

# **By Hook or By Crook: A History of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater**

## **Chapter 8: Growing Pains**

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[Note: this paper is one chapter of an honors thesis which focuses on the development of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater and the organization of the same name between the mid-1960's and the early 1980's]

Internal debates over the focus of the Clearwater organization again came to a head in 1977 and 1978. During that time, several attempts were made to more clearly define the organization's role in the environmental movement, and in each case controversy erupted. These cases included proposals to align the group with advocates of organized labor or civil rights. The largest issue in question was whether or not the Clearwater should sail to Seabrook, New Hampshire to take part in large protests against the construction of a nuclear power plant. At the heart of each of these controversies was the question of whether the Clearwater organization should identify with the more mainstream elements of the American environmental movement or the more radical elements, as well as whether its focus should be strictly regional or more broad. In the minds of many Clearwater members, the debate went to the core of the organization's mission, and each issue prompted passionate arguments on all sides of the issue. Because these debates came about in quick succession and lasted for several months, it seemed to many that too much effort was spent arguing and a bad impression was left in the minds of many casual participants in the organization. The Seabrook controversy and others hurt the organization in terms of its reputation for uniting people with mixed interests, but at the same time the organization was strengthened by establishing a more clear focus and mission as it approached the end of the Clearwater's first decade on the Hudson River.

When the initial proposal for the Clearwater

to sail to Seabrook first arose, the Clearwater organization was just emerging from a smaller but similar controversy over its mission. As a result, many members were already displeased with the direction the organization was trying to move toward. The smaller debate revolved around the possibility of a formal alliance between environmental organizations like Clearwater and organized labor, with particular focus on Brown Lung disease. An article titled "Can We Find a Common Bond?" in the July, 1977 North River Navigator wrote that the Clearwater office was taking "a first step toward establishing on-going working relationships between public-interest organizations and labor unions in New York State."<sup>1</sup> The proposal sparked a series of letters to the organization that were published in the monthly newsletter and reflected the deep differences of opinion within the membership that later manifested themselves again during the debates over Seabrook.

Some members expressed opposition, saying "I cannot believe that the environmental problems of the Hudson River are so close to solution that you have to go this far afield to find issues to deal with,"<sup>2</sup> and others simply stated "you lost my interest when you took on other good causes than the main one - the specific one of this organization. Just take my name off your list."<sup>3</sup> Supporters of the proposal described it as "sorely needed," and explained that "the system has always attempted to separate blacks from whites, men from women, workers from students, and so on down the line. Clearwater's work can only help in the ongoing struggle of all, to act together in our own best interests."<sup>4</sup> For many, there was a need for the Clearwater organization to become acquainted with larger environmental issues than the Hudson River. For others, such endeavors were a betrayal of the mission that they had signed on to support. Despite the existence of support for the proposal, the plan

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<sup>1</sup> "Can We Find a Common Bond?" North River Navigator (July 1977): 1;3-4. Print. Maryellen Healy Papers (MHP), Pine Bush, NY.

<sup>2</sup> Cummins, Robert J. Letter to the Editor. Oct. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>3</sup> Fisher, Walter Taylor. Letter to the Editor. Dec. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>4</sup> Gidaly, Glen. Letter to the Editor. Oct. 1977. North River Navigator. Pg. 2. Print. MHP (Pine Bush, NY)

was never pursued. It fell out of the organization's focus as new and larger controversies began. As the focus of the organization almost immediately shifted to other debates, the dispute over an alliance with labor nevertheless indicated that many members were reconsidering their allegiance to Clearwater at the time as it struggled to find its own focus.

One of the debates that came to overshadow Clearwater's attention to Brown Lung Disease and organized labor was a proposed shift to give more focus on race relations and environmental justice. Spearheaded by an original Clearwater crew member and noted civil rights activist Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick, a group of Clearwater members proposed a plan to alter the organization's mission. At the 1977 Clearwater Annual Meeting, a workshop was held titled "Racism & The Environment." During the workshop, a set of recommendations was approved calling for the Clearwater to board to reinterpret its definition of the environment to include "the right to a decent, well paid creative job for all persons from the teen years up; the right to housing in one's place of choice; the right to live free of fear from death, especially at the hands of the police; the right to a non-racist education, especially in the areas of history and culture, so that education will be complete and not partial."<sup>5</sup> The proposed plan would have meant a radical shift in Clearwater's approach to environmentalism.

The organization had up until then been, according to the definition of Robert J. Brulle, a product of the environmental reform movement. Its perception of environmentalism was that "human health is linked to ecosystem conditions. To maintain a healthy society, ecologically responsible actions are necessary." Reform environmentalism differentiated Clearwater from the other notable environmental organizations on the Hudson such as Scenic Hudson, which focused on preservation and adhered to the theory that "nature is an important component in supporting both the physical and spiritual life of humans. Hence, the continued existence of wilderness and wildlife, undisturbed by human action, is necessary." Instead of embracing Clearwater's method of reform environmentalism,

Kirkpatrick sought to create a paradigm of environmental justice, under the premise that "ecological problems occur because of the structure of society and the imperatives this structure of society and the imperatives of this structure creates for the continued exploitation of nature. Hence, the resolution of environmental problems requires fundamental social change."<sup>6</sup> The proposal prompted letters of support and opposition, and showed the existence of both a desire to refocus the attentions of the organization onto more broad environmental issues such as the environmental implications of racism and poverty, but also highlighted the widespread unwillingness within the organization to undergo such a deep shift. Similar to the debate over Clearwater and labor unions, the issue of confronting racism from an environmental perspective exposed tensions in the organization over its intended purposes. No action to pursue the workshop's recommendation was taken however, which is a sign that racism and environmental justice were not issues against which the organization's general membership felt the sloop Clearwater should sail and fight. Instead, it would remain largely white and middle class.

The debates over labor unions and racism were both overshadowed by more intense fights within Clearwater. The largest debate to occur within Clearwater in 1977 and 1978 was the debate over anti-nuclear protests at Seabrook, New Hampshire. Environmental actions at Seabrook had been closely followed in the national media for months before any mention of it appeared in relation to the Clearwater. In spring, 1977, thousands of activists organized by a group called the Clamshell Alliance engaged in nonviolent acts of civil disobedience at the proposed construction site, which was situated along the Atlantic coast between Boston and Portsmouth. In May, one thousand four hundred activists were arrested. For weeks the protests remained in the news. The nationwide media coverage drew more support for the Clamshell Alliance, which vowed to continue its actions.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Brulle, Robert J. *Agency, Democracy, and Nature: The U.S. Environmental Movement from a Critical Theory Perspective*. p. 98. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2000. Print.

<sup>7</sup> Lynch, Mitchell C. "Clamshell Alliance Gains Strength Following Seabrook." *Wall Street Journal* [New York, NY] 6 June 1977: 16. Print.

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<sup>5</sup> "Racism & The Environment: Workshop Report." *North River Navigator* IX (Jan/Feb. 1978): 7. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

In October, 1977, four Clearwater members, including Clearwater captain Peter Willcox, published an open letter in *The North River Navigator* to members of the organization calling for immediate action regarding the Clamshell Alliance and its continuing activities at Seabrook. The letter proposed sailing the Clearwater to New Hampshire in June, 1978 to coincide with another large scale occupation of the power plant construction site. The letter stated that "with the Clearwater visible offshore and perhaps a few people with celebrated names to present some music, the possibility of drawing the number of people necessary to toll the death knell of the plans for the nuclear power plant at Seabrook might well be in reach!"<sup>8</sup> With the possibility of winning the most public battle over nuclear power in the country, the authors of the letter hoped that a Clamshell Alliance victory would reverberate back to the Hudson River and affect the status of nuclear power there, as well as across the United States. For that reason, and because the Clearwater would increase public awareness of the Seabrook protests, they felt that the organization should make the sacrifices necessary to ensure their participation in the June occupation. It was also suggested in a Clearwater office memo that the sloop might be used not only as a visible symbol for the environment, but also as a physical obstacle to the power plant's construction as part of a blockade to prevent construction materials from entering the site from the sea. For Clearwater to participate in the blockade and occupation would mark a shift in tactics for the organization. At no point had they chosen to violate laws or civil disobedience. To do so would mark a shift away from mainstream environmentalism and toward more radical tactics.

The Clearwater organization was already openly against nuclear energy when the Seabrook proposal was made. It had opposed the expansion of the existing Indian Point nuclear plant in Buchanan, New York, and at the same time as the Seabrook protests began, was working to prevent the construction of new nuclear plants at Red Hook, Cementon, and Esopus; all towns along the Hudson River. With the threat having the number of nuclear plants in the Hudson Valley quadrupling, opposition

to nuclear power was a high priority.

In addition to their anti-nuclear work, Clearwater's approach to environmental action was also similar to the Clamshell Alliance. Its Polluter Reports, People's Pipewatch, Riverkeeper, and education programs were based on direct action, as opposed to other Hudson River environmental groups that focused on litigation such as Scenic Hudson and the Hudson River Fishermen's Association. Despite its connections to the Clamshell Alliance in terms of its aims and methods however, there were several reasons why participation in the Seabrook protests could hurt the organization, and opposition to the plan appeared almost immediately.

Opponents of sailing the Clearwater to Seabrook were a minority within the organization but ranged from rank and file members to members of the Board of Directors. In their statements and letters they highlighted the myriad reasons why the boat should not go. The most basic reason was that the organization could scarcely afford such a trip. The voyage would take approximately one month during a time when the Clearwater would be busiest doing its school and summer camp sailing programs. At the time school programs made up more than one fifth of Clearwater's income each year, and the organization was heavily in debt. In 1977 there was a fundraising campaign to pay off outstanding debts and each month the progress was reported to the membership in the newsletter. In June the total debt reported was \$42,450.<sup>9</sup> By October, the same month that the Seabrook proposal was made, the debt was still high at \$23,040.<sup>10</sup> Worse yet, the Treasury Report at the 1977 Clearwater annual meeting showed a budget shortfall of nearly \$8,000 for the year, and it was reported that a \$15,000 loan had to be taken out to be able to pay for winter maintenance for the sloop.<sup>11</sup> The staff and membership were acutely aware of the fiscal position of the organization, and the notion that sailing to New Hampshire was wiser than doing sails locally and earning some

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<sup>9</sup> Whyatt, Tom, ed. "Where Have All The Dollars Gone" *North River Navigator* VIII (June 1977): 8. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>10</sup> Whyatt, Tom, ed. *North River Navigator* VIII (Oct. 1977): 8. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>11</sup> Verb, Howard I. "From The Treasurer." *North River Navigator* VIII (Dec. 1977): 5-6. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

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<sup>8</sup> Killian, Bob, et.al. Letter to the Editor. Oct. 1977. *North River Navigator*. Pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

much-needed income was unthinkable to many of them.

In addition to the financial implications of the voyage, it seemed to many to be a distraction from more important environmental problems on the Hudson River. Clearwater was firmly opposed to nuclear energy, but they were also deeply engaged in other struggles as well. The controversy over PCBs in the Hudson was barely two years old and required staff resources to pursue the issue. PCBs remained constantly in the news both because of agitation on the part of groups like Clearwater and because of the responses from the government. In May, 1977 the Food and Drug Administration considered banning the Hudson River shad fishery based on levels of PCBs in the fish, and had already placed prohibitions on striped bass, eels, and other fish.<sup>12</sup> PCBs were the most public environmental battle on the River, which furthered the feeling that Seabrook was a diversion. Clearwater was also engaged in opposition to the proposed interstate highway known as Westway, which was planned to run along the Hudson River waterfront through Westchester, Putnam, and Dutchess Counties and was in its early stages of development.<sup>13</sup> Other important included the continuing cleanup of the Foundry Cove in Cold Spring, New York where fish had been discovered with more than one thousand times the levels of cadmium, a toxic heavy metal, than "might normally be expected."<sup>14</sup> Also in 1977 the ship Ethel H crashed in the Hudson Highlands and spilled over four hundred thousand gallons of oil into the river, requiring months of cleanup work and devastating the wildlife and shoreline of a thirty mile stretch of the river.<sup>15</sup> With the array of problems on the Hudson and the amount of attention each one demanded, it was not a difficult case for the opponents of the voyage to

Seabrook to make.

The most important argument against going to Seabrook, however was that it was not in line with the mission of the organization. After all, the Clearwater sailed for the Hudson River. Seabrook, New Hampshire was hundreds of miles away. Many Clearwater members found it difficult to believe that bringing the sloop to New Hampshire would make an impact on the state of affairs in New York. In addition to questions about the broadness of Clearwater's focus, there were also issues regarding how radical their tactic should be. Some members felt that Clearwater should identify more closely with radical environmental groups like the Clamshell Alliance or Greenpeace. Others hoped for Clearwater to stick to legal action and education for the public. In one letter, a member decried any tactics were disruptive or broke the law. Priscilla Leith wrote:

the [New England Anti-Nuclear Alliance] has gone to COURT, rather than to the fields on the issue, and has hopes of stopping the plant that way. This is the route that I believe needs to be taken by groups opposing nuclear power plants...the tactics of the Clamshell Alliance...continually pressure and harass existing organizations to engage in "actions" (demonstrations, sit-ins, picketing) of protest which divert much-needed member labor and resources to their own cause.<sup>16</sup>

Leith's sentiments were echoed in more than a dozen other letters published in the North River Navigator about the plan to sail to Seabrook. The letters reveal the existence of a contingent within the organization who sought to curtail Clearwater's radical shift. Their arguments echoed those made by conservative members of the organization in 1970, when the Vice President of the Board of Directors resigned over Clearwater's reputation as a "hippie-type" group, saying they would not be taken seriously if they did not maintain a more polished image.<sup>17</sup> By 1978 however, Clearwater had long

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<sup>12</sup> Whyatt, Tom, ed. "Last Shad Season? Beginning of the End." North River Navigator VIII (May 1977): 3. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>13</sup> Blumenthal, Ralph. "WESTWAY PLAN WINS FINAL U.S. APPROVAL; BOON TO CITY IS SEEN." New York Times [New York, NY] 5 Jan. 1977: 64. Proquest Historical Newspapers. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Lyons, Richard. "3 Fish Caught Near a Battery Factory on the Hudson Contain Up to 1,000 Times Normal Cadmium." New York Times [New York, NY] 13 Jun. 1971: 23. Proquest Historical Newspapers. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Whyatt, Robin. "The Wreck of the Ethel H." North River Navigator VIII (Mar. 1977): 1,6. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

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<sup>16</sup> Leith, Priscilla. Letter to the Editor. Jan/Feb. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 6. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>17</sup> Hudson river group aide quits in protest on seeger. (1970, Sep 28). New York Times (1923-Current File). Retrieved from



embraced its “hippie type” image, and the debate that remained was whether they could make a bigger difference in courtrooms, classrooms, or holding rooms.

Though many members expressed opposition to Clearwater action in Seabrook or any shift toward radical tactics in general, there was also an outpouring of support for the plan. Many members felt a rising tide against nuclear power and were eager to participate. For them, the Clamshell Alliance protests in Seabrook posed a unique opportunity to utilize one of the United States’ most recognizable symbols of the environmental movement, the sloop Clearwater, to both provide and generate support in a critical hour. Furthermore, there was a deep feeling that, in addition to giving aid to the Clamshell Alliance, Clearwater itself would benefit from the voyage in the long run. Member Calvin Grimm wrote “the fact is that the largest representation of nuclear opponents in U.S. History plans to assemble...these people are going to Seabrook because that is where their collective stand is being made...by supporting Clamshell’s non-violent activities we will gain both experience and friendships, and we will next be able to move to action in the Hudson Valley and Long Island Sound.”<sup>18</sup> Grimm’s letter, along with others, reflected the opinions of a clear majority of the organization, and instead of simply arguing with their opposition, supporters of the plan began to organize.

The effort to mobilize supporters of the Clearwater’s voyage to Seabrook developed rapidly. The trip required logistical planning and approval of the Board of Directors over the opposition’s protests. Additionally, all the work would need to be done in a matter of months during the busy springtime. Planning for Seabrook had to be done in addition to winter boat maintenance, and while all the standard office work was done. School programs for the spring and summer still needed to be planned, and the work on PCBs and other issues needed to continue. In order to secure Board approval, the organizers sought participation from the general membership.

The first step taken towards sending the

Clearwater to Seabrook was to begin raising money to pay for the voyage. A special fund was created to allow members to earmark donations to support the trip. The fund would both prove to the Board of Directors how much the membership supported the idea by showing how much had been raised. It also showed that the organizers were willing to do the work necessary to make the journey possible rather than stand back and demand that the office somehow make the project materialize. To get a jump start on paying for the voyage, proponents planned concerts in New York and Long Island to coincide with the voyage.

One of the original co-authors of the Seabrook proposal, Bob Killian, called on supporters to write letters expressing support to the Clearwater office in Poughkeepsie to help pressure the Board of Directors to vote in favor of the trip. He wrote, “you, the members, must make YOUR opinions heard.”<sup>19</sup> Consequently, hundreds of letters, both in favor and against the plan, were sent in over a six month period between January and June, 1978, when the occupation was to take place.

During the same period that support was being expressed through letters of casual Clearwater members, important leaders also weighed in. One letter from six families who were closely affiliated with Clearwater and included several past Board members, including Pete and Toshi Seeger, stated “when a neighbor’s barn is burning, you go to help them put it out. A year from now residents along the Hudson may be very grateful to have New Englanders come over and help up stop the nukes that threaten life in and alongside this river. Clearwater must bravely stick out her mast and go to Seabrook, or ship will disappoint thousands of us who have supported her through the years.” The message was clear; the Seabrook plan was in keeping with the vision of the organization’s founders, and they considered it imperative. Included with the note was a contribution earmarked for the Seabrook trip.<sup>20</sup>

To gather support among the membership, a workshop was held at the Clearwater Annual Meeting to discuss the plan, as well reasons why the boat should go or not. A report from the workshop

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<http://search.proquest.com/docview/118737207?accountid=13626>

<sup>18</sup> Grimm, Calvin. Letter to the Editor. Jan/Feb. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 6. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>19</sup> Killian, Bob. Letter to the Editor. Dec. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>20</sup> Seeger, Pete and Toshi, et. al. Letter to the Editor. Apr. 1978. North River Navigator. Pg. 8. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

stated that more than thirty people attended and “unanimously agreed that Clearwater should support the Clamshell Alliance in every way possible.”<sup>21</sup> While the unanimity of thirty members might be considered an insignificant in an organization whose membership count at the time was listed at four thousand six hundred, those who attended the Annual Meeting could reasonably be considered the core of the membership.<sup>22</sup> They were likely the people who attended the previous year’s Annual Meeting and would attend the meeting the following year. It was the core of the membership that could be counted on to volunteer in the office or on board the sloop, and for the workshop attendees to support the plan unanimously sent a clear message.

The Board of Directors voted March 19, 1978 to approve the voyage to Seabrook, with conditions. Eleven members voted in favor and five voted against. Five additional members did not vote.<sup>23</sup> Board President Myra Aaronson later wrote that “what the board approved was a motion to send Clearwater to Seabrook pending a clarification of the legal safety of the act, simply to be present in the harbor during the weekend of June 24-25 as a symbol of support for the occupation. We did not endorse the recommendations of the Annual Meeting Clamshell Alliance Workshop, nor did we approve participation in a blockade or other illegal action.”<sup>24</sup> The decision marked a compromise between the differing attitudes within the organization, but with a heavy emphasis on the side of the proponents of the plan. The boat would sail to Seabrook in spite of the finances and its typical springtime routine. But instead of aligning with the Clamshell Alliance and other radical groups like Greenpeace, the Clearwater and its crew would not participate in actions that would get them arrested. The organization therefore had a clear solution to an issue of contention that it had been dealing with for months; it would support radical groups and participate in actions, but it would do

everything short of breaking the law.

Aaronson’s letter also addressed two other questions posed by the debate. One was whether the Clearwater was changing its focus to be broader than the Hudson Valley, and the answer was no. The Seabrook voyage would be viewed in terms of its connection to the Hudson River, and after the sail was done, the Clearwater would continue to focus on the Hudson. Aaronson wrote “sending the boat to Seabrook and working on the river are not mutually exclusive...I believe that what we will learn at Seabrook will strengthen our efforts at home, not weaken them....I voted to go to Seabrook because

I believe it is a contradiction to be an environmental ‘separatist.’” In the same way that the sail to New Hampshire was seen as a way of helping to advance the cause of cleaning the Hudson, after the return of the vessel it would be the case that Clearwater’s work on the Hudson would be its way of working to help the environment everywhere.

The third issue addressed in Aaronson’s note was the role that that Clearwater’s financial problems played in the decision. She wrote “financial considerations go into every decision we make...but the Clearwater at Seabrook Committee has committed itself to making up [the cost]...I voted to go to Seabrook because I believe that for the long term we cannot afford not to go.” By explaining the approach to the situation taken by the board, Aaronson revealed that the organization would not allow financial considerations to be the sole factor in determining whether or not to participate in actions. In other words, even when there was no money at hand, they would find a way to make it work. This approach followed the organization’s tradition of operating without being beholden to its financial status and not changing course to make more money by sacrificing its goals.

The passion that was reflected in the membership letters throughout the early months of 1978 also manifested itself in the actions of the Board of Directors. After the vote, board member Dan Grischkowsky resigned on grounds that the Clearwater should not leave the Hudson, writing “it is time we start to say NO to Clearwater’s involvement in areas outside of our primary concern for the Hudson River.” Similar passions were felt by supporters of the plan. Toshi Seeger suggested that she might leave if the vote failed. It was later

<sup>21</sup> Killian, Bob. Letter to the Editor. Dec. 1977. North River Navigator. pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>22</sup> “Clearwater Update” 5 March, 1979. Memorandum. Nancy Papish Papers. University at Albany, Albany, NY

<sup>23</sup> Magill, Angela. “President’s Report.” North River Navigator IX (Mar. 1978): 3. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>24</sup> Aaronson, Myra. Letter to the Editor. Mar. 1978. North River Navigator. pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

reported that Seeger over the past decade had “baked acres of casseroles for Clearwater functions, licked stamps, agonized over financial crises and haggled with concert managers over contracts. Some see her as the glue that keeps the Clearwater people together, so when she rumbled that she might quit if the sloop didn’t sail to Seabrook, the board sat up and listened.”<sup>25</sup> Such passions, particularly on the part of Clearwater’s most committed members, indicate the degree to which the Seabrook debate was about more than nuclear power or whether it was a good idea. The issue went to the heart of the organization’s mission and exposed differences that had up until then remained hidden.

With the approval, planning for the journey continued, as did the back and forth commentary in the North River Navigator. Though the disputes continued through June, the decision had been made, and in many ways the controversy ended months before the voyage even took place. The Clearwater left New York on June 16th and arrived in Seabrook one week later. Instead of a blockade, the sloop participated in a flotilla near the construction site.<sup>26</sup> In addition to that change, more serious alterations were made the Clamshell Alliance’s plans before the protests took place. Instead of allowing a situation where mass-arrests would occur as they had the year before, New Hampshire officials, along with the Public Service Company of New Hampshire, who sought to build the plant, allowed the protestors to use the site for three days. Because they were there with permission, the twenty thousands demonstrators present were not illegally occupying the site as they had planned. After the three days, the Clamshell Alliance left the site and ended the weekend with a march in Manchester, New Hampshire, where the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Environmental Protection Agency were holding hearings about the plant. After the weekend, both the Clamshell Alliance and the Public Service Company of New Hampshire claimed victory.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> O'Reilly, David. "Dissension on Deck." Environmental Action 15 July 1978: 4. Web. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>26</sup> Gallanter, Marty. "Clearwater Sails to Seabrook to Make Friends & to Stop Nukes." North River Navigator IX (Aug. 1978): 1-2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>27</sup> Nuclear Demonstrators End Rally With March in Manchester, N.H.: Left by the Deadline." New York Times

After the protests, the construction of the plant was delayed for various reasons until it finally opened fully in 1990.<sup>28</sup> The Clearwater returned to a busy season on the Hudson.

In the months after the voyage to Seabrook, the journey’s effects began to be felt. One member called the efforts to ally with the Clamshell Alliance, organized labor, and civil rights groups a ‘destructive fungus’<sup>29</sup> in a letter resigning his family membership. He was not alone. According to office memoranda, the organization had more than five hundred fewer members in March, 1978 than it had had one year prior, a loss of more than ten percent of the membership.<sup>30</sup> Some left on ideological grounds, others because the seven straight months of fighting gave the appearance of a dysfunctional organization. Nevertheless, the events emboldened the members who remained. In October, 1978, more members voted in the elections for the Board of Directors than ever had before. In another workshop about Seabrook at the 1978 Annual Meeting, the number of attendees doubled from the same workshop the year before, and those present approved a resolution by a vote of twenty two to two calling for continued actions like Seabrook.<sup>31</sup> After over a year of disputes and the departure of many who objected, the organization was finding unity in its focus. Its anti-nuclear work continued, though almost entirely with a focus on Indian Point and the Hudson Valley. Only once did the sloop leave New York waters for anti-nuclear actions after 1978.

Also at the 1978 Annual Meeting, the financial effects of the Seabrook voyage were given. The organization raised more money in 1978 than it had the year prior, and emerged with a surplus roughly equal to the previous year’s deficit. While expected expenses kept the staff wary of calling the year a financial success, it was clear that

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[New York, NY] 27 Jun. 1978: A10. Proquest Historical Newspapers. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.

<sup>28</sup> "Seabrook at Full Power." New York Times (1923-Current file): 6. Jul 21 1990. ProQuest. Web. 28 Feb. 2014 .

<sup>29</sup> Lane, C.R. Letter to the Editor. May. 1978. North River Navigator. IX pg. 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

<sup>30</sup> "Clearwater Update" 5 March, 1979. Memorandum. Nancy Papish Papers. University at Albany, Albany, NY

<sup>31</sup> Grimm, Calvin. "Seabrook: Implications to Clearwater’s Region." North River Navigator IX (Nov. 1978): 5. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY

the decision to sail to Seabrook had not left them worse off than they had been the year before.<sup>32</sup>

More importantly than the controversy's effect on Clearwater's money was the effect on its mission. Fortunately for Clearwater the Seabrook debate, along with the debates about labor unions and civil rights, ended up helping the organization rather than hurting it. Despite the loss of memberships, Clearwater emerged at the end of 1978 with a clearer image of its focus for the future. The fights proved to be necessary growing pains as the organization matured, and in many ways the questions debated in 1978 would have arisen sooner or later, whether there had ever been a proposed sail to Seabrook or not.

The sloop entered its second decade on the Hudson with deeply renewed energy and a better knowledge how it would pursue its goal of a healthy Hudson River. It would take its stance on nationwide issues through the lens of each issue's relation to the Hudson. It would focus its activism locally, with a main focus on Westway, PCBs, and anti-nuclear work at Indian Point and the other proposed Hudson River sites. It would identify with more radical elements of the environmental movement but would not itself take part in unlawful actions. It would also not engage deeply in issues of environmental justice or racism.

With the clarifications made to its operating formula, as well as new developments like the new annual festival, the Great Hudson River Revival, the organization was prepared to move into a new decade, the 1980's, as well as a new era for its own work.

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<sup>32</sup> Mylod, John. "Clearwater 1978 Annual Meeting Report." North River Navigator IX (Nov. 1978): 2. Print. MHP, Pine Bush, NY