



messing about in BOATS

Featured in This Issue
"Snow Row '94"
Essex Museum
Stephens Philanthropy
East India Square
Salem, MA 01970 U.S.A.

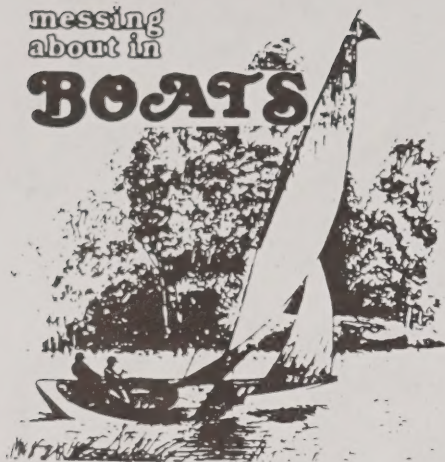
Volume 11 - Number 23

April 15, 1994



**messing
about in**

BOATS



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Our Next Issue...

Will bring you our observations on the 1994 Maine Boatbuilders' Show, now a mature and major event. Several small boat adventures will include "To Beaufort in Wigeon", "Dam" by Eric Livingstone, "My Vacation's Revenge" by Benjamin Lange, and "Continung South", Tom's next installment of "The Damn Foole's Progress". Project reports will feature Tora Johnson's "A Catskill Apprenticeship", and Edwin Irland's "Gaff Rigging a Black Skimmer". The design list will include Tim Barnum's "Open Water Rowing Boat", Rich Alves' "Return of the Time Machine", H. Douglas McNary's "Malibu Outrigger", "The Toy Boat", Jim Thayer's views on "How Many Does It Sleep?", and Phil Bolger's "Stone Horse Schooner". We'll have a look at a "Sound Proof Chart" and some special "Thomas Oarlocks", and Ralph Heinzerling will describe his "Beach Rollers". Book reviews will include "Mississippi Solo" by Eddy Harris, reviewed by David Keith; and "Pigeons & Gudgeons" by Walter Simmons, reviewed by David Goodchild.

On the Cover...

The 1994 Snow row opened the New England on-the-water season for us, on a nice sunny 40 degree early March day which attracted a large turnout. Photos and comments featured in this issue.

Commentary

There is Nothing Like a Boat

By Thomas Dixon, Jr., 1907 From "The Life Worth Living"

Contributed by Bill Townsend

If I had exchanged my New York brownstone house for a log cabin in the woods on the shores of the Chesapeake it would have been a good trade, if the boys could have had a boat.

A boy who learns early to handle a boat has achieved more in education than he who graduates at the head of his class in the city high school. A boat teaches him the first lessons of life, Law and Obedience, in vital ways. You can talk about Law to a boy hours and hours. It goes in one ear and out the other. The fact is, few of us ever learn things in the abstract. We rarely learn anything until Nature raps us over the knuckles and calls our attention to it.

A boat says to him: "Keep in harmony with the Law and I am your swift and willing servant. But if you take your hand off that sheet in a gale or forget to ease my sail to that rapping flaw in the wind, I'll dump you overboard." A boat never talks for the pleasure of hearing her own voice. She means it, and it is not necessary to repeat it. One dunking is enough.

The love which a boat inspires in a boy is not quite like any other. It is more complex and broadens his mental and spiritual horizon in proportion to its complexity. He may love a horse, or a mule, or a dog simply for its own sake.

A boat inspires all this and more. He soon learns that a boat has a soul born of the union of Labor with Nature. Though a boat is made of wood and nails and rope and cotton, the putting together of these pieces by human hand and brain gives it the press of character which reveals itself the moment she is afloat. Boats are good or bad, tricky or true, just as animals and folks.

Sailing on the river one day with my ten-year-old in his boat, we passed another boy in a narrow cranky looking craft with a big ugly sail. He was a poor youngster, a cook for some carpenters near by. But the salutes between them were given with all deference of two ocean captains in mid-Atlantic. I asked my skipper what was the name of his friend's craft.

"Hell", he answered.

"What?"

"Yes, sir, 'Hell', she's so tricky."

A boy learns to love or hate a boat for its individuality just as he does man or animal. This love for the boat rouses in him reverence for Nature in her larger life. He learns that the wind and tide have souls. He must study their temper and moods. The face of the water is ever changing from laughter to tears, from joy to anger, and with each breath speaks a new message. He must listen. The boat compels him.

The tides speaks with authority and eternal mystery. With never a break they ebb and flow twice a day. He must know their hours and plan his life in harmony with them. The fish and crabs obey their

This 1907 commentary on the merits of small boats seemed appropriate for this page. Thanks to Bill Townsend for sending it along.

laws. He must know whether it is ebb or flood when he starts home from a day's outing, or he will miss his supper. He must figure the height of the tide to cross a bar and get back to his channel, and must know the hours of high water and low water, the day he hauls his craft to scrape her bottom and paint her with copper.

The tide is his ship's railway and the beach his drydock. He must study the humors of the tide and interpret them. When the tides run unusually low he knows the wind is blowing strong offshore outside and a storm is brewing from the land. When the tide comes rushing in and piles up its flood to normal reach two hours ahead of time and keeps rising higher and higher, he knows an easterly storm is sweeping in from sea and makes things snug for its coming. Their everlasting mystery tantalizes him with a thousand vague questions about the Power back of their measureless tons. Early he learns the lesson of Reverence in the presence of Mystery.

A boat is a specific for conceit. When a boy reaches the massive age of thirteen and begins to instruct his father and mother on the conduct of life and the meaning of things, give him a boat and turn him loose in the tidewater. He may get wet, but he will be saved early from many afflictions.

I told my boy one day not to venture too far in the wind and tide of the hour from the yacht in his little boat. He waved his arm to me in lordly gesture and informed me he could sail her anywhere in sight and get back all right. I said nothing and let him go. An hour later I came out of the cabin and went ashore in the naptha tender for supplies. The wind was blowing a spanking breeze and the tide was running with the wind like a mill-race. I saw my omnipotent young navigator off to the leeward a mile, anchored, and a distress signal flying. I ran the launch within a quarter of a mile of him but paid no attention to his frantic gestures for help. I passed on to the shore and an hour later returned. Again I passed him waving his arms and bellowing for a tow. But I pretended not to hear him and pushed on.

When I got back to the yacht, I took the megaphone and asked him why he didn't come in to dinner. The wind was against him and no words from him, of course, could be heard, but the rapidity of his pantomime explanation of the impossibility of lifting his anchor in the terrible tide, or making headway against it, would have been luminous to a wooden Indian. I allowed him to think another hour then sent the launch to tow him in. He was quiet and humble for twenty-four hours.

Last summer that same boy brought his mother home through a wild, stormy night, over miles of coaming seas in a naptha launch. He sat quietly in the stern,

ran the engine, and steered the boat without a compass over twelve miles of black, crooked, foaming channel without once running ashore. He was only fourteen and his mother is a good sailor, but more than once the winds heard him say with quiet authority:

"Come, come, Mamma, don't be silly; there's not the slightest danger."

BOOK REVIEW

Building the Maine Guide Canoe

By Jerry Stelmok
Lyons & Burford Publishers
Reviewed by Ira Goldstein

If you're a boat enthusiast you've seen them. They appear a bit old fashioned, and even the new ones have an air of antiquity about them. If you're a canoe enthusiast, you've lusted after them, telling yourself that you'll one day own one. If you're a "died in the wool" canoe nut with delusions of grandeur, you've promised yourself you'll one day build one. I'm talking here of the Maine Guide Canoe, truly one of the breathtaking examples of both boatbuilding art and function.

If you can fit yourself into one of the above categories, "Building the Maine Guide Canoe", by Jerry Stelmok, originally published in 1980, and now reprinted with some updating, by Lyons and Burford Publishers, is a book worthy of inclusion in your library.

For the uninitiated, The Maine Guide Canoe is a direct descendant of the birch bark guide canoes of the last century. Guide canoes in general are slightly larger versions of the canoes we've all messed about in.

They were used by guides to bring vacationing sportsmen into wilderness areas on their hunting and fishing expeditions. Because these excursions often lasted several days or longer, the canoes had to be big enough for passengers and all necessary provisions. This meant they were usually longer and beamier than the canoes we're all familiar with. They usually tended to have more freeboard as well, both for weight considerations, and to allow passage on some of the larger lakes with their oft times rougher conditions.

Birch bark canoes, while beautiful to behold, and genuine works of art in their own right, have several inherent limitations. Their useful life is approximately 10 years if properly cared for, their materials are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, and they cannot be reproduced on anything resembling a production basis. The Maine Guide Canoe answers these concerns and makes possible the profitable crafting of these canoes by several custom builders in the Maine area and elsewhere.

One of the important services this book performs is in letting the public know that these canoes are still being produced, and if one does not have the necessary skills or confidence to start a project of this magnitude, he can still own one for not that much more than the price a good quality fiberglass or plastic model. There

Next morning his mother looked at him long and tenderly with softened eyes. She had not met him before.

There is nothing like a boat to develop a boy's executive ability, and his self-reliance within the limits of reason. Watch him skillfully beat his craft to the windward, and you know he has learned one of the first secrets in the deep seas of

life. Then see him round the bend in the channel, ease off her sheet, and lean back with a smile as he flies before the wind taking his girl home, and you know he has felt the thrill of the harmony of Nature and her laws. He has come into a heritage no calamity can imperil and no panic ever destroy.

is also a chapter describing the necessary techniques in restoration of older canoes, a task perhaps less daunting to the average enthusiast.

Maine Guide Canoes are updated birch bark canoes. Their ribs are steam bent cedar, with their planks also of cedar. Their scantlings are composed of the various hardwoods in approximately the same dimensions as those which the Indians used. The skin covering is the most obvious point of departure. Good quality birchbark is exceedingly difficult to find, and impossible to find in quantities sufficient for commercial production. This problem was solved by the use of canvas as a covering material, and canvas is still used today much as it was at the end of the last century. Modern materials have been adopted as well, several builders of these canoes now using fiberglass coatings to give a bright appearance.

This brings up one of two things I found troubling about the author's approach. The first has more to do with philosophic purity than construction. In the preface he decries man's misuse of the "natural gifts afforded him", and states that in using chemicals and synthetics we've "...contradicted the original purposes of the creation, and in the process...ravaged the natural beauty, displaced our cohabitators, and spread pollution across the land."

While it can be easily demonstrated that the Maine Guide Canoe is more benign to the environment than the mass-produced plastic creations commonly seen along our waterways today, it is still a sad step removed from the birch bark canoes of our Indian ancestors. The author never hesitates to use modern technology, start-

ing with modern fastenings, ending with the latest in glues and sealants, and all the while used in conjunction with the most modern of power equipment.

My only other criticism has to do with the book as a construction guide for the amateur builder without a complete shop. The author is a professional canoe builder. As such, he has a fully equipped shop at his disposal, with every necessary power tool and convenience. I don't begrudge him that. And in fairness, let me also state that at every step in which he uses a piece of power equipment, he also mentions that the step can be performed by hand, and gives reasonably good directions for doing that. The only step in the construction of the canoe that might prove to be an insurmountable hardship to those of us without complete shops is the ripping down of available lumber into the sizes needed in the canoe, but as the author states, this can be done for us at local mills or custom woodworking shops.

Despite the above, the author is extremely clear in his directions, and the use of pictures in describing what are at times complicated procedures is very good. Further, there are no individual steps in the process which left me feeling as if I didn't understand them fully, and perhaps more important in a book of this type, could not recreate them competently.

Overall the book is a must read if you've ever considered either building or restoring a Maine Guide Canoe, and highly recommended for those who own or perhaps just admire these functional works of art. There is no doubt that if you possess basic competence in the use of tools, along with the requisite time and patience, with this book as guidance you can turn out the canoe of your dreams.



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Gardner Callanen, boatbuilder

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THE NOBLE SPAR

I enjoyed W.S. White's "A Noble Spar" in the February 15th issue. It was a method of fabricating a hollow wooden spar that was new to me. Even at age 80 I am always able to learn more.

I was reminded of a Welsh boatbuilder I met in the '30's who plied his trade at Ellie Sprague's yard in East Rockaway on the south shore of Long Island. I lost track of him until WWII when I again ran across Sidney Davies making masts and yardarms for the YMS Class of 136' wooden minesweepers at City Island, New York.

Sidney showed me his unique method for shaping the solid masts from glued-up square section blanks, tapered in diameter from about mid-length. He had set a pair of angle iron tracks into the floor of his shop so arranged as to conform to the desired finished dimensions of the masts. The blanks were mounted above these on rugged centers which also allowed them to be rotated subsequently much like on a lathe. I don't recall all the details, but initially the blanks remained stationary while a circular saw mounted on a carriage that ran along the angle iron tracks cut off the upper corners of the blanks at 45 degree angles. The blanks were then rotated 180 degrees for another set of cuts making them eight-sided. They were then rotated as in a lathe while another motor-driven cutter on a carriage moved along the tracks rounded them.

I recall Sidney shipped these spars to a YMS builder in western Long Island. After WWII he built some small auxiliary sailboats on City Island, but once again I lost track of him.

Bob Steward, Jacksonville, FL.

Editor Comments: The 25th Anniversary Edition of Bob Steward's definitive book, "Boatbuilding Manual" has just been published by International Marine. We have a review of it coming along soon.

WEE PUNKIN



"Wee Punkin" has traditional good looks, is fun to build from inexpensive materials, and her performance will delight you. Innovative foam core deck and ample flotation make her extra safe and comfortable. She is ideal for children if they can get her away from dad. Truly a breakthrough in small boat design. Hit of the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival. No lofting. Plans with full size station patterns and detailed instructions. \$36. SASE for more info.

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Your Commentary

WEEKLY PADDLE POTLUCK

Soon after daylight savings time kicks in so does the weekly paddle and potluck on Lake Natomis, a six mile long dammed section of the American River near Folsom, California, about 15 miles east of Sacramento. A mixed group of paddle craft gathers at the Willow Creek Access midpoint on the lake and alternates weekly paddles either way. The variety of experiences includes encounters with collegiate scullers and viewing life in the great blue heron rookery across the lake from the launch site. Call Dana Fuller at (916) 682-5236 for details if you'd like to join in.

John Parks, Sacramento, CA

UNSAFE AT ANY SPEED

I was wondering if any readers could help answer a few questions I have. First I would like to build something along the lines of an International 14. I love the speed and excitement of windsurfing so I thought I'd build an unsafe at any speed double trapeze, planing, extreme, monohull which I would power with the rig from my Nacra 5.2 catamaran. As you can tell I'm looking for major overpowered here, sort of like the Australian 18's. Any suggested designs?

My second question is about locating the Eska Motor Co.? I tried calling their number but got a message that it had been disconnected. I need some parts for a 15hp engine of theirs that I got in a swap. Anyone know of their whereabouts?

Some other comment. Your Cape Dory Typhoon project sounds like it would make a great picture story. Redoing old boats is something that I, and I bet a lot of readers enjoy very much. One of my current projects is an old square sterned canvas canoe that a previous owner's wife took a hatchet to.

In closing let me say that this magazine is very much enjoyed by this reader, and while I might prefer more articles on how-to and sailboats I realize how difficult it is satisfy all the people all the time, so just keep up the good work!

Chuck Flett, 9157 Colchester Ridge Rd., Knoxville Tn. 37922, (615) 690-6416.

WHAT HAPPENED TO CHURCH'S PHOTOS?

On page 8 of the December 1, 1993 issue in your story about the Essex Shipbuilding Museum is a photo of the "Warwick" being built in the Story yard. The photo was taken by Albert Cook Church and is #83 in a book of his photos, "American Fishermen", published in 1940. It is full of his photos of the Gloucester fishing schooners and their construction.

I have often wondered what had become of all of Church's negatives, they would be invaluable to the Museum. Perhaps they already know, or a reader might.

I met Church in the mid-'30's at his studio in a loft at a shipyard in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. My father, my uncle and I spent a Saturday afternoon looking at his photos, eventually buying one of the "Gertrude L. Thebaud" taken from the deck of "Elsie". I still have it, #51 in his book.

R.H. Knight, 321 Burning Tree Dr., Naples, FL 33942.

DON'T MISS THIS FESTIVAL

Readers should know about the small boat festival at the North Carolina Maritime Museum on the waterfront in Beaufort on Saturday, May 7th. It's a great gathering of small wooden boats, with building demos too. The area offers beautiful sailing, the town is very old and lovely. I plan to attend with my stretched Micro. You can call for information at (919) 728-7317.

I am also planning a trip from Beaufort north to Nags Head sailing behind the barrier islands and am looking for owners of other shallow draft boats who might be interested in sailing in company.

Roland Anderson, 1712 Carybrook Dr., Richmond, VA 23233, (804) 750-1520.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SAILING

I learned to sail as a boy in Virginia. When I moved to Colorado in '68 I figured that was one of the things I'd have to give up for the mountains. Only a few years ago I realized that there was sailing here too, although different. I've owned several boats since (none power boats) and currently think that my Sea Pearl 21 is the perfect boat for the Rocky Mountains. Small enough to trailer easily, simple enough to set up quickly, stable enough to survive our surprise windstorms, big enough for week-long adventures on some of our larger lakes.

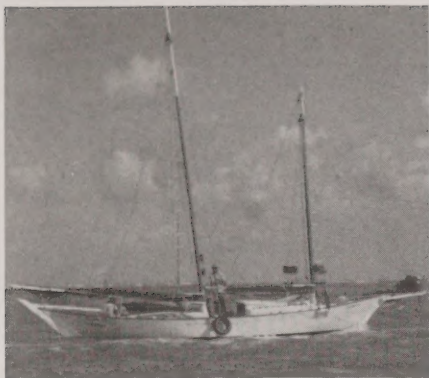
I've never built a boat but I've thought about it and I have a fair collection of plans and books. Maybe next winter. If I can get the barn cleaned out.

Lynwood Wilson, Boulder, CO.

DRESSING THE GAFF LOCALE?

I don't recognize the vessel in the "Dressing the Gaff" photo in "Your Commentary" in the February 15th issue but the patch of sky seems familiar. It looks just like the sky a couple of miles off Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii, in the Kealaniki Channel.

Malcolm Forbes, Merrimack, NH.



KNOWS THAT TANCOOK SCHOONER

I have been reading your back issues courtesy of Bob Titus and am really enjoying them. Imagine my surprise when I saw a beautiful Tancook schooner on one cover (summer of 1983). My first thought was I've sailed aboard that boat but the name is wrong. As soon as I'd turned to the story and seen John Nation's photo I knew I was right. John Nation and his wife (then) Ellen Ivey Nation had this boat in Galveston in 1976-77 in the same marina where I had my 28' Kings Cruiser. Being on the same pier we became friends. I lost track of them after they left Galveston. In Galveston the boat was named "Ellen Ivey".

It is a shame you didn't get to sail aboard her when she had a clean bottom, she was very fast reaching and running and went to windward surprising well considering the centerboard wasn't installed yet. In fact, John and one crewman sailed her across the Gulf of Mexico to Florida without the centerboard or an engine.

David Gulley, Houston, TX.

A TYPICAL READER?

I guess I am what you would call your typical reader as I have a fleet of used boats consisting of:

A 14' aluminum skiff with a 10hp outboard.

A 16'9" O'Day Daysailer.

A beat up but useable Sunfish.

A 20' Alden shell.

An 18' Old Town canoe that was free for the taking and which I recovered with Vectra.

A 10' plastic kayak.

A 12' Platt Monfort geodesic canoe which I made.

Ted Harding, Center Sandwich, NH.



WINTER IN FLORIDA

A winter mom on our local beach, not a sign of snow!

Mac McCarthy, Feather Canoes, Sarasota, FL.

WINTER IN NEW ENGLAND

A winter morn on our back lawn, not a sign of the Ipswich River behind those trees.

Alicia Moore, Ipswich, MA.



ADVENTURING NEXT WINTER?

Anyone interested in a little adventuring next winter? I'm looking for information about, and possible companions for, trailer sailing or camp cruising in the Sea of Cortez or Belize/Guatemala.

Fred Smith, 309 Sheldon Ave., Mt. Shasta, CA 96067, (916) 926-5426.

ICING ON A TASTY CAKE

I really can't explain why but I am always pleased to have read along with crotchety old Tom and his meanderings in his "Damn Foole". I then turn to the page with the latest Phil Bolger design. All else in each issue is icing on an already tasty cake.

Owen Pratz, Ellensburg, WA.

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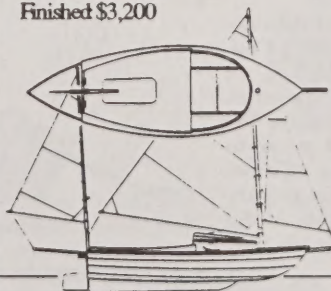


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The "Damn Foole's" Progress - 3

Continuing South

Next morning I hauled the anchor aboard and motored out of the long channel of Barnstable Harbor. We did not encounter the high winds and waves of the previous day but there were enough waves to bounce us around a bit. The tide was low exposing the flats on each side of the narrow channel. Only when we reached the bell buoy was I relieved to have escaped that accursed harbor, swearing to never again venture near it.

Turning off the motor I made sail and set a course for the Cape Cod canal. The tide had begun to ebb when we reached the entrance. We passed through swiftly against a headwind. Midway a boat from Nahant passed us, "Home Free" with Ron and Pat Silva aboard. They were sailing from the New England winter also.



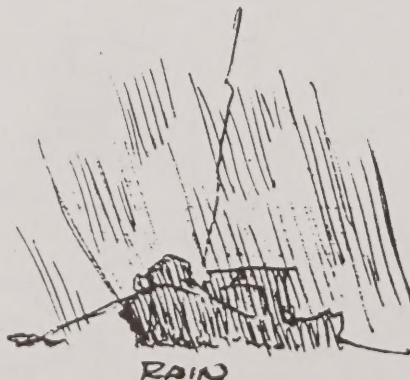
The wind strengthened at the west end of the canal, so rather than fight the opposing tide and wind in Buzzards Bay, we pulled into Onset and anchored beside "Home Free". I visited them briefly. We talked of the trip. They intended to sail to Block Island that night, and then offshore to Norfolk. Bad weather came in quickly that night. Next day all boats stayed in the harbor. The wind blew furiously all day. "Home Free" had stayed.

Everything aboard my boat that could move and make a noise did so. I rafted ashore with the help of the wind. I washed clothes, ate, drank, and walked about

town, returned to the dock, climbed aboard the raft and tried to row back out to the boat. The wind pinned us against the dock.

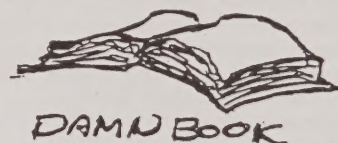


I rowed furiously. Nothing happened. I walked about the town again until sunset when the steady wind changed to gusts and rain showers. I managed to row into the lee of other anchored boats until the gusts passed. Eventually I reached my own boat and gratefully climbed aboard. By now it felt like home.



It rained heavily that night, leaving a light fog in the morning. I raised the mainsail to a light wind and motored out of the harbor into the canal where I found the tide against us. According to the the book

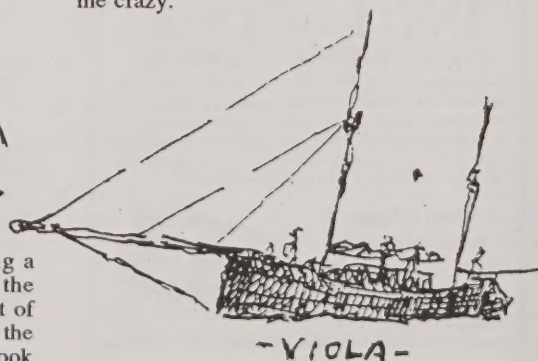
it should have been slack tide. I could never make sense of the DAMN BOOK! We made slow progress to the end of the canal. I shut off the motor and raised the genoa, sailing into Buzzards Bay.

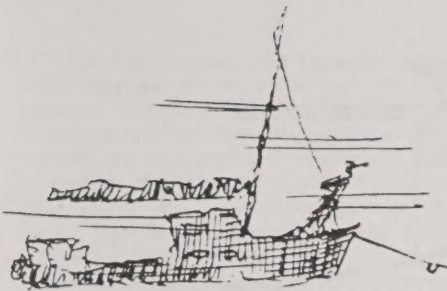


By noon the wind became strong and gusty, forcing me to douse the genoa and reef the main and run for Hadley's Harbor.



The outer harbor was crowded with God fearing, shelter seeking sailors. We sailed further into the solitude of the inner harbor and anchored some distance from "Viola", an English built ketch with the longest bowsprit I had ever seen. I lashed everything that would make a noise except the electrical lines inside the mast. Their rhythmical whacking all night long drove me crazy.





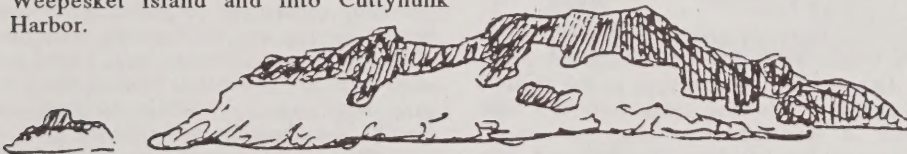
30 KNOTS —

Monday, October 4th, the wind blew 25-30 mph. Everyone stayed put. I couldn't go ashore because everywhere was private property. Amazing we were allowed to sit in their harbor. I tried to think of what was going to happen when 98% of the population would only be allowed to stand on 2% of the earth.

"96% will be boaters," the boat suggested.

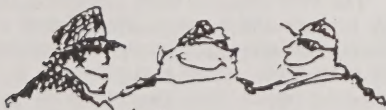
Mold was forming on everything. I washed it away with bleach and water. Tried not to go crazy. Next morning I tried to leave but a good sea running in the bay drove us back into the outer harbor. We anchored and went ashore on a small peninsula that had a sign declaring that "People Are Welcome". It was Naushon Island. The sign further explained that the island was set aside for enjoyment, exactly what the Indians told the first settlers, but ignored. I explored this wild place that had been left to itself with the feeling that I didn't belong.

So I returned to the boat, reefed the main and set the small jib, sailing out into Buzzards Bay by 11 am. It was a rough exit but once out into clear water it proved to be a following wind from the northeast. So we ran comfortably before it among the Elizabeth Islands, inside treeless Weepesket island and into Cuttyhunk Harbor.



WEEPESKET ISLAND

We found a nice isolated place to anchor and had just settled in when a large sailboat came in and took a mooring beside us. My anchor immediately dragged in response. When it caught on a mooring three men in a pram rowed out and demanded \$20 for the mooring. I explained what had happened and told them I would re-anchor. The three men smiled at one another and then rowed off.



- SMILING -

I paddled ashore to explore the island, looking for the windmill the island was noted for. I discovered that it had been torn down and a stinking noisy generator put in a house to supply energy. When I paddled back to the boat a seaplane landed, completely destroying the charm of this re-



GONE

mote little island. A bridge and a tunnel will finish it off.



During the night the anchor dragged again and we drifted across the harbor mysteriously missing all the other boats until the anchor caught on another mooring. Next morning I complimented the boat for its intelligent behavior. When I pulled the anchor up it was a ball of grass. That explained the three men in the pram smiling at one another.



GRASS ANCHOR

We left the harbor by 6:30 am, sailing through the "gut" for excitement. With a 15 to 18 knot wind over a flat sea we found ourselves east of Block Island in a very short time, but then we wearily had to tack around to the harbor where we entered and anchored. The anchor would not set so

we had to take a mooring. There were many available since it was the end of the sailing season. Finding that the mooring line would not fit into the tiny toy chock on the bow, bitched, ate, slept and awoke on October 7th to the 30 knot winds of another cold front.



HAUSER AND CHOCK

I moved the boat to a private mooring near the beach and then rafted ashore to the island the Indians called "Manisses", "Island of Many Little Gods". And so it remained until settlers came in 1661 with a single biblical god that soon divided up into as many denominations as there were "little gods". Now it is called the island of many little churches. Three hundred natives would not assimilate into this intolerant community of settlers, and were buried on Indian Hill where round stones



ISLAND OF MANY CHURCHES

mark the site for curious tourists. When I related this information to the boat, it told me to change its name to "Bullship".

Friday October 8th we sailed out of the harbor to find the wind unfavorably on the nose. "The hell with it," I told the boat, "we'll wait for better conditions."

"Right," the boat said, "you haven't finished criticising the place."

We returned to the mooring where I realized that my simple orderly boat had turned into a complicated junk heap. When I began cleaning it up I spilt a five pound bag of peanuts. Peanuts were everywhere. "The hell with it," I exclaimed, and rafted ashore rather than clean it up. I walked the island's solitary beaches and back roads, and got lost on trails through the reservations. When I returned to the boat the sun had set. I sat and ate peanuts wherever I found them.

"Did you meet yourself again?" the boat asked.

"No, I got lost."



- LOST -

To Be Continued.

The hurricane was headed out into the Gulf of Mexico. It left Cuba wet and a little tore up. Most storms curl northward after reaching the Gulf so my father and Rollo decided the chances were favorable enough to continue our planned Labor Day Weekend cruise from Miami down to the middle of the Florida Keys and back.

We planned an early A.M. rendezvous on the Miami River, caravan our two small cruisers down and out the mouth and head south across Biscayne Bay through Featherhead Banks, then into Card Sound, out the other side via Caesars' Creek and into Florida Bay. The Creek is the beginning of the "Keys". The Keys were the main object of my family vacations, a wonderland of things to do with a boat and places to seek adventure!

Spread across the transom with metal house-sign letters was the name "ROBIN S". She was twenty-six feet of very basic boat. Her history, which was long, was unclear but her intentions weren't. Rounded chine, clinker-built with a deep forefoot that ran straight aft, she became fat early, then narrowed a bit in the stern. A keel housed her shaft and stopped below the propeller. She was compact, sturdy and utilitarian.

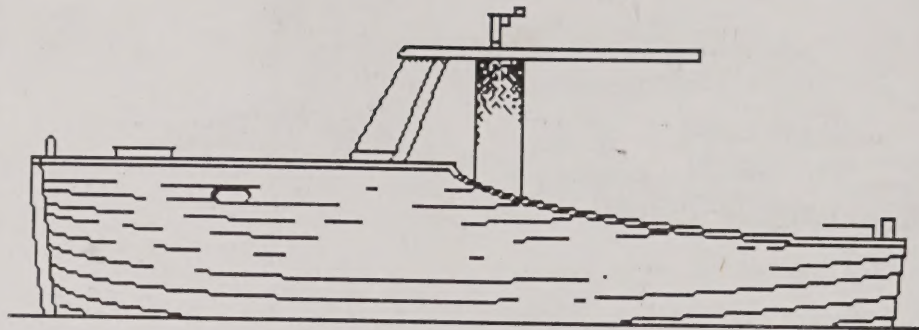
This "worker" background was emphasized by three four-by-four stantions, one in the bow and two at the stern, one in each corner, and the engines' exhaust being vented vertically through the hard-top helm area and capped with a metal rain-flap that sometimes tapped a marching beat. A second helm at the lazarette consisted of an "L" shaped three-quarter inch pipe tiller. The second helm was probably used by gill-netters working nets.

The cabin space was simple, two bunks, port and starboard, a porthole over each, and a hingeless hatch near the bow that would hop off in sloppy weather if the hooks were forgotten (we never lost it overboard). The hatch opening let out just in front of a three by two foot by four foot deep well in the flush cabin top. This well held an anchor and line, which would be tied to the bow stantion near the stern. It was headquarters for my brother and I to hunker-down in. It was a great lookout and we were in charge of the anchor. I loved this boat.

The early morning loading of supplies completed, I pushed the bow clear of the boat berthed forward. My mom released the stern line, my brother the spring line and my father reached back to the heavy-duty three foot tall lever and with some effort pulled it into forward gear. We were underway on the inky pre-dawn river.

It wasn't long before we spotted Rollo's cruiser. His boat was five feet longer and at a glance was a cousin to the "Robin S". "Yatchty", with brightwork, twin engines, twice the cabin space with head, galley, and appointments. It had less open cockpit, placing emphasis on indoor comfort. Rollo's crew was his wife, Noreen, a close friend of my mom's. I've forgotten the cruiser's name. As we approached he was lying sideways in the dark river. Motors idling, his navigation lights on, he saw us and took the lead.

Many small "traders", more than usual, had crowded in along the river near the mouth. They had come in for protection from the storm that was churning up



"Robin S" & the Hurricane

By Bert Van Dusen, Jr.

the Gulf Stream. The traders were lit up in their crew quarters and mess, which were fifteen or more feet above the water. Radios playing, clothes hanging to dry, dangling lines could be seen everywhere aboard. Dark stains ran down the tall flat sides.

My father knew all the flags that flew from the stern staffs. A lot of Panamanians, several Cubans, Hondurans, many countries in or surrounding the Gulf/Caribbean waters. There was something exciting about knowing where they were from. Something mysterious not knowing what they carried.

The sun was up but hidden under thick grey clouds as we approached Featherhead Banks. We had crossed Biscayne Bay, rigged several trolling lines and watched the night turn to morning. A short mean chop with gusting winds made the "Robin S" roll. It was not uncomfortable but turned the ordinary task of checking the troll-lines for weeds into a weird balancing act on the open deck. No fish had been caught.

Rollo, was far ahead in the distance. He found every marker, making our going a little easier. At my turn at the helm I found the following chop made the boat yaw, it was harder to keep on course. Through the winding "Banks" and into Card Sound we passed the old "Keys Highway Bridge". Pylons traced the legs from the edge of Homestead across the Sound to the northern end of Key Largo. On the Homestead side a ramp started low, ran a quarter of a mile through the mangroves, slowly rose forty feet over the water and suddenly cut off. A reminder of what a hurricane can do.

Ahead, Rollo's boat was dead in the water. We had no radio so shouting was our form of communication. Noreen, had become sick and was below (always a mistake) and he wanted to enter the lee of close-by Little Pumpkin Key to rest himself and his wife's stomach. In less than half an hour anchors were dropped and the last cups of morning coffee were poured from the thermos. The wave activity was only slightly less in the island's lee and the weather showed no signs of abating.

We rested, lunched fifty yards apart, and all agreed that the weather was gaining intensity. My dad and Rollo again used hand motions and shouts to agree to make Big Pumpkin Key for better protection and to spend the night with the hope for clearing weather by the morning.

Rollo, was virtually alone doing the duties that the four of us did. We easily made ready to get under way. He tried to back his cruiser around next to the anchor line, planning to put her in neutral, then with a boathook reach over the side for it. With boathook ready he came next to the line but a wave put him down on it. The prop took it up like a spinning reel bail and a moment later the engine clanked to a stop.

Now, stern facing the coming waves and still anchored, the boat was in trouble. Rollo tried with the second engine to pivot the bow into the waves but couldn't. Fifty yards away, we watched helplessly. My dad looked at me while suggesting that we had enough seasoned help aboard, and Rollo none. Would I swim over and lend a hand? I went over.

As I approached the bobbing vessel, Rollo, bent over the stern, and asked me to dive under and free the tangled line. Without a mask the stirred water was murky. I had to get very close to the pounding rudder and propeller to see and work. Timing my movements with the wild raising and dropping hull, I held the shaft with my left hand, worked the rapping with my right while holding my breath. The plunging hull gave me quite a ride with knocks. It took several dives and close calls to loosen the line. Now freed, the boat swung to a safer position to the waves while I climbed aboard.

We got underway. The rope had bent the shaft so Rollo used only the port engine. Slow and steady the two small cruisers crabbed across the sound headed for Big Pumpkin Key and its lee. Noreen was still sick as I helped Rollo secure his boat. It was late afternoon and the water was flatter behind this large key. It was a good place to spend the night, if conditions didn't change.

The two cruisers were anchored close. My brother and I swam, then fished until dinner. My mom had brought a wonderful pot roast with carrots and potatoes. It was reheated over the two burner green Coleman. I was now assigned to Rollo's so returned there for the night. At fourteen years old I had spent a lot of time aboard boats and knew procedures well. I felt the importance of my role but was reluctant to leave my family.

I love sleeping on a boat. It's very special. The motion is lulling, making for fluid dreams. The sounds are relaxing and comforting. I feel the same about trains.

My Dad's voice was loud and filled with urgency as he awakened us. The weather was up and nasty. The wind had turned around one hundred eighty degrees and the lee was now the windward! Both cruisers were beginning to jerk at their anchor lines. We decided to get into the lower Bay back through Feather Head Banks for better protection.

Anchors up and stowed, we headed for the channel's entrance. Through the stormy dark, Rollo found it. The cut is long, about one and one-half miles, not straight. You must find and follow markers. Feather Head Banks is shallow and sprinkled with small mangroves.

Finding the markers was difficult. They blended into the not yet dawning sky. There are two blinkers, one at each end of the channel. At the end of a dog-leg in the cut Rollo headed for a light he believed signaled the northern opening. My dad followed.

In a while it was clear that we were in the Bay and had mistakenly followed a light from a distant key. The "Robin S", was no longer close astern. I could see her navigation lights some distance away. We waited, then turned back towards the channel. Approaching the "Robin S", we could hear her engines revving and see a slight tilt to her hull. She was hard aground and struggling to get free.

Rollo turned and backed his boat stern-to to the tilted cruiser. I passed a line to my mom and brother which they fastened to one of the stantions. Rollo pulled slowly ahead and once the line was taut he put hard pressure on it. My dad used his engine in reverse. Nothing. Stuck hard! We tried swinging the stern back and forth. Again nothing. The tide was moving out fast and the weather was closing in faster!

When twilight came "Robin S" was over on her side in two feet of water. She lay cockpit towards the wind and waves. The ice-cooler had broken up and blown overboard. Most of the canvas that was put up during the night to protect the cockpit was torn and the shreds flapped wildly in the high winds. It would be several hours until the tide was full. We expected a higher tide than usual, forced in by the storm. I watched my mom bailing. Breaking waves splashed into the open cockpit. Footing was poor and sitting couldn't have been comfortable.

Noreen made her first appearance on deck in a long while. She didn't stay long. We were anchored to one side of the channel not far from the tilted lady. We had the hardest thing to do now, wait. Time dragged but finally the "Robin S" stood upright again.

From across the sound came an open commercial fishing boat. The fisherman in grey slicker and nor'wester slammed his boat in our direction. He backed off the throttle settling between us and the "Robin S". With precision he turned and backed close to her stern. My dad talked briefly to the fisherman before he passed his Danforth anchor with chain and line to the man who quickly made it fast to a large stern cleat. The other end of the line was connected to a bride-affair that my dad had arranged between his stern stantions. The fisherman slowly took up slack then

dropped the hammer. The rope stiffened and groaned then snapped. The pressure seemed to dig the keel of the "Robin S" deeper, sticking it into the mud like a cowboy does with his bootheel bulldogging a steer. The fisherman shouted he would be back with heavier line, threw the throttle over and was gone into the gray and wind, keeping Danforth and chain. ing Danforth and chain.

My dad put the engine into forward gear! Slowly the prop kicked up the mud and in a few moments there was a crater astern of the boat. He kicked the lever into reverse and with keel hopping she backed from the mud and slid into deeper water.

Once into the channel my dad took the lead. We followed. When I took the helm I watched the stern of the "Robin S" as the high short waves would lift it out of the water clearing the propeller. The engine would rev up each time. It was a struggle for both boats to keep a compass course. I was exhausted when we finally entered the mouth of the Miami River but glad to be back aboard with my family when we had an opportunity to pull close.

The river was calm and indifferent to what we had been through. Noreen was up and waved as we broke ranks and parted. It all seems like a dream now. The hurricane

had circled and hit Ft. Myers, then continued up through the center of Florida. We had been caught in one of its long arms of windy squalls. Battered, equipment broken or lost, we had been tested, the old cruiser had given us an adventure, something for our memories.

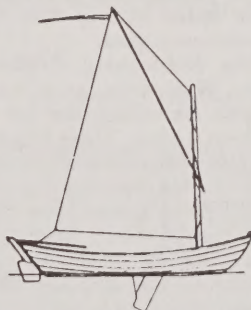
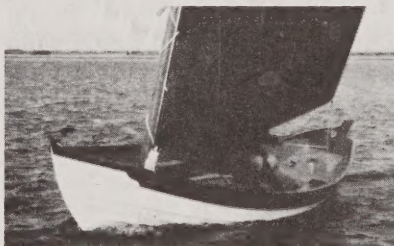
Several years later the "Robin S" was sold and a trailerable outboard cruiser was purchased. We enjoyed the new boat and had many great times but no boat stands out in my memories like the "Robin S".

(Bert Van Dusen today operates Bay View Books, a used maritime book business, at 595 Fireplace Rd., East Hampton, NY 11937).

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The Oldest Tug in the Coast Guard

By Joe Reisner

The 50' Great Lakes harbor tug "Wilhelm Baum" and her regular three-man crew have a combined age of 261 years. The tug is the oldest of the four.

The "Wilhelm Baum" was launched in Baltimore in 1923 and hauled by train to Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, for service with the United States Army Corps of Engineers at the Soo Locks. Originally christened "Captain Canfield", the tug worked with a derrick boat and sweep raft, maintaining the piers and roadsteads in and out of the locks. She plodded along at this unromantic but highly important job through the Depression, when the locks saw little traffic, through World War II when they were carrying vital loads of iron ore, and in the boom years following when steady streams of ships moved through the locks. Then, in the sixties, the tug was declared surplus by an ungrateful government and put up for sale.

The "Captain Canfield" was sold to a marine contractor from the lower part of Lake Michigan, who changed her name to "Julie Dee". She went to work moving barges and cranes around construction sites and in the other little tasks common in the life of small tugboats, until her owner, superstitiously believing she was jinxed after a fatal accident involving two divers, ran her up on a mudbank and walked away.

Jim Bradley, a professional diver and self-avowed tugboat nut, heard about the sad state of the "Julie Dee" and went up to her resting place to give her a look. He came back her owner.

A highly skilled craftsman, Jim set about getting the tug back in condition to move her down the lake to his home port, South Haven. Aside from her engine, which was in pieces on the engine room floor and with only one of four cylinders intact, "Julie Dee" was in basically good shape. Her riveted iron hull had lived all of its life in fresh water, the most benign of all environments for any metal in marine service, and had never suffered any major damage beyond the infusion of silt and garbage from the mud flats. And so, Jim sorted out the parts, bolted the engine back together, renamed the boat "Wilhelm

Baum" after his late diving partner, and headed home under power to South Haven.

The "Wilhelm Baum" came to South Haven in 1973. Three years later, both Jim Bradley and the tug joined the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, he after qualifying as a Vessel Operator, she as an Operational Facility. Like the government at large, the Coast Guard will always find the longest path to simple definitions.

When she was built, the tug had a three-cylinder, 45 hp Kahlenberg engine. This was replaced in 1944 by a four-cylinder plant of the same make but rated at 70 hp. But you wouldn't want to challenge the "Wilhelm Baum" to a tug-of-war with your 300-horsepower Merkomoronic outboard. These horses, as the late Weston Farmer used to say, were Percherons. The 14,000 pound engine turns a 35" diameter propeller to produce immense static thrust at a flat-out speed of less than 10 knots and 310 maximum rpms.

The Kahlenberg Brothers, of Two Rivers, Wisconsin, may have been responsible for ending the age of steam on the Great Lakes. Their engines were installed in every sort of vessel from fish tugs to yachts, burning many kinds of oil (the "Wilhelm Baum" does fine on home heating fuel). Low-compression Kahlenbergs rely on red-hot cylinder heads to ignite oil/air mixtures injected under pressure. A cold engine is pre-heated by cylinder head blowtorches, then turned over by compressed air. Once running, a Kahlenberg is considered unstoppable by anything less than total immersion.

The "Wilhelm Baum's" original and replacement engines were installed with a clutch and reduction gear, and were also set up with standard start-stop-reverse controls on the engines. Kahlenberg engines are two-cycle and capable of being run in either direction. On the "Wilhelm Baum", a clutch/gear control is mounted in the pilothouse, along with a Chadbourne which is connected to the engine's throttle but also still provides a chain linkage to an engine room telegraph (in case an engineer were to be employed for some reason. Maybe to give gainful employment to a relative, or something).

Today, Jim uses the engine room telegraph bell to signal the crew on the afterdeck. Because the exhaust stack, Coast Guard portable pump, hawser reel and miscellaneous emergency gear completely block the view between the pilothouse and the fantail, the crew on duty during towing operations communicates by intercom as the skipper responds with the bell and an occasional shriek on the tug's high-pitched whistle.

In her hull design, the old tug is a classic displacement vessel: Long (50'), slim (10' abeam) and deep (5' 6" draft), with sweeping sheer from a very low afterdeck (ideal working height) to a high plumb stem. Although the original "Captain Canfield" was commissioned by the Corps of Engineers for a specific kind of work, the boat is actually a classic Great Lakes harbor tug of the sort that became the workhorse alongshore from the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 until the end of the age of sail 100 years later.

Because most Great Lakes harbors are river mouths and very narrow, cargo sloops and schooners had to stand off until tugs could come out into the lakes to tow them in and snug them into their berths. But while they were designed for this particular sheltered-water service, the "Wilhelm Baum" and her forebears turned out to be exceptionally seaworthy craft in what may be the nastiest environment any boat has been required to work.

When he brought her back to Bristol condition, Jim Bradley refit where necessary and repainted and varnished everywhere else inboard and outboard of the "Wilhelm Baum". The deckhouse is mild steel and required little more than fresh paint. The white oak pilothouse is painted about halfway above the deck and then varnished. Just aft of the pilothouse, Jim turned an unused space into a warm, cherry and pine paneled cabin with a small galley and a settee that converts into two berths, a much appreciated crew comfort and an essential part of the "Wilhelm Baum's" lifesaving function.

A major alteration to the pilothouse was made by removing the tug's original square windows and replacing them with

very heavy round ports which are able to stand the frightful smashing from headseas the "Wilhelm Baum" routinely encounters. With her two pilothouse doors secured and her stern companionway and hatch dogged down, the "Wilhelm Baum" can, and regularly does, venture out in the most horrible weather and sea conditions Lake Michigan's easily offended spirits can throw at her.

At her permanent dock alongside the Michigan Maritime Museum at South Haven, the "Wilhelm Baum" on a sunny summer day looks like a pretty little piece of floating whimsy. But don't let the bright red paint and the shiny brassard and the glistening varnish fool you. When the Coast Guard radio station calls in a "case", the "Wilhelm Baum" is all business. Jim uses a set of 12-volt battery-powered electric coils to heat up the cylinder heads. The cold engine can be running within four minutes; less time than the gasoline engines of the rest of the local Coast Guard Auxiliary fleet need to exhaust their fumes and get underway.

A member of Division 18 of the Coast Guard's 9th Central District, the tug is one of about two dozen Auxiliary boats responsible for 1600 square miles of Lake Michigan. South Haven is one of the most popular pleasure boat ports on the lakes and one of the most congested. The entire Coast Guard presence at the port, however, is an all-volunteer Auxiliary search and rescue detachment. Two boats are pre-assigned for duty each weekend of the operational season, usually early May through September, and the "Wilhelm Baum" takes her turn on the schedule. But in between, 24 hours of each weekday, the tug and one other locally-based trailerable boat answer all of the calls. The nearest regular Coast Guard station is at St. Joseph, a considerable run down the lake.

In her years of service, the "Wilhelm Baum", skippered on each run by Jim Bradley, has responded to over 500 calls for help and has been responsible for saving six lives. Jim and senior crewman Leon Sowell carry pagers for the South Haven 911 center where the Coast Guard can call in requests for assistance. The second scheduled crewman, this writer, lives too far away to answer emergency calls, but there are other Coast Guard Auxiliary-qualified crew people who can be called when the pagers beep.

When she goes out, the "Wilhelm Baum" expects the worst, and carries the gear to deal with virtually any kind of trouble: Vessels sinking, vessels on fire, people in the water (cold water!), vessels foundering, people sick or injured, and vessels whose operators simply forgot to fill the fuel tank. Where human injuries are involved, a highly professional medicine chest in the hands of crewman Sowell, who retired after a long career in the navy as a medical corpsman, comes into use. If it's a fire, in the open water or in the harbor, the "Wilhelm Baum" has pumps and hoses to direct high-pressure blasts of water through a monitor or hand-held nozzles. The pumping system even provides nozzle and connector compatibility with shore equipment, including the local fire department apparatus, so that the tug can feed water to its own hoses and those of land-based fire equipment as well.



"Wilhelm Baum" gets underway on a rescue mission in a 30 knot gale.

A great deal of the "Wilhelm Baum's" work is in search and rescue, as opposed to routine patrols and responses to calls for help from vessels in known positions. The tug has been out for as long as 18 hours, running a search pattern in conjunction with other boats and aircraft. While her speed keeps her on a search course longer than a high-speed vessel, the "Wilhelm Baum" compensates with a highly sophisticated electronics array to locate vessels and even people in the water. She carries two Loran C's, two marine radios with direction finders, and a state-of-the-art radar that scans out to 64 nautical miles. The tug also carries a CB radio, fathometer and EPIRB receiver. And for the rare occasions when the search goes submarine, there's a side-scan sonar and underwater TV.

Jim Bradley preheating the Kahlenberg diesel.



The "Wilhelm Baum's" 25-ton dry weight taxes local haulout facilities, and so she's in the water 365 days a year for three years at a time. Her massive iron hull plating has held fast against more than 70 winters of ice without any loss of structural integrity. Fresh water, along with being kind to metal, is also inhospitable to the things that foul salt-water hulls and drill holes in them. And so, barring any unforeseen (and hard to visualize) disasters, the grand old lady of Division 18 can look forward to a long continuation of life, hauling in the disabled, going out to aid the endangered, and delighting the righteous who think there is no poem lovelier than an old tugboat.



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Harbor Seal

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Design and Commentary by

Joe Pallazola

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Berkeley, California 94703

SPECIFICATIONS

Length Overall: 16'	Cockpit Dimensions:
Maximum Beam: 24"	Inside Length: 49"
Waterline Beam: 22"	Opening Width: 17"
Draft: 4"	Opening Length: 31"
Weight: 28 lbs.	

Like several of my earlier boats, this one was designed to be built from 1/8" lauan "doorskin" plywood using the taped-seam (or "stitch-and-glue") method. Again I wanted a very light craft made from inexpensive material with a minimum of fuss. Here's how *Harbor Seal* came to be:

My previous stab at designing a kayak resulted in *Gato*, a 14' x 2' hybrid based mostly on Phil Bolger's *Minimum Kayak* and *Eek!* designs (See "messaging about in BOATS," May 1, '92). The exercise produced a fairly light, serviceable watercraft much appreciated by my friend Danny, to whom I gave her when I needed room to build another boat (my rowboat *Slipper*; in "BOATS," June 1, '93).

But *Gato's* plumb sides, vertical stern and stem, flat decks and straight sheer suggest a miniature *Monitor*, the Civil War iron gunboat. Despite her capabilities, she's not the prettiest of watercraft. After parting with her, I thought that my next kayak should more closely resemble the Greenland type, with flaring sides, a nicely-curved sheer and rockered bottom, and sharply raked ends. In short, I thought to try for a more traditional look.

While I was at it, I thought it'd be nice if I could make her longer and narrower at the waterline (i.e., faster), and even lighter than *Gato*, which at 36 lbs. is really not all that difficult to tote. But less weight would be better.

THE DESIGN

I started by drawing a cross-section of the hull amidships, beginning with a (scaled) bottom width of 18". I drew a vertical centerline bisecting the bottom and then drew a waterline 4" above and parallel to the bottom. (A simple way to get a curved sheer and rockered bottom is to use flared, parallel-edged sides bent around frames or bulkheads. This produces conical sections that give the kinds of curves desired. The more flare of side, the more pronounced the rocker and sheerline curves.) From the intersection of the waterline and the centerline, which I took to be the heel of the stem, I drew diagonal lines to the beam-ends of the bottom section. These represented the chines (where sides and bottom meet), as viewed from the ends of the hull.

From the bottom's outside edges I then drew perpendiculars to the chines. These indicated the flare of the side planks. Measuring up 6" for

plank-width, I then drew parallels to the chines to complete the sides. It worked out that with an 18" bottom width the waterline beam came to about 22" with a maximum beam of around 24" at the sheer. The top of the bow was a little over 6" above the designed waterline. (The dimensions of sides and bottom came from my ideas for plywood sheet usage.) I was figuring this boat would have a pointy-ended, symmetrical shape in plan view.

Then I taped together a cardboard scale model of the hull and decided to make the stern different from the bow by adding a little triangular transom like the Greenland boats often have. The next step was decking this skinny sled of a hull with something that would provide sufficient volume for occupant, gear and flotation. Leaving the center 4' of hull for cockpit space, I added straight, peaked fore- and after-decks, from the cockpit bulkheads to the ends of the hull. I figured that 16" would provide ample width for the bottoms of any prospective users of this boat, so I added vertical side coamings to the cockpit several inches inboard of the sheer, filling the space between sheer and coaming with side-decks or washboards.

It looked feasible but not particularly appealing. I put the drawing and model aside and went on to other things. Then one long holiday weekend (Labor Day) I looked at the two sheets of doorskin ply leaning against my wall and got to work. I figured that I could cobble together the basic hull in short order while giving some thought to making the cockpit and decks more attractive as I got into it. Anyhow, I needed a boat-building project (I get that way periodically) and the kayak seemed a worthy one.

STARTING CONSTRUCTION

One 4x8 sheet of doorskin would provide the sides, bottom and transom. I measured, marked and then cut the pieces out on my living-room floor after clearing a space big enough to accommodate the full sheet with a little extra all around for working room. I then joined the pieces of the sides and bottom (two pieces for each part) with butt-straps, and assembled the hull using strips of 2" masking tape to hold it together. With the wobbly hull propped up on blocks at strategic locations and a temporary spreader taped across the top amidships, I adjusted things until I judged it looked "right" and was ready for gluing together.

Like previous boat-building projects, this one provided an opportunity to try out a "new" idea. Earlier I had picked up a package of "1-minute" epoxy at a hardware store, thinking it might come in handy. I was already familiar with 5-minute epoxies, and had run across an article in the System 3 Epoxy literature describing a "hot-spots" technique where you jig together the parts and use fast-setting epoxy at short intervals to "spot-weld" the joints, and then go back afterwards to complete them with the regular thickened-resin fillets, thus eliminating the troublesome chore of drilling dozens of holes and endlessly twisting wire ties.

The 1-minute epoxy came in a double-syringe container and included a special mixing nozzle. With this device it should be possible to lay a continuous bead of fast-setting premixed epoxy along the joints inside the entire hull. I knew I'd have to work fast; the stuff would be solidifying inside the nozzle in no time! So I did it, and barely finished before the epoxy near the nozzle's orifice started to get too thick to squeeze out any more. But the technique worked. The hull was now held together with a thin (but strong) bead of epoxy inside every seam. This done, I thickened a batch of regular epoxy with wood flour, glass fibers and Cab-o-sil and applied generous fillets to all inside seams.

Then I made the bulkheads (that separate the cockpit from the decked ends) out of some scraps of 1/2"-thick "Gatorboard" I had lying around. (Gatorboard is a very lightweight laminate of fine-textured plastic foam sandwiched between thin, hard resin. It is easily cut and sanded. I ran a test of its glued-up durability using epoxy joints and found it to be amply strong. Since my scheme called for the hull sides and bottom to come out of a single 4x8 sheet of ply, originally I thought to make the rest of the boat, including the "A-frame" decks, of Gatorboard. This stuff is even lighter than doorskin and it provides built-in flotation!)

I fitted the bulkheads (to lines I had drawn inside the hull marking their locations) by bevelling a little of their side edges with sandpaper, and glued them in place with epoxy, again filleting the joints on either side with thickened resin. I glued strips of 1/4" x 3/4" fir along the tops of the sides to serve as gunwales and to provide sufficient surface area for glueing the decks on.



Using an Inuit-style paddle, Steven takes *Harbor Seal* on her maiden voyage in Berkeley's Aquatic Park.

CHANGING MY MIND

At this point I took a long, hard look at what I had so far. The Gatorboard-deck idea no longer appealed to me. Too angular, and not very "shippy." I decided to make the decks out of the same 1/8" ply as the rest of the hull, so I could put some camber into them. Instead of a one-piece foredeck and similar afterdeck, I divided the areas on either end of the cockpit in two by adding another set of bulkheads before and after the cockpit. I designed short, strongly-arched decks to cover each of these compartments, to provide some watertight volume for storage. The remaining decks forward and aft of these compartments were designed flatter, with only a little camber, to reduce windage at the ends of the boat.

Needing some way of accessing the storage compartments, I invested in a couple of circular, plastic screw-in hatches which I installed while the hull was still undecked. Then I attached single stringers at the top center of each compartment to provide camber for the decks, and bevelled the gunwales to fit the arcs that the decks would assume.

I measured and cut the decks (a little oversize) out of doorskin. Before attaching them, I squeegeed the entire inside of the hull and the undersides of the decks with a couple of coats of epoxy, and allowed it to cure. Then I glued the decks in place, using a bead of thickened epoxy along the top of the wales and holding the decks in place with lots of strips of 2" masking tape and 10 clamps along each joint.

FINISHING THE JOB

Things were shaping up. Now it was time to tackle the still-open cockpit area. First, using some 3 x 1/4" fir from my sizeable "scrap" collection, I edge-glued three pieces together and then ripped them apart along a diagonal drawn from opposite corners of the center plank. This would make a coaming twice as high at the forward end as at the aft end; i.e., sloping to the rear.

I split the forward (wider) halves of the coamings horizontally to produce parallel lower coamings with the upper parts joined at the forward end of the cockpit. The lower ends of the coamings were simply glued fore and aft to their appropriate places on the bulkheads; the upper forward ends were glued to a wedge-shaped piece of mahogany, overlapping the bulkhead at its centerline. After this was done, I took the hull outdoors, to my back porch, for the rest of the work. It was time to clean up the mess in my living room and reclaim some room to live in!

The triangular spaces on either side of the split coamings were closed with 1/8" ply, and sidedecks were similarly fitted between coamings and sheer. A couple of 1/4" x 3/4" redwood sticks glued outboard of the top of the coaming beefs-up the edge and provides a lip to secure the spray-skirt.

Remaining construction consisted of the addition of a triangular deck to cover the pointed forward end of the cockpit opening, with a laminated redwood stopwater on its aft edge. A 5' piece of 1x1 fir was screwed and glued under

the cockpit at the centerline of the bottom to strengthen it and to improve tracking. Then I laminated a cap of redwood strips for the curved top of the cockpit's rear bulkhead (to cover the raw edge of the Gatorboard and complete the lip for the spray-skirt). The kayak was fully assembled. But she wasn't done yet by a long shot.

First I had to plane off the excess wood from the decks, and round off all sharp corners with sandpaper. I brushed all of the exposed wood with a couple coats of penetrating epoxy, and proceeded to fiberglass-tape the chines, stem and stern with laminating epoxy, using three coats to fill the cloth's weave. When this had cured I sanded the entire hull and glued and screwed wooden cleats to the bow and stern. Finally I applied three coats of satin-finish spar varnish over the entire hull and inside the cockpit, allowing from 8 to 24 hours drying time between coats. I made a seat pad out of a piece of 1/2" closed-cell foam and fastened it in place with strips of Velcro tape. *Harbor Seal* was ready to try out.

SEA TRIALS

On a beautiful late-October afternoon I loaded the new kayak onto my pickup and drove down to Berkeley's Aquatic Park to meet my friends Steven and Michael and their families, and to conduct trials. Everybody oohed and aahed over the pretty little boat, and after a few pre-launch photographs, we put her in the water. As usual, Steven elected to be the test pilot. So with Michael and me steadying *Harbor Seal* at the edge of the pond, he slid into the cockpit, checked for stability, and took off.



A view towards the stern, showing the "stepped" coaming. The hatch-cover to rear compartment is off.

I studied the kayak's behavior carefully as she rapidly moved away from the shore. The first thing I noticed was that she was a bit lower at the stern than I had intended. The transom was about half-submerged when the boat was at cruising speed, with maybe 3' of the forward bottom above water. As soon as Steven returned within earshot I suggested that he move his seat forward a couple of inches, and his doing so improved the trim. At about 6' and 175 lbs. Steven is the maximum-size paddler for which this boat was designed. When he moved his body forward, his legs just fit. Now most of the transom was out of the water, and the bow had

come down, exposing less than two feet of bottom forward.

There were a couple of other kayakers out on the pond while Steven was trying out *Harbor Seal*. He chatted with both of the other paddlers, comparing boats, and got into a couple of brief "races." Against a longer, narrower fiberglass job powered by a Bulgarian with a racing paddle, Steven and *Harbor Seal* (with an Aleut-style paddle) were no match. But the other kayak (a heavy, rotomolded polyethylene craft) was easily outpaced.

To test the "ultimate limits" we had Michael try her next. He's about six-one and 200 lbs. He could just about get his long legs into the cockpit's 49" length, so he had no choice about where to put his butt. *Harbor Seal* hunkered down with most of the hull from about amidships aft submerged up to the gunwale strips, and all but an inch or two of the transom underwater. With so much weight too far aft, the bow rode high, again leaving three feet or so of bottom above water. This was not the "designed waterline" I had intended!

The kayak's attitude made it attempt to "climb" out of the water with each stroke as Michael sprinted, an obvious waste of energy but a testimonial to the boat's light weight. Even with the considerable overload *Harbor Seal* moved quickly and easily, and under good control at all times. After Michael's turn I finally got to sit in my new creation for the first time. I'm pleased to report that I am of a size and weight (five-ten and 155) to fit *Harbor Seal* perfectly! After placing myself for proper trim, I gently tested her stability.

Remembering the feel of my first kayak, this "improved model" was about as I expected. Compared to *Gato* (with her 24"-wide bottom and vertical sides) the narrower *Harbor Seal* initially feels tippler. But the flared sides quickly stiffen her as she heels, so she's not at all tricky or treacherous. I think her rocker is too excessive for optimum speed; it effectively shortens the waterline length I'd hoped for by one to two feet. On the other hand it helps her turn easily (much more so than *Gato* does without her rudder), so it's not all bad news.

Harbor Seal shows a slight tendency to wag her tail, especially when paddled strenuously. I'm adding a small skeg to correct this; she should track better and still turn well. Also, this kayak's low profile means that a spray-skirt will prove to be a necessity in anything but flattish water. I'm having one made soon.

All in all I'm pleased with how she turned out. This is a very light, attractive and capable watercraft. However, if I had it to do over I would change a few things. I'd widen the side planks to 7" (or even 8") and make the coamings a bit higher. I'd lengthen the cockpit by three or four inches. This would provide both roomier accommodations and more freeboard. And I'd lessen the rocker so as to bring the heel of the stem down to just touching the water (as originally planned). This would increase waterline length and probably make her a little faster. But even with her "prototype's faults" I think *Harbor Seal* is still one fine little boat.

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MARINE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

A pleasure boat brings us satisfaction by the way in which it transports us out of our daily sphere. It does so by physically removing us from our routines; and by inspiring our imaginations. This movement begins with the earliest planning stages, and continues in every phase: through the anticipation, the activity, and the memory of the times we spend on board. I hope the designs in these pages help you to begin this voyage. ⚓



(914)895-9165

193 Tillson Lake Road Wallkill, New York 12589

"Small Craft Designs"

By Antonio Dias

Reviewed by Bob Hicks

40'-0" LOD
36'-0" LWL
12'-0" BEAM
4'-0" DRAFT



C. P. DIAS

When I was growing up in Provincetown, the Eastern Rig Dragger was the most common boat. They had evolved quite directly from the fishing schooners. My favorites are old ones that still retain the curved raked transom stern and shapely hulls of the schooners. My father, Casimiro Pires Dias was friendly with many of the fisherman back in the fifties. I have fond memories of our visits to MacMillan wharf.

This boat is half the length of the real draggers, and is intended as a roomy cruiser for 4 to 6. The wheelhouse/saloon has two pilot berths that double as seating for 6 around a portable table. A head with shower is way aft under the whaleback. A skylight hatch cover over the "Fish Hold" illuminates and ventilates four alcove berths outboard, port & stbd.; with seats inboard and a folding table. The galley and another head are in the foc'sle. Below the wheelhouse is the engine room. There is full standing headroom throughout, and a workbench in the engine room. Over the "Fish Hold", under a boomed awning is another good banquet spot. The draggers always carried one or two dories over the wheelhouse rightside up in chocks. Their place could be taken by double paddle canoes, and a good sized sailing dinghy could be carried amidship and tended by the boom.

Here's a "dream book" if ever there was one for those who yearn for a nice little boat of their very own. This twenty page catalog of Antonio Dias' designs has an unusual flair for inspiration for a design catalogue, with the 43 drawings of the 36 designs (several offer choices of rigs) offering more than technical proficiency. They offer visions of possible dreams through their illustrative excellence, and the introductory comments urge the reader to allow the designs presented to stimulate one's imagination, for Tony offers full custom design service to complement his stock designs.

Design categories offered include "Flatties & V-Bottoms", "Trailerable Glued Lap Daysailers & Weekenders", "Pocket Cruisers", "Motor Vessels & Motor Sailers", and "Friendship Sloops & Gloucestermen". Sail and power boats are offered in traditional appearing designs, which can be built in traditional fashion or with modern materials and techniques.

At the small end of the range are boats like the 16' "Sparhawk" double paddle sailing canoe and the 14' "Little Cat" catboat. At the larger end are the 28' "Tucker S. Chubb" schooner and the 40' "C.P. Dias" half-scale eastern rig dragger, named after Tony's father Casimiro Pires Dias. In between are sailing and power designs in the 16'-26' range with a host of imaginative names you'll have to see to enjoy.

Operating as Marine Design & Construction, Tony Dias can build the boat of your choice for you, to his designs, or to your customized wishes. His workmanship is as good as his design concepts. For \$5 you can find out all about this young designer/builder's offerings, order "Small Craft Designs" from Antonio Dias, 193 Tillson Lake Rd., Wallkill, NY 12589.

A Boat for Thin Water

Part 1 - Designing

By David Gulley

I will freely admit I was looking at Phil Bolger's "Felucca" ("Different Boats", International Marine Publishing) when I started drawing "Beach Girl". "Felucca" and the "Prince William Sound Yawl" fascinated me. Of the two boats "Felucca" was closest to what I wanted, but I didn't like the sprit-sloop rig and I wanted to build in GRP instead of cold-molded wood. I wrote to Mr. Bolger asking if he would change the rig to standing lug and about building in glass. The letter came back stamped "Undeliverable-Return to Sender". This was very weird as I had corresponded with Mr. Bolger using the same address about a year previously.

Since I had no luck with the U.S. Mail I tried Ma Bell. The long distance operator said, "I'm sorry, there's no Philip C. Bolger listed in Gloucester, Massachusetts." (Editor Comments: He has no telephone, and says this marvelously improves his ability to concentrate on his designing.) I knew Mr. Bolger had lived in Gloucester all his life so this suggested two possibilities to me, both bad. Either he had retired, moved to Florida, and didn't want to hear from nuts like me, or even worse he was sailing in Valhalla. After all, I knew he was older than I was and anyone older than me has one foot in the grave.

This left me up the creek, as the saying goes. I had been searching for a boat to build for three years. In that time I had looked at hundreds of plans, but hadn't found my dream boat. My want list was as long as your arm and included the following: Trailerable, shallow draft, pretty, unusual, roomy, quick to rig, large sail area, easy to reef, easy to singlehand, rowable (so I wouldn't need a miserable, stinking, noisy, expensive, unreliable outboard motor), beachable, large enough to daysail three or four, camp cruise one or perhaps two, seaworthy enough for the large bays here in Texas, and have a long straight keel and a stem with a lot of slope. The last two are a great help in launching and retrieving from a trailer.

Things I didn't want were a masthead or 3/4 rig, any standing rigging, more than one mast, a jib, any spars or sails that project beyond the ends of the boat, ballast, or any other unnecessary



complication. All I wanted was the perfect boat. Perhaps I should point out I've sailed for twenty-five years, owned thirteen boats ranging from nine to twenty-eight feet so I know there aren't any perfect boats, but I enjoy trying.

In my long search I found a few boats that came close to what I wanted. One of these boats was the "South Jersey Beach Boat" ("American Small Sailing Craft", H.I. Chapelle, W.W. Norton and Co.). It was the right size (16' 7" X 5'), had a beautiful hull shape, and was designed to be beached. The problem was being a centerboarder there was no place to sleep in the boat. Also it had a sprit-sloop rig and the stem was too vertical. I have an irrational dislike of the sprit rig. It must be irrational since I've never sailed a sprit rigged boat. In fact, I've only SEEN one sprit rigged dinghy. There is something about the rig that bothers me and I can't place what it is.

Another boat that interested me was the "New Orleans Lugger" ("American Small Sailing Craft"). This was reputed to be the only boat in North America to set the dipping lug rig. As you may have noticed by now I like lug rigs, and the dipping lug fascinates me. Mr. Chapelle said "N.O. Luggers" were built as small as 18 or 20 feet which was getting close to the size I wanted. Maybe, but I couldn't find plans for a lugger smaller than 33 feet. In two years of looking I only found plans for three "N.O. Luggers". All these boats were much too large (33-37 feet), but I wondered about scaling the best one down about fifty percent. This would produce a 17 or 18 foot boat with a beam of 5.5 to 6 feet and a dipping lug sail of about 190 sq.ft.

I carved a half model to represent this boat which scaled to 17' 9" X 6' 2". This

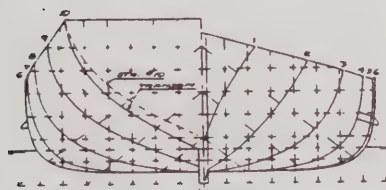
would really be a different boat and I liked the looks of it, but after I had estimated its cost (\$4000 to \$5000 in 1986 dollars) my ardor cooled. It was at this time I found "Felucca" in one of Mr. Bolger's books ("Different Boats").

I never intended to design a new boat. It just sort of happened. I had searched for three years for THE Perfect Boat and "Felucca" came closest, but now I couldn't get in touch with Mr. Bolger! My frustration was intense. I've been told I was very difficult to get along with at this time and that I tended to snarl at people for simply saying good morning to me. Maybe I can plead temporary insanity. Finally, when I couldn't stand the frustration any longer, I drew a set plans incorporating the changes I desired and a few more as I went along. There is an awful temptation when changing a boat like this to change everything you don't like about it, and I did.

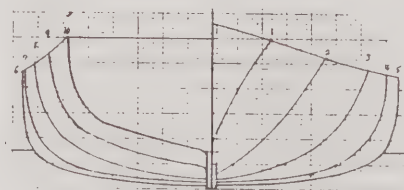
About a year later, after the hull was laid up, I found Mr. Bolger's new address and sent him a set of plans asking his opinion of "Beach Girl". Although I've not met Mr. Bolger, he has to be a very nice guy. Most designers take a dim view of other people changing their designs and for good reason. Mr. Bolger's comment was, "Your boat looks like it would be an excellent boat." I really appreciated the compliment. Especially since I'd had time to start worrying about what I'd done and that I might be building a disaster. I had intended to change the rig and hull material, but by the time it was over I'd changed almost everything. Compare the hull lines of "Felucca" (courtesy of Philip C. Bolger, 29 Ferry St., Gloucester, MA 01930) and "Beach Girl". As you can see starting at the bow they are nearly the same boat, but by the time you reach the stern they are very different.

While "Beach Girl" can't be called a Bolger boat, she was certainly inspired by "Felucca" and a little by L. Francis Herreshoff's "Beach Cruiser" ("Sensible Cruising Designs", International Marine Publishing). I, and I suspect a lot of other people, owe a debt to Mr. Bolger for generously publishing so many of his designs complete with offsets and comments. If there hadn't been a "Felucca", there couldn't have been a "Beach Girl".

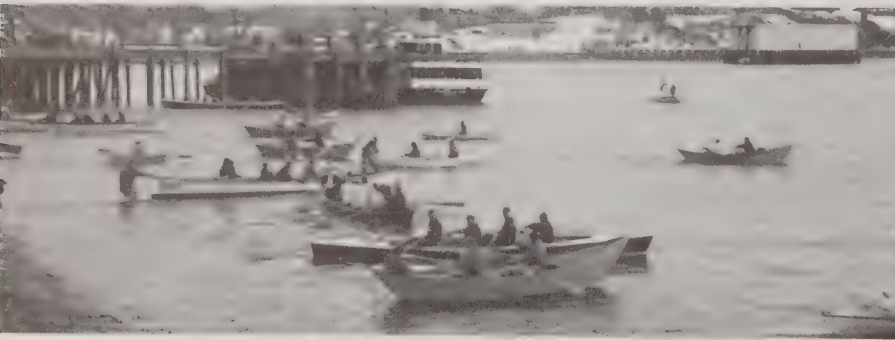
(Part 2 will be about construction.)



"Felucca"



"Beach Girl"



The "LeMans" start and the scramble to get off the beach.



As the Hull gig "Pilot" labors to get turned around off the beach, Kittery's already showing her stern to the rest at right while the latest Hull gig is still backing out.

Off they go into Hingham Bay headed for Sheep Island.



In an effort to avoid really bad weather the 1994 Snow Row at Hull, Massachusetts was moved from late February into early March. It was a successful move, a nice clear 40 degree day with a brisk wind from the northwest gave the two dozen boats entered a good workout around the 3.75 mile course in Hingham Bay on a fairly flat sea as the fetch for this wind direction was short.

A new course record of 31:58 was set in Multi-Oar-With-Cox by the Mainville Pilot 26 four-oar super gig skippered by Frank Mainville, nearly 5 minutes ahead of the traditionally built six-oar gig "Kittery", which had a race-long battle to edge out the local Hull six-oar gig "Pilot" by 33 seconds, due in part to a much better start off the beach.

Other top placings went to Kinley Gregg, Sliding Seat Single in the only Alden to show up in 38:32, just 22 seconds behind Chuck and Joan Mainville in their Pilot 21, Sliding Seat Double; Steve Woll and crew, Livery Double in a Piscataqua Wherry in 39:22; Bob Powers and crew, Workboat Double in 42:58; Ben Booth, Livery Single in John Aborn's Monument River Wherry in 46:22; and Pike Messenger, Workboat Single in a Banks dory in 56:43.



The multi-oar boats really turn out for this race, here "Mary B. II" and "Rose Bud", two nice traditional p



OW '94

(A year ago the 1993 Snow Row was a memorable one for its wind driven snow and waves. Participant Pike Messenger caught the essence of the challenge in all this in this poem.)

SNOW ROW '93

By Pike Messenger

Lined along the usually lonely shingle
The winter weirdos' boats await.
Most relics of another time,
Dories, gigs and Monomoys
All powered by the ancient oar.
Their masters/makers shiver in the snow,
Spittle off a great ocean storm
Riding hard on northeast wind.
No turning back, we're here, we're here!
Our leader scurries crew to crew
Greeting, challenging, kidding all,
Events now quite beyond control.
Obsessed are eager for the joust
Not from saddles, lances none
Just wooden shells and shafts of spruce.
Soon they'll parry, thrust with self
Across the windswept bay at Hull.



he two local Hull gigs.
boats.



The Pilot 26 crosses the finish line nearly 5 minutes ahead of the field.



"Kittery " and "Pilot" closing in on the finish still scrapping hard.



And it's "Kittery" by 33 seconds.



Steve Woll and crew in the Piscataqua wherry.



Ben Booth in the Monument River wherry.

Kinley Gregg, only Alden, only woman, 5th fastest.



A Mind Bent... A Back Saved

By Jim Thayer



As any boy scout will tell you it's always a good idea to have a boat on top of your car. You never know when you will have to rescue a damsel swept away by a nasty freshet. Then again, and admittedly more likely, you may chance upon a nice fishing spot.

A canoe is no problem and even light clinker boats can be managed without undue strain. It's a bit tougher if you have a truck or camper. For many years I have grunted all manner of boats to the top of my outfit. Long light boats like a canoe or even the "A Duckah!" are easy because you only have to lift one end at a time.

The trouble started when the "Wee Punkin" showed up. She's a fat little gal and under eight feet, just reaches to top of the truck when standing on end. You have to lift the whole boat straight up. Well, she's light and I managed okay until the "Limpet" came along. At 5'x10' it's almost impossible to get a "holt" on her. Something had to be done.

The first try was to make a long rack to which the "Limpet" could be fastened right side up. The rack was easy to get a grip on and the whole works could be slid up where it belonged and tied down for travel. It worked, sort of, but still strained the old bod. I reasoned that if the rack were on top of the truck and tilted, a tackle could be used to haul the boat up and then the rack would be folded for travel.

My old buddy and sage advisor, Bob Booth, was visiting when time came to try this contraption. He took one look and pronounced it unworkable. In fact, he pronounced it more than that.

My confidence unshaken, I rigged a 4-part tackle and proceeded to turn blue in the face. The boat ascended haltingly into the air, the rack bent alarmingly and threatened rack splinters as well as boat splinters. Daunted for the moment, we loaded the "Limpet" on a trailer and went sailing.

With Bob safely emplaned for Virginia, I took up the cudgels with renewed vigor. We had decided that the rack needed an arm projecting behind the pivot point. Disappointed with the tackle, I stuck a small trailer winch on the back of the rack, which worked on the boat through a two-part purchase. It worked like a charm.

The photos give sufficient info to build your very own. The pivot axle is pvc pipe with a wooden stiffener driven through it. The whole rig just sits on top of the house and is secured to the after crosspiece with lashings. The entire unit can be demounted in a couple of minutes. There should be a roller on the after crosspiece of the rack. There must be a safety guy to keep the rack from tilting too far back.

I would give you more details and a scale drawing but am leery of the liability involved. At first I thought to manufacture them and get rich but it occurred to me that the product liability insurance would probably run about a million dollars a year. It would make a nice kit with bolt together

aluminum channels. If you want to give it a try I'm available for consulting.

TO LOAD UP: I'll just run through the drill for you, along with safety precautions:

1. Hook up block to eye on boat.
2. Crank away. The rack will rise to the limit of the guy before the boat moves much.
3. As the eye meets the roller, it may jam. A hole through the stem is much better than an eye.
4. As the boat approaches the position shown in the third photo, stop cranking and lift the transom until the rack settles in place. If you just keep cranking, the boat will overbalance, the lever arm will lengthen rapidly, and she will come down with a crash.
5. Crank her forward and secure for the road.

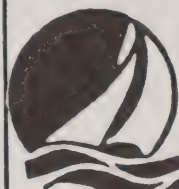
TO UNLOAD:

1. Untie road lashings.
2. Be sure the board is fixed in the full up position.
3. Slack off the winch, then LOCK THE HANDLE. This is the most dangerous part of the operation. If a load comes on the winch when it is in freewheel, it will run wild.
4. Pull boat back until it overbalances and the rack tilts up. A tackle could be rigged to do this.
5. Lower away, keeping a GOOD GRIP on the handle.
6. When transom nears surface you have to drag it back, put wheels under it, drive truck ahead, or unload in sufficiently deep water. Piece of cake, Sunday suit operation.

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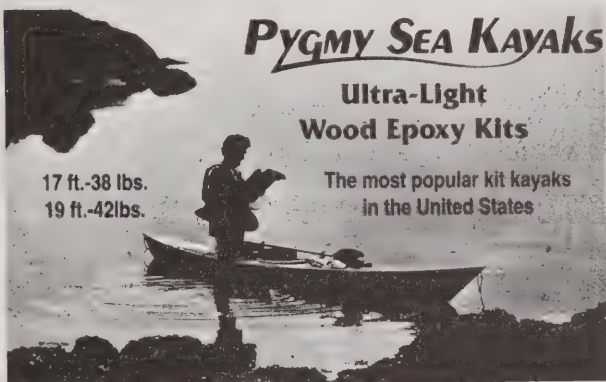
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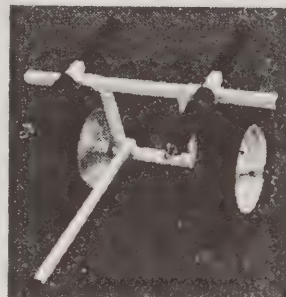
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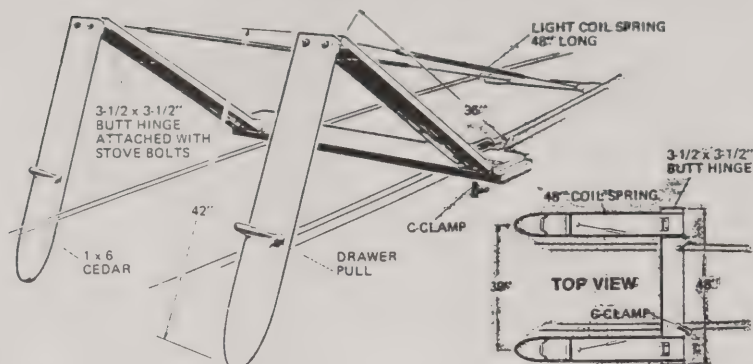
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A SOLUTION TO PROPER CANOE PADDLING TECHNIQUE

You risk getting bogged down in a no-win debate over canoe paddling technique. Progress cannot be denied, however, and it isn't everybody's cup of tea to make like Hiawatha, so let's get on with it.

The traditional canoe paddle as we know it has come down to us from benighted primitive peoples and should now be relegated to the museums. The June, 1972 issue of "Popular Mechanics" featured a canoe paddling device which is a worthy tribute to Yankee ingenuity despite

the fact that its inventor hailed from Florida.

This device is fastened to the canoe gunwales with C-clamps and has hinged paddle blades on both sides rigged in an inverted V configuration. Drawer pulls screwed to the back sides of the blades provide hand holds for propulsion. Thanks to this solution any and all canoe paddling controversies can now be laid to rest.

Lee "TNT" Kemble, Portland, ME.

The Solution... to wet Boats

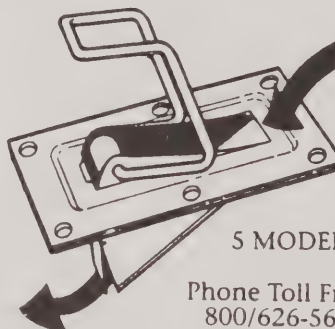
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MORE ABOUT BATTERY RUNNING LIGHTS

Last November you published my inquiry into using battery powered running lights and possible sources for them. The response to my request was truly impressive. I received scores of letters containing information not only about the lights but about the experiences involved in using them. Your wonderful magazine has a widely experienced small boat readership. The overwhelming response makes it impossible for me to thank each individually so I wish to do so in this letter.

At the suggestion of one writer I purchased a set of three manufactured by Plastimo Corp., a French firm. They have no U.S. distributor but referred me to their U.K. distributor, Cruisermart, 36-38 Eastern Esplanade, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2ES, England, catalog # 34024.

The lights are indeed quality products made of PVC, "O" ring sealed, and operate on one "D" battery each.

Tom Harrison, 38486 Shana Dr., Clinton Twp., MI 48036.

JUNK RIG APOLOGIES

I would like to apologize to all the Hasler/McLeod fans for my negative non-productive comment concerning the book "Practical Junk Rig". I should have referred to this monumental work as complex and extremely comprehensive. I studied the book as I am researching sails and sail making and have come up with some design ideas that might interest junk rig builders and sailors. Send me an SASE if you're interested.

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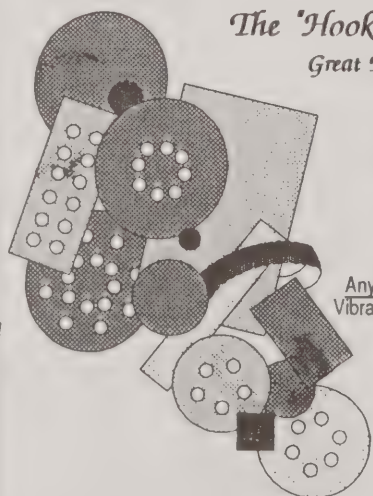
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Ball Bearings for the Oarmaster Sliding-Seat

By Sam Overman

My used Alden Ocean Shell and its drop-in Oarmaster have proved to be ideal for my learning to row and for my recreational exercise. My older Oarmaster sliding seat used the small plastic wheels running on lubricated bushings. I found that even when I regularly cleaned and lubricated the wheels and bushings, I still had to replace them about every three months when the friction became noticeable. When the small plastic wheels became no longer available, I converted the seat to use the more modern large wheels, which also ran on lubricated bushings. The larger wheels were an improvement, but I still noticed a great reduction in friction when I regularly installed a new set of wheels and bushings, at \$20 the set, which indicated that the replaced set had not been running smoothly.

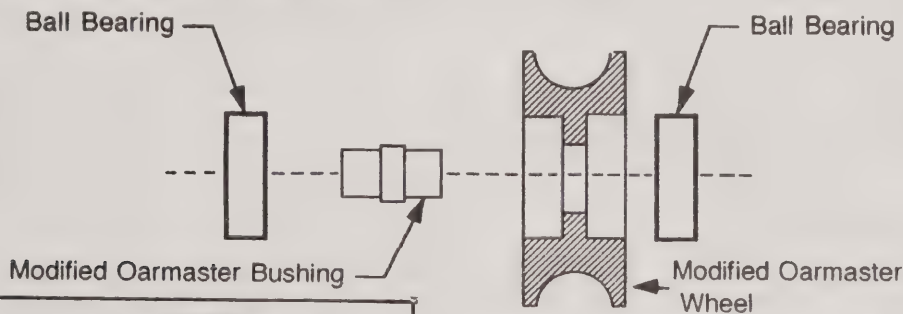
The modern wheels are large enough that I was able to modify them to take two inexpensive ball bearing assemblies. A seat equipped with wheels containing ball bearings rolls at least as easily as one having a brand new set of wheels turning on bushings. However, the performance of ball bearing-equipped wheels does not degrade with use. In addition, the modified wheels require almost no maintenance.

I chose the bearings that are used in skateboards and roller blades. They cost less than \$2 apiece, different brands are interchangeable, and they are also readily available from sporting goods stores and sports sections of department stores. It is possible to buy more expensive roller blade bearings that can be disassembled, cleaned and relubricated, because the roller blade environment is dirty. I recommend instead the inexpensive bearings that are prelubricated and that have thin metal shields and seals that cover the balls. These bearings are not worked hard in the sliding seat application, and they should perform well for years. These bearings are

not made of stainless steel, so they will eventually show rust on their outer surfaces. It is unlikely that rust will affect the performance of the bearings until after many years of use, at which time they can be easily replaced.

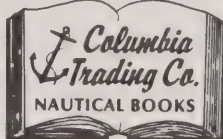
The machining of the wheels represents a modest investment, so I make an effort to ensure that they will last. I clean the wheel grooves and the contact surfaces of the Oarmaster rails after each row, which requires no disassembly. I clean them with a plastic scrubber pad sold in grocery stores for use on teflon pans. A couple of drops of household spray cleaner, such as Formula 409 or Fantastic, on the pad speeds the task (do not spray cleaner directly onto the wheels, as it may attack the bearing lubricant). I dry the wheels and rails with a paper towel. I have used the same set of modified wheels for more than a year, and they show no signs of wear whatsoever.

This same modification should be possible for the wheels of other brands of sliding seats, as long as the wheels are large enough in diameter and thick enough to accept two bearing assemblies. The Oarmaster wheel is a little over 1.5 inches in diameter, as measured at the bottom of the groove that rides on the rail, and is 0.610 inches thick. The ball bearing assemblies have an outside diameter of 0.865 inches, are 0.275 inches thick, and the inner hole diameter is 0.312 inches. I can provide dimensioned drawings and instructions for modifying the Oarmaster wheels and bushings, which requires some machining. Send a post card, which includes your complete mailing address, to me at PO Box 52, Dahlgren, VA 22448, for ordering information. It should not be difficult to adapt the dimensions I provide to a similar-sized wheel and bushing set from some other sliding seat.



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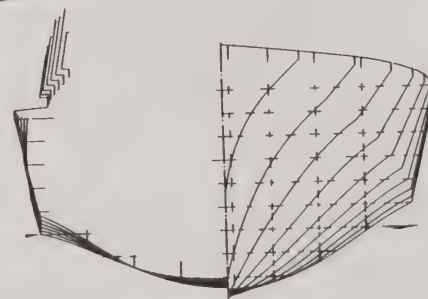
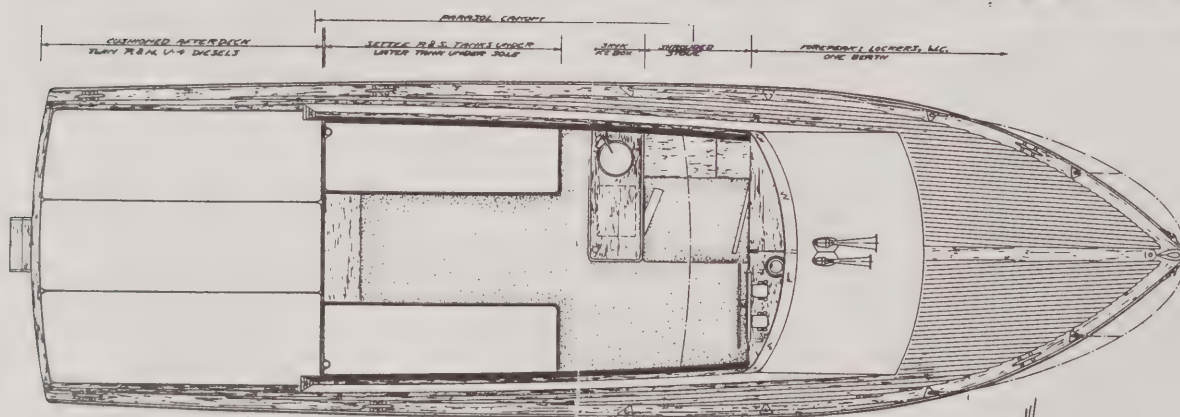
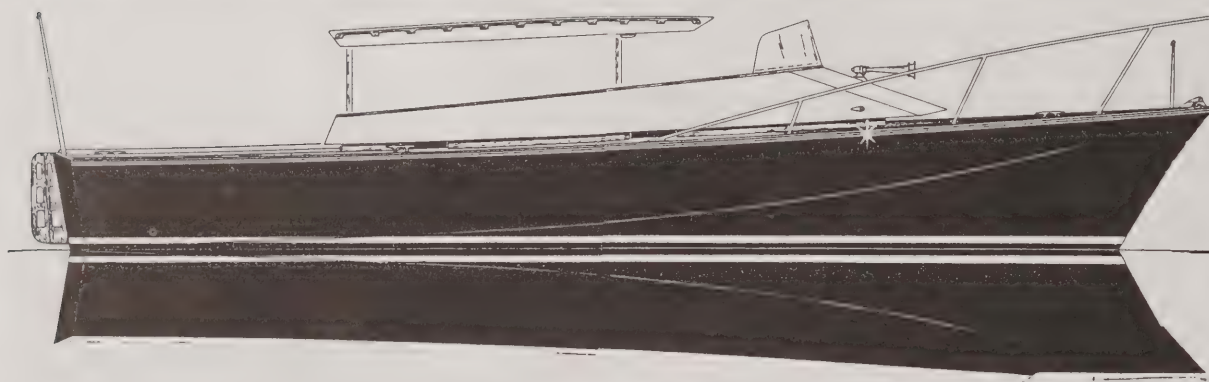
Tropical Commuter

#66, Design #154, "Fia Fia", 32'0" x 9'0"
x 2'7" (props).

"Fia-Fia" was built in Mallorca in 1962 as a day boat for Patricia Woodward; she called the boat a "tropical commuter". The emphasis was on shade and ventilation, and flamboyant style. The bell-section hull shape was trendy at the time though I think now that it's unnecessarily complicated to build and not particularly efficient.

She originally had vee-drive flat-four

diesels of about 110 h.p. each, with which she made 21 knots wide open. Eventually she was repowered with i/o drive gasoline V-8s for something like forty knots. She was heavily built of 1" glued-strip mahogany with close-spaced sawn frames, so the added power and speed caused no strain. Her rough water action was extremely smooth, but she was wet in a cross wind at the speed of the diesels.

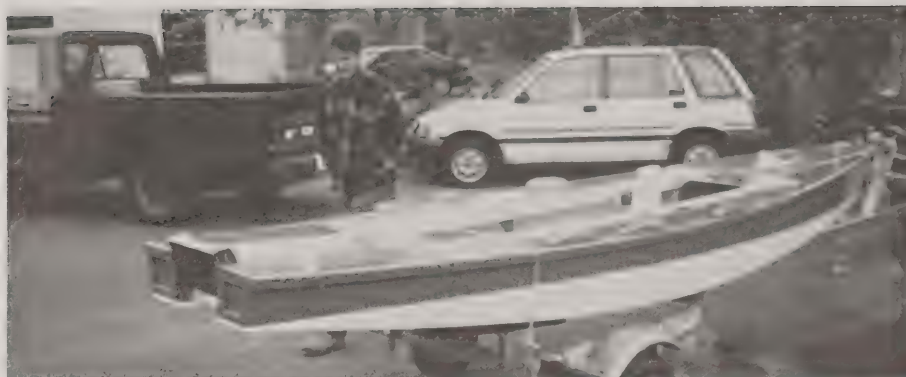


What You Are Building

COMMON SENSE SKIFF

I built this Common Sense Skiff last year, it's a Bolger design from Bernie Wolfard of Common Sense Designs. I am very pleased with how it turned out.

John Dye, E. Bridgewater, MA.



"PECADILLO"

My daughter Anne and I enjoy paddling in the Cockleshell I built from the plans you offered. I named the craft "Pecadillo". The whole family loves it.

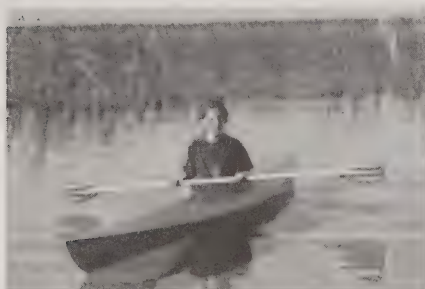
Rob Longley, Delmar, NY.



INTERESTING LITTLE CANOE

Here's an interesting little canoe that I redid last summer. It's 11' long and about 40" wide, not a classic, but looks like a fun boat which would be great for carrying in to remote ponds. I lifted its lines and will build a form for building replicas if time permits and I live long enough.

Burt Libby, Burt's Canoes, Rt. 1 Box 1090, Litchfield, ME 04350.



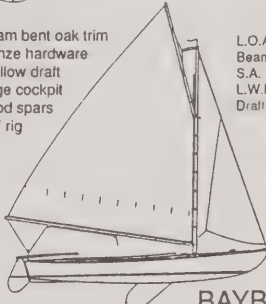
BUILT SEVERN

My nine year old daughter Elizabeth enjoys the Severn sea kayak I built last year from the plans provided by Chesapeake Light Craft.

Dave Young, Huntington Woods, MI.



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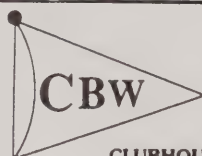
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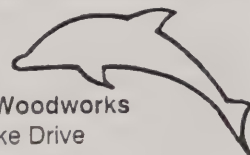
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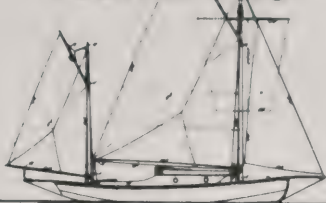
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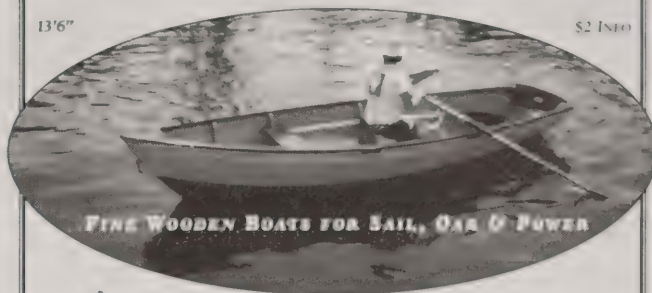
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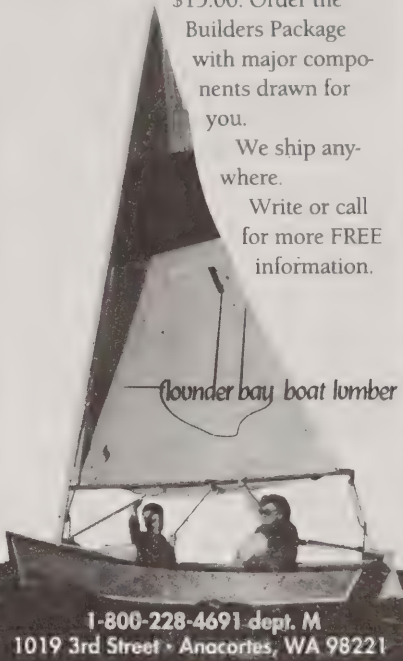
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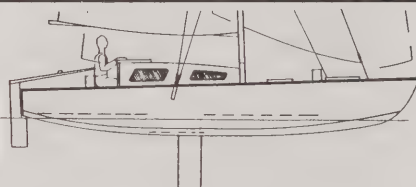
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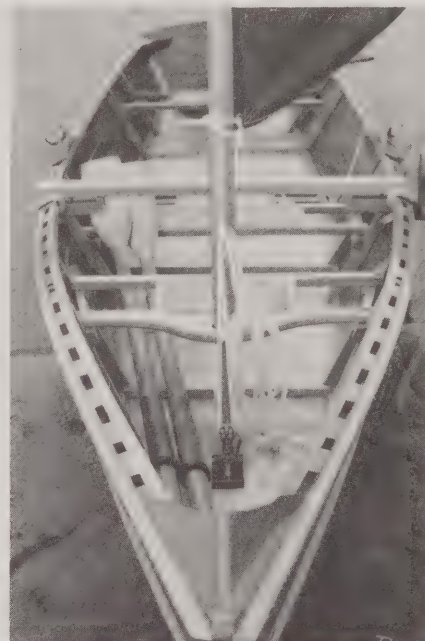
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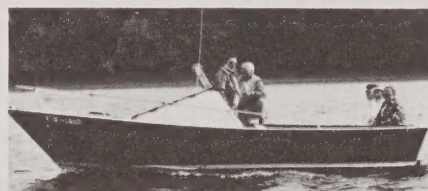
24' ELDREDGE-MCINNIS CRUISING SLOOP, '58 Atomic 4, head, slps 4, electric refrigeration, 3 sails, many extras incl custom HD trlr. Exc shape, professionally refinished 12/93. \$7,800.
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24' SHAMROCK SLOOP, Starling Burgess classic '37 shoal keel/CB daysailer, exc cond. \$3,500.
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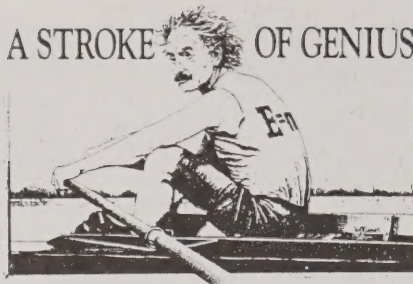
35' CLASSIC JERSEY SKIFF, lapstrake hull by Olson '58, cedar on oak, copper riveted, custom finished w/ laid teak deck & mahogany house (sedan configuration), twin Mercruisers, full galley, hot water, shower, etc. A beauty in vy gd cond. \$11,000/offers.
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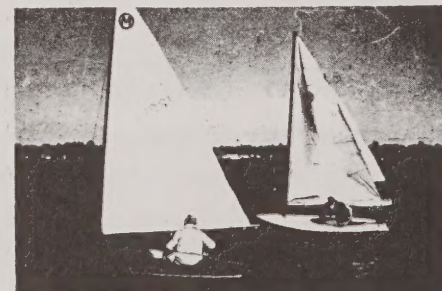
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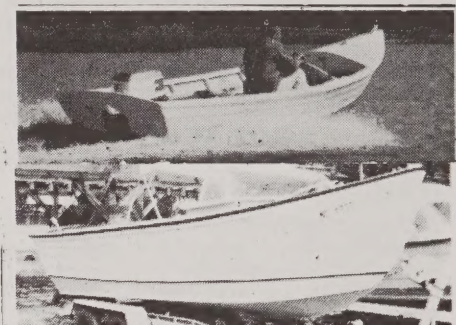
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JOE ROGERS, 24 Wood Terr., Framingham, MA 01701, (508) 872-4206. (24)

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OLD TOWN INFORMATION, about the canoes and the Old Town Canoe Co. that you would like to share. History of the company is being compiled.
SUE AUDETTE, 41 Pine Woods Ln., Mansfield, CT 06250, (203) 456-4906 eves or lv message. (24)

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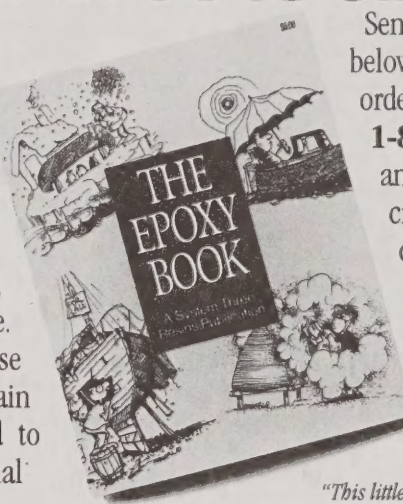
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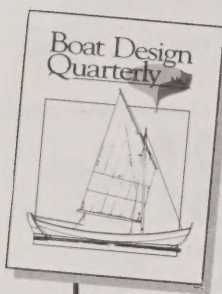
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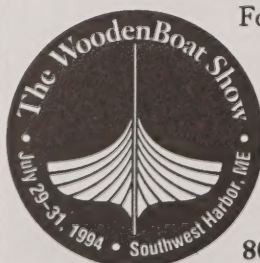
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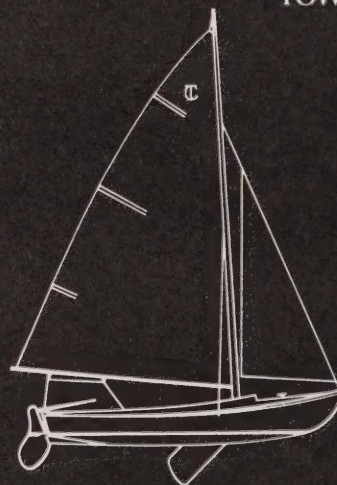
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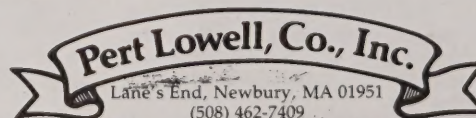
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