

Greenport - Long Island's Newest Cruising Destination

by Kerri Glynn

For more than 30 years, I have had a love affair with Greenport. That's why I and my Captain, a very understanding man, once brought, not one, but two houses here (let's not go there). I loved the maritime history, the charm of the older homes, the sense of safety and the laid back attitude of its villagers. Like many people, we believed this sleepy village was just about to reinvent itself. Time and time again we believed that - until we gave up caring and just determined to love the village as it was. When we sold our houses (but we won't go there), I stayed in B and B's. I even took the train from Ronkonkoma once and walked into town. We used to trailer our Boston Whaler and enjoyed the incredible opportunities for boating in the Peconic Bay - visiting Shelter Island and Sag Harbor - even taking off for Block Island one day (we won't go there).



the Atlantic and even as far as the Pacific. From the 1800's through World War II, over 550 ships were built and launched from here. In 1844, the Long Island Railroad



established a link to Greenport, with steam-sided ferries transporting passengers to Stonington, Connecticut where they made connections to Boston trains.

Fishing and oystering were important industries in the mid-1800's, but their importance was eclipsed (at least in my mind) by the rum-running that went on during Prohibition. Greenport's protected harbor and its excellent docking facilities and shipyards provided all the services these colorful fellows needed to supply Americans with what they needed.

During WW II, the "Picket Patrol" (or the "Hooligan Navy" as the locals called it) manned by local wooden sailboats, patrolled offshore to look for German submarines. One of these boats sits

But today the village has taken off - and luckily for all the boaters out there who have yet to enjoy the natural beauty of this place and the charm of the vil-

lage - Greenport has a new marina with 60 floating slips. You may remember it as Mitchell's Marina, but today it is owned by the village itself and sits proudly in front of the carousel.

Greenport has a rich maritime history. Settled in 1640, it became a major whaling port in the early 18th century - with 24 whaling ships making a total of 103 voyages throughout



Claudio's Restaurant established in 1870



Main Street in Greenport, NY

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in Stirling Harbor today, and she seems to be doing just fine. Greenport also has a connection to the America's Cup. Captain George Monsell sailed to victory in the *Enterprise* (1930), the *Rainbow* (1934) and the *Ranger* (1937).

Just walking down Greenport's streets, you feel as though you've been transported to an earlier age (despite the new arrival of a Starbucks). Certainly, one of Long Island's earliest working harbors has become its newest destination.

Having once walked down the entire length of Stonington's main street looking in vain for a grocery store (even a 7-11), I am delighted that the IGA supermarket is not only withing walking distance but also DELIVERS! And if your boat is having mechanical difficulty (and whose isn't?), Preston Chandelry and White's Hardware Store is in sight of the dock. (There was that day we dinghied from Marina Cay to Virgin Gorda looking for an open chandelry, but we won't go there). Also withing walking distance are more than two dozen restaurants - with everything from take-out burgers and ribs to white tablecloth service. And you won't want to leave town without sampling one of Bruce's muffins and some candy from the Fudge factory.

Fudge gets me thinking about children. What a paradise for families cruising with kids who ar suffering from cabin fever, not only can they ride the antique carousel from only one dollar (unless they grab the brass ring), but they can have a ride on a real miniature



Greenport Harbor on the North Fork.

train on Sundays and that's free (with donations going to the local hospital). The railroad museum is a short walk away as well as an ice cream parlor. And if they can't leave their skateboards behind, well they can't skate on the dock, but they can enjoy a world-class skate park just a mile away.

If it's family time you're looking for (if you haven't had enough of the being stuck together on a boat) - then take a harbor cruise on the electric launch *Glory* or go to the movies. Better still, drop the kids off at the movies and you browse through some of greenport's new art galleries. There are even free concerts and Shakespeare at the Waterfron Park - and you've got the best seats in the house. If you're still on the water during the last weekend in September, come to the Maritime Festival, which features ship tours, craft booths, chowder contests, whaleboat and kayak races and best of all (for the kids and the kid in us) - real pirates roam-

ing the streets!

I mean, what doesn't Greenport have for all the members of your family? Even the dog gets a run with his own fire hydrant right at the marina. That's obviously enough reason to come into twon, but even if you don't have a dog, there are services to offer you: deep water slips to 175 feet, free 30 amp service (with 50 and 100 available), free on-site pump out, complimentary television and wireless internet access, ince machine (always a must for me), and brand-new restrooms and showers. The price is \$3.50 a foot (with special weekday rates) and it's worth it.

So if you're tired of the same old places, if you've always wanted to spend a few days in this great little village - now's the time. Heck, if they'd had this marina years ago, we wouldn't have needed to but two houses here (but we won't go there, but we will go to Greenport).



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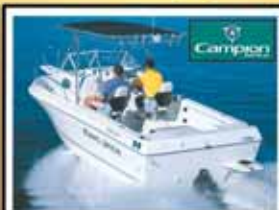
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