



messing about in BOATS

Special Feature This Issue
"Travels With Sweat Pea & Poly"

Volume 11 - Number 21

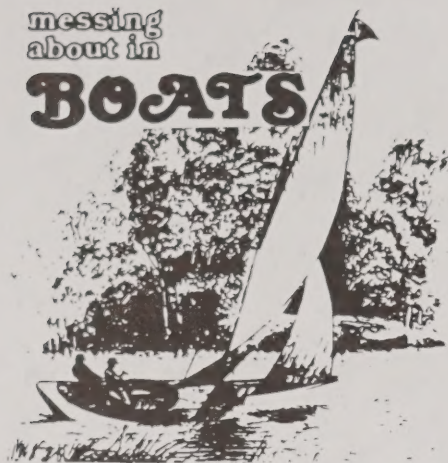
March 15, 1994

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**messing
about in**

BOATS



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Our Next Issue...

Will catch up Jim Thayer's report on Urbanna '93 by way of encouraging you to maybe go this year, Bunny Fernald's nostalgia on travels from the banks of the Parker River in Ould Newbury, Massachusetts to the Moscow canal, Tom Doane's discussion of "Historical Designs of Small Craft" and Hans Waecker's discussion of rerigging his Bolger Windsprint will have its day in print. Then on to the not yet promised titles.

"Ghosting & Gunkholing" by John Smolenski describes a special sail with his nine year old son; Andy Petrisko tells of the delights of sailing in a friend's six-year project in "David's Delight"; Dave Follansbee discusses racing a keelboat vs. a flat bottom boat in "Tortoise & Hare", and Burt Van Dusen, Jr. recalls a youthful adventure with a hurricane aboard the old family cabin cruiser, "Robin S".

Moving on, Don Betts brings us a report on multi-oared rowing plans for New York City in "Floating the Apple", and William White describes in detail foaming in flotation for his converted old steel lifeboat/sailboat. Jim Thayer details his solution to truck topping in "A Mind Bent, a Back Saved", and Ernest Murphy provides us with several handy techniques to apply to instant boat building.

The design file will provide what we can fit in of the following: Tony Dias' Small Craft Designs, Pygmy Boat's Wineglass Dory, Joe Pallazola's Harbor Seal, Phil Bolger's 32' Camper/Daysailor, and Joe Reisner's description of "The Oldest Tug in the Coast Guard."

On the Cover...

Hugh Horton's "Sweat Pea" at rest near Cedar Key, Florida, just one port of call in Hugh's narrative of last year's major outings in "Travels With Sweat Pea & Poly", which gets a lot of room in this issue, to perhaps help awaken our winter stunned dreams of the coming season.

Commentary

In the February 1st issue I offered on this page to send out a dozen or so copies of books I had received for reviewing which I would not be going to get to read for a variety of reasons. It seemed to me that perhaps some of you would like to take a crack at book reviewing and end up with the books.

Good guess. They all went out of here within a few days about a week after that issue went into the mail. Then the awkward aspect surfaced. Your calls and letters kept on coming in long after the early birds had laid claim to what I had. Obviously many of you are indeed interested in reviewing this sort of books and are not intimidated at the thought of subsequently writing a review. I'm sorry that all of you who were too late to call or write lost out, but maybe we can still get you involved.

As an aside, most of you who called too late did so the day you received that issue. It went into the mail on January 28th and calls were still coming in the week of February 14th. This proved to be very illustrative of the widely differing times that each of you get your magazines. Several readers from New York city and nearby New Jersey were amongst the very latest callers, again pointing up the abysmal delivery of mail in that overpopulated area. I've found that a 1st Class letter to New York City takes 6 to 8 days to get there from here near Boston!

All of you who missed out have gone onto a list I set up here for future reviews. Since I struck gold in my effort to pass off this task I had no time to perform, it seems to me I should pursue this new resource which has arisen, and encourage more review copies of appropriate books from the various publishers who urge me to review them. I have been hesitant simply because I knew I wasn't going to get around to them all, or even to the few with direct personal interest for me. Now I have a "team"!

There is going to be a short (I expect) delay in implementing this new plan as I wish to await some of the early reviews that should come in from this first batch of books. I want to see if the enthusiasm displayed in this initial response for reading

and reviewing does indeed result in timely reviews. I'm not in a hurry and am not pressuring anyone to rush out a review but I hope this whole scheme might get up some momentum so there'll be a fairly consistent flow of reviews coming in as books go out.

How can I be confident I'll get worthwhile reviews, some might wonder? Doesn't a book reviewer have to be some sort of erudite professional? Not for this magazine, in this game, in my view. I have long valued the opinions of the consumer in such matters, the people who buy the product and use it are the ones I want to hear from. In the case of the books we get to read on this boating topic, I'm even more certain we'll get good insights, for we're not trying to evaluate great literature or fiction. Just the facts!

So, assuming what starts to come in from this first round of book launchings results in a promising potential, I'll send off my latest lists to those publishers who solicit our reviews, for I will be able to show them I'm not just ignoring their products. There are many, many books being published about all aspects of boating today, and even those that directly relate only to our interest in small boats are proliferating. The appetite for information seems to be insatiable.

There is another aspect of this hunger for information that cannot be serviced with this approach. That is the matter of fairly recent books that are no longer in print. I mentioned one book I planned to hang onto, not only for review, but also because it directly pertained to my Typhoon project, "Upgrading Your Small Sailboat for Cruising". One reader replied that the book is now out of print (I've had my copy about a year, one that I bought for myself, not just for review) and that if I ever wanted to unload it he'd buy it. Well, how do we deal with books many of us might find useful that can no longer be purchased?

I suggest we set up yet another subsection in the classifieds where readers can run free want ads for books, or offer book swaps, or even loans, although that has its perils I'm told. I've loaned a lot of books and they've come back but I hear of those whose precious books are lost and gone forever, dreadful sorry. If this notion catches your fancy, just send on your own wants or offers and we'll start it going, see what happens. Please do limit this to appropriate marine titles and don't send me the attic book collection cleanout list. There's something about free classified ads that seems to encourage stretching the limits a bit.





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Your boat is less than 16' so you meet requirements for PFD's (life jackets) by carrying a Type IV "throwable" cushion for each person on board, right? Not any more. There was a change in the regulations as of October 1, 1993 and now ALL VESSELS, whatever their size, must carry a "wearable" Type I, II or III life jacket (PFD) for each person onboard. That includes a PFD of the proper size for any child onboard. As in the past, vessels over 16' must carry, IN ADDITION to the wearable PFD's, one Type IV "throwable" (cushion, ring buoy or horseshoe) which must be "immediately available".

The change in regulations will not be news to regular readers of "Messing About in Boats" as it was anticipated in a letter to the editor last summer, and the change makes a great deal of sense. Nearly 50% of boating fatalities occur on the smaller boats, those less than 16'.

So much for the regulations: Now a word about safety. PFD's are of absolutely no use unless they are being worn. When a large vessel goes down there is often a little time to find the jackets and prepare to abandon ship. Not so in our small boats which can capsize in a matter of seconds. The real answer to small boat safety is to

wear a PFD at all times. The Coast Guard, the Auxiliary, the Corps of Engineers and a good percentage of commercial tug and barge crews set the example. We recreational boaters can take a lesson from them.

PFD's do not have to be uncomfortable. My personal favorite for inshore work is a Type III vest. Several companies make a good ones at reasonable prices. They are comfortable, do not restrict movement and are not excessively hot for warm summer days. Whatever make or type of PFD you prefer, take a few moments on shore to break it out of its plastic wrappings and adjust the straps so it fits you. Then mark your own PFD and those of your regular crew with your name in large letters. Coast Guard regulations for offshore commercial fishing boats now require this identification and it makes sense. A PFD adjusted for a 115 pound woman will not be immediately helpful to a 215 pound man and seconds can count!

Finally, if you elect not to wear your PFD all the time, make sure it is truly "immediately accessible" and not buried under other gear in the cuddy cabin or at the bottom of a locker. The life you save may be your own.



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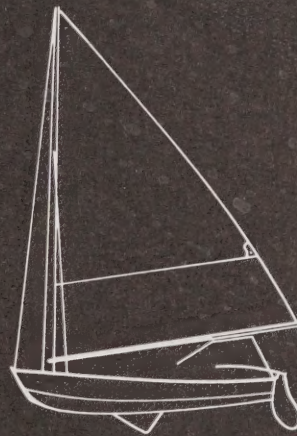
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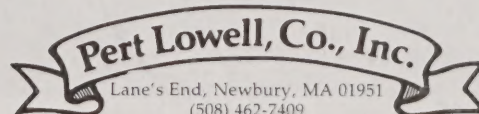
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ANYONE KNOW ABOUT THE DANUBE?

Do any readers have any knowledge of the Danube? I realize rowing it is nothing new. A while ago I suggested to my girl friend that we row/sail down the Danube in the summer of '95, politics permitting.

I rowed five years as stroke in schoolboy racing 40 years ago and have a sliding seat rig in a 16' Shew & Burnham Whitehall. The creek in front of my house provides ideal water. I see it every day. It calls.

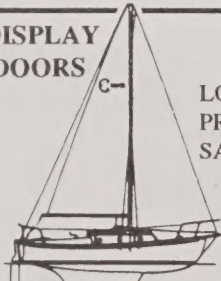
I've started my research by reading of J. MacGregor's passage in the 13th Edition of a "Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on Rivers and Lakes of Europe, 1881". I still need to know what sort of boat would be best suited for three to go down this river of 2,000 miles to the Black Sea? I would want two rowing stations and some sail. I don't expect to overnight aboard on a regular basis but it should provide the option. I want a light open boat, no cabin.

Sidney H. Dickson, 8821 Dawson Rd., St. Michaels, MD 21663.

"THE CHINESE SAILING RIG"

Recent mention of Derek Van Loan's book "The Chinese Sailing Rig", which we published, has brought inquiries from your readers. I would like readers to know that the price of the book (not mentioned) is \$15.95 plus \$1.75 S&H.

Matt Moorhouse, Paradise Cay Publishing Co., Box 20, Middletown, CA 95461.



**ON DISPLAY
INDOORS**

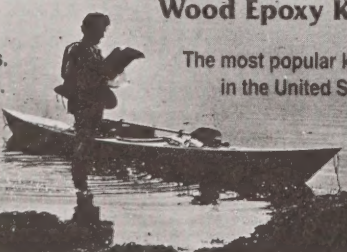
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Your Commentary

A TREASURE CHEST

I really enjoy two kinds of articles: Stories about people designing and building their own boats, especially the quick and dirty variety that can be built in several weekends; and stories of them using and enjoying the boats they have built.

I think it is particularly interesting when the writers include evaluations of the safety and seaworthiness of their creations. I am interested in knowing how they handle in heavy weather, how they point when sailing, changes they would make if they had to do it over again, what kind of paint they used, evaluations of different types of glue, innovative anchoring procedures, unusual products that they have adapted for use in building the boat and different ways of making the mast and sails.

It is especially fascinating if they can use some product usually used for some other purpose and adapt it, at a much lower cost, for small boat use. A good example of this was a tip I read about on your "Your Commentary" pages about the use of Ultra Set in repairing the skin of aging Folboats. Ultra Set is a waterproof underlay used for laying ceramic tile. Another tip that was great was a device described by the author of a story about building what he called a Pick-up Punt. It was a rod extending from the cockpit coaming to the edge of the leeboard to keep it vertical in the water. The leeboard was equipped with shock

cords so that it was self-retracting if an obstacle was encountered.

Another instance was the use of a series of octagonal rollers to turn over a heavy hull. By turning only a few degrees at a time, and by using tackle suspended from the rafters plus a stoppers, the process could be controlled and one man could do what would ordinarily take many. It is things like these that make your magazine so valuable. It is a treasure chest of people solving problems. Unfortunately, there few examples of this on the boating scene.

Bill Irwin, Amite, LA.

ABOUT GUNDALOWS

There are two publications about gundalows that I know of. "The Piscataqua River Gundalow", John P. Adams, Box 144, Durham, NH 03824 (9"x6" horizontal, 43 page, illus., soft cover) and "The Piscataqua Gundalow: Workhorse for a Tidal Basin Empire", Richard E. Winslow III, The Portsmouth Marine Society, Box 147, Portsmouth, NH 03801 (7"x10" vertical, 164 pages, illus., hardbound). I do not know if these are still in print or what their present prices may be, if available.

From time to time I have taken photos of the gundalow "The Captain Edward H. Adams", mostly at York, ME, and never under sail.

Fourtin Powell, Rockland, ME.

LOOKING FOR "AENEAS"

While on a recent charter in the Florida Keys I met a very interesting fellow from Saskatchewan who goes by the name of "Aeneas" (that's right, just like the Trojan hero). He had built one of Bolger's Birdwatchers up in the frozen north and trailered it to Florida Bay where he embarked on a leisurely cruise of the Keys.

Like many home builders he had modified the design somewhat but unlike most his changes were truly improvements. If anyone reading this should happen to see him sailing around in his boat "Poco", ask him to give me a call.

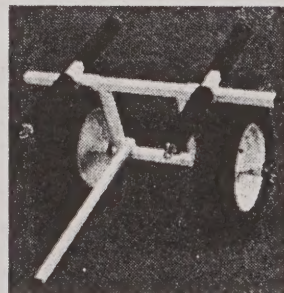
I notice most of the articles in the magazine address more northern activities. I wonder if anyone in my neck of the water shares my interest in wooden boats and small boats in general. If so, I would like to hear from them. If there were enough local involvement we could share ideas and activities with the aim of organizing a local "messabout".

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MANAGING TO BUILD

What I most like about "Messing About in Boats" is the sense it gives me that there are others like me who are managing to build boats despite the handicap of being born with ten thumbs, and lacking the mythical, red-blooded north American male's utter confidence with wood, and his fully equipped workshop, and limitless budget. Like all of muddlers though, I expect, I'm an expert at reading how it should be done.

I am very much an amateur boat-builder, my 20' Drascombe Peter Boat is taking much longer to get itself into the water than either of us had planned on a couple of years ago when we started out together. Maybe this year...but I rather doubt it.

Rev. Merv Skey, Chemainus, BC, Canada.

MY QUIET TIME

I have always believed that if it ain't broke, then don't fix it. "Messing About in Boats" seems to be doing just fine the way it is so why change anything, as some have suggested?

I look forward to each issue and as Charles Raynor said a while back in a letter, "this is my quiet time", to sit down and relax while I look in on what others are building and get to go on trips with Ruth Dunstone, the Birkenheirs, Jim Thayer and Tom in his "Damn Foole", unbeknownst to them.

So keep it up just as you have been doing.

Leston Rice, Warwick, NY.

ST. REGIS CUP

Enclosed is a picture of something that has stirred up my interest. We found this St. Regis Yacht Club cup at a local coin and jewelry shop. The cup intrigued me and after dropping more hints than I should have, my wife gave it to me for Christmas.

The cup is copper with what I suspect is pewter trim. It is approximately 4" high and has a bottom diameter of 4" with a taper to the top diameter of about 3". I have tracked it down to the St. Regis Yacht Club located on Upper St. Regis Lake in the Adirondack region of upstate New York. In fact, it was serendipitous that your December 15th issue arrived shortly after Christmas and featured two articles on the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association which met at Paul Smiths on Lower St. Regis Lake.

After several phone calls it became apparent that this cup is from the St. Regis Yacht Club mentioned above. It was formed in 1897 and has been active every year since, except during the World Wars. The date on the cup is 1913, and the club had already been in existence for 15 years. The burgee sports the club's colors, red and white.

An interesting sidebar is that around 1900, the club commissioned yacht designer Clinton Crane to draw a one-design yacht for the club. He came up with the "Idem" class, a 32 ft. overall, gaff-rigged centerboarder with 600 sq. ft. of sail. The Spaulding-St. Lawrence Boat Company of Ogdensburg, New York built twelve "Idems". To this date, all twelve survive. One is in the Adirondack Museum, and the

LOOKING FORWARD TO SUMMER STEAM

I've brought a small camp trailer and my Old Town canoe here to Florida for my winter stay and will be cruising around at Fort DeSoto Park and on the Suwannee River where I hope to see the old wreck of the steamer "City of Hawkinsville" that is sunken there. Because of my rheumatoid arthritis I use an electric motor in the canoe.

But I will be back up north in March in time to get my steam launch "Uncanoonic" ready for summer. I keep it at my cottage in Goffstown, NH, and am looking forward to messing around in it next summer.

Russ Stearns, St. Petersburg, FL.

63% LESS THAN A PARKING TICKET

Considering that your \$20 price is 63% less than the N.Y.C. parking ticket I recently received, I think the magazine is an even better value than ever. I think it fair to say that rarely has one publisher brought so many people so much pleasure for so little money.

Thanks for many hours of reading pleasure as well as for bringing me a David Montgomery Whitehall skiff and an Old Town sailing canoe that I purchased through your classifieds.

Douglas Heller, New York, NY.

Publisher Comments: I think that Douglas' appreciation extends to all of you who send in the stories that bring us all so much pleasure.

CLOSE TO FINISHING

I am close to finishing building a "Pacific Pelican", designed by Ed Barrow of Los Altos, California. It is midway between the "San Francisco Pelican" and the "Great Pelican", both designed by Bill Short. It has taken more time than I thought it would but I think that is always the case when one undertakes such a project while still commuting to work. And now later, watching my grandchildren after retiring from the daily grind. When I finally finish I will send you some thoughts and pictures of this undertaking. You seem interested in what your readers are doing with their free time if they have any.

Henry Pinson, Attleboro, MA.

Editor Comments: I welcome such stories for "What You are Building". In mid-February we're plumb out, has nobody been building this awful winter?

SUMMER ACCOMMODATIONS ON THE TRAIL

Readers who may be planning to enjoy the Maine Island Trail this coming summer might like to know about our Rutherford Island Hostel in Christmas Cove near Boothbay, Damariscotta and Pemaquid. While originally conceived to accommodate bicycle tourists, its location is ideal for paddlers and small boaters cruising on the Island Trail. We offer bed and a wholesome breakfast for \$15 per person and all proceeds go to support alternate transportation in Maine.

Sandy Vogels, MBTA, 43 Carleton St., Portland, ME 04102.



remaining eleven are on St. Regis Lake. I am told that of those, ten were actively campaigned in the club's racing season last summer.

I am told it is unlikely that this cup was awarded as a prize in an "Idem" race.

During the early 1900's the club's members were affluent and the prizes for the bigger boats were probably silver, and also larger than the cup I have. It has been suggested that this cup was awarded in a junior race, or at most for one of the other, smaller classes.

Leonard Kent, a club member and "Idem" devotee/historian, has the 1907 and 1916 club books. In them are listed the following classes: Jibs & Mainsails, 20 feet; "Idem" Class, 21.9" (racing waterline length); Caboats, 17 to 22 feet; Unrestricted, no length given (probably a small class for juniors).

I would love to have information about the 1913 racing season, but it seems there was an unfortunate accident about 30 years ago in which all the club records went overboard and were lost to the lake. There are no club records left that can give details about that era, or give information about the other class that raced.

I thought I'd pass along this little bit of history. I have no idea how the cup came to be in a shop in Lafayette, Indiana, all the way from the Adirondacks. The shopkeeper has no record of where the cup came from. But it has been an interesting thing to research and each time I look at the cup on the bookshelf, I am given to speculation. If anyone can give me some info that will flesh out this little mystery, I'd certainly enjoy hearing from them. The information I am passing along came from S. Leonard Kent, a club member and "Idem" devotee/historian, and from a 1976 "Wooden Boat" article about the "Idem".

Roger Rodibaugh, 3212 Hendrickson Ln., Lafayette, IN 47905.



Travels with Sweet Pea and Poly

By Hugh Horton

Ninth Annual Cedar Key Boat Meet

The Cedar Key Meet, always the 1st weekend in May, was still unstructured and exceptional. But how could it not be? Friends from other years smiled, new faces beamed. And, of course, the place itself makes it the relaxed event it is.

"Sweet Pea" is a folding boat, a Klepper Aenius I, green-decked with a new tanbark sail. "Poly" refers to polyethylene Hydra Sea Runners and a Sea Twin. All are driven primarily by double-bladed paddles.

Cedar Key's allure has much to do with its critters, a gushing cornucopia of them. This is due to the nutrient stuffed waters of the Suwannee River joining the Gulf, and the mix becoming oxygenated as it sweeps around and through the islands and marshes of the low cape of the Cedar Keys. The result is a challenging, small boat paradise. But its rough edges are oyster-edged channels, rinsed by mixed semi-diurnal tides. These can leave you dry where you were sure the last low tide had plenty of water.

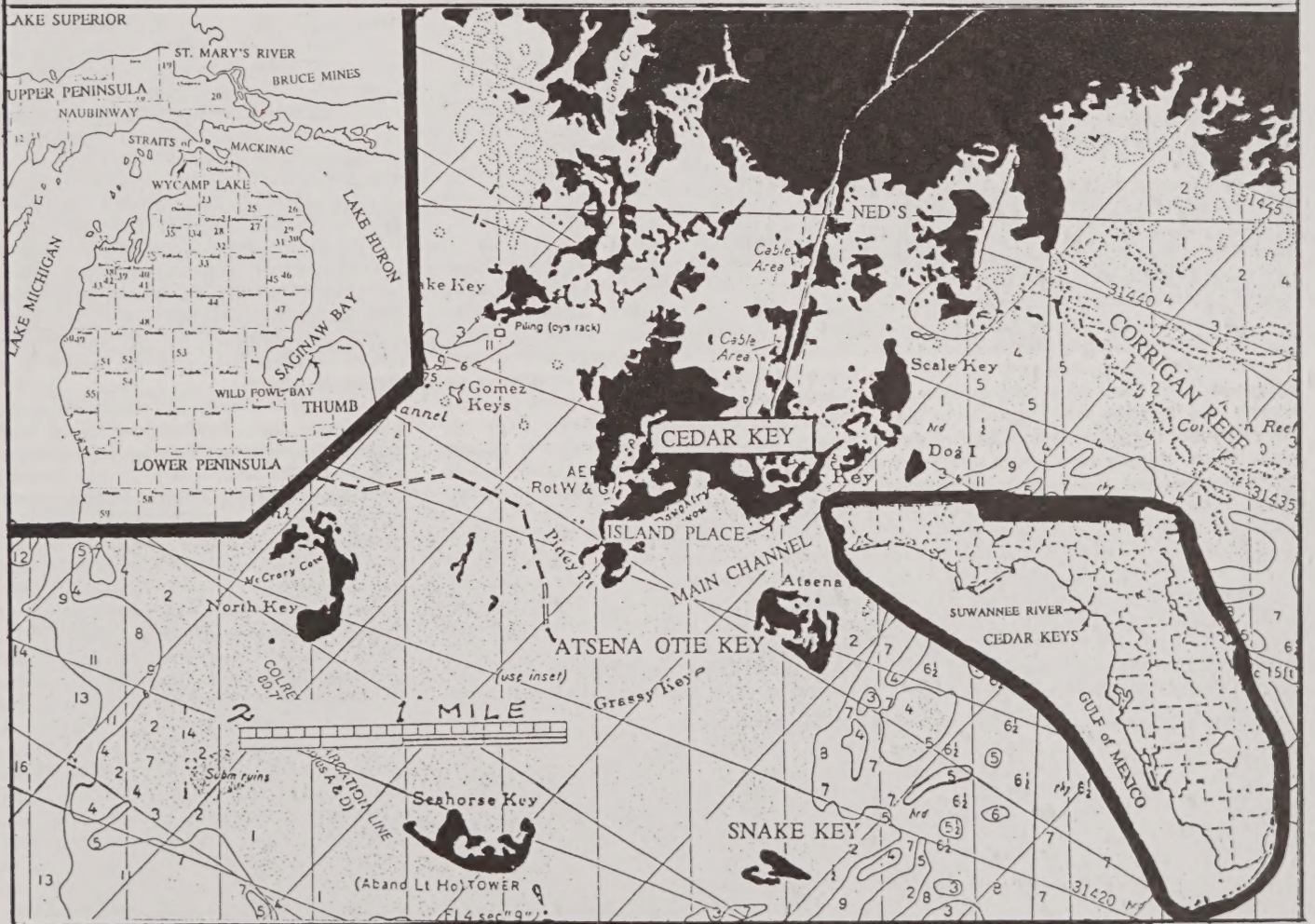
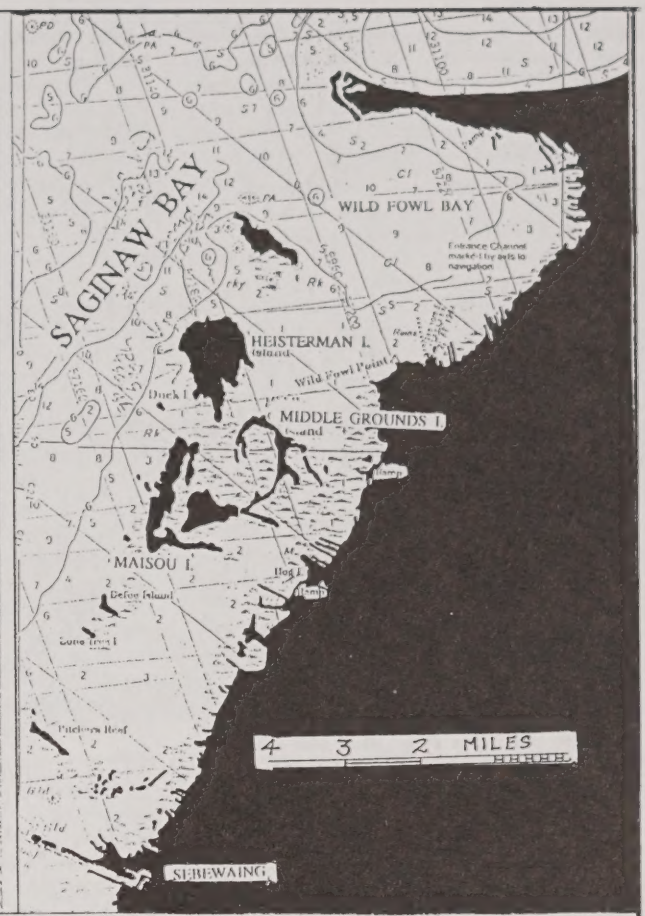
If on a sleep-aboard boat one might say to oneself, "I'll just anchor here in this pool. It's bottom of the 'medium low' right now. The channel

directly under me, even at the 'lower low' in twelve and a half hours, will still have plenty of water." But the whole channel dries out an hour before the 'lower low,' and you're stuck. A paddler might find his or herself in muck, or on grass or oysters, or unprotected by an expected lee.

Sailors and paddlers can play currents to their advantage on daytrips. If it gets breezy, and you ignore currents, you may get wet. Canoes and kayaks will find sheltered water under most winds and tides. Here shoal boats that can be beached are the ticket.

Kayann and I arrived on Sunday April 25th. Monday morning Ron Sell met us at Cook's Cafe, home of the stupendous breakfast spuds. He had driven in from winter's work in Colorado, stopping first at his Michigan home to hitch up the trailer with his Banshee planing dinghy. He brought a Panasonic breadmaker, too. This had made two loaves a day for ski crews all winter, and it continued making at least two a day for all of us, any recipe we could conjure. A particularly toothsome loaf, with a drool inducing aroma of fresh bread and New Mexico, had corn meal, cheese, and green chilis.

Left from the top: Heading out in "Sweet Pea" as seen from the balcony of the Island Place. A Sea Pearl and a Pelican afloat and a Dovekie on the north beach at Atsena Key. Beach boats: Walt and Abbie Winne's 1911 "Claire" in the foreground, behind her are Palmer's Melonseed, Bob and Cardyn Boyd's "Freedom" and two Sea Pearls.



Late that afternoon, in a Sea Runner, Ron joined Kayann and me in the Sea Twin for a paddle to and through Atsena Otie Key, only a half mile across the Main Channel. The breeze was SW 6-8 knots, overcast, in the upper 70's. This key with its compelling inner channel might now be safe from threatened development. It is the only remaining, unprotected, large key. Atsena Otie's inner channel has fascinated me for years. I try to paddle through it at least once a day to check the depth, current direction, and shape of the bottom. Usually the flood flows to the NE, the ebb SW, but the wind, or the stage of the tide, can change this, as when the flood first enters from each end. In the middle, a narrow inner (north) channel often has current flowing opposite that in the principal inner channel.

On this trip, just past the theoretical top of the tide, we see great egrets, reddish egrets and cattle egrets; green-backed herons, tri-color herons, black crowned night herons, and great blue herons; ospreys, cormorants, white ibis and a high soaring frigate bird. Seldom seen (never, in my case) clapper Mils clatter in the grass. By 6:30pm the tide is still running out the NE entrance one and a half hours into the ebb. The flow then takes a hard left into the Main Channel moving at two knots or so W bound.

On Tuesday 1pm it's ENE 8-11, sunny, low 80's. Kayann and I paddle Sea Runners and Ron sails his Banshee. We head E for Corrigan Reef against the wind but with the flood. Ron's 88 square foot una rig pulls him S on port tacks, planing gently. The wind against the flood tide makes a popply little sea which occasionally spatters my eyeglasses. We beach on the oystery islet on Corrigan where I camped three years ago, disembarking then, a stowaway big male jumping spider (*Phidippus audax*). Last year we found a lady *Phidippus*.

Now, though, it's obvious that the "Storm of the Century," locally called the "No-Name Hurricane", washed over the islet. The big prickly pear which last year had over two dozen blooms today has none. The cactus's west, windward side has been pushed east and looks tumbled and bruised, but its leeward side has hundreds of green buds. No spiders greet us. About 2:30pm we head back. Near 5pm the breeze is gone and Kayann and I, gazing at the Main Channel from the second floor of the Island Place, sipping an icy rum tonic and crunching the crust of quinoa bread, watch Ron drifting E, backwards. Eventually he beats in slowly on a light westerly.

Wednesday noon it's ESE 9-14, sunny, upper 70's, dry. Ron's ranching friends from Colorado, Jenny and Travis Fuqua, paddle their first time ever in the Sea Twin. Crossing to Atsena, as Ron sails the Banshee and I paddle the Sea Runner, we all see a few dolphins. The

Travis Fuqua in a Sea Runner watches Ron Sell sailing his Banshee.

Banshee douses me from the waist down as I take her for a spin, just a reach out and back, planing some.

Mike Leiner motors over in his Maxi Peep Hen and we sail her for her first time with Mike. Darrel and Deborah speak us from their Bay Hen. Jenny and Travis and I float NE through Atsena on the new flood with just enough water in our direction. Jumping mullet, repeating leaps, impress them. I was hoping one would jump over the bow of their boat, but then I retracted that thought because mullets' accuracy is questionable. I wouldn't want a slimy, hard headed mullet to thump Jenny's or Travis' noggin. (It happened to a friend once.) On our return, with wind against tide in the Channel, I warn them about the possibility of water slopping in. But little does.

By 7:30pm it's SSE 10-15. Kayann helps me carry "Sweet Pea" down to the water. Her new rig looks and feels right, although rather limber. The sail is 21 square feet of leg-o'-mutton with a sprit boom. It's simple and low. Mast and boom are sugar pine. Leeboards remain Klepper for now. Will the mast break in the first gust? I tack around in the basin immediately in front of the Island Place. I'm thrilled, performance and simplicity at last.

One part of performance is the low aspect ratio sail which, as one might imagine, is appropriate for a narrow boat like a canoe or kayak, particularly when not equipped with complicating outriggers. The sail produces useful, applicable power low enough to control. Very little power is lost to twist. The sprit boom gives excellent control of the sail's draft, even when the sheet is let go. It prevents the adrenalin blasting bag of windage one can get running when the sail's clew lifts if it's not held down by a boom vang, wishbone, or sprit boom. Although the boom is long for its area, this doesn't seem awkward. It is very light and clears one's head uneventfully.

Thursday at 11am it's SE 7-9, sunny, low 80's, dry. Rick Pancake (of the Cedar Key Bed & Breakfast), Mike Leiner (The Island Place), and I paddle Sea Runners to and through Atsena from the SW entrance. Brenda Pancake, Cindy Leiner, and Kayann are off island for the day. The three of us discuss among much else, prostates and "No-Name Hurricane" damage. Rick remarks, that given the experience of the two fifty-year-olds in front of him, a half century of life apiece, what advice had we for him? Huh?

In the evening, SW 9-12, I sail "Sweet Pea" again and am splashed by Klepper's low-slung lee boards. (A month later my dim attention was caught. I'd been mounting the leeboard thwart upside down.)

Friday Kayann and I drive at 5am to Titusville to collect Erica (see cover of

"Messing About in Boats", Vol. 10, #4) from Space Camp. By 3pm, after exchanging greetings with John and Rena Adsit aboard their Sea Pearl 21, I paddle my trusty Sea Runner to Atsena on the ebb and work up the NE entrance as far as I can. After backtracking I see a pair of paddles dabbling above the grass and meet a middle-aged couple in Hydra sea kayaks, cousins to my Sea Runner. She, particularly, with her bright clothing including gloves, looks like she has just come from a sea kayak symposium. He has been paddling for four months, she for two days.

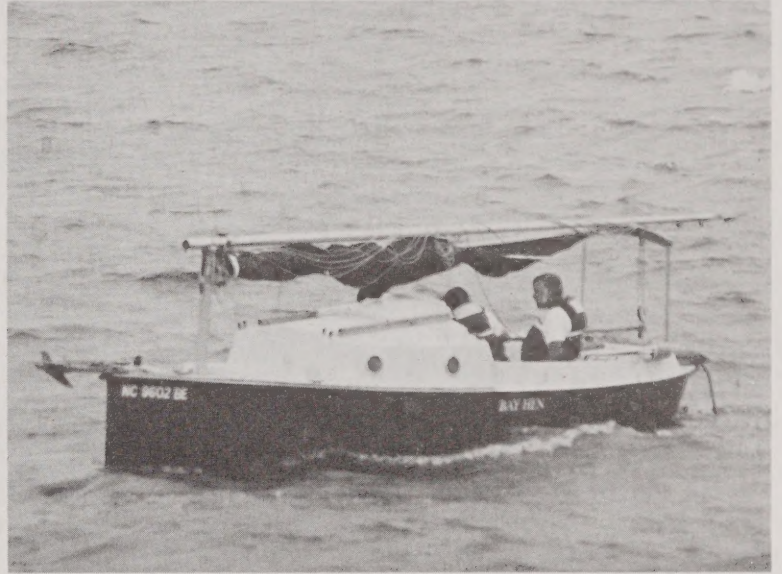
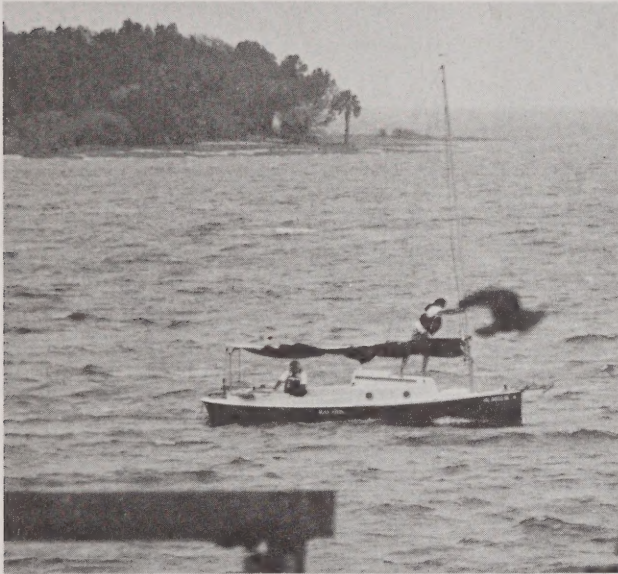
Fortunately they seem cautious and appear to treat sea kayaking with particular respect. Treating it as just another consumer sport/activity without considering the larger view of seamanship could be tragic, of course. Back on Atsena's North Beach, Larry, out of the Sea Pearl 21, "Sanibel", tries my Sea Runner for a few minutes.

Saturday Boat Meet day, 6am I awake to hear 20+ knots of solid wind. By 10am it's SE 12-18, cloudy, upper 70's. A spray skirt is necessary when I paddle with the end of the flood against the wind. It's an exhilarating, rollicking ride to the Town Beach. A dark blue Sea Pearl is already on the beach, and I'm not sure she hasn't been driven there by the onshore wind. In the trailer parking lot are "Shellglo", a varnished 13' sloop with two large skegs, not launched and not seen again; a beautifully built Swampscott dory; the Melonseed of Fred Palmer; a Dovekie; and more Sea Pearls. But where are the catboats, botters, and multihulls? Meanwhile Ron Sell is screaming around in his Banshee.

By noon most of the loose group has launched and reached the lee of Atsena's north beach. The sky clears and the breeze eases and veers through SSE and S. Boats come and go, their owners acquaint and reacquaint. I sail Fred's sweet Melonseed which I had missed last year. Mike comes over in his Maxi Peep. Most of the boats head for Snake Key. By early afternoon, for me it's a no-spray-skirt paddle back to the Island Place where I switch boats. Erica and Kayann paddle to Atsena in the Sea Twin as I enjoy a comfy sail in "Sweet Pea". Later Ron and I visit with another Darrel in a fair Glen L sloop, anchored in the lee of Atsena.

Sunday is cloudy and windy SE again. I'm cloudy, too, having had flu at both ends in the early am. But the sky brightens and again the wind veers. Phylis Stevens rows Marty in their Wisp to Atsena's north beach from their new MacGregor 26, which Marty has fitted with a mizzen. Phylis brightens me with a slice of cool cantalope. Marty built "Emerald", the Bolger Micro which was on the cover of "Messing About in Boats", Vol. 10, #12. He paddles my Sea Runner and sails Ron's Banshee. Jenny and Travis thrive in the Sea Twin. Grocer Harry Hooper and his son, Alex, in their Marsh Hen join us. A couple with a Compac 16 introduce themselves. This is their first visit to Cedar Key. Their sailing experience has been on rivers and lakes near Apopka, Florida. They are startled by oysters, and tides and wind shifts changing a placid anchorage to dry or rolling. I'm startled by their only anchor, a five pound, vinyl covered mushroom.





Darrel and Deborah bringing in their Bay Hen in a brisk breeze.

Erica, Kayann and Ron Sell on the beach at Atsena.



A Pilgrimage

This was a trip to see "Yakaboo", the star of Fritz Fenger's 1911 book, "Alone in the Caribbean". Howard Rice had heard the esteemed "Yakaboo" (17'x39") was hanging from the ceiling of a museum in a little town in Ontario. Thursday June 3rd Ron and I drove five hours to Mackinaw City from SE Michigan. We stopped for lunch with Howard, and drove across Big Mac which connects Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas over the Straits of Mackinac. We continued W for less than an hour to a place Ron showed me. This one I'm reluctant to discuss, but, with Ron's blessing, fine readers of "Messing About in Boats" surely deserve to know of such a dandy spot.

It's Big Knob campground on Lake Michigan a few miles W of Naubinway, Michigan. Conditions at the top of the Lake are often a small boater's dream. The sun warms the shallow water at least 15 degrees more than Lake Superior, an hour north. It's in the lee of winds SW through NE, and the breezes have come across land rather than the ice chest of Superior. The gentle beaches are usually deserted, and the campground is best suited to tents. But it's little known, most people heading for areas farther N and W. Southern Michigan wisdom has it if you're driving all the way to cross the Bridge, certainly you'll want to go further than an hour from Mackinac.

Big Knob camp was empty, so after setting up tents on the beach and still slapping at mosquitoes (northern Michigan's bug situation improves greatly near the end of July), Ron in his decked Sawyer canoe and I in "Sweet Pea" paddle NE a mile or so after 7pm, watching deer on shore. We reach a little spit enclosing a foot deep lagoon fed by a stream. Skittish carp splash us and the WSW 9-12 breeze blows the bugs away. It's clear and dry, but in the 50's. Ron's oatmeal bread and cheese, and a small bottle of wine toast the sunset and this idyllic spot. We paddle back in the long dusk, my hands getting chilly. At the tents faint northern lights and the Tigers winning on the radio, what could be better? I must bring Kayann and the girls back here.

The morning's frost is heavy but the mosquitoes are stopped. A crispy sunrise through fog wisps lights fresh deer tracks on the beach. Ron boils water and presses coffee. N-NW 9-12, sunny, low 60's eventually. We paddle a few miles SW along the coast past a couple of rocky points. The Beaver Islands are barely showing above the horizon to the S. Paddling back we enter the lagoon of Crow Creek, see a bald eagle family, and paddle a quarter mile up through this evergreen and birch forest until little rapids stop us. Back on the deserted beach Ron sails "Sweet Pea" for photos and feedback.

Left from the top: Howard Rice sailing through the shallows in "Sweet Pea" on Wycamp Lake. Ron Sell offers Howard some bread. Swapping paddles.



Although this place is too nice to leave, we drive back to Mackinaw City to get Howard, then back N across the Bridge and NE to the Munuscong River Campground. At 7:30pm Rice in "Esperanza", his Cape Horn tested Klepper Aeriuss I, and Ron and I paddle a mile or so down the river through the delta's grass flats to Munuscong Bay on the St. Mary's River. The occasional sport fisherman roars by. This annoyance, however, is rivaled by mosquitoes low on the water. We return in an overcast, lightly raining dusk. The Tigers lose.

Saturday by 11am we've driven through a bright morning to Bruce Mines, Ontario. After many helping phone calls by locals, we find the person to open the museum. Anxiously we walk to a back room, past an old refrigerator and a meat display case. We find "Yakaboo" slung from joists on yellow 3/8" polypropylene line. She's stunning, more than we expected, graceful, well used, and with light and fine Sitka spruce spars, particularly interesting to me since I've lately been carving sugar pine ones. A retractable skeg has been added, Fenger had no rudder. "Yakaboo's" one-piece mahogany center-board, only a 1/2" or 9/16" thick, besides pivoting up and down, could still slide fore and aft a foot or so. To steer he used his weight, and trimmed her sails and board.

In the afternoon back in the NW Lower Peninsula near Howard's on Wycamp Lake, Ron rigs his sailing canoe and I "Sweet Pea". We munch more bread and grin with a WSW 9-14 breeze. The sailing is grand, this northwoods lake is uncommonly lovely. Although the colors in the sun look like autumn, the trees are still budding and blooming. My simple rig is beginning to be more appreciated as I hear Ron swat battens with his paddle to tack his sail. What a delightful little day-sail on this salubrious afternoon! The fly in the ointment is the zillion mosquitoes waiting in the trees while we feverishly lash our boats to the rack.

Sunday WSW 8-12, sunny, dry, low 70's. Wycamp Lake again, Ron paddles and Howard sails "Sweet Pea" while I photo from "Esperanza". Now Ron and Howard have heartily approved of "Sweet Pea's" new rig and I doubt I could find two more experienced sailors/paddlers to judge it. About the leg-o'-mutton with sprit boom, Phil Bolger and Mike O'Brien are right. The performance is every bit as good as one could want, and the simplicity is undeniable.



Right from the top: "Yakaboo" hangs at the far end of this eclectic mix of artifacts. "The board still slides." She's held her shape in spite of being roughly suspended all these years, exceptionally well built.



Cedar Key Revisited

Cedar Key was singing her siren song. I hadn't got enough of the islands in May, and I had work to do on beloved, old "Kaselehlia", my Drascombe Lugger. So I drove down June 23rd for a week. It's warmer this time, upper 80's to low 90's. Thundershowers and squalls come by every day. "Kaselehlia" is under Ned Sharples' still house, so my view, instead of S and W over the outer keys, is NW and N, through E over the bayous. I paddle the Sea Runner to and through Atsena every day, and one moonlit midnight. In "Sweet Pea" I revel in one of my best sails ever in a paddling boat.

Monday, June 28th. At 11am it's SW 9-12, sunny, upper 80's. I paddle "Sweet Pea" to Atsena's north beach, set her rig, and sail E against the ebb and S in Atsena's lee. Although it's quite warm and humid, I love the tropical feel of summer in Florida. Water temperature is above 80. The air is clean and bright. Clearing Atsena's lee, we ("Sweet Pea" and I) meet whitecaps of the steady breeze rising against the ebb. Four or five dolphins fish in front of us on this close reach, starboard tack. Water climbs the leeboard and curls off a flange, straight into the cockpit. But it's warm and I can avoid it. We work into the lee of Snake Key at its E end. Out here the water is more clear, the aspect more Caribbean or South Seas.

Sailing along, gaining with puffs up into the lee, I'm beguiled by the comfort and capability of my little boat, and appreciative of my good fortune for being here to enjoy it. The breeze is now about 10-14. The ebb helps us beat up to Snake's



Top: An approaching thunderhead as seen from Atsena. Left from the top: Rick Pancake and Mike Leiner on our epic rounding and passage through Atsena on Bachelor Day. "Sweet Pea" on Snake Key.

NW beach and its rippled, current washed bar. Thunderheads are building over the land to the NW so we don't linger, yesterday had 40 knot squalls. The return broad reach begins with caution, considering the point of sail and increasing wind. At first I over-trim and balance, jiggling along in the flexible Klepper with her whippy stick. But soon I relax and let her respond by herself. It's a glorious ride rolling and surging along, only two waves topple in. A light, tropical sprinkle then a quick rain falls. The current has dragged us W so our broad reach is approaching a run in a region where the flow is accelerating over shallows.

The waves increase to near two feet, but "Sweet Pea" is controllable. The rig is low and light and the sprit does its job. Nearing the SE corner of Atsena I remember to try the eight foot steering rod I've lashed on. But a second after releasing it from its toggle it falls in the water and swings straight out abeam of the rudder, inches below the surface. Steering, if it can be called that, with the foot pedals is now very stiff and I'm wondering what will break back at the rudder. "Well, Ollie, this is a fine predicament."

Then a paddle which had been restrained by the toggle that had held the steering rod falls in. Happily the little sail slides down in a flash and things are more reasonable. After a half dozen tries I get the steering rod with the spare single bladed paddle by jamming the rudder hard to starboard and leaning to port, which briefly whips the steering stick forward out of the water a couple feet. Whew! I paddle to pick up the floating paddle half, then up sail and away we go. So I try it again. As I pass the rod over my head, the unprintable happens again. Finally I secure it with the toggle and off we go into Atsena's lee.

We stop on the S tip and the NE beach. The wind is 15 knots plus coming through the Channel. The current is still against it so I lower the sail, and secure it



My return to Cedar Key was in part to finish off restoring my beloved old Drascombe Lugger "Kaselehli". The work didn't get completed until later, but in December at last after seven years I again enjoyed sailing her. With a new mizzen from Center Harbor Sails, a new 3/8" stainless steel centerboard, a new stainless mainsheet horse, new teak floorboards, a new sacrificial keelboard with stainless rub band, and a new main mast, she's a pip!

with the paddle toggle. Paddling straight into the wind close to Atsena's oystery shore, the mast's windage doesn't seem to be unduly burdening. The short, skinny, light stick looks and feels very good right now. I still think I'm ahead of the approaching squalls, so, after watching the tumbling white in the Channel, I stop for a squirt. The water is so low now we need squishy hand shoves to leave Atsena. This after a subtle struggle to free a muck-stuck zori. The paddle across the lumpy Channel from this more windward spot is a typical one of ease for the corky Klepper. Back by 3pm, thus concluding for me, a superb, paddling boat day sail.

10th Annual Cedar Key Small Boat Meet

All beachable small boats, sail, oar, paddle, are invited to this completely informal annual gathering on April 30th and May 1st at Cedar Key, on the Gulf coast of Florida 100 miles north of Tampa. It is an exquisite area of shallows with intricate channels and challenging currents, salt-marsh and sea islands. Birding and fishing are superb, and it is isolated and sparsely populated. Campsites and other accommodations are available. Contact the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce at (904) 543-5600; Mike Leiner at (904) 543-5307; or Hugh Horton at (313) 468-6456.

The "low" low of Cedar Key's mixed semi-diurnal tides has made this fisherman's outing more interesting, he's dragging along a camouflage finished Chinook.





Wild Fowl Bay

It's on Lake Huron's Saginaw Bay in the Lower Peninsula on the W side of Michigan's Thumb. It's a dozen miles long by three wide, very shallow with grassy flats and hardwooded islands, and empty of people. Duck hunters in their season must be here, and ice fishermen, but now the only vehicle is a pickup trailering an aluminum skiff, parked under a weeping willow. It drives off shortly after Kayann and I pull up. Apparently these one to five foot turbid shallows, with occasional rocks, don't invite the average Michigan boater.

Today, Tuesday, July 6th, it's WSW 711, sunny, upper 80's, high humidity for Michigan. Before 11am we launch our Sea Runners. In the intermediate distance we see beaches among the grassy islands, so we paddle toward them. But the "beaches" become dead grass of sandy color. We decide to paddle upwind toward Middle Grounds Island, which looks to be solid with a few trees. Thrashing out of sight in the grass are carp, and possibly gar pike. The day is gorgeous, plenty of breeze to beat bugs and this Midwest heatwave, no boats, no trash, splendid. We see a broken down hunter's blind and two white markers in the distance. These become poop washed granite boulders with a gull on each. Sooty and common terns, egrets and great blue herons are plentiful, although not like Cedar Key.

Reaching Middle Grounds NE side, we stop for a stretch on spongy soil then continue toward an opening in the grass between the two outer islands, Heisterman and Maisou. At the final corner of Middle Grounds we chat in the lee and then doze in our boats for a few minutes. I've begun to think the only beaches here are probably on the N sides of the outer islands, so I'm curious. But in this day's lily-dipping fashion we meander through grassy channels, even finding a slight current against us in one. We head NW between Maisou and Heisterman.

The waves coming in have miles of fetch now and some of the grassy patches undulate with the swell from greater Saginaw Bay. The only other boat I've seen goes by just showing above waves on the horizon. Kayann inspects wood-scrimmed coves on Heisterman while I go further and find another point underlain by boulders. Convenient camping on the islands is rare, but I didn't get far enough to see the N facing shore. Kayann has seen hawks and a buzzard, painted turtles, three big turtle eggs, muskrat homes, etc. Much of our return is with the breeze and I can't help but wish for a sailing rig and "Sweet Pea's" more commodious cockpit. I've stopped twice, Kayann only once. A mile off shore we spot the weeping willow under which our Dakota is parked. We're back at the launch site by 3pm, still the only car around.

The next day, Wednesday, at 8:30am we paddle from the Sebawaing River Town Launch Site. One other car is in the parking lot. W 9-12 with a few miles of fetch gives us a wet ride straight out next to a

Left from the top: As far up Crow Creek as we went. Lake Michigan near Big Knob Camp.

mile long, spoil peninsula in our lee. The advantage of freshwater boating for eye-glass wearers is confirmed again as the drops dry and I can still see. We turn E around the peninsula's tip and come back toward the shore in a comfortable lee, along with carp, some merganzers, and the distinct sound of a fish leaping completely free of the water, and falling back with a plop. I could've sworn it was a mullet.

A series of points a half mile or so apart continues up the coast. We paddle from point to point, in one bay seeing a bunch of aluminum canoes with camping kids hacking the water. Returning we find a channel and canal behind the long spoil island. We've been out only three hours, but it's time to start to drive back down Michigan's Thumb. Wild Fowl Bay must be an especially spectacular area in early fall before duck season. The water would still be relatively warm, bugs gone, hardwoods coloring, and ducks beginning to gather.



Lake Michigan lagoon looking northeast toward Naubinway and Big Knob camp.

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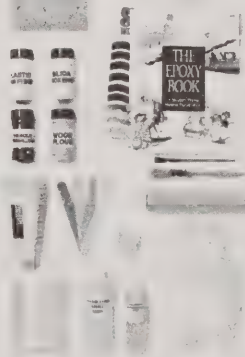
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At about the 100 mile marker on the west shore of Key Largo, Florida, there exists a unique opportunity to cruise Florida Bay. Unique because of the type of boat offered, your choice of two Phil Bolger designs, the 25' Black Skimmer and 34' Black Gauntlet. If you are thinking of building one of these boats, or just want to do some low pressure sailing in a beautiful sharpie, this dream-like shoal cruising ground offers the perfect place to do so. It is a panorama of turquoise waters, dotted here and there with mangrove-covered, uninhabited keys.

When my father offered Cathy (nee Foley) and I a honeymoon as a wedding gift, back in March of 1990, I was on the phone and planning a boat charter within hours. First called were some of the charter operations which offer fancy fiberglass blue water boats. I had always seen the ads for these firms in the glossy boating magazines. Listed along with the many lengths and styles of boats they offer is other important cruising information, things like the wattage of the hair dryers included, whether or not they supply a stereo VCR, and how many windsurfers are lashed to the stanchions. The pictures often show a cabin table laid out with crystal, a bottle of vintage wine and a bowl of wax grapes.

I was nonetheless intrigued enough to put a \$1000 deposit on a name brand 30

Shoal Water Chartering

By Rich SantaColoma

footer, after which I was mailed the full contract to sign. In this document, a clause stated that if for any reason the chartering firm felt we were not capable sailors, we would still have to go through with the charter, but at the dock! We would not get our deposit back. If we didn't pass their scrutiny on arrival, but still wanted to sail, we would then be required to hire a captain. I wasn't able to get any kind of assurance over the phone that my level of experience would "pass the test", so I backed out. I wasn't going to look forward to sailing in Biscayne Bay, and then be grounded because I called a block a "pulley", or had an ugly scuff on my Topsiders.

While agonizing over the risk involved in this commitment, I remembered a simple black and white ad I had seen. It didn't have photographs of endless fiberglass decks strewn with chrome, no interiors shot with bug-eye lenses. It just showed a little drawing of Key Largo and Florida Bay. It seemed very low key, very "us".

When I called Paul Fochtman, owner of Key Largo Shoal Water Cruises, I knew I had found our charter. We talked boats, not legalese. We discussed the "Wooden Boat"

article about Bolger. We talked sharpies and sharks, not contract clauses. Paul told me how to get to his place, what he provided for the charter and what we should bring.

There was stormy weather brewing in the Keys when we arrived. The sky was charcoal gray and white caps were dancing around the bay. Another couple had been staying at the dock in their Black Skimmer waiting for it to clear up. They were running out of vacation and decided to go out, but we felt it would be more prudent to drive our rented convertible down to Key West and hide for a couple of days. I appreciated this flexibility, as we didn't feel we were losing huge dollars by not braving the storm. When the weather was sufficiently calm for our sailing abilities, we could pay our deposit and go.

When we returned to Key Largo, Paul went over a chart of the Florida Bay with us. He answered questions we had, and explained the rules of the park. He then took us out for a familiarization sail, from which he disembarked into his kayak.

We made our way out to Nest Key on the first day, about a 12 mile sail. Being unsure of the conditions at first, I had put in and taken out an unnecessary reef. The sails on the Black Skimmer are easy to handle and straightforward. The foot well at the bow gave a tremendous feeling of security when working the halyards or handling the anchor. As for the leeboards, they took Cathy and I some getting used to, as we found them a bit heavy.

The Black Skimmer is an all around incredible boat, with a spacious cockpit and cabin, shoal draft, and self righting ability. It looked to me as though it would make a wonderful backyard project, very straightforward construction. There is a certain elegant look about it, also. I feel it is reminiscent of a delicate bird, the type which forages along shorelines everywhere.

Florida bay is a wonderland of impossibly beautiful water, stretching off to the horizon. It is difficult to imagine that much of it is under 20 feet deep! The tropical temperature varies little during the year, unlike the lower part of mainland Florida. It is quiet, vast and uncluttered by homes and other boats. It's the place you would make up and sail in your dreams if you had never been anywhere.

Once we got a couple of miles out, we only saw one bat-winged catamaran, one house boat, one small motorboat and another Black Skimmer. I kept wondering where everyone was, and why there wasn't a constant invasion from the Key Largo population. I think part of the answer lies in the bay's shallowness, and in the distance between amenities. It would be a difficult place to sail a boat with a significant keel, and many popular sailboats have enough draft to get into trouble out there. The motorboaters probably stick closer to shore to water ski and such, as they would have to burn a good amount of fuel to get out into the wide open part of the bay. For whatever reason, it was left almost entirely for us to romp in.



We tied off to a mangrove on Nest Key for our overnight. This is one of the few keys where this is allowed. As it turned out, we would have been better off mooring anyway, because the waves lapping on the transom made enough noise to start us out of our bunk in the middle of the night. It was quiet when we retired, but the wind had shifted. We would have moved our boat to the lee of the island, since the moon was huge and bright, but the charter contract prohibits night maneuvers. We waited until dawn, then motored around to the quiet side of the key to catch up on our sleep.

I had boned up on my piloting skills before our honeymoon, and was glad I did. The keys look very much alike, and there are few significant landmarks once you get out there. We navigated from key to key, always keeping one we knew within sight until we positively identified another. While sailing briskly along we were even asked directions from a passing motorboat! As they approached, Cathy and I wondered if we were going to be robbed and murdered, but all they took from us was the proper course back to Nest Key.

I got fairly roasted by our second day, so Cathy dropped the hook off of Deer Key and I hopped into Florida Bay. It is such a surprise to step off into waist deep water while still a distance from shore. This may be one of the reasons we found the whole experience so safe and welcoming.

It seems to me the ideal place, and the ideal way, to learn if shoal water cruising is for you. For a reasonable amount, you can try out a cruising sharpie before building one. That is cheap insurance. And if you just want to sail in a place of beauty, without the slick, high pressure atmosphere of one of the bigger chartering companies, this is the place to do it. For this reason, it surprised me to learn that this may be Shoal Water Cruises' last season.

Hurricane Andrew, while somehow leaving Paul's place off of it's list of destruction, created something almost as damaging, the impression that all of southern Florida must be a devastated wasteland. Inquiries dropped by 50% in the three months following the hurricane, and many of the calls which did come in were, "How bad did you get hit?". While it was possible for Andrew victims to get aid for physical damage, it was tough to get help for business lost by the public's incorrect assumptions. Add to this dilemma the 25% drop in income from losing the "Small Boat Journal" as an advertising medium, and the tide was turned for Shoal Water Cruises. The next six months or so may offer the last chance to book a boat with them.

Cathy and I will always have our honeymoon memories, but it hurts to know that we may not be able to return someday for a sail in one of the sharpies. Although our Elver is a wonderful boat, chartering in the keys would be a more practical alternative than trailering it 1500 miles. If Key Largo Shoal Water Cruises does not survive, we may not have a chance to sail down there again, among the mangroves and the manatees. Unless, of course, we develop a sudden affinity for chrome, wax fruit, and are willing to stick to the channels.

How About Black Skimmer?



By Alan Hamet

When we were trying to sell our Bolger Black Skimmer last summer (to help finance my wife's schooling), a number of friendly Messing-About-in-Boats people from all over the country called us wanting information about the design and asking for pictures (which I didn't find time to send as it turned out). I expect there are others interested who didn't call, and I thought you might be willing to publish a picture or two and allow me to answer some of the questions most asked about the design in those phone calls.

We've found the boat to be a comfortable extended cruiser for two and a good daysailer for up to six. Weekending with four adults is fine also. Our boat has been sailed singlehanded from Seattle to Juneau and back (the first leg by the original builder and the second by Dick Wagner, the director for the Center for Wooden Boats in Seattle) which strongly reinforces our substantial confidence in the boat's seaworthiness from our own experience.

The boat sails quite well in most conditions (including very rough stuff) and on all points of sail, the one weakness being trying to sail to windward in very light air. The leeboards don't provide enough lift at slow speeds, and the boat slides off. This may be partly due to our oldish sails, but is also just a standard complaint with light, flat-bottom boats. In a strong breeze off the wind she is quite fast, maybe 8 knots or so. We've had no real problems with the rig, but it's hard to reef the main, and if I ever get a new sail I'm going to make it possible to reef completely from the cockpit, junk rig or roller reefing maybe.

The leeboards are heavy and take some lifting, but they make the cabin so nice that it makes up for it. Off-center boards would be a better option, though. When we bought the boat we immediately got rid of the original transom design, which had broken, and installed a stronger solid transom with an external outboard motor bracket. This worked out very well,

and allows for much better motor control. We use a 6hp which is plenty of power.

I met the builder at one point and he told me it cost him \$20,000 in materials to build and outfit the boat in 1980 using fir plywood and epoxy. A lot of people (including me) seem to think that's about \$5000 high, but it's hard to argue with actual experience. We bought the boat six years ago in fair condition for about \$3000.

A lot of people asked about trailability as well. We haven't tried it so I really don't know, but I'm sure it could be done with some modifications to the main mast. I would think, though, that Long Micro would be a better design if trailability were the main thing. The Black Skimmer would require a dual axle trailer and a heavy duty pulling vehicle.

Overall we've been very happy with our boat. The shallow draft is great, even around here where there's usually plenty of deep water. It's not so big that the maintenance gets away from us or causes terminal checkbook shock every time the boat gets hauled out, and it's not too small for a three-week trip into the islands in reasonable comfort either. It's a fine line, but this design lies along it pretty well for us.

4123 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103.



A New Sailing & Rowing Freedom

By S. Newman Darby

Nine years ago when I moved to Jacksonville, Florida, I was impressed with the seemingly endless thousands of square miles of clean water with almost no sailboats in sight. The wind was smooth and even, with bottoms of beautiful sand. It didn't take long to know why I saw so few sailboats after I went out on my sailboard. There are a lot of shallow spots dotted everywhere, only about 10" at low tide. This takes the fun out of sailing.

So I designed, built and tested two small sailing dingys that could sail and tack in these shallows. One is an 8' one person boat that is fast and surprisingly seaworthy for its size. The other a three seater almost 12' long. They have no centerboards. These small shallow draft sailboats make those small clear lakes that are so plentiful in Florida seem much bigger since the shallow perimeters are often most of the water area. The rudder is designed to draw a little less water than the hull.

Their having no centerboards gives other spin-off advantages. There is more usable room in the boat. In fact the 8' models are so small that there would be almost no room for the sailor if they had centerboard wells. A centerboard is also a big drag in the water. This is easy to understand when one pulls up a daggerboard, while running with the wind on a sailboard, and feels it surge ahead.

I call these hull designs "Side Step" hulls (SS). The side step gives the lateral resistance needed to tack upwind. These hulls move through the water with the same ease as conventional hulls because they are carrying most of the load on the very narrow center hull section. The upper beamy hull section only touches the water enough to give the stability needed to sail.

We have found that many types of sail rigs work well on these boats. Both boats can be carried on car tops or in the backs of small trucks. These boats are not in production yet. If anyone wants one they have to make it or have someone build it for them from plans which are available at \$20 for the 8' boat and \$30 for the 12' model.

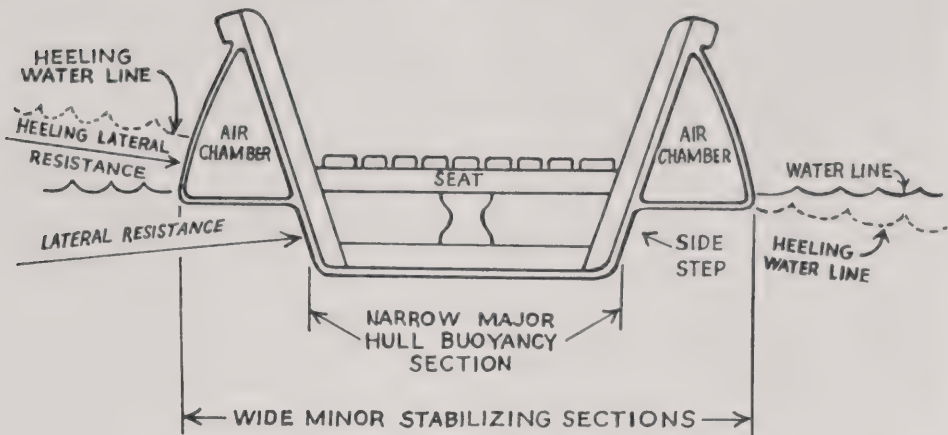
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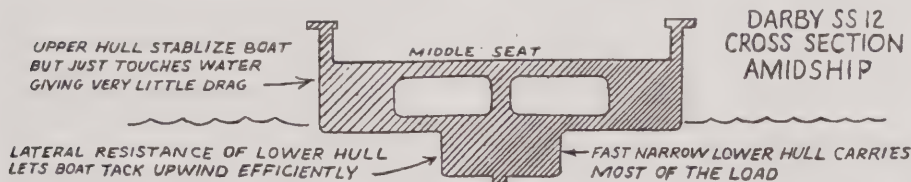
Left from the top: Sailing the SS-8 in a brisk breeze. Rowing the SS-8 in a brisk breeze and its wind chop. Rowing the intentionally swamped SS-8, still manageable.

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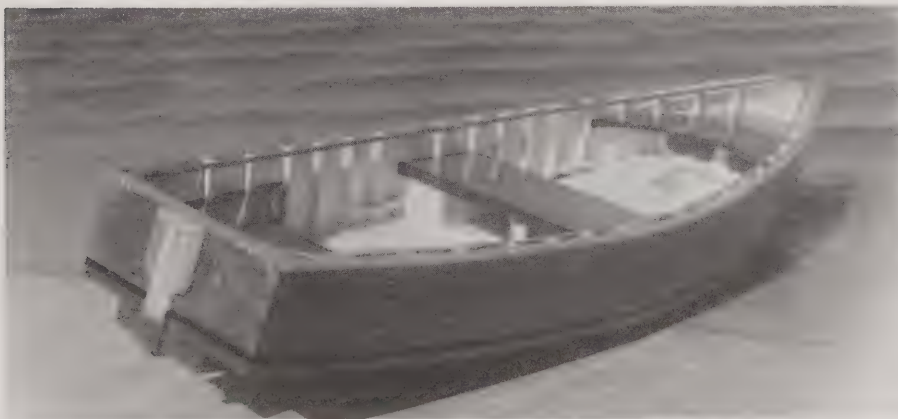
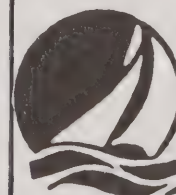
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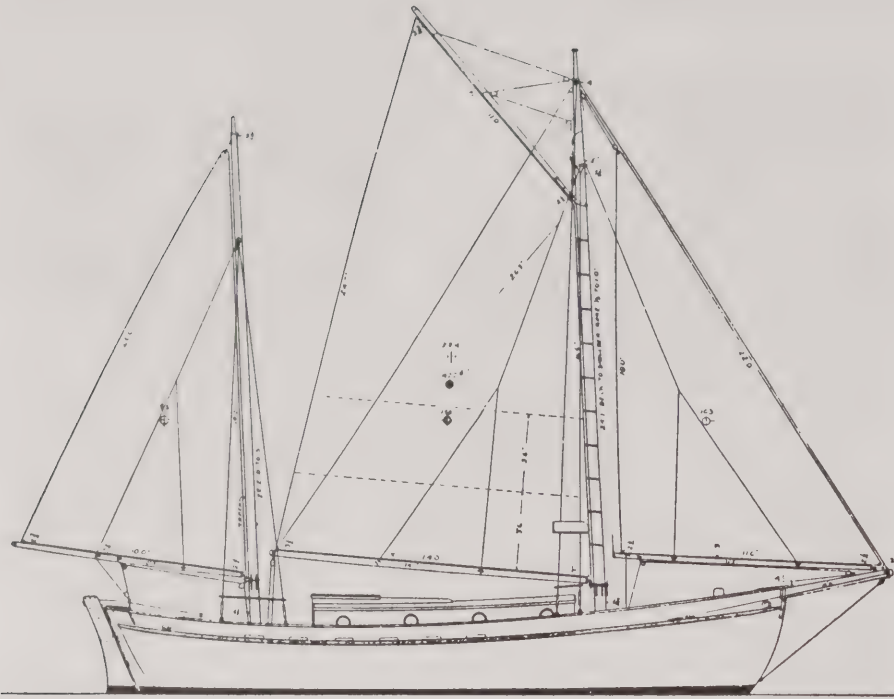
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How the "Tahiti" Got Her Name

By Weston Farmer
(Published initially in the early '70's.
Thanks to Wes' son Wes and his widow
Bylo for bringing this to us all).

There is a saying that once printer's ink has touched your hands, you'll be hooked for life. I submit that a more lethal and lasting narcotic is the vice of boat noodling.

Who has not hopped about boat yards drinking in the euphoria of hulls? Who has not idly searched boating publications for that ideal ship of one's dreams? Who, having found her, has not mentally built this boat in half a second without sweat or money? And in her, who has not slanted seaward at the fading end of day, all cares left astern in the airs of evening while the windswept harps of Memnon pipe the rising of the moon? Who has not?

Not a man among us.

This narcosis seems to be self-stoking. The progression is from wee boat to bigger boat, thence a call to a genuine "round-the-world" boat, that dainty shallop in which to sail away on a sea of dreams.

If this dream stuff reaches the point of serious research, inevitably a number of well known designs will be studied. Joshua Slocum's "Spray" may enter the picture; Charles D(rown) Mower's "Seabird", ably skippered across the Atlantic by Thomas Fleming Day, should be pored over; Captain Voss's voyage in the Alaskan Indian canoe "Tilicum" surely will come up for pondering.

Eventually our researcher will encounter leads concerning a thirty by ten by four foot world girdler which classified ad writers insist on calling "Tahiti Ketch."

Now this ketch "Tahiti" is not something cooked up in Tahiti, nor indigenous to that romantic isle. Rather, she is the double ender which her designer John G. Hanna, turned out to my order down in Dunedin, Florida nearly forty years ago. As founding editor of the magazine "Modern Mechanix" (not "Mechanix Illustrated"), I commissioned "Tahiti's" design from Jack. Old Leonardo da Vinci probably was unaware that his Mona Lisa was destined to stand the world on its ear

when he painted her, and Jack Hanna, I am sure, was unaware that "Tahiti" would become the capable, enigmatic little craft that would entrance all would-be circum-navigators at some point in their shopping.

Now this is a meandering way of coying up my subject: Jack Hanna, the stone deaf genius of design who entertained, with clear drafting and prose, that spectrum of boat noodlers who had access to his work, from 1919 until his death of cardiac asthma in Dunedin, February 1, 1948 at the age of fifty-seven. He was responsible for such notable boats as "Pelican", "Helican", "Maximin", "Foam", "Lizzie", "Carcassone", "Carole", "Gulfweed", "Dorothy", "Tahiti" and "Poco Dinero", in about that order, together with many others. As do old tunes, these names evoke an era, peeling back time to just a day or so ago.

He was born John Griffin Hanna in Galveston, Texas in 1891, the son of John Hanna and Frances Griffin Hanna. The Hanna family was prominent in real estate and insurance in Galveston, where Jack attended grammar and high school. He graduated from the University of Texas as an electrical engineer, fully grounded in the basics of physics and mathematics, of mechanics and stress analysis. He was uncommonly endowed with both wit and horse sense. It is little wonder he became proficient in yacht design.

When nine years old, he became the victim of a devastating bout with scarlet fever which left him stone deaf. At that age he had a residual muscular memory of speech, and could talk after a fashion, but as he could not hear tone or inflection his speech became slurred. I could never understand him, and listening to him was painfully embarrassing, so he communicated by dashing off concise, sparkling notes on a little pad he carried.

Jack Hanna's first engineering application was in aviation. After building his own self-designed airplane in Texas, an

adventure that ended up with the plane a wiped out ball of sticks, Jack took a steamer from Galveston to New York. There, on Long Island, he worked first for the French airplane firm of Moissant, then did a stint for Curtiss at Mineola, doing engineering design work on the World War I JN4-D, famed as the old "Jenny" biplane. Here he met and became friendly with Wilbur Wright, who was interested in the Hanna patent for lateral and longitudinal flying controls. Such were Hanna's frustrations, however, that he gave up aviation saying it would never amount to anything commercially. By mail he pursued the wooing of an attractive girl he had met on the steamer trip from Galveston.

He was married to Dorothy Trask in Florida in 1917, and in 1919 settled in Dunedin because both he and Dorothy liked it. They had four children, three of whom survive: John, Helen and Mary; competent, handsome people.

For a brief period, Jack's mastery of good English prose led him into publishing the "Auburndale News", a small newspaper. Upon being asked to assume editorship of the "Tampa Tribune", he gave it much thought, then rejected it upon the basis that it would require all night work, twenty-five miles from Dunedin, so he chose naval architecture. Around 1920 he bought a double ended twenty-eight footer of Greek sponger derivation named "Orca". It was from this boat that he contrived improvements that led to "Carcassone" and, later, "Tahiti".

Dorothy Hanna, Jack's widow, who still lives gracefully in retirement at the Hanna home at Dunedin, tells me that the pressures and decisions that were then faced made the peace and quiet of the small Florida town seem ideally adapted to Jack's handicapped life style. It was about this time, in 1919, that Jack's first boat, "Pelican", hit the pages of "Motor Boat", "the old green sheet" then published twice a month. To a young journeyman boat

builder seeking enlightenment on anything technical, which I was at the time, Hanna's gripping prose made me a Hanna fan. He could design and he could write!

As an illustration of his impact, I can to this day recall how, at one point in the "Pelican" story, Hanna metaphorically tore off his wig and jumped on it when the subject of a flat steering wheel was being argued against the traditional spoked marine type wheel. Jack allowed as how anyone wanting a flat wheel was not a sailor but a "cinder streaked son of a gyascutus who'd learned about boats from the hurricane deck of a boxcar."

At quite another time and much later, plumping for sturdy decks and deckhouses on small seagoing craft, he wrote typically: "When I leave the veranda of the yacht club nattily clad in my blue jacket and yachting cap, I leap gracefully from the pier to the deck of my trusty ship. I aim to stay there! I do not hanker to nap on through into the bilge with a load of shattered shingles and glass in my crotch."

Hanna left a rich legacy of living prose. His designs live on because they are for the sea, and wind and water never change. He wrote his pungent column, "Heaving the Lead", for "Motor Boat" until he went over to "The Rudder" for editor William F. Crosby in the late twenties with the same column. In "The Rudder", Jack fired verbal cannon blasts at anything he didn't like and, occasionally, swooned with praise over some noteworthy effort.

Even today I feel Jack is around somewhere, and expect to get a blast from him, although he doubtless made it to Heaven. Because he could not talk, he is certainly writing memos up there, carefully editing his spavined typing and telling the Twelve Apostles how to frame the next Ark.

"Pelican" appeared in 1920. Soon thereafter, in April 1921, "Motor Boat" published Jack's "Maximin". These designs, containing drawings, dimensions and written text on how to build them, appeared at a time when such stories were rare in the boating press. "Maximin" was followed by "Lizzie" in 1924 powered with a Ford Model T engine. A study, not a design, of Slocum's "Spray" was published in the old "green sheet" as "Foam" in 1923 and her plans are still extant. "Carcassonne", a sweet little double ender Jack designed for Anton Schneider of Lakeland, Florida, appeared in a 1923 spring issue of "The Rudder", not as a how-to-build, but merely as an exposition of yacht design. This boat became the most important of the Hanna line, because she was redrawn (without change of lines) as "Tahiti" nearly ten years later, appearing in "Modern Mechanix" for November and December 1932 and January of 1933, and in the 1933-34 issue of "How to Build Twenty Boats", published by Fawcett Publications.

The story of how this writer left boat-building and naval architecture to become the founding editor of "Modern Mechanix" is not important to this tale. What is important is that in getting out the first few of a string of eighty-four issues, I commissioned Jack Hanna to design "Dorothy", a 24-foot dory, and also

"Tahiti", a name I tacked on to "Carcassonne" when I asked Jack to update her in light of his knowledge of Anton Schneider's little sweetie. One of our editors, Don Cooley, was going to Tahiti on a leave, and the name seemed a natural.

The boating world was then agog over the rediscovery of double enders as designed by Colin Archer, the British expatriate to Norway in the nineties. Hanna had evolved something without reverse framing at the garboards, a Hanna American double ender, as he termed it, and she would be simpler to build than the Colin Archers. About "Carcassonne" I had remembered Jack's statement that she was an unqualified success, kindly, seaworthy, dry and self steering under started sheets. He told of how this boat had run across the Gulf Stream to Havana with the freshly varnished tiller strung in the rigging for four hours, not needed.

Jack submitted only the inked cloth tracings at first. Upon return to him of these drawings after the engravings had been made, he sent his usual jaunty text and one photograph. His demand was that when the engraving for that picture was made, and the original returned to him, he would send another. By this process of prying the story out of Hanna, I eventually ended up with more than sufficient photo engravings and two complete sail plans, both of which were published.

I look back on that era now, and some highlights glare: Hanna was paid two hundred fifty dollars for the entire job. I got bawled out for being so generous.

Before returning Jack's inked tracings to him in order to get the text and photographs out of him, I made Van Dyke negatives of his tracings and worked out a royalty arrangement with him, which has been scrupulously adhered to by Fawcett in the years since, accruing to Mrs. Hanna now. However, the Van Dyke originals must have worn out. The plans Fawcett sells today are not Hanna' drafting, being the heavily inked machine lettered work of some magazine illustrator. Nor is any credit given to Hanna, although the world know him as the father of "Tahiti". However, his original text is therein contained. Until this past summer the re-work puzzled me mightily.

One day last August, in a cabin I own at Rock Harbor, Isle Royale, Lake Superior, I discovered a roll of inked tracings. They were the originals of "Tahiti" that Jack had sent me at Newport, California, a few years before he died. I had toted them north and put them away forgotten. They had lain there twenty-five years.

Several years after publication of "Tahiti", Fawcett's advertising department estimated that a hundred thousand dollars worth of "Tahitis" had been started and were under construction. When I left the magazine thirty-six years ago, to take up naval architecture again, it was known that even then thirty-nine of these little vessels had been built. Today there are hundreds, one subsequent editor putting the figure at some thirteen hundred world wide. My editorial judgment, and the two hundred and fifty dollar payment, are vindicated!

"Carcassonne" and "Tahiti" were the



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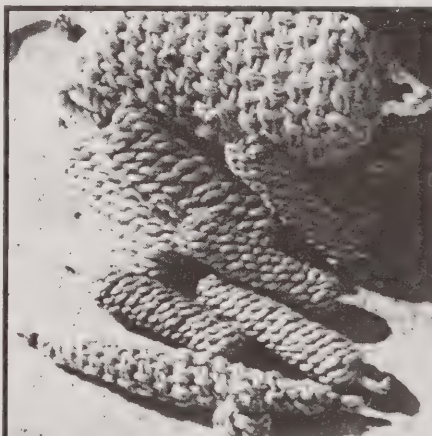
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same boat as to lines. The earlier boat carried twenty-eight hundred pounds of outside ballast in an iron shoe. "Tahiti" (same construction and framing) carried thirty-two hundred pounds of lead in an outboard shoe. Anton Schneider's boat had a one lung overhead valve mill on the plan, probably an eight horsepower Doman. "Tahiti" is shown with a two cylinder, four cycle, twelve horsepower Miller kerosene mill on the theory of that day that oil for the lamps of China was procurable world wide. Today I'd use a diesel. Fuel oil is distributed everywhere.

When Hanna gave me his tracings, there was with them a note, "I am leaving everything to Dot. I'll be sailing away, am determined to get some peace before I check out." This, I took it, was no reflection on his home life; these were Depression years, and I had already had a note from him stating he'd had to write a hundred letters to get one design order or bite, and that the fishing was lean. There is, however, roast beef sustenance in the tales "Tahiti" owners have left behind them in all the waters of the world.

There was the story of "Waroo", one of these boats built in Australia and which completed a circumnavigation of that continent's wind-blown waters. Another Magellan story was of one of these boats in which her young amateur builder left the Atlantic coast with a stem of green bananas lashed to her shrouds to "ward off scurvy." After fiddling around in mid-Atlantic, he managed to make the Azores, quite green at the gills. She was called "Fiddler's Green", in case you want to know what's in a name.

There was also published the story of how a "Tahiti" barrelled down between Madagascar and the African coast, surviving a dread black norther. Another tale told about Roland Rosinski and his young wife Marge, who built "Monsoon" in a big brick Detroit metal shop, unbricking the building to get her out, writing later with charming informativeness of their adventures in the Caribbean.

Numerous stories have appeared in the yachting press about "Tahitis" which have left west coast ports for the Hawaiian Islands and the South Seas beyond.

As to hulls, the boats are good today. Perhaps the above-deck housing could be altered in some cases, the young men of today being no different than young men of other generations in believing that the world was without substance until their birth and that they alone are responsible for modernity. 'Twas ever thus.

I have stated that "Tahiti" was an enigmatic craft. This is because, in light of accumulated knowledge, she is under-derigged. Hanna had a solution: Use on the mainsail a gaff equal in length to the main boom and peak the sail high, gunter fashion. The same for the mizzen. Balance out with an enlarged jib, and the original 470 square feet goes to 520 or better. The boat, all 18,800 pounds, is amply stiff and more cloth will get her there a little sooner. If you are planning a voyage to Hellangone, fettle up a squaresail on the mainmast. All successful long voyages must be before the wind, using the Trades to get there.

The last time I saw Jack was on a rainy Sunday at his home down in Dunedin. He seemed frail to me, as he sat

lolling in the easy chair at the southwest corner of his living room. He was in shirt-sleeves, and collarless, a gold collar button holding his collar band, and I saw his merry brown eyes through thick, round, rimless spectacles, crinkling at the corners as he read my lips. Occasionally he responded with a quickly scribbled pencil note, some of them uproariously funny. I had chided him about the one and only snapshot of him ever published, utterly indistinguishable, showing him at great distance with a luxurious beard to his waist. "That was a big mouthful of cypress moss to keep my public guessing." Actually he was clean shaven.

To correct his paucity of exposure here, for the first time, is published a good portrait of the man in his prime. A good guy to meet on deck of a fresh morning as the breeze wafts down from the Cyclades.

The timelessness of Hanna's world is found in the truth of his basic philosophies. It seems fitting to close with this direct quote, written forty-six years ago, which reveals and sums the man:

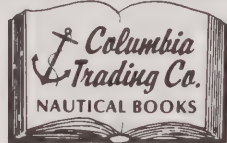
"There is food for thought in what the pioneers of our industry have to tell of their early struggles. The boat game can't be better summed up than in the one sentence, 'We might have made more money in some other business, but think of the fun we'd have missed' Conditions in that respect have not changed much today. I know several young men who are struggling and starving to get a foothold in various lines of boating right now. I have given them much sound advice, telling them that the same amount of work or less would have made them rich in many other lines. But it didn't do any good. They all applied the thumb of scorn to the nose of contempt and wiggled the fingers of derision at me, saying, 'Why didn't you take your own advice, Wise Guy?' To that I could make no answer. After all, they may be right. There are a million kinds of work in the world, each and all returning some money, but only one kind for any certain man that pays the richer gold of fulfilled desire, of captivated interest, of contentment that obliterates weariness. Why shouldn't he choose that one kind? We'll stay dead a long time after we die, and no amount of money will do us any good in that long time, but maybe happy memories will. They certainly help a lot in this life, and can't be lost or stolen."

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John Hanna

Techniques, Tools, Materials: Your Ideas & Needs

SMALL BOAT TENTS

Do you suppose it would be possible to get any readers to pass on ideas as to how they attach their various types of tents onto their boats. Not so much sail boats but small skiff type rigs. My boat is a 16' Sturdee simulated lapstrake Amesbury type skiff. I trailered to Deer Isle last year and then cruised about in Penobscot Bay, camping on different islands that are maintained by the Maine Island Trail Association. It was a beautiful trip. All but the last night. We were fogged in in one harbor and stayed on our boat, under a tarp with no mosquito netting. A tough night. The only way we could avoid the "little black bugs" was to stay in our sleeping bags, heads and all. The rest of the times we camped on the islands themselves with proper tents.

I had my tarp rigged well, as far as rain or wind were concerned, but I had no time to rig no-see-um netting. I had used a plastic tarp with ash bows. The edges of the tarp were cut and hemmed with plastic eyelets to fit over and around the rail of the skiff. A small nylon line was passed through this hem and then pulled and secured on small cleats attached to the transom. The outer rails on my boat have been renewed with a 3" piece of treated porch and deck wood cut diagonally. I then attached a canvas covered rub rail to this which gave me a nice lip to secure the tarp over. I intend to make a new tent out of rip stop nylon material and also sew in proper ventilation and bug control areas. Anyone out there have any other ideas?

Paul Boufford, 320 Wallis Rd., Rye, NH 03870.

TOPPING LIFTS

This is not about safety, it is about convenience. Specifically, it is about a piece of rigging that once was standard but is now seldom found in small sailing vessels. It is about a topping lift.

A topping lift is a line running from the outboard end of the boom, through a cheek block at the masthead and down to a cleat at the foot of the mast. It holds the boom off the deck when the sail is not set and it is a handy line indeed.

A topping lift has several advantages:

By holding the boom well clear of the deck it makes it easier to bend on the main or remove it at the end of a cruise. It holds up the boom when you wish to rig a canopy over the cockpit. It certainly adds to the appearance of your boat if you leave her on a mooring. Boats with the boom dangling down over the coaming look anything but seamanlike. It can even get the boom completely out of the way if you wish to fish from the cockpit of a small sailboat (I used one most successfully in a 16' catboat down in Florida). It can even serve as an emergency halyard should the main halyard snap. That happened to me years ago and since I could not lower the mast to get to the sheave, it was a long, long row home against the tide.

LOW COST FIDDLE BLOCKS

I am a recent new subscriber sent your way by none other than "Dynamite" Payson himself. So far I have enjoyed all of what I have seen. I have a Luger 21 that I am restoring and expect to sail come spring. With the onset of cabin fever due to our cold snap, I needed to focus on a vang/preventer for my cruiser but costs of other work has placed that item low on my list of financial priorities. That was until I saw, on page 28 of January 1st issue, David Goodchild's article, "A Quick Course", which inspired me to shake the winter doldrums and to design and make a pair of low cost, good performance fiddle blocks for a vang/preventer.

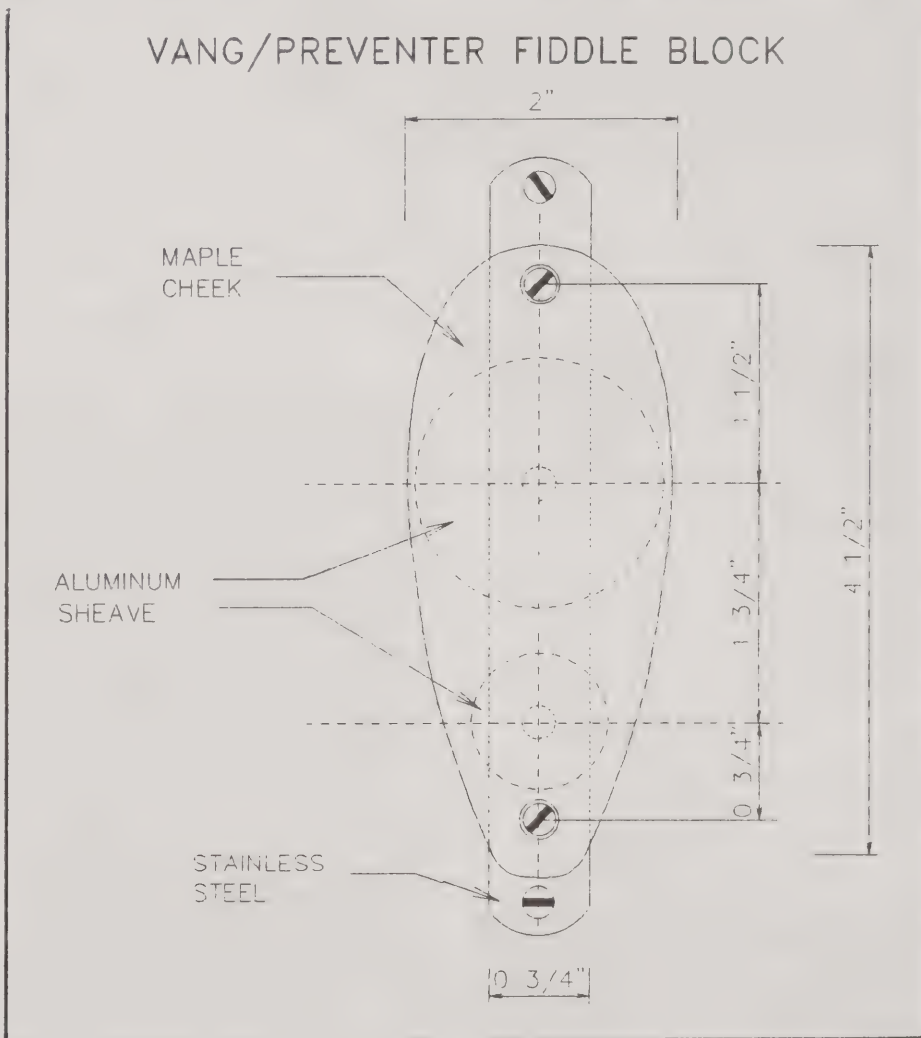
I began by using one of the CAD programs on my PC to design the basic block and then proceeded to test and refine the

prototype.

Once I worked out the details, the actual fabrication took about two to three hours for a pair. If more blocks were made, time could be further reduced by tasking the different processes. The most time consuming single process was turning the aluminum sheaves on my metal lathe. I have also tried acrylic plastic sheaves and am pleased with the working qualities of the material but must wait to test the results more fully.

I was so pleased with the effort, that I thought that I would like to share the results with others. So, I am sending along a copy of my plans for your perusal and use if you feel that you can use them in your magazine.

Garry Cerrone, Baltimore, MD.



Are there any disadvantages? I don't think so, but there are those who object to any "extra" lines on a boat and a racer might claim that the topping lift makes for additional wind resistance and, to some infinitesimal degree, reduces speed.

One must suppose the boat builders have ignored the topping lift to save a few

pennies in cost, literally a few pennies. In so doing, they have deprived the sailor of a most useful piece of gear. Why not add one to your boat while the mast is lowered during winter storage? I can promise that by haul-out time next fall you will be glad you did.

Tom Shaw



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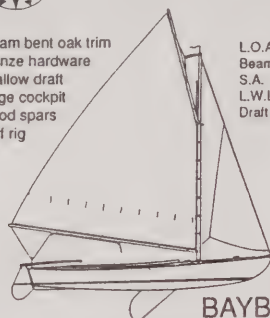
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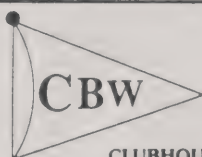
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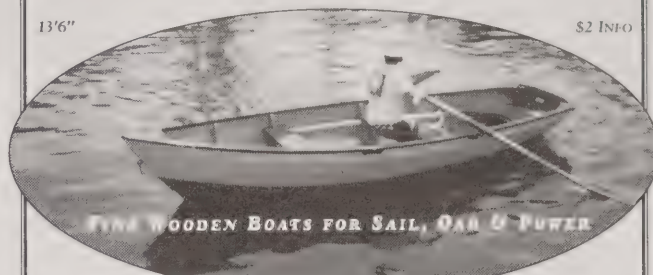
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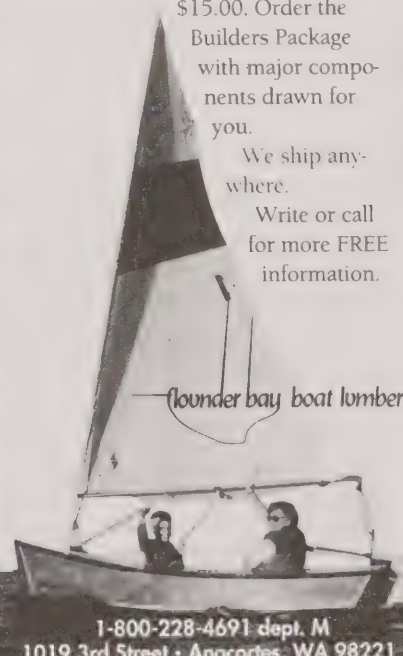
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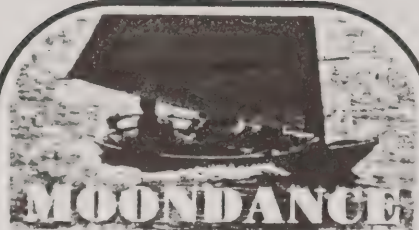
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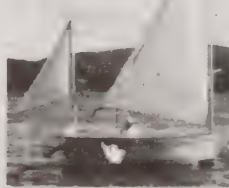
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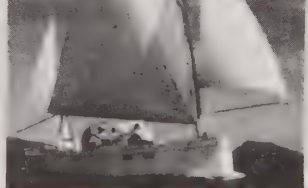
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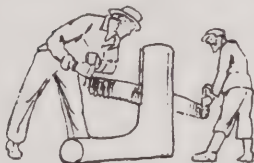
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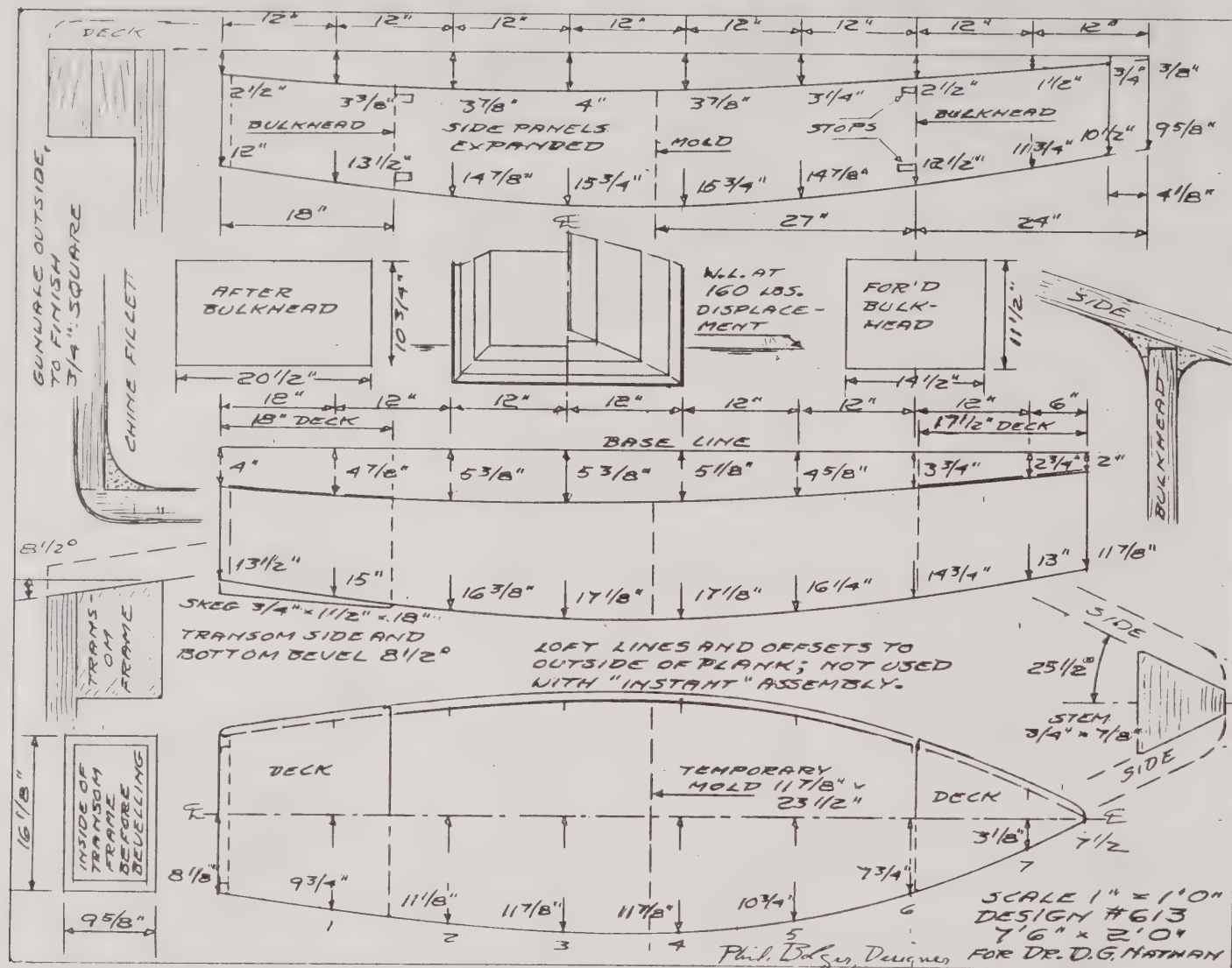
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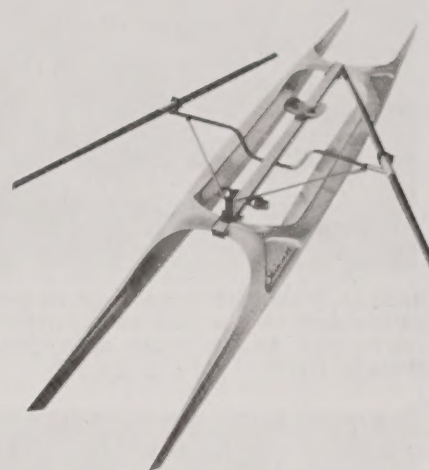
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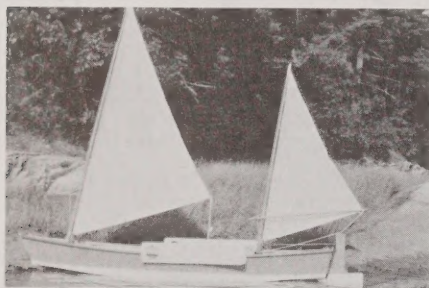
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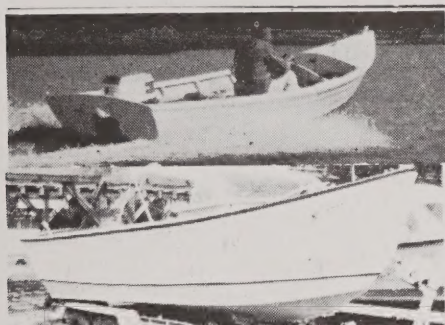
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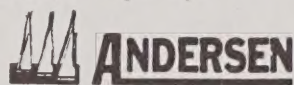
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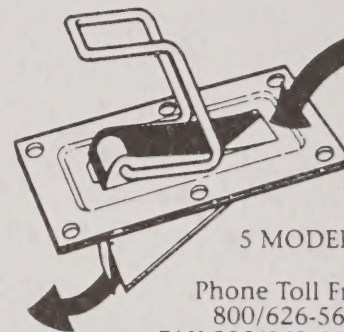
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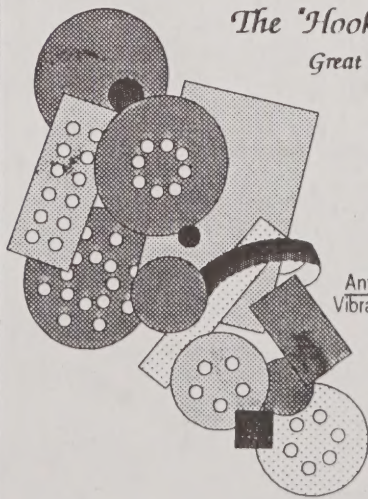
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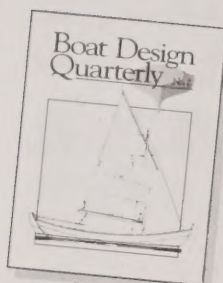
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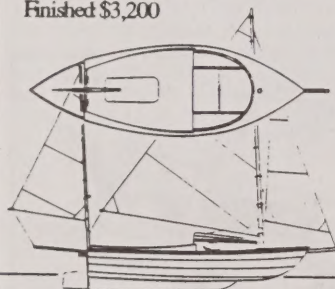
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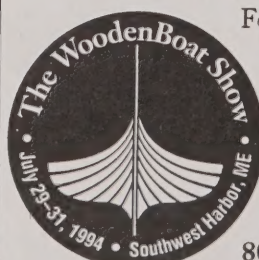
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