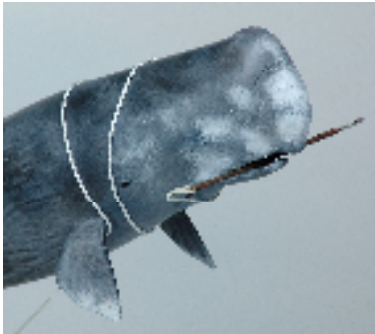




A NANTUCKET SLEIGH RIDE **CARVING A SPERM WHALE**

Instructor – Dennis Drechsler



Skill Level: All skill levels.

Novice carvers are welcome as long as they have carving experience. The subject for the 2009 class will be a Sperm Whale and a Nantucket Sleigh Ride.

A **Nantucket Sleigh Ride** was a term used by whalers who had just harpooned a whale. The whale, realizing that it was harpooned, would try to flee and as a result, it would drag the whaleboat with it. Due to the different sizes of whales, the bigger the whale, the faster the ride. The Sperm Whale was the whale that brought the biggest thrill, reaching speeds of 23 mph. The resulting thrill ride for the sailors lasted as long as the whale could swim before tiring out. Once the whale tired out, the sailors would kill it and haul it back to the main ship to harvest the oil and the baleen. But often, the ride resulted in the whale overturning and smashing the boat and many sailors lost their lives. Pursuing a 60-foot Sperm Whale was a very dangerous undertaking.

Dennis Drechsler has won numerous awards for his realistic portrayals of Cetaceans, including six Best of Show awards as well as a first in Aquatic Vertebrates at the 2000 Ward World Championship Carving Competition in Ocean City, Maryland. He is a qualified PNC carving judge and is on the planning committee for the annual Brant Festival Woodcarving Competition, held every April in Parksville on Vancouver Island. He and his wife Barbara live in Victoria, BC, on the southern tip of Vancouver Island. His work can be viewed on the Internet at ... www.whalecarver.com