

GRAMPA'S BROWNS CORNER

BLAB

5-20-20

Birthday Edition

WHOSE BIRTHDAY?

Why, mine of course.

Me, Grampa, The Old Guy

Today's issue is easy-peasy. Why? Because I wrote most of it a long time ago.

Not without difficulty I retrieved a copy of a letter I wrote to Gigi last year. With even more difficulty I figured out how to convert file formats and insert it here, beginning next page.

The Campers have seen this letter before outlining in painful detail the family history with canoes and my reasons for seeking an OSAGIAN CARGO CANOE. I will not repeat it all again.

The main point of this BLAB is to report that in keeping with long standing tradition, Carol has given me a really great birthday present, the canoe I've been seeking for years. On my 40th birthday she gave me The Load Boat, one of the last ten Grumman 18 footers ever made. Now, precisely 33 years later, she has given me an OSAGIAN 17 MISSOURIAN CARGO CANOE. Like the Load Boat, it is a discontinued model. (You can buy a new one in Denmark for only 15,999 DK.)

I'll let you read the back story first.

Turn the page.....

DEAR GIGI,

I TOLD YOU I WOULD WRITE ANOTHER LETTER ABOUT CANOES. THIS IS IT.

YOU HAVE PROBABLY SEEN "GRAMPA'S SAILING STORIES", A ~~THE~~ LONG PIECE OF WRITING ABOUT SOME OF MY SAILING ADVENTURES. IF YOU HAVE NOT SEEN IT, AND IF YOUR DAD DOES NOT HAVE A COPY, I WILL SEND YOU ONE. THAT STORY HAS BEEN IN THE WORKS FOR YEARS AND IS NOT YET FINISHED. THE BEGINNING OF THAT STORY TALKS ABOUT SOME OF THE BOATS I BUILT WHEN I WAS YOUNG. I MAY HAVE MISSED ONE OR TWO. NO MATTER, THIS IS ONLY ABOUT CANOES. THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.

MY DAD TOOK THE FAMILY CANOEING A COUPLE OF TIMES WHEN I WAS A KID. WE LIVED IN NEW JERSEY AND HE WOULD TAKE US DOWN TO MOUNT HOLLY TO "HACK'S CANOE RETREAT" ON RANCOAS CREEK. I KNOW I WAS A BIT OF A NUISANCE BECAUSE I ALWAYS TRIED TO GRAB THE FURTHER WE WOULD SEE.

THE NEXT TIME I WENT CANOEING WAS IN COLLEGE WITH A GROUP FROM A FRATERNITY.

When your Dad was about six years old he and Chris went canoeing with me at a lake retreat of my friend Jim Macomber, then I did not go out in a canoe again until for another six or seven years.

Probably in the summer of 1986 I borrowed a canoe from my friend Steve Zdanowski (generally called Steve Z) and took it up to New Hampshire with Carol and Jennifer and Samantha. We all enjoyed the canoe outings there and that led to buying our first canoe, a 17-foot Grumman Eagle.

We had so much fun with that, that we bought another 17-foot Grumman Eagle because especially when Chris and Tim were with us, one canoe did not have enough room.

At first we were just poking around in lakes and ponds near home. Then we discovered white water canoeing on the Delaware River. Nana gave me a neat birthday present for my 40th birthday, an 18-foot Grumman whitewater model which Chris & Tim called The Load Boat.

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SOMEWHERE IN THERE I ALSO BOUGHT A SMALL GRUMMAN 13-FOOT CANOE WHICH WE NAMED "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS" BECAUSE IT WAS FOR JENNIFER AND SAMANTHA. THEN WE GAVE YOUR DAD A GRUMMAN 17-FOOTER WHICH HE CALLED HANDSOME DAN, AFTER THE PAW MASLOT. OF COURSE YOU KNOW THAT BOAT.

AT THAT TIME WE HAD A BIG, LONG WHITE VAN WITH HEAVY DUTY ROOF RACKS AND WE DID SOMETIMES TAKE ALL FIVE CANOES ON OUTINGS. WE EXPANDED OUR TRIPS TO THE Housatonic RIVER IN CONNECTICUT.

THE BOYS, CHRIS AND TIM, NAMED THE TWO 17-FOOT GRUMMAN EAGLE CANOES "PROBE 1" AND "PROBE 2" BECAUSE WE WOULD SEND THEM DOWN THROUGH A MORE CHALLENGING BIT OF RAPIDS TO CHECK OUT THE PASSAGE BEFORE COMING THROUGH WITH THE LOAD BOAT, HANDSOME DAN, OR THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS.

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE WE MET FRIEND NICK STAMATIS, FATHER OF JENNIFER AND SAMANTHA'S CLASSMATES KATRIN AND YONA, EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN THE 17-FOOT EAGLES AND I MADE A TRADE, GIVING HIM ONE OF THE PROBES IN EXCHANGE

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FOR A NICE GRAMMAR 15 FOOTER WHICH I NAMED "NICK'S NO NAME" IN MEMORY OF A FAVORITE RESTAURANT FROM MY COLLEGE DAYS IN CAMBRIDGE. WE STILL HAVE IT AT BROWN'S CORNER.

DURING YOUR DAD'S COLLEGE YEARS WE WERE DOING OCCASIONAL THREE-DAY CANOE CAMPING TRIPS ON THE DELAWARE RIVER. I ALWAYS CARRIED ALL THE FOOD AND TENTS IN THE LARGEST BOAT BECAUSE I FIGURED IT WAS THE LEAST LIKELY TO TIP OVER. THE SOLOCK KIDS, COUSINS RESPECT, MICHAEL, AND DAVID, WERE ALONG FOR ONE OF THOSE TRIPS AND I WAS VERY GLAD TO HAVE THEM ALONG TO HELP WITH SUPPLYING AND SETTING UP CAMPS.

NOW A PIECE OF THE CANOE STORY THAT I PARTICULARLY LIKE IS ABOUT SAMANTHA, WHO IN HER JUNIOR YEAR AT U. PENN APPLIED FOR A JOB AS A CAMP COUNSELOR AT A SUMMER CAMP IN NEW HAMPSHIRE SERVING "SPECIAL NEEDS" CHILDREN. THE RECRUITING DIRECTOR WAS IMPRESSED BY HER CANOEING SKILLS AND HE HIRED HER FOR A POSITION WHICH MADE HER CANOE INSTRUCTOR. HE ALSO SAW OTHER SKILLS AND MERITS OF COURSE AND HIS NAME WAS MARK SWENBY. HE OF COURSE ENDED UP MARRYING HER. VERY LOOL.

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WELL SOME YEARS HAVE GONE BY AND FOR THE MOST PART THE CANOES HAVE GONE UNBOD. I SOLD THE OTHER PROBE TO SOMEBODY WHO WAS BUYING SOME OTHER BOAT I POSTED ON CRAIGSLIST. TIM TOOK HANDSOME DAN HOME TO CONNECTICUT, THAT LEFT US WITH ONLY 3 CANOES; THE LOAD BOAT, NICK'S NO NAME, AND THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS.

LAST SUMMER WHEN WE VISITED THE CONNECTICUT ~~RANDALLS~~ RANDALLS WE WENT OUT WITH YOU AND TODDY IN HANDSOME DAN, THE FIRST TIME NANA AND I HAD BEEN IN A CANOE FOR SEVERAL YEARS. YOUR DAD TOLD ME THAT HE AND MOMMY FOUND THAT CANOE TO BE QUITE TIPPY AND THEY WERE NOT COMFORTABLE TAKING YOU AND TODDY OUT IN IT.

I DID A LITTLE RESEARCH ON LINE AND FOUND THAT THERE IS (OR WAS) A CANOE BY OSAGIAN IN LEBANON, MISSOURI, CALLED THE 18-FOOT EXPEDITION MODEL AND IT IS ABOUT SIX INCHES WIDER THAN THE GRUMMAN CANOES. AS A TRAINED NAVAL ARCHITECT I COULD CALCULATE THAT THAT BOAT WOULD BE 160% AS STABLE AS A GRUMMAN STANDARD CANOE. A LOT LESS TIPPY!

I TOLD YOUR DAD ABOUT THE OSAGIAN 18 AND I ALSO TALKED TO NANA. SHE TOLD ME THAT IT WAS OK WITH HER IF I WANTED TO GET ONE. I HELD OFF A WHILE BECAUSE THE PRICE WAS ABOUT \$1500 PLUS SHIPPING - ANOTHER \$400. I WANTED TO WAIT UNTIL I HAD PLENTY OF MONEY IN MY BANK ACCOUNT. BUT THEN I DECIDED NOT TO DO IT BECAUSE IT WOULD PROBABLY BE JUST ANOTHER OF GRAMPA'S SILLY IDEAS AND PROBABLY NOT USED MUCH.

I BROUGHT "THE LOLO BOAT" TO JENNIFER AND CHIN'S HOUSE IN YARDCUT, PA. TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE CANOE OUTINGS WITH ZOE AND EUE. THEN I ALSO BROUGHT "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS," THE LITTLE 13 FOOTER IN CASE MORE PEOPLE WANTED TO GO CANOEING. THAT LEFT ONLY ONE CANOE AT BROWN'S CORNER, THE 15-FOOT "NICK'S NO NAME".

SOMETIME THIS SUMMER AFTER PICKING UP ZOE AND EUE FROM THEIR DAY CAMP, WE ALL DECIDED TO GO CANOEING. WELL, ACTUALLY ONLY ZOE AND I DID, SO WE LOADED UP "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS" ON TOP OF THE WHITE CAR. EUE AND NANA WERE GOING TO GO TO THE PLAYGROUND.

WE HAD A LAST-MINUTE CHANGE OF PLANS WHEN EUE DECIDED SHE WANTED TO GO OUT

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IN THE CANOE TOO. WE WERE ALREADY AT A PARKING AREA BY THE CANAL IN YARLEY.

SO NANA AND I PLUS ZOE AND EUE ALL PILED INTO "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS". WE WERE WITHIN THE RATED LOAD LIMIT, JUST BARBLY.

WE HAD A SHORT CANOE TRIP. ZOE AND EUE WERE WORRIED ABOUT TIPPING OVER BUT HAD A LOT OF FUN AND SAID THEY WANT TO DO IT AGAIN.

I DECIDED THAT IF ZOE AND EUE WANT TO DO MORE CANOEING, I ~~SHOULD~~ SHOULD GO AHEAD AND GET THE BIG OSAGIAN 18 WHICH WILL BE VERY STABLE - NOT TIPPY. BUT GUESS WHAT! I FOUND OUT THAT THE OSAGIAN CANOE COMPANY HAS GONE OUT OF BUSINESS AND THEY AREN'T MAKING THEM ANY MORE.

THAT LED TO A NATIONWIDE SEARCH AND REVIEW OF CANOE HISTORY. I KNEW THAT GRUMMAN HAD ONCE MADE A 19-FOOT MODEL WHICH WAS WIDER THAN THE LOAD BOAT AND THEREFORE MORE STABLE. I HOPED THAT IF I COULD NOT FIND AN OSAGIAN 18 I MIGHT FIND A GRUMMAN 18 FOR SALE. INTERESTINGLY, I HAVE LEARNED THAT MOST OF THOSE WIDE CANOES ARE USED BY MOOSE HUNTERS IN

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THE FROZEN NORTHLANDS. THEY CAN CARRY OVER A HALF A TON OF CARGO!

SOME TIME IN AUGUST I SAW AN ADVERTISEMENT ON CRAIGSLIST FOR AN OSAGIAN 17 IN NEW JERSEY. I HAD THE GUY CHECK THE WIDTH AND IT WAS ABOUT 2 INCHES WIDER THAN THE GRUMMANS, MORE STABLE! SO I WENT TO LOOK AT IT. TURNS OUT IT WAS DEFINITELY 2 1/2 INCHES WIDER, BUT IT WAS ONLY 15 FEET LONG. SO INSTEAD OF GIVING THE GUY \$350 HE WANTED, I OFFERED \$300 AND HE ACCEPTED.

I TALKED TO JENNIFER AND SAMANTHA ABOUT THEIR CANOE, "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS" AND THEY AGREED I COULD TRADE IT FOR THE NEW (OLD) OSAGIAN 15 WHICH IS A LOT MORE STABLE. SO I SOLD "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS" FOR \$400. I HAVE ALREADY PAINTED THE NEW NAME ON THE OSAGIAN 15, "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS 2.0".

NOW YOU HAD A PART WITH YOUR DAD IN MY BUYING A GRUMMAN SQUARE BACK "SPORT BOAT" WHICH IS A GRUMMAN 19 WITH THE BACK CUT OFF. IT IS A BIT WIDER THAN EVEN THE OSAGIAN 18 EXPEDITION MODEL. VERY POPULAR WITH MOOSE HUNTERS!

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SO THE FLEET NOW CONSISTS OF:

- "THE LOAD BOAT" - ONE OF THE LAST TEN GRUMMAN 18s EVER MADE.
- "THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS 2.0" - AN OSAGIAN 15, 2 1/2" WIDER AND 3" DEEPER THAN THE GRUMMAN
- " ? ? " - THE GRUMMAN SPORT BOAT, A CHOPPED-OFF GRUMMAN 19 WITH OARS AND A MOTOR, AND A TRAILER. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO TESTING IT OUT. ANY IDEA WHAT I SHOULD NAME IT?
- "NICK'S NO NAME" - A NICE GRUMMAN 15. I'M PLANNING TO SELL IT IN THE SPRING, PROBABLY DON'T NEED FOUR CANDLES HERE.

I HAVE SKIPPED OVER A LOT OF STORIES THAT WENT NOWHERE - VARIOUS CANDLES I WAS INTERESTED IN BUT DID NOT OR COULD NOT BUY

I THINK I WILL END RIGHT HERE BEFORE I GET TO THE END OF THIS PAGE. I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT YOU WILL NOT BE COMING TO BROWN'S CORNER NEXT WEEKEND. NANA AND I WILL LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ANOTHER TIME.

LOVE, GRAMPA.

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Here are some background pictures:

Actually I did not take this picture of Old Man Grumman demonstrating his unsinkable canoe. I include it here just to reassure worried mommies. Due to blocks of styrofoam built into bow and stern, you can't sink these things.



This comparison picture is outdated of course because I sold **THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS**. I bought a new (old) Osagian 15, now badged as **THE INCREDIBLE SISTERS 2.0**



(Old outdated picture)



The Incredible Sisters 2.0 ,
Osagian 15
bought in NJ
last Octoer:

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This picture lets you see the higher sides on the Osagian 15, rear, compared to Grumman 15, front. The Osagian 15 is also 1-1/2 inches wider and thus more stable. I'm sure you all recall from Naval Architecture 1.01 that stability increases with the cube of the water plane width, thus $(37.5 / 36)$ raised to the third power reveals that the Osagian 15 is 13% more stable.



The new **Bob's Brownwater Boating** (tm) fleet:



Left to right, the Grumman Sport Boat 15 (cargo canoe) , the Osagian 17 Missourian Cargo, The Load Boat (still in great shape after 33 years), and Nick's No Name (Grumman 15). Naval architects agree that

You might rightly ask why i need all these canoes. Infact, I don't. I'm planning to sell the Sport Boat and Nick's No Name as soon as it stops raining.

Here is another view. Convenient to have a tree house close by for photography.



You can really see the difference between the fat boats and the traditional canoes. The Osagian 17 Missouriian Cargo and the Grumman Sportboat can both carry about a half ton of cargo and were sold mostly to fishermen and moose hunters. really. The guys who own them love them and that's why it is so hard to find them for sale.

The new canoe has a 5 hp Tohatsu motor, a Japanese made outboard with a very good reputation. Runs very quietly.

In the interest of getting to press and getting some work done, I'll stop here.



Contemplated near-future BLABS include

- ART issue recognizing our dear friend John Bisignano
- Tools 'n Tractors issue, important to those who know and love such
- Gardens issue. Lots of cool stuff happening here.

MEANWHILE, STAY HEALTHY, Y'ALL.

still proud of
BARACK