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Special Feature This Issue
"Row Mystic's Chamberlain Dory Skiff"
"Wooden Boat West" - "A Trip I Could Tolerate"



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 19 - Number 10

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Looking Ahead...

Jeff Potter regales us with his tale of being "Up All Night, Spectating the AuSable Canoe Marathon"; and we will have coverage of the very laid back "19th Annual Boston Antique & Classic Boat Festival", this year held in historic Salem.

Robb White carries on with "Ranges"; and we begin a series of reminiscences by Harold Taylor from his self published "Waterlogged".

Dave Carnell bring us Part 2 of "\$200 Sailboat Completed"; Caleb Davis summarizes his methods of "Strip Building Canoes"; John Longbottom tells why he is a "Harry Bryan Fan"; and we have a look at Weston Farmer's "Mini-Max".

Sharon Brown concludes her two part historical overview in "Row Mystic Seaport's Chamberlain Dory Skiff *Harry Williams* at the Boathouse"; Pedal power re-appears in "Nauticraft Releases New Cutting Edge Pedal Craft"; Gerard Van Wyk announces "Oh No, Not Another Mini-Tri!"; Dennis Davis continues with Part 7 of his series "Design Rules - OK"; and Phil Bolger & Friends surely have something in the works for us.

Bob Whittier reports on what the EPA has to say about "Disposing of Old Fiberglass Boats"; Curtis Nichols urges us to "Push on Oars"; and we offer an overview on "Building Oars".

Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Jim Thayer concludes, on page 11 in this issue, his ramble through the 2001 *Wooden Boat Show* held in Michigan this year with some opinions on how and why the return of the Small Boat Show, or something akin to that long departed attempt to showcase small boats built by small builders, should be again attempted.

His remarks caused me to look back into our archives to 1984 and 1989, the years that the Small Boat Show was launched and folded. The six year span saw the gamut run from lots of enthusiastic support promoted by *Small Boat Journal* to almost total abandonment by builders which caused the show to fold after 1989. These were the early years for us here and I was heavily involved in promoting the idea on our pages, and at the end even served on an advisory group gathered by the show sponsors, the Newport Yachting Center, intended to help them sort out what went wrong. At the end *Small Boat Journal*, which had initiated the idea, was no longer directly involved and on its way to its own demise as a small boat publication, ultimately being sold south and becoming a powerboat magazine.

In 1984 *MAIB* was just a year old when I commented in part on this page as follows:

"The Small Boat Show was not a disappointment to me. In fact it seemed to have turned out better than one had a right to expect, given that it was the first time for a show featuring a rather diverse offering of watercraft.

The displays totalled over 100, and this really impressed me, for again, it is a busy time of year for many in the trade, hard to get away for, "what, another boat show?" But they came, and the diversity of offerings was truly broad.

Did the people buy? I got conflicting reports, some did well, others were unhappy. It seemed less of a buying public than one finds in February in Boston, more a looker crowd. Power boats seemed to find buyers, not surprising, people buy power boats like cars, when they go shopping they are ready to buy. Small sailing and rowing craft seem to require more investigation and consideration. It was an "exposure" sort of show, live advertising, and the opportunity for in-the-water tryouts for many of the boats by serious intentioned prospects was very useful and needs emphasis.

Well, I for one hope the Newport Yacht Center and *Small Boat Journal* will go for it again in 1985. It was not "what, another boat show?" but rather special in its own way."

Six years later it had all changed and I commented again on this page in part as follows:

"The Small Boat Show in mid-May at Newport was the sixth annual round and it sure has changed. This year I spent Friday only there to see what there was to see of interest to those of us who enjoy small boats as we think of them. I was all finished mid-afternoon, just a handful of small boat builders were there, most out on the floats. The current definition of "small" appears to have shifted to outboard boats, up to 28 footers at close to six figure prices. The old concept of a small boat show has been overtaken and thrust aside by the ongoing mad stampede for ever bigger bucks.

The small boat race disappeared from the show a couple of years ago, the "liability" thing apparently. Most of the small boat builders, the one-man hopefuls of the earlier years, are now long gone, too costly to be there. The larger small boat builders, firms that build small sailing boats mostly, hang in there now, swamped by the dealer displays of outboards and some production daysailers. Obviously this is where the market is, the production type of small boat. Boats you can buy for close to nothing down and only a few hundred a month for how many years?

The introduction of this show in the early '80s promised maybe a growing awareness on the part of the public in the pleasures of messing about in boats. I thought so. Quite a few small boat builders did too. Now it would appear this is not the case, not enough, anyway, to support the expense of such shows in Newport. Mass marketing of mass produced boating "appliances" can carry the costs, the small collection of small boat builders cannot."

Now a decade plus has passed and one small boatbuilder survivor of those early years, Jim Thayer, has again raised the cry that small boat builders need a show of their own. Yes, the yearning is still there, but is the will to make it happen? *Small Boat Journal*, the innovative publication that attempted to serve our small boat interests, is long gone, it too folded from lack of support. *MAIB* carries on because our small scale is affordable. Perhaps that's what would work for another Small Boat Show, small scale with unpretentious ambitions. But who would undertake so unrewarding a venture?

The big question that looms over the concept is, would the small boatbuilders support such a show? Past performances do not offer an optimistic answer.

On the Cover...

Mystic Seaport's Chamberlain dory skiff *Harry Williams* is the focus of Sharon Brown's long look back over such traditional boats and John Gardner's part in their preservation featured in this issue.

"Some Thoughts on Small Boat Safety" (August 15) is a generous gift by Bob Whittier to us all. Common sense and experience still carry a lot of weight, as he so definitely proves, but I honor him especially for offering a sophisticated explanation for the safety issues we see around us.

I have wondered for years if the Coast Guard fascination with life jackets originated in the military notion that a PFD ought to support an unconscious sailor upright after his ship has been sunk. It is past time that the federal government thoroughly investigate the usefulness of pocket and vest-size inflatable PFDs and water-activated, inflatable hull flotation systems that convert a capsized or sinking small boat into its own rescue device. Why the scuba divers have all the compact, high tech equipment small boaters might use continues to mystify me, but a "safety sausage" for boats under 20' might be a real seller, especially if it cost less than \$50 and was smaller than a small fire extinguisher.

Beyond that, the National Transportation Safety Board should conduct a thorough analysis of hull design, not only flotation. Bob Whittier exposes the dirty little secret of so-called cheap johnboats designed to fit between pickup truck wheel wells. But what about hull shapes of huge pleasure boats that make terrific and contorted wakes? Maybe the NTSB should analyze the wakes peculiar to certain manufacturers of outboard and inboard/outboard-powered pleasure boats. Anyone watching working boats, especially square-sterned lobster boats, moving at the same speed as pleasure boats instantly sees the incredible difference in wakes. Some 50' pleasure boats make extraordinary wakes no matter how slowly they move, wakes that make "No Wake" signs a joke. Artificial rough water may indeed cause more accidents than storms.

I doubt that education and/or licensing will stop much of the misbehavior I see on the water. Probably lawsuits will, especially as electronic devices merging GPS and digitized video recording enable attorneys to use hard evidence in the courtroom. Along shore, rumors suggest that some young, kayak paddling attorneys are now realizing reckless endangerment when they see it, and they see it not among the PWC riders so much as among operators of large, perhaps overpowered cabin boats that make extraordinary wakes when operators panic, as I saw two panic a few days ago.

A dense haze covered both Plymouth and Duxbury Bays as my wife and I left Plymouth after lunch in our ship's lifeboat, nowadays powered by oars, lug sail, and a little 5hp Tohatsu four-stroke in a well. As we entered the narrows opening on the sea, we found ourselves more or less in the clear, with perhaps 1/8 of a mile of visibility, but with fog on the ocean ahead, too. I remarked on the effect, fog astern and ahead, and how difficult it was to see not only kayakers, but some fishermen in a very small aluminum boat. Outside the far right side of the channel, minding our own business, we were surprised to be overtaken by a 35' fiberglass cabin boat, complete with two huge outboards and flying bridge, which accelerated when next to us and did an extraordinary U-turn away from us, sending a wake that hit us sideways. At least two women with infants in arms sat on the lower deck facing astern, their faces numb with surprise as



Some More Thoughts on Small Boat Safety

By John Stilgoe

they saw us swing into view.

While my wife and I wondered what prompted the turn, a 45' boat of the same type charged from the haze to our left and began crossing our bow, well ahead of any collision distance. But then its operator jerked its helm to the right, accelerated wildly, and well nigh rammed us as he crossed immediately in front of us. It is traditional to point the bow at wakes, and I tried to without aiming at him, but we went up over the first corkscrew-shaped wave in a way new to me and came down so hard that the old boat hook, lashed alongside a pair of 12' oars, snapped down so hard against a thwart that its bronze head sheared from its oak shaft with a crack that made both our hearts skip a beat. I know, I know, not lashed tightly enough.

The massive, Newfoundland-built (1937) lifeboat performed flawlessly, however, and my wife and I watched the fiberglass and chrome boat speed into the haze, sort of racing in the wake of the other. I am glad we had the lifeboat and not something else, say the johnboat a quarter mile away. And I pity anyone in the dense haze ahead of the two boats scurrying toward land while leaving gigantic wakes.

What I hope Bob Whittier addresses in a subsequent article is something about which no one writes, how easily disorientation panics high-powered boaters into running far

faster at night and in fog than prudent; indeed, how panic almost always shows up in acceleration. I think the haze unsettled two boaters into behaving abruptly, one deciding to go back to the marina before the creeping fog enveloped him further. I think he had been following us and suddenly realized we were way out of the channel. The other had missed the channel and had headed for us until realizing we were way beyond it, determined to proceed hurriedly toward the harbor, or in its general direction, by following a speeding boat headed in.

But more to the point, in their confusion I think both utterly misjudged the speed, however slow, of our lifeboat simply because a double-ended boat makes almost no wake. One had to accelerate to overtake me rather than reducing revolutions and making his U-turn astern of us, and the other had to accelerate to complete a turn he began way too late. Anyone can be rattled, hearing the old boat hook snap caused me to squeeze sap from the tiller, but being rattled in boats that make huge, curling wakes can cause real harm, especially when wakes cross. And people in big boats that provide an illusion of security perhaps rattle quickly and deeply when fog or something else rips the security blanket made of air-conditioned plastic.

As we cruised through the fog into bright sunshine and a mirror flat sea, my wife and I wondered what might have happened if we had been in a less seaworthy boat. Then we wondered what might have happened had the two big powerboats hit each other. Who would have rescued the two PFD-less infants flung into the sea? What would have happened to us or any other nearby vessel had the two operators accelerated away from an imminent collision?

In a boating world where wake equates with power, so much so that PWC makers angle the exhaust water up to increase the small wakes such toys leave, those of us who see wakes as signs of incompetence may be neglected right now. But some very savvy attorneys armed with high-tech imagery of misbehavior are beginning to glimpse product liability lawsuits based in hull design. Bob Whittier is right. We need to think about deeper issues underlying the present safety ones, including the overpowering of flat stern pleasure boats, the wakes such hulls leave, and the panic that shows itself in acceleration, even around marina slips.

In the meantime, his article should be required reading everywhere people go on the water in small craft.

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Greeting the Sunrise

Lately I've been getting up early on Saturdays, around 3:30am or so, and paddling my kayak across the bay to greet the sunrise by myself on Fire Island. I highly recommend it.

On a recent Saturday I had a particularly fascinating trek. While we have been largely spared the worst that New York summers have to offer, the humidity had hit with a vengeance a few days before. At 3:30 a thick haze hung over land and sea. A low ceiling filtered the light of the waning moon to a dim glow. Not enough to see by, but enough to bathe everything in a faint luminescence. By the time I was a half mile out the lights of the shore had dissolved into the haze and I was alone on a pitch-dark bay.

The moon hung above me like a ghost. The deck compass stared back at me from the darkness. Patches of fog were transformed into swirling amorphous shapes appearing and then disappearing across the surface of a mirror-still bay. Below me, each stroke of the paddle would leave a phosphorescent streak swirling past the gunnel of the boat. Occasionally the paddle would disturb a jelly fish which would light up like a spark in the water.

Before me Fire Island, three miles distant, was blanketed in a cloud of fog, so it appeared I was paddling into a grey-black world while suspended above a distant cosmos with my way lit by a ghost overhead. The surf roared in the distance. It was a phantasmagorical scene.

About halfway across I accidentally picked up clump of eel grass with the paddle blade. It landed on the deck with a splat, right on the compass. It was enough to spook me, and the hair on the back of my neck stood out straight despite the humidity. The remainder of the crossing was one of bated breath and false starts at the sounds of jumping fish, passing birds, even at the shadows of floats from the occasional crab pot.

I hit the Fire Island shore just as the world was beginning to emerge into a silvery twilight. Even then, it was too dark, and foggy to see any distance, so my boat was into the marsh grass before I knew it was there. I had aimed well west of my mark, and turned eastward to begin a quarter mile paddle along the shore. I had timed my trip so that I would be reaching my destination about a half hour before sunrise, so that I could easily spot it in the morning light.

At sunrise I was comfortably enjoying my breakfast of raisins and water, and by the time I returned to my original point of departure on the Long Island shore the rest of the world was just beginning to awake.

For anyone who knows their local waters well enough to navigate them in the dark, and has the ability to get up at a ridiculous hour, a paddle in the wee hours can be a most fascinating and rewarding experience.

Brian Salzano, East Patchogue, NY

Information of Interest...

For What It's Worth

In "Small Boat Design (The End... Finally)" by Robb White in the July 1 issue, Robb said, "I ain't about to explain lofting". Well neither am I, but may I suggest the readers have a look at the *Mystic Seaport Boat Shop Lofting Manual*, text by Barry Thomas, drawings by Chris Rawlings, VM297.5T46 1998, ISBN 0-913372-85-4. It sells for \$15.95, and is some 78 pages soft covered.

I'll quote a paragraph from the back cover to give you an idea of content. "The mysteries of small-boat lofting are here de-mystified by the Mystic Seaport boatbuilder Barry Thomas in a shop-manual-style book whose text is accompanied by a wealth of drawings by Christopher Rawlings. This is the manual that Barry Thomas uses in his Mystic Seaport Boatbuilding Classes."

I myself wanted to learn something about lofting. I bought the book and a 4'x8' sheet of plywood, a quart of flat white latex, a box of nails and off I went. I spent three nights on the floor with the book, laying out the lines, using his quite easy to follow, step by step directions and "voila, the boat was lofted up". I learned a lot and recommend the book.

"Starboard", Old Salt, Southern CT

Quincy Creek Controversy

Blacks Creek, a 50-acre saltwater marsh that has weathered its share of environmental mishaps over the years, is either on its way back from ruin or on its way toward ruin depending on whom you talk to, according to a recent article in our area newspaper. The creek is enjoyed by nature lovers, boaters and fishermen.

A 9' log wall under the Greenberg Bridge on Quincy Shore Drive in Quincy, Massachusetts is put into place during the summer to keep the water in Blacks Creek high enough for a popular city sailing program. to conduct sailing lessons. But some environmentalists say that blocking the natural tidal flow into and out of Blacks Creek to conduct a sailing program is the type of environmentally harmful practice that has been discontinued by every other coastal community in the state. They contend that the practice is detrimental to marine life, depletes oxygen in the water, causes excessive algae growth and allows weeds to encroach. Those who insist the logs are harmful will not be satisfied until the practice is discontinued.

The city's youth sailing program began in 1953. From the first week of July until just before Labor Day more than 400 children participate in the Recreation Department lessons on Blacks Creek. The historic argument against removing or reducing the height of the log wall is that either action would create safety issues for the young sailors and leave

the boating program at the mercy of the tides.

Resolution of the debate might come with the repairs being done now to the tidal gates owned by the Metropolitan District Commission at the Greenberg Bridge. If the MDC will let city workers operate them, a system could be developed to satisfy both environmentalists and sailing enthusiasts.

The city recreation director was quoted in the article as stating, "I'm not going to debate environmentalists, I cannot refute the negative in terms of is the creek better or worse because of the stop logs? I only know that for 31 years I've had a valid permit from the state to use the stop-logs."

Bob Whittier, Duxbury, MA

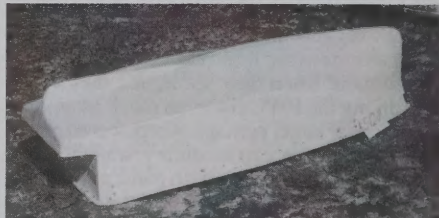
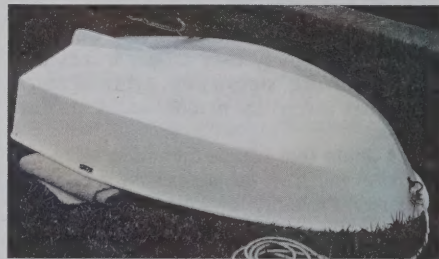
Projects...

Too Small Dinghy

My 7'2" fiberglass dinghy was too small, it was somewhat unstable with two people, and hard to row, so I put a "tanker bow" on the front, and a "swim-platform-like" extension on the stern. It now rows better, and floats better, and still stores on top of my 30' sailboat. I glued up 1" thick pieces of rigid urethane foam, sanded to shape and fiberglassed.

John E. McCarthy, Satellite Beach, FL 32937

Before (below)



After (above)

Limited Boatbuilding Success as Youth

Despite all the vicissitudes in my life, I still remember a time as a young boy in rural Quebec putting my non-existent boat building skills to the test on a frequent basis. From age ten through fourteen, I attempted, with limited success, to build a series of homemade boats. The convenience of a lumberyard next door, I suspect, greatly impacted my efforts

as a would-be shipwright. Offcuts of lumber, split and splintered, freely given by the lumberyard's Manager, Mr. Paquette, were regularly hauled home with the help of my friends. Almost daily, we would fill the unused stall in our barn with fresh cut lengths of pine, spruce, and hemlock, all in varying widths, thickness, and condition.

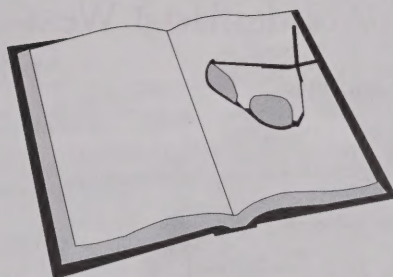
Armed with only my imagination and a collection of books on pirates and explorers, we would toil each summer, building small boats, rowboats, sailboats, or whatever we might deem seaworthy at the time. With few exceptions, most of these feebly built boats sank once launched in the North River at the foot of the garden.

Momentarily one spring, all of that changed. I had built, what I believed to be was a fine vessel. It was designed in the pointed, uninspired shape of a narrow wedge of cheese. No graceful curving hull lines for this gang of young shipwrights! We completed it in just under three days. I included in the boat's design, a double planked bottom, allowing for a secret storage compartment for wooden swords, bows and arrows, and pirate gear.

Finally, we loaded our 8' vessel on a small metal wagon and managed to haul, drag, and coax the boat, named the *Discovery*, down to the riverbank. With the effort of five trusty pairs of hands I launched her into the waiting river. Holding anxiously onto the painter, I realized to my sheer joy, she floated! I climbed proudly aboard, followed trustingly by my friend Bruce Dobbie. At the last minute, Mickey, my small dog, jumped on board for the maiden voyage. We drifted and poled our way out into the middle of the river.

Five minutes into the trip, rivulets of water began to push their way through the deck boards. I was not deterred since we had clad the underside of the boat with a large sheet of galvanized tin as a means of waterproofing the hull. As we slid further into the middle of the river, it was, I thought, time to check the secret deck compartment. I forced open the hatch only to discover water between decks in a space of just 4". Within seconds water was over the boat's shallow gunwales and all three of us were bobbing freely in the cold North River. Mickey made it to shore first; embarrassed I suspect that he had signed on for the voyage. I managed to pull Bruce, whose flailing arms continued to hit me in the face, back to the muddy shore. Sitting on the bank, wet, dirty, and marooned, I decided to give up on boat building for awhile. I was almost eleven.

Alex Bridge, NORS, P.O. Box 143, Woolwich, ME 04579



Book Review

A Shipyard in Maine

Percy & Small and
the Great Schooners
Ralph Linwood Snow and
Capt. Douglas K. Lee
Maine Maritime Museum
243 Washington St.
Bath, ME 04530
1999 Hardbound \$49.95

Reviewed by John Hawkinson

What is the magic of a six-masted wooden coasting schooner? Is it the tons of yellow pine, oak, and hackmatack joined in 100 yards of shapely sailing vessel with a graceful sheer and a lot of canvas? Is it the names of the six masts; fore, main, mizzen, jigger, driver, and spanker? Perhaps you would be interested in the delicate financial arrangements that floated these schooners (divided into increments of 1/256 of total cost of the vessel). The backing came from contributors as diverse as the glove tycoons of Gloversville, New York, and the Governor of Wyoming, in addition to the builders, the captains, and the brokers.

For nearly 30 years, between 1890 and 1920, in an era when iron and steel shipbuilding was already established, large wooden four, five and six-masted schooners were built in Bath, Maine. This indian summer of wooden shipbuilding, based upon many layers of accumulated skills and shrewdness, is clearly and concisely documented herein.

The authors are Ralph Linwood Snow and Capt. Douglas Lee. Mr. Snow, a former director of the Maine Maritime Museum, which is located on the site of the Percy and Small shipyard in Bath, Maine, has written several books on shipbuilding in Bath. Captain Douglas Lee has designed, built, and captained schooners, and shares research about the schooners with his wife, Linda.

The great schooners represented the culmination of plank on frame wooden shipbuilding: "It was a rig that was economical in terms of the manpower necessary to handle it." These were intended to be coasting vessels and were the beasts that carried coal from West Virginia to New England's expanding industries that had outgrown water power. These schooners were faster and cheaper than other available carriers and provided a margin of profit for their investors during the depression

years of the late 1890s.

Reaching nearly carnival enthusiasm, the large wooden schooners were launched in Bath accompanied by all-day band concerts. Extra trolley cars were on hand to transport observers to the festivities. The vessel name itself, *Wyoming*, adds the sense that this is a world event, not just the sliding of a commercial vessel down the ways.

A Shipyard in Maine tells the story of the leading provider-builder-financier-operator of the great schooners. The origins of the Percy and Small shipyard are traced from the sea-going Captain Sam Percy and his business partner, Frank Small, who utilized an existing shipyard in Bath. Wooden shipbuilding experience and skill were harnessed into factory-like production. The financial underpinnings of the great schooners were as important as the ways they were built upon and the blacksmith shop that forged the fittings. Many of the schooners were named for family members of the financial backers, *Cora F. Cressy*. The designers, loftsmen, carpenters, blacksmiths, riggers, sailmakers, brokers, and captains live again in these pages.

Percy and Small completed 30 schooners between 1893 and 1917, slightly more than one per year allowing for booms and busts. The price of four-master in 1893 was about \$65,000, which included 270 tons of hardwood as well as 455,000 board feet of long leaf yellow pine. This prototype, the *Charles P. Notman* was 219' long and 1518 gross ton displacement. As the schooners got larger, cargoes advanced from 2400 to 2700 tons. The larger five and six-masters averaged 300' long.

The real test was whether a schooner could repay the investment. Coal may not have been a glamorous cargo, but it turned a profit. Capt. Linc Jewett, the hard-driving skipper of the *Notman*, doubled her value in six years carrying coal from Norfolk to Boston, New York, or Portland until she was rammed and sunk by the steamer *Colorado*. Jewett's wife was rescued by lifting her from the schooner to the steamer's deck while the captain and hands got clear in the longboat.

There was one seven-master, the *Thomas W. Lawson*, a steel hull 369' long, built in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1902, converted within four years to carry bulk oil and stranded on the Scilly Islands in 1907 with loss of 13 crew. She was of a different stamp than the wooden schooners of Bath.

This book details each aspect of wooden shipbuilding of the era and includes reproductions of paintings as well as line drawings. Of interest to builders is the description of "horning" the timbers of each frame as it was assembled, which ensured symmetry and allowed for adjustments in dimension. "When all was said and done, there always remained ample material in the frame stock for skilled liners and dubbers, not one of them a graduate of an engineering school, to transform the frames into a shining monument to naval architectural fairness."

It would be pleasant to think that the great schooners could still be sailing. The *Cora F. Cressy* persisted longest, for 28 years, but most of her sisters foundered on beaches or breakers, some burned, a few were destroyed by U-boats, and one was lost without trace. *A Shipyard in Maine* generously gives us an understanding of the designers, builders, captains, sailors, construction, and massive beauty of these schooners.

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After kicking the idea around for several years, the *WoodenBoat* brass gave Valerie the OK and she hauled the whole *WoodenBoat* Show shebang to Michigan. Michigan, with more registered boats than any other state, is also fairly close to the Northeast where most of the wooden boat guys hang out. Geoff Kerr of Two Daughters Boatworks said it was only about four hours further than St. Michaels. Once again, the venue was a maritime museum in the little harbor town of South Haven.

For years I have been telling myself that I would have the original cold molded Nina ready by the time *WoodenBoat* came west. Not even close.

As luck would have it, I had two pulling boats and a fantail hull for delivery to the East Coast, and by sheer coincidence the run coincided with the show. Wife Janis and daughter Susan, having been snatched from the bosom of their families and in-laws and dragged west years ago, signed on as relief drivers. Granddaughter Jessie came along to do a survey on swimming pools and playground equipment.

We rolled into South Haven about 8:00 AM on a cold, front-freshened Saturday morning, watching for museum signs. We saw a couple, but being unsure of our position, inquired of a man directing traffic on the drawbridge. He had no idea, but no matter, it was 30 yards ahead, right under our noses. I was loudly lamenting the impossibility of finding parking when a long stretch of trailer friendly curb opened up just two blocks from the gate. Too easy.

At the credentials tent we were welcomed by lovely Valerie Chiasson, show honcho, who deputized my three assistants as members of the press. The *WoodenBoat* Show has always been a very exhibitor friendly affair, and Valerie must be the main reason.

Speaking of exhibitor friendly, anybody remember that glorious affair in Newport at the Yachting Museum where they ladled up Dark and Stormy's and chowder outside while palatial platters awaited inside? By the time I made it inside the platters were cleaner than a hound's tooth. No matter, the D&S were quite sufficient.

In the same category, but even more opulent, was the tummy challenging spread put on down in Charleston back whenever. I think it was mostly for the Around the World Race volunteers, but we boat show guys were invited, too. We shall probably never see their

WoodenBoat West

By Jim Thayer



Valerie Chiasson on station.

like again.

Ah, but I digress. We came to look at the boats. We saved the first tent for later and ran right into the Norwegian *Wooden Boat Co.* display. They had a nice little lapstrake keel daysailer and a nifty launch built in Norway. Lovely traditional designs and nice woodwork. They also had a bunch of sweaters for an assured cash flow. I should have checked back to see how sweaters sell on a warm summer day.

On just a bit was Dan Sutherland, that fourth generation guy from Sutherland Boat and Coach up in the Finger Lakes. I'll never forget the party Dan and Arfra put on up there one year. He was on the job for the Antique Boat Museum of Clayton, New York, with a nice St. Lawrence skiff. Super boat.

There were a number of canoes along there. The standout was an old time canvas covered job painted green below and white above with a red star. We don't see many strik-

ing paint jobs any more as fiberglass doesn't require paint and, even for canvas, it's a lot of trouble.

Around the corner is a nice little sailboat that from the outside looks to be glass. Must be Sam Devlin's work. Sure enough, it was Nancy's China with an electric motor built right into the rudder, a neat and painless way to deal with tired wind. Sam himself was just the other side of the Chinook 21 Pilot, listed under John Jay Marine, Inc. in the program and described as a diesel powered character boat. After giving Sam a good blast with the video, I found out that he had hauled her all the way from Washington.

I brought up Sam's proposal at the Southwest Harbor show to organize some sort of group, a guild I suppose, for wooden boat craftsmen to promote the product. There was great enthusiasm at the time, but when the check writing crunch came there was no one to be found. Sam still feels strongly about the need.

Insurance is a sore point with me and reason enough to get a group going. Insurance for the *WoodenBoat* Show was \$100. Most shows are several hundred. Do two or three shows a year and what do you get? The risk must be daunting but I never hear about the deaths and injuries. How do they keep it covered up? I must, in good conscience, warn the reader to stay away from boat shows, else fear for his life.

Contrast the above with the average motorboater who gets out a dozen times a year, travels hundreds of miles at blistering, hair streaming, bikini ripping speeds, and covers it all on his homeowners policy.

Well, let's get on to the next tent there. We immediately spot familiar faces. Mary Slaughter, Dean Melodones, and son Damon. Gosh, just the other day Damon and his cohort were crawling around underfoot at St. Michaels. The boat business has a serious warping effect on time.

Dean and Mary are regulars at St. Michaels and as a sideline put out those Ratty t-shirts. No, no, that doesn't sound right! They are really neat t-shirts featuring a rodent rower and our heartfelt rallying cry nothing, absolutely nothing ... as simply messing about in boats.

Hey, in the next booth is Tony DeLima, the MAS man. Been a while since I first met him in a cavernous room in Chestertown, Maryland, furnished with just a table, a computer, and a bunch of jugs. I took a chance and bought five gallons. Being able to vary the cure time was the selling point. I happened in there while looking for Marc Barto to talk about a glass Melonseed. I found Marc in the other end of the old auto dealership cutting out parts for Chesapeake Light Craft kits, another success story.

Gosh, right here across the aisle is a gorgeous guideboat. Standing alongside is its builder/purveyor, Steve Kaulback, a trifle grayer and more distinguished than in the old days when he drove that little pickup with the stove grille artistically grafted into the front. He and partner Dave Rosen now run a serious business with about 20 employees. I ran across some mogul extolling the virtues of his boat in the pages of *Forbes*, and he has gotten plenty of other ink as well as a feature on VT public TV, which I have just watched.

It just goes to show that if you love your work, make a super product, and can keep your

Dan Sutherland and young crew take out the Rushton cruiser.



head above water long enough, you can succeed in the boat business. Of course, the same dedication and talent would soon make you a millionaire in most other endeavors. Dave was sending people out for trials but, worse luck, I never got around to it

In the next tent was the E-Z Row man with a framework mounting levers and pivots which allows one to row facing forward. It looked to be sturdy and well built, and after a trial on the water, I concluded that it works very well. It takes some getting used to and it helps not to lock the oars. Just row and let them do their thing.

There were five tents full of stuff, tools, goops, plywood, books, magazines, and such. I tend to cruise along fairly fast through most of it. There was, of course, the Saladmaster man dear to our editor's heart, in this case, the guy who drills holes in files. He has all manner of hard-to-drill metal looking like Swiss cheese. Seeing is believing and his explanations sounded reasonable. I was tempted and the price wasn't out of line. I just don't drill enough files, I guess.

It was late morning and we were flaked out on a picnic table resting the feet and comparing notes when hailed by that stalwart sharpie sailor and Kokopelli veteran Dennis Bradley and his lovely wife Linda.

We went for lunch, caught up on the news, then went up the hill to the park to see the amateur boats and the family boatbuilding. There were a number of trailerable boats, homebuilt and restorations, which the owners had brought to show off. Eye-catching was a stripper kayak with a carved duck's head on the bow and painted feathers, yet. A sharp little powerboat was named *Half-Nelson* because, as the builder explained, Nelson Zimmer had designed it based largely on a Hacker. The owner had then gone on to build a larger model named *Full-Nelson*.

A fellow had a collection of gas-powered models which used to make timed runs on the end of a 60' tether. One engine I couldn't figure out. It looked to be water-cooled but that didn't make sense either. Maybe some kind of pump? Turned out to be a steam engine powered by a flash boiler. They were a little tricky to handle.

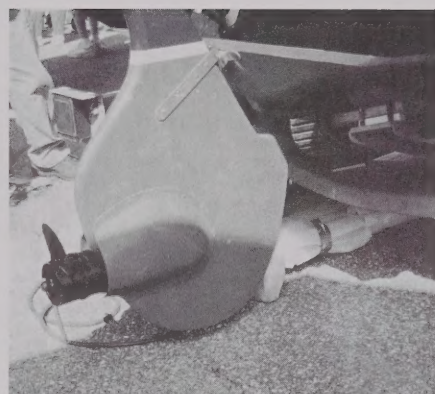
About 20 Bevan skiffs were coming along nicely under the trees with enthusiastic crews working away. No sign of Joe Youcha so decided he had delegated. I ran into him outside the gate at closing time. Can't build a Bevan skiff without Joe looking over your shoulder.

The afternoon was wearing on so the girls were turned loose and Dennis and I went off to gather up loose ends and check out the boats on the water. Overshadowing everything else on the water was the 50' Olympian, a P class as I recall. She has been restored by Brooklin Boat Yard and gives a feel for how things used to be in the good old days.

At the other extreme was a little open boat with some rather busy decking identified, if I remember rightly, as a Rushton cruiser. My notebook caddy had gone off somewhere and I was reduced to making notes on the backs of business cards, which I have misplaced. She had about 8" side decks and with her rather slack bilges, looked a bit tender. Dan Sutherland had her out several times and she was the only boat I saw sailing, in contrast to St. Michaels where there was lots of on the water action.



Sam Devlin leaning on Chinook 21. Obviously a comfortable boat.



Electric power on Nancy's China.



Damon, Mary, and Dean, the Ratty/Messy t-shirt gang.

Tony DeLima talks MAS.

Steve Kaulback talks guideboats.





E-Z Row man caught off guard.



Young tool shopper.



Dennis Bradley tries a turn in the E-Z Row coming towards us.

Builder with *Half Nelson*.



On the other side of the finger was a salty old gent with a Macinac boat. She was obviously a working boat rather than a show boat. Dennis was interested as he had helped build one up at Grand Marais.

Beyond was Geoff Kerr of Two Daughters Boatworks with his Caledonia yawl, an Oughtred design. Geoff has built five of these (or was it seven). By a stroke of luck the one on display had been delivered to a customer in Ohio. Geoff has been quite visible at MASCF and agreed that it was an important affair for stirring up business.

We spent some time with the King's Cruiser (*Wings*) because Dennis and the lady skipper came from the same neck of the woods. This gal, like several other skippers, brought her boat just to show off. She paid regular rate.

We stopped to chat up the Atlantic Challenge folk and get the latest on next summer's do. The International Festival of Seamanship and Boatbuilding will take place in Rockland, Maine, July 12-17, 2002. I gather that our friend Ben Fuller is involved with this affair. After that comes the Atlantic Challenge. Better block out some time next summer. Tell the boss you are having a triple bypass, or whatever it takes.

At the end of the rather expansive WB booth was *Maritime Life and Heritage* magazine, a joint effort of WB and La Chasse Maree. Dennis, smitten by the gorgeous covers and perhaps also the belle Francaise, signed up.

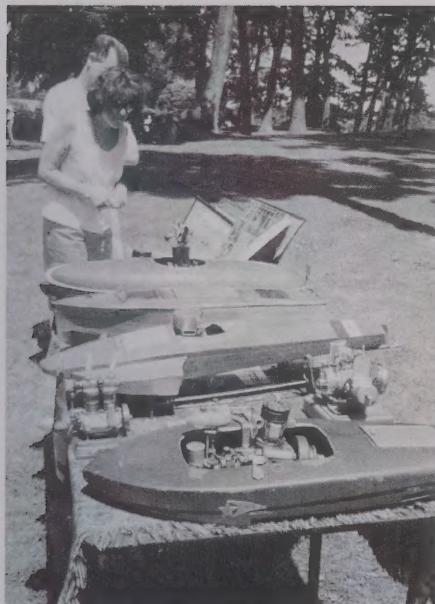
Two more major displays just about wraps up the boatbuilders. Mike Keifer of Great Lakes Boatbuilding right here in South Haven had about a half dozen of his various lapstrake boats. Next to Mike was the usual overwhelming display of Chesapeake Light Craft. Snug in a kayak right in the middle was John Harris, new first paddle, contentedly surveying the scene.

I haven't said much about the fancy stripper kayaks. I've never gotten to know any of the kayak builders which, of course, is my own fault. I've done some kayaking, even learned to roll, so I'm not agin 'em per se. I'm just not sure where these objets d'art fit into the great scheme of things. Who buys an umpteen thousand dollar kayak, and what does he do with it?

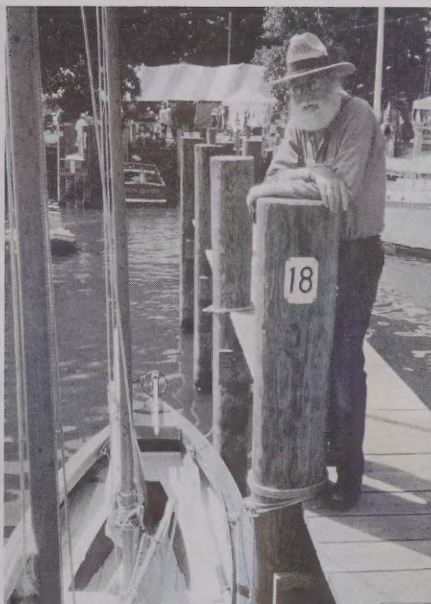
A statistical analysis of the program showed 99 exhibitors of which 19 were boatbuilders. Some people I expected weren't there. Middle Path wasn't that far away, but Andre tells me he has had some minor health problems. David Stookey of Open Water Rowing was on the program but something came up.

In addition to the give-me-your-money exhibitors, there were a number of educational displays, demos, talks, and kiddy boatbuilding. Interlux sponsored a display of privately owned boats up in the park that was certainly of interest. I assume it was free. The museum itself had a building with three wooden CG boats. There was another new building that closed just as I got there.

I'm sure that there weren't as many builders as at the East Coast shows, but it was a good affair and everybody I talked to seemed happy. What's up for next year? I'm not sure it's been decided yet. Give them some feedback if you have ideas. Valerie, dear girl, is moving on to other things so somebody will have a tough act to follow.



Antique gas engine racers.



Old salt with his cruising Macinac boat.



Stability demo with Geoff Kerr on Caledonia yawl.



Two Daughters Caledonia yawl.

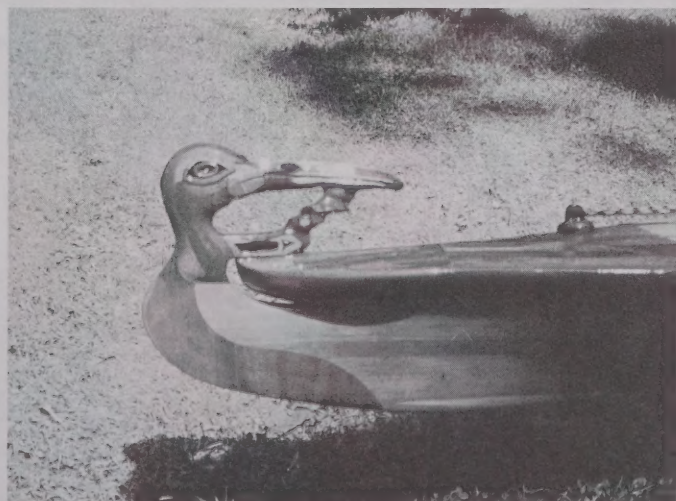


Une belle Francaise parle de magazines.

Part of Mike Kiefer's Great Lakes Boatbuilding display.



Prudent bow duck.





A contrast in plywood.



Ubiquitous show goer Chuck Raynor in his guideboat.



Swampscott Dory.



Cute little launch.

Heavenly launch. A powerboat to die for.



A real barrelback.

I have thrown in my lot with modern materials, but still have been in a number of WoodenBoat Shows on the basis of selling plans for wood boats. I think it is rather a fine point to exclude my hulls because they don't have a wood core. Remember the talk when Jon Wilson put carbon spars on his boat? Surely there is a world of difference between a stripper canoe, which must have glass overlays, and a chopper gun jet ski, but it is perhaps as much philosophy as material. I suspect that I have butchered as much mahogany as some small wood builders.

I'd like to see a show for small builders, forget the material. The only criterion would be annual gross and entrance fees would be on a sliding scale based on that gross. If the big guys want to come, fine, let them pay the freight.

I'd prefer something like MASCF where the people trying to make a buck would be immersed in a mob of people having a good time with their own boats. Maybe some overtones of Burning Man or the Rainbow people, oh, just a hint! Run it and police it like the Hudson River Revival.

Of course someone has to ride herd, and that's where an organization would come in. Maybe there aren't enough builders for a viable organization. We might have to reach out to the sweater people, the glue and paint folks, the toolies, maybe even the Saladmaster man! Well, it would take a lot of volunteer work, some inspired leadership, and, yes, a check. It could be done and it would be a lot of fun. If you ain't having fun you hadn't ought to be selling boats.

I hope you'll forgive the reminiscences and the personal opinion. No doubt it's indicative of advanced geezerhood. Be glad to talk to anybody about whatever.

Jimthayerboats@hotmail.com

Dan Sutherland and "toothy" author.



Another part of Mike Kiefer's Great Lakes Boatbuilding display.

John Harris (second from left), new cox at Chesapeake Light Craft.



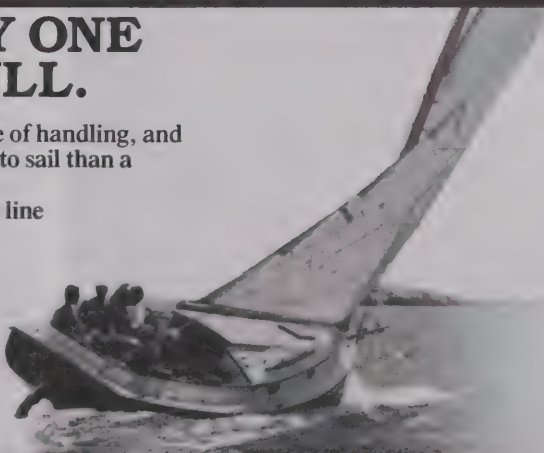
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A Trip I Could Tolerate

By Kinley Gregg

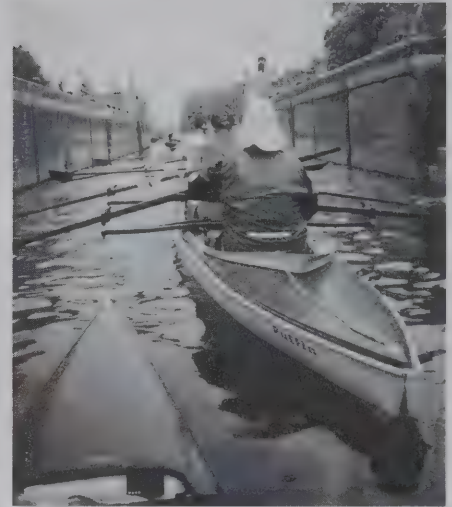
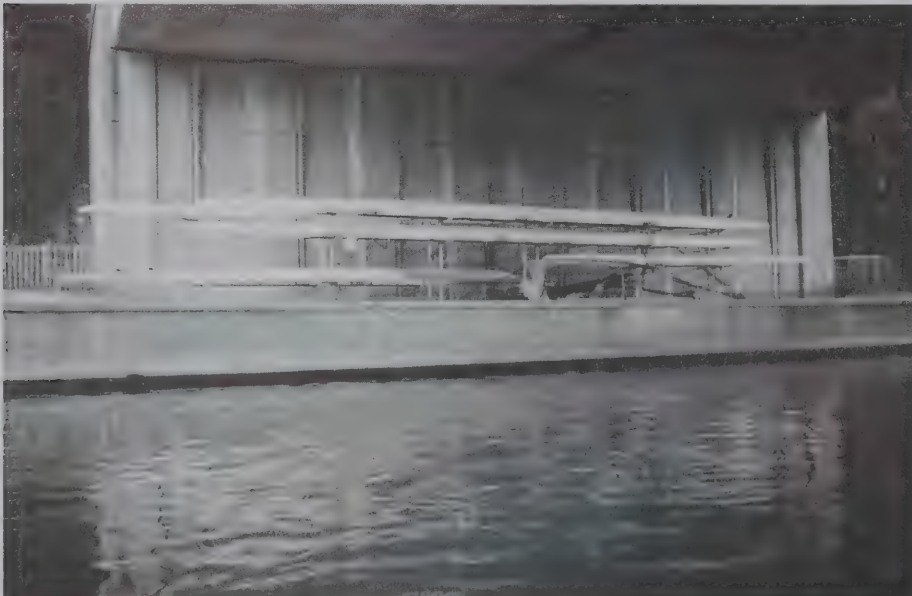


Canal boats moored at Runnymede.



Sightseeing by Alden. That blotch on the horizon is Windsor Castle. The sign says "The Crown Estate. No Landing or Mooring"

A novel boathouse concept: unsecured rowing equipment under a highway overpass.



Backing out of a lock.

Last winter, as snow lay deep on the land, an issue of the Alden Ocean Shell Association newsletter arrived, inviting members to join a rowing tour of the Thames the following August.

The game plan was to row from Oxford to West London, 100 miles, over the course of five days, returning by van to the same hotel each night. We'd be home in little more than a week. Even a travelphobe bent on building character through travel could manage.

Let me interject that I acquire trips the same way I acquire boats: I see one I might be able to tolerate, and I write a check. This is how one gets into Aldens in the first place.

So I wrote a check, dug out my passport, and, come August, dragged myself to that remnant of arcadian paradise known as an international departures terminal undergoing major reconstruction.

To kill the interminable preflight wait designed to starve prospective terrorists into submission, I perused *The Wind in the Willows*. Suspiciously, Water Rat's reverie on the pleasures of messing about in boats reared its head immediately. I always worry when the passage for which a work is known crops up in the first chapter. Once I started *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which is usually described as an ode on the Slough of Despond, only to find that the Pilgrim had passed beyond the Slough by the bottom of Page 5. Which caused me to wonder if anyone had ever read that far.

The Wind in the Willows, however, is an excellent choice for anyone rowing down the Thames, because you will see plenty of willows. On our first day I brought a guidebook along. According to the guide, we passed country manors, a prime minister's residence, dungeons, abbeys, and points of interest predating the Patriarchs. From the seat of an Alden I saw willows. I began to think we were in for a week of the rowing through the British equivalent of a salt marsh with the tide half out. A salt marsh with locks. Every three miles.

The trip prospectus had warned that participants should be able to row five miles an hour for hours on end. Unfortunately, one does

not transit locks at five miles an hour, especially on sunny weekends in July, when every "holiday-maker" in the Kingdom is queued at the quays waiting for his turn to continue downstream.

A rowing shell, of course, has considerable beam, and many of the locks were narrow. One double solved this dilemma by taking two of the four blades out of the oarlocks and paddling through each lock canoe-style. The rest of us quickly realized that if we had to row with the oarlocks hitting the shafts at half mast, it was easier to push than to pull, and took to backing into the locks. Backing in also allowed us to see upstream boats approach as they emerged from the locks, as well as to make eye contact with the lock keepers, who clearly were not accustomed to swarming Americans in Aldens.

Though time consuming, locks had their rewards. Navigating the waterways by canal boat is a popular recreation among Britons. At every lock those waiting together, or transiting together, strike up conversations about where they've been, where they're headed, and what they've seen. I suspect we talked to more locals in each of the countless locks we passed through than a tourist in Trafalgar Square sees all month.

The Thames supports a recreational river culture detached from any broader context or economy. We saw one workboat, a small tug, in five days on the water. But the steel liveaboards were ubiquitous. Many had an aspect of meticulously maintained bohemia; rooftop gardens, dogs, and blithe owners seemingly oblivious to worldly care.

And then there was the rental fleet, poorly kept fiberglass craft with fenders flopping promiscuously. These had an annoying way of rounding bends on the wrong side of the river, or breaking loose in locks.

The British seem to take public access more seriously than we do in the States. Most of the shoreline is available for mooring and, indeed, the river in places resembled a street with parallel parking on each side. Moreover, the former towpaths are open to pedestrians, and all along the Thames one sees hikers, walking sticks in hand.

Nearly every town we passed through had a conspicuous rowing club. Twice our group simply descended on a boathouse, pulled the Aldens out onto the floats, and asked if we might leave them there while we looked for lunch. At the middling-sized Marlow, we counted 170 shells in and around the clubhouse. In Maidenhead, the bulletin board listed a fee schedule for "social members," drinkers who like to hang around rowers but don't care to row. For someone from the coast of Maine, where a rowing shell is regarded as a peculiar kind of kayak, this constituted culture shock.

In the end, our group did not make it to London. We established a base at Eton and rowed in that vicinity each of the last two days. Varying levels of fitness and motivation within the group, in concert with locks and the logistical delays that dog any group enterprise, prevented our completing the trip as planned.

Nevertheless, the accompanying photos testify to the success of excursion, and to the initiative and effort of AOSA president Bob Tarrant and UK Alden rep Andrew Wilson. Readers who enjoy dining out in wet spandex and neoprene will want to keep the Association's 2003 tour of, tentatively, Germany in mind.



Official launches rafted up at Henley.



Amaryllis along the Henley racecourse.

Slipper stern launch with willows.



How does it go... "...the best laid plans...etc."

Each summer season I try for a one-week hermit cruise in my PMT; i.e., my Poor Man's Trawler, my 1998 Nimble Bay Hen 21 Sharpie shallow draft sailboat which I converted into a 5hp / 4-stroke Honda power cruiser, one knot per horsepower!

My first reported cruise was a four-day round trip to the head of navigation on the Delaware River. The next year it was a week to go down the Chesapeake Bay (from the top) to Annapolis and return. This year I decided to take a week to explore the upper Chesapeake Bay tributaries that feed the Bay, the rivers Elk, Bohemia, and Sassafras (see map).

Best Laid Plans... Another Cruise of PMT Amenity

By Bill Zeidler

After an enjoyable winter study of the charts, cruising guides, tides and currents, potential anchorages, hurricane holes, etc., I picked The Monday-through-Friday to go do it, complete with a "liberty pass" and blessing from my dear wife who was looking forward

to a week of peace and quiet. Being retired, it's really nice to go weekdays and avoid all the weekend boaters, "ramp rage," etc.

With everything ready on *Amenity*, my pocket custom PMT cruiser, I was all set to go. However, unforeseen family matters intervened and I had to postpone my casting off on my selected week. Needless to say, the week required at home weatherwise was beautiful and perfect in every way. Being really hot to go, I decided to go the very next week, despite every weather forecast source saying to look out for possible thunderstorms, rain, high wind, small craft warnings, etc. for the entire week.

Rather then write my usual Day One, Day Two, Day Three report, I'll just give you some of the highlights and a few photos.

Due to a really nasty front to come through, I took out and spent one night ashore in *Amenity*, but in a camping site in the Elk Neck State Park, which also was the ramp site for this week. Being a weekday, the several hundred camp sites were mostly empty. The camp "guard" told me to just drive around and pick out a site I liked. I found site #64, and at half price due to my Golden Age Passport, I thought I was all set to wait out a one day/one night storm.

Wrong! The guard tells me, "Sir, you can't stay at site # 64 as that is in the "Pet Loop" and you must have a pet to stay there." I told him that I did indeed have a pet, a pet turtle which was a liveaboard. He smiled and let me stay in the totally deserted "Pet Loop" anyway, knowing full well that I was full of you know what. Later, when I taking a rainy afternoon nap in *Amenity* in my campsite, a uniformed camp patrolman knocked on the companionway hatch and said he left something for me in my boat's cockpit. A summons? No, he left me a cute ceramic turtle with a bobbing head which my wife now enjoys. Later when I met this chap in person we both had a good laugh.

It did indeed rain, and rain like the dickens, but I did not see any animals queuing up two by two for a 40-day cruise on *Amenity*, so I felt the weather would clear, which it did the next morning.

Since I had a can of cold beans the first night for dinner (the water skiers that kept circling and rocking me in my expected-to-be secluded anchorage would not go home until sunset), I towed the boat from my campsite into the next town (Elkton, Maryland) and treated myself to a really nice all-you-can-eat steak and shrimp dinner, their Cholesterol Special, I think they called it.

As I approached the mouth of the Sassafras later in the week, our friendly U.S. Coast Guard decided to look me over. Of course I passed all the regulations, but they did inform me that even though I was single handling, I should have my throwable PFD out on deck so that should I fall out it could be tossed to me (by whom, I wondered).

"Take our picture?"

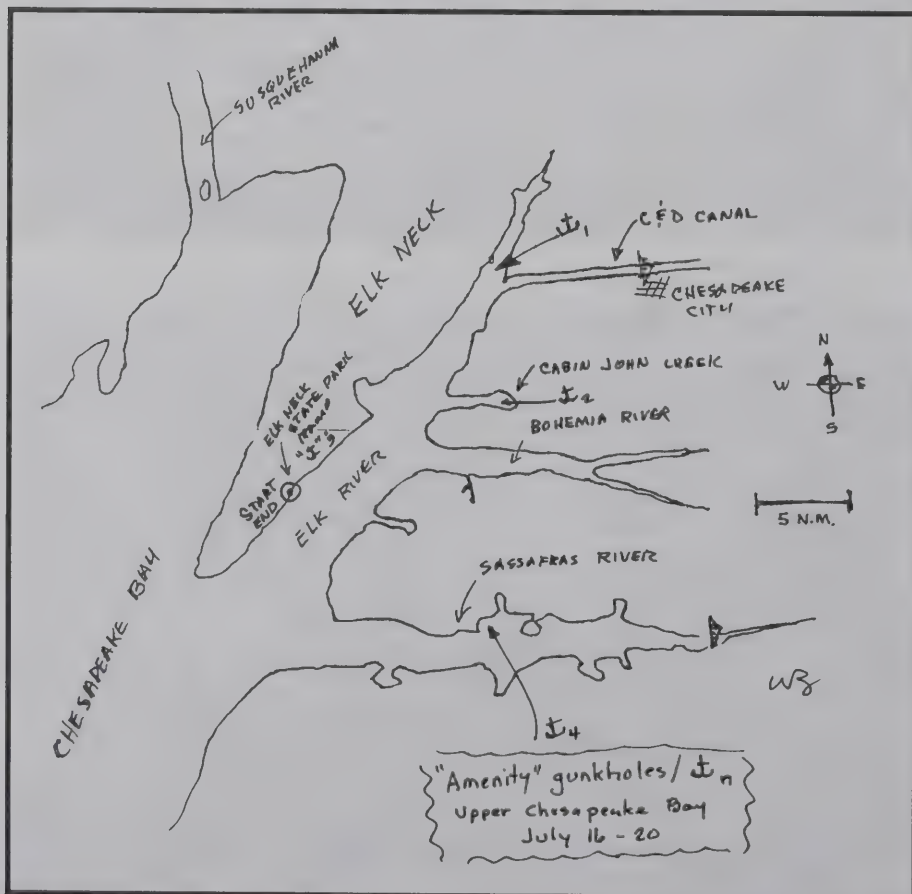
"Sure," I says.

I did have a nice breakfast ashore one morning in the small town of Chesapeake City on the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal (C & D Canal, would you believe). The large trimasted ship at the town's free public dock behind me was the *Lioness*, a steel hulled galleon operated for youth of Pennsylvania.

My last evening's anchorage was also "interesting." While sipping my happy hour



Campsite #64 at Elk Neck State Park, Maryland, on "Pet Loop."



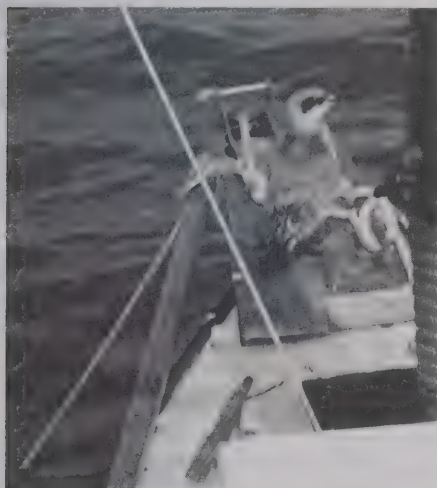
on the hook in the bay at Ordinary Point on the Sassafras River, Common Terns seemed to be holding an air raid attack on me for some reason. Swooping and squawking at me in wave after wave they came, often diving within only inches from my head. What had I done to deserve this?

Then on my anchor roller sprit I saw an immature Common Tern which decided to relax there for several hours rather than go fishing for itself. Kids, I tell you!

The bottom line was that I had four really nice days out of five, quite a few good smiles and laughs, and the bird guano washed off my anchor sprit with no problems.

I guess that although sometimes the best laid plans do not work out, if you go with the flow you can have a good time out anyway.

Immature Common Tern relaxes on *Amenity*.

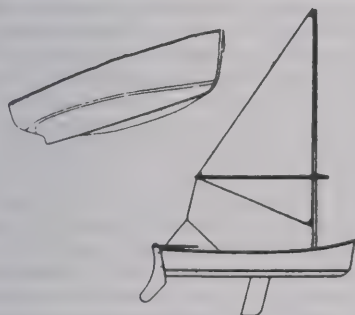


Our USCG on the job.

City Dock, Chesapeake City, on the C & D Canal.



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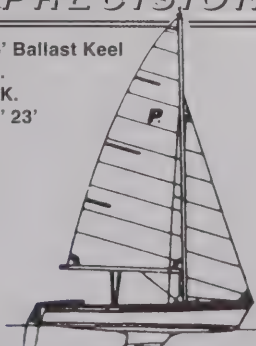
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Row the classic boat which was the focus of the first recreational boatbuilding classes in the country. This is the boat which John Gardner built with his assistant Sylvester F. Costelloe during his first classes at Mystic Seaport commencing in January of 1971.

When The Boathouse closes in October 2001 it will mark retirement for the Chamberlain dory skiff, *Harry Williams*.

The boat, known simply as "the Chamberlain" or "Chamberlain dory skiff," was named, 20 years after her launch, by Mystic Seaport's boatbuilder Barry Thomas, in honor of a fellow employee who kept aging Seaport physical plants functioning. A life member of Mystic's B. F. Hoxie Engine Company, Harry Williams was well liked by his colleagues for his sense of humor, his work ethic, and his

Row Mystic Seaport's Chamberlain Dory Skiff, *Harry Williams*, at The Boathouse

Part 1

By Sharon Brown

knowledge of ancient furnaces, buried cable and pipes. Harry died in 1988 at the age of 77 still making a contribution.

The Chamberlain *Harry Williams* (Accession Number 1971.238) has had a summer

presence on the riverfront for staff and members since her launch in late spring of 1971. But she has done hard service in Mystic Seaport's Boathouse since 1988 where she has been part of the livery fleet from May through October and used in the summer Boathandling Classes for the last 13 years. To paraphrase John's description, she has a narrow (18 1/2" maximum), rockered bottom which bites down deep when loaded, and the full turn of the rounded bilges develops lift. There is a skeg to track on, and a little rocker which enables her to turn with ease. The narrow stern is tucked high to prevent drag, and raked to part following swells. The hull has a double ended shape on the waterline. And while the sheer is sufficient to keep water out in weather, the freeboard is minimal and there is not much windage although if lightly loaded, the bow may fall off in a fresh cross breeze. There are two rowing stations and a variety of options to load her with one, two, or three people and gear, and set her on her waterline.

Easy and unimposing, the *Harry Williams* is a popular choice to row and yet despite her venerable age she is still in good shape reflecting the caliber of annual maintenance and minor repair by the employees of Shipyard's Paint Shop.

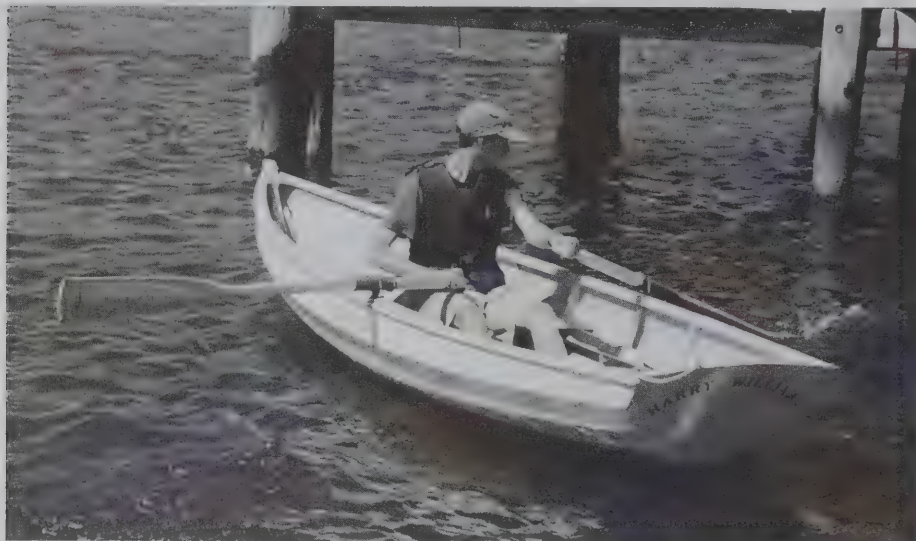
Would that all traditionally built small wooden boats were so fortunate. Few are meant to last, except those lucky recipients of special care, or those stored dry and forgotten while still fresh and full of life. Boatbuilders would have had difficulty keeping food on the table had our great grandfathers had the luxury of coddling what were essentially work boats, whether used for commerce or not.

In an effort to preserve a group of boats considered pivotal in John Gardner's 26-year career at Mystic Seaport, the Chamberlain will be taken out of service while she is still in decent condition. Earlier, *Little Sister*, the reproduction of the North Haven peapod, 14' 3" x 4' 2", which John built in 1984-85 with colleague Bill Mills in the White Boat Shop was similarly retired. This peapod (Accession No. 1985.136) was the last boat that John built. It is a copy of his personal boat (Accession No. 1985.135) built by Alton Whitmore of Pulpit Harbor, Rockport, Maine circa 1929. In the summer of 1991 John arranged to have the reproduction moved from storage to the White Boat Shop where he repaired a plank scarf and recaulked some of her seams. We painted her out and put her to use in the livery at The Boathouse where she remained through 1997.

The plan is to haul *Harry Williams* at the end of the 2001 season, complete her annual maintenance and painting and then gracefully retire her. After her 30-year career on the waterfront at Mystic Seaport she will be preserved in the permanent collection now stored in the Mill, AMERC. Waiting in the wings will be a new Chamberlain dory skiff, built in the John Gardner Boat Shop by Wade Smith and Sarah Blachly.

Whereas "skiff" is a regionally specific descriptive applied to a diversity of hull shapes and construction methods, dory-skiffs are the smallest, most common, relative of the dory family, ranging from the square-sided, flat iron to the rounded, knuckle sided models built on the Massachusetts shore.

William Henry Chamberlain (1864-1939) of Marblehead, Massachusetts designed and built many fine dory skiffs from the late 1890's through the early 1900's. Evolved from work



Demonstrating her ease of maneuverability, volunteer Matthieu Guillet from France, rows the Chamberlain dory skiff *Harry Williams* out of tight quarters. (Sharon Brown photograph)

Loaded with nourishment for the return journey, participants in the 2000 Annual John Gardner Small Craft Workshop prepare to push *Harry Williams* off the beach at Mason's Island. (Sharon Brown photograph)





One of many canine Boathouse visitors, this standard poodle enjoys an afternoon outing in *Harry Williams* on the Mystic River. (Sharon Brown photograph)

boats used by Cape Ann fisherman, dory skiffs became the most popular recreational small boat type around Marblehead and the shore north of Boston. A pre-outboard design, they rowed easily with little drag, they were seaworthy, and their flat bottoms enabled them to be beached without damage.

According to his wife, Georgene, William Chamberlain learned boatbuilding from Al. Graves father of James E. Graves, and went on to try his own hand and designs, setting up in his father's cow barn behind the family house in Marblehead. From these humble beginnings he struggled to keep solvent by working various jobs, building by lantern light, and sometimes relying on his mother who took in piecework for a shoe factory, to earn cash for the purchase of stock (G. Chamberlain, ca. 1938-39, ms.). For over 40 years, from this shop behind the house at 14 Orne St., came some of the finest traditionally built small craft whose reputation spread far beyond the outskirts of the north shore. Many of the best small boat builders worked in his shop, e.g., Albert Cloutman, Arthur Bamford, Charlie Lawton, Wilbur Cross and before his wife Georgene Chamberlain took over the books, Harry Hammond was the bookkeeper. Chamberlain built the famous Beachcomber and Alpha Dories which began racing in the 1890's and was a founding member of the Alpha Dory Club of Salem in 1902. A fully rigged racing dory would sell for \$90-\$100. "In 1913 Mr. Chamberlain's business was considered one of the best equipped in Essex County, and he was one of the first [1895] to have the Town's Electric power installed in his shop" (*Ibid.*). Chamberlain printed a first class catalogue circa 1920 advertising "Power Boats, Sailing and Clipper Dories, Rowboats and Skiffs." He built fine sailing boats, and later, cedar yacht tenders, and power launches for the Corinthian Yacht Club, the Eastern Yacht Club, and the Boston Yacht Club, and his reputation was contemporary with an extraordinary period of yacht construction and racing which the measurer Evers Burtner described in "The Golden Age of Open Class Racing At Marblehead, 1906-1940."

Boatbuilding is a competitive business. William Chamberlain was a generous, proud man with a significant presence in the community, and, his eyesight waning, he cut up

his forms and destroyed evidence of his boats rather than have the designs pass to someone else (John Gardner, *Maine Coast Fisherman* June 1951). He married in 1929, fathered a child, William Henry Jason (1934-2001) at the age of 71, and when he died in April 1939, he left a wife who had worked alongside him in the shop and four children. He had been blind for three years.

Chamberlain built his dories of wide white pine boards with knees and frames of hackmatack. He relied, as did most production shops of the time on patterns for parts (John Gardner, *Maine Coast Fisherman* June 1951). Men built by eye and worked from half models, and rarely lofted small boats or drew the lines.

John Gardner's article on dories in the May 1951 issue of the *Maine Coast Fisherman* prompted a letter to "The Mail Buoy" from George S. Hulen of Damariscotta. He described how as a boy of 14 in 1904 he took the trolley with his dad to Marblehead "to look up Bill Chamberlain. We found his house, and went out back to his shop." Hulen's boat, 20' 2" overall, 5' beam with centerboard, jib, and

leg-o-mutton sail cost \$50 complete. Hulen added, "I never saw a dory that I liked as well as Chamberlain's. He seemed to standardize on that one size and model, usually building two boats at a time. He had full sized wooden patterns of all the parts, and the boats were hand built except for a band saw and a power driven planer."

A. B. Morgan of Darien, Connecticut purchased a "new 18' Rowing-Sailing Dory, Centreboard, Rudder, and Thole pin holes included" for \$70 on June 25, 1935. Used for years at the family summer residence at Good Harbor Beach, Pigeon Cove, Gloucester, it was the boat that Dodge Morgan sailed as a boy. The brass builder's plate was stamped "W.H. CHAMBERLAIN / BUILDER / MARBLEHEAD, MASS.," and the dory came with bailer and rudder yoke. Two days later, Morgan purchased from Gloucester Ship Chandler Sherman B. Ruth, "1 pr. 8' ash oars \$3.36, 1 pr. 8' spruce oars \$4.00, 12 thole pins \$.35."

The impact of Chamberlain's contribution ripples yet in the world of traditional small craft. While little remains in the tight residential setting around the Orne Street house to suggest the productivity of the shop, a few blocks away on Washington Street, at the Marblehead Historical Association, a 20-foot Alpha Dory built by Chamberlain in 1906 and recently donated by the Chamberlain family is on exhibit in the gallery. And through a series of fortuitous events backyard builders still build Chamberlain's models 60 years after his death.

In December 1941, John Gardner was working the second shift at the James E. Graves lower, or Beacon Street, yard at the Barnegat end of Marblehead's Little Harbor, planking 38-foot Coast Guard picket boats for the war effort.

John was eager to learn the trade which he had been exposed to as a child on the banks of the St. Croix River in Calais, Maine. There he hung out in the boatshop at Barber's Beach off River Road where Pete and Jim Whalen worked, he built a skiff with his father, helped with other repair work, and subsequently built a small Banks dory on his own. More than 15 years passed before he built another boat, the

After a rowing lesson for their young charge, Boathouse visitors use their ingenuity to trim the Chamberlain and guide her back to her berth at the dock. (Sharon Brown photograph)





John Caligero of Connecticut records a Chamberlain moment for his son John Jr. who was visiting the museum to look at *General Lafayette*, the boat he was building at Friday Harbor, on San Juan Island in Washington State from John Gardner's plans of the *American Star*. (Sharon Brown photograph)

precursor Frostbite Dinghy, the *John G.*, (Accession No. 1990.142) which he built with hand tools at Pine Island Camp in the Belgrade Lakes in 1930 (or 1931). A mature man of 36, at Graves he worked with some of the best old time boatbuilders who were called back to support the war need. He shared the shop with Dan Grant, Charles W. Lawton, Jesse P. Hammond, Jack Robarts, Gerald Smith and Albert Cloutman, and he revelled in their proximity, listening, questioning and absorbing. John had read Howard I. Chapelle's articles on historic American small craft written for *Yachting* in the 1930's and articles in *Forest and Stream* written by W. P. Stephens. He had practiced redrawing hull lines from magazine articles, but the first boat he measured, on a rare Saturday not spent in the boatyard, had repercussions beyond his imagination.

It was the beauty of William Chamberlain's lightly built personal 19-foot gunning dory designed for duck hunting among the outer ledges which caught his breath as he describes in the introduction to *The Dory Book* (1978, 1987). The boat had lain under Chamberlain's verandah, stowed when he lost his eyesight. After Chamberlain's death in 1939, lobsterman Charles Briggs had eventually persuaded Georgene to sell the dory. She was hauled out at a cove frequented by Marblehead lobstermen when John spent a whole day in 1942 capturing her shape. "The next pleasant Saturday morning found me on the beach bright and early with notebook, tape, rule, chalk line, thin pine template stock, and all the other tools and equipment I could think of as possibly needed for the job." His elation, which he subsequently captured in print, still peaks interest, as it did then, when it lead Frank Caswell his Graves co-worker to entrust John with tracings of Chamberlain's patterns for the dory skiff which he had copied while apprenticing in the Orne Street shop near the end of Chamberlain's career.

The dory skiff is the last model in Chamberlain's catalogue. Two lengths, are advertised: "13' overall for \$28.00 and 16' overall for \$31.00." The illustration shows perhaps four planks, with three sawn frames, and the hull is painted white or a light color, with a roped gunwhale, two rowing stations, and a backboard in the stern sheets. They were aptly described: "These skiffs are models of beauty and stiffness. They make an excellent

tender for small yachts and are used extensively on inland waters. The ease with which they are managed makes them a favorite with the entire family."

John first published the lines of the gunning dory in *Outdoor Maine* in 1959. He drew the lines to the Chamberlain dory skiff in April 1951 and published them in the third article he wrote for the *Maine Coast Fisherman* in July 1951.

A number of boats were built to these lines and in 1964 Thomas G. Plant Jr. of Plant Bros. Corp., San Francisco, adapted them for modern materials, i.e., 3/8" marine plywood, Philippine mahogany seam battens, and fiberglass tape. Plant also modified them for sliding seat rowing and for sail with a sloop rig, leeboards, lateen sail, and rudder (John Gardner, *Maine Coast Fisherman* April 1964 and *National Fisherman* May 1965, and February 1969). Plant Bros. "built and sold a few dozen" and Plant wrote to John Gardner. "I row the skiff for hours at a time [on Tamales

Bay] and it is little more effort than walking. It has much the same pleasures of sailing; you can talk with your passenger and do not disturb the birds in the water; and I think one enjoys the pleasures of the water much more than cruising at high speed in a rough out-board" (see also, Chapter 25, *The Dory Book*, The 13-Foot Chamberlain Dory Skiff, p. 257-259.)

The lines and offsets for a "14' skiff... a slightly altered and enlarged version of the 13' 6" dory skiff designed and formerly built in the early decades of this century by William Chamberlain of Marblehead," were drawn by John Gardner, and published in the December 1968 edition of the *National Fisherman* under the title "A Rowboat For The Masses". Although intended "to focus attention upon the urgent need for a suitable general purpose utility rowboat for beginners to learn to row in," the 14' x 51" hull was suited for adaptation for sail, but not intended to support an outboard motor. John included construction notes for use of plywood planking, with or without seam battens, in the January 1969 issue of *National Fisherman*, and further discussion of the Plant Bros. renditions of the 13' 6" and 14' models was included in his February and April columns of the same year (*National Fisherman* 1969).

In April of 1969, in his 64th year, John Gardner left his family in their Saugus home and joined the Curatorial Department of what was then the Marine Historical Association, now Mystic Seaport. As previously described in these pages (*M.A.I.B.* March 15, 1996), the pace of his first year at Mystic was blistering and set the tone for his 26-year career in the museum world.

Commuting to Saugus on weekends, he spent every available waking hour in Mystic writing, planning, and working on traditional small craft. Using a room in the Clift Block for lofting, John scrounged materials for a workshop in the carriage barn, and began to design and build the 14' 7" pulling boat, *Lawton*, which was featured at the first Row-

Everyone had a turn at the oars, and now it is Dad's turn to guide *Harry Williams* back to the dock. *Harry Williams'* signature, her unique plank lining, was a source of amusement for John Gaardner. (Sharon Brown photograph)



ing Workshop which he inspired and planned in June 1970. He organized a meeting of 35 individuals interested in pulling boat design in October of 1970, established the Small Craft Laboratory, hired his first assistant, and in December of 1970 he planned the first recreational boatbuilding classes in the country.

John mailed letters to those who had attended the June workshop and October conference, and advertised in the *Log of Mystic Seaport* (Winter 1970, 22(4):141-143) and his *National Fisherman* (January 1971) column, describing a 15 week class to be held Tuesday evenings in the Small Craft Laboratory, from 8PM-10PM, starting January 12, 1971. The response was beyond what he and Curator Edmund E. Lynch had anticipated, and it was necessary to hold a second class on Thursday nights, limiting each to 15 students.

John's December 4th (1970) letter urging prompt registration, described the class as "A Working Introduction To Boatbuilding—A beginner's course in wooden boat construction for amateurs, presenting trade fundamentals in the context of a working boatshop typical of New England when the trade was at its height. The tools and materials of the trade will receive particular attention. Building methods and techniques, especially those not adequately treated in published manuals, will be explained and demonstrated. During the course, two boats, one clinker, the other carvel, will be carried through the various stages of construction from laydown to caulking and finishing. Emphasis will be given to planking as the primary boatbuilding skill, with detailed instruction in such planking operations as lining, spiling, getting out, hanging, and fastening." He elaborated, "... the aim is to offer a general orientation, and at the same time to provide individual guidance and practical assistance to individuals in the group, especially to those with building projects in progress, or even in the planning stage." The fee was a very modest \$30.00, and the recommended reading included Chapter XIX, Small Craft, from L. Francis Herreshoff's, *The Common Sense of Yacht Design*, the book which had been previewed during the 1940's and 1950's in *The Rudder* magazine and fervently read each month by John.

As reported in his March Comments column (*National Fisherman* 1971), "Classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in recreational boatbuilding at Mystic Seaport are now in progress as part of the new small craft program, and are scheduled to continue through the winter and early spring. Emphasis is on traditional American wooden small craft with attention directed to lines and laydown, to materials, tools and to construction under actual boatshop conditions. A 13' Chamberlain dory skiff is now building, exemplifying clinker construction. When this is completed a carvel type will be built, quite possibly a Maine peapod."

Mary Maynard's March 12, 1971 Sound Currents Column in the New London Day about the classes included a photograph of John and Syl demonstrating the building of a stem for "a Maine peapod" (Accession No. 1971.237 completed in August 1971 and used in The Boathouse livery fleet since 1988). "Among its 34 students are businessmen, college students, a clergyman, a retired physician, a retired naval officer, apprentice boatbuilders, a lobsterman, three housewives, and their guests. They drive from as far way as Boston,

Hartford and Fairfield. ... 'The lecture situation, where they sit and listen to me explain what Syl Costelloe and the shipyard staff did on the demonstration boat since the last class, isn't very productive. They'll swallow that for a while, but doing is the best way to learn,' he said. This week everyone participated. Each was given wood, tools and instructions on how to cut a rabbet into the stem piece. All listened attentively to Gardner's explanation. Class members have begun working on a Maine peapod, but Gardner does not know whether it will be completed before the 15-week class ends in April. 'The Marblehead skiff will be painted, put in the water and used at the seaport,' he said."

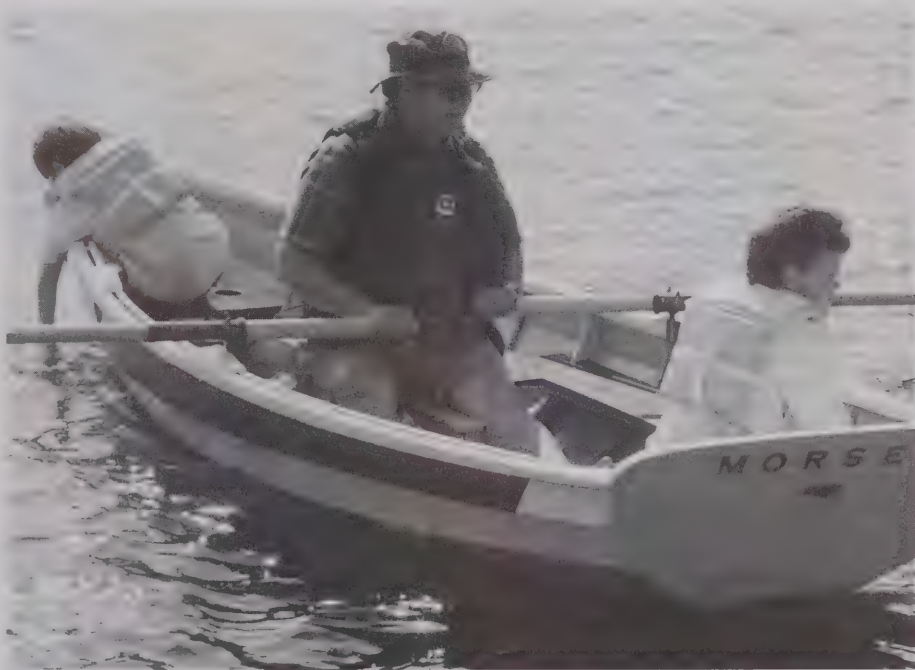
John's assistant, Sylvester Costelloe, a cabinetmaker from Ireland, emigrated in December 1966 and worked nine months at Dauntless Shipyard in Essex, Connecticut. When co-worker, shipwright Henry Jarvis left to work on the *Charles W. Morgan* for the Marine Historical Association, he wrote to Syl who had gone back home urging him to return and work at the museum. Syl started in 1967 on the *Morgan* and eventually used his fine joinery skills to build the fife rails for the *Joseph Conrad* and carve the tiller for *Annie the sandbagger*. He struck up a friendship with

John Gardner who would visit the Morgan or the Shipyard (then housed in buildings which became the White Boat Shop, and the Gray Boat Shop or Small Boat Shop, now known as The John Gardner Boat Shop), and often "swap yarns" with Henry. In 1970 John needed help with the expanding new Small Craft Program and hired Syl who worked for him until 1973.

The first classes were a source of pride and wonderment to John as he expressed in correspondence with his colleagues. He rose to the challenge and responded with enthusiasm. It was the first time that he was able to put his training as a teacher, his skills as an orator, and his knowledge of the boatbuilding trade to use at once. It set a style he continued until the late 1980's, sometimes teaching five nights a week, forcing him to nap in the afternoons. The classes were a success, and he continued teaching them in the White Boat Shop until fall 1988 when boatbuilder Gary Weisenberger took over after assisting in the spring classes. John went to work on another book project funded largely by the generosity of his friend, artist Lois Darling. He was 83 years old.

(To Be Continued)

Chauncy Rucker takes two young crew on a row in the Marblehead dory skiff *Morsel*, built in Mystic Seaport's John Gardner Boat Shop by Barry Thomas and Val Danforth under John's supervision in 1977. (Sharon Brown photograph)



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In 1992 I started to make and sell canoe paddles as well as instruct paddle-making classes. Shortly after I added canoeing instruction. For years, I have addressed the issues of paddle selection and the proper positioning of the paddlers so as to get the most out of paddling with the least effort and stress on the body. This article is intended for (two) tandem paddlers who paddle opposite sides and who are using the traditional method of paddling with a full stroke length while on flat-water (lakes or slow moving rivers).

When asked what is the best and most stable position in which to paddle, many will say that it is best for both paddlers to be seated and centered in the canoe. I might agree if you needed to paddle both sides of the canoe, such as in whitewater or sit-and-switch, but for most recreational paddling this position has some distinct disadvantages. It's understandable that people respond that the center (length) is the best position. It is hard to imagine coordinating a move to the edge (side). To most of us, the edge of the canoe means tipping and an unwelcome swim.

But if you think of a canoe as a seesaw, it is apparent that the canoe has two balance points. One is across the short axis (width) where the portage or carrying thwart is located. This balance point determines the tip forward and back and is critical in having the correct trim. The other balance point is the long axis that runs bow/stern along the centerline. This line determines the tip side to side. You may feel comfortable sitting on this balance point if nothing else is happening, but if you add paddling and weather it can become a precarious balancing act.

In contrast, if you shift from the center, and opposite your partner, you will act as outriggers to each other. It will take some co-operation but the ride will feel far more stable. I strongly encourage hip to gunwale (edge) and knees to the floor with your backside resting on the edge of the seat. I get there by having one of the paddlers say: "What side do you want? Ready to shift? One, two three, shift." Remember to shift back to the center upon switching sides or landings.

In addition to the issue of stability, there is the matter of technique. For centered paddlers you will find several things that happen that significantly impair your technique and heighten discomfort. Sitting centered means a longer distance to the water. This requires a longer shafted paddle, which puts more stress on your body. Imagine what an equal load feels like with a long handled shovel versus a short

Canoe Paddling Explained

By Caleb Davis



handled shovel, the same increased leverage and increased body stress is true for the paddle. I don't believe that recreational paddlers need that increased leverage and body stress.

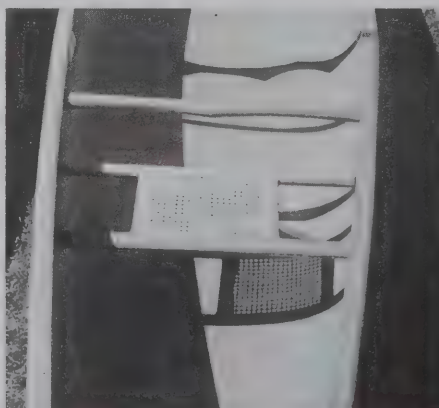
There is also the issue of decreased angle of the paddle to the water, which makes each stroke a bit of a sweep. Remember (in theory) that the most efficient stroke would be directly along the long axis line. This requires no steering for a straight line and it is the most direct line to move the canoe forward. By paddling hip to gunwale, you improve your technique by getting the paddle perpendicular to the water, minimizing sweeping action, and your paddle closer to the long axis line, which helps reduce the need for an excessive shaft length. This position gets you closer to the working area and helps to reduce body stress.

Seats. I'm sure that you'd agree that most seats are designed to center the paddler and that the seats are a real pain in the backside if you move to get your hip touching the gunwale. There are three distinct styles of canoe seats. Perhaps the easiest to manufacture are the bucket seats. These are usually made of rigid plastic and are almost always centered. You can imagine how thrilled I am with these! Next are the wood caned seats. These are usually an improvement both aesthetically and in comfort, yet the frame seat is often too narrow to allow one to comfortably move hip to gunwale. Paddling this way loses its thrill very quickly when you have to straddle the seat frame. Finally there is the bench seat. If this is made wide enough and has enough foot clearance, then the use of a thin sitting pad allows the paddler to comfortably be positioned exactly where it is best for stability and technique.

The bottom line for better traditional flat water stability, technique, and body comfort is to get your hip over to the gunwale. Be aware that the canoe manufacturers may be inaccurately determining our comfort and sacrificing good technique. I would love to see manufacturers provide seat inserts and removable bench top for bucket and caned seats. This would allow paddlers to move to the desired side as well as able to use the fixed seats for comfortable crossover paddling.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 603-532-5992 or tremolo@together.net. For more information about Caleb's activities, please log on to www.wcha.org/builders/tremolo or www.traditionalflatwater.org.

Caleb Davis, 489 Thorndike Pond Rd., Jaffrey, NH 03452





Answers to Frequent Questions

Reprinted with permission from *Feather Canoes*

By Mac McCarthy

I want to try to answer some of the most frequent questions I get asked by e-mail, telephone calls, letters, and at my shop. In my book, *Featherweight Boatbuilding*, I tried to describe as simply as possible the way in which I build a Wee Lassie canoe, where I use one, and why the little canoe has remained my favorite for well over 20 years. It was impossible in writing the book to cover everything. Some of the questions are not answered in the book, for a very simple reason. They can't be answered without detailed knowledge about the person asking the question.

For instance, How stable is the Wee Lassie? A simple question, but there is no simple answer. I personally have never tipped over in a Wee Lassie, but that is not the answer the person writing is asking for. To answer the question intelligently, I have to know the skill level, the weight of the paddler, and where he or she intends to use it.

I recently found this statement in W.R. Stevens' book *Canoe and Boatbuilding*, published in 1891, but still very true. I quote, "How much sail to carry? In a canoe, the greatest elements in carrying sail are the personal qualities of the canoeist, his skill, activity, daring, prudence, and good judgement; and their value is easily appreciated when on the same canoe one man can carry 100 ft² of sail, while another will hardly be safe with 50. This being the case, it is impossible to calculate what area a canoe will carry safely."

Another question often asked is, can the writer stretch the Wee Lassie? I ask why. Then, and only then, I find out that the writer weighs in at 200 plus lbs., with emphasis on plus. At this point I suggest a Wee Lassie Two or a different design with a wider beam than the Wee

Lassie Two, which we are calling the Big Bob. Another question frequently asked is, can the Wee Lassie Two be modified to take two people? My answer is usually OK, if the people who are going to paddle it are both 100 lbs. or under. Otherwise, they should go to a standard tandem canoe and be comfortable.

People write about seat locations in tandem canoes. Again, it depends on the weight of the people who are going to use the canoe, a 200-plus-lb. man in the stern of a canoe with a 90-lb. wife or child in the bow seat will make for an unsteerable canoe, one that could be very dangerous in a squall or rough water.

This is a major safety factor in the Wee Lassie. The paddler's weight is low and centrally located. Stability in a Wee Lassie becomes critical only when getting in and getting out. You cannot stand up in a Wee Lassie.

Another question frequently asked is, how long does it take to build a Wee Lassie? Here again, without knowing the experience level of the builder, this is a hard question to answer. In my two-week class at the Wooden Boat School in Maine, over 100 students completed their Wee Lassie type canoe, caned their seat, and finished a double paddle. Basically the student worked an eight-hour day for ten of those days, with an extra day on the weekend in between, and some work in the evenings after supper, about 100 hours at a steady pace, with everything prepared ahead of time.

Each day's work was scheduled, so the student knew what should be accomplished, and quicker students often helped the slower ones catch up. These were ideal conditions. At my shop in Sarasota, I have taught at least another 100 students who have successfully completed their boats. Here again, all the tools

are provided, all the materials are ready for use when needed, but the pace is often more relaxed, as the time limit is not enforced by another class needing the space.

Time to build a Wee Lassie for an individual working alone is largely dependent on his personal abilities, the nature of his work space, and availability of various materials needed for the construction. If the builder is in no hurry, finding materials, and buying the proper tools can be part of the process, and enjoyable. To someone with limited time, it can be a frustrating experience.

I recently got an e-mail from someone who complained about the cost estimate to build a Wee Lassie in my book. He had gotten a price for cedar strips, coved and beaded from a reputable supplier, that was almost the cost for a completed boat in my estimate. He had disregarded the fact that the cost in the book was for raw lumber, not for finished coved and beaded strips. He evidently, from the tone of his letter, had no conception of what is involved in preparing a kit for the general public. Coved and beaded strips don't just happen.

To maintain quality control and a good reputation, the supplier must have first class equipment, a good reliable source of first class material, and qualified material handlers and supervision. None of this is cheap. The advantage the individual builder has is that his labor is free. This is where you can save money if you already have the tools to do the work. If you don't have the basic tools, it pays to get your strips or a complete kit from a reputable supplier.

All of us who have written books on building the cedar strip canoe have different working methods that we have gotten accustomed to. Not necessarily better, just different. We have all tried our best to help the first-timer, and often the more experienced builder, build the best boat he is capable of. It can be confusing to combine different systems. At least on the first boat, pretty much stick to one system. For instance, different epoxies require different techniques. Some epoxies may be cheaper, but are not suitable for clear finish. Some techniques work fine if you are going to paint your canoe, but again, are not suitable for clear finish.

One thing I have learned is that if you want to build a great boat, you have to start right at the beginning, do each step as well as you can, and don't rush. Perfection is a dream, excellence is attainable. Often an extra hour spent sanding, or one more coat of epoxy before final sanding for varnish, can make all the difference in the final appearance of your boat.

If you are interested in wood epoxy boat building, you can get a FREE subscription to *Epoxyworks*, an informative booklet put out twice a year by writing to *Epoxyworks*, P.O. Box 908, Bay City, MI 48707-9933. It is published by Gougeon Brothers and has a lot of good information in each issue. The latest issue even has a picture of a Wee Lassie Two built by Dennis Palin of Houston Texas, using my book. I have used their epoxy and their hardener for well over 10 years with total satisfaction, both in my classes, and my custom canoes.

While I'm recommending stuff, you can't beat the Matsushita combination blade handled by Dave Carnell. The blade sells for \$26 ppd. 910-686-4184.

The recent *MAIB* writeup on the John Gardner Small Boat Fest at Mystic had a Mystery Guy with a couple of micro-miniature boats. I immediately recognized Gavin Atkin's Mouse scow canoe, so the Mystery Guy must be Dave Colpitts.

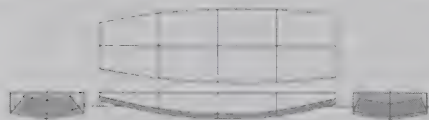
Gavin's one of those fellows who's obsessed with simplicity. We've been trading scans of salty old skiffs and Commodore Munroe tidbits by e-mail for some time. Gavin has evolved an eclectic and very interesting Free Boat Design website with plenty of links to cheap, if not free, boat stuff: <http://home.clara.net/gmatkin/freedest.htm>

Gavin's got loose with the free HULLS hull design software and the result is, among other free designs, the Mouse family of boats. It's been said many times that the scow hull form is the quickest and cheapest boat for the money, a square-ended scow morphs into the rounder-ended punt and, as it gets larger, into the jonboat and garvey. All these are good solid boat types.

Visit his web site and download any of his design ZIP files and you will get a series of files including a GIF showing the lines, construction details in both GIF and DXF forms, diagrams for cutting ply, offsets for, and a Hulls data file. The boats are so simple to construct that he's given you more than enough information.

So many people have been interested in the various Mouses (meeces or mice) that an e-mail discussion forum for builders and users is up at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mouseboats>.

The Mouse by Gavin Atkin



Gavin writes: "The Mouse started life as a one-sheeter; that is, an exercise to develop the smallest, cheapest possible boat. As a result, it's not a boat to which you can safely trust your life in any sort of waves, as anyone who climbs into a Mouse will quickly realize. Nevertheless, a canoeist would probably consider it pretty solid, and I think it is capable of providing hours of summer fun in a strictly supervised environment. Not bad for a boat this cheap.

Anyway, the first Mouse is now built and tested, and here's a report on it from my Connecticut friend Dave Colpitts.

"Dear Gav: So, now that I really have something to tell you, here goes. Took Mouse to a local lake with my friend in an 11' rec kayak, and we were joined by some "holy roller" in full sea kayak regalia, who looked at the Mouse on shore and said things like, "be careful out there, man," "you shoulda used epoxy, man," and, "wow, are you nuts, man." Then, he watched me launch and take a few strokes, and he turned a full 180 and said, "Wow! It's way better than I thought. Howja make that thing?"

To make a short story longer, this was the second test. The first yielded mild optimism in a raging large river, but sent me back to the basement for a skeg. Last night I rigged one from a scrap of 1/4" ply and 10" of 1x1 pine, an ounce of Liquid Nails, four drywall

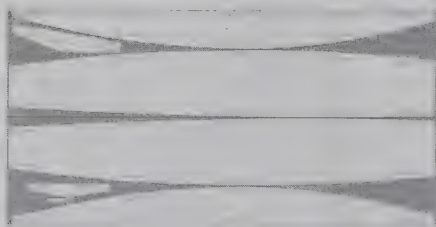
Mouse and the Mouse Family

By Gavin Atkin and Craig O'Donnell

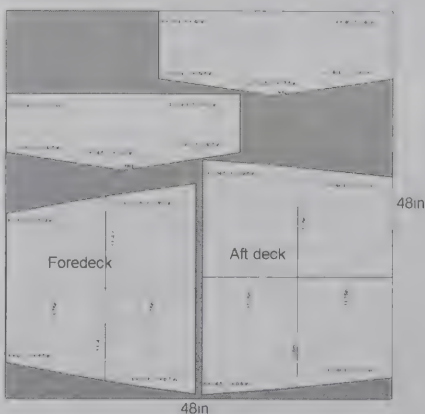
screws, and two nails. This added about 3 oz., half an hour, and 40¢ to the project. Son of a gun if it didn't allow me to keep up, wind and chop notwithstanding, with two Neckys, one Old Town, and a rather surprised but very friendly, sea kayaker.

By "keep up," I simply mean paddle all around a windy lake while talking to other paddlers and never once feeling like I slowed them down. Not a race, not even fast touring, but exactly the kind of boating many of us actually do. And, more importantly, would do more of if boats cost \$30, weighed 30 lbs., and took only maybe 10 to 30 hours to finish rather than 60 or 100. The skeg made it feel like a 10 or 11-footer to me, which is good enough, considering. I'll bungee it up later for instant deployment, but can only imagine raising it for stumps and rocks.

It felt like a rock (well, like a nice stable little boat anyway) and never came close to plowing the front transom as I had feared. From shore she is an easy launch, stern out, and almost allows dry entry if careful of her main hull seam. The sea kayaker said she tossed a little wave in front (and, in fact, pounded rather comfortably in the modest chop) but left an almost glassy wake. Wow, I repeat. I am pleased as punch, Gavin and other mouseboaters, and will get you the pix as promised this coming week. Regards, David"



Decks and frames - fitting decks and full frames is strongly recommended, as they will provide approximately 300 lbs. of emergency flotation.



According to Gavin, this boat can be done "in 12 to 24 hours of work using the kitchen table. The main material is 1/4" hardwood ply, the main hull takes one sheet, while the decks and first and third frames are intended to come

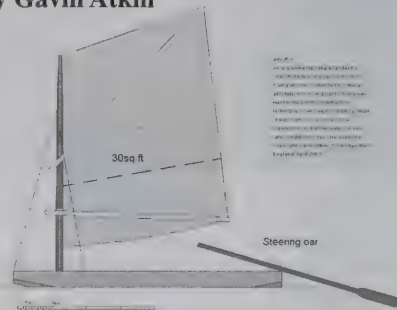
out of an extra half sheet. Other framing should be 1" by 1/2" or so pine, although just about any cheap lumber will probably do. The stitch and glue seams are epoxy and glass tape, other glues may be of cheaper varieties such as polyurethane.

In most circumstances, I would think that the decking and enclosed frames will be very valuable, as the stern and bows enclosed areas will provide a good amount of precious emergency flotation."

Flying Mouse

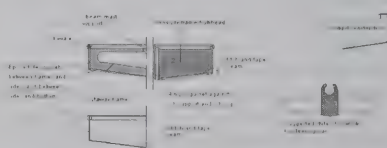
Next Gavin decided to add a sail to yer basic Mouse: "Flying Mouse is an exercise to develop just about the smallest, cheapest possible sailing boat I can conceive. I think it is capable of providing hours of summer fun in a strictly supervised environment, which isn't bad for a boat this cheap to build.

Flying Mouse by Gavin Atkin

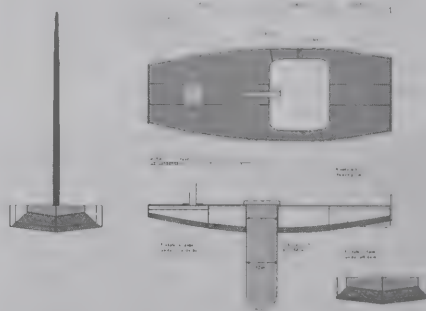


The main material is intended to be 1/4" hardwood ply, the main hull takes one sheet, while the remainder is out of an extra one-and-a-half sheets. The framing should be 1" by 1/2" or so pine.

Frames



The mast is marked as being tapered, although I suspect that a straight-sided closet pole could serve.



Please refer to David Grey's Polysail website or other authoritative source for instructions on how to make suitable sails."

Thus we wind up with something that's a lot like a micro-sized sneakbox. It's fair to point out that a single pivoting leeboard will surely work as well as a daggerboard and will be simpler to build. It also eliminates annoy-

ing spitting from the centerboard trunk when you decide simply to paddle your Flying Mouse around for a while, and gives you more room to ooch about on the floor.

You can also build a Mouse first and convert her to a Flying Mouse very easily if you take the leeboard approach.

Based on my experience with the Bolger Sailing Peero (24' by 12'), 30 ft² is a lot of sail area. When you make your spritsail, if you include a halyard, you might make a slab-reef at the bottom with a spare grommet for the spritboom. Gavin is right to give such a small boat a lot of sail, since it's most fun to take her out when the summer wind is blowing lightly. But a reef will let you sail downwind or on a broad reach to get back if you're out and it breezes up.

Lacking a halyard, the traditional approach with a sail that is permanently laced to the mast is to remove the peak sprit, letting the head of the sail flop off to leeward and creating in effect here a 15 ft² leg-of-mutton sail. In either case, you're going to have to beach to reef.

Gavin has drawn shrouds, which wouldn't be necessary and are in the way of letting the sheet run and the sail weathercock. If you want to help support the mast, use the old sailing canoe trick, run the halyard forward to the stempost, through a block or fairlead, and up to the masthead. This acts as a forestay when the sail is hoisted.

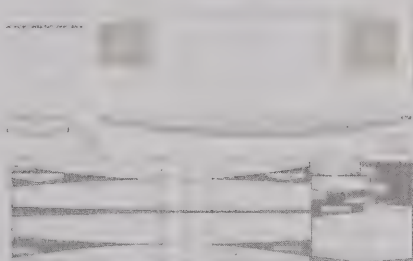
If you're getting water over the foredeck

(happens sometimes with the Bolger Peero, too) put a V-shaped coaming in front of the cockpit and make the vertical pieces slant forward like you see in the old sailing canoes. A raked coaming or a small vertical one will only lift spray into your face.

Cruising Mouse

The latest Mouse is an extended version using a little more plywood and just shy of 12' long. As she gets longer she surely begins to resemble the Thames punts of Victorian days.

Cruising Mouse by Gavin Atkin



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Mystery Builder & Boat Revealed

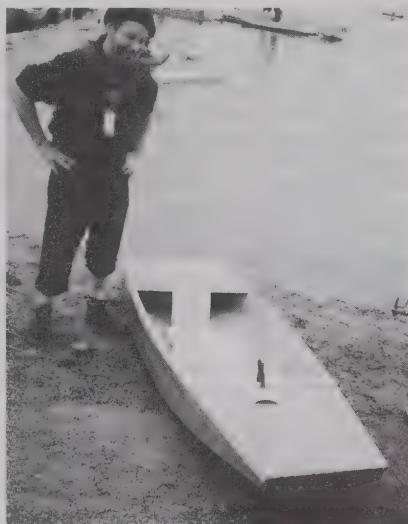
By Bob Hicks

It was the following excerpt from my report on the John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Workshop in the July 15 issue that occasioned our hearing from Gavin through Craig:

Mystery Builder

This young man had both square and pointy ended little dinghies he had built. The square ended craft has particular appeal for youngsters with its high degree of stability, as was demonstrated by this youthful paddler. Wanna know more? Me too. It turned out that his boats had not been "properly registered" so who he is and what they are remain a mystery. Perhaps he'll see this and come forward?

Why hadn't I just asked the man who he was and what was he up to with his tiny boats? Well, on the several occasions on my wanderings when I was in his vicinity, he was busy with people trying out his little boats, and I do not choose to intrude like some sort of TV news person. Perhaps the next time I pass by... As the day passed I went on to other things and only when I looked over my photos did I recall I had never followed up. No matter, I'd just look him up in the registration forms Peter Vermilya sent on to me. He wasn't there!



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So far in this series we have seen the sailing dinghy design reach the stage where a notional sail plan has been derived with centreboard (c.b.) and rudder sketched in. The latter have not been considered in detail so perhaps this would be a good place to begin. The c.b. was shown only as a rectangle without details as to how it was to be hung or pivoted.

Normally the board will be pivoted on a bolt positioned near the forward edge of the board and low down near the bottom of the hull. This is logical from a pivoting viewpoint if not a water-tightness one, although if rubber washers are fitted under non-ferrous metal ones, there is little possibility of leaks. If you want to have the pivoting bolt above the waterline, the board may have to take on an awkward shape in order to permit this and will almost certainly have to be controlled with a line rather than a handle.

When designing the centreboard, the first consideration has to be the centre of lateral resistance (CLR) so consider the board first in its vertical position, then think about the pivoting arrangements. The sketches show a couple of possibilities. So far as area is concerned there are differing opinions on this (of course), but C.A. Marchaj in his *Aero Hydrodynamics of Sailing* suggests that the area of the fin or centreboard should be about 4% of the sail area. On this basis the dinghy we have been looking at would require a c.b. of some 4.75 ft² or 1.75 ft² larger in area than that shown on the drawing. Shape is equally controversial and applies to both rudder and c.b. (or daggerboard), these days both are known as "foils" and much has been written about the optimum shape.

However, look at any collection of craft of differing classes and see how much agreement there is on what this shape should actually be. The mechanics of the rudder may be better worthy of a detailed look. As already mentioned, the actual blade can be fixed, in which case, if it hits the bottom it is liable to rip off the transom fittings, hinged on a pivot so it can swing up in the event of grounding, or lifting so it can be pulled up in shallow water or for taking to the ground.

The fixed rudder is self-explanatory and worth fitting only if you always sail from a pontoon in deep water or if simplicity is the overriding consideration. The lifting variety

Design Rules – OK!

Part 6

By Dennis Davis

Reprinted from *Afloat!*

was discussed briefly in the last issue and usually has the rudder blade sliding vertically within a case or frame which is hung on the transom. A variation on this is where the rudder, in its entirety, fits into an in-hull case, Norfolk Punts and International Canoes have an arrangement like this.

The pivoting blade rudder is most common and as such lends itself to greater variation. Commonly the blade is pivoted within two cheeks, normally with some kind of elasticated downhaul fitted to keep the blade in its working position while allowing it to swing up if it hits an obstruction. If the elastic weakens, the blade is liable to come up when least required; e.g., when sailing at speed and needing maximum efficiency from the rudder.

A better method, but one which can lead to considerable complication, is where the blade is pivoted at the top of the rudder stock and held in its working position by means of shock cord, or in the more complex types, a ratchet arrangement. The latter can prove expensive to repair in the event of damage occurring. There is a lot of scope for personal innovation where pivoting rudder blades are concerned, assuming a one-off design or a development class where experimentation is encouraged.

Of importance to both rudder and centreboard is the cross sectional shape. For many years designers and builders were content to use flat sheets of metal or wood for rudder blades and boards, but this is just about the worst possible shape for hydrodynamic efficiency. This may not matter too much for craft designed to be built to a certain price or from a specific amount of materials, examples here being the two small dinghies in my own range of designs which, because they are each cut from just two sheets of plywood, utilize off-cuts of that ply for rudder and daggerboard.

There is some controversy about the best cross-sectional shape and thickness for foils (surprise! surprise!) so if you are interested in this aspect of design, read the books and perhaps join the Amateur Yacht Research Society. The AYRS publish some 113 booklets and books on a wide range of yacht and small craft design topics including foils. One point which may be worthy of mention is that it is generally thought to be a mistake to have the aft edge of the foil coming to a feather edge, better is a square aft edge of up to 10% of the foil thickness. Gordon Trower in his *Yacht & Small Craft Design* suggests this can improve lift by as much as 10% with little increase in drag.

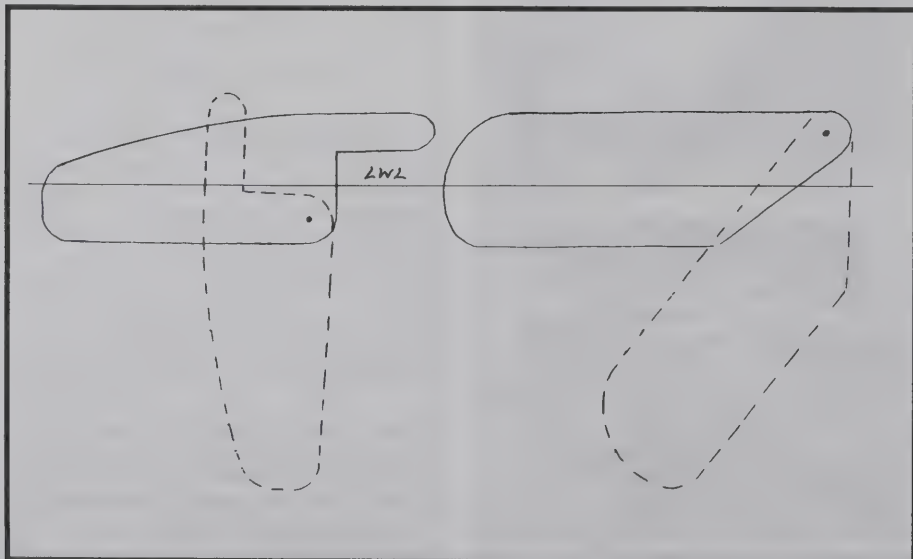
Those of you who have persisted with this series from *Afloat!* No. 1 may remember we began by looking at boat lengths and construction methods. It was originally intended to discuss hull cross-sectional shapes, but the need to include other articles meant this was omitted. We shall catch up with it now. Lateral stability in unballasted craft such as the sailing dinghy we have been considering depends largely upon cross sectional hull shape (form stability), beam (which is part of form stability, of course), and length including keel rocker.

The implication being the more beam and the flatter the cross section, the better the stability. This is true if initial stability and carrying capacity are our only concern; the Thames lighter is a good example of this type of hull which is really just a rectangular box with some concession to hydrodynamic shape at each end. The Thames sailing barge was developed from this shape and maintained the rectangular cross section for most of the hull length, but with a good entry and run being blended into the shape to give a good turn of speed when conditions were right. If such a shape is utilized for light small craft the user is lulled into a false sense of safety by the feeling of great initial stability.

However, if such a craft is subjected to waves, or is heeled, then its waterline beam is effectively diminished rapidly and it suddenly becomes very unstable. This is a lack of final stability and can lead to a dangerous situation. Thus we can see that a flat cross-section may not be an entirely satisfactory shape for a small craft. You will probably be thinking here of flat bottomed craft which appear to function perfectly well. Yes, there are ways of improving the flat bottom to make it safer. Flat bottomed canoes and kayaks tend to have long straight keels because this helps the paddler to paddle in a straight line.

When such a craft is heeled, or used in waves, its waterline beam is reduced as already noted and because of the straight keel the centre of gravity tends to rise so stability decreases even more. If, on the other hand, the keel is well rockered, when the craft is heeled the centre of gravity does not rise so much hence stability is better. This may be better understood if a hull with a hogged keel (where the keel line is concave rather than convex) is considered. Here the narrow ends of the craft are deeper in the water than the centre, wider section, the centre of gravity is high and the stability is low. After the flat bottom, with or without rocker, the hull can be given a V-bottom which adds greatly to stability.

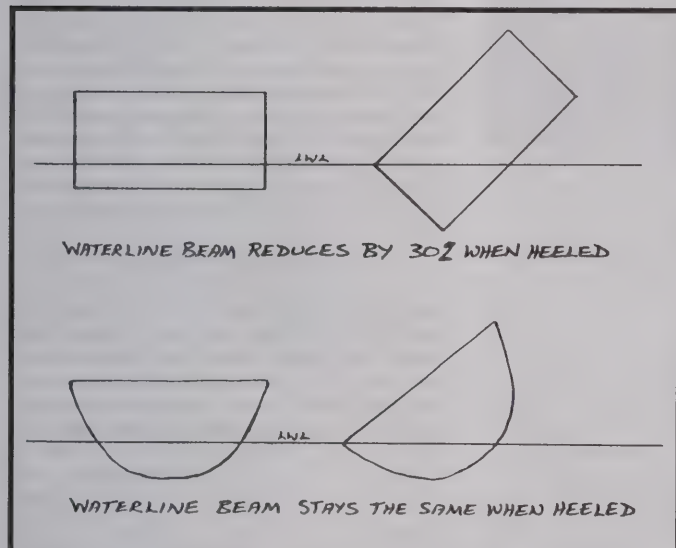
Obviously when such a hull is, heeled the flat of the bottom comes into its own, and because it will be curving out of the water at each end stability will be improved. The V-bottom



can be further improved by adding a turn to the bilge, or in the case of plywood craft adding a chine panel to give a multi chine hull. Whether such a change adds greatly to the performance of the craft depends upon the skill of the designer. From this we can see that not only is cross-sectional shape important for stability, but the designer must also take into account rocker, and initial stability is less important than final stability.

Try to have a look at some canoes and kayaks and determine whether they are going to have good final stability. Sailing craft are less easy to categorize, some modern racing craft have so little initial stability they will not float upright without a crew aboard but they sail well and are very fast.

(To Be Continued)



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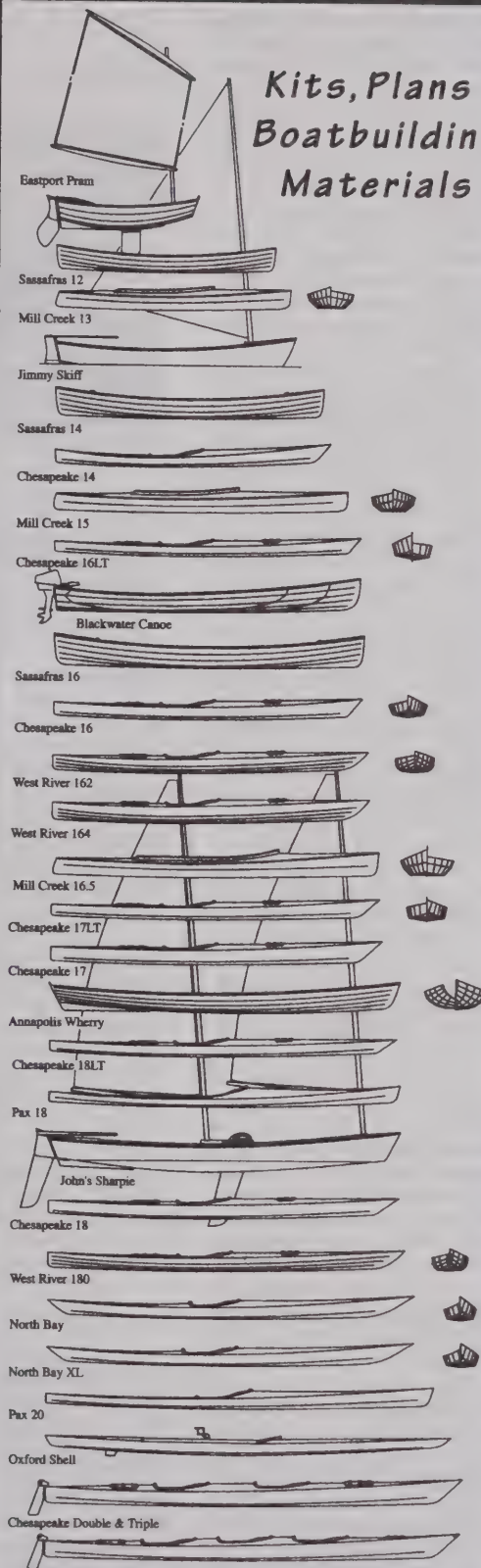
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CHESAPEAKE LIGHT CRAFT

I ordered a set Dave Carnell's \$200 Sailboat plans when I was back home in North Carolina last August. After returning here to Majuro, Marshall Islands, I started construction around the first of September. The boat and all accessories were finished by around the end of January.

First, I didn't build the boat exactly to his plans. Normally I can resist the urge to modify because I know that I'm not a naval architect, an engineer, or particularly lucky, but this time I felt that I had no choice. It all started with the flotation. Sailing conditions here are boisterous for small boats. We usually have 20-knot trade winds and a vicious 3' to 5' foot chop in the lagoon. I wanted to be sure that if swamped or capsized, I could easily right and bail out the boat.

The answer seemed to be lots of foam, but I found that you can't get foam here. Nobody insulates. Two-part urethane foam is available, but at astronomical prices. I've never used it before and didn't want to experience the learning curve, so foam was out. I thought about sealed containers, like water jugs or 5-gallon paint buckets. Buying them new would be as expensive as the foam, and finding used containers to recycle wasn't going to be easy. I even considered duct taping together several dozen 2-liter Coke bottles and tying them into the boat.

At this point, my wife stepped in and said that she didn't think a boat full of garbage would be a great idea. The only other option I could come up with was to deck the ends of the boat, as one builder planned to do. That's what I ended up doing. Frame 6 became a solid bulkhead, and I decked from there forward to the bow. To access this space, I put a top-opening hatch held down with bungee cords. This required a transverse deck beam and longitudinal hatch framing. The same was done aft, frame 14 became a bulkhead and there is a deck from there to the transom, with hatch.

To complicate matters, I liked the idea of the curved transom top in the plans, so I continued the curve in all the bulkheads. That resulted in cambered decks. The theory is that bent plywood is stronger than flat plywood. It also looks good. Deck beams, hatch coamings, and especially the hatches themselves were a bear to make, though, because I always had to match the camber both on the top and bottom.

I decided to eliminate the external chine, so I did the bottom as tack and tape. There is a layer of tape on the outside, a large radius epoxy fillet and a layer of tape on the inside. The whole exterior is covered with fiberglass cloth in epoxy. I epoxied on shoes and bottom skids, as well as the gunwales, after glassing the exterior. This worked fine and the layout is more or less as shown on the Featherwind plans. The decks are glass covered, but I ran out of cloth and couldn't do the inside bottom.

I changed the mast step arrangement, too. Since station 6 has a solid bulkhead and the boat is decked from there forward, I decided that it would be possible to just attach a plywood collar as an upper mast partner. It's a flat piece of 1/2" plywood, glued to the deck with screws through bulkhead 6 and the hatch beam. The plywood extends about 6" out from the bulkhead and has a hole cut for the mast. The lower mast step is also a plywood collar, glued to the bulkhead and to two partners that are screwed and glued to the bottom. I hope that is clear. It is plenty strong enough for the

\$200 Sailboat Completed

By Bill Huguelet



normal sideways thrust of the mast. This arrangement moved the mast a few inches forward of the position in your plans, but the center of sail area didn't seem to have moved significantly when I diagrammed it with the dimensions of my sail. It's still almost too far forward for the center of lateral resistance. The steering was balanced, tending toward lee helm the first time out. I'm experimenting with moving the halyard on the yard to shift sail area aft a bit.

I didn't want the leeboard to be attached to the boat, as in the plans. I know that a pivoting board is convenient, but I decided that I prefer the clip-on type. That way I can leave it at home if I just go rowing. I made it similar to the one in the Payson/Bolger design Surf. Since I had eliminated the chine, I glued a 3/4" spacer strip to the board itself at about the waterline level. Unfortunately, I didn't make the two beams that hold the board to the boat nearly strong enough. They were 3/4 x 1-1/2, placed on edge, but drilled for a 1/4" bolt which had a countersunk nut. The result was that there wasn't all that much wood at the critically stressed joint, and they popped like matchsticks the first time I put up the sail.

Plan B was two pieces of schedule 80 PVC, held to the board with PVC U-shaped straps through-bolted. There were sections of 3/4" dowel inside to stiffen the PVC a little. This worked, in that they didn't break, but they flexed. The motion caused the board to walk upwards, and also bang slightly.

Plan C replaced the PVC pipe with laminated plywood. The final product is two 2-1/2 x 1-1/4 beams. They are through-bolted edge-wise to the leeboard and are strong enough, I hope. The board ended up being a bit on the heavy side, 4.5 x 1' of 1/2" ply, plus the two beams. It might not hurt to cut the board down to 9" or 10" wide.

The final major modification that I made is to the rudder. I liked the look of the one on Bolger's Windsprint, so I made up one that resembles it. There was a lot of cardboard pattern-making before I found a line that pleased

my eye. Then, when I assembled it I discovered that I hadn't accounted for it hitting the transom and preventing a full swing of the blade, which meant a lot of head scratching and beveling before it worked properly. All of this reads like a cautionary tale, modifying the plans requires good engineering knowledge and/or lots of trials, many errors, and a lot of time. I'm satisfied that the end justified the effort in this boat, but it's a close call.

My biggest headache is launching. I live right on the lagoon, but on the lee side, and there is a very jagged coral reef between the back porch and open water. The chop slams into it, throwing spray high in the air. Only at certain periods of the tide is it possible to launch there, and only then with about five big guys to help out. I decided that the best thing is to roll the boat to the other side of the neighbor's yard where there is a tiny bit of sandy beach to leeward of a projecting seawall. That meant that I needed a trolley. I also wanted a boarding ladder, because otherwise it wouldn't be easy to get back into the boat after capsize.

What I decided to do was make a ladder frame for the launching trolley, with wheels that remove. The frame then becomes the boarding ladder. It's tied to the midships frame at the limber hole. A couple of flotation cushions attached to the back of the ladder compensate for the flare of the boat and keep the ladder more or less vertical when boarding. When sailing, the ladder sits on the bottom, up against the midships frame. With a cushion, it acts as a duck board to sit on. The wheels are made of scrap plywood and the axles are PVC. This actually works, and would have been fine for a smooth area and a short distance.

The problem was that to fit inside the boat, the ladder had to be pretty short. That meant that it had to be too far from the center of the boat for the wheels to clear the sides when used as a trolley, it fit right under station 6. As a result, it required holding up a lot of the weight of the boat when rolling it. To go over cobble-sized coral chunks, up and down hills, all the while holding the boat up, was too much work. I made another trolley that fits under the boat at the midships frame and is balanced enough for me to roll the boat around with one hand. It stays on shore. Even so, it takes two to get the boat up and down a steep drop-off to the water.

My boat is, obviously, NOT a \$200 boat. I probably have three or four times that amount in it, including the new Dacron Sunfish sail. I don't care, it's still cheap entertainment. It took me six months to build, which is longer than it should have, because: 1) I worked completely alone and could only work on free weekends, not evenings; 2) I modified without constraint, which meant a lot of thinking, cutting, trying, and then re-doing; 3) I epoxied and glassed the whole boat; 4) I took some pains with the finish; 5) I had a long vacation out of the country at Christmas; 6) I don't have very many woodworking tools here, my total kit is a 3/8" reversible drill, a saber saw, a combination square, a sliding bevel, a block plane, a 1/2" chisel, three small C-clamps, plus a tape measure, screwdrivers, pliers, and a crescent wrench.

But I don't mind that it took a long time. My main reason for building was to have something to do, and I like building almost as much as sailing. I'm very satisfied.

So many *MAIB* readers have had success building hollow spars from reading that complicated and confusing little how-to article, that I have decided that I must be dealing with some pretty capable people, so, ever-so-briefly:

You follow the instructions in the previous article up to the place where you are fixing to paint the insides of the laid-out sticks and roll them up. Just before you paint them, you laboriously and meticulously apply a strip of regular scotch tape to both faces of two opposing seams (got that, Martha Stewart)? Then trim the tape off flush both inside and out with a sharp knife. What I am trying to say is that you fix it so that when you paint the sticks with the epoxy and roll them up, you'll be able to take the spar back apart into two halves after the glue is hard. Do those things and roll up the spar with the mono filament line.

When the epoxy is cured (all the way, better than 24 hours), unroll it and pry the mast apart at the tape. If you rolled it around like I told you to do while it was curing (I have jack-legged¹ up a little machine to do that now) you'll find a very nice, uniform coat of epoxy inside the spar. Before you take off the tape, wash and scrub the whole thing with a Scotch Brite pad to remove any amine blush, then remove the tape and let the whole thing dry out well. You might have to scrape with a little sharp piece of hard wood. After it is dry, sand the inside smooth. I tried all sorts of flap-wheels and stuff, but nothing I have found yet beats a hot thumb and 60 grit PSA paper.

When you get the epoxy inside the spar smooth enough, carefully sand the four mating surfaces with 60 grit sandpaper stuck onto a little board so you won't round off the edge. You could get cute and make a little 22-1/2" fence to make sure but, if you do, make sure that you relieve the inside corner so that the paper can extend flat beyond the corner of the mast stave (Martha...) and not leave a ridge either on the outside or inside edge to interfere with the mating of the two surfaces. I don't fool with that, I just use an emery board (thanks for the tip, Heloise) and hold it right.

Here comes the tricky part. Rip two strips of fiberglass a little wider than it takes to cover the inside of each half. Ain't no need to do

How to Apply Fiberglass or Carbon Fiber to the Inside of a Hollow Wood Mast

By Robb White

like I said in "Fiberglassing" and follow a strand to get a perfectly ripped and unraveled edge because it won't matter if there are a few errant strands. You can overlap short pieces every which-a-way, too, and double up down at the butt. This mess is going to turn out perfectly anyway. After you get your fiberglass cut up and ready, hit the inside of both halves of the spar with just the least little hint of 3M 77 Multiuso aerosol contact cement.

Hold the nostril of the can right down there close and walk fast and straight so you don't get too much on the two mating surfaces. I don't think it matters, epoxy seems to sort of dissolve that stuff in a compatible manner. Lay the fiberglass or carbon tape, or both, it don't take but just four strips of narrow graphite tape to make a world of difference in the stiffness of a spar.

Stick the graphite onto the wood first. The sticky gaps between the strips will be plenty enough to hold the fiberglass while you paint. It is a good combination of stuff. The epoxy and fiberglass holds the wood together and the graphite tape stiffens it. Altogether it makes a most excellent little stick, especially for a lug or gunter yard so it won't bow so much when the wind gets up and put all that belly in your sail right when you need it to be flat.

I kind of left us standing there admiring the two halves of the spar lying there with the white fiberglass and the black tape gleaming like inside the guts of some supernatural straight snake. Kind of reminds me of what Eddie Murphy said in one movie, "You done dropped the gun when you busted the window.

What the hell you gonna do now?" Here is what you do to make the miracle happen. Find you some kind of tube of polyethylene, mine is a surplus strip of some kind that might have been used to seal up hospital instruments.

I got umpteen yards of it, a rolled up little hollow strip about 3-1/2" inches wide and I use the same piece over and over again. I am afraid I have a lifetime supply, but if I didn't I would look for the smallest size of what they used to call Seal-A-Meal roll style freezer bags. I hope you can find something. Dook everything real good and lay out the plastic tube all wadded up in one side of the two halves so that it won't try to get into either seam and roll up the spar just like before. It is nasty work trying to get the flaps of wet fiberglass inside and all, so get your gloves and even some plastic sleeves and wear your glasses. After you get it all sort of cleaned and rolled up, cinch up the exhaust hose of a vacuum cleaner on one end of the plastic tube and, leaving the other end open, blow hot air through the spar.

The wiggling of the plastic inside there will sort of distribute the epoxy and flatten out the errants. Gradually clip the output end closed with spring clamps until the tube expands completely inside the spar. Don't let it flap around and fling epoxy on you. Leave a good-sized leak. It ain't the high pressure that does the job, it is the constancy of it and that hot air. All kinds of epoxy will run out both ends and you can take it to another project with a brush. Leave the vacuum cleaner running until the epoxy is set up fingernail hard. Don't be tempted to remove the bag until the cure is complete though.

Sticky epoxy sticks to polyethylene pretty good but cured epoxy doesn't. The best way to remove the bag is to blow all around it with an air compressor, but if you don't have one you can feed a string all the way through and tie to one end and, hopefully, avert the bag out complete but some of it might tear off way up in there. So what? I plugged up some object inside a little mast one time, might have been a tire valve, a time capsule. Couldn't tell it was in there unless you turned the mast upside down.

¹Jackleg is a name applied to people who drank so much moonshine that the lead and fusil oil from junkpile stills combined in their brains to disrupt the motor control of at least one leg. The result was an uncontrollable "jacking" of that leg when the poor fool tried to walk. When the jackleg began to affect both legs at the same time, the person fell down and was unable to go get any more moonshine so the affliction was, in a way, self-limiting. Cruel people began to use "jackleg" as an adjective to describe projects that look like the work you would expect from someone whose brain is in such shape. Often, such observations are the result of the arrogance of jealous people who are too devoted to the imaginary dignity of ignorance to have interesting projects of their own. Watch yourself.



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I just launched a new June Bug, a small flat-bottom skiff designed by Phil Bolger. I also have a Common Sense Skiff and a Micro, two other Bolger flat-bottom skiffs. When people ask me what boat I went sailing in last weekend, it is kind of hard to explain. Before the June Bug, I could say "the little one" and they'd know it was the CS Skiff. Now the little one is the June Bug. Actually all three are about 14' long. The difference is in the weight, Micro weighs about 1,200 lbs., CS Skiff about 225 lbs., and June Bug about 125 lbs.

Due to this confusion, I thought I would write this little report about the two smaller skiffs, June Bug and CS Skiff. I'll skip the Micro, because most messing about'ers know about the Micro, a boat designed for overweight, middle-aged people to sail in shallow water. The photo here shows what a rigorous sporting event it is to sail a Micro.

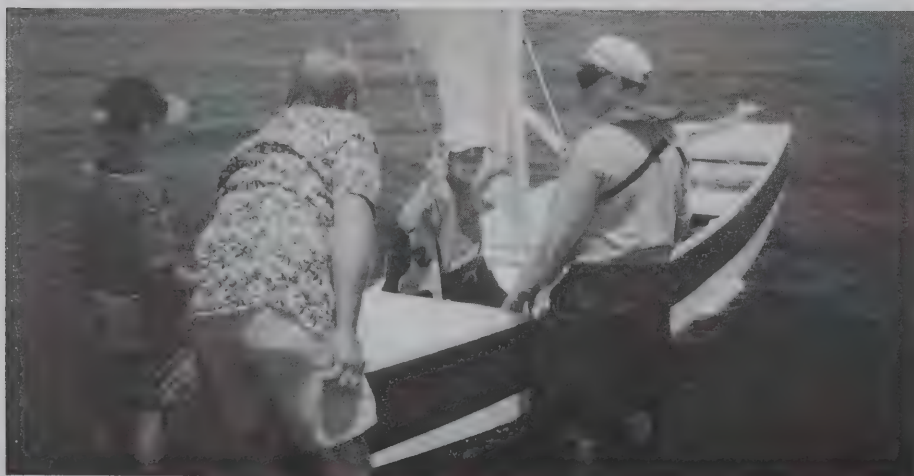
The June Bug launch party was great fun. The special guests included Levi, neighbor boy age 6, and Marguerite age 80, both of whom got rides in the June Bug. About 15 people in all got rides. I got pretty good at sailing into the shore and pulling up the lee board and rudder.

Levi is the boy flashing the "Victory" sign



Typical Micro sailor underway.

The June Bug launching.



Report on Two Bolger Skiffs

By George Fulk

in the photo. He visited me in the shop one day while I was building the boat about 10:00 AM on a Saturday. I was laying on the bottom. I told him this was a boat (it was hard to tell at that point) and that I'd give him a ride when I got it finished. At noon he came by and asked, "is it done yet?" He was ready to go sailing right then. Three months later, a small boy eternity, he finally got his ride.

My June Bug was built without any modifications of design except for the rudder. I put a Michalak kick-up rudder on it. That really works out well.

I don't have too much experience with June Bug yet, but I'd say its major positive attributes are simple sailing rig that can be set and struck without fuss, moves along very well under oar power, and great stability. I am hoping I can car top it easily, but wish I had used the epoxy a little more sparingly to keep the weight down.



June Bug with full crew, note kick-up rudder.

The CS Skiff is a whole different type of boat all together. It was designed by Phil as an entry for a Wooden Boat contest. As I recall, the design criteria were a simple-to-build skiff that would be a spirited sailor, would move well under oars, and onto which you could put a small motor. Sort of a Swiss Army knife of boats, a multiple function item.

Phil's CS Skiff fit those criteria exactly. He should have won the contest. For sailing I would give it an A, for rowing a B, and for motoring a C+, which is not bad. How many sailboats small enough to row easily can take a motor? How many sailboats big enough to take a motor can be rowed at all, let alone rowed easily?

This thing really moves with 10 knots of wind. I sailed her 4.5 land miles (straight line distance measured on a chart) in 50 minutes once. That is 5.4 miles/hour, but actual top speed was probably a lot more since I did not sail in a straight line. Anyway, it was an exhilarating sail, surfing most of the way.

The CS Skiff demands that you pay attention, which I do not always do. I have capsized it twice. Based on those experiences, I'd have decided to add more floatation than the design calls for. When full of water she has only 2" of free board, and I'd like more.

The rig (solent lug) is not so handy. Setting it up takes some time and fiddling around. When you strike it, you've got so much sail and rope in the boat you can hardly move. It is almost impossible to take in a reef when out on the lake. You have to strike both sails, re-tie the mail halyard to a different place on the yard, roll up the foot of the sail, re-tie clew to boom and tack to mast, adjust the snotters, then re-set the sails. The advantage of the rig is that you can get a lot of sail up on short spars.

The wife and I had a good day playing Tom Sawyer on the river. We took the CS Skiff down a few miles on the Kerr inland waterway in Oklahoma. Oklahoma does have access to the Mississippi. I took the centerboard out and plugged up the centerboard case so it wouldn't spit so much. The boat really handled well with a 4hp motor.

So the two boats are very different. The CS Skiff is a bit complicated, but exciting to sail and able to be used for motoring or rowing as well. The June Bug has the simplest of sailing rigs and is a real pleasure to row.

CS Skiff moving right along with a reef tucked in.





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In the April 2000 *MAIB* we showed the plans of a cabin version of the 18' clam skiff design. Quite a few of them have been built, including a few hereabouts where we see them in action. They're very fast to build, extremely rugged (the bottom is 2-1/2" thick solid plywood along the centerline), and stable working platforms. This cabin version for day outings with some shelter and shade, and not so low amidships, seemed sensible if not pretty.

It was originally designed for a family that meant to use it in Alaska. We haven't heard anything more about that one, but we suggested it to Jeanne and Paul Connor when they stopped by looking for a design for a dayboat (a "picnic boat" if you like) for use around the great harbor of Sydney, Australia. They had in mind something home-buildable and a little less pretentious than what passes for a "picnic boat" in some quarters (those people are pikers; the late Commodore Dane used to use a 200-odd foot Herreshoff-built diesel yacht for his picnics around Mt. Desert Island).

They built her in short order, and comment as follows: "We have just spent a summer using *Heron* and report that she has no apparent vices. She is stable, comfortable (as long as you don't travel directly into chop), and, despite your warnings to the contrary, looks good! (We agree, the photos show surprisingly nice retro proportions despite her basic box hull.) The 50hp high thrust four-stroke Yamaha is very quiet and fuel efficient. We mostly amble along at 2000 revs, although at 6000 she really goes!"

No speeds reported but it's a safe bet that top speed with that motor is close to 25 knots, incidentally a speed at which she may be beginning to be at risk of tripping in a maximum turn. At 2000 rpm the economy advantage of the four-stroke motor is dramatic as compared with a two-cycle; she may be getting as much as 10 miles per gallon. Nice for range and duration as well as low costs. Connor concludes, "We love our boat and the adventures we have on it (beaching and swimming, visiting the fish markets, etc.) and thank you very much."

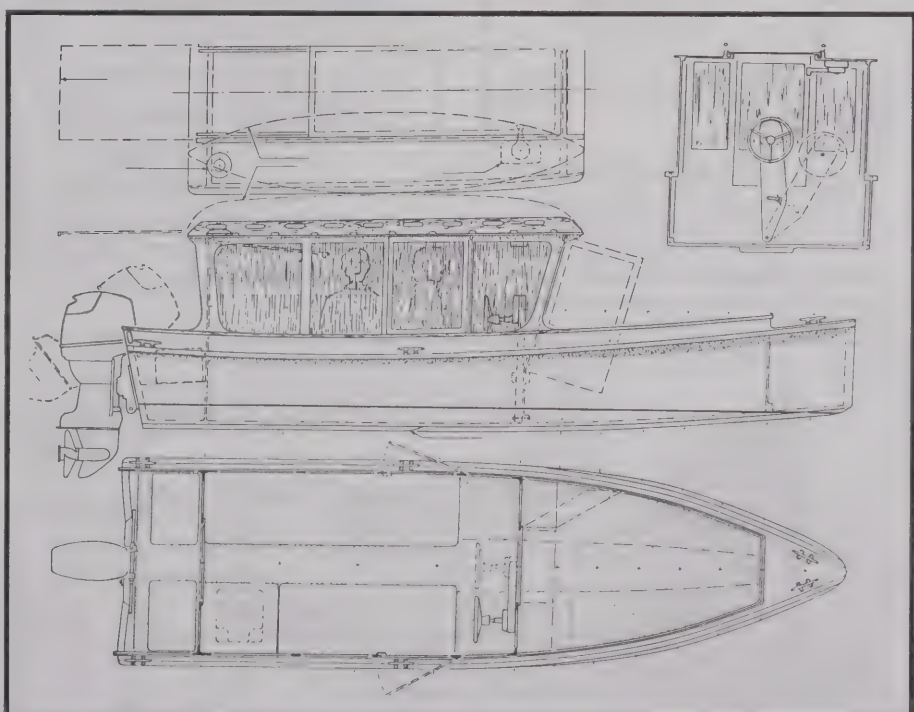
Nothing said about camping, but a lot of cruising has been done in much less comfortable cabins than this one. With a tarp over the cockpit she'd take a couple of youngsters as well as a couple. The cockpit cover would be desirable in any case for rainwater, though the high sill at the forward end of the house keeps any water in the cockpit out of the cabin. The cockpit should certainly not be self-draining, as it would either be much too shallow for comfort and safety, or the scuppers would be dangerously close to the waterline, or, most likely, both.

Interesting question: How much of the time is something like this actually better, handier, less vulnerable, better view (with access to better views), than something that costs thirty times as much? Plans are \$100 to build one boat, sent Priority Mail, rolled in a tube.

Bolger on Design

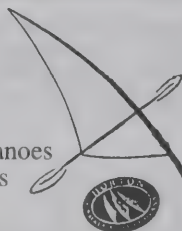
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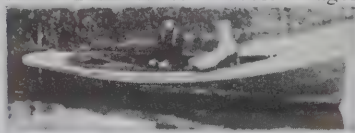


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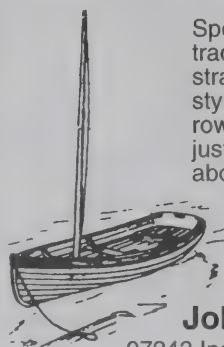
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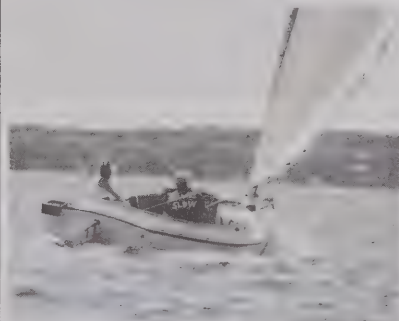
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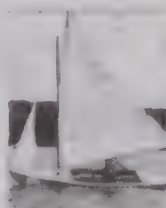
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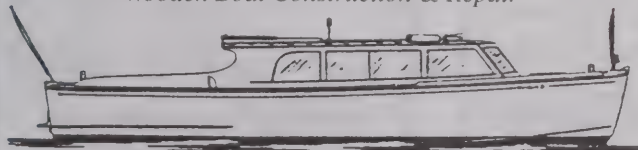
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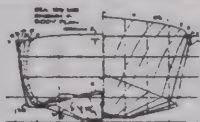
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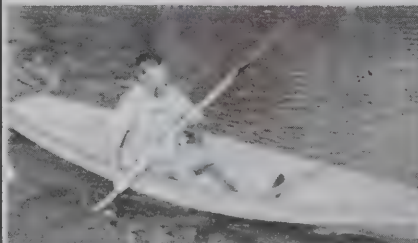
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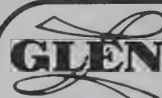
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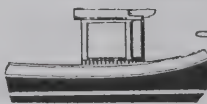
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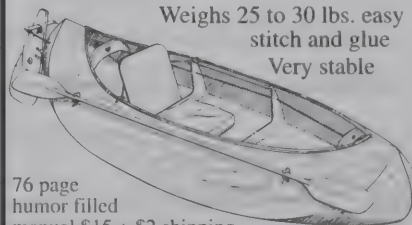
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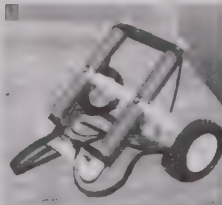
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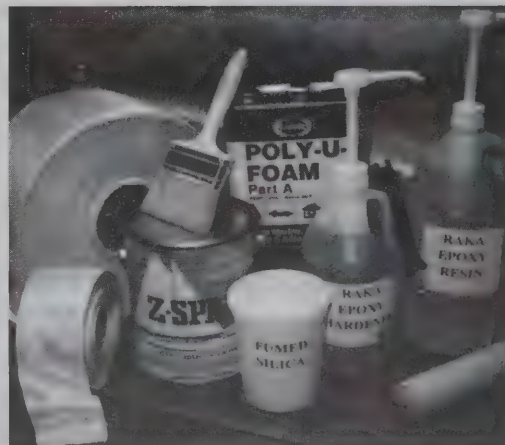
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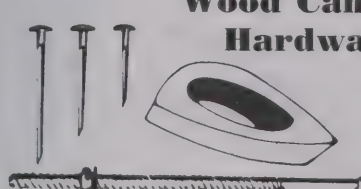
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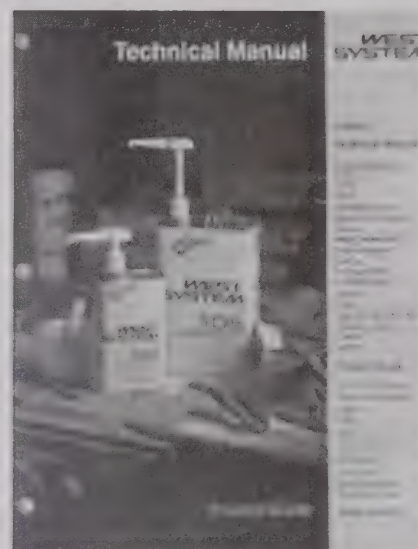
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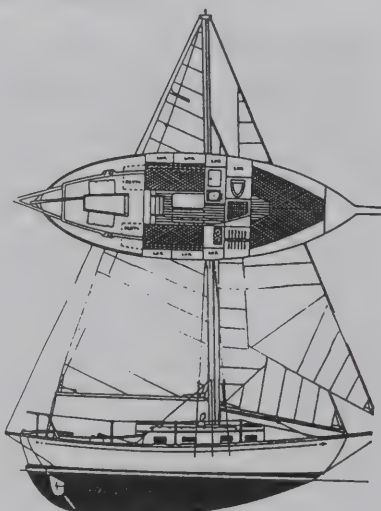
Luders 16, '46. 26' LOA, 4' Draft. Mahogany hull, spruce spars, all original bronze hrdwre. Main, jib, genoa, spinnaker & boom tent. Fully restored '99. Classic beauty located in MD. \$9,000. RICHARD PRANN, West Chester, PA, (610) 436-1127. (10)

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Westerly Nomad, 22', tri-keels, MD1 diesel engine, 3 sails (main, genoa on jib furler, spinnaker), Trowbridge trlr. In gd cond. Located Nantucket Island, MA. \$6,000US. FRED HEAP, Nantucket, MA, (508) 228-9904, <FFHEAP@yahoo.com> (1)

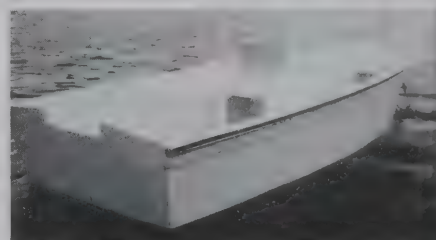
26' Telstar Trimaran, new (larger) jib, 4 Doyle sails, Profurl on jib. Beam increased to 18', diesel, interior comfortable for 3. Located ME. \$30,000. DICK NEWICK, Kittery Point, ME, (207) 439-3768. (10p)

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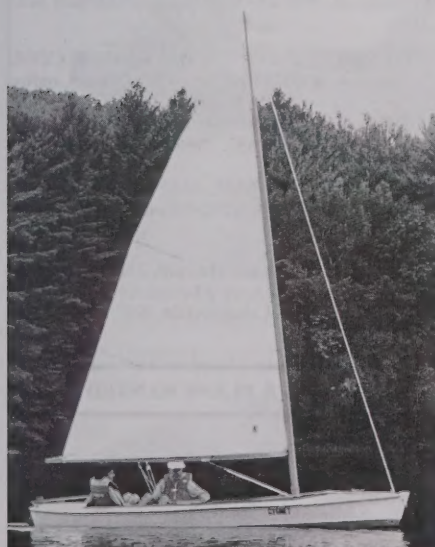
16' Custom Sea Skiff, center console, 67' beam, epoxy, FG. My 25th sea skiff. Brand new boat, fast, pretty, blt to last lifetime. \$1,600. BILL GREENOUGH, Newington, CT, (860) 953-4410. (11)



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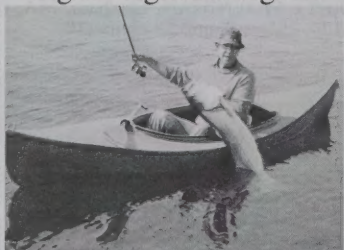
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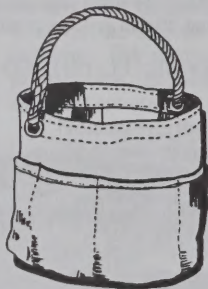
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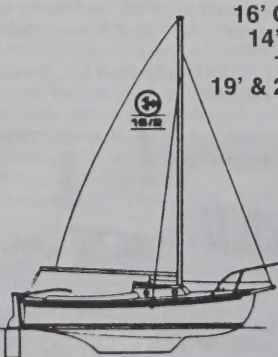
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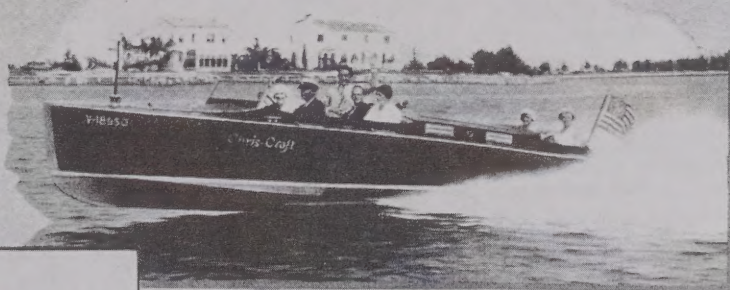
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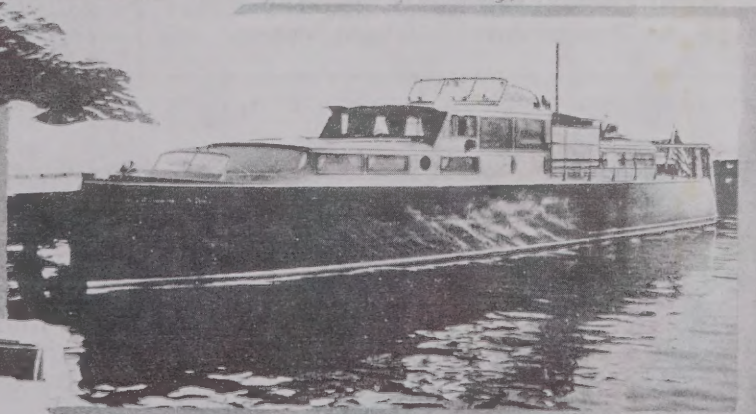
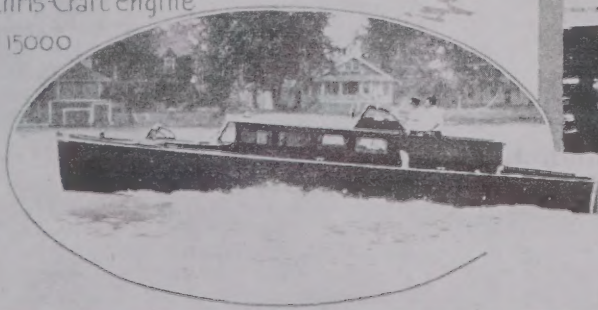


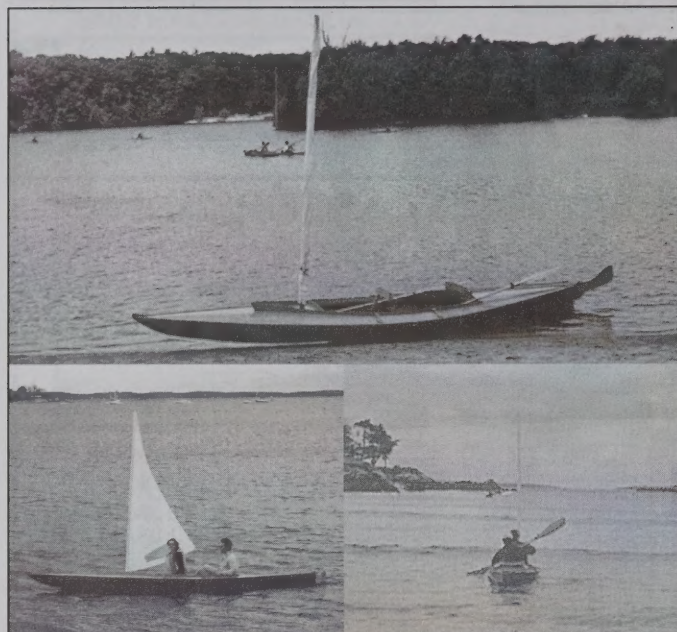
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