

Mulligan Stew: A Child's Perspective

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written: September 1, 2025

For those of you who are remembering a day or event in the past and don't wanna see that go by the wayside don't just talk about it, make it happen.

I first came to the yacht club as a little boy in the early 70s. I've watched the Club expand and contract both in physical size and in membership size. I've seen different friends and trends come and go.

As we adjust to our new building, I hear some of the comments that I've heard many times over through my life at Deep Creek. Like many others, it does take me a while to adjust to change.

When I look out across the room at different events I probably see something different than many of our members see. The building is just that, it is a building, but it's the members who give the building life.

It is said over and over again that we are self-help club. When I look at my experience at the club, it is through the self-help moments that I have met my closest friends. The members that jump right in and become part of the work parties or helping with the different events whether it's sailing promotion or a grand ball, they seem to be the ones who get the most out of their experience at the club.

My brother and I from day one were required to attend the dock pull and pushes. I was about six years old and I can remember bringing a bag of vegetables to the club kitchen, where they would eventually end up in a pot of stew in the backyard of the club. I spent the rest of the day carrying a can of bolts that probably weighed more than I did, from one dock section to the next. When the work was done, my mother acted like I was dirtier than the next person as I was covered in rust, lake mud and smelled like lake water and I was supposed to make myself presentable so we could go eat the stew from that big pot in the back. The stew was referred to as Mulligan stew.

Mulligan stew is a hearty, often improvisational stew, traditionally made with a mix of meat and vegetables, and sometimes with foraged or scavenged

ingredients. It's historically associated with the "hobo" culture of the Great Depression era, where individuals would pool their meager food supplies to create a communal meal.

At our sailing club, it was the members who came to the dock pull and pooled their vegetables and potatoes together with the stew meat simmering in the pot to make this last meal of the sailing season.

I told my wife, Anne, that I would like to bring that tradition back and I guess that rumor made its way around to Susie Crawford, who informed me that that big pot was still in her family. A few weeks back, Quoc Tran and I met up with Roger and Susie and their daughter and loaded the original pot from many years ago into my truck. With the help of the people at the welding rod the "witches pot" (that's what they referred to it as) has been restored and is ready for the 2025 dock pull Mulligan stew. Ed Hailey is making a new "pot stirrer." Please look for more details regarding this event in future announcements.

I have asked Susie to contribute her knowledge of this event and the times this pot may have been used in other events involving friends and family coming together for a labor or social event.