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messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 17 - Number 22

April 1, 2000



Special Features This Issue
Autumn Kayaking "On Golden Pond"
"Making a Simple White Polytarp Sail"

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messing about in BOATS

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In Our Next Issue...

I'll have my report on "Snow Row 2000" (featuring an all-woman gig crew from Great Britain!) which didn't make it into this issue; Robb White will regale us with his tale of "The Wreck of the *Daily Bread*"; Reinhard Zollitsch begins a short series on "Paddling Solo Around the Gaspé"; Jack Hornung continues with useful information on "Small Boating on New York's Erie Canal"; Steve Turi is up to Part 15 of his "Adventures of a New Jersey Boat Nut"; and Nathaniel Bishop's "Four Months in a Sneakbox" enters Chapter 6.

Don Cleveland reports on his first time boatbuilding project in "Opus #1"; "Mississippi Bob" Brown describes what he calls his "Wedge & Glue Construction Technique"; Arch Davis introduces his upsized "Penobscot 17"; Bob Sparks introduces his new "Rob Roy" double paddle decked canoe design; Richard Carsen's "Dreamboats" looks at the "Handy Thames Barge"; and Phil Bolger & Friends will be with us, subject at press time unannounced.

Rounding things out, Robb White details "How to Build Small Light Hollow Wooden Spars"; and George McBride discusses his "Appropriate Technologies "Canoe Cart".

On the Cover...

Robb White sent on this action shot of one of his little sailing skiffs with the comment, "Almost didn't stagger out of the way in time!"

Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Now it is March (7th) as I write this and I do believe that winter is well and truly fading. The weather here in New England has moderated to almost early spring conditions, stirring the usual renewal in interest in outdoor activity for this non-skier, but another sure sign of impending spring is the arrival in the mail of ever more catalogs of boatbuilding programs lined up for the summer ahead by schools and museums. They are proliferating in variety and location year after year. The latest issue of *WoodenBoat* (March/April) has the better part of seven pages listing such schools all over the world. Most of them did not send me their catalogs. But a few did.

One, of course, is the *WoodenBoat* School itself. School Director Rich Hilsinger has certainly built this summer holiday vacation school into a major attraction for small boat building wannabees. The catalog, *Wooden Boat School Access to Experience 2000 Course Catalog*, has 40 pages of course options inside a glorious full color photo wrap-around cover, all on glossy stock, with loads of photos. How can one resist? Why would one resist?

I even went to *WoodenBoat* School one summer myself for a week (around 1982 or 1983 I think, not sure anymore) to learn how to build a spritsail from sailmaker Nat Wilson. I succeeded, the sail came out pretty well and worked fine, and I was disabused of much of the mystique sailmakers tend to surround their craft with.

But that was then and this is now, and today's *WoodenBoat* School is a quantum leap ahead in scale and variety. A quick count came up with listings of 75 courses, starting in early June and running through the end of September.

While still leading the pack, *WoodenBoat* School now has "competition" from others offering much the same sort of "education" to summecators who love small boats and who want something more stimulating than two weeks at the beach for a holiday. One I received was the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's *Courses, Workshops & Learning Adventures 2000*. Another gorgeous full color photo cover, this one enclosing 20 pages of course options printed on slightly more budget level paper. But such an impressive upscaling from what was, only a couple of years ago, a listing on a couple of pages in a plain vanilla newsletter. They must be offering what people want.

LCMM offers about 30 adult courses and a dozen for youth. They are not all boatbuilding (nor are *WoodenBoat's*) but encompass some adventuring sorts of maritime activities also. And they are located on the lovely shores of Lake Champlain in northwestern Vermont, the opposite "west coast" side of New England from *WoodenBoat's* Atlantic shores.

A third catalog of boatbuilding courses I have just received is a newsprint tabloid sort from the North House Folk School in Grand Marais, Minnesota. Here we have something different, but not unique. Boatbuilding courses are but part of their offering of "traditional skills" courses. They state that "the learning that is emphasized is inspired by the Scandanavian folkehoskoles where learning is valued for its own sake". A far broader view, hence courses like "Flintknapping" and "Quill Pens". They have about 15 boatbuilding courses, and also sponsor a Wooden Boat Show in June.

I say that the North House School is not unique in its inclusion of boatbuilding amongst what can best be described as traditional crafts and skills courses, because a number of other such traditional handicrafts/skills schools have been increasingly offering boat building. But no stitch-and-glue, fiberglass covered stuff, thank you, just boatbuilding the "real" way.

Well, *WoodenBoat* long ago accepted today's synthetics as being okay for inclusion within its purview of what wooden boats are all about. So, seeing they have a website on the internet is not surprising. However, to note a website on the North House Folk School's catalog cover underneath its old timey, rustic village, piney woods, illustration came as more of a surprise. I shouldn't have been, whatever it takes today, it seems, to attract folks to what you have to offer.

Do you suppose folks busy building a birchbark canoe or doing that flintknapping this summer also chatter on cellphones while they are at work, in instant communication with someone somewhere else while they strive to learn about the good old ways? Golly, as my old gram used to say, "what is this world coming to?"

Well, in part it is coming to boatbuilding, school this summer. If you think you might want to join in, check the listing of organizations we run six times a year (most recently in the March 1st issue) which offer boating activities, many offer boatbuilding courses.

A Wild, Clear Call That May Not Be Denied

By Tom Parker

Between Thanksgiving and Easter, a certain incipient madness affects the mind of the committed sailor to a degree which reflects the relative warmth of the day or the freshness of the breeze. At times, the compulsion to raise a sail and move across the water leads to extreme measures such as "frostbiting", which is clearly for the foolish, or "chartering" in the warmer latitudes, which is pretty much for the rich, leaving the rest to suffer in frustration (the joys of winter maintenance and reading *MAIB* notwithstanding.)

A half a century ago, during the week between Christmas and New Year's, the pressure got to be too much for two young salts who refused to accept the exigencies of nature or the admonishments of older and wiser salts. Along with my friend Skip, a decision was made to construct an ice boat which could be used to navigate the substantial ice which covered lakes in eastern Kansas in the days before global warming. Neither Skip nor I had actually seen an ice boat, but that proved to be of not much concern to two confident teenagers fresh from a summer of sailing the family Lightning and the Sea Scout's collection of Snipes and Moths. What could be so hard about sailing an ice boat? A boat was still a boat and a run was still a run, wasn't it?

The project began by "salvaging" two stout 2"x 10"s from a local construction site, which when securely bolted together formed a cross of Christian proportions which neatly allowed for the starboard and port shrouds, and forestay of the Moth rig which we had taken on temporary requisition from the Sea Scout's rigging loft. Any thought that we might be setting ourselves up for a re-enactment of the Passion was either left unspoken or simply cast aside in our eagerness get out on the vast stretches of Lake Shawnee!

The long arm of the cross was fitted with seats fashioned from those collapsible grocery delivery crates that have since become collector's items. At the ends of the transverse 2"x 10" we bolted on runners which were made of sharpened 2" angle iron. A similar runner was mounted at the extreme aft end of the long arm, just behind the seats, which was rigged to pivot when the helmsman pulled on the port or starboard steering lines. The rig required a crew of two, the front being the sailhandler who sat almost in the lap of the helmsman.

It was a beautiful rig, which was obviously going to function perfectly due to the skill and cleverness of its builders. My Mother, however, when it finally occurred to her that the contraption we were building was not just another downhill coaster, was not convinced of the efficacy of our design. Her opinion was quickly dismissed as a form of "landlubber anxiety" and we continued undeterred in Skip's garage.

When all was ready, the "thing" was loaded into Skip's topless Model T touring car, which, as things developed, should have been allowed to suffice as the day's adventure. We cleverly affixed the boat license from the ap-

propriate Moth to the bow of our new sailing machine so in case any questions were asked, we would have a tag which corresponded to our sail number. We planned to plead that it wasn't anything at all except a slight hull modification. After all, the Moth was a development class, wasn't it?

Sure enough, after we had the whole thing rigged up and were preparing to cast off the stern line which would have allowed us to reach directly toward the main part of the lake, the Lake Patrolman arrived in his very official pick-up with the roof-mounted flasher and twin spotlights. We actually knew the gentleman from several warmer encounters which probably involved our choice of beverage, and there was no doubt that he remembered us. When asked what we were up to, we explained that we were just going for a little sail in our slightly modified Moth and that we really saw no cause for him to be concerned. He, rather heatedly, explained that the lake was closed for the winter and that we should "get the hell out!" Somehow, in spite of our pointing out to him that the license tag did indeed say "good until January 1" of the following year and that "it was only December 30th," he became markedly more animated.

Now, I don't clearly remember exactly what transpired next, but the general tone of things clearly turned from tense to exciting. Either the stern cleat came unnailed, or Skip cast us off. I was never clear on that, but, to the astonishment of all, we departed on a dead reach for the open lake at an amazing velocity! Amid our whoops of joy and exhilaration, we were only vaguely aware of the flashing red light careening down the lakefront road in the direction of the far shore. The chase was

on! The truck clearly was no match for our slick rig and as we approached the swimming beach, we had dramatically shown the law our stern!

As sail handler, I had trimmed the sail to close-hauled to account for the shift in the relative wind and was ready to head up and come about. I remember shouting "hard A'lee!" and I remember an acknowledgement from the helm but nothing whatever happened by way of course alteration! The lee shore, which mercifully was a sand beach (although frozen,) was approaching at what we later estimated to be about 40mph (based upon how long it took for the law to arrive) and our rudder blade had absolutely no effect on our heading! I managed to fly the sail, but too late. The mast and sail ended up somewhere beyond the bathhouse, our stout 2"x 10"s were splintered beyond any use (except as evidence) and we were left sitting on the swimming beach in our snow suits, miraculously unscathed except that we were now technically fugitives.

Without appreciation for our spectacular landing we were summarily hauled before a Shawnee County Magistrate and charged with "ice boating out of season." The Magistrate, who must have come from a seafaring lineage, allowed that it would be pretty tough to ice boat in any other season! The Lake Patrolman suggested "unlawful flight" as an alternative. The Magistrate, probably fearing what the headlines in the Topeka Daily Capital would say, graciously offered to let us plead guilty to "exceeding 5mph in a no-wake zone" and banished us from the lake for the remainder of the year, if on New Year's Day we would resolve to give up all ice boating until spring. We happily copped the plea.



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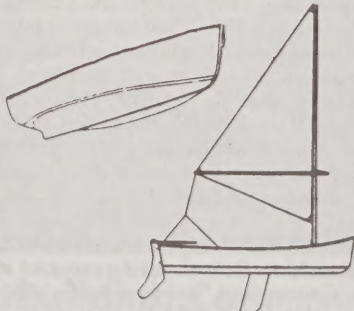
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Activities & Events...

12th Annual Moosehead Rowing Regatta

On Saturday, June 3, During MooseMaine Month, the 12th Annual Moosehead Rowing Regatta will take place at West Cove, Moosehead Lake from the Greenville Junction wharf over a 4.5 mile triangular open water course.

Prizes include floatplane rides, whitewater rafting trips, and steamship *Katahdin* rides to top finishers in each class.

Last year's race had 27 entrants including 11 racing shells, 6 Alden Ocean Shells, 4 recreational shells, and 6 fixed-seat pulling boats.

The event is sponsored by the Maine Rowing Association. Entrants must become monthly (\$5) or annual (\$25) members to participate. Contact Betsy Rockwell at (207) 695-2680.

Information of Interest...

John Gardner TSCA Chapter Formed

At the annual meeting of the Traditional Small Craft Association in June, 1999 it was voted to pursue establishing a Southeastern Connecticut Chapter, named after one of the famous founders of TSCA, John Gardner. John was arguably the national leader in promoting the skills and appreciations which have moved traditional small craft from museum status to participatory on-the-water and amateur-building activities.

This John Gardner Chapter does not supplant existing chapters like the Connecticut River Oar & Paddle Club but provides some clout for larger-scale talks and activities which may pull together several chapters and small boaters in general. The first, organizational, meeting of the JGCTSCA was on October 30 at the Avery Point Campus of the University of Connecticut in Groton and there have been three subsequent meetings.

Elected officers are: President, Russ Smith of Gales Ferry, who coaches the St. Thomas More School rowing program in Salem, Connecticut, and is a proficient open water rower; Vice-President, Geoff Conklin, CROPC officer, TSCA Councilman, and a senior U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliarist; Secretary, Tom Snyder, molecular biologist and small boat builder; Treasurer, Tom Duguay, business manager of the Avery Point campus and avid small boater.

The new Chapter, and CROPC also, offers their thanks to, among others, first president pro-tem Eleanor Watson; writer/professor/waterman Steve Jones; Mystic Seaport small-craft director Peter Vermilya; Tom Duguay; and the Campus Director, Joseph J. Comprone, who kindly invited the new chapter to organize activities from the campus base.

The majestic Branford House mansion on the campus is available for TSCA meetings and talks. The Chapter also is to have a building available for its exclusive use. Building

36, on the west side of the campus fronting on the Thames River, is a short distance from a small beach and is well suited for vessel construction, maintenance, and working meetings.

The university hosts two undergraduate concentrations of interest to TSCA: The four-year Coastal Studies program centers on that group of physical and biological sciences which explores marine and maritime technology and geology; and an emerging Maritime Studies program focuses on cultural history and literature of the sea. TSCA chapters such as CROPC may well be of direct support to these curricula through hands-on programs in small boating, and opportunities to meet designers and builders of small craft in seminars and lecture programs which are open to the public as well.

CROPC members will receive information on the John Gardner Chapter and may wish to join it as an adjunct to their other smallboat memberships.

For current information contact Russ Smith by email at <fuzzy@hotmail.com>

John Atkin RIP

My husband John Atkin died last November after a very difficult four years. I finally had a service for him on January 8 and it was perfect. He always said he wanted a "Brass Band and a Party" and I had both. A trumpet played with the hymns and then everyone came back to the house and visited the office, and had good food and drink. It was really very wonderful, as it was such a large mix of all sorts of people, everyone asking how they knew John. The service was a celebration of his life and it consisted mainly of music and people speaking. Jon Wilson came all the way from Maine to speak. I learned so many things about John, his kindnesses to folks who I had never known.

I enclose the obit Jay Benford wrote for me. He lived and apprenticed with us for two years in the sixties. This went to all the local papers and the *New York Times*, they ran it just as Jay had written it:

"John D. Atkin, internationally acclaimed in the boating business, both as a yacht designer and yacht surveyor, died Thursday, November 11, in Stamford Hospital. He was 81. Born August 19, 1918, in Montclair, N.J., he was a son of the late Dorcas Wilson Atkin and William "Billy" Atkin.

Mr. Atkin studied naval architecture at New York Technical School. His father had started on a career of designing and building boats in 1906 and Mr. Atkin shared this gift for yacht design, having his first design published at age 15.

Before World War II, he worked for Luders Marine Construction & Consolidated, leading designers and builders of fine yachts. After serving in the U.S. Army Transportation Corps during World War II as navigator and first mate, Mr. Atkin returned to the world of boat designing. He worked alongside his father at Atkin & Co. until his father's death in 1962. He ran the business for three decades.

For several decades, Mr. Atkin and his

father provided *Motor Boating* magazine with a new design each month, along with commentary on how to build it. A charming part of this was the naming of the designs after people and places that had special significance to the designers. These vignettes gave the readers a window into the Atkins' lives and the relationship they had with their neighbors and their world.

Mr. Atkin wrote numerous other articles, including a series on boatbuilding, as well as a number of books on boats and designs. In the work that he did, Mr. Atkin never hesitated to take on a challenging project. He had his own artistic style and an excellent sense of design for creating the small cruisers for which they are justly famous.

He also expanded into the field of yacht surveying. His long years of designing and knowledge of boatbuilding practices stood him in good stead in this dual career.

Mr. Atkin leaves behind a legacy of having helped thousands of people in their choices of boats to buy and in the creation of thousands of boats built to his designs. He also served as a judge at the Classic Boat gathering at Mystic Seaport for two decades.

Mr. Atkin and his wife were married on September 9, 1957, and they lived in a house they built on the Old Post Road in Darien for several decades. His wife, Patricia Atkin, still continues on with the worldwide sale of Atkin plans to builders of boats large and small.

I am going to carry on with the designs as long as I want to or can and then they will all go to Mystic Seaport. It is what John wanted, and seems proper, for they will always be there for folks. Thank heavens, I am younger than John so could be with him and do what was needed and now I get great satisfaction keeping the designs available for that small number of wooden boat folks out there.

Pat Atkin, Noroton, CT

1932 Olympic Monotype Plans

Responding to Howard Hannold's classified ad in the February 1st issue looking for Olympic 12' Monotype Catboat plans, 1932 was a Depression year! The Olympics, particularly the '32 Olympic Yachting Program was strapped for finances. There was little money for a class of one-man sailboats. The problem was presented to Mr. D.M. Callis, perceived dean of naval architects on the Pacific Coast at the time.

Mr. Callis used the Snowbird, which was the most popular small catboat in Southern California at the time. Sponsored by the Balboa Yacht Club and Newport Yacht Clubs, races were held regularly by both clubs during the summer season. The Flight of the Snowbirds was a one time annual race that drew up to 175 boats in the late 1940s.

Mr. Callis redesigned the Snowbird's rigging. He shortened the boom and heightened the mast to give this boat a higher aspect ratio. He also moved the center of effort forward. This modified the weather helm in stiff breezes and improved the sailing qualities. The mast, however, was hollow spruce and only twenty or so of these rigs were built. The change was never adopted by the Snowbird class because of cost. Owners of the boats loaned for the Olympics were given sails and rigs.

I had the privilege of representing the Long Beach Yacht Club in the U.S.A. monotype eliminations. Southern California

was represented by eight yacht clubs. We raced in the ocean, taking two days to do eight races, round robin, with the original Snowbird rig as the new rigs were saved for the international races.

At age sixteen, I was the youngest competitor and ended up third, due to one disqualification. A 21-year old Star Boat Skipper was the U.S. Representative. I believe France won the title. Europe was ahead of us in small boat racing at that time.

A recent inquiry I made brought the response that the Flight of the Snowbirds is now raced in Lazars, a small fiberglass boat. *Small Boat Journal* had files. *Rudder* magazine's date back to 1915. I wouldn't be surprised if *WoodenBoat* or *Sea* magazines have similar files.

I wish Howard Hannold luck. The Snowbird was a great little boat.

Harry Davis, Santa Barbara, CA

Opinions...

Crossing Oceans in Small Boats

After reading the review of *The Seaworthy Offshore Sailboat* in the February 15th issue I feel compelled to offer up my own opinions about crossing oceans in small boats.

Firstly, any person who actually recommends outfitting Catalina 27s for offshore work ought to be too embarrassed by the idea to even write it down, no less publish it for public consumption. People take Catalina 27s across oceans either because their finances allow them no choice, or because they have gone nutty. Those who achieve success in such an endeavor do so only by escaping the notice of Poseidon, Neptune, Davy Jones, and the rest of the angry pelagic gods. Anyone remotely familiar with the subject knows that when the sea puts its mind to the task, there is no small boat, especially a fin-keeled small boat, which can survive its ultimate fury. The small boats which disappear without a trace every year are testament to that fact. Even if the boat remains floating after dismasting and ensuing repeated 360 degree rolling (unlikely in a Catalina 27 as the hatch boards only have to move a couple of inches before they fall completely out, flooding the boat), it is likely that the occupants will have been fatally battered either by flying interior detritus or being themselves tossed violently between bulkheads. Even the hardest veteran crews on well equipped and prepared boats are not immune to such fates, as the '79 Fastnet and '99 Sidney-Hobart disasters demonstrate.

Secondly, there is no more unseaworthy a design for an ocean going boat than the fin keel. The fin keel boat is the result of a hundred year effort on the part of cockamamie designers to beat the various racing handicaps which they have been subject to. It has evolved not because it is in any way even remotely seaworthy, but only because it will earn a boat a couple of minutes per mile handicap when racing. Fin keels are top-heavy, directionally unstable, damage prone (via their unprotected spade rudder), uncomfortable, and, as pointed out in the review, marvelously stable once inverted.

Many designs even possess the characteristic referred to in yachting circles as "negative stability", meaning that once they are

pushed over on their sides to a certain angle, they will continue over as a matter of design rather than righting themselves. In the more extreme designs this angle could be as little as 110 degrees, which just barely has the mast-head in the water. This figure represents that of the more extreme designs, but it demonstrates the general problem. It is ironic in this day of modern computer aided design and high tech materials coupled with generations of sailing experience that contemporary boat design has actually devolved since racing became a popular sport.

Anyone interested in the details of this subject should rush out and get a copy of the long rant by C. A. Marchaj entitled *Seaworthiness: The Forgotten Factor*, which demonstrates the matter via detailed mathematical, anecdotal, and tank tested analyses.

That being said, I guess I'd sooner cross an ocean in a Catalina 27 than not cross at all. It certainly beats working, and you gotta go sometime anyway.

Brian Salzano, East Patchogue, NY

Projects...

Not Wanting to Sell

That Robb White makes me laugh out loud. He has such an easy-to-read style of writing. I wonder if he is the son of E. B. White? Some of what he says hits pretty close to home too. For instance, his comment about not wanting to sell the boats he builds because he likes them so much.

I just finished a Bolger June Bug as a fund raiser for Habitat for Humanity. We will raffle it off to make a few bucks. Trouble is, I like

More Space for Small Outboards

I greatly enjoy your magazine. I am in the process of building Kilburn Adams' "Skiff America 20". Is there a chance that smaller open outboards and beach camping/cruising might get more space on your pages? I am heading there and I have found that if I am going that way I am usually one of thousands. I call it my lemming legacy, that small mammal that periodically flocks to the sea and drowns over on the east coast somewhere.

Greg Sluys, 2113 Jensen st., Ferndale, WA 98248

Editor Comments: We run outboard and beach cruising articles when we receive them. Our content is not arbitrarily limited, it's what we receive from all of you.

the boat so much I hate to see it go. My wife says it would not be ethical for me to buy chances on it and keep it if I won. Here the boat is on launch day. Isn't she cute?

My daughter gave me a cartoon of a grown man hugging his sailboat with little hearts floating in the air above him. There must be something wrong with a person who can fall in love with an inanimate object.

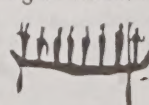
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Cedar Key '99 Report, Think 2000

By Hugh Horton

The Cedar Key Meet is an opportunity to bask in Cedar Key's virtues. It's a chance to catch up with old friends and good acquaintances, to see how their boats have changed, hear of trips, and meet or introduce others. Cedar Key is 100 miles north of Tampa, Florida, a few miles south of the mouth of the Suwannee River. The Meet is the 1st weekend in May.

Showing off a place one loves to people one respects and loves is a great part of being human, I think. So it thrilled me, particularly, to see Sue, my daughter-in-law, here. She lives in Albuquerque, was raised in West Yellowstone. She'd been east of the Mississippi, to southeast Michigan, for a Thanksgiving weekend.

Bill Ling is an Adirondacker, a bred paddler. He'd sailed once, *Puffin*, at a Wooden Canoe Heritage Association Assembly. His chum, Jim Thaxton, had been a canoe and kayak liveryman in Kentucky and is the Professional Paddlesports Association Executive Director.

On Thursday at 7:30am Ron Sell and I were in Cook's. I was savoring breakfast spuds with onions, peppers, and salivatory mushrooms. Bill came in with Mike Leiner.

"You know him?" Mike smiled.

"Man," Bill said with a slow grin, "I drove coast to coast into the full moon, through land mists, out into daybreak on what seemed like a runway (#4 bridge)...."

"You have landed," Ron said.

Before noon it was southwest 0-5, sunny, low 80s. Bill sat high in his open Curtis Solo Tripper canoe, 16' by 30" and swung a long, single blade paddle, straight shaft. I was low in *Pintail*, a decked 16' by 29" Bell Magic, and was prying her along with a double-bladed paddle. Ron was sailing his open Bell Starfire,

the same 15' x 34" hull shared by the sailing canoes *Puffin* and *Serendipity*. We were in the half mile wide channel between the town of Cedar Key and Otsena Otie Key. Each of us saw foot long needle fish. We paddled to red marker #36 in mid-channel where I introduced Bill to the eastbound flood.

Bill and I headed west around Atsena, ducked under the dock and paddled around and in the southwest entrance.

"It's another world!" Bill had said. "I didn't realize it was here."

We briefly tucked up in the cord grass and black rushes in the light lee, and watched and talked about mullet jumping, nearly flying mullet, thumping slippery mullet you'd usually not want flopping around in your boat.

The flood carried us, drifting, in Atsena. Bill tried a long, straight shaft single blade made by Ron Sell. I used one of Ron's short bent shafts. It seemed just the paddle for those shallows. We traded paddles. The long one was fine, too, although one can be jarringly reminded of its length. Ron sailed in from the northeast, and Larry paddled in with his CLC Cape Charles. We took the northeast lagoon to the east beach, stopped to chat, then returned across the ebb by 3:30pm.

Sue arrived by car from the Gainesville airport.

5:30pm, southwest 10-15, gusts 18, sun on glittering sea. In old sneakers she was walking carefully on oysters and mud, looking at crabs and shells and drinking in Cedar Key's moist air and its birdlife; darting, soaring, wheeling, flapping, gliding, quacking, rattling, screaming, crying, cooing.

Puffin, reefed, and I sailed out to red #36 where the ebb was running southwest toward Seahorse Key. It was so shallow at Atsena's north Beach, we fell off on a broad reach to

the channel between Dog Island and Scale Key. It was shallow there, too, so I didn't land. Returning, some dolphins seemed to race each other like gamboling puppies. They reminded me of being a motorheaded teenager on Woodward Avenue near Detroit. It was a beat back against a west northwesterly and the new flood. Past 7:30pm and Sue was still stalking the beach, watching an egret, and a long gone horseshoe crab.

Saturday morning was cold, upper 50s, the coldest Boat Meet day ever. It was north 10-15 and cloudy. By 11am the sun was about to come out, north-northeast 12-18. A fine variety of boats arrived on Atsena's north beach with warmly clad crews. Bill paddled over after the breeze had dropped to 10-15. We, he paddling and I sailing, poked in the northeast end of Atsena. The tide was so high I took inner short cuts, but ran onto oysters once before gaining the channel by the old osprey tree. He ran onto some near it. No clapper rails to be seen and we returned the same way to Atsena's north beach, *Puffin* shooting ahead in gusts; Bill's Curtis catching up in lees and lulls.

Old friends Jeri and Bob Treat with *Freddie the Cat* were here six years ago. This time Bob provided one of the best photo opportunities of catboat action I've seen, or will likely ever see, but I blew it. And I even had two loaded cameras with me, one in my hand! It was such a riveting few moments, I, like others, watched open-mouthed. The breeze was northwest 10-15. As *Freddie* left the beach, within a few yards of it, Bob gybed, her huge sail pulling like a Cummins diesel; her wake giant, her big rudder churning and pushing water, all eyes were glued as, with pilot's panache, he avoided T-boning a Sea Pearl beach bound. Wow! That I missed the

photo bothered me sorely. I still wince typing this. There was wake and spray, a snapping flag at the tip of her gaff, gaping spectators. Damn.

Freddie returned to town. The wind was so strong Bill knelt paddling back across the channel, pleased his canoe had good buoyancy bags. Although it was cool, I was happy to see Sue in *Freddie* with the Treats. Bill and I caught a ride with Mike and Becky Latta in *Chessie*, a Sea Pearl. We were off to North Key with the northwesterly 12-18 and the ebb.

Bill later wrote: "Sailing in *Chessie* out to North Key was primo. It was a rough ride in cold spray but sailing is like flying, what human doesn't want to be able to do it?? It feels so right. Thank the gods for boats. They let me be above the water and free of land, isn't that flying?"

Chessie arrived on the beach on the southeast tip, then *Freddie* followed by another Sea Pearl and the gentlemen from Dallas.

Sue had the forward, wet seat. "It was cold," she laughed, getting out of Bob's foul weather jacket.

"*Freddie* tossed spray," Bob said. "Sue was really a good sport."

We walked to the shell beach north of the southern tip, not lingering since the tide was still falling. Returning, Bill rode in *Chessie*. I reveled in the helm of *Freddie* with Sue and the Treats, and the grand broad reach was prolonged by the ebb. The Sea Pearl 21 slowly pulled away from the Chappiquidick (sic) 12-1/2.

Sunday it was north-northeast 7-10 early and warmer. On Atsena were Bill in his canoe, Ron in his open sailing canoe, a Wilderness Systems triak, a 10' 3-meter Marples tri called *Bananas*, Jack and Tosh in his Sea Pearl, a Sea Pearl tri, John Martin in his Snark, and the Howes in a double kayak.

Bill and Ron headed for Corrigan Reef. A few of the smaller boats joined me inside Atsena, from the north. The water was low but rising. We skimmed sand, closely following the channel and scraped through. Near the southwest end, after the turn south, I broad reached in the oystery channel at about 3-1/2 knots against a 2 knot or so flood. Delightful. Out of the channel we continued south, then east around Atsena's southern tip and with the tide up the east side.

The Snark and I fell off for Corrigan, but the breeze got light and fluke so John headed for town. I paddled, then sailed the flukiness with tacks and gybes as it was northwest, southeast, southwest, south-southeast, north. With the flood's help *Puffin* and I passed Dog Island, and nearly went right past Bill, Jim, and Ron spread out near Scale Key, aiming back southwest. Bill, Ron and I beached. Jim paddled back.

The wind returned 12-18 west-northwesterly and Ron left. So did Bill and I. Then we beached again on the little key west of Scale. Offshore, west of Dog Island, we saw a flash. Through binoculars we watched a tippy yellow canoe. The flash was its wet bottom rolling and reflecting the sun. It wasn't making headway to the west, although it seemed to be trying. When it was close enough the improbable was apparent. The Mohawk canoe was facing backward. In what was now the stern was a young woman sitting high in a bathing suit, looking very pink, facing west, the direction they wanted to go. Her friend faced her, the opposite of their direction and paddled



Sunday morning at Atsena's north beach.



Exploring endless tidal channels amongst the keys.

Freddie the Cat on the beach.



backward. He was also bright pink, shirtless and hatless, sitting high. She appeared beat and barely moved her paddle. He was doing little better. They slowly crabbed toward us, eventually landing a hundred feet away. We offered water, sun protection in the form of lotion or shirts and hats, food.

"We're fine," she'd said. He'd turned away and fished. She stayed in the canoe. Bill and I waited awhile, knowing the tide was about to change.

Earlier Sue had been aboard Ron Hoddinott's *Sea Pearl Whisper*. "I have no idea," Sue said, "what the temperature was on my second ride to North Key. It was the warmest day and driest ride I had been on. The sun felt hot with a bright cloudless sky, no wild wind and the calm quiet water made for a smooth sail. Plus North Key was my favorite to explore."

Monday, southwest 5-9, low 70s, sunny. In mid morning Sue in a Hydra Sea Runner, Jim in his kayak, Bill in his Curtis, and Ron in *Pintail*, paddled, and I sailed *Puffin* to Atsena's north beach. We went in the northeast end

against a solid flood.

Jim, who teaches kayaking and canoeing at a local university, later wrote, "I remember that tidal stream and Sue struggling to hold the nose of the Hydra in line with the current so as not to be swept sideways and back downstream. I also remember stealing a glance at the bald eagle perched on the northern point of the island. Sue needed little cheerleading once she got the boat headed directly into the current."

Sue also wrote, "As the current swept me backwards I felt like a pinball machine as I bounced from one shore to that muddy area where I almost was high-centered. The guys were telling me how to straighten out, and how to hold the paddle. It was a gorgeous day. We took a break on a white smooth beach. That was fun because there were all kinds of little creatures and hermit crabs cruising the water, and I was in heaven collecting a bazillion shells, enjoying the view. I could have stayed there a long while, but the wind was picking up along with the tide rising. Some of the shells I collected could not fit in the kayak. We

headed to Cedar Key at an angle, which was something new to me. FUN but exhausting for a rookie. I slept real well that night."

By 2:30pm, still southwest 5-9, I with Jeri and Bob sailed *Freddie the Cat* into Back Bay behind town. The tide was very high. We wove through channels and islets, seldom bumping, to the 1st bridge and then gybed and tacked around a couple times, before sailing out the way we'd come. *Freddie* performed perfectly for Southwest Air pilot Bob. Back outside we headed to Atsena and tacked in the northeast entrance, crunching lightly, tacking all the way through and out the southwest end. Bob gybed and we returned through Atsena mostly running, it was uncommonly splendid sailing. Later at the launch ramp, Bob said, "It was *Freddie's* best sailing day."

And Cedar Key's effect on Jim? He wrote, "I repeatedly violated my promise to myself to keep the place a secret. As I was sharing the past year's adventures, I would blurt out something like, 'I rediscovered my passion for paddlesports at Cedar Key last May.' Oops. Then like a recovering alcoholic who succumbs to 'just one sip', I go on about the white beaches, eagles, sea turtles, dolphins, osprey, great horned owls, intimate tidal routes through the islands, artistic wooden sailboats and sailing canoes, quaint shops, on and on until I would realize what I was doing, then I would begin to exaggerate the bugs, and the primitive nature and desolation of the place, 'til I was finally satisfied that my listener would give up all hope of finding enjoyment there."

Thank you all for coming. Thank you Ron Hoddinott, and Bob and Jeri Treat for giving Sue wonderful rides. And thank you Jim, Bill, and Ron for brother-like care.

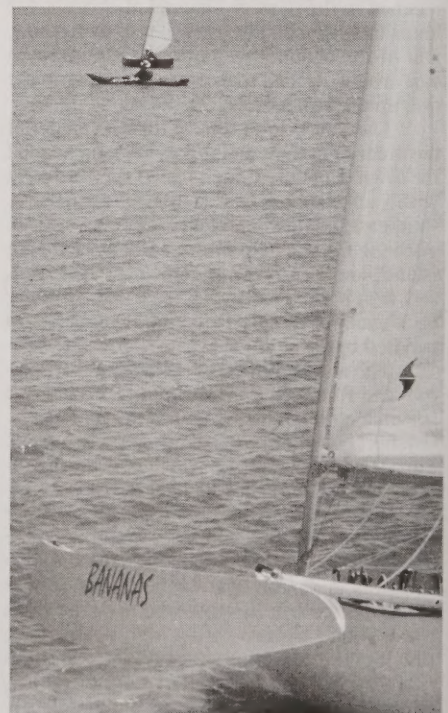
This year it's May 6th and 7th. Where will the tides help us go? I'll try not to look them up, or think about them or the moon at all, and just be surprised. Come to the 16th Cedar Key Boat Meet and be surprised, too.

For details on Cedar Key 2000, contact Hugh Horton at 29474 Old North River Rd., Mt. Clemens, MI 48045, (810) 468-6456).



Bill Ling in his open Curtis, Ron Sell sailing, *Pintail* beached.

Puffin reefed on the beach.



Early May, 1999 I walked into the chilly water at just before five in the morning. Had I waited for the sun to come up, *Freddie the Cat* would have been beached by the falling tide. It would be late morning before *Freddie* and the rest of the fleet of small boats in front of The Island Place would be underway. So I threw the spotlight and my dry sneakers and jeans into the boat, pushed off the beach, and let her drift out to hang off the anchor. The year's last cold front had just come through. I put on the warm, dry duds, and went up into the bow to raise the sail.

Sailing at Cedar Key always brings forth the very best things for me that can happen in boats. The feelings of wonder, adventure, and intrigue were strong as I knelt in the dark, hoisting the throat and peak halyards of the little catboat. The sail hoops rattled against the mast, and the long boom danced back and forth. I had already bent a single reef in *Freddie's* generous sail. This would not be a good morning to be out there in the dark, solo and overpowered. I worked my way up to the anchor, eased it out of the bottom, and sloshed it for a quick rinse as we bore away and accelerated. On the beach, a half a dozen Sea Pearls, a Bolger Birdwatcher, a nice little catamaran, and several beautiful kayaks snuggled up in the lee of The Island Place as *Freddie the Cat* bore away into the night, leaving a handsome wake.

Cedar Key's waterfront appears cozy, warmly lit and inviting as seen from offshore night waters. Out in the darkness and immensity of the gulf night, one is drawn toward the comfort and safety of the little town. Indeed, as *Freddie* rounded the corner of the town dock and hardened up for the beat to windward, we saw the lights coming on inside Pat's Red Luck restaurant on Dock Street. Coffee would be brewing, hash browns would sizzle, and the frying smells of bacon and sausage would tug at the couple of hardy fishermen braving the early morning out on the dock.

I was eager for the night waters, however, and kept my eyes away from the town lights to dark adapt as soon as possible. All our Cedar Key sailing over the years had been daysailing trips to the beautiful keys to the south and to the west. I had a curiosity about the waters out to the east, in the other direction. Scale Key was once inhabited, families were established, and children were born and raised out there. There were handsome stands of tall trees. Offshore, Dog Island lies low with scrub trees, brush, and salt grasses. I wanted to see Dog Island up close, to muse about its dog, and his story.

Corrigan's Reef seemed both forbidding and inviting. Twisted channels run through banks of sea shells. State leases for clam farming are staked out, and not to be disturbed. There are probably some respectable tidal currents out there. An approach to Corrigan's would have to wait until daylight.

With my watch cap pulled down, and the soft, warm collar of my foulies zipped up to just under my nose, I settled down comfortably on the windward deck to work up into the wind. I sail *Freddie* to windward by just sitting out on the deck over the coaming, and steering with a hiking stick on the tiller. She has enough beam that hiking straps are unnecessary, if not unseemly. Though brisk, the wind wasn't overpowering. The puffs seemed to settle into a pattern that allowed us to carve long satisfying arcs into the wind. The light

Sunrise Sail At Cedar Key

By Bob Treat



chop here in the protected lee of the marshes slapped cheerfully against the resonant cypress and mahogany cold-molded hull. That continuous patter is the song of all the enchanted small wooden boats of your childhood. Mixed with the wee-morning bird cries, that slap slap slap transported us happily up the channel between Dog Island and the marshes.

With eyes adjusting well to the darkness, comes now a new thing. We are not alone out here. No. We became aware that some porpoises were matching our progress out toward the east. We were being scoped out. How many little sailboats do these boys come across out here in the Dog Island channel at night? We were auslanders. We were strangeolas, an alien presence moving through the night waters. Outboard motorboats were understood, were accepted. They buzzed along in straight lines, and were quickly gone. We quietly moved along, a fat, blue belly with a metallic white fin which retracted a bit when it noisily scraped an oyster bed. Our ungainly blue tail fin wagged from side to side a bit, and we didn't go in a single straight direction. We were all over the place, first toward this shore, then toward that. A quick glance above the surface revealed our single great wing. What the hell WERE we? A strange presence out here in the night waters, the familiar waters, where this family lived and fed.

Then, suddenly, *Freddie* and I got a huge message. Nothing remotely like this had ever happened to me in a boat before. We were instantly and involuntarily turned off course,

rolled a bit, and LIFTED by a powerful boil of water. Not a large turn or roll, and we were lifted an inch, no, probably a half an inch or less, but we did go up. It was the most unusual motion that *Freddie the Cat* had ever experienced. A strong greeting from the water. It would be presumptuous, even arrogant, to wax interpretive about this. It simply was what it was. A powerful force there in the night's dark waters.

We were quieter, more reflective, as we sailed on past the east end of Dog Island. The porpoises were gone. Dawn began to make itself known. That first thought comes, "Hey, it's beginning to get light." From the Dark Mother Night came the earliest faint gray glimmerings. The cool morning air swept down out of the mainland woods carrying cedar and pine forest smells. It rolled across the saltmarshes and mixed with the heady tide-water scent.

We sailed along the awakening shore east of Scale Key and watched the horizontal bands of the clouds over the distant dark trees turn from gray, to pearlescent, to pink. There was an out-of-time beauty to the dawn. None of man's works were evident, and all of nature's were overwhelming. The scent from the woods and marshes made me want to breathe it in, and breathe it in, until I had breathed it all in, or had burst in the attempt. We were struck dumb by the beauty of that dawn, and were humbled by the greatness of its gift to us.

As we sailed on towards Corrigan's Reef, the early light began to reveal the berms of shell, and the stakes and markers of the leases. The strong wind, the unknown waters, the falling tide, the numerous markers, and respect for the commercial operations all suggested that this wasn't the time to be exploring Corrigan's Reef.

I decided to try to sail around the east and south sides of Dog Island, and to sail up the channels near Scale Key after that. This was a bit of a dicey proposal. It entailed running dead downwind, in shallow unknown water, at full speed, on a falling tide. Oh, yes, then there could be a flying jibe if we liked, as we rounded the southwest end of Dog Island. We had the old accousto-mechanical fathometer, our centerboard, to help out of course, assuming that the bottom would be mannerly enough to shoal up gradually for us. And it ought to, shouldn't it? Well, no guts, no medals. We could always spend the day on Dog Island, or wait for the tide to rise, or something like that, if we crashed.

It turned out wonderfully. A couple of nibbles on the board by the oysters as we gaily ripped along, and no death roll crashjibe. The sun came out in full. It began to warm. The watchcap and jacket came off. The reef was shaken out of the sail. We meandered up the intriguing channels near Scale Key. One doesn't run aground in here, one runs a-mud. You have to be subtle, 'cause sometimes the mud simply gets thicker and thicker and you just decelerate. At least oyster beds talk to you. We went up the creeks until we were hopelessly unable to sail to windward further (that's the whole point, isn't it, with this messing about in boats, and all?), backed around with an oar in the mud, got the board up, rinsed the oar, and ran happily down the creeks and back to town.

During the jolly breakfast at Cook's with the rest of the crowd, there was a quiet sense we had been the recipient of a very great gift.



Nine, all that sail and oars to boot.

Millennium Kokopelli

By Jim Thayer

Saturday, September 18: About 9:30 I showed up at the Chipeta sous shop and began throwing stuff in the boat. Sharon, Chip, and the Babe showed up to see me off but stayed out of the way unless I asked for help. By 10:30 I didn't see anything else to load, although now, the first night out, there is no sign of the pint of butter or any bread. Sigh!

I Pulled off in Green River to see Larry Bowerman, the melon mogul. I met Larry several years ago when buying a melon and he took an interest in my boat. Larry generously donated four nice melons to the cause. Thus laden I turned south, climbed through the Henrys, and rolled into the Bullfrog campground about 5.

In contrast to past expeditions, Kokopelli '99 was billed as a laid-back cruise around Bullfrog and Hall's Creek Bays. We had all new recruits as those giants of yesteryear, Axon and Bradley, were goofing around back east.

Per usual, we had an eclectic little fleet. Cruising the campground in search of likely boats I pulled up alongside a West Wright Potter, *The Queen Victoria* of Estes Park. I had inadvertently awakened Jim Jenrich who was zonked within.

We had a good gam in the shade and when Jim's lovely wife Linde came back from a walk, we had real German potato salad, Linde being from the Old Country. It was getting dusky when Dewitt Smith hove in sight with the big Victory 21 keelboat, *Gusty*. She had fine lines from the days before boats came under the purview of refrigerator designers.

Dewitt had fitted her with a mizzen, the better to play the sailorman role and fool with things like mizzen staysails. For crew he had brought David Sees, a fancy culinary school grad. We wouldn't be eatin' no beans this trip.

My boat was my 15' Nina with a lug ketch rig. The main came from the '97 trip on the A Duckah!, a tender boat. The Nina, with 5' of beam, could handle more. I have been very taken with Iren's Romilly on the cover of *Watercraft*, #15. Both main and mizzen are very high-peaked, so I determined to add a piece to the head of the main.

I knew that the leech was a bit slack so I planned to compensate for that. When I confidently raised the new canvas I was shocked to find the leech worse than ever. So, I just took some darts in it. Now I had gross wrinkles, yea folds, in the body. Time was short so I stuffed 'er in the bag. The smart move would be to lay the whole project on Stu Hopkins.

The Nina hull was one that L.C. Trimber and I chopped out of the ice a couple of years ago. L.C. started it then took off for Corpus. It had an oak centerboard case built like a brick dependency, but when I ran a trial launch early this summer it leaked alarmingly. This upset me less than you might expect because a case in the center of the boat is always in the way. I like to build it into the locker front about 8" off center. This gives it good bracing and gets it out of the way. Since the locker was already built, the result is not too beautiful but it was still a worthwhile move.

We had a jolly visit, getting acquainted, reviewing the boats, supping and slurping, but by 10 we were all flaked.

Sometime after noon we joined the line to the ramp. If you have never watched the ramp at Bullfrog, you have missed some entertainment as well as some marvelous conspicuous consumption. It is wider than some of the ponds I have sailed.

In due time we were free upon the dark blue waters. The plan, with a south wind, had been to reach west through the pass into Hall's Creek Bay and find a nice cozy hole up in the Waterpocket Fold. By the time we were ready to make use of it, the wind had worked around to the west. I was having a fine time, mostly hard on the wind, but I couldn't detect that the

Potter was making any westing and Dewitt was still at the dock sorting out loose ends.

Old Sol obviously didn't care a hoot for our plans so, with the afternoon well advanced, I concluded the better course would be to reach north and get secured before we found ourselves benighted. We were all coming along now, and with a good lead, I decided to reef, more for practice than need. The Potter followed suit and Dewitt was closing rapidly.

I checked a couple of places that were great for us centerboard guys but no good for the keel. Finally a great spot appeared with just enough beach for two boats and a steep-to rock for the iron.

I had shipped a deckload of wood scraps from the shop so we got a fire going while David our culinary honcho busied himself with a turkey burger veggie melange in foil packets. While these were cooking, a salad was prepared by simply dumping dressing into bag of salad makings. I had an Italian to go with the salad and Dewitt pulled out a Schlumberger cabernet to accompany the entree. Eat your heart out Axon!

Dinner delected, we sat back to admire the colors, the cliffs incandescent, the rocks afire, the Henrys drawing their mauve and purple capes against the coming night. Magnificent beyond the telling, even with the pur-

First night's camp.



plest of prose.

Awesome color, good sailing, fine friends, super supper, what a great day! But hey! What's this? The big boat is up against the rock, water is splashing into the beached boats. The wind is straight out of the north and honking. Time to reread the lines, grunt the boats farther up the beach, and rig some fenders. Aeolus phooey, 'tis Murphy in charge of the winds.

After things calm down the keel guys lay out and perfume (pollute) the night air with a couple of Thomas Hinds, then come up with a pot of popped corn for a nightcap. Half a moon and a sky full of stars with, now, a nice breeze out of the east. Time to bag it up.

Monday September 20: It dawned clear with just a slight drift out of the south. We shared one of Bowerman's melons and everyone did their own thing for breakfast. I set the stove up in the sternsheets and had a cup laying up against the sail. Then I made another sip while frying up my bread in olive oil, having forgotten the butter. One slice with marmalade and one with cherry. Apparently no peanut butter. Cleanup consisted of wiping the pan with a paper towel (I'm relatively fastidious) and whisking the cup and knife over the side.

Breakfast over, we were ready for the feature event. Dewitt, with his halyard jumped out again, was going to careen the ship rather than take down the mast. The first attempt threatened to flood the cockpit so she was moved to a higher, steeper cliff. With Dave on the shrouds and the rest of us on the cliff top, Dewitt did his human fly act on a narrow crumbling sandstone ledge. Back on deck he found that it was off again. Repeat the whole drill. With very careful management he got through the rest of the trip without trouble. Turns out the sheave had part of the rim broken off.

Four men and a lady, with some effort, managed to get the beach boats afloat and we set off northward under oars. The Potter was soon nearly out of sight ahead with the energetic Linde at the oars. I sat in the sternsheets pushing on the oars when the sprit moved. After raising the main with great care, the keel boys moved on past but fell in a hole at the north end of the island while I whistled up a breeze and left them in the dust, but not for long.

Somewhat after noon we were around the island and working south into a modest little breeze. The keel guys were seen to be anchored up far ahead, swimming. When I caught up we had a drink and waited on the Potter, which arrived under oars. Jim announced that he was going blind! Seems he had forgotten his sunglasses. They decided to power in and get them. The rest of the flotilla would work south along the coast looking for a good anchorage. If nothing offered we would meet back at the previous camp.

Dewitt stood south making very long tacks. I figured that he would run back checking the shore carefully. I worked alongshore and, with Dewitt nearly out of sight, found a large bight with a likely looking landing in the southwest corner. I checked it out and was much enthused so set off to find the keel guys. I happened to look back and saw the dreaded bbc (big black cloud) building over the Waterpocket. Damn, I should be ashore putting up the tent. I was tempted to stay, but Dewitt was likely settled in somewhere waiting for me. Nothing for it but to go see. I had



The beachable boats, cabin vs. open.

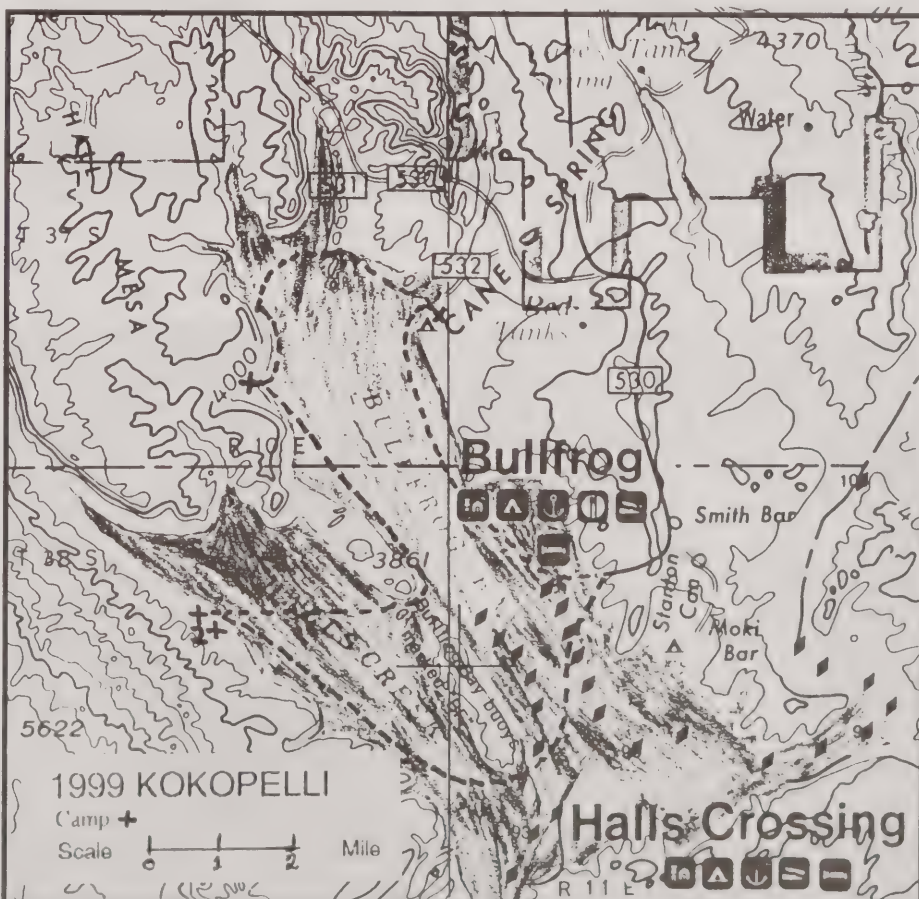
just about worked out to open water when I spied a sail above the bushes. Saved!

The bbc went south and we lounged over hors d'oeuvres with a Turning Leaf chardonnay followed by spaghetti and a Valle Central cabernet. Both splendid. All was topped off by Mrs. Thayer's cookies. We sat up late by a fire fueled with wood left by some public spirited power boater. No sign of the Potter. It was too warm in the tent.

Tuesday September 21: We awoke to a nice breeze out of the north, just what was

needed. But we dawdled over breakfast and took our time loading. Dewitt, heading to town for resupply, got away first, into a breeze now well to the east. I got off with a faultless maneuver, easy enough when no one is looking. There was just enough air for crisp tacking and a chuckle under the bow.

The wind goes south and dies, so I break out the wood and begin pushing languidly while exposing more skin than modesty permits me to describe. Luckily I look back in time to see the Potter closing fast under oars.





Supper preparation.



Sail workshop aboard Potter.

Lunch at Hard Rock Cafe. Dave, Dewitt, Jim, Linde.



Finally the wind comes tentatively back out of the southwest. We work our way slowly down to the pass where we meet the keelboat which leads us across to a nice camp with a large sitting log, close under the Waterpocket.

David was soon chopping up panchetta for a great clam chowder which was followed by a veggie pepper medley. No fire so we bagged up at a reasonable hour. I paddled out and slept on the hook.

Wednesday September 23: I sat in my sack and watched the sunrise. Gorgeous. Lotsa video. Plenty melon and fried bread for breakfast. We had scheduled a sail seminar and workshop for today, so Dave rode with me while Dewitt worked with the Potter gang on sail trim and windward tactics. The Potter was soon much improved, almost matching the Nina on a close reach. When we headed for lunch ashore the wind died so we made the second canyon up under Honda power. After lunch at the Big Rock Cafe we went off hiking. Dewitt and Dave, purposely I suspect, got themselves hung up on the wrong side of the canyon and took the sensible course of sitting down to wait for us.

Home by Honda, and then we moved camp across the bay to a spot offering much nicer bushes and doubtless some firewood as well. Linde dug into her dried supplies and came up with a mild chili with noodles which really hit the spot. We sat up late sipping Dave's fruit flavored wines while Jim fed the fire a couple of twigs at a time. It started to sprinkle and then we got some gusts strong enough that I took the mizzen down. I rigged a plastic sheet and slept on the boat. It sprinkled all night but come morning the laundry was dry.

Thursday September 24: Overcast and a few sprinkles at breakfast. I had one banana with blackberry merlot which was good and one with cocoa mix which was very good. About 11, with no sign of wind, the rest hiked off to look at a cave and I set off rowing. I soon had a southwest zephyr and ran north under mizzen alone. Since I wasn't going anywhere in particular there was no hurry. There's a notion that would leave a powerboater scratching his head.

I checked a couple of leads and then worked into one with a lot of dead trees at the end, the trees indicating a stream. Ashore, I passed a couple of nice pools and was soon up where I could see most of Hall's Creek Bay with my friends out sailing around. Too late to go for the top.

I set off but seemed to be making a lot of leeway. Looked like the trees were going to get me. Maybe something caught on the board. That can't be because the board is up. First time that's ever happened. Once in the clear, I took down the main and took out the darts. Not a big improvement but if I crack off a bit it doesn't look too bad. I sailed all around the shores of the two arms of our little bay passing close to some houseboats. Not close enough to alarm them unduly but close enough that they couldn't help but wonder what the old geezer was up to and why he looked so smug and contented.

Dave was into cheddar broccoli soup with just a little onion and a dribble of brandy. It was augmented by some babyback ribs on a stick and more turkey bundles. Everybody had been on wood patrol and we had a nice stack, but nothing over a half inch. We would have to husband it carefully. About 10:30, after

Dewitt had incinerated his cigar dipped in Portagee brandy, the boys pulled out another pan of popcorn. That pretty well ruined, somebody noticed a mouse.

"Quick, the graham crackers!" We started him on small pieces, of which he ate a couple, and then started packing them off into the darkness. He wasn't going far for he was soon back. We started upping the ante and he began having trouble getting them through the hole in our pile of gear. Finally, the piece de resistance, a whole cracker. It gave him a fit but he made off with it. My ears aren't up to it but some thought maybe they could hear squeaky laughing and shouting somewhere in the bushes.

Friday September 25: Clear with a bit of dew this morn. Emboldened by yesterday's banana experiments, I determined to refine the dish this morning. My remaining two bananas were over the hill and far down the other side. They were mashed in the pan with cocoa mix and dash of Portagee brandy over a low fire. Oh! for some butter. Still pretty good. In fact, pretty dam good. Modest fellow that I am, still I feel that I must proclaim the invention of a significant dish, Bananas Powell. Let the culinary world take note. Commenting to Linde on the joys of getting up early brought out this bit of old world wisdom, "Morgenstund hat gold im mund." Early rising puts gold in the mouth. Coined by a dentist perhaps. It will be splendid ammunition to blast any slugabeds around camp.

The keelboat headed east for the pass to get an early start on the unrigging job, while the rest of us determined to head south about five miles to round the long island which stretches from the pass down to the old channel of the Colorado near Hall's Crossing.

We had a breeze of 12 to 15 right in the teeth. We worked our way down through the great whale back rocks just south of the pass and then took long boards from the low-lying western shore out toward the steep bare rock of the island. Jim and Linde must have been apt students judging from the way the Potter was dogging my heels.

It seemed to be slow going and the floating pooperina, the only distinct mark in sight, appeared to be receding at the same rate we progressed. We did eventually catch it and soon had it hull down behind us. At low lake levels it would be necessary to take the river channel around but at this level we could get through the shortcut, saving a mile or so.

Once into Bullfrog Bay it was a dead run to the ramp. Time to wing out the sails and relax. For some reason she wasn't having any. She just flopped around thither and yon. I soon discovered that with the tiller lashed amidships and the main close-hauled to port she ran straight as an arrow. She didn't like starboard. Maybe something to do with the off-center board and mizzen. I wasn't inclined to analyze the problem because lunch was much on my mind.

I set out the Coleman and soon had one of Dave's foil packets on the burner. Just lounging around, quaffing, watching the bubbles streaming off into the distance, soaking up rays, and trying to gauge the state of the packet by the aromas wafting forward. Hey, is this a tough life or what?

The Potter, evidently unable to cope with a soldier's wind, had dropped out of sight behind. Around five we slipped smartly alongside the float having hardly touched the tiller in a five mile run. Just behind me was a man with a dead powerboat who wanted to get past all the tied up boats in front. It was no big problem because the wind would have held him off. But he didn't want to set foot on my boat and evidently didn't trust me to do it. At length he just pushed off, hoping to be rescued by one of his own kind.

Dewitt had promised Dave a sit down meal at the lodge and wouldn't be dissuaded so I was off the hook for cooking. With a minimum of arm twisting they did agree to a little appetizer so we blew away the rest of the tomatoes and cheese with a bottle of red.

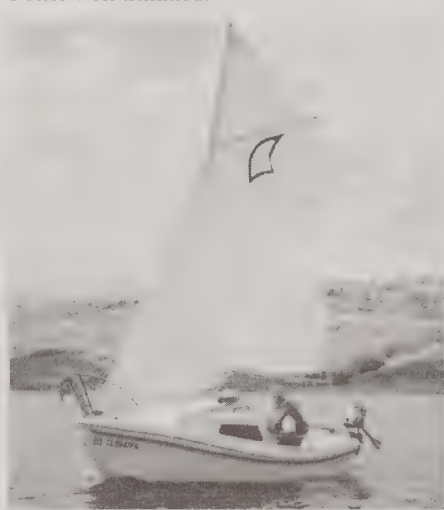
Jim and Linde rolled up at dusk with the Potter all shipshape for the road. With the chow hounds back from the bright lights, we had a fire and burned up the wood box for a grand finale. Another great Kokopelli will live on around the campfires of the future.

Come morning, we were on the road for home, except Jim and Linde who were off for the dam to do more cruising. I stopped in Green River to hit the 66 station and then nip across the road to get a watermelon and tell Larry what a great trip we had. Another hundred miles and I was home for some well-earned rest. It's plain hard work but it would be downright immoral to sell boats that haven't been rigorously tested.

I realize that most of you are currently trapped under ice and snow and that it would be unkind, if not unethical, to fan the flames of sailing desire as I have done, were I not in a

position to make amends in some way. Therefore I am offering another stirring video which will transport you to the indigo waters and breathtaking scenery of Powell. It also includes nearly all of the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival at St Michaels, including the race action from the deck of *Egret*. Send check or money order for \$17.50 to Grand Mesa Boatworks LLC; Rt. 1 Box 75, Collbran, CO 81624. For those with no boat, no cable, or otherwise culturally deprived, or with serious insomnia, we are offering our two reel special with full coverage of Kokopelli, MASCF, Down the Bay with Axon, a visit with Robb White, a cruise of Elephant Butte, and other odds and ends. This incredible bargain is only \$25.00. See you on the water.

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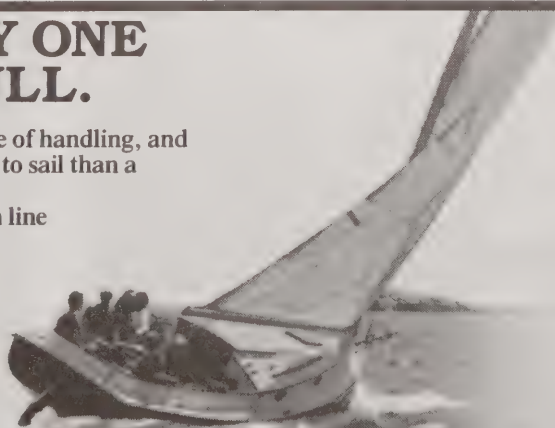
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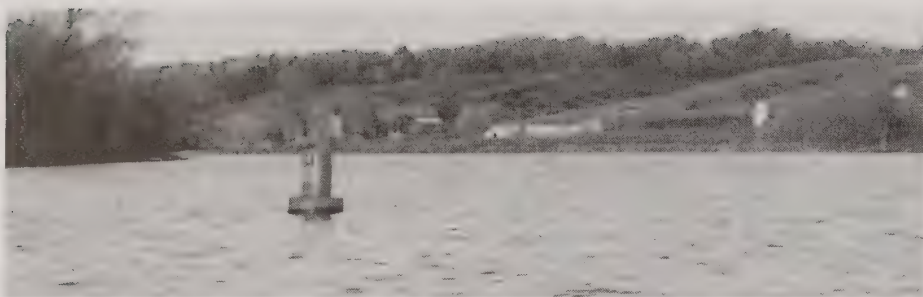
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On the Champlain Canal, note buoys which mark channels in the entire system.



My shelter at the marina and park at Fort Edward. Vicky's Restaurant is but 400' away.



Locks at Whitehall.

The most graceful truss bridge on the Canal system in my opinion is this one on the Champlain Canal. It has the only sprung deck I recall seeing.



Small Boating On New York's Erie Canal

A Practical Guide For Muscle-Powered Cruisers Part 3

By Jack Hornung

The Lake Champlain Hudson River Route (About 85 Miles)

Although the Hudson dominates, this is not just a river route. The first lake section proceeds south from the vicinity of Fort Henry where at its southern end, Lake Champlain narrows into a more hospitable channel for small boats. Lake Champlain and its valley are beautifully ensconced between the Adirondacks of New York on the west and the Green Mountains of Vermont on the east. I did not personally row this thirty five mile stretch, but suggest it from conjecture, previous experience, map study and discussion with local people.

The next section begins at the very picturesque Canal village of Whitehall on the southern end of Lake Champlain. Whitehall, I learned, is the birthplace of the United States Navy. The owner and staff of the Whitehall Marina went out of their way to help me in various ways. I am grateful for their help and am sure that they would provide the same service to other small boaters.

From Whitehall, the route south along the Champlain Canal follows a relatively short section of very nice line canal to Fort Edward. On this stretch, I discovered with delight, the historic village of Fort Ann, not visible from the Canal, but accessible to a small boat, with a little ingenuity and effort, by a creek leading under a railroad bridge.

At Fort Edward, the line canal ends and the route now follows the upper Hudson River south. A short distance upstream from the Canal, the Hudson leads to the very nice village of Fort Edward, where I camped on the lawn of the village Marina and had supper and breakfast at Vicky's Restaurant, only a hundred yards away on Main Street.

The last stretch of this route is now real river, the Hudson gradually swelling as you proceed south, pass dams, and transit numerous locks. Settlement is infrequent. Woods and fields line the banks. You pass by Saratoga National Battlefield.

I would characterize this Lake Champlain - Hudson River route as somewhere in between the quiet tranquility of the Midstate Rivers and the drama of the Mohawk.

You may, as I did, eye the map and wonder if this trip could be continued down the Hudson to New York. There is no doubt that the scenic banks and lovely old towns are wonderful. But after a three day attempt, here is why I would not try it again. There is a long dreary stretch through the bulwarks and docks of the Port of Albany. If you had to beach your boat, you would be out of luck. In fact this section is very unsafe for that reason. I feel I

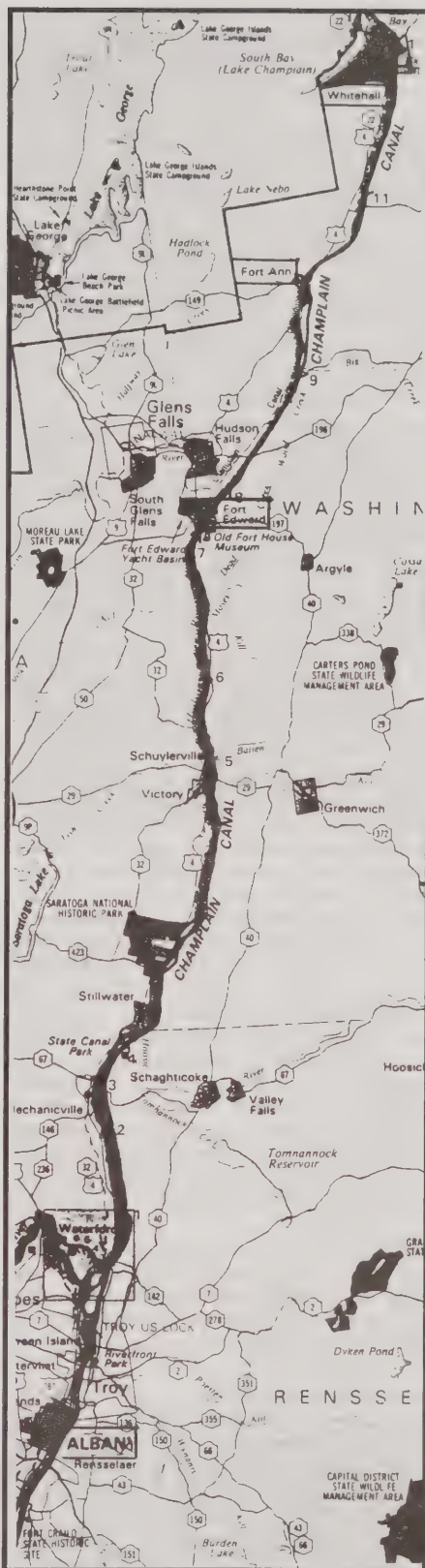
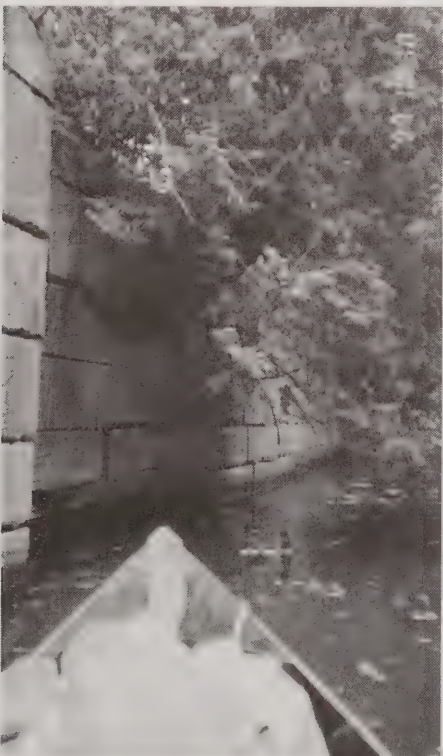
was lucky to just make it through by nightfall and camp in a small patch of woods in the middle of a twenty four hour large truck depot!

Once you are through the Albany area you encounter the monster power boats, really big ones, who could care less about courtesy or your safety. Maybe I exaggerate, but I think some of those wakes were three or four feet high

The last obstacle is strong tides, against which I could not row. Maybe if you had the time to wait for each daylight six hour favorable current it would work. But I think it would be slow going.



Gorgeous Carpenter Gothic church (above) and lock ruins (below) in Fort Ann.



Small Boat Travel Elsewhere On The Erie Canal

From central New York to the Niagara River, the Erie is a pleasant line canal, a sort of nice watery highway with lovely nineteenth century towns about every seven miles. My family and I traveled this stretch by houseboat, confirming my opinion that a larger cruising vessel is the best way to see the Western Erie.

What about small boat travel on the lakes? On Seneca and Cayuga Lakes as well as Lake Champlain, I would not discourage small boat travel for others but would not do it myself. Lakes can be uncomfortable or dangerous. They seem to me more out of scale for a small muscle-powered boat than the Canal channel. Use of the shores is often restricted by uninterrupted private property. And compared to the constant change and interest of the Canal channels, big lakes to me seem boring when I am in a small boat.

Oneida Lake, which forms a sort of connecting aneurism for the main Canal at midstate, is a very dangerous lake and to me not particularly scenic. For your safety, I recommend staying off this lake. If you have to travel it, I would do so along the sheltered shore, depending on the predicted wind direction. At its eastern end at Sylvan Beach, the lake shallows and breaking waves are very dangerous in wind conditions. From either shore, I would not turn north or south toward the Canal entry, thereby exposing my beam to the waves, unless it was very calm.

Onondaga Lake, which leads to the Syracuse Terminal, is an extremely polluted lake and not very scenic. I have not visited the Syracuse Terminal in recent years so I cannot discuss it knowledgeably. However, it is quite remote from the downtown, the University or other points of interest. Syracuse is my home town and I wish I could be more positive. I will be happy to be shown where I am wrong.

The canal at Little Falls.



Squam Lake at last! For decades, I had known little about New Hampshire's second largest lake except that it was a private preserve of the wealthy and the film setting of "On Golden Pond". I had always had the false impression that public access was virtually closed. This myth was finally dispelled when I arrived there on Sunday, October 3, 1999, for a day's kayaking with guide Bill Zeller and three other guests. Bill had made advance arrangements for our outing at the office of the Squam Lakes Association (SLA) lodge overlooking Pipers Cove. What I found was arguably the best lake kayaking in New Hampshire, a magnificent expanse of water, islands, coves, and shoreline ringed with mountains.

We all had our own reasons for coming here. Bill himself had retired four months earlier from an elementary school principalship; he had celebrated his freedom with a summer canoeing trip to the Barrens, Northwest Territories, Canada. He and his wife were now devoting all their time to their canoe/kayak store and leading trips, "almost more than we can handle," Bill confided.

Ken and Diane, a married couple, had moved from Texas to New Hampshire the year before. After purchasing two kits, they had painstakingly constructed, from plans to finished products, identical kayaks. They had only recently applied the final varnishing on the hulls, giving the wood grain a handsome tan-brown hue, and now they were ready to christen the kayaks in the lake. Looking out from the dock, they exclaimed, "Texas has nothing like this."

Giorgio, a middle-aged, very fit fellow, craved exercise away from the tensions and demands of the business world. As a freelance writer and librarian from Portsmouth, I was anxious to liberate myself from my desk and its mounds of paper. Since the season was coming to a close, we all savored the chance of embarking on one last paddle before stashing away our kayaks for the winter.

As we assembled, we avoided all the typical small talk of new acquaintances; our occupations, New Hampshire property taxes, or any standing-on-the-street-corner exchanges of conversation. All that had little relevance here, the only worthwhile topics being kayaks, canoes, past trips, the weather above, and the waves before us.

At 9:15am we launched our expedition, pushing off from the beach at the SLA dock. Despite a slight chill in the fall air, we warmed up quickly with each forward stroke. Under a sky streaked blue and gray, clearing as the day progressed, we paddled beyond the shelter of Piper's Cove. Across open water in the distance was Point Finisterre (Land's End), a promontory affording the nearest land access. The far shoreline, indeed, the lake's entire circumference, was forested to the water's edge with pine, broken occasionally by a flaming red maple. To minimize risk, we bunched together.

Then came the full blast of the wind, slamming us broadside from the west. As my kayak sliced into the waves, I felt the water spank the hull, with spray splashing on the bow deck and a few drops even striking my face. Beads of water landed on the deck and rolled over the sides, a few becoming stationary as the kayak momentarily stabilized. Whitecaps only added to the excitement of the bucking ride, rough enough to present a challenge but not enough to pose any real danger.

Autumn Kayaking "On Golden Pond" (Squam Lake, NH)

By Richard E. Winslow III

As I dug in hard with my paddle, my mind frequently flashed back to people I had met on earlier canoeing and kayaking expeditions in far-flung parts of North America. How I wished they could be here today on Squam Lake, yet I sensed their spirits paddling alongside in phantom kayaks on this glorious lake.

My nature-writing friends ought to have been present today, too. Many of them gathered annually on retreat to read their work, discuss their projects, and sketch the beauties of nature, all as a cerebral and spiritual exercise. How much more elation they would feel experiencing nature on an actual outing with open pores and adrenaline racing through their veins. Writing and reading seemed so tame compared to the raw reality before me at this moment.

As we rounded Point Finisterre, another party headed toward us from Livermore Cove. We met up in calmer, more protected waters. Bill hailed the party's leader, Brad Washburn, grandson of the legendary mountaineer/photographer/cartographer. When young Brad bought his canoe at Bill's shop, the two became friends, and they have often met by chance on the waters of this lake. For years, I had seen the wiry grandfather as one of the regulars on the mountaineering lecture circuit, and I vaguely recalled that the Washburns owned a camp on Squam Lake. Along with his well-received, accurate-to-the-last-contour-line maps of Mounts McKinley and Everest, indispensable items on any expeditions to those areas, Washburn in 1989 had produced "A Chart of Squam Lake," jointly sponsored by the Squam Lakes Association and Boston's Museum of Science, where the veteran mountaineer had served as director for years. Under bungee cords on his bow deck, just in front of the cockpit, Bill had strapped Washburn's laminated map for instant referral.

We then turned due east to aim for a slot between two islands a few miles away. Both Moon Island (where we planned to have lunch) and Bowman Island are owned by the Squam Lakes Association and are available for camp-

ing, hiking, swimming, and other recreational uses. The wind, after being an adversary, now became our friend, pushing us in perfect alignment toward our destination. The crest of each wave lifted our kayaks, giving us a free ride on the way down as it dipped down and flattened out in a trough, almost as if the lake were rhythmically breathing in and out.

In half an hour we entered the channel between the two islands and paddled into a protected cove of Moon Island. A dock, awaiting removal for the winter, marked our landing site. A sand beach looked as though it would be inviting for a summer swim, but certainly not now. We landed, stretched, walked, and reached for our lunches and canteens.

As we downed our sandwiches, Bill related a few details of his summer trip to the Barrens: "We didn't meet another person during the month-long expedition. We landed in MacKay Lake, paddled the Lockhart River to Aylmer, portaged over to the Back. We went down the Back to an unnamed river and went up it for sixty miles to get to Nose Lake, the headwaters of the Mara River. We paddled down the Mara to the Arctic Circle; there the Mara meets the Burnside which we followed to Bathurst Inlet. While waiting a day or so for our bush flight back to Yellowknife, we talked to the seventy-three-year-old Inuit matriarch of the village. Most of the twenty-seven natives who live there are her descendants. During the winter she goes out alone on her snowmobile on hunting trips." Bill described her vividly as a larger-than-life character still exerting considerable influence over her extended family.

Presently a Squam Lake safety patrol boat motored over. "It's quite windy out there," warned a young officer in uniform. "I just met up with another group and they are heading for the mainland to get out of the wind and waves." Bill explained that our strategy was to hug the shorelines of various islands, and, if need be, we would turn back early.

As we waited for the wind to let up, Bill offered to evaluate one of Ken and Diane's homebuilt kayaks. Paddling off on a mini-shakedown cruise, Bill put the kayak through its paces, including extreme leans on each side, shifting his weight to tip the cockpit gunwales within an inch or two of the water's surface. "You have an excellent boat," he announced. "It's very stable and handles well."

When I inquired, Ken explained that the kit company offered a variety of measured materials, dimensions, and kayak plans to ac-

Diane in her self-built wooden kayak draws near Moon Island.



commodate different-size people. A longer, larger kayak designed for a six-foot, four-inch person weighing 220 pounds obviously offered more of a tailor-made fit than one constructed for a person five feet six inches and a hundred pounds lighter.

Our pause while watching Bill's demonstration was just what we needed. The winds had slacked off so we could resume our journey. "How would you like to see the camp where *On Golden Pond* was filmed?" asked Bill. "It's down at the narrows at the far end of Great Island." We had all seen the movie, so off we went.

Taking the channel between Moon and Bowman Islands, Bill led out to pick up the favorable tailwind. The many islands and points of land in this middle section of the lake diminished the turbulence and power of the wind and the waves, so paddling was easy. As I rounded Bowman Island and glanced to the northeast, I noticed what looked like a familiar landmark. I called to Bill, who confirmed it was the distinctive horn of Mount Chocorua, with shafts of light filtering down on its summit cone. Over the years, I had climbed that mountain many times, indeed, from every trailhead around its base. Today it was thrilling to view it from my cockpit seat, an entirely new vantage point.

As we followed the Great Island shoreline (mercifully devoid of camp development) to its southern end, the island and the mainland pinched at the far end to create Great Island Narrows. Black-and-red-topped buoys marked the channel in this shallow slot littered with boulders and submerged ledges.

Bill signaled to us to gather round him. Wanting to avoid disturbing any occupants of the camp, he told us in a whisper what we should look for upon approaching the site. First we saw a gazebo in a pine grove. Then, continuing around the point, we spotted Thayer Cottage and a boathouse set back in Purgatory Cove: Shangri-la on a New Hampshire lake. Once unknown and secluded, this camp has become world-famous since the filming of "*On Golden Pond*" here in 1981; film buffs make pilgrimages to this shrine. It is indeed ironic that the owners, once tucked away in their privacy and solitude, are now besieged by sightseeing tourist boats whose captains hover offshore and gush into loudspeakers about the joys of living on "*Golden Pond*." I suppose I am no different from the rest, since I succumbed to snapping a few pictures. The site has become a public place, even to the point of appearing on postcards.

Our gawking finished, we resumed our partial circumnavigation of Great Island. To make a game of honing our skills, Bill suggested we take turns playing follow-the-leader along the shore, ducking under limbs, skirting blowdowns, and zigzagging around boulders. The closer we brushed by an obstacle, the better the others appreciated it. Any attempt to cut across a little cove or to avoid an unmanageable obstacle would have produced an instant frown and a call to conform to the rules. Needless to say, none of us flaunted the rules. Despite close quarters at times, we never got hung up and we managed to avoid the menacing rocks that appeared at the last second, an inch or two above the water.

Halfway along the southern shore of the island, Bill alerted us to another challenge, a labyrinth of broken remnants of a giant pine tree, victim of the great New England ice storm



Navigation in Great Island Narrows pits kayaker against boulders and submerged ledges.



The hulk of Great Tree invites exploration.



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of January 1998. We paddled into this tunnel, under a canopy of the snapped trunk and sprawled-over branches. It was semi-dark inside as we hastened toward the safety and sunlight of an exit beyond. We felt rather like kids exploring a watery version of Tom Sawyer's Cave. Within a few years, perhaps as soon as the next winter, the accumulation of ice and snow, coupled with the spring breakup, would collapse this hulk, and the wind would blow away the debris as driftwood.

Bill next told us we were approaching the narrowest crossing to reach the mainland. Gliding out into more open water, we suddenly felt the wind return. The late-morning tailwind had become the afternoon headwind, once our friend, now our foe.

Always planning ahead in the event of an emergency, Bill aimed our flotilla for a house on the mainland shore. "A friend lives there," he said, "and has given me permission to use it if necessary." Thus, if anyone in our party needed help, we could land at the dock and enter the camp for shelter, blankets, food, or a phone call to the outside world.

As we began our dash, we spotted an excursion boat. The chugging vessel carried a full complement of passengers, shaded by a flat roof, with its propellers churning up a creamy wake in the blue water. The captain evidently was en route to Thayer Cottage, a standard destination of these tours. Along with speedboats we had seen earlier, the excursion boat had a perfect right to be there, as Squam Lake is not the exclusive preserve of the kayaker and the canoeist. Nevertheless, we paddlers felt a slight twinge of resentment as we encountered this noisy commercial vessel on the lake. On a positive note, though, we saw no PWCs on the lake, and I hope there is an ordinance banning them.

The mainland shoreline was developed with camps, most of them built in an earlier era, perhaps now under second or third generation ownership. Many of these luxurious camps, actually, million-dollar-plus year-round homes and lodges would be a more accurate description, looked empty at this time of year. Each featured an elaborate dock, a boathouse with two or three berths, a terrace with deck chairs, a glassed-in porch and living room facing the water, and a flagpole, with one or two flying the American flag, indicating someone was still in residence.

By 4 P.M., as the lowering sun bathed our faces with golden light, we had completed our circuit back to Piper's Cove. Bill, inspired to

demonstrate the eskimo roll, twisted his paddle in coordination with his hips, righted his kayak, and shook his head vigorously to shed the cold water from his face. Then he asked for a brave volunteer. Ken came forth, dumped his kayak, and with Bill's coaching performed a two-person rescue procedure.

Before the late-day chill began to set in, we headed back to the Squam Lakes Association dock. Our expedition had been an exhilarating finale to the paddling season, kayaking at its finest. As Bill had mentioned on several occasions during the day, the lake has many pristine preserves and forests, especially in its eastern section, where we had not ventured. Squam Lake is not a "been there, done that" type of place, and we mentally reserved those areas for another trip.

No great trip ever ends easily. Reluctant to leave, Giorgio and I lingered, strolling around the SLA clubhouse, picking up pamphlets and flyers, and viewing the splendid artwork and photographs of the region on the meeting-room walls. A friendly woman in the gift shop answered our questions. Brad Washburn's map of the lake was in stock, on plain or laminated paper. The map was color-coded; forest green for SLA land holdings, lighter green for private property, red for buoy markers, and light blue for water. Giorgio and I both opted to purchase the laminated version. These were no mere trip souvenirs: We knew they would be useful for future explorations of Squam Lake.

On the same day, outdoors people the world over were climbing Mont Blanc, hunting caribou in the Arctic, riding horseback on the Argentine pampas, diving off Australia's Great Barrier Reef, biking over Colorado mountain passes, and even trekking in Nepal in search of the Abominable Snowman. I have no doubt these other seekers had found, regardless of the risk, time, and expense involved, their own sense of satisfaction. None in our party, however, felt the slightest desire to be anywhere else, to join up with anyone else, or to do anything else. Our day could not have been duplicated. Kayaking on Squam Lake easily surpassed whatever the others might have been experiencing; each of us was completely content to be on Golden Pond.

For information, reservations, and recreational opportunities on Squam Lake, contact: Squam Lakes Association, P.O. Box 204, Holderness, NH 03245, Tel. (603) 968-7336, email: squamla@cyberportal.net, www.squamlakes.org

Diane Glances at a Squam Lake camp boathouse, with home in rear.



Canoeing the Ramapo

Lynn and I drove to Oakland, New Jersey, on a sunny, pleasant Sunday morning. We paid our rental fee and boarded a van with several other couples. The van pulled a trailer loaded with aluminum canoes. We rode north to Suffern, New York, where we launched the canoes on the Ramapo River. We would float with the current down the river back to Oakland. While we were putting in, I noticed some of our fellow travelers lashing their coolers, radios, and gear into the canoes. Some used duct tape. This seemed a bit excessive to me. We were told there were no rapids or rough water of any sort.

There were some half-submerged shopping carts and tires near Route 17, but as we floated slowly southward the shores were clean and the scenery pretty. This part of the river is wide and shallow. The current runs slowly. A few of the canoeists ahead of us had pulled their boats up on a little sandy beach. They must be stopping to picnic, I presumed. The river flowed into a narrow channel next to the beach. A fallen tree trunk arched over the entrance, leaving just enough headroom for us to pass under. We went through the arch and the canoe was quickly and solidly pinned into the curve of the bank. The entire flow of the river was going through this narrow spot so rapidly that we couldn't budge. Shortly waves splashed over our rail and filled the canoe. We sat upright, amazed and wet as our lunch, jackets, and my hat floated away on the flood. The canoe rolled and we were in the water. Luckily, one of the paddlers who had beached his boat came to our rescue, and I do mean rescue. He was able to pull our bow across the stream and onto the opposite bank. The water was too deep to walk and too fast to swim. We held onto the sides of the boat and our hero pulled us ashore. Whoever you are, wherever you are, THANK YOU! I shrink to half an inch tall when I remember that experience. I recently read in the county paper that a woman drowned in that same spot.

The rest of our journey was pleasant and peaceful. The river calmly passes through bucolic vistas and tree-shaded stretches. We carried the canoe past a dam or two and stopped at one point to explore a wooded bank. It was there that Lynn suffered a spider bite.

Future expeditions will be limited to saltier waters.

Windsurfing

Mr. Macho does it again. Lynn and I spent a vacation near Sag Harbor, Long Island. We happened upon a place where they rented those newfangled windsurfers. It was a nice day with a fair breeze, so I decided to try it. The young man there asked me if I'd had any experience and urged me to take a lesson or two before going out alone. I didn't think I needed any lessons. Need I say more?

The wind was blowing straight away from the beach. I hopped on the board, pulled up the sail and off I went...and went. I decided to turn back and tried to tack back to the beach. Splash. Again. Splash. I was getting pretty exhausted and winded from the repeated effort of pulling myself back onto the board and hauling the sail out of the water and up into position. I was beginning to wonder how long it would take to drift across Long Island Sound to Connecticut. Suddenly an outboard powered inflatable came alongside. In it were Lynn and the rental guy. Lynn was afraid I'd be an-



Adventures of a New Jersey Boat Nut

Part 14

Boating from Behind the Statue of Liberty

By Steve Turi © 1998

I must down to the seas again, for
the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may
Not be denied.

John Masefield

gry that she'd yelled Mayday. She'd become concerned when I became a mere speck on the horizon. The instructor's silent grin said, "Told ya to take a lesson, nyah, nyah." I haven't been near a windsurfer since then.

The Buddhists

Lynn has known her friend Ruth Astor for many years. Ruthie has been a practicing Buddhist for nearly that long. In 1987 we went to Halifax, Nova Scotia to visit her. Halifax is a beautiful city and we did all the maritime tourist stuff, the Museum of the Atlantic, the schooner *Bluenose*, and most of the colorful waterfront. A sheltered part of the harbor is called *The Arm*. That's where many little boats play.

Ruthie introduced us to her friends Ashley and Ute Howes, members of the Buddhist community and owners of a 27' fiberglass sloop. We drove to the town of Chester where they moored it. We sailed the harbor through channels defined by huge round rocks. Pine trees grew atop the larger ones and lined the shores. The water was blue and deep.

While we were sailing, I snapped one of those lucky photographic accidents. I shot forward from the cockpit, capturing Ashley and

Ute's smiles framed by full, white sails with a background of sun-dappled blue waves and piney islands on the horizon. Before we left, I'd washed my lens without drying it properly and the remaining water had condensed inside the filter to produce a halo-like effect. Yes, I sent them a copy.

We anchored near some islands and picnicked on the stony beach. We would have liked to swim, but when we waded in to our ankles it felt like iron bands were tightening around our legs. The water was so cold that our feet were instantly numbed, and the contrast between air and sea temperatures produced this uncomfortable sensation.

An unusual boat anchored nearby. It was a 25' sloop with a gaff rig and an enormous bowsprit. Its hull was dark gray, made of steel, and the owner had built it himself.

We watched the sunset from a waterside restaurant where lobster boats and sailboats lay at their moorings and dinghies huddled around the pier.

We had a magic evening on our way home from Nova Scotia. Lynn had made reservations on the ferry across the Bay of Fundy. A little car trouble delayed us getting to the boat at Digby. We were low but didn't have time to stop for gas. We drove onto the ship as the last dock lines were cast off. The car stopped three feet from its space on the deck, its gas tank bone dry. I pushed it into place, the deckhands slipped the wheel chocks under it, and we went up on deck.

Curious harbor seals floated with their heads above the surface, watching us leave. The bow of the ship was heading directly at the huge round red-orange sun slowly dropping toward the horizon. Straight aft, the full moon was rising at the same rate reflecting from the waves of our wake. There were high, wispy clouds in the deep blue twilight, and if an artist painted that scene exactly as it appeared, no one would believe the colors. I found myself whistling the melody of *Canadian Sunset*.

When we docked at Saint Johns, the crew brought a can of gasoline to my thirsty car and off we went.

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The creeks were now so swollen from the heavy rains, and so full of drift-wood, that my usual retreat into some creek seemed cut off; so I ran under the sheltered side of "Three Mile Island," below Newburg, Indiana. The climate was daily improving, and I no longer feared an ice blockade; but a new difficulty arose. The heavy rafts of timber threatened to shut me in my camp. At dusk, all might be open water; but at break of day "a change came o'er the spirit of my dream," and heavy blockades of timber rafts made it no easy matter to escape. There were times when, shut in behind these barriers, I looked out upon the river with envious eyes at the steamboats steadily plodding up stream against the current, keeping free of the rafts by the skill of their pilots; and thoughts of the genius and perseverance of the inventors of these peculiar craft crowded my mind.

In these days of successful application of mechanical inventions, but few persons can realize the amount of distrust and opposition against which a Watts or a Fulton had to contend while forcing upon an illiberal and unappreciative public the valuable results of their busy brains and fertile genius. It is well for us who now enjoy these blessings,—the utilized ideas of a lifetime of unrequited labors,—to look back upon the epoch of history so full of gloom for the men to whom we owe so much.

At the beginning of the present century the navigation of the Ohio was limited to canoes, bateaux, scows, rafts, arks, and the rudest models of sailing-boats. The ever downward course of the strong current must be stemmed in ascending the river. Against this powerful resistance upon tortuous streams, wind, as a motor, was found to be only partially successful, and for sure and rapid transit between settlements along the banks of great waterways a most discouraging failure. Downriver journeys were easily made, but the upriver or return trip was a very slow and unsatisfactory affair, excepting to those who travelled in light canoes.

The influx of population to the fertile Ohio valley, and the settling up of the rich bottoms of the Mississippi, demanded a more expeditious system of communication. The necessities of the people called loudly for this improvement, but at the same time their prejudices and ignorance prevented them from aiding or encouraging any such plans. The hour came at length for the delivery of the people of the great West, and with it the man. Fulton, aided by Watts, offered to solve the problem by unravelling rather than by cutting the "Gordian knot." It was whispered through the wilderness that a fire-ship, called the "Clermont," built by a crazy speculator named Fulton, had started from New York, and, steaming up the Hudson, had forced itself against the current one hundred and fifty miles to Albany, in thirty-six hours. This was in September, 1807.

The fool and the fool's fire-ship became the butt of all sensible people in Europe as well as in America. Victor Hugo remarks that, "In the year 1807, when the first steamboat of Fulton, commanded by Livingston, furnished with one of Watts's engines sent from England, and manœuvred, besides her ordinary crew, by two Frenchmen only, André Michaux and another, made her first voyage from New York to Albany, it happened that she set sail on the 17th of August. The ministers took up this important fact, and in numberless chapels



Four Months In a Sneak-Box

By Nathaniel H. Bishop, 1879
(1837-1902)

Chapter 5 (continued)

The First Steamboat of the West —
Victor Hugo on the Situation —
A Freebooter's Den —
Whooping and Sand-Hill Cranes —
The *Sneakbox* Enters the Mississippi

preachers were heard calling down a malediction on the machine, and declaring that this number seventeen was no other than the total of the ten horns and seven heads of the beasts in the Apocalypse. In America they invoked against the steamboat the beast from the book of Revelation; in Europe, the reptile of the book of Genesis. The SAVANS had rejected steamboats as impossible; the PRIESTS had anathematized them as impious; SCIENCE had condemned, and RELIGION consigned them to perdition."

"In the archipelago of the British Channel islands," this learned author goes on to say, "the first steamboat which made its appearance received the name of the 'Devil Boat.' In the eyes of these worthy fishermen, once Catholics, now Calvinists, but always bigots, it seemed to be a portion of the infernal regions which had been somehow set afloat. A local preacher selected for his discourse the question of, 'Whether man has the right to make fire and water work together when God had divided them.' (Gen. ch. i. v.4.) No; this beast composed of iron and fire did not resemble leviathan! Was it not an attempt to bring chaos again into the universe?"

So much for young America, and so much for old mother England! Now listen, men and women of to-day, to the wisdom of France—scientific France. "A mad notion, a gross delusion, an absurdity!" Such was the verdict of the Academy of Sciences when consulted by Napoleon on the subject of steamboats early in the present century.

It seems scarcely credible now that all this transpired in the days of our fathers, not so very long ago. Time is a great leveller. Education of the head as well as of the heart has liberalized the pulpit, and the man of theoretical science to-day would not dare to stake his reputation by denying any apparently well-

established theory, while the inventors of telephones, perpetual-motion motors, &c., are gladly hailed as leaders in the march of progress so dear to every American heart. The pulpit is now on the side of honest science, and the savant teaches great truths, while the public mind is being educated to receive and utilize the heretofore concealed or undeveloped mysteries of a wise and generous Creator, who has taught his children that they must labor in order to possess.

The Clermont was the pioneer steamer of the Hudson River, and its trial trip was made in 1807. The first steamboat which descended the Ohio and Mississippi rivers was christened the New Orleans." It was designed and built by Mr. N.J. Roosevelt, and commenced its voyage from Pittsburgh in September, 1811. The bold proprietor of this enterprise, with his wife, Mrs. Lydia M. Roosevelt, accompanied the captain, engineer, pilot, six hands, two female servants, a man waiter, a cook, and a large Newfoundland dog, to the end of the voyage. The friends of this lady—the first woman who descended the great rivers of the West in a steamboat—used every argument they could offer to dissuade her from undertaking what was considered a dangerous experiment, an absolute folly. The good wife, however, clung to her husband, and accepted the risks, preferring to be drowned or blown up, as her friends predicted, rather than to desert her better-half in his hour of trial. A few weeks would decide his success or failure, and she would be at his side to condole or rejoice with him, as the case might be.

The citizens of Pittsburgh gathered upon the banks of the Monongahela to witness the inception of the enterprise which was to change the whole destiny of the West. One can imagine the criticisms flung at the departing steamer as she left her moorings and boldly faced her fate. As the curious craft was borne along the current of the river, the Indians attempted to approach her, bent upon hostile attempts, and once a party of them pursued the boat in hot chase, but their endurance was not equal to that of steam. These children of the forest gazed upon the snorting, fire-breathing monster with undisguised awe, and called it "Penelore"—the fire-canoe. They imagined it to have close relationship with the comet that they believed had produced the earthquakes of that year. The voyage of the "New Orleans" was a romantic reality in two ways. The wonderful experiment was proved a success, and its originator won his laurel wreath; while the bold captain of the fire-ship, falling in love with one of the chambermaids, won a wife.

The river's travel now became somewhat monotonous. I had reached a low country, heavily wooded in places, and was entering the great prairie region of Illinois. Having left my island camp by starlight on Tuesday morning, and having rowed steadily all day until dusk, I passed the wild-looking mouth of the Wabash River, and went into camp behind an island, logging with pleasure my day's run at sixty-seven miles. I was now only one hundred and forty-two miles from the mouth of the Ohio, and with the rising and rapidly increasing current there were only a few hours' travel between me and the Mississippi.

Wednesday morning, December 29th, I discovered that the river had risen two feet during the night, and the stump of the tree to which I had moored my boat was submerged. The

river was wide and the banks covered with heavy forests, with clearings here and there, which afforded attractive vistas of prairies in the background. I passed a bold, stratified crag, covered with a little growth of cedars. These adventurous trees, growing out of the crevices of the rock, formed a picturesque covering for its rough surface. A cavern, about thirty feet in width, penetrated a short distance into the rock. This natural curiosity bore the name of "Cave-in-Rock," and was, in 1801, the rendezvous of a band of outlaws, who lived by plundering the boats going up and down the river, oftentimes adding the crime of murder to their other misdeeds. Just below the cliff nestled a little village also called "Cave-in-Rock."

Wild birds flew about me on all sides, and had I cared to linger I might have had a good bag of game. This was not, however, a gunning cruise, and the temptation was set aside as inconsistent with the systematic pulling which alone would take me to my goal. The birds were left for my quondam friends of the shanty-boat, they being the happy possessors of more TIME than they could well handle, and the killing of it the aim of their existence.

The soft shores of alluvium were constantly caving and falling into the river, bringing down tons of earth and tall forest-trees. The latter, after freeing their roots of the soil, would be swept out into the stream as contributions to the great floating raft of drift-wood, a large portion of which was destined to a long voyage, for much of this floating forest is carried into the Gulf of Mexico, and travels over many hundreds of miles of salt water, until it is washed up on to the strands of the isles of the sea or the beaches of the continent.

Having tied up for the night to a low bank, with no thought of danger, it was startling, to say the least, to have an avalanche of earth from the bank above deposit itself upon my boat, so effectually sealing down my hatch-cover that it seemed at first impossible to break from my prison. After repeated trials I succeeded in dislodging the mass, and, thankful to escape premature interment, at once pushed off in search of a better camp.

A creek soon appeared, but its entrance was barred by a large tree which had fallen across its mouth. My heavy hatchet now proved a friend in need, and putting my boat close to the tree, I went systematically to work, and soon cut out a section five feet in length. Entering through this gateway, my labors were rewarded by finding upon the bank some dry fence-rails, with which a rude kitchen was soon constructed to protect me from the wind while preparing my meal. The unusual luxury of a fire brightened the weird scene, and the flames shot upward, cheering the lone voyager and frightening the owls and coons from their accustomed lairs. The strong current had been of great assistance, for that night my log registered sixty-two miles for the day's row.

Leaving the creek the next morning by starlight, I passed large flocks of geese and ducks, while Whooping-cranes (*Grus Americanus*) and Sand-hill cranes (*Grus Canadensis*), in little flocks, dotted the grassy prairies, or flew from one swamp to another, filling the air with their startling cries. Both these species are found associated in flocks upon the cultivated prairie farms, where they pillage the grain and vegetable fields of the farmer. Their habits are somewhat similar,

though the whooping-crane is the most wary of the two. The adult Whooping-cranes are white, the younger birds of a brownish color. This species is larger than the Sand-hill Crane, the latter having a total length of from forty to forty-two inches. The Sand-hill species may be distinguished from the Whooping-crane by its slate-blue color. The cackling, whooping, and screaming voices of an assembled multitude of these birds cannot be described. They can be heard for miles upon the open plains.

These birds are found in Florida and along the Gulf coast as well as over large areas of the northern states. They feed upon soft roots, which they excavate from the swamps, and upon bugs and reptiles of all kinds. It requires the most cautious stalking on the part of the hunter to get within gunshot of them, and when so approached the Whooping-crane is usually the first of the two species which takes to the wing. The social customs of these birds are most entertaining to the observer who may lie hidden in the grass and watch them through a glass. Their tall, angular figures, made up of so much wing, leg, neck, and bill, counterpoised by so little body, incline the spectator to look upon them as ornithological caricatures. After balancing himself upon one foot for an hour, with the other drawn up close to his scanty robe of feathers, and his head poised in a most contemplative attitude, one of these queer birds will suddenly turn a somersault, and, returning to his previous posture, continue his cogitations as though nothing had interrupted his reflections. With wings spread, they slowly winnow the air, rising or hopping from the ground a few feet at a time, then whirling in circles upon their toes, as though going through the mazes of a dance.

Their most popular diversion seems to be the game of leap-frog, and their long legs being specially adapted to this sport, they achieve a wonderful success. One of the birds quietly assumes a squatting position upon the ground, when his sportive companions hop in turn over his expectant head. They then pirouette, turn somersaults, and go through various exercises with the skill of gymnasts. Their sportive proclivities seem to have no bounds; and being true humorists, they preserve through their gambols a ridiculously sedate appearance. Popular accounts of the nidification of these birds are frequently untrue. We are told that they build their cone-shaped nests of mud, sticks, and grass in shallow water, in colonies, and that their nests, BEING PLACED ON RAFTS of buoyant material, float about in the bayous, and are propelled and guided at the will of the sitting bird by the use of her long legs and feet as oars. The position of the bird upon the nest is also ludicrously depicted. It is described as sitting astride the nest, with the toes touching the ground; and to add still more comicality to the picture, it is asserted that the limbs are often thrust out horizontally behind the bird. The results of close observations prove that these accounts are in keeping with many others related by parlor naturalists. The cranes sit upon their nests like other birds, with their feet drawn up close to the body.

The mound-shaped nests are built of sticks, grass, and mud, and usually placed in a shallow pond or partially submerged swamp, while at times a grassy hassock furnishes the foundation of the structure. In the saucer-shaped top of the nest two eggs are deposited, upon which the bird sits most assiduously, having no time at this season for aquatic

amusements, such as paddling about with her nest.

The young birds are most hilarious babies, for they inherit the social qualities of their parents, and are ready to play or fight with each other before they are fairly out of the nest. A close observer of their habits writes from the prairies of Indiana: "When the young get a little strength they attack each other with great fury, and can only be made to desist by the parent bird separating them, and taking one under its fostering care, and holding them at a respectable distance until they reach crane-hood, when they seem to make up in joyous hilarity for the quarrelsome proclivities of youth."

Like geese and ducks, cranes winter in one locality so long as the ponds are open, but the first cold snap that freezes their swamp drives them two or three degrees further south. From this migration they soon return to their old haunts, the first thawing of the ice being the signal.

The mouths of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers were passed, and the Ohio, widening in places until it seemed like a lake, assumed a new grandeur as it approached the Mississippi. Three miles below Wilkinsonville, but on the Kentucky side, I stole into a dark creek and rested until the next morning, Friday, December 31st, which was to be my last day on the Ohio River.

I entered a long reach in the river soon after nine o'clock on Friday morning, and could plainly see the town of Cairo, resting upon the flat prairies in the distance. The now yellow, muddy current of the Ohio rolled along the great railroad dike, which had cost one million dollars to erect, and formed a barrier strong enough to resist the rushing waters of the freshets. Across the southern apex of this prairie city could be seen the "Father of Waters," its wide surface bounded on the west by the wilderness. A few moments more, and my little craft was whirled into its rapid, eddying current; and with the boat's prow now pointed southward, I commenced, as it were, a life of new experiences as I descended the great river, where each day I was to feel the genial influences of a warmer climate.

The thought of entering warm and sunny regions was, indeed, welcome to a man who had forced his way through rafts of ice, under cloudy skies, through a smoky atmosphere, and had partaken of food of the same chilling temperature for so many days. This prospect of a genial clime, with the more comfortable camping and rowing it was sure to bring, gave new vigor to my arms, daily growing stronger with their task, and each long, steady pull TOLD as it swept me down the river.

The faithful sneak-box had carried me more than a thousand miles since I entered her at Pittsburgh. This, of course, includes the various detours made in searching for camping-grounds, frequent crossings of the wide river to avoid drift stuff; &c. The descent of the Ohio had occupied about twenty-nine days, but many hours had been lost by storms keeping me in camp, and other unavoidable delays. As an offset to these stoppages, it must be remembered that the current, increased by freshets, was with me, and to it, as much as to the industrious arms of the rower, must be given the credit for the long route gone over in so short a time, by so small a boat.

(To Be Continued)



We eight timid souls fled to the water to escape reality.



The author indulging in 18lbs of freedom, his Compass Streamer canoe.

Pre-Christmas Paddle On the Wood River

By Joel Flather

Wood River, Exeter, Rhode Island, southern New England, east of the Mississippi. December 18th, the week before Christmas dawned bright, clear and cold! Fortunately for the intrepid band of bundled paddlers the wind was from the northwest at about 8 knots so it essentially gently pushed us from behind in the direction we were going, south towards the Atlantic Ocean. As the cold damp realization that Xmas was but seven days hence set in we eight timid souls fled to the water to escape reality.

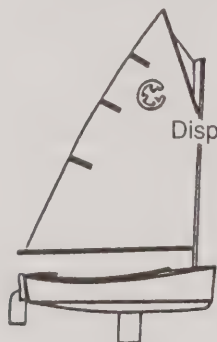
The gaggle, pod, or fleet of Compass Sweet Lassie canoes launched at the DEM deer check-in station on Rte 165 just over the small Wood River Bridge. For those unfamiliar with Rhode Island, we do have many beautiful rivers, ponds, streams and salt water estuaries albeit in a proportion to the size of the state. This is where "wee boats", 18lbs of freedom, come into play.

Actually, the wee fleet was made up of Old Town, Hornbeck, and Compass, all faithful reproductions of the famous J.H. Rushton Wee Lassie type canoe built for the semi-crazed George Washington Sears, alias Nessmuck in the 1890s. Nessmuck fled from his wife and five children in Pennsylvania each summer for a few years and solo paddled the Fulton Chain of Lakes in the Adirondacks in New York state. Hmmm. Maybe he wasn't so crazy after all.

Our trip of five miles was uneventful unless you count the sighting of a horned owl, an otter, many mallards, black ducks, and wood ducks, and two, up close and personal, Great Blue heron as eventful. The outcome of our paddle was that we realized that paddling can be a winter sport, though sunglasses are mandatory in winter as the sun is so low on the horizon in our neck of the woods; and that two unsuspecting people were going to receive new Compass Canoes for Christmas.

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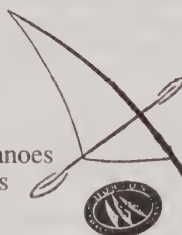
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The name Vic Smeed will be familiar to many people, (particularly in Britain) who have been associated with model boats of both the power and sailboat kind. Smeed's articles and his model boat designs in the UK magazine *Model Boats*, have inspired hundreds if not thousands towards getting involved in the building and sailing of such models.

Even in my homeland, Guyana, I grew up on a diet of Smeed, reading the magazine and quietly hailing him as the king of the model boat world, a name regularly in print that inspired confidence in those with sparks of interest in the hobby perhaps not yet ignited.

What is quite amazing is the fact that Smeed's 34" Starlet designed in 1966 for either RC or freesail, today some thirty-four years later is enjoying a renaissance in certain areas despite the availability of plans for so many modern and much sleeker looking classic sailing models. It is perhaps more understandable that those in England have now returned to embrace this design, after all, as Smeed being an Englishman, they would have a natural desire and interest in doing so.

But what about New Zealand and Australia, those lands so distant from Britain, where today, particularly in the afore-mentioned, the Starlet is enjoying a steady return to popularity? In Auckland there are currently about fifteen sailing, mainly windled rather than seriously raced, and several are currently being built in Australia.

The 1966 Starlet was produced for the "Boating for Beginners" series in *Model Boats* that year, and designed at a time when the thought of converting, say an "A" Class model yacht to radio though not a daunting one for those used to yachting (and with storage facilities near to sailing water), was however a bit of a turn-off to possible newcomers attracted to this new radio control because of the sheer size of an "A". What was needed was a smaller boat that could take radio, and was easy to carry around.

The Model Yachting Association was at that time prepared to consider proposals for the adoption of a new official class, if a sufficient number of boats of the proposed class were already sailing, and Smeed, working on about 450 to 500 square inches of sail area, and a hull length of approx 30 inches or less on the waterline, thus designed the Starlet.

In designing the boat, Smeed's aim was for a simple but efficient model giving an interesting performance. The design displacement is 10.7lbs, making the finished boat easy to handle insofar as length overall and weight are concerned. It fits easily into a small family car, is easily rigged, and can be carried fully rigged in any car with a drop down rear seat that open the interior into the boot or trunk.

I have to say that my own gaff-rigged Starlet, *Bells and Whistles*, simply astounds me with its performance. It just sails so damn well for a design of such vintage, and takes a strong breeze in its stride without sign of stress or fuss. What's more, it turns heads and attracts attention. Though you would not call it a "pretty" boat, it certainly is not ugly and has a certain grace about it.

Equally suitable for free-sailing (naturally with an increase in the lead weight) the boat upon initial introduction soon shot into prominence. Its simplicity and speed of construction, and having a hard chine hull made it an obvious choice and it was to form the basis for many an introduction to RC model

The Vic Smeed "Starlet"

Mark Steele Looks at an Ideal Design for an
Intro to RC Model Yachting



Aucklander Warren Hastings' Starlet.

yacht sailing, particularly in gravel pits and small to medium sized ponds in Britain. Today there are several groups that race the boat in UK, including the Whitton Modellers who have a larger fleet and who have adopted it as

their club boat which they race under minimal rules.

Vic Smeed is still around and having made contact with him we remain in touch. He was editor of *Model Maker* magazine in the UK for many years, and built his first yacht in 1937.

There may be the odd Smeed Starlet in the US as I am aware of some effort by a US company to introduce it there many years ago, but for anyone wanting a simple to construct, easily transportable, better than average in performance model sailboat in which to fit radio control, this design gets my vote without a shadow of a doubt.

The best news for anyone in the USA that may find their spark of enthusiasm ignited by my suggestion is that the plan is still available. It costs five UK pounds fifty pence, has the plan code of MM1048, postage and packing from the UK to the USA would be a further three pounds, and the best news of all is that there is an American Plan Stockist, Wise Owl Worldwide Publications, 1926 S. Pacific Coast Hwy, Suite 204, Redondo Beach, CA 90277.

If you prefer to deal direct with the UK, write to Nexus Plans Service, Nexus Media Ltd, Nexus House, Azalea Dr., Swanley, Kent BR8 8HU, United Kingdom.

Below: Roy Lake's Bermudan rigged Starlet (right) and my own gaff rigger go at it, note skippers at helms.



Our own new skiff, which was first in the water in March of '98, has had much use. Since it was built to be a family boat, not to be sold, we did some experimental stuff just to see how it would turn out. One thing is that the old tulip poplar log from which we sawed the planking had been lying on the ground since I was a child. It is still holding up just fine.

Another experiment was a continuation of years of fooling around with the shape of the bow, forefoot particularly. I already know that it is a tricky thing to get the bow shaped so that the boat neither roots into the back of a wave and causes the stem to yaw around so that the boat tries to broach and drown everybody, or dives so deep that it fails to rise when running downwind in rough water and drowns everybody.

So far, we think that rooting is caused by the failure of the boat to pass easily by a wave that it is trying to outrun. If the bow stops when it hits the back of the wave, the momentum carries the stern around and the boat yaws and broaches. We think that the bow has to either penetrate the wave or bounce over it to keep the boat going straight. A small boat which will bounce easily enough to keep from yawing will also pound real bad and has to be so butt headed that it won't go against it when it is really rough. That leaves the adjustment of the shape of the bow so that it is fine enough to penetrate, yet full enough to rise.

The bow on this skiff is the best yet. It is the best downwind boat I ever built. Though sometimes when going with a very steep, short sea (like a stiff onshore wind against a falling tide in the mouth of the river), the boat will peel a disconcertingly large section of green water out to either side, it does not yaw or ship anything but spray.

The very cutting edge of the stem ain't sharp enough. One night, I hit something that notched the sharp stem of another boat and made me shy. I started making the stem-band of planing boats from 3/8" bronze rod fitted into a groove in the hickory stem after that, but, as an experiment to try to reduce electrolysis of the engine in this boat, all the hardware is stainless steel (didn't work, engine worse than ever) and I didn't do what I had to do to weld a stainless rod to the stainless half-oval strap of the keel so the cutwater is 5/8" wide.

In some conditions of sea and wind, it peels a cute little spit of water right over the bow onto my wife. She says that when I get ready to paint the boat, I need to fix that.

It is time to paint the boat. For a long time, I have been using the excellent, Italian, two-part polyurethane varnish over the W.E.S. T. epoxy. I started with it in the late eighties because it is so hard that it resists the wear that small boats get. I found that it handles the sun better too. I decided to let the varnish go on this boat to see what was what. I need to varnish now but it is twenty months, that's pretty good for continuous use in Florida. I did not let the varnish get so bad that the Gougeon clear coating epoxy underneath has been damaged, nor do I intend to.

Another experiment I did was to leave the rails un-epoxified. Ever since Meade and Jan were youngsters I have been epoxifying our boats with excellent results. I believe that epoxy is the best wood sealer ever invented and have finally learned how to get a good job of it. With this boat, I learned that two-part

Update On The New Skiff (With the Four-Stroke Evinrude and Some Other Stuff Too)

By Robb White

polyurethane stays with epoxified wood better than it does with unepoxified wood.

Though I try not to haul much stuff in the boat on the trailer, I have some worn out varnish (don't ever think that a polyethylene gas tank won't wear a hole in something it jumps around on over the road) where the oars are tied and where the salt crystals in my britches have et the varnish off the stern seat. I found that the sign of deterioration of two-part polyurethane is when it separates from the surface. It seems to happen worse where there are places where the gloss is degraded by wear. There is no doubt that it stays on epoxy better than it does plain wood. I don't have a bad mess yet, but it is time to varnish and paint my boat.

The engine news is interesting. For one thing, there is no doubt that four stroke engines are astonishing. This 15hp Evinrude (305 cc, just like a Honda Dream) sure does get 25mpg on our skiff. The engine idles just like a motorcycle, runs just like a motorcycle, sounds just like a motorcycle, cranks just like a motorcycle. It has an updraft carburetor and likes to be pulled easily through one compression stroke to suck up a little gas into the cylinders (like an old airplane) then it will start off of six inches of rope. I just wish it had a kick starter.

One day last winter, my wife and I were fishing way down to leeward of the island, I started the engine with my usual smugness and after I pulled the rope, it didn't want to go back in the hole. This same thing had happened two or three times before, and I guess, I must have sort of helped it as a reflex. Somehow, the flywheel grabbed the slatting rope and snatched it in the hole so violently that it popped the handle off and threw it some hundred yards out into the water, broke the nylon line, and disjointed my index finger most painfully. I was able to straighten my finger back out and take the hood and recoil assembly off and crank the motor with a piece of spare line to go home.

Evinrude replaced the rope under warranty but said that there had been no other instances of the incident and so they felt that there was no reason to do anything further. What I believe happened is that I poked a bight of the line into the gap between the recoil starter assembly and the the flywheel as I returned the handle to its position. The flywheel, for some reason, has bumps cast on top of it which must have caught the line. I also believe that the specially formed spiral groove on the plastic recoil spool had failed to accomodate the line as it re-coiled and it had jammed against the housing causing the initial feeding malfunction.

The first modification I made was to replace the line with one of a smaller diameter and there have been no more failures of the thing to re-coil. My finger is still stiff, and I ain't felt comfortable with that pull handle since. My next step will be to make a skirt to fit on the recoil assembly to close the gap on top of the flywheel. I wish I had a kick starter.

I have had to replace the kill-switch twice. All of a sudden the engine will just cut off like I had pulled the safety lanyard off the kill-switch doo-dad. The first time it happened, I didn't know what the hell had. After a few experiments, I wrongly decided that the unrepairable computer ignition was at fault and my grandson and I rowed five miles back to the house. Further experiments proved that the switch was defective. Again, Evinrude replaced it. The new one lasted three months but at least I had sense enough to unplug it and go on about my business. I think I'll build me one of my own. It ain't all that a complicated a thing.

Despite the fact that I don't use copper bottom paint and have no other metal except 304-314 stainless steel on this boat, the deterioration of the foot is worse than ever. I have run OMC 9.9s and 15s (upon which the bottom of this engine is based) ever since they were invented. Except for the plastic gear-driven recoil starter, they seem to be the longest lasting and most likeable little engines (for a two-stroke). The thing we like the best though is how well the foots hold up in salt water. Corrosion (even when tilted up every possible chance) is what finally gets a continuous-use salt water outboard motor and the 9.9 OMC seemed to do better than most.

For some reason, this one is getting et up faster, might be that stainless steel on my boat, the "dearment" chart might be wrong. To continue the experiments, I could take it all off and replace it with the usual bronze or take the Evinrude off and replace it with a Honda or a Yamaha, or a tiny inboard, a converted Kubota diesel (with a kick starter?). I am getting tired of feeding \$2,000 to the sea every five or six years. The engine in my old surplus Navy Motor Whaleboat was built in 1957 but it don't like the shallow water up by my house. Does anybody know about retracting propellers on planing boats, tunnel drive, or Hickson SeaSled rig where the propeller hub is above the planing water line?

Inquiries like this in *Messing About In Boats* have been mighty productive for me. I found out about what happened to the wonderful, cute, tiny 4.4 pound Bruce anchors that way. The outfit in Texas which is the main importer for Bruce says that the mold got busted and the little anchors weren't profitable enough in the first place so they discontinued them and sold off the ones on hand to Moorings Inc. for use on the tenders for their bare-boat charter fleet in the Caribbean. I don't blame them, those little anchors will probably keep their dinghies off the rocks despite the carelessness of the ignorant crew.



Polytarp sails, or PolySails, are a simple, inexpensive solution to the problem of getting your newly constructed sailboat onto the water quickly. Unfortunately, most would-be polytarp sail makers are forced to use blue or silver-colored tarps that look more at home covering farm machinery than powering a newly launched craft nimbly across the water. With our White PolySail Kit and simple ten-step construction process, however, you can create a PolySail that is nearly indistinguishable from traditional sails. Make your sail in the morning and be on the water by afternoon, usually for under \$100.

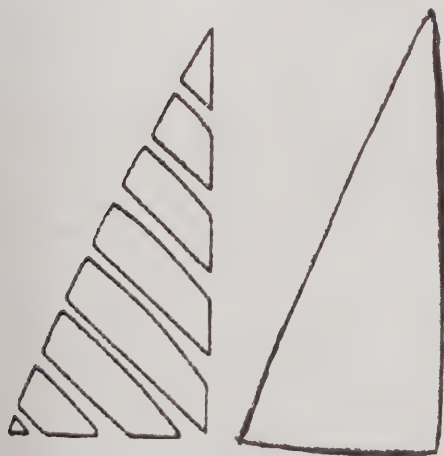
To make a white PolySail, you will need your sail plan and the following materials, space, and attitude:

A White PolySail Kit (available from me at HR Solutions, (317) 842-8106). The regular kits can include up to 555sf of white polytarp material, 108' of white or colored vinyl tape, 75' of double-faced adhesive outdoor carpet tape, a grommet kit, a utility knife, rope, a knot-tying guide, a marker, a set of instructions, and (with larger kits only) a 25' steel tape measure. These regular kits come in three sizes: 20'x 30', 20'x 20', and 10'x 20'. (For a limited time we are also offering a "bare bones" kit called a Tarp and Tape Kit that includes only the 10'x 20' tarp material, 42' of double faced carpet tape, and instructions for making a simple white PolySail).

A clean, level and open work space inside or out; stakes or large pole barn nails for stretching out the material; a long, straight flexible batten or steel measuring tape; and a strong determination to finish up and get out on the water quickly.

In sailmaking, there are two ways to create the depth of curvature needed for the sail to work. Professional sailmaking lofts create this curvature by cutting and shaping panels of cloth or synthetic material and then sewing these panels together. This process is generally labor intensive and expensive.

The second method has been in use by amateurs and expert sailmakers for centuries. With this edgcut method, the sailmaker simply cuts the edges in a curve. When the curve is straightened by a mast or the tension of a rope, shape is forced into the sail. The more curve, the more "belly" in that side of the sail. We use this simple edgcut method to construct all PolySails.



Panel Cut Sail

Edge Cut Sail

How to Make A PolySail

By Dave Gray, Principal Partner
HR Solutions-PolySails
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Our Goal: Get on the Water!

Like many small boat builders, once you get "hooked" on PolySails, you will probably build a number of experimental sails improving your technique and the appearance of your finished product each time. One kit is usually enough to construct two triangular sails.

That's enough theory for now. We are still 10 steps away from a finished sail. Let's get started!

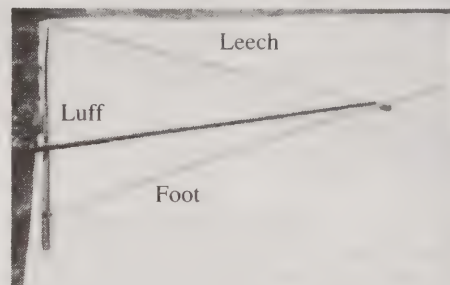
The following instructions are for creating a simple spritsail for a mast without a track, but they can easily be adapted for many types of sails or a mast with a track. The illustrations are not to scale.

Step 1, Stake Out The Material: Unfold the polytarp material and stake the corners and edges. Stretching the polytarp in the warm sun will help remove the wrinkles and provide a better surface for laying out the sail plan.



Step 2, Lay Out The Sail Plan: Begin by identifying the dimensions of your finished sail. Add about .02% in length to the dimensions to allow for tape shrinkage of edge dimensions. Very lightly mark out the dimensions of the sail on the polytarp material. Mark the luff length first (the side that is next to the mast), marking a series of dots about 5" in from the edge of the polytarp. Note that the edges of the polytarp material are not always straight. If your unstayed mast curves, this line should follow the curvature of your mast. If you have

a small, easily handled mast, lay the mast on the polytarp and mark along the inner side of the mast. If the mast is too heavy, use the measuring tape to make the line of dots. In the illustration, I have used the mast, sprit boom, batten, and tape measure to create my base lines



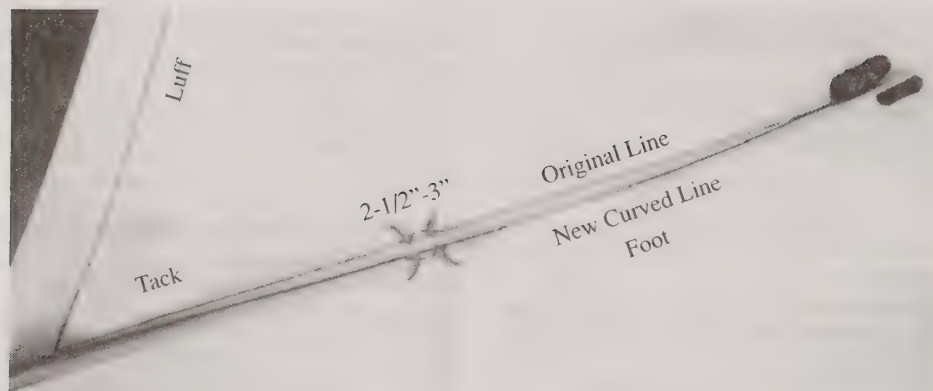
Step 3, Marking The Edge Curves:

After you have lightly marked the foot measurement, lay a batten (a long, straight, consistently flexible piece of wood or metal) or your tape measure along the line of dots you have made. To create "belly" in your sail, curve the batten or tape outward about 2-1/2" from the base line you drew in Step 2. At either end of the foot, the batten or tape should be touching the base line dots. The greatest distance between the base line dots and the new curved line dots should fall between the lower end and middle of the line as shown on the diagram. (Note: the base lines, or original lines in the diagram were computer enhanced so that they would show on the diagram. Mark all dots very lightly or the ink might show through the completed sail.

Follow the same procedure to mark the luff line curvature. However, you might want greater curvature in the luff for a cruising sail or day sail. If so, increase the distance from your base line dots to the new curved line dots to 3-1/2" to 5". Again, the greatest distance between the base line dots and new curved line dots should fall between the middle of the luff line and the lower corner or tack of the sail. For sails with a luff of over 14', increase this curvature by 1/2" for each additional 3' of luff length. Before marking the new curved line, sight along the batten or tape measure to see if you've created a "fair curve".

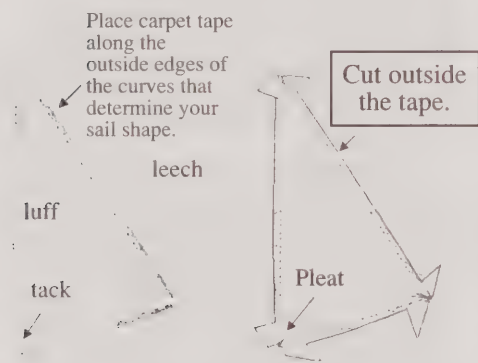
Next, mark the leech of the sail. The leech line should have very little curvature compared to the luff. A difference of 2" between the base line of dots and the curved leech line of dots is sufficient. The greatest luff distance between the two lines should be at about the middle of the leech.

After marking the outline of your sail, place double-faced carpet tape strips around the sail shape. The inner edge of the carpet tape should just touch the outside of the newly-marked curved lines. Each strip should stop about 3" from the corners. Leave the protective coating on the top side of the tape for now.



Step 4: Cutting Out The Sail Shape: Precautions: Use the outside edges of the carpet tape as a guide for cutting! Allow plenty of extra material at each corner of your sail!

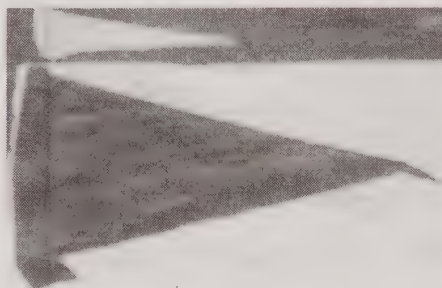
Starting from the tack, or lower corner, work your way up the luff, cutting out the sail shape. Leave at least an 8"x 8" tab at each corner. (Note: If you must have reef points for your sail, allow extra material at the reef points as well. Most novices should avoid including reef points). Notice how extra material has been allowed at each corner in cutting out the sail shape in the illustration. Create pleats in each corner to help create more belly in the sail. Tape these pleats securely.



Step 5, Taping In The Rope: Once the sail shape has been cut out, you can fold up the excess material and remove it. Make certain that you have a clean place to work, then stretch out and stake the sail through the excess material at the corners. Remove the protective covering from the top of the double-faced tape. Beginning at the tack, or lower corner, lay rope on the inner edge of the carpet tape all the way up the luff to the top corner, or head. The rope should be just to the outside of your curve line. Check to make certain the rope is stuck to the double-faced tape in a fair curve. Do not cut the rope!

Following the procedure you used to create the luff line, lay out the rope in a fair curve for the leech and foot creating a nicely curved "belly" for your sail. (Note: The leech rope can be left out or reduced in diameter if you prefer a finer edge at the leech). Make small loops in the rope at each corner except at the tack where the loose ends of the rope will meet (see the illustration). If you choose not to reinforce the corners, the loops can be folded

inward and taped down as reinforcement for corner grommets.



Step 6, (Optional Step) Reinforcing The Corners: Before the polytarp is folded over the rope and taped, each corner can be reinforced with additional material as shown. These pieces are not necessary for most sails, but can help strengthen the corners. Using the utility knife provided with the kit, cut out pieces from 1/8" thick scrap plastic, or some other waterproof, fairly rigid material, sand the edges smooth and insert. For additional protection, wrap the pieces with vinyl tape. Place these pieces inside the corners and tape the rope to them as shown. Additional reinforcement panels can be added wherever extreme stress might be placed on the sail, e.g., at reef, clew and tack points.

Smooth out all wrinkles of material along the edges of the sail. Use a hair drier if needed, but be careful not to use so much heat that the material stretches or scorches.



Step 7, Folding The Edges Over: After laying out the rope, fold the polytarp material with the carpet tape on it back over the rope and smooth the taped edges down. Because this step gives you the final shape of your sail, make certain that all curves are fair and the sail shape is what you expected before you firmly tape down the overlap. It might be necessary to cut through the taped overlap where there are curves since there is a slightly more material in the overlap. Smooth the edges toward "bumps" of excess material, then make a cut through the "bump" almost to the rope as shown. The cut will allow you to smooth the edges and avoid wrinkles in the edges of the sail. Tape at least two layers of scrap material across the corners on each side. Then fold the tabs of material at the corners over the reinforcement panels and trim off the excess material as shown. Try to leave tabs of material that can overlap the edges. Put double-faced tape on these overlapping edges and tape them down tightly.



Snipping the "bumps."

Step 8: Taping The Edges And Corners: After the rope is covered, you must decide whether you want to apply vinyl tape to the corners and edges. If you have no intention of sewing down the overlaps, you might want to reinforce the corners and edges with vinyl tape or reinforce just the corners alone. The tape alone will normally last a season or two without sewn reinforcement, but all adhesives will eventually loosen from the slippery polytarp surface.

If you decide to tape the edges, it helps to have an assistant help you with this task. It is easier to apply the vinyl tape if you tape each side separately. Unroll about an 18" strip of vinyl tape (adhesive side face down) from the roll and begin taping from the top of the luff. Carefully lay the 3" tape along the edge of the sail so that about 1" of the adhesive surface of the tape extends beyond the sail material. To avoid having this adhesive stick to something over the sail edge, place scrap polytarp under the sail edge. With the heel of your hand on the tape that has been laid, con-

tinue feeding out 18" strips of tape, allowing the tape to return to its natural length before applying it to the polytarp material. As you apply tape to the polytarp material, smooth the tape from the center out to the edge to avoid having the tape wrinkle.

Continue this procedure for the full length of the luff. Be careful not to let the tape fold over on itself and try not to backtrack (pulling up tape that has been firmly applied already). When you have finished taping one side of the luff, roll the overlapped tape around to the reverse side of the sail and apply firmly. Repeat this procedure for the foot and leech of the sail.

After you have finished taping all the edges, turn the sail over and repeat this process with another strip of tape for each edge on the other side. Finish the corners as illustrated by adding diagonal strips of tape to each corner for appearance and reinforcement.



Step 9, Adding Grommets: In order to attach the sail to a mast or boom, place grommets into the tape at intervals along each side of the sail that is to be attached. These grommets have other functions as well. They help hold the tape firmly in place, help hold the internal sail rope in place, and provide a means of varying the "belly" of the sail. Grommets should be spaced no more than 18" apart on a PolySail to avoid overstressing the material. Separate instructions for attaching the grom-

mets to the sail are included with the grommet kit that is a part of the regular PolySail kit. The optional corner rope loops are secured to the corner grommets for added strength. Use twine or heavy fishing line to seize and lash the rope loops to the corner grommets.

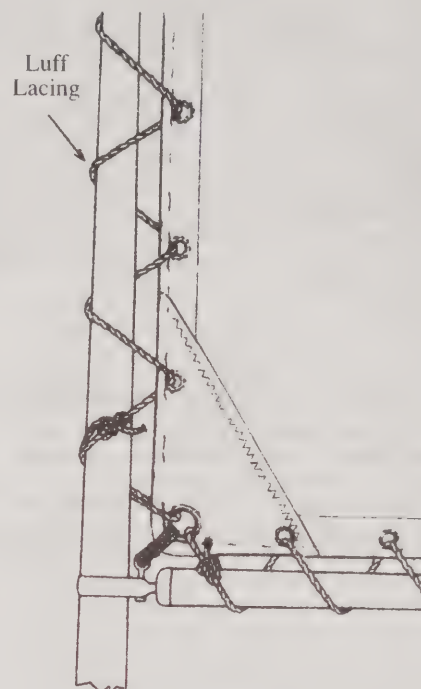
Note: If time is not a factor and you want to give your finished product more durability, I recommend stitching or sewing all taped edges. Eventually, the effects of sun and water will cause tape to stiffen and lose adhesion. However, if you are eager to try out your sail, go ahead and skip this step. You can always do the stitching at a later time, or make another sail. If you do stitch up the edges, use a heavy-duty needle and thread. Lubricate the needle with Vaseline or silicon spray when sewing through tape with a sewing machine. Test sew through a double thickness of tape on a scrap piece of polytarp material until your stitches are smooth and tight. For a truly strong sail, we urge you to stitch the tape in place. It's not as hard as it might seem, and it's about the only way that you can put in reef points in polytarp. Pictured is a finished spritsail that has sewn corners and edges. Note the extra material in the middle of the sail. Once attached to a mast, this extra material will provide camber or depth to the sail shape.



Step 10: Attaching The Sail To The Mast And Boom: Once the grommets are installed, you can either attach wood mast hoops to the sail, rope mast hoops, or use the illustrated lacing technique to attach the sail to the mast. Attach the sail to the boom with the same spiral lacing technique or by individual robands attached with a clove hitch at the grommet and a square knot under the boom (a knot tying guide is enclosed with the poly rope in the kit).

There is no lacing around the boom of a spritsail (or sprits'l). Instead, the sprit boom is held in place by a snotter, a rope that is lashed to the mast and knotted at the free end.

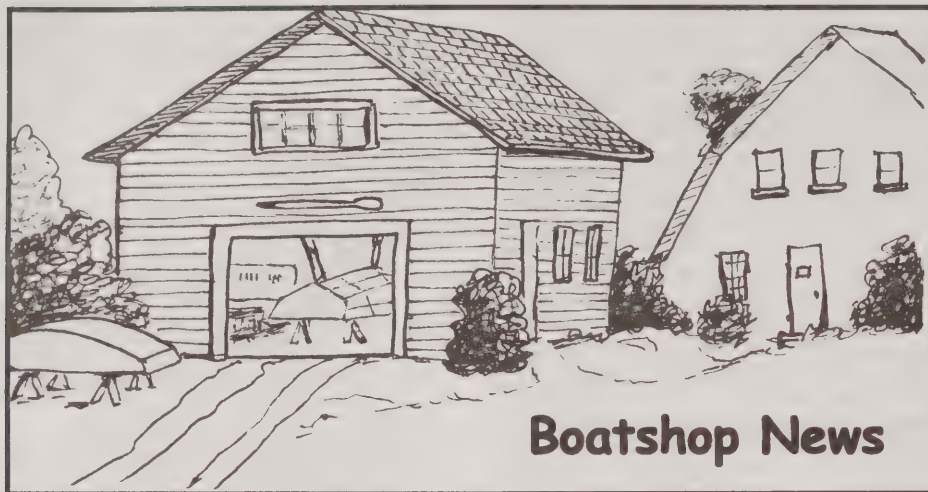
The knotted end is then inserted into an open slot at the end of the sprit boom that is about 1-1/2" deep and slightly wider than the rope.



Happy PolySailing! To get personal guidance with sail construction or to suggest improvements to these instructions, please contact: Dave Gray, 7404 Madden Dr., Fishers, IN 46038-1366, Phone (317) 842-8106, Fax (317) 579-0929, Email: PolySail@aol.com

The finished cat-type sprits'l.





Here at Lowell's we have enjoyed a very active 1999. Ten new boats have been built, and fourteen more are on order. One of this year's boats, a 16' "Old Style" skiff, won "Best Hand-Powered Boat" at the Boston Antique and Classic Boat Show in September. Peter Gibb built this boat for a private order using a pattern that hasn't been built since early this century. Designed originally as a working skiff, it has straighter, cleaner lines and a more classic look than many more modern, rounder, beamier designs.

Another new boat that Peter took great pride building is "the perfect boat" a 17' Salisbury skiff built all in mahogany and finished with varnish. It's a boat "out of my childhood", says the collector who ordered this beauty.

The boat that brought the greatest pleasure to our shop builders, however, was the Salisbury Point skiff with sailing rig ordered as a surprise birthday present and built this spring for Steve Powell of Enfield, New Hampshire. Steve, it seems, had many times visited the boat shop and dreamed of someday owning a Lowell's boat. His wife, Becky, and other family members decided it would be the perfect 50th birthday present and ordered the boat earlier in the year. Under the

A Great Year for Boatbuilding at Lowell's Boat Shop (Amesbury, Massachusetts)

By Mike Browne

rust of driving to a garden tour in Newburyport this summer, they "happened" to drive past the shop, where Steve was shocked to see a beautiful new sailing skiff decorated with a big "Happy 50th Steve!" sign. What a surprise!

Builder Peter Gibb put a number of special touches on this birthday boat, including inlay in the tiller and special carvings. The Powells had ordered the boat unfinished and were going to finish up the painting together at home. They'll first sail and row on Mascoma Lake, but Steve is already looking forward to sailing *The Surprise* along the coast of Maine next summer.

After a lot of planning and a lot more work by a lot of people, the Boat Shop's Livery of rowing boats opened this summer. For the first time, the general public could find out what it's like to row a wooden skiff or dory in

the beautiful waters near the shop.

The idea was born well over a year ago when I sought a way to share the pleasure of rowing a Lowell's boat with a wider group of people, but the obstacles seemed insurmountable. The shop didn't have enough boats on hand for the public to use, and even if the boats were available, there was no safe, convenient way to get people in and out on the water. In addition were issues of supervision, safety, other equipment, and administrative concerns.

I enlisted the help of the Boat Shop Trust, lined up the problems, and went after solutions. The biggest initial expense would be the cost of building new floats for accessing the Livery boats in the water. The Trust pledged a grant to purchase the building materials and raised the funds through a special "Rotten Dock Fund" appeal. Trust members joined with other volunteers in April to build the floats.

At the same time, I had been working with Trust members and the Newburyport Maritime Society to work through complicated issues of administration and safety. With the support of the Society's Board, the project was cleared to open.

The Livery boats came from a number of sources. Three came from adult boat building classes, three from the Turning Point classes, three from Nock Middle School classes, and one from an Amesbury Middle School class.

In addition, the Livery needed life jackets and oars. A big issue was the need for a chase boat with outboard motor in case someone got into trouble on the water. Like a stroke of fortune came a skiff with 30hp outboard donated by Charley Johnson.

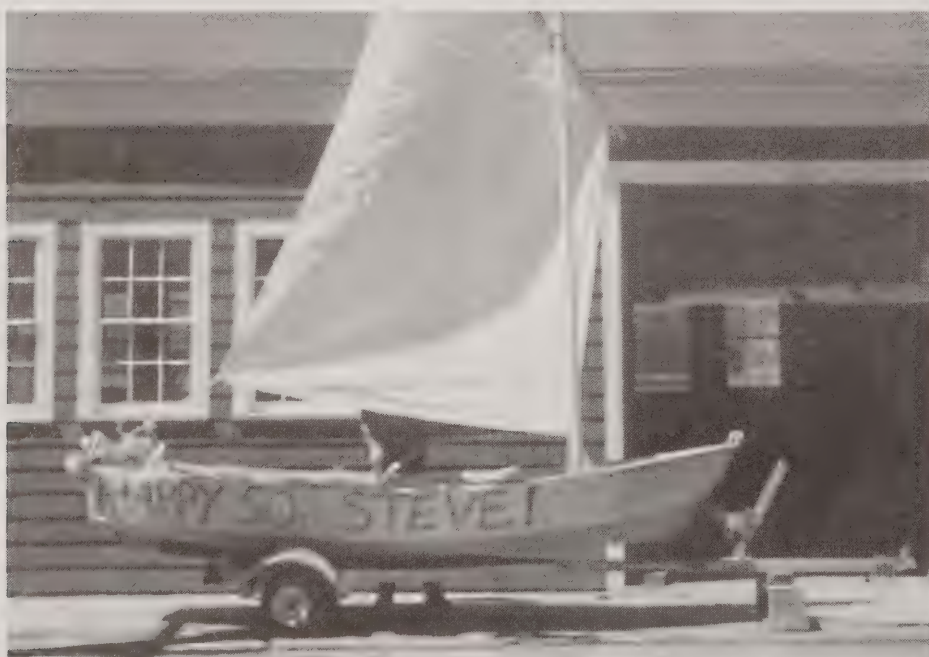
On Memorial Day weekend it all came together, and the Livery opened to public and members. Boats available for individual or group rowing include the 12' Merrimack rowing skiff, the 15' Salisbury Point skiff, 17' Atlantic skiffs, and the 19' and 20' Banks dories. The cost was \$12/hour for the general public, and rowing club memberships were available for \$100 for individuals or \$175 for families. The Livery was open Thursdays and Fridays from 3 to 6pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 3pm. New rowers were taught how to row, and the chase boat was always present in case someone got caught by the current and needed help getting back.

Peter Ivancic joined the operation as Livery Supervisor for the season. With his expertise in emergency response and water skills, the Shop feels lucky to have found him. This fall Alan Salich took over when Peter resumed other duties.

One of the benefits of the Livery is the joy of people discovering what it's like to row a boat really designed for rowing, unlike aluminum skiffs, inflatables, and fiberglass dinghies. For being heavier and more stable, Lowell's boats are safer, track better, and generally are more comfortable out on the water as well as a lot easier on the eyes.

What lies ahead for the Livery? We are already looking forward to this season, planning for a longer season with more hours open for rowing. I also have hopes for expanded programming, including weekly rowing classes for kids, guided trips for kids and adults, nature-watching trips, and other special events.

Lowell's Boat Shop, 459 Main St., Amesbury, MA01913



Already I have mentioned in these pages the Flying Wombat. To recapitulate: A short, wide boat that passed me in my longer and narrower sharpie type boat in a hard wind and choppy conditions as if I were standing still. Total superiority.

The Wombat was like a very wide ski, almost without rocker, the front end curved up like a ski, and a 12"-18" channel running down the full length of her bottom. Sure enough, her sail was gorgeously formed, with shaped battens which bent to the exact shape as we both reached across the wind, getting the utmost of the powerful wind, while her skipper, leaning way out, kept her as flat as was possible under the prevailing conditions. But it didn't explain the absolute superiority. It had to be the channel.

Thinking back, I remember other hollow keels. One is the Sperwer, a Dutch yacht built on traditional lines. Sperwer means hawk. The traditional lines call for a flat or slightly rounded bottom, no keel, and a false stem. The Sperwer has a keel. To attain the upright stance when grounded on a sandbank at an outgoing tide, the bottom in section looks much like an accolade, the keel being the point of the accolade. In order to achieve the upright stance, the bottom planking forms a reverse curve on each side of the keel so that keel and bottom on each side end up in the same plane. This leaves a hollow on each side of the keel, and, as I mentioned, she's the fastest (and, incidentally, also truly beautiful).

In the catamaran the V-shaped bow wave of one hull cancels the dip aft of the other hull, when properly spaced. Both hulls are now running on an even keel. Not having the weight of tons of lead on the keel, the effect is greater speed, the lighter the craft, the greater the speed. In a three hulled trimaran, the same

Dream Boats The Hollow Bottom

By Richard Carsen

principles apply. Hence the tri running with one ama out of the water (ideally). Lifting the weather hull out of the water on a catamaran slows the cat down and proves the principle.

The hollow keel works on a different principle. Water and air are sucked under the bottom and disperses sideways along the bottom. The air in the water greases the bottom, counteracting the effect of drag. This again results in greater speed.

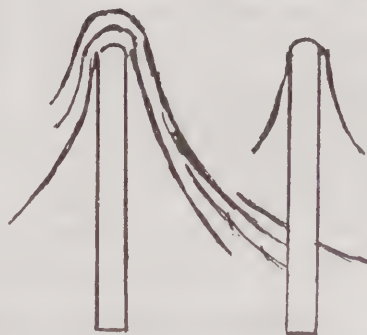
The same applies to the bottoms of traditional racers with a wineglass section. Realise that such craft heel. The hollow between the pressed down leeward part of the hull and the keel serves the same purpose. The excessive weight of the keel annuls most of the effect.

In my stack of old *Mechanics Illustrated* and *Boatbuilder* magazines is buried the design of a hollow bottomed scow. This was in the time when lake-scowers were the fastest things on the water, even faster then the existing catamarans. But the hollow-bottomed scow beat them all! Eventually it was ruled that this craft was a catamaran and not a scow. It was barred from further competition. I do not agree with this ruling.

The bottom of this scow, with the sides, formed something like a very flat W; flat and stretched (in section). The principle governing its speed is a different one from that of the catamaran. In the conventional hull running at hull speed, a wave is formed at the bows and a dip at the stern. If the boat is driven past that speed, the craft either is drowned by its bow wave, or sinks at the stern. Many skippers in the past, driving hard before a storm, not understanding this principle, have driven their ships "under" and paid with their lives. To beat this effect you have to have a craft light enough and with enough power to rise up on the bow wave, the planing boat.



Wineglass Hull



Catamaran



Wombat



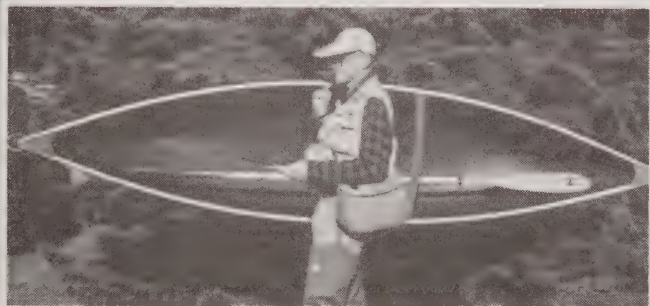
Sperwer



Hollow Bottom Scow



Monohull



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GLOUCESTER, MA 01930, USA

Over the years there have been sporadic inquiries about putting some shelter on the rugged 18' Clam Skiff. Recently Ron McIrvine proposed a lobsterboat-style silhouette. He and his wife wanted a trailer boat for pleasure use alongshore in the Alaskan panhandle where it rains a lot, with dry (!) overnighting every once in a while, some fishing, and with a hull rugged enough to handle frequent beachings on sand and gravel (#606 offers 1" bottom plus 1/2" shoe). And he really liked the down-east appearance of the house he sketched.

Unfortunately, between ergonomics and weight distribution, this option seemed dubious to us. Under likely weather/sea-conditions the proposal would have put crew into too cramped a space too far forward which would be good neither for the simple skiff-shape nor the crew. But it sure would have looked cute.

Rather we wanted to shift the weight aft towards her center of buoyancy, keeping it there for both regular running, over-righting, with enough elbow and head room to make driving, lounging, and keeping personals and

Bolger on Design

18' Cabin Clam Skiff

Design # 606 II

(18'x 5'3")

travel gear dry easy. When fishing, putting people-weight into her bow would not matter, keeping it light again during higher speed runs. The house is around 8' long and very airy, while offering solid protection from wind and rain. It is stout and easy to assemble. But we felt that an altered sheer line might help the overall aesthetics of this modification, which should not be a problem for those building the boat now with or without this house as an option in mind. The house will work on any 18' Work Skiff.

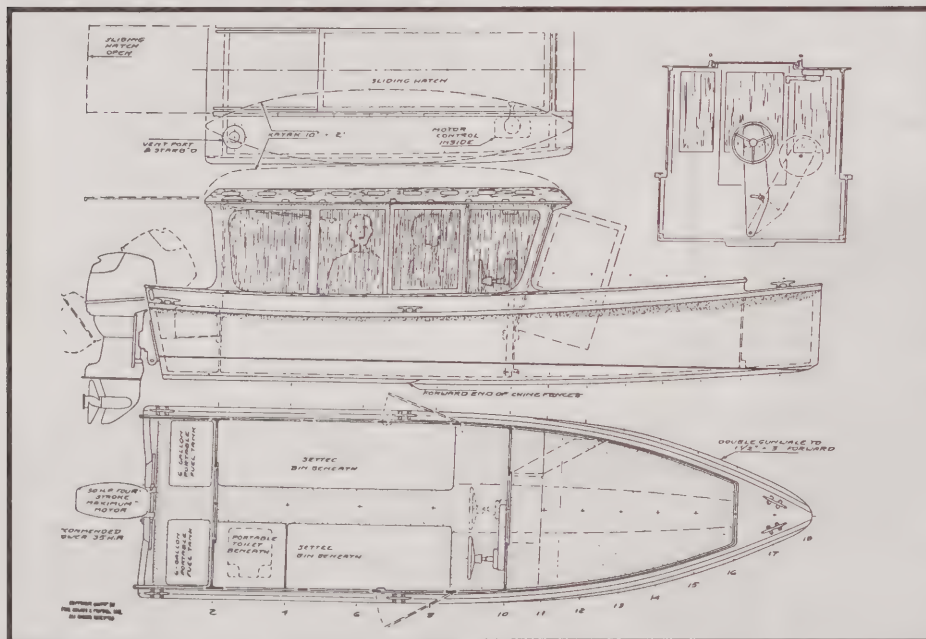
Normal driving, like sightseeing in your car, would be with the McIrvins facing for-

ward on the full-size berths, perhaps with the side-windows open folded aft. There's adequate dry storage under the bunks, including room for a single-burner portable stove and of course the porta-potti. The forward rake of the windshield is very "North-West", limits glare, and enhances feeling of generous interior driving seated. Her 2/3 house-length sliding hatch in the top offers sun and air even with privacy curtains still drawn at night. Along with the overhead throttle to starboard and the simple flip-over helm, this hatch allows standing up at the wheel when the sea is too rough to do without knee-flexing for suspension. Slid all the way aft, the hatch still extends only over the motor. Standing up also allows the option of manhandling and securing up to two light 10' kayaks on the roof, available for near noiseless exploration of pristine locations.

For beaching, anchoring, and fishing at trolling-speeds at best you'd step out of the house forward enjoying her wide bottom for solid stability. Its heavy lamination should stand up well to beaching abuse, and can of course be repaired removing badly chewed up layers, without putting into doubt the structural integrity of the boat during the procedure. Instead of a near impossible self-draining deck forward, we propose to locate a float-switched bilge pump at the 16" high house door threshold, plus two holes well above the WL.

A well-gasketed top-hinged door at the after end of the house allows secure access to the motor. The two portable 6-gallon tanks shown in the slop well will offer moderate range, with more tanks possible strapped down in the bow cockpit. That four-stroke 50hp is shown as the maximum power to be treated with great caution with this type simple hull. On the other hand it would allow using the Work Skiff for actual push and tow work, even under the daily rain of the Alaskan coastal skies. McIrvine, though, has his eye on a smaller lighter engine. And he's already at work on the boat.

Plans for #606II on five sheets are available from us only at US\$100, or just the 2 sheet house upgrade at \$50.



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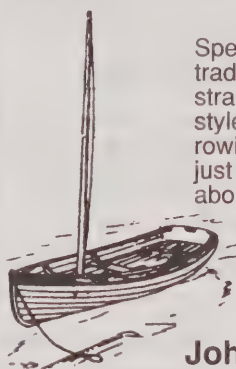
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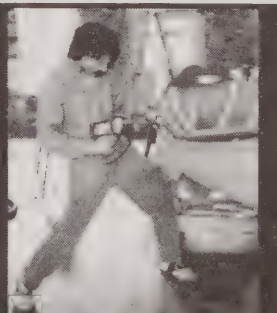
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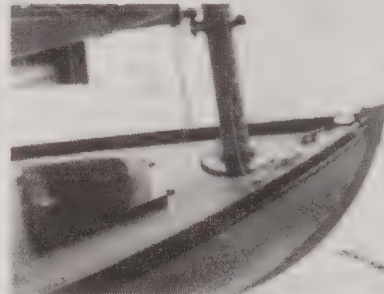
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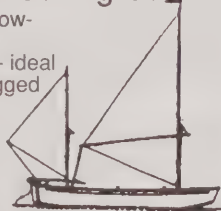
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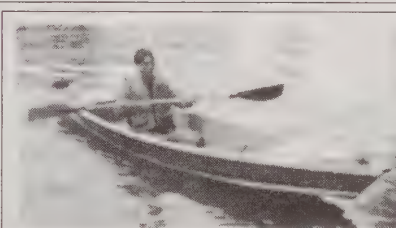
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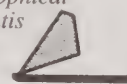
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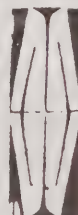
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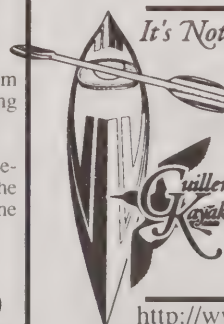
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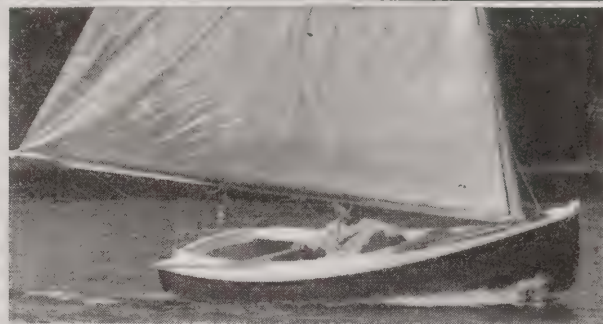
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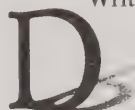
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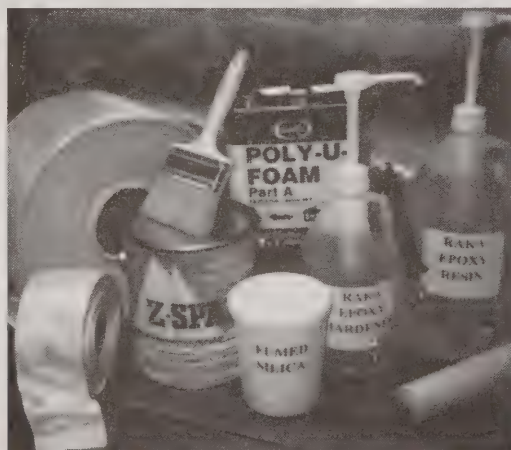
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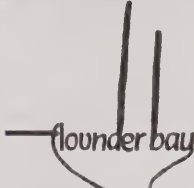
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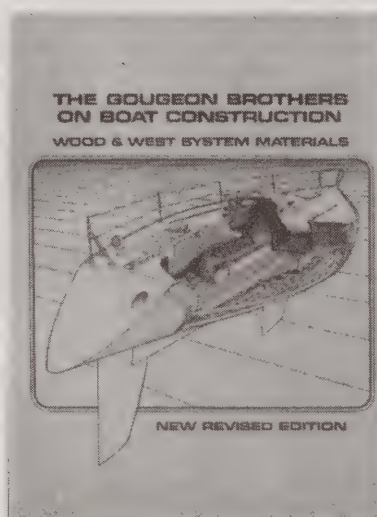
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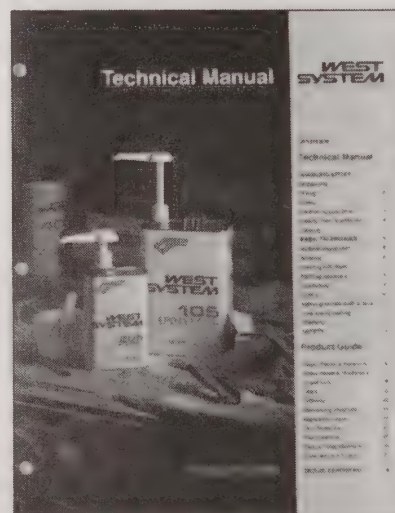
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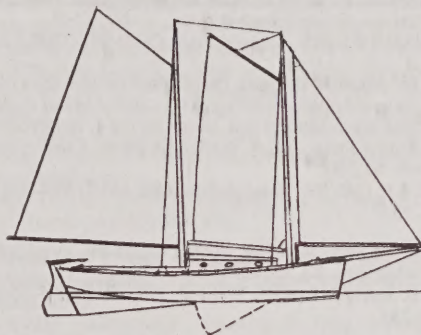
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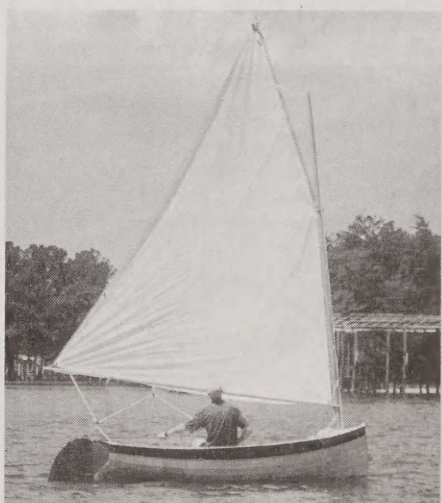


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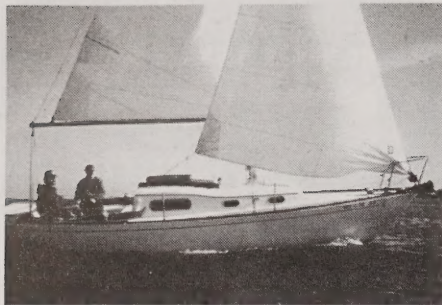
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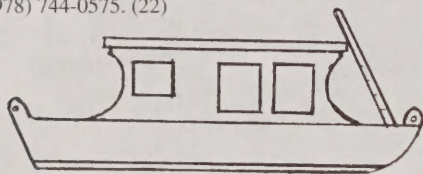
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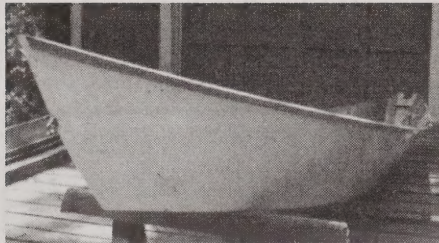
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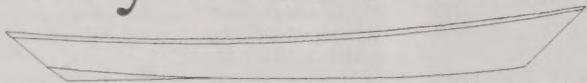


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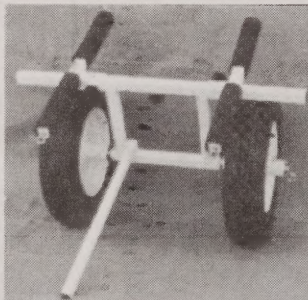
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