

The Howland Quarterly

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In This Issue:

From our new President, <i>Robert Allen Greene</i>	page 2
Minutes of the Annual Meeting, <i>Barbara Adams</i>	page 3
Roll Call, New Members Present, In Memoriam	page 6
From the Editor	page 7
The Lura Sellew Mayflower Medal, <i>Robert F. Huber</i>	page 8
Before the Voyage, <i>Peter Arenstam</i>	page 10
The Maiden Voyage of the <i>Elizabeth Tilley</i> , <i>Jonathan Stubbs</i>	page 11
Notes from Sailors, <i>Robert Long and Sandee Clark</i>	page 14
Tilley Tales: One True Story, <i>Richard Clary</i>	page 15
Photos of the Maiden Voyage of the <i>Elizabeth Tilley</i>	page 17
Proclamation from the Mayor of Augusta	page 23
Archaeological Dig at Rocky Nook, 2003, <i>Derek Wheeler</i>	page 24
The Howlin' Howland Digger's Lament, <i>Jan Hetterly</i>	page 28
Howlands in the News	page 30
Dress as your Pilgrim Ancestor for Halloween, <i>R.J. Heinsohn</i>	page 32
Let the Pilgrims Have Their Day, <i>Stacy B.C. Wood, Jr.</i>	page 34
Family Society Corrections	page 35
New Members, <i>Judith Elfring</i>	page 36



Photo by Robert Dow

Before the Voyage

By Peter Arenstam

The most hair-raising part of the whole journey of the *Elizabeth Tilley* from Plymouth to Augusta Maine was the few feet we had to lift and turn the shallop right at the building site. We built the shallop in the field out side of the Craft Center about two feet off the ground on some large posts. In order for the boat transportation trailer to pick up the boat on launching day we had to lift the shallop off the building stocks, lower it to the ground and turn it about ninety degrees. This whole process was accomplished with hydraulic jacks, large levers, blocks of wood and a whole day for eight people.

Simms Brothers boat haulers from Scituate, Massachusetts picked up the boat the morning of July 8th and brought it to the town boat ramp at Plymouth harbor. Nancy Brennan, Plimoth Plantation's executive director, gave a short speech, John Howland of the Pilgrim John Howland Society, christened the boat with champagne and the driver slowly backed the trailer down the ramp until the *Elizabeth Tilley* floated free.

We had equipped the boat with pumps, hoses and buckets, not so much as a reflection of our abilities as boat builders but as a precaution against any embarrassment with so many people watching the launching. Try as we might, on the short trip from the boat ramp to *Mayflower*

II where the shallop would spend several weeks, we could not find enough water in the bottom of the boat to even sponge out.

We let the boat float next to the ship for about week so that the hull planking could swell tight. During that time we prepared the mast, rigging and sails. We suspended a block and tackle off the main yard of *Mayflower II* and used it to lift the shallop mast and fit into the hull. The rigging was quickly set up and Friday, July 25th was set as date for the first sea trial.

There is a sailor's superstition about never starting a voyage on a Friday. Technically this wouldn't be a voyage so much as a pleasant sail around the outer harbor. With several members of the crew who would sail on our trip to Augusta, the building crew and a few other advisors aboard we set out. Too timid to row the shallop so close to *Mayflower II*, we got a tow from our work skiff out away from all the expensive moored boats in the harbor. The wind was just the right strength, the sun was shining and there was nothing left to do but set the sails.

All I can remember of the rest of that morning was the overwhelmingly pleasant feeling of seeing the *Elizabeth Tilley* sailing about the harbor. The white curl of the bow wave, the tug of the main sheet, and the gentle rise and fall of the deck as we moved through the water.



PJHS Historian John Howland christens the "Elizabeth Tilley". (Photo by Richmond Talbot)



A group of Howlands gathered to witness the launch of the shallop: John Howland, Jonathan Stubbs, Susan Shaw, Richard Clary, Sandee Clark, Judy Elfring, Henry Adams, Barbara Adams, Bernie Elfring, Bobbie Hall and Sidney Clifford



Our shallop alongside the *Mayflower II*. (Photos by Judith Elfring)



Launching the *Elizabeth Tilley*

The Maiden Voyage of the *Elizabeth Tilley*

By Jonathan Stubbs

The *Elizabeth Tilley* has completed her maiden voyage. On July 28, she sailed from Plymouth Harbor to reenact the voyage taken by the Pilgrims in 1628 to establish a trading post at Cushnoc (now Augusta), Maine. With the assistance of our escort boat, we arrived at Old Fort Western on August 7, 2003.

The *Elizabeth Tilley* is a reproduction of a shallop, which was used in shallow waters in the 17th century. The vessel is 38 feet in length and is fitted with both oars and sails. The *Elizabeth Tilley* was commissioned by The Pilgrim John Howland Society and built at Plimoth Plantation under the direction of Peter Arenstam, the Plantation master boat builder.

In 1628, Plimoth Colony was granted a patent of 1.5 million acres along the Kennebec River. The Pilgrims traded corn for beaver pelts, which were then sent back to England. The Pilgrims had incurred a ten thousand-pound debt for the financing of their trip to establish the Colony of Northern Virginia. Most of this debt was paid off in 20 years as a result of the fur trade.

Peter Arenstam was the Captain of the *Elizabeth Tilley*, and 22 members of The Pilgrim John Howland Society joined him-- four members doing the complete route and others joining for some part of the trip. (There was a crew of 12 each day.) In Maine, Bud Warren joined the crew. He is on a committee to build of a replica of *The Virginia*, the first ship built in America [in 1607] at Popham, Maine.

The voyage exceeded any previous expectations that I had, and it was a privilege to be member of the crew. We found the winds were generally light before 11:00 a.m., so we were towed so as to meet our planned stops. The first day, Plymouth to Cohasset, we did sail for a short time and attempted to do some rowing. The weather was warm and sunny, and the crew enjoyed the day. Barbara Dillon provided dinner for us and made sleeping arrangements for those who needed quarters.

The next day we sailed from Cohasset to Rockport, Mass. We had light winds in the morning and were able to get in a good sail in the afternoon when the winds picked up. Just outside of Rockport Harbor, we were met by *The Appledor*, which is a replica of an old sailing ship. She fired a welcoming shot across our bow. The shot was repeated in the inner harbor, and the sound echoed around the ledges lining the water. Members of the Sandy Bay Yacht Club served us a delicious home-cooked turkey dinner with all the fixings, and in the morning served us breakfast. The highlight was the warm jelly donuts! Richard Boulter provided beds for the crew.

The third day we went from Rockport to the Isle o' Shoals, near Portsmouth, New Hampshire. We had nice weather and a good afternoon sail. The original plan was for us to tie up to a mooring in the cove for the night. The hotel on the island offered us supper and later, after their guests inquired about the shallop, allowed us to tie up at the dock. From 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., people came down to view the shallop. The next morning, people started showing up as early as 5:30 a.m., and continued until we left. There were at least 100 people who came to see the *Elizabeth Tilley*, and the best thing was that many of them were children who were interested in the story of our trip. Some of us slept at the Marine Research Lab on the next island, while the rest of the crew slept on the boat.

The fourth day was from Isle o' Shoals to Kennebunkport, Maine. We had light winds in the morning. We did get some sailing in the afternoon. A Minkie whale was seen today. We sailed into the harbor, but since the river is too narrow for sailing, we were towed to the Kennebunk River Club. There were a number of people from the John Howland Society and Maine *Mayflower* Society on the breakwater to welcome us to Kennebunkport. The Plimoth Plantation is hoping to take the *Mayflower II* from Plymouth to Portland, Maine next year. They hosted a reception to help raise funds for that voyage, as it will be an expensive endeavor. After the reception was over, the

Elizabeth Tilley was towed up river to berth at Chick's Marina.

The fifth day was a layover day built in should we have had the need to make any repairs to the vessel, which fortunately we did not. As it turned out, it was lucky that we did not have to sail, since it rained all day. The day was spent being a tourist in Kennebunkport. I was able to purchase a shirt that said "If there is no wind, then blow."

Day six was Kennebunkport to Portland. We got a little later start today, as we had to wait for the tide to come in for the escort to float before we could leave. We were towed all the way to Portland Harbor, but then were able to sail around the harbor for an hour or so before landing. We saw two Minkie whales and number of seals today. We docked at the Portland Yacht Services. Since there was another layover day tomorrow, most of the people did not stay with the vessel. I stayed with the shallop and went to the nearby railroad museum and learned about the narrow gauge railroad and trains. There were 8-railroad lines in use in Maine at one time. They could be built with a lighter rail, and therefore were less costly to build and maintain.

Day seven was the layover day, and Plimouth Plantation sponsored another reception. Another day of being a tourist.

The eighth day was scheduled to be Portland to Popham Beach, Maine. The fog had rolled in so thick that we could hardly see ahead 50 feet. The range of visibility was much less than the two hundred feet that was the length of the tow line. Portland Harbor is such that the wind blows the fog in, and then the surrounding structures in the harbor hold it in. The chase boat went out to see what the situation was and came back to report that it did look as if we would be able to travel safely. Around 10 a.m., the chase boat went out to check again when it started to rain. This light rain knocked down the fog just enough to give us enough visibility to travel. We went back to the dock, assembled the crew and left Portland. The light rain remained for most of the morning, and the fog for the whole remaining trip. Due to the lack of wind, we were towed all the way to Popham Beach. As a native of Maine Bud Warren gave a good history lesson of the area.

That evening there was a reception put on by members of the Popham Colony. There was a nice cake and refreshments. The local church had purchased a house to be used if a family had an emergency and needed a place to stay. The family that had been using the home had just moved out and it was made available for the crew to use as sleeping quarters for the night. I went into the local store to see if they had deli meats we could use for lunches. The owner said no but he would give me the keys to his truck so I could go to Bath if I need to.

The next day we were not scheduled to leave until 1:00 PM which was the time of the incoming tide. We had time to explore the site of the Popham Colony. They are doing an archeological dig and have found evidence of structures as drawn on the original plan used when constructing the site. (*Editor's Note: This plan is the 1607 map by John Hunt—the only known map of an early English settlement.*)

The ninth day was from Popham Beach to Bath on the Kennebec River. After a short distance the first of many eagle sightings was made. We also had sturgeon and blue-fish jumping all around the boat all the way up the river. We were able to sail all the way up Bath where we docked at the Maine Maritime Museum. A cannon being fired from shore saluted us. Again we were offered a building to use as a sleeping place



Jonathan Stubbs was one of the four crewmen to sail the entire journey from Plymouth to Augusta. (Photo by Christopher Smith)

for the evening.

Day ten Bath to Richmond. That morning was spent touring the museum, as we did not leave until the incoming tide in the afternoon. We passed the Bath Iron Works and were saluted by the workers there. We passed under the new bridge and set sail for Richmond thru Merrymeeting Bay. This was another wonderful day of sailing with the pretty landscape. The shore is lined with wild rice, which the migratory fowl feed on their journey south. The solitude of being under sail on a beautiful boat was so enjoyable. We passed by Swan Island where some of us stayed in adirondack shelters. The island is a deer refuge and those who stayed there saw many! We went around the top of the island and docked at town dock at Richmond. We went to dinner at the Railroad Café, which is housed, in a former funeral home. At dinner we sang "Happy Birthday" to our *Quarterly* editor Gail Adams.

There was a concert held at the bandstand, which was adjacent to the boat dock. The town has a strong Russian heritage but is a depressed area at this time. When we arrived at Richmond Eldon Gay and Jon Daley [who were with us on the first part of the trip] met us. They wanted to sail again if there was space available. At eight-thirty the park ranger picked up those who were sleeping on the island. We were then taken on the back of a truck to the camping site. The next morning we were picked up by the truck to be taken back to the *Elizabeth Tilley*.

Day eleven was the last day and we traveled from Richmond to Augusta. We had towed for a short distance when the Public Service Station out of Lewiston, Maine met us. They are doing a documentary of the early trade of the Colonies. We spent a half an hour rowing the shallop up the river. To be authentic all modern items had to be hidden. Glasses, watches and hats were all put away.

The trickiest part of the trip was here as the river has a narrow channel and can be shallow. We needed to be in Augusta by 1:00 PM because of the tide. There is a swing bridge at Richmond and we had made arrangements the night before to have it opened at 8:00 AM. We were towed for this portion of the trip. The mast of the *Elizabeth Tilley* is thirty-two feet. The main concern was the bridge at Gardiner has only a thirty-five foot clearance at the center of the span. We cleared the bridge with room to spare. It was only 10:30 AM when we were coming into Hallowell with less than a half-hour to travel. We stopped at the public dock as we were ahead of schedule. We were docked for an hour and a half and had many visitors. At 11:45 AM we made the last part of the trip. As we came under the bridge to the dock at Old Fort Western we were greeted by a large crowd and an honor guard, which fired a greeting round. The corn was unloaded and carried up to the site of the original fort. There was a nice ceremony where corn was exchanged for a beaver pelt.

This was a very memorable trip, which was an honor to be a part of. The beauty and the grace of the *Elizabeth Tilley* are to be admired. The warmth and enthusiasm encountered will be long remembered by those fortunate enough to be part of the voyage.



Jonathan kept a journal of the voyage while sailors Stuart Hall and Chris Smith relax.



DAY ONE, back row l to r: Richard Clary, Peter Arenstam, Robert Long, Robert Greene, Jon Daley, Jonathan Stubbs; front row: Erica Dieselman, Tracy Dieselman, Sandee Clark, Helen Birks, Stuart Hall, Eldon Gray.
(Photo by John Howland)

On the morning of July 28, 2003 I had the honor to take part in the maiden voyage of the *Elizabeth Tilley* Shallop. Traveling from Plymouth to Cohasset in the open sea and having the enjoyable experience of meeting cousins from The Pilgrim John Howland Society. This was a journey I will never forget. When I volunteered to take part in this adventure I was a little apprehensive and unsure of what I was getting myself into but the outcome of this trip is one I greatly appreciate. While on the trip I was given the opportunity to steer the boat. This was an adventure that I am grateful for taking part in.

Robert M. Long

Sailing on the *Elizabeth Tilley*: A Few of the Extra Benefits That Came Our Way

By Sandee Clark

The actual sailing of the *Elizabeth Tilley*, the shallop contracted to be built at Plimoth Plantation by the Pilgrim John Howland Society, started her maiden voyage on July 28, 2003. It was an ending of two years of labor and love by Peter Arenstam, the Plantations maritime artisan manager along with other artisans from Plimoth Plantation. As for me it was a culmination of two years of great anticipation for I would sail on this vessel from Plymouth, Mass. to Augusta, Maine. The sailing was a reenactment of an actual voyage that John Howland took in 1628.

I knew there would be breath-taking views of the land and sea, fun and fellowship with cousins, get-togethers and meeting people interested in the boat and the journey. I was aware that my wee self would feel quite minute on the great sea, BUT. The other benefits that came to us day by day were the best.

When sailing out away from the shore you see towers, outlines of buildings, sometimes a lighthouse top, or it could be a pile of rocks or a buoy with many birds. One day our path was crossed by a huge container ship, now that was big! God's creatures were our entertainment. We watched minke whales surface and dive and if you kept watching the spot he went down he would come up again very close to where you watched.

The seals were just as entertaining. On the Isle O' Shoals with its many gulls I found a nest, very large made with twigs and grass, with an egg. It was under the building we had stayed in. The egg is about the size of a chicken egg; it is light brown and speckled.

The Kennebec River was not to be outdone and here we also enjoyed nature. The sturgeon jumping up – it was as if they stood on their tails and then slapped the water with their bodies as they reentered the water.

There were smaller animals also; mink and beaver, but my favorite was the eagle. The bald eagle rode the air currents above while we depended on the river current below. One sat in a tree as we passed and watching him through the binoculars he seemed not to care at all, then he did move his head as if watching us pass. The best one spotted was the last day. We could see his markings and as we grabbed for cameras, unfortunately, he flew away. It was a wondrous sight to see out nations emblem flying free!

Sandee Clark

DAY TWO, l to r: Jon Daley, Stuart Hall, Tracy Dieselman, Peter Arenstam, Eldon Gay, Sandee Clark, Richard Boulter, Richard Clary and Jonathan Stubbs.

(Photo by John Howland)



Tilley Tales: One True Story of the Maiden Voyage of the *Elizabeth Tilley* as Lived by Dick Clary

First: My *Elizabeth Tilley* adventure can only be described as "unforgettable". All the great cousins I met – no wonder the clan has done so well over the years if they are all as personable and talented as the few I met.

Peter Arenstam built a strong, safe and accurate replica and taught us how to sail. Thank you!

Brad Gorham – he dreamed of a shallop, thought about it for a while and said "GO!" Thank you Brad!

Second: My seafaring education was lacking and Peter taught us so many things. Terms such as vane, snotter, sprit, sprit rig, main mast, halliard, fore sail, main sail, strike, raise, bow, stern, port, starboard, lee board, come about and jibe to name a few.

He taught me how to tie two very important knots: the bowline, which is used to secure the docking lines, and the sheet bend, used to secure a sail to its halliard.

Third: All the wonderful people we met at every port. Many were waiting to just "come aboard" or to ask about the construction and the historical significance of the voyage. What amazed most of them was the fact that we were all related and descended from the pilgrim who first made this voyage. They did not know that such an organization existed and in the words of one teenage girl, "That's really cool!"

Also, the great folks who gave us so many dockside receptions, great food, drinks and one even had a music concert at the dock.

Just before Augusta, Maine, there was an unscheduled stop. There was a man there who was a boat builder and student of ancient sailing techniques who came aboard.

(I didn't get his name). He closely inspected the *Elizabeth Tilley*. He began to tear-up as he continued to say "Marvelous, marvelous, I'd give anything to be part of this crew." We were more than just a curiosity to most.

I must also mention all the kind and generous people that opened their homes to us. They gave us a comfortable bed, a shower, breakfast in the morning, and as the song says "Got us to the boat on time". People like Barbara Dillon in Cohasset, Dick Bolter in Rockport and our own John Howland. And of course, their beautiful wives! This human experience happens seldom in a lifetime and should not be missed.

Fourth: Were the little personal happenings that only I experienced, such as the morning in Popham as I was about to store some gear in the hold and found myself staring at a black mink who was helping himself to our food stores; he made a hasty exit without a goodbye or thank you.

Or, the night I was sleeping on deck at the "Isle O' Shoals" when Zack, the skipper of the *Wavelength* (our chase boat) decided to change moorings. *Tilley* was moored to the dock and *Wavelength* was moored to *Tilley*. Zack cast off the sternline first and *Wavelength* drifted back pulling the bowline under my sleeping bag and lifting me

and sleeping bag up and toward the edge. Since there is only about six inches between the deck and over the side, I was halfway there frantically trying to get my arms out of the bag. All the while, Zack was unaware of this. Fortunately, he released the tension on the bowline in time and I sank back down onto the deck unharmed.

Fifth: Were the



Richard Clary, one of four crewmen who sailed the entire journey from Plymouth to Augusta.
(Photo by Christopher Smith)

experience we all shared such as spotting whales, seals and bald eagles. In the Kennebec we saw sturgeon and striped bass jumping. What a beautiful river!

And who could forget our great river pilot, Bud Warren, who made sure we were safe in the face of dangerous currents and shallows.

Brad made quite a splash when he recreated the legend of John Howland, but God saw fit not to let Brad actually go all the way under the water!

One day when we had no wind, and the *Wavelength* was towing us from point A to point B, Jeff Gorham pulled out a piece of bubble gum and started to chew. Before long we were all attempting to blow the biggest bubble and Jeff's weeks supply of bubble gum was gone. Those of us with beards were at a disadvantage.

By the way, I don't think the chemical toilet got any use. How we ever managed that will forever be a puzzlement.

There was one bridge across the Kennebec that had a questionable height and we wondered if the mast would fit under it at that tide. As we neared the bridge, tension mounted and cameras clicked. From our viewpoint, looking straight up, it was impossible to tell if it would safely pass under. Closer and closer it came until finally it went through with about two feet to spare. A loud cheer went up from the *Elizabeth Tilley* and observers

***This may not be the end of the tale though as I have already volunteered to bring her from Augusta to Bath in the Fall where the Maine Maritime Museum has agreed to put her up for the winter and perhaps sail back to Plymouth in the Spring. I hope so....



DAY THREE, 1 to r: standing - Peter Arenstam, Stuart Hall, Richard Clary, Jonathan Stubbs, Walter Read, Jon Daley; front: Harrison Gray Otis, Sandee Clark and Robert Boyden. (Photo by John Howland)

on the bridge.

At last: After 11 days, we arrived at Augusta and what a show those people put on! As we neared the sight of the original trading post musket fire salutes could be heard and soon after drums were mixed in as the muskets continued to fire salutes. So many people wanted to welcome us that the dock started to sink and many had to wait on shore. Finally we transported our corn to the trading post led by a drummer. The ceremony took place on the exact spot where the original post existed in 1628. The area had been excavated and the findings (mostly stuff that fell from pilgrim pockets) are on display at the museum at Old Fort Western (adjacent to the trading post site). I plan on going back and visit the museum not having had time that day.

After the ceremony we were visited by some authentic Penobscot Indians. They were super people who allowed us to freely take pictures with them. The day was also marked by a Proclamation by the Mayor of Augusta declaring August 7 "Pilgrim John Howland Day".

Sadly: Our final chore was to make sure the *Elizabeth Tilley* was securely fastened to the dock. Her sails were neatly folded and stored, the sprit was lowered and secured and she is left to the care of the folks in Maine for a while.

The crew was now free to find a way home.

The ELIZABETH TILLEY Up Close



Photos by Christopher Smith

Learning to Sail and Row



Sandee Clark and Jonathan Stubbs



Capt. Peter Arenstam and Stuart Hall. Stuart is the governor of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the state of Maine.



Jeffrey Bradford Gorham & Stuart Hall



Rebecca Adams and Bonnie Smith



Bonnie Smith of New York and Rebecca Adams of Virginia have done "the dig" together the past few years and now the shallow sailing.



The younger crowd passed time playing cards!



Captain Peter Arenstam plots the course.



Your editor got on the boat, but did not sail her - next year!



Zack and Steve on the chase boat "Wavelength"



PJHS President Bradford Gorham at the helm!



Stuart Hall, Rebecca Adams, Bonnie Smith, Peter Arenstam, Pilgrim Sandee Clark, Jon Stubbs, Walter Read, Dick Clary, Jeff Gorham, Chief Brad Gorham, Chris Smith and Jon Daley.

Popham Beach



Popham Beach had a nice welcome for the Howlands.



A nice reception was held at the Popham Library with Bud Warren.



Views from the Boat



Peter instructs the sailors



Chief Gorham in Richmond Maine!



PJHS Historian John Howland



"Man Overboard!" The voyage wouldn't be complete without a reenactment of John Howland falling overboard — Brad was up to the task!



Peter and Walter plotting the course



Bud Warren at the helm, preparing himself for the maiden voyage of the "Virginia" to be built by the Maine's First Ship Project.



Our trusty chase boat, with Steve and Zack



Your editor celebrated her birthday in Richmond, Maine, trying to blow out those magic candles as Bonnie Smith looks on!



Sandee Clark



Here she comes! There was no wind so they had to be towed into Augusta.



"We come to make a trade."



Jonathan and Sandee followed by Brad and Christopher



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Pilgrims made a trading voyage under the command of John Howland from Plymouth Plantation to the Kennebec River in 1628 aboard their shallop, and;

WHEREAS, they selected "Cushnoc", now Augusta, to be the site of post from which to trade furs and European goods in exchange for Indian-trapped beaver and other pelts, and;

WHEREAS, the income from the Cushnoc post played a major role in financing Pilgrim debt and securing the viability of the Plymouth Colony, and;

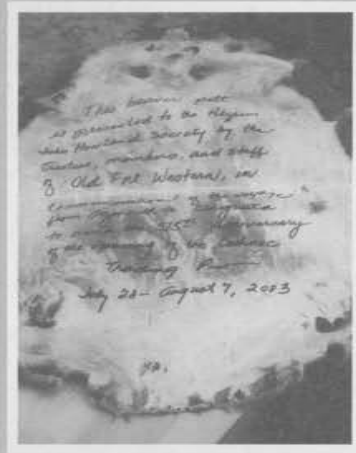
WHEREAS, the City of Augusta can trace its origins in part to this Pilgrim voyage and mission, and;

WHEREAS, in 2003 the Pilgrim John Howland Society built, launched, and sailed a replica of the shallop, christened the Elizabeth Tilley, from Plymouth, Massachusetts to Augusta, and;

WHEREAS, that voyage commemorates the 375th anniversary of the opening of the trade and recalls the historic role the Kennebec Valley played in early New England history;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that I, William E. Dowling, Mayor of the City of Augusta, do hereby proclaim that August 7, 2003, is hereby declared to be Elizabeth Tilley - Pilgrim John Howland Society Day throughout Augusta, and that the City and her citizens welcome the master and crew of the shallop, congratulate them on their successful voyage to Augusta, and applaud them for their steadfast commitment to recalling and recreating our shared history and heritage.

Attested by: _____ Signed by: _____
 Linda Veillette, Deputy Clerk William E. Dowling, Mayor



*Jay Adams, Director of Old Fort Western presents Brad Gorham with a special beaver pelt.
 (Photo by John Howland)*



Stuart, Sandee, Brad and Jonathan examine a beaver pelt before giving up their corn.