin back then. After all, I did also work for Nichols Yacht Yards as soon as I turned 16 in 1983. But mostly I just spent my summers hanging out on the boat and other peoples'.

Let me see, the crew at the dock master's house was, Casey with the tracheotomy, Eddie Tomenek with the lobotomy, Old Eddie [Collins] the Irish Guy, Eddie Conca, Louis Terranova (with whom I delivered diesel fuel to boats in winter), Burns our token Vassar Co-ed, Jullian the Trinidadian and his son Max who worked the Midnight to eight shift. My last year actually working at/for the Boat Basin was in 84 after the Parks Dept took the Basin back. Then I was the midnight to eight guy. Before that I was pumping gas, collecting transient fees and being an annoying kid to the non-running "trailers" at the Basin.

I was also there the night that the brand-new breakwater caught fire when that transient boat's propane stove burst into flames. Was that 1981 or 1982?

Again I remember a lot of the residents, so if you ever need some help with old names for the reunion I might be able to help. I would like to help if possible.

Anyway, we finally left in 1989 when we sold the Sport fisher.

I just wanted to "unload" because my memories of being at the boat basin are some of my best. After all, I spent my teenage life at the boat basin and left at 22.

Again, thanks for getting back to me. I hope I might have jogged you noodle a little. Please put me on your newsletter list and I am looking forward to being there on the 12th of June. If there is anyway I can help out just let me know.

Best regards,

Joshua Goldberg

P.S. A little more about me since leaving the Boat Basin:

My dad passed away in 2005. My mom is still around and kicking live.

I am 40 years old and worked as: Page Six (NY POST) reporter, NBC News researcher, Cartoon & Writer's Syndicate Editor (Int'l editorial cartoon synd.), Display Ad Salesman at the New York Press, New York City PD licensed highway tow-truck operator (not a pretty job - - - bad wrecks and injuries), fish-buyer for DeMartino Wholesale Fish at the Fulton Market, NYC Cab Driver, Chauffeur for an extremely pretentious/snooty limo service, livery car driver in Washington Heights, NYC Marshall and NYC Sheriff Auto Retriever (tow truck - - - repo man), AND CURRENTLY (drum roll please) Licensed New York City Tour Guide.

Graduated of Pace University, class of 1990, Journalism & Political Science/English minor.

My beautiful wife of 17 years, Chantal Jean-Baptiste, who I met in Riverside Park right outside the Boat Basin in 1988, is a translator of Haitian Creole/Patois & French.

Correction from Andy Sferra

Thanks for the News Letter.

A correction...

A second child was born to the Boat Basin on April 7, 1974. Noah Sferra was born to Andrew and Connie Sferra and lived on "D" dock on the houseboat "Miss Lizzy" approximately six months after Dana Bragonier was born and lived on Reg and Penny Bragonier's trawler "Stormy Petrel". As you know, Noah still lives up on the Island of Manhattan.

Also that summer of 1974 Milton Lewis of channel 5 news interviewed Connie holding her newborn baby Noah. The interview was a long segment of living on a houseboat in Manhattan. It made the boat basin look like a great place and way to live. Credit to Connie and the memory of her.

When the weather gets warmer I will attend a reunion. Who ever heard of real boat people coming out in the winter.

[Bri Wood was the third Basin baby, not the second as stated in Issue 2 – ED]

And from Noah:

I am afraid I cannot confirm any of this. However I can confirm I was born. ;)

Ray the Rower

Ray Pasquale (sp?) loved to race the Circle Liners on the Hudson with his aluminum rowboat . The Circle Liners always won but their passengers always cheered for Ray. Often he would row into the Basin with his dog and Italian flag to visit his many friends here. Ray passed away a couple months ago and is survived by his wife Rita. Rowin' Ray has rowed away. He must have been cheered as he rowed through the pearly gates.

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PRESENT

There's no present. There's only the immediate future and the recent past.

- [George Carlin](#)

That's my neighbor? Werner Buhner

On April 21:



Youngest ever USCF master Nicholas Nip, now ten years old, flew to the Big Apple over the weekend to appear on Monday morning's talk show [Live with Regis and Kelly](#). In front of the cameras, he played a ten board simul against experienced adult players from the New York area, scoring nine wins and one draw. Afterwards, Nicholas answered a few questions from Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa, ranging from what age he learned chess (five years old) to whether the TV hosts are too old to play chess (no) to whether he has any girlfriends (no).

from <http://main.uschess.org/content/view/8373/446/>

This precocious chess player beat nine out of ten but had to accept a draw with the formidable Werner Buhner of "Raquelita" on D Dock. You can view the segment at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGvdLm-eF-g>

D Dock Diaspora

During the weekend of April 4th to April 6th, D Dock was vacated. It was a great show of neighbors helping each other move the boats to E Dock, C Dock and A Dock. This weekend, the displacement will end as D Dockers return to their home dock.

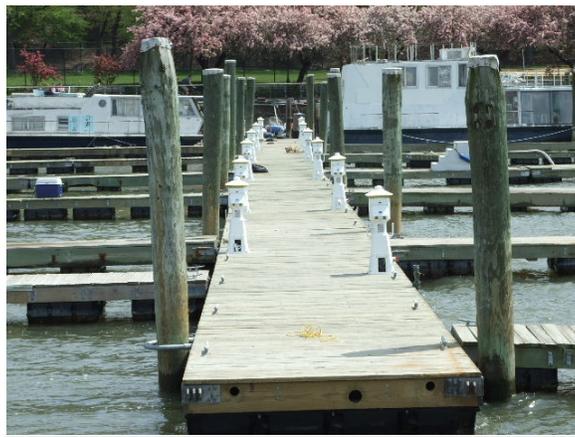
D Dock empty for the first time in over 40 years



Virtual D Dock



D Dock redux – kudos to Joe, Chris, Troy and the other Parks employees that assisted



Law and Order shoot

On April 23, Law and Order shot a segment with the boats on B Dock as background. Miles Pincus' "Go Lightly" came in from the moorings for the shoot:

No, Miles was not sailing in the B Dock slip.

As the tide went out, "Go Lightly" settled into the mud but she heeled more and more until low tide. Possibly, a fragment of Gene Greenspan's floating home "Fountainhead" remained under the mud when "Fountainhead" sunk, was broken up and removed from the Basin. A good career, but the bottom didn't need cleaning.

Look for a heeled sailboat in the Law and Order show when it airs.



Boat Basin Tea, Literary and Duckwatching Society

First meeting was held at Dallas BBQ on West 72nd Street on Saturday, March 29. Ray Stephens, Jane Clegg, Al Wolfson, Raquel and Werner Buhner, Leslie Day, Jim Nishiura, Regina Jordan and Ed Bacon accomplished the only order of business – selection of the restaurant for the next meeting – the City Grill. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis.

New contract late fees

Due to a system glitch, the payment due date was posted as April 1 instead of May 1 and some were charged late fees when they paid. When the problem is resolved by Parks, the late fees will be removed from the statements.

~ _/) ~

PFUTURE

The future ain't what it used to be.

—attributed to Yogi Berra and others

Boat Basin Alumni Reunion

The reunion will be on Thursday, June 12 at 6:00 pm on C Dock.

Following is the attachment to the Parks permit application (yes, old timers, you need a permit to party now at the Basin) that explains event details:

This will be a Boat Basin alumni re-union with people coming from all over the country.

It'll be an informal Sip (beer, wine, soda), Snack (potluck appetizers or hors d'oeuvres), and Schmooze (Yada, Yada, Yada about old times) event. No speeches. No ceremonies. No microphone. No music. No items will be distributed. No sales of food or products. No promotional materials.

Parks Director of Marinas Nate Grove and Boat Basin Dockmaster Joe Burck have been apprised of the re-union and have approved alcoholic beverages being confined to a cordoned-off area of the dock during the event.

We will police the dock during the event and clean up after the event. We will be responsible for the disposal of all beverages, containers, trash, etc.

We will also be responsible for the conduct of event guests, mostly ex-neighbors and current neighbors, while they are in the Boat Basin.

We will also pay Parks published marina labor rate for an extra staff person for the duration of the event, as already discussed with Nate and Joe.

Attendees will be encouraged to use public transportation or parking garages in the neighborhood.

Attendees will be informed that the event ends at 10:00 pm and that they should depart the Basin before then for dinner at a West Side restaurant or for other activities landside.

I need to approximate how many are intending to attend. PLEASE CLICK ON ebacon@nyc.rr.com NOW and in the e-mail, give me the names of the persons and whether they'll drink red wine, white wine, beer or soda.

Here are some of the Missing in Action:

Leslie Strauss	Emily Lee	Mark the playwright
Henry Cohen & Toni Kline	Helen Mignon	Mike the diver
? Patterson (stage mgr)	Paul Minkoff	Rick, Eric and Thor Field
Pat Pulley	Peter Addis	Lonnie Day
Jerry Schindlinger	Claudia and Ted Howard	Dave Foster
Greg Smith	Bonnie Munchen and kids	Jay Pellicane
Jim Gallagher	Howard Chavell	Guessing Julian
Burns Patterson	Ruthie Hammerman	The Cat Lady
Jonathan Asche	Susan and Tanya Octaviano	Bobby Held
Jerry Berton	Paola and Roland Stern	Barry
Julie and Miles	Beth McCarthy	Orlando Rodriguez
Josh Bloomgarden	Mel Appelbaum	Pat Halvorsen
Leslie Smoke	Tanya and Susan Octaviano	Jill Baker
Nat Haft	Hanny Ruddy	
	Ted and Claudia Howard	
	Eivind Avrum	
Judy Williams		Ida Smyer
Ione Haskell	Tom Salmon	Phyllis and Dave
Pat, Mariah and Morgan Carey	Lou Gonzalez	Neil Sendar
	Tom Glennon	Mel Snyder
Dr. Bob	Tony Germani	Joan and Ed Wood
Hugh Downs	Jerry Fouche	Mike Samuels
John Edelman	Mike Portis	Harry Wilkins

Please send any additional alumni e-mail addresses to ebacon@nyc.rr.com

Alumni re-union berths

Would you like to learn how Boat Basin alumni coped before you arrived at the Basin? Offer a berth on your vessel on June 12 to an alum. Susan Argus, who lived on a Drift-R-Cruz 34 and a Cal 39 sloop in the 70's with her late husband Steve Salonites, could use a bunk for the night:

Beginning my planning to come to the reunion on June 12th and am thinking about accomodations: I know Prelude will be busy, chartered or both but I thought you might know of some less advertised less expensive places on the West side or of someone in the Boat Basin who might be able to provide me a berth for the 12th. (I am small clean and neat and know how to use a head . . .) I'll keep working on it, but would appreciate any suggestions you might have.

Pfantasy pfuture

Deep Boat, our mole at Parks Department Headquarters, has provided the following Parks internal memo:

Commissioner, the Boat Basin users are complaining about our 3-phase dredging plan [see Issue 2 - Ed], particularly that they won't be able to leave or enter the marina with their boats except at high tide for the next 40 years. Some say they'll refuse to install the concrete blocks foundations and gardens during Phase II. They claim that one of the reasons they live on a boat is to get away from gardens and lawns.

We're proposing a simple no-cost solution that will eliminate the foundations phase and allow the users to boat at any tide. Following is a paragraph to be added to the Boat Basin Terms of Agreement:

Permit holders will be required to dredge their own slips. Empty cans, bottles and containers should be filled with mud from your slip before disposing them in the dumpster. At one of the extreme low tides of the winter, the dockmaster will inspect your slip. If your vessel is not floating, you will incur a charge of \$20/foot for use of the mud in your slip.

Commissioner, we have shown this to Legal. The lawyers all agree that the State and the Feds own the water at the Basin but that we own the mud. We can legally charge for the permit holders' use of our mud just as we charge for the use of our finger docks and pilings. The lawyers are also checking the legality of revoking a permit if the person uses the sewage pumpout system to dredge his/her slip.

Parting proverb

"It is an interesting biological fact that all of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea—whether it is to sail or to watch it—we are going back from whence we came."

Quote attributed to John F. Kennedy; Speech, Newport, Rhode Island, 14 September 1962 Public Papers of the Presidents (1962) p. 669

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