



messing about in BOATS

Twice a Month

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Our Next Issue

... will go into the mail about October 1st. Subscriptions received before this date will begin with that issue #11 unless otherwise requested. Subscriptions can be ordered starting with Issue #4 if desired, #1, #2 and #3 are now out of stock.

In the Next Issue

... we expect to feature reports on the annual steamboat meet at Moultonboro, New Hampshire, the Gerrish Island rowing/sailing race at Kittery Pt. Maine, a first cruise in a sea kayak along the Massachusetts north shore, and the tryout of one of those "Baby 12 Meters", a twelve foot long scale model of an America's Cup racer that you can sit in and sail. We may also fit in a look at a replica Gar Wood Speedster runabout recently built here in New England.

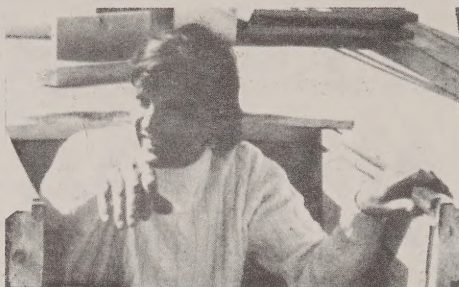
Having Trouble

... receiving MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS? If you miss an issue, or get one mangled in the mails, or otherwise not in satisfactory condition, please let us know, we'll send you out a replacement.

On the Cover

... Cliff Hurst discusses the Concordia Sloop boat built by the Landing Boatshop at the Wooden Boat Show. He later took an order for a larger version.

Commentary



BOB HICKS

In this issue we've devoted quite a bit of space to the Wooden Boat Show, because it is more than just a trade show for boat builders and suppliers to sell their wares. Unlike the much bigger sailboat show at Newport, or the winter boat shows in Boston or New York, this affair is much more a gathering of the clan, bringing together professionals who have wares to sell, amateurs who have wares to sell, dreamers looking for inspiration, wooden boat lovers looking for like-minded fellows, and maybe some potential buyers of the aforementioned wares. The overall atmosphere is low key, congenial, the absence of the raucous hard sell is so pleasant. None of those used car salesmen in blue bow ties hustling you into the latest 28 foot creation. Often it's even hard to find the exhibitor of the boat that has caught your eye, most of the professionals in wooden boat building are still builders, not marketing people.

The purpose of the show is to bring together all these different facets of wooden boats, for the person who comes just to look around, there are not only the trade displays, but also scheduled activities that are entertaining and informative. Just spending a day here with no intention of buying anything at all is an engrossing experience. Looking at all the variety of wooden boats that are on hand, new and used, for sale and just for display, can take up an amazing amount of time. Talking with the builders and owners is fascinating. Just about all of them are happy to chat with you, even when it's apparent you'll not be buying their boat or gear. Arriving at 10 a.m. when the gates open and expecting to "do" the show in two or three hours, you find it is suddenly 6 p.m. and you've still not seen everything, you have spent so much time at many of the booths, or lingering on the floats looking at lovely boats in the water and maybe dreaming a bit.

The activities this year were on an expanded scale from last year. A number of seminars were scheduled, subjects such as trouble shooting wooden boats, what to look for when buying, camper cruising alongshore. The Traditional Small Craft Association had several ongoing projects, building a stitch and glue kayak, oarmaking. Also on hand were over a dozen small traditional boats

owned by TSCA members that were available for tryouts on the water. And there was the Sika Quick & Dirty Boatbuilding Contest, really a perfect setoff against the sometimes too serious atmosphere surrounding wooden boats. A lot to see.

We had a booth this year to introduce this new publication to potential subscribers, and we had an enjoyable four days talking with hundreds of people who stopped by to look over MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS and often tell us about what they were doing. We had first hand exposure to the sort of people who came to the show, and it re-affirmed our belief that wooden boat people are a nice group. We had no experiences with anyone who could possibly be characterized as the "ugly consumer." But we did have experience with those I would describe as the "wary consumer." Probably conditioned to defend themselves against those hard sell obnoxious salesmen life seems to bring us, this person would sort of tip toe into our booth and crane a bit to see what the copies of the magazine on the countertop looked like.

But, far and away the most people we met were friendly, interested, and open to conversation about what they were doing messing about in boats. Also, to my surprise, just about everyone who dropped in had not yet seen our publication. Now, this was good for us, of course, as that was our purpose. But I did wonder about the five thousand or so people who have received a sample issue in the mail since May. And I also wondered about the hundreds of people whom I know personally who did not turn up.

Talking later with some of these people I found they had not gone to the show. I think this is incredible. ANYONE, and I really mean it, who has any love for wooden boats, should go to this show. It is a great time. It is not far off, Newport is within a few hours of ALL of southern New England, and an easy day trip from even the far north. Why didn't these people come? Family demands, too hot, long drive, expensive area (for overnight).

Well, once a year you owe yourself this outing, believe me you'll not be disappointed. You'll go home with renewed enthusiasm from a shared affection for wooden boats and the people who enjoy them.

What's happening...

SEPTEMBER 24: SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SCHOONER RACE, MYSTIC SEAPORT, MYSTIC, CT.

The Seaport's annual schooner race is an effort to preserve the American schooner racing tradition established in early years of this century. Any schooner rigged vessel, private or commercial, is eligible. Interested owners should contact Contance Boehm, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, CT 06355.

Seaport visitors may view the 25 to 30 schooners which take part at dockside on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon. Also along the lower Mystic River from 7 to 8 a.m. the schooners will be visible enroute to the race course in Fisher's Island Sound.

The races will be conducted in three classes and one of the four possible race courses will be selected on the basis of weather conditions on Saturday morning out in Fisher's Island Sound. Awards will be made to the best corrected time in all classes, best corrected time for a gaff rigged schooner, first schooner across the finish line, oldest schooner entered, and schooner with greatest number of crewmembers under the age of 18.

SEPTEMBER 24-25, OCTOBER 1-2: OPERATION SHIP SHAPES, CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD, BOSTON, MA.

This public sale of over 100,000 wooden patterns of ship parts discovered in clearing out one of the buildings in the Navy Yard in preparation for conversion to living facilities will benefit the Artists Foundation of Boston. The patterns will range in price from \$1 to \$10 for most items. Hours each weekend are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The sale will be held in the Pattern Warehouse, Building 106, Shipyard Quarters, the Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA. There is no admission fee involved.

For further information contact Caron LeBrun at (617) 247-4131.

SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 2: CANOE BUILDING COURSE, CRAFTSBURY COMMON, VT.

The Sterling College in Craftsbury Common will run this nine day canoe building course for a small group of interested persons. A similar course successfully was completed in May, in which four persons took part. The course includes morning construction work at Strong's Canoe Yard, afternoon local paddling in preparation for a final four day expedition to provide experience in lake paddling, portaging and white water. The fee is \$525, which includes room and board for the stay on campus and all camping fees and food for the canoe trip. Interested? Contact Ann Ingerson, Sterling College, Craftsbury Common, VT 05827.

SEPTEMBER 24-25: CHRISTMAS COVE TSCA MEET, CHRISTMAS COVE, ME.

This is the seventh annual gathering of traditional small craft at Christmas Cove, organized by the Traditional Small Craft & Rowing Association of Maine. Headquarters are at the Cove-side Inn and Marina. Entry fee is \$6 per adult, \$12 per family (discount for local TSC&RA members) to cover use of the marina facilities and camping on the grounds for those not staying at motel.

Saturday is spent at the Cove enjoying the boats, visiting, watching, etc. Boat owners are expected to allow others the opportunity to use their boats, but this is strictly at owners' discretion.

Sunday morning a trip to the restoration and dig at Pemaquid is planned, leaving Christmas Cove at 9 a.m. The group will row through the gut and through the islands and across John's Bay to Pemaquid. A power boat escort will go along to provide for passengers without small craft or for any necessary tows.

The Coveside Inn has motel rooms available and will provide meals for Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

For more information contact Ellen Shew, Box 131, So. Bristol, ME 04568.

OCTOBER 1-2: TRADITIONAL SMALL CRAFT MEET, CRAFTSBURY COMMON, VT.

The third annual gathering of traditional small craft at beautiful Lake Hosmer in Craftsbury Common, VT will again be at the Craftsbury Sculling Center. Lake Hosmer is 2 miles long by 1/4 mile wide and is pretty much unspoiled with little or no motorboat traffic. Autumn foliage should be in full color.

The program is unstructured, participants arriving Saturday can indulge in boat tryouts on the lake, Saturday evening will feature sculling films, and Sunday morning further action in the boats on the lake.

Several accomodation options are offered. Overnight Saturday double occupancy in dormitory room, with lunch and dinner Saturday, breakfast and lunch Sunday is \$27 per person (using own sleeping bags on beds) or \$33 per person with linen. Meals can be purchased at \$4 for breakfast and lunches, \$7 for dinner. There is no entry fee for the meet itself.

This is a long way for southern New England small craft enthusiasts to travel but it's a perfect time of year at a lovely location. The meet was originated by Ken Bassett of Onion River Boatworks in nearby Waterbury Ctr. VT. It's a great way to wrap up the season of small craft meets.

If you need further information contact the Craftsbury Sculling Center, Craftsbury Common, VT 05827.

OCTOBER 1: 5TH ANNUAL SIPPICAN OCEAN ROWING REGATTA, MARION, MA.

A rowing race for all oarsmen with classes according to handicapping and for Alden shells. The course is 6.3 statute miles and will run across Sippican Harbor from Stone's Point to the Beverly Yacht Club. Bad weather course will be revised up the Weweantic River or to Bird Island. Starting time is 9 a.m. sharp at Stone's Point Dock.

Prizes are offered to the first three Alden Ocean Shells, the open class winner and the first woman finisher. A lunch for participants follows the race. Entry fee is \$10, which includes soft drinks, beer and lunch for participants and one guest each.

For details call Richmond Viall at (617) 748-1464.

OCTOBER 23: HEAD OF THE CHARLES REGATTA, CAMBRIDGE, MA.

This is a major rowing race over a three mile course on the Charles River, with Alden shells going off at 8:30 am, other types to follow starting at 9:30 am. The start is at the Boston University boathouse on Memorial Drive in Cambridge.

Further details in upcoming issues.

CUSTOM HOUSE MUSEUM FALLSCHEDULE.

The Custom House Museum in Newburyport, Mass. will have a busy fall schedule. Until November 13th the Museum will be open 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission charge is \$1.50 per adult, 75¢ for children 5 to 15. Children under 5 are admitted free.

Several evening programs have been arranged as well. A six week course in basic seamanship will commence on Tuesday evenings, starting September 27th at 7 p.m. at the Museum. Former Coast Guardsman George Parseghian will teach. Fee is \$25 for non-members, \$20 for members. Registration is required by September 23rd.

A 15' sailing skiff constructed at the Museum this summer by Lowell's Boat Shop will be raffled at the October antique show of the historical society.

Tickets are available at \$1 each or 6 for \$5 at the Museum, the drawing will be on the afternoon of October 16th at the show in the National Guard Armory in Newburyport.

For further information on the Custom House Museum and its programs, call them at (617) 462-8681, or write the Custom House Museum, P.O. Box 306, Newburyport, MA 01950.

DOING SOMETHING INTERESTING IN BOATS? KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS? LET US KNOW ABOUT IT, IT COULD MAKE A GOOD STORY FOR OUR READERS.

Silver Bay on Lake George is a small indentation on the lake's west shore some 20 miles north of the heart of the tourist area, secluded with a nice waterside park, boathouse, and up in back a big old summer hotel now a YMCA. It was here that the Lake George Antique & Classic Boat Show took place August 27th and 28th. In earlier years the show had been held right in the town of

Lake George, but the tourist crowds had made it increasingly difficult to manage. At the much smaller Silver Bay location, crowds were manageable and more knowledgeable.

We counted about 50 boats of all types moored at the docks. The show requires any entrant to be on hand from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for judging. The inner pool surrounded on three sides by docks

Antique Meet at La

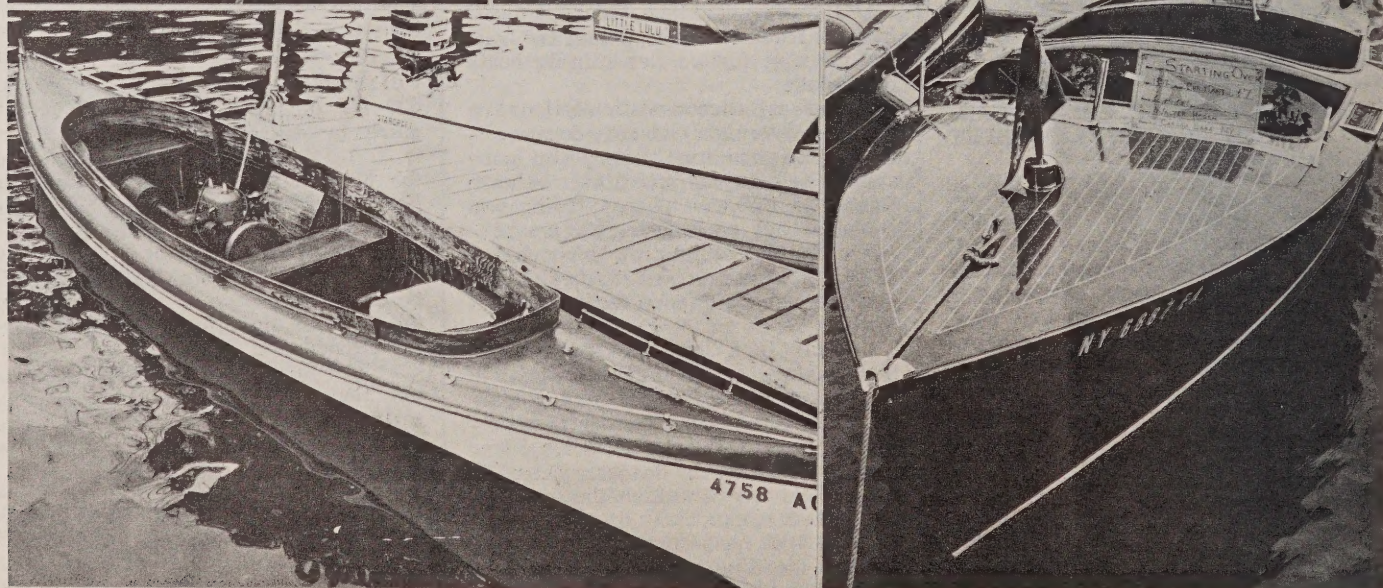
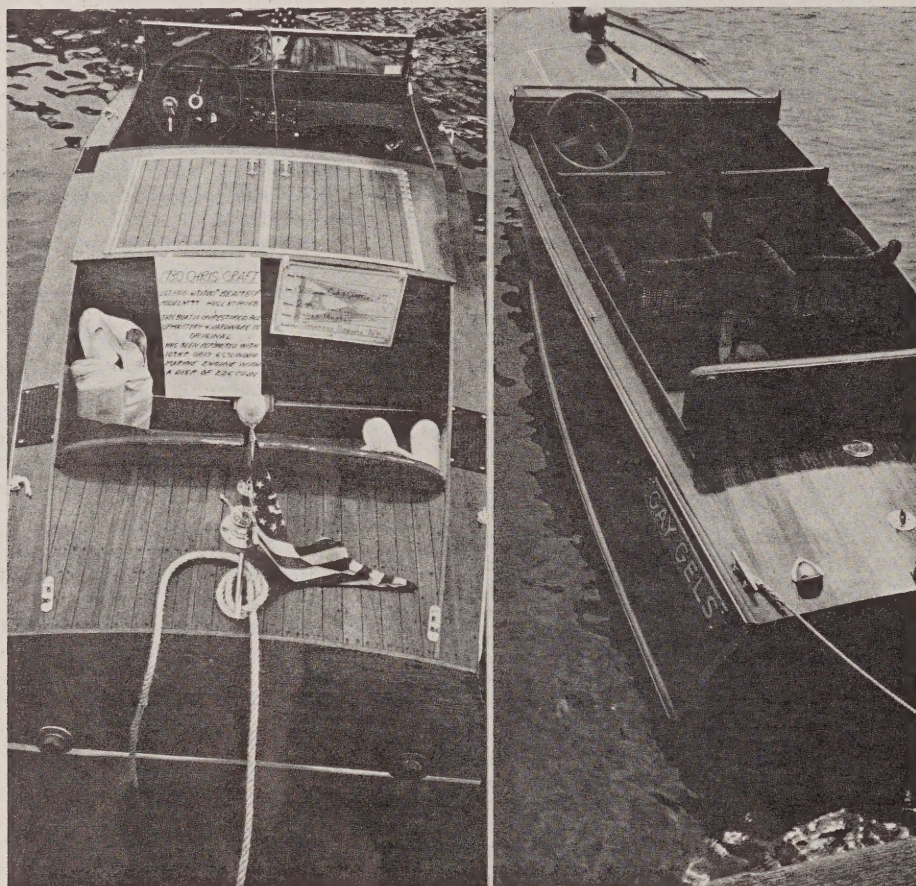
provided an excellent setting for viewing the assembled gleaming wooden boats, just about all of them variations on open racy runabouts or long slender open launches. A canopy or two on launches, one or two '50's era cabin cruisers, one sailboat, a motor canoe, these were about the only craft not falling into the major categories.

The old launches were the antiques such as the one we arrived in, Chapin Condit's 1912 Fay & Bowen. Some were really elegant restorations, and one or two were new replicas. The classics were chiefly multi cockpit runabouts up to 30 feet or so, most again restored originals, but some brand new replicas, particularly of Hacker crafts.

Then there were the racers, the Gold Cup boats. One was the real thing, BABY RUMRUNNER the Gold Cup winner in 1924 and 1925. Two others on hand were replicas, RAINBOW IV and DELPHINE 4.

This sort of show is a static affair, the boats are parked and one looks at them. So in midafternoon when the three thunderboat owners agreed to go out on the lake and take a few laps around an informal oval course, the crowd quickly gathered at vantage points. The engines bellowed into life, and it's a thrill to hear these big ones fire up, they eased out through the onlooker fleet just outside the Bay, and soon the three were thundering around a half mile out. They were not racing, of course, but they were cutting some fairly fast laps. The comparison was interesting. BABY BOOT.

Top left: This 1930 Chris Craft was entirely original and unrestored except for repowering with a six cylinder 109 hp engine. Top right: Wicker chairs seem to be widely used in the older boats. Bottom left: A motor canoe, yes canvas covered, decked over with a twin cylinder inboard motor. Bottom right: STARTING OVER, a lovely restored 1941 Chris Craft 17' runabout.



& Classic ke George

LEgger was cutting through the water far and away the fastest and with the least fuss, a low pitched bellow, a moderate wake, speed and amazingly tight turning circle for so long a craft. RAINBOW was bellowing mightily, throwing an enormous roostertail and going much more slowly through the water. Sort of seemed like revving along in low gear. DELPHINE was making conservative laps somewhere in between the others.

The owner of RAINBOW had been saying earlier in the day that he still had engine problems to sort out. His boat has a 454 cubic inch Chevy V-8 installation. BABY RUMRUNNER has original specification Hispano-Suiza aircraft power, much slower revving, torquey power, getting a bite on the water and moving the boat, not the water.

When DELPHINE came in we had a chance to observe her crew. Driving was an older man geared up in white jumpsuit, white cloth racing helmet, goggles, gloves, and bright yellow PFD. As he docked with the aid of a younger man in the cockpit, he announced he would walk out over the long polished foredeck himself, and after gingerly getting up out of the cockpit, proceeded to do so, to the applause of the group gathered. We were told this man was once a riding mechanic back in the '20's on the original DELPHINE gold copper, now 60 years later here he was driving this replica.

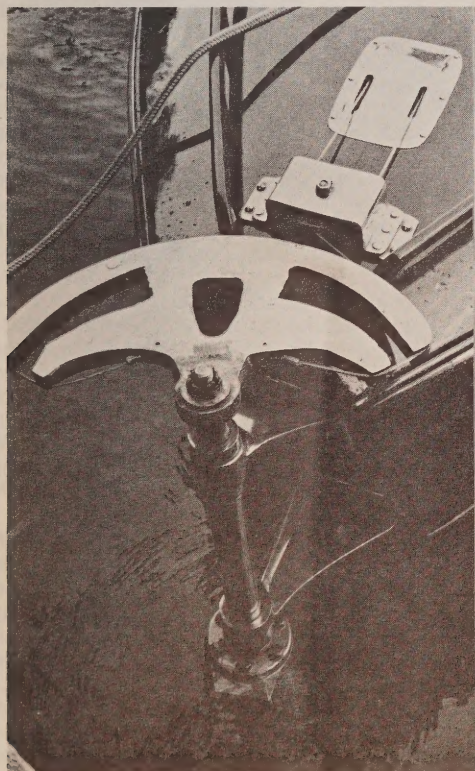
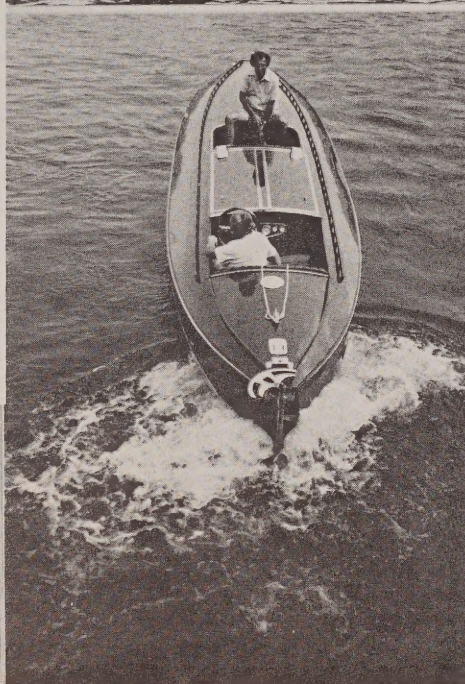
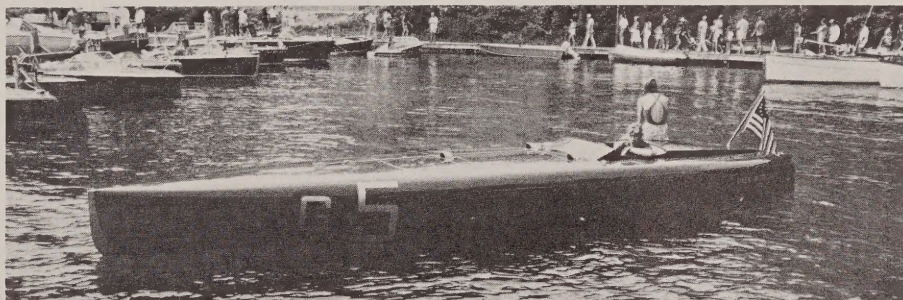
"How fast do you think you were going," someone asked him. He grinned and replied, "Maybe we hit 55 or 60 once or twice, but, we made some noise

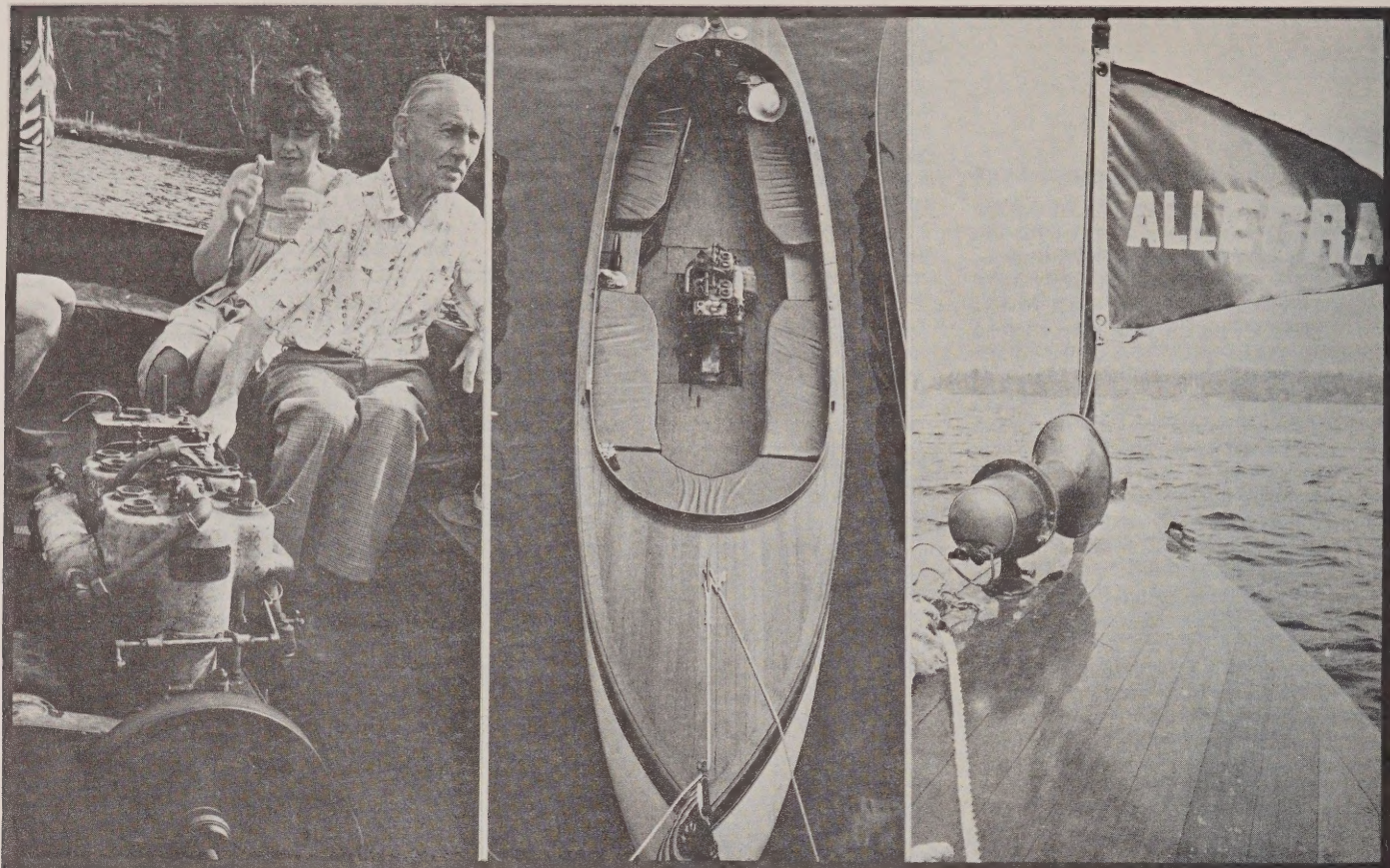
didn't we!" Yes, that's why these old time racers were called thunderboats.

Now with two closeup looks at the antique and classic boat scene, we can say that this is predominately a power boat interest, the odd sailing or rowing craft is incidental to the main thrust of restoring or replicating the glorious old wooden powerboats from the era when the gasoline engine was capturing

the fancy of Americans on the roads and on the water. Boats beautifully made by many firms in a great variety of designs and styles, elegant yet functional. Boats built before boating became a mass public recreation and thus became consumer boats, anonymous plastic affairs that function very well, like appliances, but lack the individuality and character of these earlier craft.

THE RACERS: Top: Looking for a place to park is BABY RUMRUNNER, restored Gold Cup winner in 1924 and 1925. Middle left: RAINBOW heads out for a photo session. Middle right: DELPHINE comes in, her driver delighted with having made "a lot of noise." Bottom left: The massive naval bronze steering mechanism on RAINBOW. Bottom right: Walter Fullam drove this outboard racer to a championship in 1928, still has her complete and original.





Chapin at the helm. Friend Ginny Dutcher has first refusal should LEAL ever be sold. The Fay & Bowen launch is a sociable craft. ALLEGRA was the original name, still flies from the bow flagstaff just ahead of that original brass electric horn.

This Fay & Bowen Keeps on Going

There were ten people in Chapin's launch coming back from Silver Bay on Lake George. We'd all been over to see the Antique & Classic Boat meet there on August 27th "You realize there are TEN people in this boat, Chapin?" one of us asked. "Sure, well that's what she's made for," Chapin rejoined. He should know, he's been cruising around Lake George in LEAL, a 1912 Fay & Bowen inboard launch since the '30's, and knew her before that as a neighbor's boat. Now 82 and retired, Chapin still uses LEAL all summer long, including making Sunday runs to church in Silver Bay with his wife.

Chapin used to be a field service engineer for Sun Oil Co. and his affinity for the internal combustion engine is very obvious as he runs LEAL down the lake. The Fay & Bowen engine is a 1916 model, installed when it came out because it had electric starting. It's a four cylinder flathead and turns about 800 rpm (my guess) just chuffing along at a steady ten knots. "One thumb width is about ten miles an hour," Chapin explains. The lever throttle moves over a comb arc, and by inserting his thumb between the lever and it's idling stop, Chapin knows he's doing ten mph.

On the inlet manifold is a small bleeder valve, one of those gas line shut-offs with a bat handle. Chapin makes fine adjustments in engine rpm as he goes by letting a bit of air in, this slows the engine just a mite without a change

in throttle setting. Periodically he also clears each cylinder by opening the bleeder valve under each of the small priming cups over each piston. It's all out in the open, no cover, we all sat alongside this gray chuffing iron heart, part of the experience.

Up on the foredeck is a brass horn, original equipment. Chapin would occasionally hit the button for the "Ah-Ooo-Gha" of that era, but then with a smile would apologize that it was a bit too shrill, the horn was made for 6 volt system and right now it was hooked up to a 12 volt battery, sort of hurrying up the "Ah-Ooo-Gha". Just ahead of the horn on the bow flagstaff fluttered a green banner announcing, "ALLEGRA."

"That was the name of this boat back when the neighbors owned her in the '20's," Chapin explains. "When my family got her it was depression time and Dad couldn't find all the brass letters for ALLEGRA, so he renamed her LEAL (a local wildflower) with what he did have. Couldn't afford brass letters for a boat in those times." Today the ALLEGRA banner is to please the neighbors (still there) as they look over at Chapin's boathouse.

But the boat is also lovely, even if the engine tends to dominate things. It's a 25 footer, long and narrow, with a torpedo stern. Along both sides run benches with cushions, and all around the back. Up forward is a wheel, as is also alongside the engine. Chapin pre-

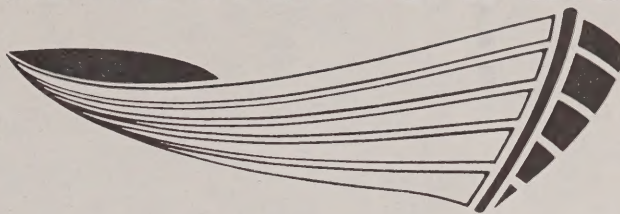
fers to run the launch from that engine location. The deck and interior are varnished, in nice, but not show condition. The topsides are white painted, the bottom green. The exhaust burlles out just at the waterline on the transom.

Enroute home on the 10 mile trip someone suggested we "thread the needle," a narrow passageway amongst several rocky islands in the lake. Chapin took us through, even entered one tiny cove where two modern sailboats were moored, backed and filled LEAL around as the sailboat owners looked on. We struck a rock at one point in the narrows, and one concerned friend suggested he go under to check on prop damage. "No need for that," Chapin shrugged, "she's got a big steel skeg runs right under the prop, and there's no change in the feel of her." Matter of fact. Yes, this is a real antique, been in service just about all her life of 70 years, but, after all, Chapin drives her around the lake routinely. LEAL isn't "saved" for special occasions.

At the Antique & Classic Meet we were moored right up to the dock of the boathouse stern to, along with the other, mostly much more glitteringly restored, longer boats. LEAL wasn't out to win a prize on flash, she was just there because she belonged, as did Chapin Condit, a man and his boat that span the entire era of what we know today as "Antique & Classic," and still going strong.

The Wooden Boat Show is first and foremost a marketplace, bringing together vendors and buyers. But, it is also a gathering place for those who love wooden boats and look forward to meeting others of like mind. In three short years since its inception, this show has acquired a substantial following and a reputation for being a great way to spend a late summer day. As a purely spectator experience, with no intent to buy anything, it was a great value for the \$6 admission. If you were shopping for anything relating to wooden boats, you could find it here, available from vendors who, for the most part, love the boats just as much as you do.

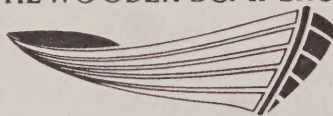
THE WOODEN BOAT SHOW



Top left: Pert Lowell and Ralph Johnson await the crowd. Bottom left: Trying out one of Rob Lincoln's cold molded canoes. Top right: Gannon & Benjamin's CANVASBACK is, "Faster than a speeding duck," according to their advertising. It's a BIG saysailer. Middle right: Bim Randolph talks spars with a prospect. Bottom right: Chris Stickney (right) hopes to develop enough orders to justify renting shop space this winter in expensive Newport.



THE WOODEN BOAT SHOW



TSCA National Meet

An important part of the Wooden Boat Show was the first annual Traditional Small Craft Association National Meet. With the encouragement of the show organizer, Rob Dwelley, TSCA Vice-president John Burke succeeded in recruiting the help of area TSCA members to man membership and information booths, conduct various seminars and displays, and provide on the water opportunities for interested show goers to try out traditional small boats. Over a dozen privately owned small wooden rowing and sailing craft were brought to the show by their owners and made available for tryouts.

The membership and information booth talked with large numbers of interested persons and signed up many new and renewal members. It was a big boost in the current effort to rejuvenate the Association. Displays on oar making, sail rig types, and building a stitch and glue kayak drew much attention. A seminar on coastal cruising drew some interest also.

The chance to try out some traditional watercraft was the most popular activity, albeit with some concern at times over the heavy boat traffic in the channel next to the dock. Normally a

"gas station" for passing boats, the dock was closed during the show to traffic and instead held the tryout boats. In a way it was a bit like trying out a new ten speed bike on a rush hour highway, but everyone made out okay. The access to the boats was controlled by volunteer workers who made certain the persons taking the boats out had basic understanding of what they were doing. Mostly it was a rowing exercise as sailing in the busy channel and crowded nearby anchorage was tricky indeed.

Traditional small craft are defined by the Association as boats designed for use with sail, oar or paddle, prior to the advent of the internal combustion engine. While wooden boats are obviously preferred, boats of the older designs built in modern materials are welcomed. The TSCA is a national group with a number of growing regional chapters. Membership costs at present \$10 per year and includes the quarterly newsletter THE ASH BREEZE. In the water meets and winter indoor gatherings are held in various areas by TSCA chapters and members.

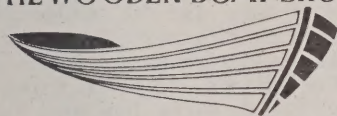
If you wish to know more, contact the Traditional Small Craft Association, P.O. Box 350, Mystic, CT 06355.

Top left: Bob LaVertue's sailing canoe was an eye catcher. Bottom left: Tryout boats on dock when not in use. Bottom right: Ron Ginger and Bart Hawthaway talk canoes.





THE WOODEN BOAT SHOW



Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. it was showdown time for the quick and dirty boatbuilders of the Sika Challenge. Out on the water off the dock at the Newport Yachting Center a half dozen quaint and awkward looking little boats were racing it out for seaworthiness, a row upwind, a sail down and then a row back up to the dock. All this in a busy channel on a busy summer Newport Sunday at America's Cup time. Sort of like running a pedalbike race on the thruway at rush hour.

Well, while the struggle went on out there, a moment of true democracy arrived. Looming up the channel came one of those multi-storied floating condominiums, a huge powerboat with alongside a 12 meter racing yacht. One of the big boys, serious stuff. As this equipe threatened to barge right into the midst of the pathetic little plywood craft desperately battling the lop of the traffic, the assembled crowd on the dock and nearby floats began to shout at the looming megaboat and shake fists. The roar caught the attention of the skipper, and lo, he backed off, to resounding cheers. The race went on undisturbed.

First boat to finish was a very substantial looking dory built and raced by Chris Fabiszak and Lou Sauzedde,

Left: The building contest, foreground the catamaran, background the proa.
Right: Overall winners Husher and Cole and their scow ketch.

SIKA Challenge

professional boatyard men. She had taken the lead right off, rowed well and sailed well, considering the 2 hour 50 minute construction time. But they were closely harrassed all the way by the flat bottomed scow design built by Neil Husher and Gary Gallagher. And this craft ended up as the Sika Cup winner, as they had the best overall ranking, second fastest in the race, second fastest to build.

"We knew we'd be up against the pros again," explained Husher, an architect from Cambridge, Mass. "so we chose a design that would minimize the need for professional building skills and still work well." Enter the Bolger-like scow, and with its split rig it sailed very well indeed, the dory could not get away from it on the downwind leg, and only a bit of hassle dropping the rig for the final rowing leg opened a small gap.

The Glues Brothers had another proa type, it floated but didn't go very fast. A twin hulled catamaran arrived dead last at the dock, decks awash, with frantic calls for pulling it out before it sank. One hull had been taking on water steadily and it was fast becoming the "Green Submarine" by the race's end.

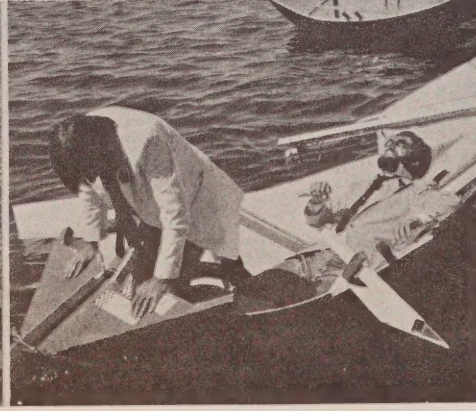
Then there were the two guys in tuxedos in the funny little craft that looked like the stern had been folded back

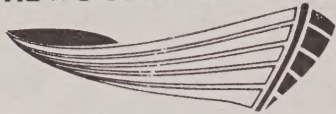
in over the boat. It didn't work very well, and they were two exhausted guys at the finish in the almost dead heat with the sinking cat.

The Sika Cup went to Husher and Gallagher, with Brad Cole a third man in as sailing companion to Husher. The victory was particularly sweet for Husher, as he's no boatbuilder. While they indulged in the victor's champagne, Fabiszak and Sauzedde were out in the bay sailing the dory. For a boat built in under three hours this was a pretty complete and actually useful craft, sturdy, seaworthy, even looking not bad if it was a hundred yards away.

The whimsy involved in this notion of John Hanson's (WOODEN BOAT magazine's ad manager) nicely contrasted with the perhaps a bit too serious tone of respect that envelopes the really nicely built serious wooden boats. And the way that a non-builder could construct a craft quick to build, and useful to sail was encouragement to any would-be amateur builder. Sika seems to work too, the boats are stuck together with it, and some really awful fits are sealed shut. The leaking catamaran? Well, yes, they missed a place with the stickum pucky in the haste of building.

Left: The Fabiszak/Sauzedde dory is really a useful craft. Center: The "Green Submarine" frantically heads for the dock in sinking condition. Right: Two weary dudes collapse, last to finish in unique folded over stern, windsurfer rigged craft.





Talking with the Trade

Ken Steinmetz has unearthed the boat show equivalent to the "tire kicker" of the automobile world. Ken decided to stand right beside his Culler rowing skiff ROBERT D on the last day of the show in a serious effort to encourage someone to buy the boat. He had already sold a beautiful 18 foot sailboat and sort of wanted to go home empty handed (of boats). "You know what just about every one who stopped at the boat (out in the center of the aisle through the tent) ended up doing?" Ken asked us rhetorically. "They flipped the oarlocks in and out a few times." So there you have it. At the wooden boat show it was the "oarlock flipper" rather than the "tire kicker." Interesting market research.

Ken was pretty happy with the show, last year he'd sold a boat on hand and subsequently taken orders for several more as a result of being there. "The follow-up is what is important," he tells you.

Tom Hill sold several of his small lovely double paddle canoes, he was feeling pretty good about things. These came in under \$1000 each at his pricing system of \$90 a foot. The show was a good investment for him of time and money.

The Randolph family of Randolph Boatworks, sparmakers, were back this year. "We went home last year feeling pretty encouraged from all the interest," said Easy Randolph, "but then nothing happened most of the fall, it wasn't until winter that we started to see some results. I'm knocking on wood."

"Well, we've taken to an awful lot of people," commented Ralph Johnson of Pert Lowell Co., makers of mast hoops, and builders of wooden Town Class day-sailers. "But we haven't sold much." Much what? Well, they had some of their mast hoop trinkets on hand, coasters, coffee table tops, mirrors, all framed with real mast hoops. People weren't buying much in the way of trinkets. It was a serious boat crowd. And inquiries

on the Townie and on the new line of traditional wooden blocks might bring in future business. "It's a lot more exposure than the equivalent amount of money spent on a small ad in the major magazines," was Ralph's view. Pert had been around until Sunday. Then, he said, "Got to get home to go to work Monday morning, pay for this vacation!"

Chris Stickney had his 11' yacht tender outdoors, the least expensive space. Chris was hoping to generate enough interest in his work to line up something for the coming winter. His simple cardboard sign and snapshots belied the low budget he had to operate on, yet here he was at the show as an exhibitor. "The cost of renting work space here in Newport is pretty high," Chris explained. "I really need to have some firm orders lined up before I go ahead and rent space."

Howard Mittleman of North River Boatworks in Albany, New York sat in a chair on the float opposite his North River Skiff moored in the water. The space was less expensive than in under the tents, and the in the water setting has its charms if it doesn't rain. The 15' rowing skiff, nicely made, was priced at \$2000 and Howard hadn't sold it yet when we talked with him on Saturday. "Well, of course I wanted to sell it," he replied to our inquiries, "but I figure if I get enough interest here maybe an order will come in later on." Howard works full time on wooden boats, but mostly on repair work. He earlier had tried to market Swampscott dories, but says, "If I had to live on that market, I'd not have lasted long." He still offers the Swampscott to order.

Not far from Howard in the same mooring area was a Swampscott dory builder who has made it work. Mike Porter of Chebeague Island, Maine had one of his Swampscotts also in the water. For about \$3600 you could sail or row this nicely made, workboat finished boat home. Mike did not sell the boat at the show. "Maybe about 6 or 8 of the inquiries we had here will come to anything,

Mike's wife stated. "We find that's the way it seems to work. Yes, it's worth it being here, but winter will tell the story."

The show has a small scattering of non-boat related displays, and I don't think they do well at all. People came to our booth, next to which was the Hammond Organ people, and asked us why that sort of display was even here. The organ man must have wondered too, as he had precious little interest at all in the four days. The people who come to the Wooden Boat Show seem to be serious about wooden boats. They don't patronize the trinket displays and the unrelated equipment, nor the engine people much either it seems. They do spend a lot of time with the builders, and the suppliers of useful wooden boat gear. The photographers and the artists had slim pickings, our artist friend reported. And, as we've illustrated with a few random inquiries, the builders seem to be banking more on future orders than on show sales. They aren't offering "Show Specials" implying big price cuts if you buy at the show. They can't. The prices in most cases represent real values cut close to the bone. Wooden boat building is labor intensive and thus costly. The already established builders familiar to readers of WOODEN BOAT or SMALL BOAT JOURNAL did more business, not surprising. The new guys, the hopefuls, being at the show was for them an initial step in gaining some of that identity that will attract the conservative sort of person who seems to fall in love with wooden boats.

As Ralph Johnson had commented, the cost of a booth (he had two) is so reasonable that it is excellent exposure for anyone making anything that has real value and interest to wooden boat enthusiasts. It's a great time to say hello and shake hands with people who may later become valued customers. The atmosphere is so pleasant that it generates the feeling of the "vacation" that Ralph's father-in-law and partner, Pert Lowell, commented on. Such nice people, so much enthusiasm.

Mike Porter talks about his Swampscott dory. Bill Clements discusses his skiff. James Hanna talks canoes.



The Adirondack Guideboat Show

Report by Kathleen Ivimey

Photos by Bob MacIntyre & Paul Meyer



The 3rd Annual Adirondack Guideboat Show at Saranac Lake, NY was held over the July 4th weekend in conjunction with the Willard Hammer Guideboat and Canoe races. Over 200 participants entered the race, and the show displayed seventeen guideboats along with builders' tools and historical materials.

Thirteen guideboat builders were represented along with apprentice builders from the local community college. The earliest boat, built in 1880 in Long

Lake by Caleb Chase predated the newest, built last winter by just over 100 years. Fifteen of the boats were traditional, two of modern fiberglass versions.

Video and tape/slide presentations of guideboat building, a display of 19th century hand tools, raw materials such as spruce roots for frames, 19th century photos, art related to these craft, demonstrations of seat caning, and guideboat rides in the adjacent lake rounded out

the seven day show.

A trading post was set up for those interested in buying or selling guideboats, with a number of listings.

The Guideboat Show and the Hammer Race were sponsored by the Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce and attracted 2500 persons to view this display of craft indigenous to upstate New York. The 1984 show will take place June 28th through July 4th at the town hall in Saranac Lake.



SPRAY arrived in Rockport, Mass. the last week of August, and we went over to visit owners Ed Davis and Sue Mehrstens to have a look at the realization of this particular dream. It was too late in the day for a sail, and their schedule required their moving on next morning towards homeport of Southwest Harbor, Maine, so it would have to be just a look-see at the fruits of five years of a labor of love.

Ed Davis started building SPRAY in 1978 after years of contemplating the project, years which included visiting the actual site outside of New Bedford where Slocum restored his SPRAY before setting out on his historic solo circumnavigation. Ed started by going out into his woodlot and felling trees for timber for the job. He was no stranger to this right-from-scratch approach, as he had been supporting himself building log houses right from standing trees. He set up his SPRAY project next to the one room log cabin he had built in the woods in West Tremont on the west side of Mt. Desert Island, the side the tourists don't get to very much.

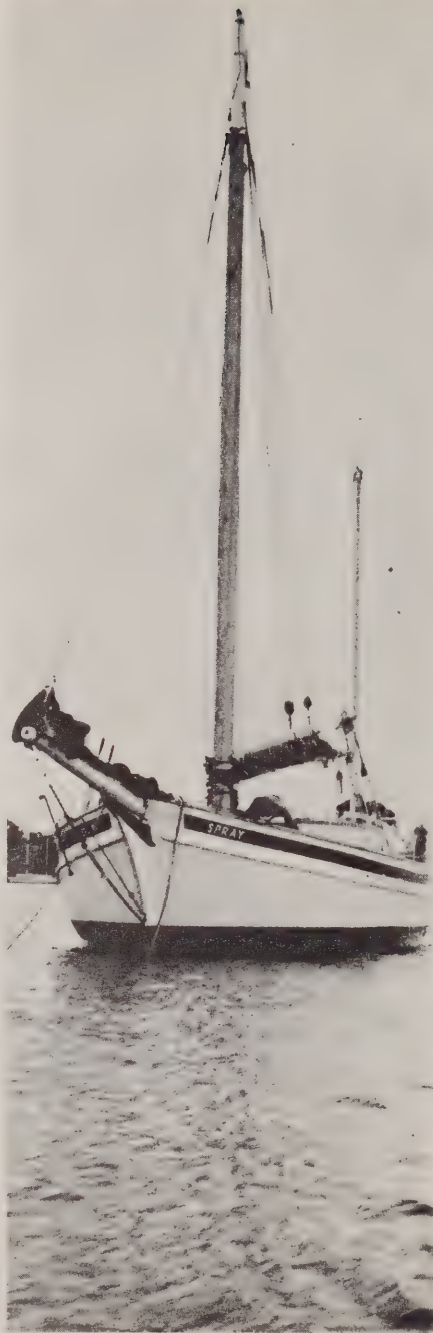
Ed had a small workshop in which he could fabricate bits and pieces, but SPRAY was to take shape outdoors. The first winter Ed had no heat in the shop, when his hands got frozen too stiff, he'd cup the 60 watt light bulb in them until they thawed.

The second winter Ed had a wood stove, and SPRAY had a winter shed over the now framed and partly planked hull, a structure of strapping and plastic, within which on sunny days it got comfortably warm.

When the hull was completed, Ed had it moved to the shore on his family's land at Goose Cove, skidded over a mile of gravel road behind a friend's dump truck, across the pavement and into the field at water's edge, above a fairly gentle sloping ledge. Here Ed constructed the ways for the launching to come, and SPRAY was set up on the ways for finishing off.

Ed had been working pretty much alone up until this point, with occasional help from family and friends. Now he was joined by his new bride, Sue Mehrstens in the final 18 months of feverish finishing off. As they say, building the hull is only 20% of the work. True. They worked hard to get the deck on and the cabin closed in before winter so they could carry on in the cold weather with interior jobs. Come spring, it was outside again for the last rush to be ready for the launching in August. Those final months were just total immersion, as soon as school closed at the College of the Atlantic where Sue teaches, she joined Ed in the nearly round the clock last minute efforts.

The August launching was some affair. Ed and Sue had done no publicizing of this project, but area newspapers had heard of it, and on launch day a crowd of some 500 was on hand to share the moment. Sue read her poetic summation of what this all meant to them, and then one of Ed's lobstermen brothers jockeyed his lobsterboat into place below SPRAY and a cable was hooked up



SPRAY... Perseverance Prevailed

to haul her down the ways. At the bow a friend's bulldozer sat with snubbing chain to keep SPRAY from taking off too fast.

No danger of that. SPRAY didn't want to budge. The lobsterboat yanked and yanked to no avail. Then Ed went forward and jumped on the bowsprit just as one more yank was applied, and down she came to the cheers of the assembled throng. The event made the front page

of the Bangor newspaper, large photo and all. "We were so aimed at that launching that we didn't really think much about what was left undone," Sue will tell you. "But we had a commitment to take out a group from COA right after Labor Day and we still had no ballast in her, nor was she rigged." The big lobsterboat diesel was running, but a universal joint was still needed to tie it to the prop.

The ballasting was solved by recruiting many of the youngsters who were to go on the first cruise. The group effort cleared the nearby beach of suitable stones, but space ran out with SPRAY still floating several inches too high. The spar was put in over at Southwest Harbor by a local boatyard, the rigging was setup and only two days late SPRAY was away on her first cruise.

Now a summer later she was enroute home from her first extended trip, Ed and Sue sailed directly to Nantucket from Southwest Harbor and were taking the coastal route home. Both were delighted with their craft, she was just as Ed had long read of in Slocum's book. True, the interior was unfinished, but did provide spacious accommodations for two. The diesel was used reluctantly and only out of serious necessity because it was pretty loud still sitting right there in the living area.

Sue has a skipper's license so they charter out groups up to 6 for day trips around Mt. Desert, many are environmentally oriented as Sue teaches environmental science, along with navigation and history at COA. Until they left in late July for their summer cruise, they had been busy since May with locally available charter groups, even without any publicity, just word of mouth. In 1984 they will spend August at home chartering because of the growing demand. Sue recalls a favorite amongst the charters, one in which they took a honeymoon couple out for the afternoon and provided locally caught (by Ed's family) lobster dinner with all appropriate trimmings. A nice personal touch.

This coming winter SPRAY will get her stone ballast replaced by concrete filled with iron boiler punchings, to get her down to her load waterline. The interior also is scheduled to be completed. By spring of 1984 this downeast replica of SPRAY will be pretty much complete. Built by the hand of a man with a dream out of timber from his own woodlot, helped by a woman who also believed in that dream, this SPRAY is not only a monument to the romance of old time boats that afflicts many of us, but also to the motto, "Perseverance Prevails". If you ever were interested in Joshua Slocum and his SPRAY, you might want to look into a day trip with Sue and Ed this coming summer out of Southwest Harbor. They can handle parties up to 6, the price is very reasonable, and the experience can be arranged to suit your preferences within the limits of what can be seen or done in a day around Southwest Harbor.

Interested? Write to Sue Mehrstens & Ed Davis, P.O. Box 725, Southwest Harbor, ME 04679.

Biggest Hoops Yet!

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

The Pert Lowell Co. consists of two men, Pert Lowell and his son in law, Ralph Johnson. They work in a little shop on the shore of the Parker River in Newbury, Massachusetts. Mostly they make mast hoops, something Pert's been doing since World War II. They also now have begun building the famed Town Class sloop again in wood, to order. Pert built the first of the Townies back in the '30's, working then for his father, Marcus Lowell. Pert worked on the very first Townie just over 50 years ago, and today, at 76, he's still at it.

In July just past Pert and Ralph have just completed the biggest order for the biggest mast hoops they have ever built, 50 hoops of 3 foot diameter to go on the west coast historic schooner, C.A. THAYER. The THAYER belongs to the San Francisco Maritime State Historical Monument and is on display there. She ended her days of commercial sail in 1950, and after a brief commercial venture as a "pirate" ship in the northwest, came into the possession of the state. The THAYER was built in 1895 as a lumber schooner, later worked as a fishing schooner in the Bering Sea, and continued to function hauling cargo until 1950, the very last of the west coast sailing fleet, an anachronism by the time she was retired and the object of much press attention as a result.

The restorers came to Pert Lowell for the new mast hoops to fit on those towering spars because Pert's just about the only source for the real thing, red oak hoops wound up on forms after boiling in hot water to soften the wood. Pert's usual trade runs in the 6" to 15" size range, the largest previous hoops were



24 inch diameter. So these monsters required some improvisation to make.

The red oak was delivered from the sawmill in 30 foot lengths, sawn 1" by 2". Each of these strips would become a single hoop. Now, there's a mathematical issue involved in a hoop of this scale. The inside diameter of 34" is 5" smaller than the outside diameter after the 1" thick stock is rolled around the form two and a half times. The circumference is thus about 15" longer on the outside than the inside. This means the oak has to compress on the inside and stretch on the outside a combined total of these 15". Well, that just aint possible, the wood fractures.

So, before the boiling, Pert saws the wood lengthwise on its 1" dimension into two 1/2" by 2" strips, leaving one end still joined for a few inches. Now the wood can creep along itself as it is wound onto the form more easily. Next boiling. Pert doesn't steam, he boils. It doesn't discolor the wood as much and the wood is easier to handle hot from the tank barehanded. Yes, barehanded. After 40 years . . .

Well, Pert's tank was 16' long. How to boil 30'? He made a shallow wooden trough, attached it to one end of the stainless tank, (itself a shallow trough, set up on a slight incline. A pump was installed to pump boiling water from the tank to the far end of the wooden trough where it would run down over the oak strip back into the main tank. A half hour of this and the wood was ready.

Now to bend the hoop. The uncut end of the split strip was fastened to the edge of the 34" diameter form, just a wooden wheel actually. The far end was held by Pert on the floor to keep the two parts aligned in the 2" dimension. Ralph and another strong helper brought in for the occasion then "rolled" the form along the floor on top of the oak strip, rolling the oak onto the form as they went. It took all their might to keep it tight and in line. When they arrived at Pert, a waiting screw was fastened through the oak to hold it. Of course the inner "section" of the split strip went on around the form further than the outer as the difference in circumference manifested itself.

The hoop was then removed from the form and set aside to dry. Later it would be through bolted permanently, sanded smooth, oiled and readied for varnishing.

They did this 60 times, making extra hoops because sometimes the wood is just about all wound on when "crack", the oak lets go in a weak spot. Even though it was specially ordered clear stock, hidden flaws do exist in the wood.

So when the sails are hauled aloft on those three towering masts, they'll be riding up on these hoops made right here in New England in what has got to be one of our most unique remaining "old ways" specialty workshops. If ever you are in need of real mast hoops, Pert Lowell's the man to see, he's made them from 3" on up diameter, reasonably priced, just the way they used to be made. Pert Lowell Company is located at Lane's End in Newbury, Mass, just off Rt. 1A at the Parker River bridge. The phone number is (617) 462-7409.



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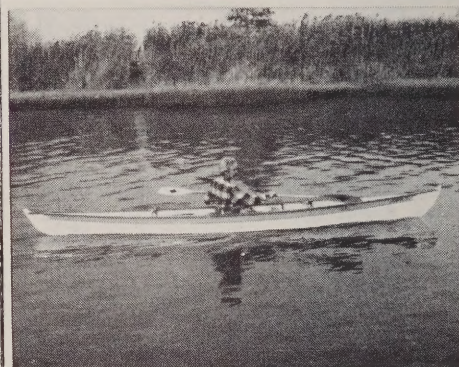
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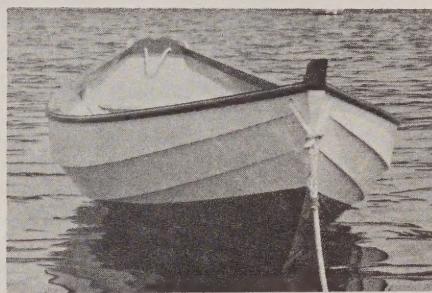
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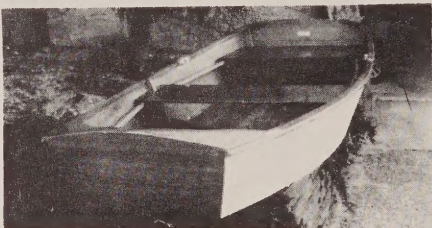
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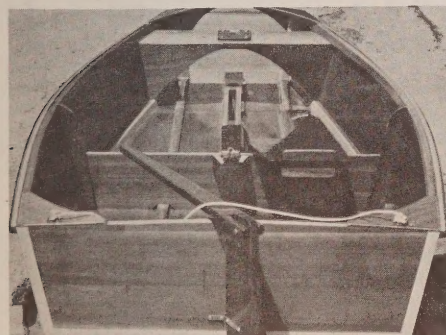
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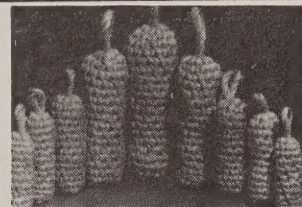
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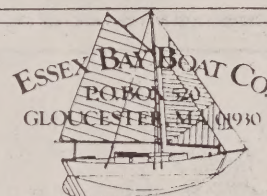
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IF AT ANY TIME YOU FEEL THAT "MESSING ABOUT
IN BOATS" ISN'T OF FURTHER INTEREST, JUST LET
US KNOW, WE'LL REFUND THE UNUSED PORTION
OF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FEE, NO HASSLE!