

# The Broadside



## The voice of The Mathews Maritime Foundation

*Museum Located at 482 Main Street, Mathews, VA Mail to PO Box 1201, Mathews, VA 23109 804-725-4444*

### *Shipwrecked on an Ocean Island*



In our last issue the story of Gil Klingel left

off with him in Haiti filming West Indian lizards. Here now is the next installment in the life of this fascinating man as told by his daughter Marcie Benouameur.

Klingel soon wanted to return to

the West Indies to search for new species. This time however he hoped to sail there in his own boat to be free to travel when and where he wished and to be more equipped for the journey. He decided to plan a scientific expedition for this purpose. He asked his boyhood friend Wally Coleman to join him in this adventure. Under the auspices of the Natural History Society of Maryland and the American Museum of Natural History, a boat was soon built. It was outfitted as a research vessel. Klingel's choice for this boat was a replica of Joshua Slocum's famous 37 foot sailing yawl the "Spray" in which Capt. Slocum sailed single-handed around the world in the 1890's.

This replica was completed at Conley's Shipyard in Oxford, Maryland in 1930 and was named the

"Basilisk" after a Caribbean lizard that could run across the water. The builder, Alonzo Conley was a builder of the old school. Some of his vessels were three masters and one was a four master.

This expedition was to have been the first of its kind. Plans were made to sail from island to island in the West Indies to observe, collect, and gather information on rare species, especially lizards. The Basilisk sailed from Oxford, Maryland in November of 1930 and once out in the ocean was caught up in a storm so terrific that other larger ships were lost at sea. The two young sailors battled the seas for nearly two weeks and after a voyage of 1500 miles of open ocean they sighted land just at sunset on December 10, 1930. In Klingel's own words: "We hove to about 8 miles off shore as the twilight deepened, and went below for some badly needed rest. Hardly an hour before dawn a terrific lurch threw us clear off our bunks. We were on the reef. A heavy sea was running and there was little that we could do."

Their boat was being smashed against the reef and all they could do was to save their equipment and supplies. To make matters worse, their chronometer had been damaged during the storm so they had no idea where they were. It was not until later after exploring the island that they learned this was the island of Inagua, the second largest and southernmost island of the Bahamas.

*Keeping the Past in the Present Preserving it for the Future*

Gilbert Klingel's dream was ruined by rough seas and a jagged coral reef. Shipwrecked on a desert island, he made the most of this tragic dilemma and discovered a natural world never before described in great detail.

This misadventure later became the basis for his first book "Inagua" which was published in 1940. He not only took many photographs and brought back numerous specimens from this expedition but returned in 1938 to continue where he had left off. During these scientific expeditions, he discovered several species of lizard new to science and a hummingbird unique to Inagua.

Even more impressive, however, were Klingel's vivid and detailed descriptions of all the creatures he found on this lonely island of the Bahamas. Among these were roseate spoonbills, hummingbirds, octopuses, sharks, crabs, bats and many-colored fish. Especially notable, however, are the accounts he gives about the multitude of flamingos found on Inagua at that time.

It has been said that Klingel's descriptions in the book Inagua rival the best of William Beebe's Galapagos adventures.

### ***PEGGY OF NEW POINT History - Part II***

In the September issue of the Broadside we traced *Peggy's* history from her launching in 1925 to her retirement in 2001 when then owner Captain Ed Grinnell retired from fishing the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Our story continues now with Kim and Gretchen Granberry who purchased the *Peggy* from Captain Ed and converted her for liveaboard cruising.

This, as told by Kim, is how he and Gretchen came to own the boat. "I first saw this boat on the Chesapeake Bay. I saw her, and fell in love with her, pretty much instantly. I found out who owned it and called him up. I told him that if he was ever interested in selling the boat, I'd be interested in buying it. He said, 'I don't know, if I sold that boat I don't know what I'd do, I want to be buried in that boat. We had a nice chat, and then I called him once a year for eight years.

The last time I called him, he said he was ready to sell the boat but wanted to work it one more year because he had done so for forty years.

I went down for that haul-out and helped him, and it was the first time I'd ever met him, after talking on the phone a lot. He was an amazing character a real local hero type. So we came to terms and I went out and fished with him.

The pilot house is removable, and we have a deck hatch that we can sit on, so we can have the boat in its original fishing configuration, which was important to me as I didn't want to modify too much. We wanted to be custodians for the boat, because there are only a handful of them left on the Chesapeake.

Converting this boat to a liveaboard was a great design challenge because it was a complete open fish-hold. We lived on board for the first year, to determine the best design.

There were only two really bad trips we've had on this boat, one was from the Tortugas, and the other one was crossing the [mouth] of the Potomac. There were six to eight-foot short, high seas, a very lumpy situation. But as an old-timer once said to us, 'She's a great boat, she'll always get you home, as long as you can hang on to her.' When the conditions do get lousy, the boat can take it a lot more than we can. The boat's been out fishing in over 70mph winds.

We weren't allowed to change the name, or paint anything on the boat blue, or eat chicken on the boat, or start anything new on a Friday. We've stuck to the first two, at least."

***Sidebar on the Peggy Story...*** Often we forget to recognize the contributions of volunteers who work quietly, behind the scene, giving of their time and energy. One volunteer who deserves special recognition is Joe Ortiz. Joe is the one person responsible for the *Peggy* coming to the Foundation. He has known Kim Granberry for some time and was the principal contact for Kim with the Foundation. Thanks Joe for all you do for the Foundation.

### ***Heritage Day Celebration 2008***

It was an interesting day! Like other annual events in Mathews this year, the weather man reminded us that we have no control over how each dawn breaks... on 9/27 in a downpour.

However, just as opening remarks and introductions were made, the sun came out and made a day quite pleasant though with fewer people attending than we had anticipated. Several exhibitors were not able to take part, but a variety of live entertainment helped to raise our spirits. We thank all who were at Horn Harbor Marina that day.

### ***Heritage Day Poster Contest/Raffle Winners***

As in the past we held a poster contest for the benefit of students in the 5th-8th grade and High School (9-12 grades combined) in the Mathews School System. Participating students had to design a poster depicting their vision/view of “what Mathews County means to you”. A cash award of \$25.00 was given for the first prize poster in each of the lower grades and high school categories. A “best in show” cash prize of \$50.00 was awarded for the best poster in grades 5-8 and for the best poster in the high school category.

First place winners were: Hakeem Blake 12th grade, Lindsey Brown 8th grade, Abbey Sorey 7th grade, Chelsea Jones 6th grade, and Makailia Dawn Stebbins 5t grade.

Best in Show honors went to Hakeem Blake for the second year in a row and to Abbey Sorey.

On Heritage Day a raffle was circulated among those present. Ruffled off were a 5# package of shrimp, a bushel of crabs. and a bushel of oysters. Waterman Kevin Godsey donated the shrimp and crabs. The oysters were a donation from Susan and Tim Hill.

Winners were: Susan Goldstein, 5#s of shrimp; Jim Warren the bushel of crabs; and Edwina Casey the bushel of oysters. Thanks to the donors and all who participated in the raffle. We appreciate your support.

### ***Speaker Meetings Bring Interesting Topics and Guests***

Our winter series of speaker meetings began with Terry Grinnell Hudgins speaking about her Dad, Captain Ed, and his deck boat Peggy of New Point, now the flagship for Mathews Mari-

time Foundation and the future floating ambassador for Mathews County.

As cooler weather came in November we were transported to the Carribean via Susan and Richie Goldstein’s travelog while sailing in the 1500 Rally from Norfolk south to the islands. This “eating meeting” at Kingston Parrish was enjoyed by all who brought a variety of food to share and also served as a time for fellowship.

### ***MMF Elects Three New Directors***

At the November speaker meeting a portion of the time allotted was taken up with the election of three new Directors to the Board of the Foundation. We are pleased to welcome Kerry Hall and Matt Rowe to a three year term on the Board. Ex-President Nancy Lindgren was elected to fill the third vacancy on the Board.

We are pleased to have Nancy continue to be involved with the Foundation as she has made immeasurable contributions in time and effort to the success of our mission to preserve the maritime heritage of the Mathews.

Kerry Hall, a commercial waterman, who has worked behind the scenes for a couple of years brings to the Board his love for Mathews as well as his practical experience and knowledge.

Matt Rowe, while new to Mathews, grew up in the Northern Neck knowing the waters and its inhabitants and feeling a strong sense of stewardship through education and preservation.

He hit the ground running, particularly on Chesapeake Bay Day at Thomas Hunter Middle School, providing a power point and engaging discussion about the richness of the waters surrounding Mathews County. His day job is County Planner in the planning and zoning department of Mathews

### ***PEGGY Endowment Fund***

We are still seeking donations/contributions to the Peggy Endowment Fund. A recent donor matching grant netted \$8,400. May we suggest that you consider a donation to this Fund in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one.

***Model Boat Building 2008***

During the last week in September and the first two weeks of October a group of Maritime Foundation members helped students from Thomas Hunter Middle School build model boats. The boats were scale models of two-man skiffs used in pound net fishing in the days before outboard engines were widely available.



This model building project was one of several projects of after school activities. The concept was proposed and funded by the county Extension Agent, Nancy Roche, to allow the children to stay after normal school hours, participate in projects of their choosing and have a bus available to take them home. Unlike previous boat building activities, twenty students from grades 4 through 8 each built a boat in the six one and a half hour sessions in the art room of the school. There were usually 6 or 7 adults to help the 20 enthusiastic young people at each session.

The Foundation members involved were: Stan Cath, Dennis Crawford, Hank Furniss, Dennis Gryder, Richard Goldstein, Janet Loyd, Dave Machen, Dave Montgomery, Nancy Roche and Thomas Hunter Middle School teacher Elliot Riddick. *Pictured in the photo are: Back Row L-R - Taylor Northrop, Samantha Clevinger, Shelden Akins, Brandon Harrison, Drew Hudgins, Lee Staunton, Jamie Robins, Ricky Rutter; Front Row L-R - Ariel Overgaard, Jordan Bozza, Emily Brady, Mikel Garrett, Jonathan Hogge, Daniel Pugh*

---

**Mathews Maritime Foundation**  
**PO Box 1201**  
**Mathews, VA 23109**  
**804-725-4444**