

Caribbean Boating/Newport Sailor

(Caribbean in winter, Newport in summer)

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***HMS Bounty* visited Newport as part of 2012 Ocean State Tall Ships Festival**



HMS Bounty's masts were visible above the superyachts at Casey's Marina on July 8 during the Ocean State Tall Ships Festival in Newport. (CBNS photo)

The 180' (loa) square rigger *HMS Bounty* which sank this past Monday with the loss of a deckhand - Claudene Christian, 42 - and, apparently, also the captain, Robin Walbridge, was in Newport this past July for the Ocean State Tall Ships Festival.

As widely reported in recent days, 14 of the 16 crewmembers – all in survival suits - were rescued from two 25' inflatable liferafts by two Coast Guard helicopters with rescue swimmers 90 miles southeast of Hatteras, North Carolina in 18-foot seas and 40 mph winds. The *Bounty* crew, led by Walbridge, 63, was attempting to escape Hurricane Sandy – whose hurricane force winds extended up to 175 miles, and tropical storm winds 485 miles, from the center - by sailing east. But on Sunday the ship's generator failed and *Bounty* began taking on water. The three-master had departed New London, Connecticut on October 25, planning to sail east out to sea to avoid the worst of Sandy and arrive in St Petersburg, Florida where *Bounty* was scheduled to welcome the public aboard over the weekend of Nov. 10 and 11. After the stopover in Florida the plan was to winter in Galveston, Texas.

Tall Ships America, of which *HMS Bounty* was a member, has issued a statement thanking the Coast Guard and requesting that interested parties refrain from “further speculation” about the cause of the tragedy and instead await an “official inquiry”.

NEWPORT SPARED: Newport Harbor was spared any major damage from Tropical Storm Sandy to boats or boating structures. On shore there were far fewer power outages than during last year's Irene. Winds on Monday were 35 to 42 mph and the temperature a mild 63 degrees. And of course none of what Newport and southern New England experienced begins to compare with the misery that Sandy brought to the New Jersey coast and the New York metropolitan area.
