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Volume 43

November 2004

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Our 40th year of paddling fun

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Program - November 10, 2004

Paul Woodcock and Ron Nunnely will tell us about their trip this spring on the Jack Fork River in Missouri.

Election of New Officers

Discuss the Christmas Party December 4th

Come join us at 7 PM at Red Cross Bldg on 59 near Kirby.

We need your correct email address!

Please send your current email address to Marilyn Peery now.

Email address: mpeery@ev1.net.

The Waterline is the monthly newsletter of the Houston Canoe Club, Inc. The Waterline is made possible by your dues and critically depends on member contributions. Please submit items (please do not embed photos in MS Word documents) to the Editor at the following address.

sherrib57@hotmail.com

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Submit change of address to Marilyn Peery.

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mpeery@ev1.net.

Physical address:

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Houston, TX 77025

Waterline Submissions

For Sale

Yakima Cross Bars

If anyone has contemplated adding 66" cross-bars to their Yakima rack system, I have a deal for you! Gently used 66" set for \$25 if picked up in Galleria area, \$1 more for each round-trip mile of delivery!

Page S. Williams
4229 W. Alabama St
Houston TX 77027-4901
713-622-8533

Klepper Aerius 2-person collapsible kayak with rudder and sail package
Made in Germany, an engineering marvel. Ash-birch frame, rubber and canvas hull. Blue and Gray. 17 feet long, 80 lbs. Great for someone who lives in an apartment without storage room for a hard craft. Breaks down into three bags, plus one for the sails. Assembles in 15-20 minutes. Air sponsons in side panels make it almost impossible to roll over or sink.

One owner, this classic model is old, but still in great shape. Has been in the Atlantic Ocean in Boothbay Harbor, ME, many rivers and lakes in PA and WI, but no whitewater, so it is gently used.

Current models go for \$2,000 or more. (See the Klepper website at www.klepper.com) Only \$400 for this used one. Contact Ron Scott at 281-931-3780 or email

rscott21@houston.rr.com for more information or to see boat in Northwest Houston.

Submit content to the Newsletter Editor,
Sherri Blifford, by the 18th of the month.

Send electronic submissions to
sherrib57@hotmail.com.

Send snail mail submissions to
Sherri Blifford
8233 Kingsbrook Rd., #134
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December 4th: Pre-party Paddle and Party

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Morning: Pre-party Paddle

Mary Zaborowski will lead her annual pre-party paddle down Buffalo Bayou that morning, with a new twist: Put in at The Old Spaghetti Warehouse, paddling down to the new Boat Launch, then down almost to the turning basin and then paddle back. It will be an interesting paddle, then a brief lunch. This way we can look over the new boat launch and improvements on the Bayou that Winnifred Riser and Trudi Smith described to us at our last meeting. Meet at the Old Spaghetti Warehouse around 8:30a.m. Saturday Morning - Dec 4th. Put in and take-out at the same place so we won't need a shuttle. Contact Mary at 713 884 1925 (home) or 832 215 4551 (cell). Or email Mary at coachz66@hotmail.com.

Evening: Party

Our December meeting will be the annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 4th from 6 to 9 PM. The location is the same as the last few years, at

Northwest Fitness and Sports Club

5304 Hollister – between Hwy 290 & Pinemont



Map to Northwest Fitness and Sports Club

Click on image to enlarge.

As part of the decorating theme "A Christmas Campout", we are asking members to bring something they have found on a canoe trip that can be hung on a tree. Let your imagination run wild. A piece of driftwood or a lost item of jewelry will make it interesting and colorful. If you haven't saved such an item, make something. Pine cones, twigs, dried flowers, and small crafted items are some ideas.

The club is providing a ham and turkey, soft drinks, iced tea, and water. We will also provide plates, etc. Please bring a covered dish and drinks to share. No alcoholic refreshments will be provided by the club but you are welcome to bring whatever you want. Also, if you have digital pictures you want to share, contact Donna Grimes. She will be providing her PowerPoint presentations on past river trips.

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The Downtown Crypt

by Louis F. Aulbach

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The Donnellan Grave Vault.

Click on image to enlarge.

You would not ordinarily think of the banks of Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston as an ideal burial spot, but in the 19th century, the south bank near Franklin Avenue entombed the remains of several members of a prominent Houston family.

Timothy Donnellan was a violinist who had immigrated to Texas from Ireland. By 1840, Tim Donnellan had obtained a patented title to 100 acres of land in Harris County, and he owned ten town lots in Houston.

Harris County records show that Timothy Donnellan and Emily de Adendy (recorded as "Emilie De Ende") formalized their marriage on May 11, 1841. Emily was the daughter of the French General de Adendy of New Orleans.

When Tim Donnellan died in 1849, he was buried in a large, red brick vault built in the south bank of Buffalo Bayou at the west end of Franklin Avenue. Like her husband, Emily Donnellan was buried in the vault when she died in 1867. Two sons of Tim Donnellan also were interred in the vault after their deaths from an accidental explosion in 1866.

In 1863, the Confederate ship *Augusta* sank at the foot of Travis Street and was inexplicably abandoned by the Confederate forces. For years afterward, when the bayou was low, the ship would reappear from below the depths and people would recover relics from the sunken ship. In 1866, the two Donnellan boys were exploring the ruins of the sunken vessel in the shallows of Buffalo Bayou when they found a bomb. They were working on the detonator cap to defuse it when the bomb exploded and killed both boys. The remains that could be found were collected and placed in the family vault.

The sunken Confederate ship blew up in 1910 due to unknown causes and sank away into the oblivion of the bayou silt.

One surviving member of the Donnellan family was Thuse Donnellan, a famous Houston artist. Thurston John "Thuse" Donnellan was born in Houston in 1840 to Timothy and Emily Donnellan. He began painting at age eighteen, and Thuse studied art in Chicago and New Orleans. Thuse Donnellan was best known for his portraits of Sam Houston. Three of these portraits of Sam Houston are in Houston, at City Hall, in the Houston Public Library and at Rice University. Donnellan died in Houston in 1908 at age 68. He was not buried in the family vault.

The Donnellan Grave Vault is a large vault made of red brick with a small door in the lower right corner. A fine degree of workmanship is seen in the arched header to doorway which is boarded up with timbers. Located in the bank of Buffalo Bayou under

the Franklin Avenue bridge at Louisiana Street, the vault has survived a number of phases of construction along the bayou, including the rechannelization of the mid-1920's.

Remnants of former bridge pilings stand under the modern bridge and a concrete ramp extends from the water line to the base of the vault to prevent erosion from undermining the vault's integrity.

Although all of the remains of the vault were removed and reburied in Glenwood Cemetery by the Wall and Stabe Undertakers on December 3, 1901, the Donnellan Grave Vault endures as an impressive, but little known, monument to an early Houston family.

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Moonlight Paddle

by Rick Brunson

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Twenty-three paddlers and one young passenger enjoyed a moonlight paddle on Armand Bayou in October. Rick Brunson led this paddle from Bay Area Park in Clear Lake. The paddlers traveled upstream for about an hour, then returned to the park at about 9:30 p.m. Several of the twelve boats were decorated with lighted Jack-o-lanterns or Ghouls. Paddlers were treated to a beautiful, nearly full Halloween moon over glassy, smooth bayou waters and a cool breeze. However, no alligator tricks (or mosquitoes!) were reported.

After the trip, Fraser and Janice, Carl and Linda Kuhnen, Christy Long and family, and Rick, Cordy and Alex Brunson shared s'mores and scary ghost stories!

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Regatta Changes and Rendezvous Again?

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Winifred Riser (Director of Community Relations) and Trudi Smith (Director of PR and Events) told us about the Buffalo Bayou Partnership plans for the 2005 regatta at our last meeting. They are moving the Regatta to October instead of the traditional May event to separate the Anything That Can Float competition from the Regatta. The reasoning is that this should make it easier to get volunteers and more press coverage for both events.

The Regatta will also be held at the new boat launch on the East side of downtown. The new site offers camping and more park space for visitors as well as highlighting the new BBP improvements. The Partnership is interested in possibly reviving the Rendezvous or holding a smaller version of it. HCC is forming a committee to discuss the plans and contribute knowledge and ideas. Anyone interested in being involved in these discussions should contact John Ohrt.

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Classes With Bob Foote & Karen Knight

by Ken Anderson

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We may be able to have classes with them in February and March. These are the possible dates:

2/26 and 2/27

3/5 & 3/6

3/12

They have a web site that you can look at for the sort of instruction they offer and their fees:

www.bobfoote.com.

They may have commitments on the February dates so those dates aren't firm. The March dates look good.

If you are interested in a class on any of these dates please e-mail me a response no later than November 22. In your e-mail please let me know what sort of a class you are interested in and your preferred date(s). I'll sort the replies into a schedule.

This isn't an official HCC event and I'm doing this outside of the club. I will be responsible for paying them so I'll be asking anyone who wants to take a class to pay me before I schedule your name into a class (my mom always told me to "get the money up front" and we know moms never lie). Since the fee schedule is based on how many are in a class I won't know what the cost is until I know how many are going to be in any given class. If you later find you need to cancel out of a class you and/or I will have to find a buyer of your interest.

If you have any questions I'll be available at Wednesday's meeting. See you there.

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From the Stern

by Sherri Blifford

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It's always been a column called "From the Helm" in the newsletter, usually written by the Commodore, but he was busy this month. Even as a "newbie" I knew there isn't a Helm on a canoe, so I don't get it. Dr. Phil says you get it or you don't. I don't. I think we got our signals mixed somewhere back there. If you'll allow me, the Newbie Journal will enter a new era as "From the Stern".

The world looks different from the stern. Responsibility is greater. Paddling can be harder. Your view is obstructed. Your serenity is invaded. In recent months, my adventures have moved me from the bow to the stern frequently, taking novices for a ride. Some of them more are worth mentioning because we can all learn from them. My first was the "wobble-wobble" type. Since this variety usually comes in extra large size, the wobble makes the whole boat wobble. Not content to sit quietly, he has to wobble and squirm, turning to talk. He refuses to fasten his PFD, which is just as well since, after the first mile, you want to replace it with a straight jacket and tie him down. Then comes the Princess. She wears white linen and sandals, doesn't want to get her feet wet, or put forth any effort. She can't help carry the canoe. She can't paddle. Her fingers dangle like bananas but aren't as useful. She sits regally, waiting to be entertained. Heaven help us if a dragon fly comes her way. She gets hysterical, leans one way and another, screams and flaps her arms like a turkey. Forget the straight jacket. You want to tie her to the next low branch and leave her dangling there. But they aren't as bad as the "Expert". He went to camp 40 years ago and knows all about canoes. Of course, from his build, you know he hasn't climbed out his recliner for about 20 years. He insists on paddling ferociously, yet can't find his "other left". Tied with the Expert for most annoying is Chatty Cathy. She wants to talk non-stop. Will she ever come up for air? She turns around to talk. It would be less painful if she actually said something interesting. But, no, she just jabbars. Forget spirituality and communing with nature. Will somebody find the batteries and disconnect her? Please? Then there's the critic. This one is so nasty he makes Rush Limbaugh look sweet and cuddly. He feels compelled to "teach" everyone else by shouting unsolicited advice at them. His buddy, the Exec, is too busy talking on her cell phone to notice the water or the irritated glances from the other paddlers. With tandem partners like these, going solo keeps looking better. Who are your favorites? Send them on to me.

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