



Buon Anno Nuovo anche a lei e alla sua famiglia

The Sycamore Islander

January 2007

Volume 86 No. 1

President's Letter

Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year! The New Year is, of course, a time for making resolutions. I hope that your resolutions include getting involved in Club activities in 2007. The Club's resolution for 2007 should be to reach a decision on the renovation of the caretaker's quarters/clubhouse and complete the project if the members vote to go forward with the project. I will do my best to see that this resolution is carried out.

Speaking of resolutions, resolve to come to the January meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, January 10th beginning at 8:00 PM at the home of Whitney Pinger and Roger Pollack, 3501 Ordway Street, NW, Washington, DC. Ordway Street is one block south of Porter Street, between Wisconsin Avenue and Reno Road (202-686-5443, if you're lost). This is the area near the McLean Gardens complex and the Sidwell Friends School. Items on the agenda include an update on the development of a bid package for the construction project and the formation of an environmental committee as suggested by Larry Heilman. As stewards of the Island, the Club should evaluate its conservation practices such as leaf disposal. For example, can our leaves and dead branches be used to stop the erosion at the Northern end of the Island? Is it consistent with good environmental planning to address the erosion issue? Can we improve other maintenance practices? As always, we will be looking for members who would be willing to help out with this project, especially those with some expertise. (What a surprise!) However, expertise is not required.

You will be receiving your 2007 dues statement early in January. Please keep on the lookout for it and pay your dues promptly. The Club will be on a tight budget in 2007.

See you at the January meeting. If you cannot make the January meeting, you should definitely plan to come in February. The February meeting will be held at the Irish Channel Restaurant & Pub, at 5th and H Streets, Northwest, in the District of Columbia, near the Gallery Place Metro stop, courtesy of members Frank Daspit and Nell Hennessy.

— Jeff Komarow

The Sycamore Islander is a monthly newsletter of the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club. Any materials of interest to the membership and waiting list are welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Norman Metzger, 638 G Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003-2724 or by fax to 202/544-6027. Text and graphics may be sent as email attachments to normanmetzger@verizon.net. Telephone: 202/544-6027 or 202/445-5436 (cell).

The deadline for the February issue is Wednesday, January 31

Provisional Calendar of 2007 Sycamore Events

Event	Date/Time	Contact	Rain Date
Spring Workfest	Sunday, April 1 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Joe Hage, Tryon Wells	Sunday, April 8
18 th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup	Saturday, April 7 9 a.m. to noon.	Renée Dunham	
Annual Orientation	Sunday, April 22 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Tamara and Joe Belden	Sunday, April 29
Canoeing Class at Sycamore Island.	Saturday, May 5, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m	Frank Daspit and Jim Drew	
Annual Wild Flower Walk	Sunday, May 6 10 a.m. to noon.	Jane Winer	
Downriver Canoe Race	Sunday, May 20	Star Mitchell	
Summer Solstice BBQ, River Song Party and Sleepover	Saturday to Sunday, June 23 to 24	Joe Hage, Whitney Pinger	
Fishing Derby	Saturday, August 18 tbd	George and Shelley Malusky	
Sycamore Regatta	Monday, Sept. 3, 1:30 p.m. till dusk.	Sherry Pettie, Vicki Judson, Anne Waid- mann	
Fall Workfest	Sunday, Nov. 4, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Joe Hage, Tryon Wells	Sunday, Nov. 11

Minutes: December 13, 2006

The end-of-year December meeting was hosted by Larry and Anne Heilman. It started with a business meeting, and then caretaker Joe Hage joined us for the holiday celebration that followed.

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m.

Present: Gerald Barton, Joe Belden, Jim Drew, Renée Dunham, Larry Heilman, Jeff Komarow, John Lentz, Joan MacKinney, Norm Metzger, Star Mitchell, Sherry Pettie, John G. Stapko, John F. Stapko, Christopher Thomson, Peggy Thomson, Bernard Veuthey, Tryon Wells, David Winer, Jane Winer.

Minutes: The November minutes were approved without changes.

Membership: Club president Jeff Komarow reported on a request by regular members Bob Henry and his wife Dorothy Barthelmes to take inactive status. Since they are not moving out of the area, which is the reason given in the rules for becoming “inactive”, an exemption allowing their request had to be voted on by the membership. Bob and Dorothy will not be using the Club for two years while their son Michael is in the Peace Corps, and they have not been members long enough to qualify for senior status. After a discussion of the issue, a majority vote approved an exemption allowing Bob Henry and Dorothy Barthelmes to take inactive status.

New members: Continuing with Membership business, Jeff reported that Allison Levine and Bob Palermo resigned their membership. Jeff then presented two new families for Club membership, one of which has two small children – good news to those members who feel that the Island should be enjoyed by more young children!

A motion carried by unanimous consent to accept new members Jon and Jennifer Glaudemans, and Christie and Garth Ross.

Election of Officers: Jeff called for nominations or volunteers from the floor to serve as a Club officer or committee supervisor, but none responded. He then presented the slate of officers listed in the November *Islander*, who were immediately accepted by unanimous consent.

2007 Budget: A motion carried to accept the proposed budget printed in the December *Islander* as the Club’s spending guidelines for 2007.

2007 Dues and Fee: A motion carried to levy an across-the-board five percent increase in all Club dues and fees.

Upcoming meeting sites: Jeff reminded us that the Club has a new tradition of holding the February meeting at Frank Daspit’s pub downtown. Several possibilities for January meeting sites were raised, but none definitively. [Since then, Whitney Pinger and Roger Pollack have volunteered to host the January meeting. Details in President’s letter and last page.]

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m., and those present moved to our hosts’ dining room and kitchen for holiday refreshment and conversation.

--Sherry Pettie, Recording Secretary

From Holly Syrrakos, Archivist

From the Archives
Almost 122 Years Ago

In a document titled, “Sycamore Island Pleasure Club, Organized Apr. 3, 1885” we find the first set of Rules. There are 14 in all—and some may appear familiar.

1. This Club shall be known as the “Sycamore Island Pleasure Club.”
2. That the membership of this Club shall not consist of more than 15 members. [The numeral is crossed out, and 35 is written above.]
3. The officers shall consist of President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The President to preside at all meetings, and in his absence the Secretary.
4. The Club shall meet for the transaction of business the first Monday [crossed out and replaced with Thursday] of each month. The place and hour of the meeting to be determined at the previous meeting by the President or such officer as may be in charge.
5. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all of the proceedings of the Club.
6. The Treasurer shall dispose of the funds in such manner as the Club may direct and be ready at any time to exhibit the sources and amount of receipts and amount of disbursements.
7. The regular contributions of members shall be 25 [crossed out and replaced with 50] cents a month, payable monthly.
8. Any member failing to pay dues or assessments within sixty days [crossed out and replaced with twelve months] shall not be entitled to vote and shall, in addition, be disqualified from receiving any benefits.
9. Any member wishing to dispose of his share of stock, shall give at least one month’s notice, and the Club to purchase at a valuation to be determined on by the President and two (2) members; the member selling to have the privilege of appointing one (1).
10. Any member wishing to use the boats must give at least 24 hours notice.
11. That a committee of 3 members shall have the power of determining whether any member shall use the boats, provided said member’s application is made for the use of the boats on any day except Sunday or legal holidays, and said applicant shall be responsible for the boats while in his possession. The committee to keep the boat in repairs, the cost of repairs to be paid by the Club.
12. That on the first Sunday of each month the boats shall be at the disposal of the members of the Club and their friends, the remaining Sundays for members only.
13. That a quorum of members of this Club shall not consist of less than 6 members.
14. That in case of a vacancy occurring in the membership of the Club it may be filled by the unanimous vote of the members present.

In Touch With Joe....

Happy New Year to everyone. We Island dwellers hope you all had a wonderful holiday. We've had a very nice month down here. The weather has been amazing and every time I think it's going to be the last nice day before winter, we get another warm, sunny day. The Island has been busy with my regular visitors and we did have a couple of holiday gatherings down here as well. It's been fun decorating the clubhouse and the ferry with wreaths and lights, having aromatic fires in the wood stove and singing carols around the pool table. We decided not to bring a Christmas tree down here this year and instead we decorated our ficus tree and put that in the window. Looks pretty good.

I fixed the baseboard heaters in my bathroom. They haven't been working since the first of the cold weather hit and we've been getting by with just a space heater in there. I wasn't confident that I could fix the problem and I was on the verge of calling in an electrician. I had to do something because I knew that the space heater would not be sufficient to keep the pipes from freezing in this under-insulated room. I shut off the power, took apart the switch, and found the problem: A disconnected wire. With a little trouble I was able to reconnect the wire and restore the heat to the bathroom.

I've seen a few wintering birds like the red-necked grebes and the common mergansers. The red-shouldered hawk is always around and I saw a merlin at the top of a dead sycamore. The eagles have been spotted near their nest and I caught another glimpse of our nocturnal friend, the flying squirrel. Birds that are strangely absent are the seagulls that are usually massed out in the middle of the river at this time of year; but not so this year. Maybe it's the warm weather that has them on a different schedule. Speaking of the warm weather, I'm afraid that the bluebells might start emerging here soon. We already have a number of green shoots coming up and the silver maples are starting to bud as well. Can you say climate change?

Tryon and I noticed as we were driving on the towpath to deliver a huge roll of roofing rubber down to the Island that the Lock Six house is now vacant. I guess that young couple and their baby moved out and I've lost my closest neighbor on the canal.

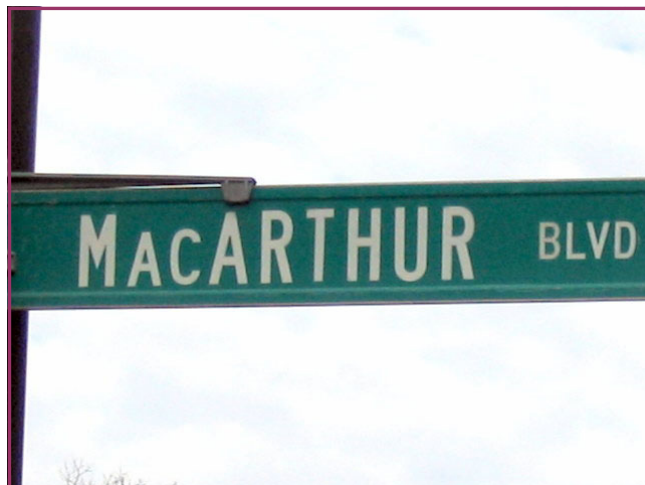
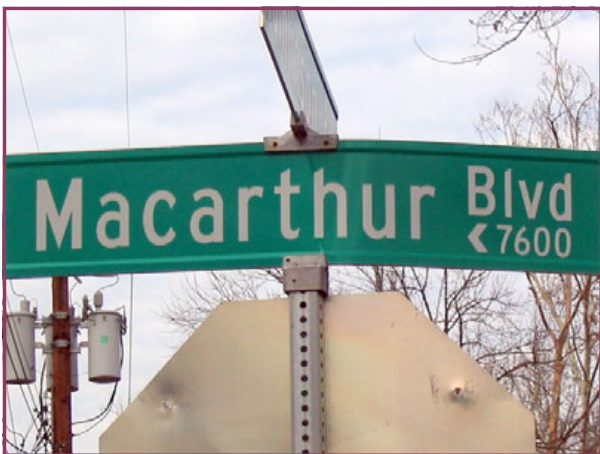
Also from Joe...

This obituary was sent to me by Claire Collins Conner, the widow of Donald Conner. She said that she met her husband on Sycamore Island where her father was a member back in the late twenties and early thirties.

Donald Lawrence Conner, 99, of Midland, Michigan, died at his residence on Friday Dec. 15, 2006. Born in Washington D.C., he was the son of William Wallace Conner and Marie Louise Stephenson Conner. He married Claire Hayden Collins on November 24, 1934, in Washington DC. He was truly a renaissance man. In his youth he excelled at sports. He was a national East Coast champion canoe racer, ran track where his events were the hurdles and high jump, and played semi-pro baseball. He was proud of canoeing the entire length of the Potomac River. He belonged to the Sycamore Island Club.

Back to Conduit Road^x?

Photos by Joe Hage



^xFormer name of M_____r Blvd, since it was where the conduit for the Washington Aqueduct was put down in the 19th century. The name change has not gone smoothly.

Saturday Relief Caretakers January — March

January		
6	11-dark	Mary Ann Stein
13	11-dark	Nancy Ehrlich (waitlister)
20	11-dark	
27	11-dark	
February		
3		
10	11-dark	
17	11-dark	Star Mitchell
24	11-dark	Mark Fredrichs (waitlister)
March		
3		
10		
17		
24		
31		

****** Caretaker Volunteers ******

To volunteer, contact Maxine Hattery at 202-362-1361 or hattery@aol.com

Large Parties

Star Mitchell is hosting a potluck play pool party with an estimated 35 guests on Feb. 17 from 11-dark.

A large party application form may be printed from the Club's web page at <http://www.sycamoreisland.org/systems.htm>
 To request a form through the mail, call the Supervisor of Parties, John Noble
 e-mail: johnnoble@comcast.net, phone: 301-448-8562



The Sycamore Islander

6613 80th Place
Cabin John, MD 20818
ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BETHESDA, MD 20817
PERMIT NO. 1172

FIRST CLASS MAIL

<http://www.sycamoreisland.org>

To view this month's Sycamore Islander on the Internet, go
to:

<http://www.sycamoreisland.org/rutsch/islander.htm>

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Upcoming Sycamore Events

January Meeting—Wednesday, January 10, 8:00 p.m. At the home of Whitney Pinger and Roger Pollack, 3501 Ordway Street, NW, Washington, DC. Ordway Street is one block south of Porter Street, between Wisconsin Avenue and Reno Road (202-686-5443 if you're lost). This is the area near the McLean Gardens complex and the Sidwell Friends School.

February Meeting — Wednesday, February 14, 8:00 p.m. At the Irish Channel Restaurant & Pub, 500 H St. NW, Washington DC, 202-216-0046.

N.B. General Meetings are held at 8 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

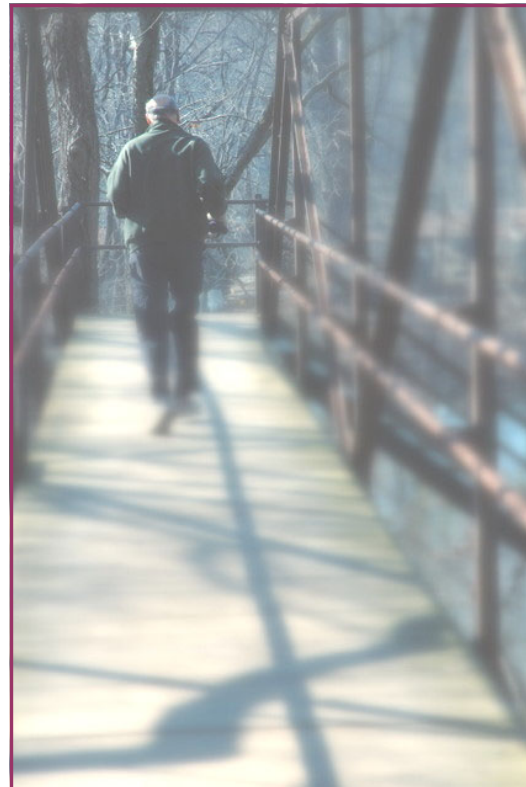


Photo by Norman Metzger