

Special Features This Issue
"Snow Row 2003"
"Haulout Day" - "Tales of Multihullers"



messing about in **BOATS**

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Looking Ahead...

The Rockport Apprenticeship reports on their recently held winter launching in "On a Chilly Morning".

Val Thompson gives us the inside story on "Taming the Thames"; Greg Welker reports on "A Brief Winter Trip to South Carolina with Kayak"; Hugh Groth has a report on "The Race"; Sam Chapin tells how it is when "An Old Man Steps Back into an Old Boat"; Ken Preston continues his series on "The Seagull's First Trip to Baja" with Part 5; Hugh Ware is back with his monthly "Beyond the Horizon"; and Chris Kaiser continues her observations through her "Window on the Water".

Richard Hatch recalls "My First Boat", built at age 12; Charlie Schmitt discusses instant boats in "A Long Time Coming"; and Robb White undertakes a "Grumman Sport Boat Improvement Project".

Richard Kolin brings us the latest of "My Favorite Things", in this instance, "Ranger, a 10-1/2' Sailing Boat"; Mississippi Bob Brown announces that he's had "Enough OPBs!"; John Welsford reveals "A Design Puzzle" in his "From the Drawing Board"; and Phil Bolger & Friends will be with us with another from their inexhaustible file of designs.

Duncan Wright espouses oil, tar and salt in his discussion of "Preserving Wooden Boats"; and Bill Zeiter tells us "How to Build a Nice Boat Ramp".

Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



us on March 8th for our annual look in on the Snow Row. While the nature of the event is pretty much standardized after all these years, there's always something happening that I find of interest. And, of course, it's nice to go down to the sea where the boats are after four solid months of way below normal cold and lots of snow. As I ask in my report in the Snow Row in this issue, "Anyone for global warming?" I hope the fearmongers of that particular perceived environmental threat take heed. The Montreal Express ain't dead yet here in the northeast.

As I've emphasized in past reports on this event, it is the largest gathering of big multi-oared traditional pulling boats I know of on the Atlantic coast. With 13 of the 32' pilot gigs, a whaleboat, and two 26' coxed fours, it was an impressive gathering. There were, of course, many other pulling boats too, including sliding seat sculls, even coxed fours of that genre, and always at least a Banks dory or two.

Every year at Hull I wonder why these really spectacular big boats do not show up at other open water events, such as The Blackburn Challenge in July, where they'd have a 20 mile open ocean course to subdue rather than the 3.5 miles in sheltered Hingham Bay at Hull. Apparently a major factor here is that many of these boats are student built boats and school's out in the summer with the builders/crews scattered. Also there's a cost factor, entering a 6 oared gig in the Blackburn comes to serious money, maybe it's just not an affordable adventure.

Spectating at rowing races is not a totally absorbing activity if you are not somehow connected with the participants. But the multioared boats provide a form of action that does hold your attention, the coordination and effort to move those big heavy boats as fast as they do, and when several are closely matched it gets pretty exciting in a sort of slow motion format.

One of those moments I still see in my mind's eye from a number of years ago at the Blackburn was the boat to boat struggle between a Bantry Bay gig (I think one of the Atlantic Challenge boats from Hull) and a Gloucester seine boat. There was a 3' chop and they were rowing dead upwind, crashing into the waves, implacable oars sweeping, what a sight. Today's version of such teamwork is that of the Hawaiian outriggers canoes, but somehow the fast stroking paddlers don't convey the muscular effort that pulling on those long sweeps do.

I once had the opportunity to experience this game up close when Ed McCabe took me along as supercargo in one of the Hull gigs. McCabe is the father of all this and still totally immersed in it even after all the 20 or so years he's been at it. I sat in the stern sheets out of Ed's way (he was coxwain) and not only had a close up look at the youth crew pulling on those sweeps, upping the stroke with gusto when called for, but also saw how racing strategy was applied. We were attempting to overtake another Hull youth crew, but the young woman coxing that boat was master at closing the door on every attempt Ed made to pull alongside. She had eyes in the back of her head, and always swung across our bow, whichever way it headed. McCabe was pretty upset, she had learned too well.

This year it was a nice mild 40 degree day with sunshine and little wind, but the dirty hard frozen snow was piled high along the back of the beach and at the roadsides, so we knew it wasn't really the opening of our on-the-water season. Just a tantalizing taste, even the hardcore winter rowers like Cape Cod's Vikings have been landbound. Their Pleasant Bay was frozen over most of the winter, and even Cape Cod Bay was lined with shoreside ice.

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On the Cover...

Just about all the multioared/coxed pulling boats from around New England gathered at Hull, Massachusetts on March 8th for the annual Snow Row, and I have my usual collection of photos and comments for you in this issue.

I had just turned 40 that day in 1981, jogging around Bachman Lake in Dallas with a hip that was begging me to stop, when a sculler came sliding along the bank. I hailed; he stopped, I took my first few awkward strokes and was hooked. Two weeks later I had an Alden on the roof of the old Buick wagon and was at the lake evenings after work and most daylight hours on the weekends. Reading, watching, asking, listening and rowing, slowly my stroke smoothed out and the boat began to move.

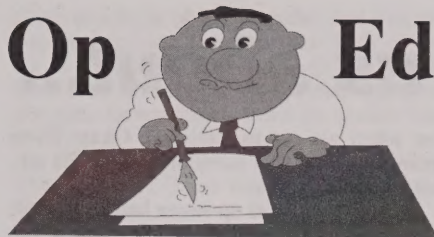
On my next birthday, Anne gave me my dream racing shell, a Ron Owen masterpiece. Other scullers appeared, we started a club, built a boathouse, put on regattas, and started crew programs at six high schools and a university. There was always a Concept II Ergometer in the garage, and the long erg workouts helped increase strength and endurance while clearing my head and insuring deep sleep. I had success racing in and around Texas, though clearly in those days Texas rowing was not Boston or Philadelphia. Sculling was a big part of my life for ten years, and then a career change made work more demanding and sculling took second seat, no longer a passion but still a joy as it is today.

Five years ago we started spending time on Gardiner's Bay at the east end of Long Island. I met another rowing architect, Louis Mackall, who was very much in the passion phase of sculling, slamming his old red CarboCraft racing single through bay chop and ocean swell. In order to be a bit more stable in choppy waters, we bought Maas 24s which have taken us smoothly through the bays and around Gardiner's and Shelter Islands.

Having devoured every issue of *Open Water Rowing*, I became intrigued by the fixed-seat alternative, and I recently set out to find a proper fixed-seat rowing boat. Based on aesthetics as well as performance in the Oarmaster Trial and Guideboat and Blackburn Challenges, I zeroed in on an exquisite 18' St. Lawrence River Skiff built by Keith Quarrier. I remember quite vividly my first stroke in the skiff on a calm lake in New Hampshire. Being a confirmed slider and having never before rowed a proper fixed-seat boat, subconsciously I felt that if the seat didn't slide the boat wouldn't glide. Sitting on that wide laminated wood seat, surrounded by a varnished cedar hull with bronze pins through the large spruce oars leaved for balance, I gave an easy pull and, zoom, off she flew! I could not believe the acceleration and the solid run from such minimal effort while sitting still with no leg work, and unlike the early phases of skinny-boat sculling, balance and coordination were non-issues. Again I was hooked.

After puttering around in the skiff on the East End for a good bit the first summer, I raced her in an eight-mile race across Long Island Sound. She did amazingly well against a strong headwind, particularly considering the age of her engine. During the race, while the skiff was dancing over the bumps, it was interesting to watch the sliders in their long narrow shells laboring away in the chop and swell. I was surprised to find that some of them were behind me.

Last spring Louis bought a fast 17' Monument River Wherry designed and built by Jon Aborn. In June we rowed 120 miles in four days with two other boats from Manhat-



Sliding Into Fixed Seat Rowing

One Man's Experience

By John Mullen



tan out to the east end of Long Island. By the end of that row I had developed a better understanding of the skiff and fixed-seat rowing and how it differs from sliding. Now the Maas and the skiff sit together on the bay beach, and on any day the question is sliding or fixed, an interesting choice. Both boats are highly refined examples of their type and are joys to row. So what are some of the factors in making the choice, sliding or fixed?

Exercise: Sliding-seat rowing uses over 90% of the body's muscle groups. It ranks at or near the top of full-body exercise activities. If exercise is the primary focus, sliding has the edge. I know that I work harder, burn more calories and get tired quicker sliding. I also find that a longer row in the skiff, perhaps at a lower stroke rate, provides a very good workout as well. If I want the leg work, I can always walk, run, climb or bike.

Speed: If you are really focused on speed, you may be in the wrong sport. Having said that, we all know faster is a kick. On flat water the Maas is significantly faster than the skiff. By efficiently using the body's largest, most powerful muscles, the quadriceps, sliding-seat rowing delivers more power to the oars which will produce increased speed in a boat that is properly designed to utilize the increased power. That boat will be relatively long, narrow, and light. As the boat design gets shorter, wider, and heavier, it is less able to convert the increased power of leg drive into a significant increase in boat speed. At some point it is not worth putting up with all the claptrap of riggers, tracks, and seats with wheels and axles if the increase in speed is negligible.

Clearly a sliding-seat rig in a heavy, beamy 8' dinghy is a joke, as would be a fixed-seat in a 26'11" wide, 30-lb. shell. To

my way of thinking, a 20' single should be a slider, below 16' feet it's fixed. In between, it is a function of beam, weight, and personal preference. The sliding-seat 16' Alden Ocean Shell is popular, not because of speed, but because it can provide good exercise, has the convenience of a drop-in sliding-seat rig, and is easily car-topped.

Weather: Perhaps the most significant factor for me in choosing fixed or sliding on a given day is the water surface. I am a flat-water slider. Feeling the Maas run out smoothly across flat water is a great joy. I know that long skinny sliders often win open-water races in rough conditions, but when the chop gets up I choose the skiff, which delights in dancing over the bumps. Balance in the skiff is a non-issue and 2'-3' chop over 6' swells is a blast, but for me it is hard work in the Maas. Either way, always remember that positive flotation and the ability to self-rescue (get back in the boat and get the water out) are all-important both in a blow and in a calm.

Distance: Going long, say ten miles or more, I want water and food, perhaps a chart, camera, VHF, GPS, whatever, and I go with the stability and capacity of the fixed-seat skiff. Greater distance also increases the probability of weather change, which for me says skiff. Shorter distances on flatter water, particularly in the early morning calm, I'll be sliding in the Maas, unless Anne and/or the dog want to come along. But be aware that there are lots of serious rowers who go long distances in sleek sliders and have a ball.

Intangibles: Perhaps the most significant difference between sliding and fixed is what goes on in your head. I find that in a slider more of my brain is occupied by the act of rowing in order to execute the more complex stroke smoothly and efficiently. I generally keep my eyes trained aft and focus on setting the boat. Having rowed thousands of miles sliding, certainly I can and do row without consciously thinking about rowing and look around, but the tendency is there to be focused on the act of rowing. In a fixed-seat, oar-on-gunnel boat the rowing is easy, sit and row.

Even though I have rowed fixed-seat for far less time and distance, I am much more connected to the environment and, if it happens to be a place that I find appealing, that is a very good thing. In the skiff I find I will row close along a new shoreline for hours, a very good form of beach combing. So, on a flat Texas lake or along our home beach on Long Island, I go for the workout and I slide. But when I venture out into the interesting places I sit comfortably and glide along with the Zen of pull-push-pull, plugged into the meeting of land and water, the most appealing environment on earth.

Fixed or sliding, just get in a good boat properly rigged, get out there, and go.

(This article first appeared in the no longer published *Open Water Rowing*)

Alden Shells

in eastern New England



"Oarmaster 1" parts

Rowing Sport

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You write to us about...

Adventures & Experiences...

South American Adventuring

Well, I have rounded the Horn both ways. I hope that I shan't become too insufferable. If pressed for detail, I'll just close my eyes, shiver slightly, and say mournfully, "I'd rather not talk about it."

Should you happen to be in Buenos Aires anytime soon, and you should be, considering the prices, grab a bus or taxi to La Boca, a *de rigueur* tourist stop. After checking the vendors and having lunch at the tango joint, head up the harbor toward the lift bridges. Keep a sharp eye out if you are toting cameras. Just beyond the old bridge you will find a ferry service, over and back for one peso, \$.30. The boats are double enders, about 18', and rowed by one man standing amidships. The oars are near vertical and never leave the water. The boat is just sort of stirred along with very short strokes and no effort to speak of.

A very similar boat is used across the river in Weymouth. The boatmen all look to be 70 or better and, as I recall, use a little more defined stroke. In any case, it's a revelation to watch these boats being handled.

Beyond the new bridge there is a long stretch of smallish freighters, tugs, big cranes, and other floating stuff of interest. However, the neighborhood becomes increasingly seedy and we came at last to a fence. As I was poking the video through to get a shot of a boat named *Cabo De Hornos*, we were set upon and lost a p&s before I knew what was happening. We managed to fight them off and save the rest of the gear. We spent the rest of the trip looking over our shoulders.

In Valparaiso, several people warned us about having the videocam in sight. Valparaiso is a great town, lots of funiculars to ride and media litro with a big pile of great fries at a sidewalk cafe for \$1.25.

You know how some of us types will sometimes stop, or even go out of our way, to look at an old boat. If the wife is along she may wonder if it is really necessary. The next time you are subject to such pressure, you might recount this little tale.

Janis and I were walking along the waterfront in Valparaiso when I stopped to look at an old fishing boat hauled out to end its days baking in the Chilean sun. She was about 18'-20' with a rather flat sheer and a small transom to take an outboard. She was lapstrake and well built but nothing fancy. She was evidently a successful model as there were quite a number of glass replicas about and one putting out with four men aboard.

As I was taking pictures of the boat, a small boy climbed aboard and proceeded to do what all small boys do in a boats. His mother made some comment and I replied in my sorry Spanish. This brought on the father who spoke passable English. He was number two man at a local glass works and had been to the States on business. More chit chat and we lined everybody, including grandpa 94, and grandma, around the bow of the boat for a photo. This necessitated an address. More chit chat and they suggested we come to sup-

per when we got to Santiago. Okay. Even mentioned that they could take us to the airport. Well, all right.

They picked us up at our hotel and took us home. We had snacks, drinks, and heavenly lamb chops under the grape arbor, then went in for the main spread with a nice wine. Grandpa, a real trencherman, has had a glass or two of wine everyday of his adult life. His claim to fame is that he has been retired longer than he had ever worked.

We went sightseeing and came back for more food. They got us to the airport on time and we parted with hugs, kisses, and little memento presents. A wonderful couple with lovely children. So keep looking at those old boats. It's a long shot, but you never know.

Jim Thayer, Grand Junction, CO

Re-Arranging Storage

My heart goes out to you rearranging your storage at this time of life. We moved from a 3,600sf house to a 1,600sf house on a lake. Now that is trauma, after 36 years in the old house. Fortunately my son moved into the old place so that I did not have to clean out the barn down to the bottom. My company still rents a good part of the barn and so parts of a 1931 Model A Ford still live there, along with an iceboat and three lapstrake repair jobs.

Joe Spalding, Skaneateles, NY

Information of Interest...

A Strong, Rigid Foam for Boatbuilding

On reading readers' comments on Robb White's "Plywood Phooey" article several issues ago, I am prompted to submit something of my own observations. I take no firm pro or con side concerning the use of plywood in boats, but put more priority in getting out on the water in a useful boat with reasonable safety. At my age (70 plus), any material in a boat is likely to last longer than I'll be around, or at least active enough for small boating.

I have located a source of a strong, rigid foam material that is as strong as plywood in comparable thickness (it comes in several thicknesses, from 1/4" to 1"). It is 1/4th the weight of plywood. I have samples and have tested them in many ways. It takes paint excellently and is closed cell and totally waterproof and rot proof. It will even take epoxy coating, but this is not really needed. It will greatly simplify the construction of the houseboat I am building. I could even build a better kayak with it.

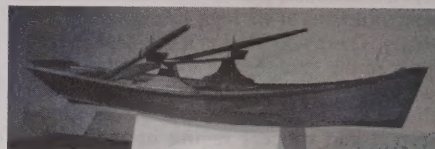
I had a hard time persuading the company to sell me just enough sheets to build my boat (for I want to use several thicknesses) because they sell in stacks of 50 or more sheets, in just the same thickness. It is rather expensive, from \$30 to over \$75 per sheet, depending on thickness. This is the best material I've come across yet for building almost any kind of boat. It's total flotation, being foam based!

Walter Head, 1178 Laurel Fork Rd., Vilas, NC 28692-9175

Atchafalaya Skiff

In the March 1 article about the Louisiana Wooden Boat Festival there appears a photo of a handsome skiff, but little information. I'm sure this boat was in the Peabody Essex Museum (MA) a couple of years ago in a display of international small boats. As I recollect, it is an Atchafalaya skiff, but I can't find my notes on it. Here's a photo I took which shows its lines a little better. This one is pristine, a real beauty. I would like to see some history on this type and its use and a couple of pictures of them in action. Could anyone oblige with such an article?

Irwin Schuster, Tampa, FL



Opinions...

Jones' Books Go Beyond

MAIB's recent review of Tom Jones' latest book, *Plywood Boats*, missed an important point. Your contributors, and many books, give valuable boat ideas and designs. Bolger's books and Gerr's *Nature of Boats* are outstanding. *Principles of Yacht Design* by Larsson and Eliasson, and Marchaj's books have complete formulas and research results. But I found Tom Jones' books go beyond in linking design information with pros and cons of how boats work out after launching, for a wide range of types, to better help you choose and build the best boat for your conditions.

Tom, in plain words, presents designs and facts PLUS why it is that way, what variations would do, and the boat building and sailing experience which resulted. Included are the balance between cost, performance, and utility; various construction methods; the size to build; weight saving; rig; other designs and designers. He has visited and talked with many small craft designers.

If it's a matter of opinion or choice, he gives his reasoning with that of others, based upon designing, building, and sailing his own boats over 14,000 miles with four crossings of the Atlantic, including through a hurricane when his 23' catamaran was undamaged but two nearby production boats were damaged and much more uncomfortable. His boat was more seaworthy, for reasons explained.

His three books are:

Low Resistance Boats, reprinted as *Boats To Go*. This book gives design and construction methods in several materials for 24 boats; kayaks, rowing, sail, and power in size up to a 24' monohull and 28' trimaran.

Plywood Boats details more boats in plywood, the material which comes with a smooth surface.

Multihull Voyaging. Really good multihulls have finally evolved. To find how, subscribing to *Multihull* magazine was frustration! Two Naval Architecture degrees were not enough to penetrate the fog. Boat evaluations were sales pitches. Photos were printed too artsy, cropped, and miniature to be of use. Beyond principal dimensions, facts were few. Many articles didn't name the boats.

Then Tom's *Multihull Voyaging* book came out, which detailed the size to build or

buy; proper hull, rig and sail form; the balance between performance, utility, and cost; and how to outfit and sail them.

Loaded for cruising, with working sails and crews of two, his boats have nipped at the heels or passed stripped monohull racing sleds with electronics and muscled crews of deck apes tweaking Kevlar sails, costing 40 times as much as his boat. Sound like fun?

Jim Wonnell, Merritt Island, FL

Projects...

About Bamboo Spars

Some recent comments regarding the use of bamboo in spars was interesting. Reinforcing the bamboo with fiberglass/epoxy is a good idea. Here's a thought that will help make the bamboo a lot stronger.

In drying, the solid separations between the chambers of bamboo tend to make the material split at each section and this weakens the bamboo considerably. The only way to prevent this splitting from happening is to drill those sections out after harvesting, but before drying. I make my own drills out of a piece of 1/4" to 1/2" rod, half as long as the bamboo. I heat and hammer out one end of the rod and then file or grind a crude drill point on the end. When green, the bamboo is soft and it doesn't take much to drill those solid portions between sections out. Drill the holes as big as possible so that the material in the middle doesn't prevent the outer walls from decreasing in diameter as they shrink. I have a helper hold the bamboo on a bench while I drill from both ends to the center with a variable speed power drill. Keep the bamboo out of the sun and it will slowly dry without splitting.

Mark White, Pelham, AL

Small Boat Safety...

Reading Robb White's article on anchors reminded me how important it is to not throw out an anchor. I never have figured out why so many people think that it should be done that way.

Years ago, many years ago, I served in the U.S. Coast Guard. We would get copies of all the accident reports that the service processed. One of these reports really struck home because I can remember it more than 40 years later. This report was about a double fatality that should never have happened.

Two young men were out boating and they decided to anchor. The inspectors concluded that one man probably went forward and threw the anchor over the side. He must have gotten a turn around a leg and gotten pulled over the side. The anchor pulled him under water. His partner panicked and dove in to perform a rescue. Some time later the anchored boat was found with two drowned men tangled in the anchor line.

The report went on to list things that were done wrong. First, never throw an anchor. Lower it all the way to the bottom and note how deep the water is. After this is determined, continue to let out line until the desired scope is achieved. Second, never

stand in a bight of line (number one rule for any deck crew). Third, despite both of the above rules being broken, the day could still have been saved if the second man had simply gone forward and pulled the anchor line back in.

Those men shouldn't have died that day. Things just as dumb happen daily and the boating world seems to be filled with really dumb actions.

Mississippi Bob Brown, Apple Valley, MN

This Magazine...

Google Can Help

I love this magazine and most every little idiosyncratic thing about it. One of the best features is the bi monthly puzzle, "Where, Oh Where, is This Taking Place?" The contributing writers often forget to mention, and Bob Hicks will never tell!

In the February 15, 2003 issue, George Jacobs' piece, "Hey, They Both Have Airfoils!!" was about a sailing canoe outing "on the Inland Waterway." The challenge, Where, oh where, on the 1000+ mile Inland Waterway? There were lots of clues, but none really narrowed it down far enough.

The photos help, it looks like coastal lowlands along the Waterway, but that could be anywhere. And it is near a Naval Base, but which one? NAS Patuxent River, NAS Norfolk, NAS Oceana, NAS Jacksonville, NAS Pensacola?

But the writer mentioned he phoned for his pizza at a place called Sherman Cove Marina. A search on google.com nailed it, complete with photos of the Marina, on the Air Base at Pensacola.

There should be prizes.

Lewis S. Kreger, Portland, CT

So, Who Are We, Bob?

The most recent comments to modernize you and *MAIB* have got me wondering where I stand in relation to the new and the old. I make my living as a craftsman in the antique business and I have a shop lined with hand tools. Neither I nor my help use them! We are entirely dependent on palm sanders, screwguns, angle grinders, and power equipment of all kinds. Anything less and we would not be competitive, and I would not hire a prima donna bent on the old ways.

Yet there is a Model T in the driveway, and when I'm in Maine I live in a 1910 RR caboose, and while there I'm restoring a 1900s Palmer steam launch. When I sail my cruising boat I have radios, cell phones, loran, radar, and the most wonderful GPS chartplotter that shows the boat on an electronic chart in real time despite any pea soup fog. Of course, I only understand 5% of what the chartplotter can do. I'm actually intimidated by all of the buttons.

I have never used an ATM machine, I much prefer dealing with the nice women at the bank counter. I would not think of going to a drive-up window or a computer terminal. I have my son and daughter run the business computers.

So, who are we Bob? If I am sailing and the diesel dies, the batteries go flat and the electronics fail, I still have my paper charts, a compass, and a storm anchor ready to set to windward. *MAIB* is a chart, a compass, and an anchor to its readers, and if some word is misspelled, its proof positive that a human wrote it.

Ed Howard, Essex, MA

Deep Appreciation

I'd like to express my deep appreciation of the report in the March 1 issue on the 17th Annual Small Wooden Boat Festival in Madisonville, Louisiana. I have covered several years of the Boston Festival and I know how hard it is to write up and photograph such events. My peer congratulations to John Clough. A wonderful report, indeed!

Hugh Ware, Manchester, MA

Calendar...Just the Basics

To help inform you of what's happening on the water this season, I'm going to try this abbreviated listing from issue to issue of events which I receive publicity about. Listings will appear in the month preceding the events. There is no room for any details, call or email those which interest you.

April 24-26: Bay Bridge Boat Show, Kent Island, MD, (410) 268-8828, <info@usboat.com>, www.usboat.com

April 25-27: Richardson Boat-owners' Association Spring Meeting, Port Carling, ON, (702) 292-6752, <searo@auracom.com>

April 26-27: Depoe Bay Wooden Boat Show, Depoe Bay, OR, (541) 765-2889, <dbchamber@newportnet.com>, www.stateoforegon.com/depoe_bay/chamber

May: We have received no listings for May events.

June 2-July 2: Canoe Building Course, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC, (828) 227-7368, http://et.wcu.edu, <Info@et.wcu.edu>

June 6-8: Maine Canoe Symposium, Bridgton, ME, (207) 892-3121, <info@mainecanoesympposium.org>

June 7-8: 34th Annual John Gardner Small Craft Workshop, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, CT, (860) 572-0711 XT5028, www.mysticseaport.org, <jgscw@mysticseaport.org>

June 13-15: No Octane Regatta, Blue Mountain Lake, NY, (518) 352-7311 XT24, <acarroll@adkmuseum.org>

June 14: 15th Annual Moosehead Rowing Regatta, Moosehead Lake, Greenville, ME, (207) 695-2680.

June 21-22: Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival, Croton Point Park, Croton, NY, (845) 462-3113, <revival@clearwater.org>

Snow Row 2003

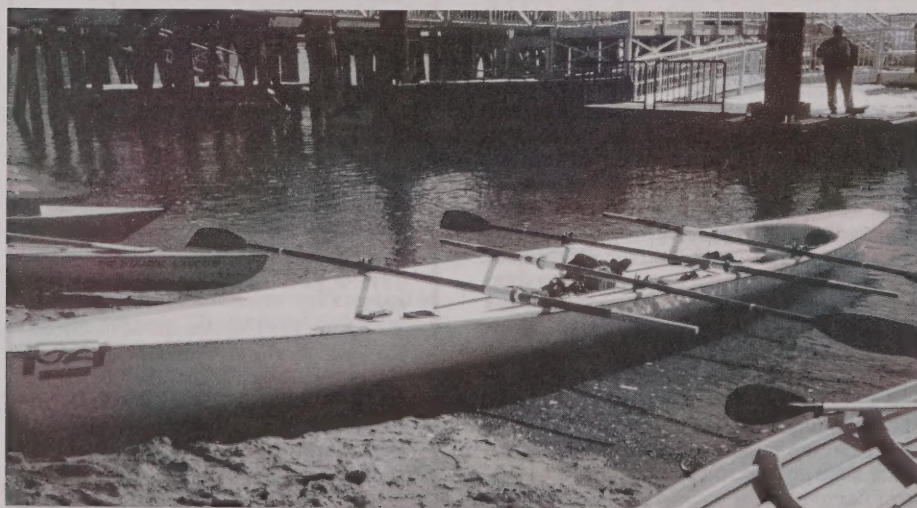


The crew "Out on Bail" of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's *Redwing* is all smiles (behind those wild west bandit masks) after winning the Adult Pilot Gig "Am" race.



The pilot gig *Vixen* was rowed by a mixed youth-adult crew from Vinalhaven, Maine.

The Hudson Fish was 4th overall and fastest of the two sliding seat coxed fours.



Anyone for global warming? The winter has been a cold one here in New England, temperatures averaging 10 degrees below normal, and we're all tired of it. Perhaps it was a concentrated focus on let's have a nice day by all who planned to enter the Snow Row on March 8 at Hull, Massachusetts, that brought a great day, 40 degrees, sunny, no wind, a flat calm on Hingham Bay, site of the 3.5 mile triangular race course.

As usual this event was the single largest gathering of the 32' 6 oared pilot gigs we get to see, 16 of the big boats lined up on the beach. Again this year the Brits were over from the Scilly Isles, world center for their particular form of rowing racing, with a difference this year in that they brought along an "A" team, said to rank 3rd currently in their world.

To date, the Brits have pulled their punches a bit, but last year's win by the Sound School youth crew over a mixed Brit crew put an end to such babying. The locals now were getting good enough to warrant serious attention. It was needed, as the UK adult "pro" crew, rowing their own *Sippin*, edged out the Sound School youth "pro" crew in *Sound* by a scant 19 seconds, 29:01 to 29:20, with adult "pro" Team Saquish in the *Mike Jenness Sr.* a close 3rd in 30:09.

And what is this "pro" classification? Well, it's a "new race concept". Organizer Ed McCabe explained it, "Okay, okay, we admit it. There are differences in crews and their boats and their goals, so try this on for size: "Pro" crews are geared for speed, trained to race, highly competitive. "Am" crews are here to race with peers, have fun, but not necessarily sweaty."

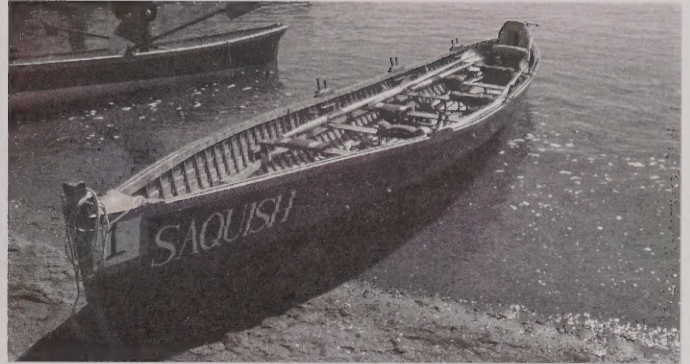
With all eyes focussed on the big boys (and girls, there were three women crews in gigs) the sliding seat entries, starting about 5 minutes after the gigs, went about doing what they do best, and first boat over the finish line, despite the 5 minute handicap, was the double ocean shell of Al Flanders and Champion Rioux, having overtaken the headstart handily to finish with about 6 minutes faster elapsed time, far and away the fastest boat in the race. And Paul Milde in a single ocean shell was second fastest overall, with the UK gig rounding out the top three on elapsed time.

There were two four oared sliding seat ocean shells that looked to be a serious threat for overall fastest, but the Hudson Fish, with a 29:14, settled for 4th behind the gig *Sippin*.

The small traditional boats cannot match the speed of the bigger craft but they do provide several outstanding performances. Donald and Dustin Carter rowed their fixed seat Monument River wherry into 9th overall and Paul Neil in the Kaulback Adirondack guideboat again topped the single fixed seat livery boats in 33:20.



The Sound School's *Sound* is a cold molded pilot gig which has served its youthful crews exceedingly well, fastest overall in 2002, and second fastest pilot gig behind the UK Rowing Club crew this year.



Saquish is Team Saquish's first pilot gig, this year rowed by a UK Rowing Club women's crew.



The coxed four *W.G. Tucker* was rowed by a Team Saquish youth crew.



The sign on the umbrella on this lovely Whitehall reads, "Boat Rides \$.15."

Ted Perry (left) and Doug Martin debut their all new recreational rowing shell, designed by Doug and built by Ted's East/West Boats in Berwick, Maine.



Snow Row Top Ten

1. Unnamed	Ocean Shell Double	A. Flanders/C. Rioux	23:31
2. Unnamed	Ocean Shell Single	P. Milde	28:40
3. <i>Slippin</i>	Adult Pro Pilot Gig	UK Rowing	29:01
4. <i>Hudson Fish</i>	Sliding Seat Coxed Four	To the Water	29:16
5. <i>Sound</i>	Youth Pro Pilot Gig	Sound School	29:20
6. <i>Mike Jenness Sr.</i>	Adult Pro Pilot Gig	Team Saquish	30:09
7. Unnamed	Sliding Seat Coxed Four	CMI	30:27
8. <i>Skylark</i>	Whaleboat	Whaling City RC	30:32
9. <i>Daniel J. Murphy</i>	Livery Double	D. & D. Carter	31:26
10. Unnamed	Ocean Shell Single	D. Karamanlidis	31:38

Class Winners (In Order of Times)

Sliding Seat Ocean Shell Double	Unnamed	A. Flanders/C. Rioux	23:31
Sliding Seat Ocean Shell Single	Unnamed	P. Milde	28:40
Adult Pilot Gig (Pro)	<i>Slippin</i>	UK Rowing	29:01
Sliding Seat Coxed 4	<i>Hudson Fish</i>	To the Water	29:16
Youth Pilot Gig (Pro)	<i>Sound</i>	Sound School	29:20
Adult Whaleboat	<i>Skylark</i>	Whaling City RC	30:32
Livery Double	<i>Daniel J. Murphy</i>	D. & D. Carter	31:26
Mixed Youth/Adult Pilot Gig (Am)	<i>Vixen</i>	Vinalhaven RC	31:48
Livery Single	<i>Linda Marie</i>	P. Neil	33:20
Adult Pilot Gig Am	<i>Redwing</i>	LCMM	33:42
Kayak Single	Unnamed	T. Nutt	35:46
Workboat Double	<i>Green Onion</i>	A. & H. Hall	35:53
Youth Coxed 4 (Pro)	<i>1st Constitution</i>	Sound School	36:24
Livery HOV	<i>Roshin Duvre</i>	Albany Irish RC	37:24
Youth Pilot Gig (Am)	<i>Port of Boston</i>	Hull LSM	38:08
Youth Coxed 4 (Am)	<i>W.G. Tucker</i>	Team Saquish	38:48
Workboat Single	<i>Jackie's Angst</i>	D. Llewellyn	42:16
Kayak Tandem	Unnamed	K. Calvi/R. Webber	45:14



The UK Rowing Club adult crew contemplate the Lemans type start drama, they probably do not get to mix it up in such off the beach melees at home, backing out and turning to get underway with 15 other gigs alongside. This year organizer Ed McCabe was alongside, bracing a Hull coxed four for the onrush of crew when the bomb goes off. Both crews got aboard okay but *Slippery's* oars soon intruded amongst the four's crew and, as they turned in opposite directions, collision seemed imminent. Then as they proceeded to untangle the two boats, a third headed right for them.



The finish procession: The Flanders/Rioux sliding seat ocean shell way ahead... followed by the UK Rowing Club pilot gig *Slippery*... the Carter brothers' Monument River wherry *Daniel J. Murphy*... the Hudson Fish sliding seat coxed four just ahead of Team Saquish's pilot gig *Mike Jenness*





The UK Rowing Club's women crew were elated after edging out the Team Saquish women's crew in the pilot gigs. The UK women rowed Team Saquish's *Saquish*, while the Team Saquish women rowed *Rogue*.



Ken Donovan from Sound School discusses the race results, wherein the UK Rowing Club crew edged out the Sound School youth crew by only 19 seconds, with a UK support crewman. Ken told us how he establishes perspective with his race winning youth crews, telling them that, "When we are here to race, we mean to win, but after it's all over, you'll find nobody cares."



The Sound School crew have a go in *Slippin* after the race. *Slippin* is, incidentally, 4' short of the typical 32' gig, she was built over 80 years ago and raced until recently. She was retired, restored and put on display in the Scilly Isles gig museum, only to return to competition now as the UK boat which spends the year over here with Team Saquish to save annual trans-Atlantic shipping costs. That's British team manager Martin Langdon at right.



A Bolger Gloucester Gull dory and pair of double enders await their crews.



A pair of Banks dories brought by the Cape Cod Vikings.

Sr... the Mainville CMI sliding seat coxed four... and Paul O'Neil's Adirondack guideboat. Staggered start times for the small traditional rowing boats, the coxed fours and gigs and the sliding seat and kayak entries mix them up pretty well on the water in 3.5 miles.



Ever since getting my West Wight Potter P 19, *Wight Magic*, in '98, I have thought about the possibility of a crossing of the Chesapeake Bay. For those of you not familiar with the bay, its width varies from four miles to somewhere like 21 miles. My wife Jenny and I normally sail on the Patuxent river, and where the river meets the bay (Solomon's Island), the bay is about nine miles across. By a fluke of work schedules I found myself with Thursday and Friday off, and Jenny had other plans for the weekend.

I started watching the weather. Come Thursday morning, weather predictions were for wind 10k N, Friday 5k NE, Saturday 5k S, Sunday 5 10k S, lower temps 80s. It was a go with an 8:30 AM launch from Broome's island, about nine miles up the Patuxent River from the mouth. My plan was to get the mouth, look at the bay, and decide to go or not. If not crossbay on Thursday, I'd hole up in a creek on the river until Friday and look again. I wanted to give myself two days to do the return trip, dependent on weather.

Main and small jib went up. I didn't have roller furling, and I figured the safest course was to use the small jib if things got hairy. I motorsailed down the Pax until I reached the tip of Solomon's Island (10:28 AM). From Broome's to Solomon's the river is only about 12 miles wide and winds are usually about 5k less than on the bay. Wind is N 5k. By the time I reached Solomon's the wind had picked up a bit. I headed east out of the mouth under sail only on a 60 degree tack, wind 10k N/NE. Just out of the mouth of the river past Drum Pt., I put in one reef in the main (11:15 AM). Wind was now 15k N/NE.

I started out accompanied by several other larger (of course) sailboats. Cruisers on the bay generally do a mid bay cruise that runs from Solomon's up to either Oxford or St. Michael's on the Eastern Shore of Mary-

Crossing The Bay

By Greg Welker

land. I was surprised that I was not all that much slower than some of these boats. I did note that their angle of tack into the wind was a lot closer than mine. If I was at 60deg, they must have been doing closer to 40deg. I now had all whitecaps, but 2' or under in height. I slogged my way east, and got to the red buoy just northwest of Barren Island. I was about 1.5 miles off the Eastern Shore.

This was enough. I didn't think I'd enjoy trying to continue the tacks upwind to reach the Little Choptank river, my original goal, in this wind, which was definitely more than the weatherman predicted. I turned around and tacked back west, aiming about 30deg up into the waves to minimize the rolling. Other than bow splashes over the side, things were really pretty dry, but I could see the water getting bigger as the wind kept up. I got to the western shore south of Cove Pt. Light and changed to a run downwind with the wind over the starboard stem quarter to the mouth of the Pax at Drum Pt.

Wind was now 15 with gusts to 21 as reported from the military base just at the mouth of the river. Occasionally I got a gust that simply turned the Potter sideways and around into the wind. Interesting. Jenny and I have been out in winds of this amount and not had this happen. Perhaps it's a combination of the wind and the 2' plus waves. The boat hardly heeled at all during this maneuver, but when it happened I couldn't rudder out of it. Went through about three of those on the run downwind.

As I came up to Drum Pt., a larger sailboat was coming out and taking a tack upwind of mine. It was steering pretty close to

pass me, don't know why as it had plenty of water depth to the upwind side. I was worried that I'd get one of those oddball gusts and the boat would round up and point me directly at the other boat. As the other boat passed within about 30' of me, the lady at the wheel waved, and I see that the boat is under sail and power. Nice boating. Give me a break. 1:56 PM.

I got back inside the river and things calmed down. Wind was still the same with the gusts, but the fetch here was less than a mile and the waves were 1' or less. I made my way up to Pt. Patience. Approaching Pt. Patience from the south, I headed north under the Route 4 bridge, then turned 270 W and went through a U-turn that brought me out at somewhere between 45 and 60 East. Also, there was a good bit of current here and some boat traffic. Pt. Patience was named from the sailing days when sailing ships would wait on one side or the other of the point until wind and tide allowed them to get past.

Two other interesting things about this area; it is the river's deepest section at 122', and there is a geologic magnetic anomaly located in the bottom almost under the bridge. It's good for about a 10-15 degree swing in a compass, local surveyors tell me. I've only seen one chart that records this. I've also always been too busy tacking under the bridge to watch the compass. I made it through on sail power alone and only four tacks, which makes me happy. Some days it's taken twice that. I was up the river and tucked into my favorite creek for overnighting before dark. I set up for the night and phoned home with the current location, 32 miles, eight hours. The longest mileage I've done to date. Nice trip to remember.

**Give to me and I will give to you,
says the Lord"**

(Milachi 3:6)

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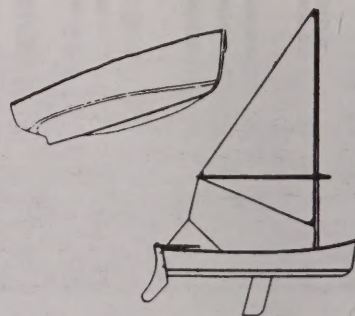
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Never having been much of a boat person, I finally decided, at age 76, that it was time to find out what all the excitement was about. So I took the advice of Key West sailing master, Sam Chapin: "Get out on the water!" That seemed simple enough, so last year, when midwinter boat prices were at their lowest, I bought a beautiful 9' yacht, a yachting cap and a life vest, and, when summer arrived pushed, off into one of Cape Cod's tidal ponds. Having read all the single handers' accounts, everyone from Slocum to Chichester and beyond I felt ready for a voyage.

The pond's outlet, a lovely meandering creek only a few yards wide, swiftly carried me toward the sea. It carried me backwards



but I was sure I'd have a chance to turn around when I got to a wider place I reasoned that by putting up the craft's only sail, I might in that way manage to swing myself around. I was right...until we became wedged crossways between the grassy banks, at which point I noticed that several boats, with perhaps more experienced skippers, were bearing down on me.

Knowing that they had no brakes, I jumped into the shallow water to push my boat loose, but the stream wasn't shallow. When I came to, I was lying on the grass while several people pumped on my chest. Around me was a chaos of slanted masts and grid-



locked sailboats. But the collision had caused no serious damage to the boats and we were soon on our way out to sea.

That was a surprise...the sea... I tell you. Waves that looked like ripples looked like mountains as I left the inlet, moving backwards again much of the time.

By the time I'd reached smoother water, I'd figured out how the sail worked. It was indeed an effective boat mover. Each time I got us pointed away from land I'd put the sail up again, fast, and see if I could get another push from the wind. It would be nice if there were some way to SEE the wind. That would be a big help. Well, live and learn.

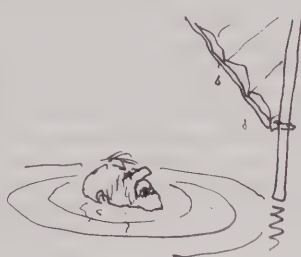


One Good Day Of Sailing

By Malcolm Wells

When the boat got blown over on its side, scaring me to death with images from *Jaws* and *Titanic*, I found that it somehow managed to right itself without any help from me. All I had to do was climb aboard and bail out the water. There was no bailer. Cupped hands had to do the job.

Every time I got most of the water out and I had begun to wring out my clothes, we'd get knocked over again. And again. After a few of these episodes I learned that if I did nothing at all the boat would stand up better with the water left in it. It was more stable. It looked funny, I suppose, to see nothing but my head and the sail above the water, but I didn't care. I WAS SAILING!



When I'd had enough and was ready to call it quits for the day, the land was no longer in sight! I had no idea which way I should go. I knew that the sun was usually in the east, or south, or something, but it wasn't sunny. And as for following the seabirds to land, that didn't help me either. The only bird in sight tended to circle around me.

Luckily, fate was with me, for after only a couple of hours full of the worst thoughts of starvation and drowning, I saw that land had reappeared. All I had to do was wait. It was a little embarrassing to think of being seen approaching Cape Cod going backwards, but then, I hadn't pretended to be an expert.

But where was I?



When a wave at last threw me rather unceremoniously onto the shore, there was no sign of a human presence in any direction. Climbing out of the boat half exhausted, I approached the dune, climbed to the top and took a look around. The only thing of interest



was the sight of my boat drifting away... backwards out to sea, a submarine with a sail.

The events of the day seemed to have been telling me something. The message seemed to be that one good day of sailing was enough. Other interests beckoned and I wasn't getting any younger. It was time to move on.

(Malcom Wells is an architect and illustrator focussing on "underground architecture" because he came to realize that "the earth's surface was made for living plants, not industrial plants". He and his artist wife operate a small gallery on Cape Cod in a building covered with a deep layer of earth in which native plants of all kinds are thriving. He has written 18 books on his special interests and offers a descriptive folder on them on request. Box 1149, Brewster, MA 02631).



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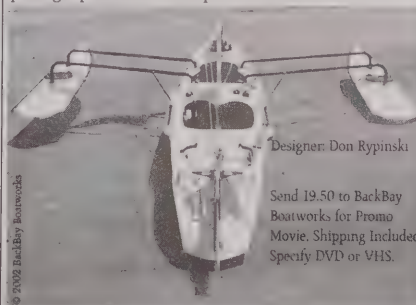
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As far as sailing is concerned, I am a bit of a hard case. HARD CASE may be somewhat of an overstatement, however. What I mean is, I rarely take my boats from the water in the fall until the very last wintry gun is fired. It is not a matter of laziness, but true sailing enthusiasm.

When my sons, Senn and Scott, began sailing and my daughter, Vanessa, had not yet come to realize she, too, walked upon sea legs like her father and older siblings, we owned only a 17' wooden Montgomery (Monty Craft) Annisquam Fishboat of mid 1930s vintage. Both Sean and Scott learned the art of sailing it within the marsh-grassed confines of Jones Creek. Jones Creek is a tidal estuary fed by the famous Annisquam River in Gloucester, Massachusetts. This tidal shoestring, on charts, is labeled "Jones River," but now at a little below mid-tide, it holds little more than a coffee mug of water.

My wife, Ellen, unlike anyone else in the family, does not enjoy the purest sailing style the kids and I love so insatiably. It was at her insistence that I bought a 3hp outboard kicker for our tiny vessel. Ellen said the wind had a way of ceasing to exist when she climbed aboard. Upon reflection, she was right about that, except to take it just a little further, nothing ever operates properly on any boat when Ellen is aboard. I have always thought she lacked a certain boating karma.

This non-sailing equipment was the first outboard engine I had ever owned. There is many a true ragman who will agree with me when I say that I wish it had been my last. It never quite functioned correctly when Ellen was around. Hell, it hardly ever ran properly, but was least apt to when Ellen was aboard.

A foul weather Thanksgiving came and went and that same foulness carried over into Friday and did not allow me the last sailing day of my self-proclaimed sailing season. Disappointingly, Saturday was equally as miserable. This, of course, is the only problem with waiting so late in the season to haul a boat in Gloucester, Massachusetts, you never know what kind of weather you are about to encounter that late in the year. Snow could easily develop overnight when the weather turns in November so, whether you want to get wet or not, the boat gets hauled that Saturday.

I had enlisted my father's aid. He would meet me at the launching ramp on the end of Long Wharf, less than a half mile from the mooring, with his truck towing the boat trailer.

I stood at the window watching rain come down, quite hard at times, thinking to myself, boy, this is not going to be fun. Scott, the younger of the two boys, nine then, came along and stood beside me, also looking out the window at the wildly whipping trees. The wind drove the droplets hard against the windowpane and we could hear a slight whistle as the wind found the draft producing gaps around the wooden window frame.

Have you ever noticed how nine-year-olds are? How can I put this delicately, that is? They're blind. "Can I go with you?" this voice said from the floor.

I like to think I'm a fairly astute fellow, possessing a good sense of humor. I feel I am equipped with a certain insight and sense for life and living. However, when it comes to reasoning with kids, nine-year-olds especially, it has been my experience, most gen-

Haul Out Day

By George Story

Copyright, 2001 George Story

erally, that you cannot win. A damned if you do, damned if you don't kind of quality enters into the picture when you are faced with this kind of situation, and at times going against your basic instincts is all you have the capacity or stamina to do.

As if in an out-of-body experience, I heard my voice say in reply, "Okay," instead of something equally wise such as, "Can't you see what it's doing out there? Do you want to catch your death?" or, and always one of my favorites, "Go ask your mother." I know how to defer, almost better than anyone else but this time, for some reason, I didn't say no, which any clear thinking adult should have under the circumstances.

I looked down at the surprised smiling face, obviously in as much shock as I was by my response, and said to him in a firm fatherly manner, as if we were about to embark on a great adventure which would save mankind as we know it from itself, "put on foul weather gear and get oars, life jackets, gusher pump, and the small fuel can out of the shed. I'll be outside in ten minutes." I turned to go, hoping I was not going to run into his mother before we left, then as I walked away I turned back adding, and smartly so I thought, "A pair of long johns and a heavy woolen sweater won't hurt."

When I found him in the yard, eight and a half minutes later, I took account of my orders, like any true captain would have. He had gotten all I asked for, surprisingly, the first time. He was standing there, slickered and already drenched to the skin, life jacket straps falling everywhere, the long unbalanced oars, half in his arms, half dragging on the ground, making an X in front of him. "Need a hand there?" I asked, lifting one of the life jackets to see his face.

He grunted a "Yeah." Letting go of the life jacket, I reached under his pile and took the tiny one gallon fuel can from under his arm and made a follow me motion with my hand. Scott grunted, but still smiling, bounced in the air a little to adjust his load. I heard the dragging of oars on the ground as we walked to the bottom of the hill. The Annisquam Fishboat *Fishtail* (named by four-year-old, Vanessa) was the only boat moored in the well protected basin.

I got Scotty, the pump, the oars, life jackets, the fuel can, and myself situated in their proper places and in due order. I went about the ritual of winterizing the mooring, making sure all was secure below the surface, wanting to make short work of this job, I even started the engine to let it warm up. The wind was a bit lighter here inside the lee of the hill we lived on, but there was still quite a breeze, which showed tiny catpaws and ripples on the surface further from shore. Jones Creek is one of the best hurricane holes I know of.

Turning my attention toward the bow, I said to Scotty, "Go ahead, cast us off. Just let the chain drop to the bottom."

Scott crawled onto the foredeck of the *Fishtail* and threw off the mooring chain. I

throttled up the little engine slightly and we were off. We moved out of the basin and hooked a right at the mouth to veer around a small marshgrass topped island. We moved along slowly, getting wet, but all in all having a good time. We rounded another marshgrass covered island when, for no apparent reason, the engine died. "Not to panic," I shared with Scott, still smiling and putting up a good front, "No problem," I added, holding onto the "o" in no and snipping the word problem short.

I pulled the starting rope. It did sputter, once but did not fire. I slid the choke slide over and gave it another pull. Nothing. Slipping the choke back to its original position, I cracked the throttle halfway and pulled the starter rope again. Still nothing happened. I propped myself up on my knees and leaned out over the little engine, hanging out over the stern and fiddled with everything. Nothing seemed to do the trick. Once I remember throwing the starter rope back at it as it refused to respond to my "gentle" pulls.

"Hey Dad," came Scotty's voice from behind me, "why don't we just????"

I simply and idly turned and said smiling, "We'll be underway in no time. You grab an oar and fend off the shoreline, keep us out of the mud," and turned back to the engine, now beginning to take the slow burn. A nine-year-old was not going to make this go any better right now, I thought.

"But Dad."

"Don't worry," I said, waving a hand behind my back to him. "Okay, pal?" I kept fiddling.

Thinking he was getting restless or hoping maybe doing what I told him to do, I heard Scott moving about behind me. "That's it, keep the boat balanced, doin' a great job up there," I said, not paying any attention to him at all but wanting to sound encouraging.

I was getting wetter by the minute and angrier by the second. "Excuse me, Dad," Scott said crowding me just a bit.

"Careful there," I said in my most stern, fatherly and teeth gritted voice. "You don't want to end up in the drink, do ye?" I asked. "Of course not. Besides, I'd never hear the end of it from Mom."

"Hey, Dad," Scott said. "Can I use those pliers for a second?" He grabbed my pliers from beside me and without turning around I issued a stern warning to the crew. "Listen, don't lose my tools overboard."

"Here you go," He said to me, handing me back my tool.

"That's better," I said to him, leaning over the stern just a little bit further. I was absorbed by my problem, so much so that I had not noticed the commotion forward. I then heard, "Dad, you better hold on."

Exasperated, I stopped what I was doing and looked under my arm toward Scott. "Is there a boat making a big waaakkkkeeee?" I screamed. I landed on the slatted decking and I found myself sitting, somewhat upright, but looking more skyward. All I could see was the big white sail, unfurled and set, above me. Scott, standing up in the cockpit with the mainsheet in his hand, stepped over me and gave the line a goodly tug to adjust the boom inboard. The boat listed over, he half turned, leaned toward me, stopping the tiller from moving with his foot.

We were sailing, no, we were practically flying across that little creek. I lay stunned at

what he had done. I looked his way and noted the proud smile on his face. Only once did he glance my way, and only then to issue an order to adjust the downhaul for him.

I bit my lower lip almost all the way through as the opposite shore came upon us quickly. I braced myself, feet pushing against the centerboard trunk, back against the cockpit coaming; I had all I could do to keep my mouth shut as Scott looked all around and stated with authority, "Ready about," and he waited, and so did I. Tensely I drummed my fingers on the coaming's oak trim, still waiting. I did not want to close my eyes, not even blink, and then came the execution part of the command not more than 15' from shore. "Hard alee."

Never in my life did I watch such a perfectly executed tack. All in one fluid motion he eased the mainsheet slightly, moved his leg and allowed the tiller to slide past, he bent over and let the boom fall gently to the other side. He stood up again and, with his leg, controlled the rudder while drawing in on the sheet, adjusting the boom into place with perfection on the very first try.

I sat back and watched. The wind was steady. It did not seem to gust up much, if at all. We sailed past the little marsh covered islands we had drifted back passed earlier, while I was trying to fix the outboard. We were beating into the wind, but making a goodly cut in the step up the creek toward the long wharf where we would haul out. We had full tide now and Scotty continued, tack after tack. As a good crew member, I sat quietly by and did only what I was told to do.

The truth be told, Scott did most all the work and I sat back enjoying the ride completely.

We rounded the marsh toward Long Wharf and found my father slipping the trailer into the water at the clamshell based launching ramp as we closed in on the rocky protected opening. My father patiently waited and watched. Scott tacked past the back of the submerged trailer so closely I could easily see the frame under the water. I readied to throw a line to my father when Scott said, "Hold on, Dad. Let's do this the easy way. Ready about. Hard alee." At the last second he pulled hard on the sheet, pushed over the tiller, turning away from the trailer as we passed, eased up on the line for a moment, then he pulled it in, turning the boat three quarters of the way around, he righted completely into the wind.

The forward motion of the turn kept us moving just fast enough to haul up the centerboard and to slip the *Fishtail* onto the trailer and close enough so that Scott slipped up onto the bow, took the winch clip from my father, put the cable through the chock and clipped it onto the cleat in one graceful movement. "Okay, Grampy," he said, and my father tightened the winch, hopped into the truck, and drove up the ramp onto level ground with the trailer in tow and the two of us sitting in the boat looking at each other.

Scott smiled, eyes twinkling, and jumped to work taking the sail in and off of the mast and boom. With the rain coming down as it did, we made as quick a job of taking down the mast as we could. We took

in the tiller and rudder, tied everything down, twisted free the dory plug, and headed home.

Ellen was in the window as we backed the trailer into its winter position. She watched and I tried not to notice. "We're in trouble now," I muttered to myself. Scott looked up at me, having heard my words, "What'd I do?" he asked. I put my arm around him and said, "Not a thing. Not a single thing."

The two of us went into the house to warm up and I looked at Ellen, who did not say a word. I took a deep breath and sighed. When he saw his brother and sister, Scott started in. "You shoulda seen it," he said animatedly on tiptoes to Sean and Vanessa. I watched and cringed as Ellen took in every utterance and registered it all in her mind for later.



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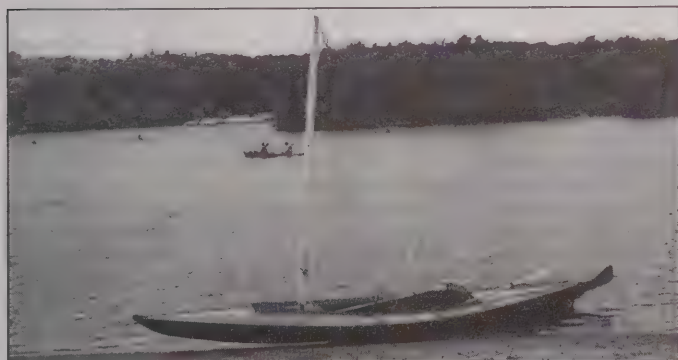
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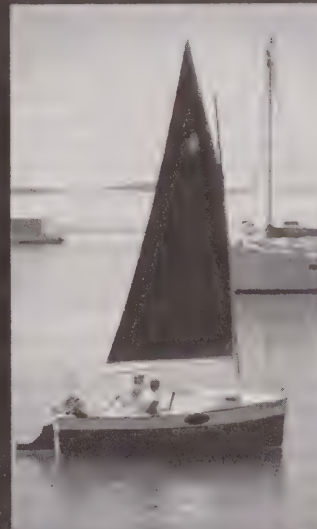
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The fleet at Agua Verde.

Sailing South from Isla Danzante

The morning dawned brilliantly colored and flat calm. Although I love the sunrises and sunsets here, this time I'd have been happy to trade the Technicolor sunrise for a little bit of wind. However, trusting to the "normal wind pattern," I started out drifting with cats paws out of the bay and up around the north end of Danzante. Within an hour I'd given up, fired up the outboard, and was quietly motoring down the east side of the island and over toward the south end of Isla Carmen. A bit of breeze from the NW came up so I got the motor put away and set the main and the cruising spinnaker, my first try with the big chute. The day's wind came and went, but there was always enough to keep the chute flying and pulling strongly.

Late in the afternoon, as I was closing on Puerto Agua Verde, I had handed the main and was doing really well with just the spinnaker. About two miles offshore I began to consider my arrival, dead downwind into a circular bay with a reef protecting a tight little cove on the right side going in, with a wind getting up toward 20 knots, and me flying a spinnaker that I didn't know how to get down. Hmm. I tried heading up into the wind to see what happened and didn't like it. The sail flogged and shook the whole boat.

Finally I decided it had to come down whether it was fun or not and better to do it here than closer to the beach, so I lashed the tiller in a broad sweeping turn to port, clipped on my tether and crawled up to the halyard, uncleated and eased out on the line. Wow. The sail flogged and banged about my ears wildly for a few seconds while I tried to haul in on the lee sheet to collapse the mess on board somehow. It wasn't to be. The halyard ran out, the sheet ripped through my fingers and the whole works went into the bay off to the right.

Oh well. Nobody was watching, nothing broke, and at least the wild sleigh ride was over. Pulling in on just one corner at a time brought it all on deck pretty quickly without fouling keel or rudder, then I found time to heave to properly on starboard tack. I put away the chute and dug out the jib, hanked it on, hoisted and hove to again, got the main up with one reef pulled down, and squared away for the harbor.

Agua Verde has a remarkable signpost out front, an enormous finger of rock perhaps

The Seagull's First Trip To Baja

A true story of a long drive &
some fun sailing from Seattle to
Seattle by way of Puerto
Escondido and La Paz, Baja
California Sur, January 13 -
February 15, 2002

By Ken Preston

Part 4

half a mile offshore painted completely white by flocks of seabirds over the generations. It's called Roca Solitaria and can be seen clearly from miles away to the north and makes a landfall really easy there. Otherwise one would have to know exactly where to look to find the bay. As it was, a pair of kayakers were coming out of the bay and heading north along the beach. I steered to pass behind them and waved. They made me feel like a big boat for a change. Coming into the harbor and seeing how things lay I decided to heave to in the entrance, get the sails off her and go into the anchorage under power.

All went well until I fired up the motor and swung across the wind to tuck in behind the protecting reef. The inflatable canoe flipped over in the crosswind though it had followed perfectly all day. Upside down underway isn't her best behavior, but this was worse. I'd left the removable middle seat in her for the day (remember it was calm in the morning and this was my first trip with her) and the seat immediately popped out and headed downwind for the beach a half mile away.

Oh well. I headed off in hot pursuit and finally caught the runaway seat on the third try without tangling the canoe's tow line in the prop or getting us ashore. Hence the rules regarding towing the inflatable canoe: 1) Remove seat and paddle before towing, and 2) don't look back. There were three boats

already in the harbor and another large sailboat motor sailing in from the south, so I took advantage of *Gaviota's* small size to tuck way up in the corner to the left of the others, shut off the motor and anchored easily on good sand in about 15' of water. The anchor held immediately and thus began a fine evening after a grand day.

Agua Verde

Agua Verde is a fishing village that also raises goats, as I found out in the morning. The men launch their pangas off the beach in front of the village (where the canoe's seat had been headed) or keep them on head and stern lines in the little cove where all the yachts had anchored. The choice is clear enough. On the beach in front of the village is close to home, easier to load gear and equipment, but more work to handle the boats up the sand. The cove with the yachts lets the boats stay safely afloat, but it's about a mile from the village by road and the last 500' are not passable by vehicles since the cliff slid away some time back. The population seems about equally split between the two choices, which gives you an idea of the work involved in hauling a panga up the beach.

There is what is described as an "exciting dirt road" from Agua Verde out to Mexico Hwy 1 some 30 miles away, which allows access to Loreto or La Paz to sell fish or goat products. On Monday mornings a truck brings fresh vegetables, fruit, and so forth to the little store ("tienda") in the village, so restocking there on Tuesday can be accomplished. I was still well stocked with stores from Loreto, of course, but even so, before breakfast I decided to walk into town while waiting for the breeze to come up for the day. I took the canoe ashore and tied it to a rock above tide line, changed into hiking shoes, and headed up the road around the mountain to town.

The walk took about half an hour, including time to let 50 or 60 varicolored goats and their kids (pun intended) pass up the road, having just come from milking at the first homestead at the foot of the hill. The lead goat with her bell eyed me with quite a disapproving look as she passed and I decided to stand still to avoid bothering her crew. Looking up at the hills all around I could see the goat paths through the scant underbrush and recognize the closely cropped shrubbery that marks the high tide limit for a goat standing on its hind legs. This seems perhaps a little greener place than many I'd seen in Baja, and the goats looked very fine and healthy.

The houses were small and plain and mostly made of plywood and similar materials. Each was surrounded by a fence of stout poles for posts and old fish netting. Remember, there are goats here and each house has flowers or fruit trees or vegetables growing. Most of the houses have one or two large shady structures either as porches attached to the house or just free standing in the yard with a table or a big rope strung bed or both under the shade and often an open fire raised cooking hearth as well.

At one such hearth a magnificent woman in her 40s, graying mane of long hair pulled back from her face, stood making tortillas on a cast iron griddle above the mesquite fire. I had skipped breakfast so I couldn't help standing and staring. She said something I missed (my Spanish is awful anyway) so I

just smiled and said, "Buenas dias." Before I knew it, a bright eyed six-year-old with shiny braids and a yellow dress (spotless) came over to the fence with a napkin carefully folded over a steaming hot thick tortilla for me. Goodness, was that good. I rolled it up and thoughtfully ate it, standing in the early sunshine with a bougainvillea bush overhead covered in red flowers, then I bowed deeply to the lady and her messenger, gave them "muchisimas gracias," and walked back to the boat. By the time I was aboard there was a good start on a NW breeze so I dressed the boat for sea, main, and working jib and got the anchor aboard.

From Agua Verde to Puerto El Gato

The breeze from Agua Verde looked grand, though in fact it died off in the late afternoon so the last four miles took two hours. Leaving Agua Verde, larger boats often go outside the low lying offshore rock and reefs called Roca San Marcial, though the charts and guide books say there is plenty of water and room between the rock and Punta Marcial. I passed inside and in the small boat felt happy with the space available. This point is a significant corner on the coast. In front of Agua Verde the coast runs nearly east-west, but at Punta Marcial it turns sharply south and runs along for many miles as a tall mountainside dropping into the sea. It's utterly magnificent and interestingly deceptive.

While one may be making good time along the coast, the scale of the mountains and their great extent north and south makes it seem in the clear air as though one is hardly moving. The navigation for the day was superbly simple. Once past Punta San Marcial, keep Baja on your right and turn in at the cove with the red cliffs. The distance to sail, anchor to anchor is just under 20 miles, and with the dying breeze in the early afternoon it took most of the day to do, but a fine and pleasant day of sailing and sunshine it was.

Still there were no dolphins around, though I saw whale spouts all around the boat in the distance and some very large fish jumping clear out of the sea and crashing back again. Suddenly, close at hand astern, came a loud long exhalation and I turned round just in time to see the broad grey back of a whale as the breath-hole closed and he slipped back below the surface, perhaps 100' astern. Once again he rose and blew, a little farther away, and then was gone. I waited all day to see him again and perhaps I did. Far off to the east, a mile or more I'm sure, my eye happened to fall for a second on what had to be a whale "spy-hopping." He had to have been standing on his tail and holding his head far above the sea.

Coming into the anchorage I was surprised to see *Con Limon* there ahead of me. They had spent the night at Agua Verde, though we'd only just spoken briefly, and earlier in the day I thought I'd seen them headed toward Isla Santa Cruz far offshore, but hadn't been sure in the distance. Somehow they'd managed to turn back in to the coast and reach harbor before me during the day and I'd never noticed when they crossed my bow. They were ashore gathering firewood for a bonfire, which promised well for the evening, but my eyes were all full of the scene above the beach.

The red rocks that make up the very visible cliffs when sailing in from the north are

somehow different from most of the volcanic rocks around. They weather into great rounded shapes and incredible bands of filigree instead of the harsh angular shapes of the basalts and volcanic ash cliffs. The late afternoon sun was warming the already red rocks with amazing light, and I hurried to anchor and get ashore with the camera. I'm not often floored by simple geology but Puerto Gato is magnificent beyond description. Some of the photos I took are good reminders of the place, but nothing can compare with sailing into the bay, paddling ashore, and walking among those fabulous cliffs oneself.

The campfire ashore that night was as good as the stones earlier. We sat in the dark staring into the small flame, Renee, then Winston taking turns poking and feeding it. Renee had a large sack of sliced limes ready for the beer and the stars were stupendous overhead, even in competition with the nearly full moon. We talked over most of the world's problems and opportunities and traded stories from Alaska (where we had all worked at one time or another) to the South Pacific, where Renee was a Peace Corps volunteer. When the fire finally ate the last bit of wood and died to coals we paddled silently to the boats and to bed.

From Puerto El Gato to Nopolo

Next morning I was up before sunrise, with a light breeze stirring. I got the anchor, said good-bye to *Con Limon* and drifted quietly to sea. Right around the point from Puerto Gato is the settlement of Timbabichi, perhaps three or four miles south. It has a number of fishermen's homes along the beach and a road access out to the highway, though I've heard it's even rougher than from Agua Verde. Shelter is not as fine as in Gato, but the sandy beach works well for the fishermen's pangas. The landmark for Timbabichi is truly prominent, a very large white home (vacant, I believe) standing near the beach. So brightly white and square and huge, it's given the bay a nickname, "Casa Grande," among the cruisers.

The next good looking harbors to the south are Nopolo (not the golf course near Loreto) and just below Nopolo, Puerto San Evaristo. I wasn't sure starting out where I'd end up. Nopolo is about 20 miles from El Gato and Evaristo is another five or six miles beyond. I trusted in the wind to come up and give me more of a boost along during the day. In fact, I got up to 2.5 knots at times but spent time too sitting like a boat on a mirror.

At lunchtime, becalmed, I lashed the tiller again and went below to fix something to eat. Looking out the hatch as I munched my tunafish sandwich I saw the water utterly glassy but the sails filled and I felt a light coolness against my cheek from the east. I couldn't call it a breeze and I could see no sign of it on the water at all except that we were moving nearly 2 knots. I've read of wizards who could call a "magic wind" to move them where they wished across the seas in olden times, but this is the only time I've had a magic wind of my own. From noon until mid-afternoon the boat just chuckled quietly through the water, mostly with the helm lashed and me standing quietly in the hatch watching the world pass by.

We passed the landmarks along the way, Roca Negro was just in front of us for the

longest time as we glided quietly along, and I never actually made out Roca Morena until I was well past. It lies so close to the shore I thought it was just part of the jagged coast. La Habana is very prominent and stands out from the cliffs beyond coming down from the north, though it was confusing to me since I'd not yet identified Morena. Finally the pointed cliff top just north of Nopolo began to separate itself from the great mass of the mountains of the coast.

During the day I saw several very large fish jumping, but not a single whale or dolphin. A flock of perhaps ten pelicans sat on the water directly ahead as I ghosted along and I did not alter course. About 20' from them (they were eyeing me dubiously above their long beaks) a school of foot-long silver fish suddenly exploded from the glassy sea and skittered across the surface into the flock of pelicans. Each pelican lunged into the school as it passed and not a single bird missed! I suppose they're still sitting there waiting for me to round up another school and flush it out for them.

About four miles from Punto Nopolo, with the 600' high cliffs close alongside, the wind left for good and left us bobbing on the water like a cork. I put away the sails and fired up the outboard, set it to its quietest throttle setting, and purred along at 3.5 knots. Passing close to the point, turning slightly to the right, I wished there was a better anchorage right in front of the first two little settlements, but the guidebook advised anchoring off the third settlement in front of the beach at the end of the arroyo.

The anchor held well on the first try in about 20' of water, still a good distance off the beach. The sun was already behind the mountainsides and purple dark was spreading quickly over the anchorage. Two houses were visible on the beach with perhaps a glimmer of light from the one to the south. Other than that there were the moon and stars and utter quiet. In the course of the day I'd seen one contrail from a passing jet but had not heard his engines. There had been a shrimp boat pass ahead of me and I'd seen two charter boats with their sails furled motoring south and two or three pangas passing in the distance. Certainly I wasn't alone on the sea, but in the course of the day I think I only heard engines (other than my own) two or three times. That's peace and quiet and room to breathe.

(To Be Continued)

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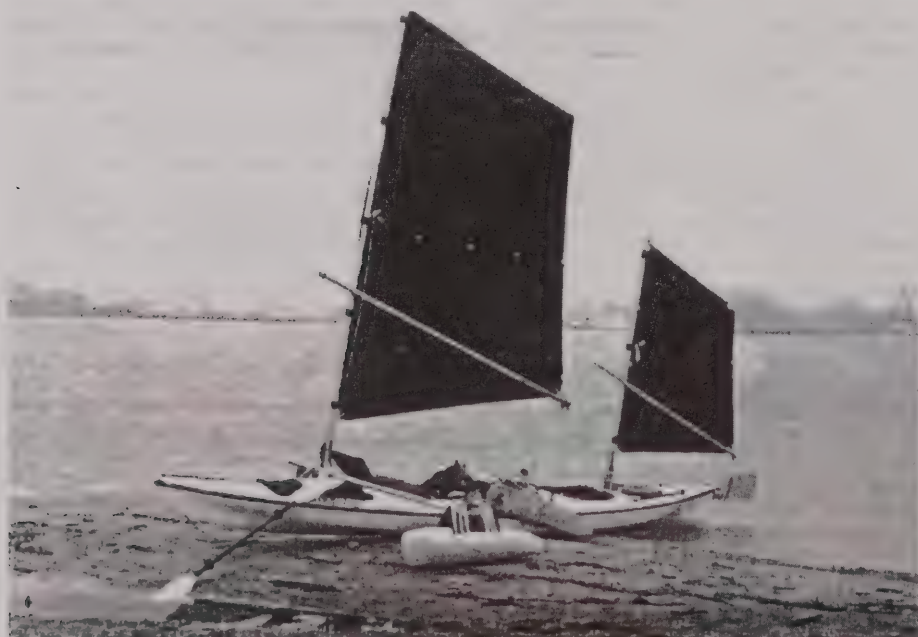
Russell getting me into his new (later became *Brown Pelican*) boat in 1982-83

September 1990: The town dock on the edge of Puget Sound is in late day shadow. It's cool. Russell Brown's on his Prindle 16, stowing gear after our hurtling ride back across Port Townsend Bay. He hops on the dock and looks like he's about to tell me something a little unpleasant.

"Okay, Russell, but I have to try." I'd been talking adding amas to kayak hulls for sailing. I mentioned it several times but never got a ringing, "Yeah, that's great!" or even a shrugging, "Umm, why not?"

For years I'd been experimenting with sailing rigs on kayaks. I'd sailed on beach

Seascope II with Little Brown Ama on Lake St. Clair.



Tales Of Multi Hullers Wouldn't It Be Great?

By Hugh Horton

cats, Bill Schooley's paired hull, single outrigger *Dragonfly*, and many kayaks and canoes with a variety of modern windward rigs and others. I thought a paddling/sailing boat with an ama or two would be good.

They'd add stability and safety. You could use bigger sails and with the waterline length of long kayak hulls, maybe occasionally go like a small beachcat.

Russell checked the Prindle's gear and lines and gave me a wry look. "Hugh," big smile, "let's go eat."

Russell is Jim and Joanna Brown's younger son. Jim is one of *Multihulls Magazine's* 25th Anniversary "Living Legend Designers." Russell designs and builds proas and other boats (see *WoodenBoat* #83 and *Cruising World*, March '01). He's an artistic master of composite construction. Brother Steve and he grew up on the family's trimaran, *Scrimshaw*.

Winter 1990/91: Russell built a little ama for Howard Rice and me. Howard's a one design fanatic and Klepper sailor/paddler. The ama is 5' long, 80-90 lbs. displacement. It was an experiment for a Klepper Aerius II double and is exquisite.

Spring 1991: The Clinton River near Detroit, 50s, cloudy, blustery, raw. Howard and I carry a 21' Northwest Kayaks Seascope II 50 yards to the water. Out of the shop, around the old house, through and over a gate in a low fence to the stout catwalk on the failing wooden seawall. Whew! We've taken many kayaks and canoes this way. Holy complicated cow! With even a flyweight, simple 5' ama and single tube aka, the Seascope had gotten unwieldy.

On Lake St. Clair the ice is gone, an illusion of warmth. We splash around at six or seven knots or so. Howard hikes to starboard or climbs out the pipe aka. I wonder how the ice has melted.

First weekend in May 1991: A few miles south of the mouth of the Suwanee River, Florida, the 7th Cedar Key Small Boat Meet. Sunny, 80s, SW 8 12, and close to 80sf of sail on the Seascope. Ron Sell and I grin and watch the ama slide under the warm water like a dolphin until the water hits my crude attachment. The ama glides under while its buoyancy works 5-1/2' out from the centerline of the boat.

Wet. Who cares? But the Sea Pearl 2ls, 600-lb. open monohull cat ketches, still fly away to weather. With the ama we have more capsizing resistance but we're not faster than without it, nor when it's to weather. When paddling, too, we subconsciously heel her enough to lift the ama clear.

Longer, greater volume amas would be better yet for sailing, particularly if one is stuck in a small cockpit in the middle of the boat. For paddling or light air sailing Russell's beauty gave as little drag as possible, kissing the water and submersing, yet it is drag on the end of a lever. But it gave the stable "not tippy" feeling of a multihull.

In 1993 Jim drew a little sailing/paddling trimaran for Wilderness Systems and sent an early model. It looked like a kayak with amas. But the design evolved more to a sailing trimaran than a paddling boat, becoming the *WindRider 16*.

Summer 1996, Lake Michigan: Rice and I reach down swells meeting shallows. He's in his 17' Klepper with short fabric amas, and a rock in the bow seat. My Puffin is 15' overall with 2-2/3rds the sail area of the Klepper. But our speeds are about equal. Howard's balloons cut anxiety, though, and he didn't capsize. What can I say? I was in a little shore surf, turning into the trough, and shouting

about dinner to Ron Sell on the beach, when....

1997, Cedar Key: I sailed a WindRider 16 with plenty of wind. The year before I'd drifted around in one for a few minutes and had no fun paddling. With wind it was great, wet, and speedy. I couldn't trip it over the leeward ama.

1998: Jim designs the WindRider 17 tandem/double with a stayed rig and lifting bow shape. She's become a more powerful sailer, he says, comfortable in seas offshore. But do you want to paddle her? Or put her on your roof? Can you carry her on your shoulder to the water, with rig and paddles in your other hand?

Now I know why, a decade ago, Russell sighed and changed the subject.

Amas on kayak hulls can offer safety because of resistance to capsizing and higher performance. But the latter is more elusive as amas and rig shrink, or more costly to paddling and user friendliness as rig and amas grow.

Look at a group of experienced multihull sailors in Michigan. Four of them, and Howard, have commissioned sisters of Meade Gougeon's monohull cruising, sailing canoe, *Serendipity*.

Three own G32 cruising catamarans. One has a Tremolino. Two own trimarans that have dominated Great Lakes racing for 30 years, including Mackinac races, and are also featured in the *Multihulls* 25th Anniversary issue. A third owns a Kettering Tri Foiler, and the same one has cruised Lake Huron's North Channel on a Laser. Three have sailed monos and multis to or on other continents. One has paddled flatwater competitively with single and double paddles. And they've had scads of beachcats. Over the years they've owned as many boats each as any of my boathead friends. Now they want a good paddler/sailer, simple and cartoppable, and as capable as they are.

Look at Jim. At age 62, he drew and built his first monohull, *Bottle Nose*, a 14'x28" innovative kayak/decked canoe with a simple upwind rig.

Remember, please, the obvious differences between sailing next to a friend in another boat along a friendly shore in warm water half an hour from an organic sandwich/espresso shop, and sailing alone miles offshore on cold briny. A wish to prevent capsize is not unreasonable nor unseamanlike, particularly if one's boat is narrow enough for it to happen easily. As Howard emailed, "I can tell you many times I have longed for buoyant wings of some sort in my skinny craft." From the smallest balloon amas to big ones, all resist capsizing. And, to some extent, so does a wider, fuller boat.

So, if we could have an instantly variable, inflatable ama/aka system with high volume amas as long as the boat, as shapely as art and science allow, which could shrink to a balloon on a stick sometimes and anywhere in between, and then simply disappear altogether half the time, wouldn't it be great? And an inflatable rig, too, with better controls than, say, the fore and index digits of a bat, with a vapor flow tell tale seeping at will from the leading edge/forefinger? Wouldn't that be great! And then...

October 2001: Russell's back from a cruise to the Straits of Georgia between Vancouver Island and British Columbia. His



Puffin capsized in shore surf.

proa, *Jzerro*, is in Australia. "It was really cool. I was anchored and tied off while it blew in the Straits. I had my tent set on my Tornado. A bald eagle was flying around. An osprey flew right over the tent. I was thinking how fun Meade's little boat would be."

(Originally published in *Small Craft Advisor*, Jan/Feb 2002)



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Once upon a time we could buy plywood made from perfect veneers of durable species of wood. The best trees were selected as suitable for plywood, and any that did not make the grade would be sent off to be sawn up for planks. Perhaps that is a generalisation, but in reality that would happen more often than not. I've worked in plywood factories, not hands on down on the production line, but in engineering the machinery and working out process controls and management systems. I can tell you that as the machinery's ability to recover useable sheets of veneer from marginal quality logs improves, the financial side of making plywood has changed from having to use only really top logs (or "bolts" as some know peeler lengths) to being able to produce a high dollar value product from a much cheaper raw material.

New types of veneer lathes can cut a thin sheet from logs with monster knots in them and turn right down until they are into a softwood log's juvenile corewood, new driers can dry wood of varying densities to acceptable standards of moisture content, there are absolutely wondrous machines that "read" faults in a sheet of wood, cut them out, and join up the pieces into continuous sheets again. Filled glues are able to bond much larger gaps so the ragged surface finish of some veneers is no longer an issue (the local plywood mill here is the biggest user of hard baking flour in the district, and they don't use it to make cookies for lunchtime either).

The result is that plywood ain't wot it used to be!

It is more than adequate for most uses, and housing, packaging, and industrial uses soak up more than 99% of the world's plywood production. We, building boats from the stuff, are both the most demanding and the smallest users of what is really a miraculous material for the home boatbuilder, so few manufacturers worry about us. We are not in the "too hard basket." We are the "too hard basket!"

But what else could I find as a material for my clients that they can normally buy locally right off the shelf, that comes in sheets that are not too hard for them to carry and lift, that is available to them in a wide range of thicknesses and strengths, that has strength almost uniform in two out of three planes and is flexible enough in the other to bend around the side of a boat, that can be shaped and drilled with tools that are easily obtained and that they are usually familiar with, that can be bonded by screwing, nailing, fiberglass taping, epoxy glues, phenol formaldehyde glues, polyurethane glues, silicones, melamines, and so on, that can be painted with a paintbrush, and that even painted with ordinary housepaint seems to survive pretty well. It's good stuff. Well, in theory at least.

But the quality is an issue, like I said, apart from a very few specialist mills the industrial and housebuilding users drive the quality and often the product that suits them doesn't suit us. So what do we do? Welding our next boat up out of aluminium or steel would be one thought, but running a 9" angle grinder on a steel chine at 1:00 PM while your neighbour is trying to get the new baby to sleep is perhaps a risky option. Ferrocement is not the material of choice for builders of sea kayaks, and a degree in chemistry plus a 20' long autoclave is going to take longer to acquire than we'd like, seeing as our

From the Drawing Board

John Welsford

Small Craft Designer



Occasional Ramblings From a Small Craft Designer

Plywood Ain't Wot It Used to Be!

dreamship is to take us cruising next summer.

So what to do? Well, there are some good things in amongst the doom and gloom. First though, we need to have a good think about what is we actually need.

Assuming the basic properties of plywood, we need a waterproof glue bond. The red or almost black glue line will be phenol formaldehyde glue (resorcinol), as waterproof as you will get. If in doubt, buy one sheet and take it home, write down the maker's name and grade type so you can buy or avoid that manufacturer in the future, slice a couple of bits off a corner, and boil them for a couple of hours. If they hang together you'll know that you can sail your boat through boiling water with no risk of the ply delaminating. But better still, you can be pretty sure that the glue will not soften and let go when in normally cold water.

We need one good side. It doesn't have to be perfect as long as it has a smooth surface. This surface can be partly filler as in C Pd grade where one side is plugged or patched. The smooth side goes inwards, we can deal to the outside later.

We want not too many internal voids. Have a look at the stack of sheets in the rack. If some of them have a lot of gaps in the cross-wise veneers, don't buy the ones that look okay. Remember that only the voids near the edge will show and if some of sheets in a production run are ratty on the edges, chances are that there are internal voids as well. These voids are weak, often are a sign of poor gluebond, can reduce strength and make a sheet bend unevenly when wrapping around a boat, and the outer veneer may collapse under impact making a hole in the surface. In some cases they are starting places for rot. Try another grade or manufacturer.

We need to check for overlaps in the internal veneers, this is not unusual in the construction or utility grades and usually occurs where the two half veneers that form the crossband are overlapped when being laid up into a ply sheet. It shows in the edge as a double up at the joint about halfway along the sheet, and in the surface as a change in the appearance of the sanded surface caused by the finishing machine sanding off the bump.

This double up will appear in the finish of your boat. No matter how much you sand it, it will eventually reappear.

Wood moves ever so slightly with time and change of moisture content, and the compressed wood in that double up will swell slightly more than the wood around it. It will become an unsightly straight lined bump in the finish that you will never be able to get rid of. Okay, perhaps in a bulkhead or seat top, but Murphie's law will ensure that it is the sheet that goes on about halfway along the otherwise perfect side of your pride and joy!

We need to check for sheet uniformity. Pull a sheet partway out of the rack and swing down on the end, sighting along it while holding it bent. The bend should be even, no flat spots and sharp bends. These indicate that some parts of the sheet are stiffer than others, and conversely some are weaker. They should be even!

When you are still faced with a sheet of ply that reveals a gap, or gaps in the edges, after cutting out a component, use a sharp chisel to peel some veneer off a piece of scrap, dip it in glue, and drive it as far into the void as you can. The intention here is to fill the void as well as possibly preventing weakness and the accumulation of moisture.

We have to make do to some extent with wood species, the old durable species are hard to come by. The fact that gaboos, or occoume, is widely used in boatbuilding is an indication of just how good our coating systems are, as these two wood species can rot as quickly as look at you. Our paints, and sealants when appropriately used, are very effective at keeping water out. Rot, of course, needs food (the cellulose sugars in the wood), oxygen, and moisture, deny one of those three and rot cannot flourish. So we can preserve the less durable species and while it is nice to have a really good plywood made of a durable timber species, it is not always obtainable so we have to do our best with what is available.

I am frequently asked about treated plywood. There are several kinds, LOSP is common, Light Oil Soluble Preservative. This stuff is moderately effective in preservation of wood, but can be very dodgy to glue. I myself will not use it with conventional glues and my testing has given variable results. LOSP is normally clear and may not be detectable by colour or touch. It may, in some cases, be detectable by smell but don't bet on it. Very occasionally you might come across some green LOSP treatment. The green stain will normally be a light, bright green as opposed to the dull, muted green of the CCA treatment chemical.

CCA (copper, chrome, arsenic) sounds really hazardous, but in use the stuff bonds chemically to the wood fibre. People who have worked with CCA-treated woods for many years seem to show no signs of poisoning from it, not like pentachlorophenol which is really nasty stuff. CCA is a waterborne treatment that penetrates some woods very well and kills anything from rot spores to teredo worm. It will not leach out and is very effective at preventing rot or insect damage. I suspect, though, that the perceived hazard of introducing this brew of chemicals into the environment will soon see it become unavailable.

I have built a number of boats from CCA-treated construction ply and have found

that as long as I scrub the surplus treatment salts out of the surface of the wood with a strong solution of bleach and hot water, I have had no problems with glueing with either epoxy or resorcinol. Following my selling her, the original *Hobo* sat for quite a few years partly full of fresh water and dead leaves. When the current owner stripped her, he found that the plywood was fine but much of the solid wood was history in spite of epoxy coating and lots of paint.

Precoating is a good idea where quality is suspect. It is a good idea anyway, but especially so when the surface finish of the ply is not good. Rot flourishes in corners, cracks, voids, and other places where it can hide away unseen until it has a grip. This is at least partly because those places retain moisture and so a rough finished surface, or one with the checks and splits common to rotary peeled veneer. Peeled from the surface of a log rotated against a lathe knife, this cylindrical shaped sheet is pressed flat during the drying process and will then have a myriad of tiny lengthwise splits built into it. Some species are affected worse than others in this process.

To reduce the chance of this happening, we can use the outstanding virtues of epoxy resin. It seals, it sticks, it fills, and it is as nearly waterproof as anything we are likely to find. It sticks to itself very well, so we can precoat the plywood that will be hard to access when the boat is built. Lay the sheets out, get the number one helper mixing resin, put the respirator and the Nitrile gloves on, and pitch into the sheets with a short nap paint roller. One coat plain resin and a second coat with enough microballons to make a good thick film should do the trick. Try it at about runny porridge consistency and tip off with a foam paint applicator (paintbrush). The second coat should go on just as the first one has almost lost its tackiness, and when the whole lot is well hardened the lot should be sanded until a "flatted" surface has been achieved.

Now I say "flatted." That does not mean level, or in a single plane, or whatever the strict dictionary definition is. It does mean that all of the shiny surface has been sanded to a dull or "flat" surface. Don't attack it too hard or with anything much more aggressive than about 80 grit as you will make holes in the coating and have to start again.

The objective here is to have a nice smooth surface to which epoxy glue will adhere and which will take paint. This is an ideal interior surface, already sanded smooth, easy to mark with pencil or felt pen, tends to saw without as much splintering of the cuts, and is precoated with the base of the boat's preservative system. You can do both sides of all the bulkheads, seats, bunk fronts, and so on. This saves an awful lot of time and is less wasteful of resin than you might think, as you will tend to use the ply scraps and doing large areas in a controlled manner is more efficient than coating a series of smaller, less accessible areas in a partly assembled boat (no dribbles or puddles).

Precoating can be bought, we have a product called MDO here, sold as "Signply." Most plywood vendors sell a grade which has one or both sides covered with a layer of overlay. The product is intended for use in signs, has to be durable in exterior use (waterproof and so on), has to be very smooth, provide a good base for paint (where paint will stick so will glue), and tends to be of good grades of

veneer as failures are right out there where they are easily seen.

I like MDO, short for Medium Density Overlay, it is usually high grade kraft paper impregnated with a resin such as melamine urea formaldehyde and hot pressed onto the ply surface. It's very good stuff and in terms of saving labour and paint is often well worth the extra price.

Even further on the precoating thing, but not so much concerned with the finish or rotproofing, I have on occasions specified ply panels precoated with fibreglass, kevlar, or carbon cloth or tape to improve strength. It is easy to coat the outside of a boat during construction, but a nightmare to do the same to the inside. I find that it is possible to better than double the stiffness of a panel by coating both sides with "eglass," "unidirectional rovings" or "knitted" fibreglass fabric. To coat both sides and then try to wrap the resulting sandwich around a curve is asking for trouble as it will be unbelievably stiff. Do the inside only as you will find only a very slight increase in stiffness when bending toward the coated side. When the panel is in place and the boat at the appropriate stage, then the outside can be coated completing the sandwich.

Tough? I used 6mm (1/4") gaboon with 9oz "unis" each side for the deck on a small ocean racer that had up to three crew dancing on the deck. Although the larger unsupported panels flexed a bit, that boat did over 20,000 sea miles without so much as cracking the paint.

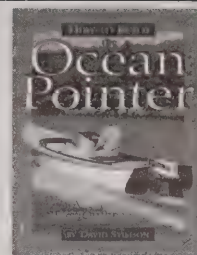
Just a thought, coat one side of a panel with kevlar or carbon cloth and try to cut it with a jigsaw or sabre saw. This stuff needs special tools to cut it, and you are better cutting your panel to its finished size then laying out the reinforcing coating before fitting it into place. As with most exotics, it pays to read the makers instructions before using it. Strong though!

So we can, with care and work, use most grades of plywood. We can improve some that are not so good, we can make it stronger, preserve it, improve its finish and its resistance to checking, we can indeed make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. But before you do, think about the boat, its intended use, and its expected life. Don't over specify the product. If you are building an ocean racer that will have an expected life of 50 years and more in her cruising retirement, where weight and strength is an important consideration, then your choice will be quite different from the one that is appropriate to a one sheet punt for the kids to paddle on the irrigation lake on Granddad's farm.

Coming Next Issue:

A Design Puzzle

(To learn more about John Welsford's designs, contact Chuck Leinweber at *Duckworks Magazine*, 608 Gammenthaler, Harper, TX 78631, online at www.duckworksmagazine.com)



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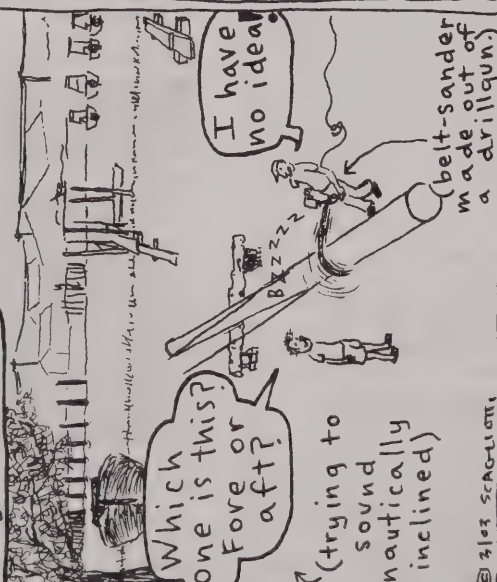
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We'll hafta wait till we start makin' the other one. It all depends on how much wood these trees let us use... which way they lean, what they look like as a pair...



Meanwhile, Cap'n Mike began his career in wooden boat preservation. ...linseed oil & turpentine. About fifty-fifty.



... So after a trip to the hardware store... Hey, some things need to be replaced!

Would you say that about Fenway Park? Instead of the frame we're making him a Ken & Barbie Malibu Dream Yacht!



Who threw away this brush? Do you know the lineage of this brush?



Harold made a big return-to-the-loft around this time.

Well, I just had to write a letter to the Coast Guard.

Cuz they want "calculations".



← (2)



1- In September '03, Mike Rutstein lost his court case to stop the Boston Red Sox Corp. from shutting down Yawkey Way, a public street, to public vendors. For a trial period of post-season games, the Fenway Frank™ triumphed over the sausage cart fellas. 2- Harold sands frames half-hull model to put more scoop into the design. Carving a half hull model is how a designer conceives a boat.



Wing & wing in Mill Valley Harbor, Richardson's Bay.

The Rig: I dusted off my copy of *The Chinese Sailing Rig - Designing and Building Your Own* as I considered how I was going to rig my shiny new canoe. It's fortunate that I committed my knowledge and experience with rig design to paper 20 years ago as I have a tendency to forget what I have learned. And, years ago I had been inspired by the sailing canoe movement of the 1870s.

The original Vesper had a patent, folding metal board. In my canoe the fore and aft position of the board had been moved, so my first task was to cut out a scale profile of my new vessel from the waterline down and balance it to determine the center of lateral resistance. I did this while waiting for my car's oil to be changed at the Saturn agency. Following my venerable instructions, I calculated the centers of effort of the original rig. Then with a bit of geometry and numbers, I came up with a plan.

I had read that canoe rig designers back in the 19th century would sew a finished foresail and cobbles together a mizzen or after sail (the "dandy"). Then the dandy sail would be modified and finished through trial and error. I was more certain and so made two pretty good dacron sails using several other very good reference books: *Make Your Own Sails... And Win!* and *Canoe Rig The Essence and the Art*, by Todd E. Bradshaw. And, of course, Stephens' book has drawings of Vesper's original Mohican rig, which I liked very much. I thought it best to begin with the Mohican rig, too, even though I had visions of a twin windsurfer rig or an Uffa Fox single masted rig.

It's important to remember that the canoe rig, being small, is a great one to experiment with. Innovations such as the cam cleat and remote reefing all came out of the canoe movement. Stephens, in his other book, *Traditions and Memories of American Yachting*, delineates the direct relationship of the sailing canoe and the America's Cup racer. The sailing canoe was a great laboratory tool.

Building My Vesper Decked Wood Sailing Canoe

Part 2

By Derek Van Loan - Photos by Katrina Van Loan

As far as sewing a complete modern sail (one with shape sewn into it) was concerned, I had never made one. This is one reason I had gotten into Chinese rigs, they derive their shape from the battens. Nothing is required but sewing the panels together and suitably finishing their perimeter. At first I thought that I'd hand him the drawings and have my local sailmaker do the job. A brief meeting with him caused me to realize that I could not afford him. Even so, he graciously offered help.

Obtaining the fabric (for a small sail, dacron, nothing else will do for me if I am going to put all that work into making a sail) is a pretty good trick these days. The choice is to buy it from your local sailmaker or weave it yourself. The weavers have an iron tight grasp on sales and only sell in quantity to sailmakers. Fortunately for us amateurs, Sailrite sells everything needed from the sewing machine to the grommet in any quantity, at a reasonable price, and they are nice folks to deal with.

Moreover, the essential manuals they sell lift the veil of secrecy on the trade secrets of the professional sailmaker. This permits amateurs to produce an acceptable sail. My friend Hugo Moreno loaned me his 1973 edition of *Make Your Own Mainsails...* He also offered valuable advice throughout my project. It is important to remember that sailmaking is as much art as it is science, and that the judgment and skill of a professional is well worth the cost if you can afford it.

The box of materials arrived a few days after I had selected them from their online catalog and had phoned my order to them. I penciled the Mohican sails onto white painted plywood, the lines show through the sailcloth for hot knife cutting. I referred to Sailrite's instructions for making lateen sails. Sail panels are held together with double sided tape for sewing. I simply sewed tabling to the hot knifed edges and used scraps to make pockets for the battens.

Putting It All Together: After lashing the sails to their spars I rigged the canoe. Incidentally, I had shaped the masts enough undersized so that they would not swell and stick in the tubes. The foremast has two cheek blocks for the double ended halyard, so it was unnecessary to use some method of keeping the mast from being twisted by a halyard running aft to the cleat on the outside of the cockpit coaming. The dandy halyard cleat is on the mast, being easily reachable from the cockpit. Its sheet belays to a cleat on the tiller.

I led the foresheet through nylon rings, one on a rope horse, the other on a span between the boom and batten, the standing part tied to the horse ring. The after lazyjack on the foresail is adjusted by making it off on a thimble just above the boom. This is reachable from the cockpit. The forward lifts on both sails are fixed, as is the after lift on the dandy.

When I launched the first time I had not rigged the rudder blade downhaul line, which made for an awkward launch until Donna Hamilton, late of the Adirondacks, happened along with her son, saw what was happening, and waded into the cold bay water to regulate the blade! Her family had made boats and she recognized the lineage of mine.

The collapsible dolly that I use to wheel my canoe to and from the water was inspired by a book published in London in 1932, *Coastal Cruising for Landsmen*, by C.E. Tyrrell Lewis. It consists of a plywood cradle with axle and a removable fore and aft keel

piece. I removed the bearings from 16" bike wheels, which are held on the axles by pins, and all packs flat. The cradle is shaped to the canoe's midsection and padded. It bears the entire weight of the canoe, which rides at a convenient height so that I can walk normally while pushing or pulling the canoe, which simply rests in the cradle.

For those times when I wish to transport my canoe on my cab over truck camper, I have constructed a davit of 1-1/2" metal conduit that I found in a local scrap yard. A \$30 winch lifts the canoe, which is swung around and lowered into cradles on top. The winch was not designed to safely hoist an overhead load, but it has a 900 pound capacity and does not unduly concern me as it never feels as though things are getting anywhere near the limits of control.

My Vesper tacked readily in the light breeze and pointed well. I soon learned to sail with the dandy sheeted while holding the main sheet. It's like sailing a fine piece of furniture. On the third sail, after having sailed for hours on Richardson's Bay, I purposely dumped her near the beach by not getting up onto the side deck during a puff. I found that flotation under the cockpit side decks would be helpful and have resolved to keep the cabin hatch cover secured.

Also the 3-lb. anchor, with its line cleated had, unobserved by me, dropped out, causing the canoe to be pulled over by the tidal current. I only realized that the anchor was down when I tried to paddle away! Little water had entered the cabin so I crouched on a rowboat at the dinghy dock, sponged out, paddled to windward, and sailed back to my launching site. This vessel is fast, elegant, and fun to sail.

My only disappointment comes with not being easily able to take passengers. The

cockpit is a busy place, even though I made it big enough to seat two, and the optional cabin seating, while comfortable, is not conducive to sociability.

I have begun building the Chapelle Delaware Ducker and could be talked out of canoe and jig ownership, but meanwhile I'm having a great time!

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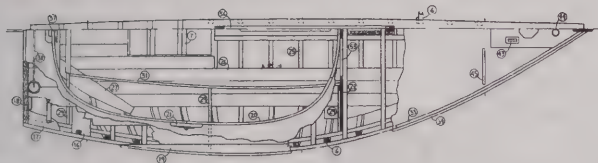
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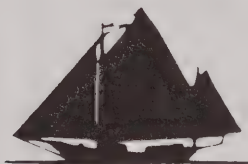
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My Camper Rooftop Carrier Davit

Here are a few drawings and photos of my camper davit. I must say that I've been inspired by Jim Thayer's various truck topping adventures.

I do have serious reservations about using a cheap winch. Better would be some sort of worm drive winch. My winch cost \$30 and has a 900-lb. capacity. It does feel safe enough to me, but it could be improved with the substitution of a wheel with knob for the winch handle. I did not detail the attachments to the camper.

My winch is attached to the camper jack with a couple of steel straps, and swings in for travel. The bent 1-1/2" electrical conduit davit goes through a 3/16" metal plate at the top edge of the camper, and I welded and gusseted a 3/16" plate to angle iron for the bottom support. The angle is lagged and bolted to the camper's corner post. The jack bracket is lagged on over the davit's angle iron. The holes for the davit are cut larger than

the diameter of the conduit and a scrap of good quality 1/2" ply provides the bearing surface for the upper support. The 5/8" bar bears against the bottom phenolic laminate bearing and serves to keep the davit up and to swing the davit. 3M 5200 seals all.

I use my kayak paddle to help push the canoe around and into place.

Canoe with silver tarp cover on camper with davit lowered, dolly in foreground.



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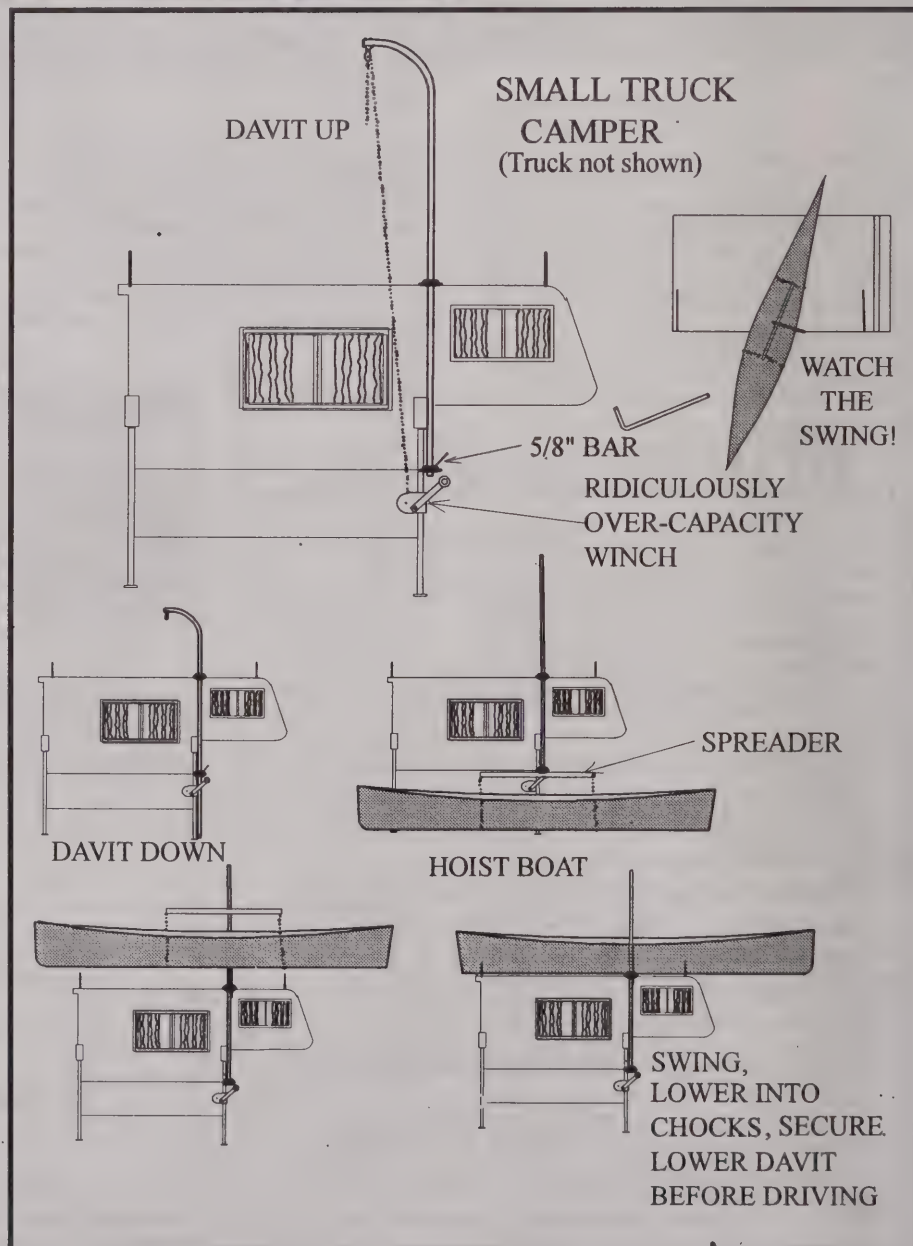
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RayCraft

By Robb White

I ought to do my research better, but that's not my passion and you know a man has to let go of a few compulsions when he gets old enough to realize that he is not paying proper attention to all of them anymore. I think I am going to quit going to air shows next.

Anyway, somehow there were these molded plywood boats available in the late '40s and through the '50s. I even heard that there were some built back in the '30s. Though I never went to the factory, I heard that the veneer was actually laid up and pressed and heated just like regular plywood, but it was done either on or in a boat shaped mould or mandrel (maybe both). Anyway, the result was an astonishingly smooth, light hull. The only ones I ever saw were made by Dunphy in Wisconsin or this little outfit in Tennessee called RayCraft.

Well, that's not exactly all there was to it. I don't know about Dunphy, but back in the early '50s it was possible to buy just the molded part without any trim or transom or anything. The moulded plywood hulls came on the truck nested together in a plywood box. Though the hulls I saw had a good tumblehome to the stern, the fact that there was no transom allowed them to be unnested by spraddling out the sides enough to get one hull out of the others and out of the box. The old man I worked for when I was a teenager (putting together boat trailers and screwing ridiculous chrome plated accessories onto Lymans and Thompsons) had a box of maybe five or six of the hulls.

I don't know what your experience is, but I think when you get the hull of a boat finished, you are only about 10% through. So, this man still had most of those molded plywood hulls in that box when he died about 1990. I have no idea what became of them, but I am afraid they had powder post beetles in them, I know the box did. He thought he could make a good profit if he built the transoms, foredecks, and all the innards out of very good mahogany (still had a lot of that when he died, too) and sold the boats at a premium price to people with discriminating tastes. I can only remember him actually finishing out one of those hulls. I was fortunate enough to be able to do a good little bit of hand sanding on the project.

The discriminating boat buyers of this region were just beginning to discriminate against wood boats about then. I remember the first fiberglass boats that man sold were made by MFG (Molded Fiber Glass Boat Company) and were molded lap strake on the outside. They looked a lot like a Thompson plywood lapstrake boat and I wondered where they got their plug. Those old MFGs were pretty good boats, but they were heavy and a real Lyman or Thompson would run rings around one with the same horsepower. The champ of the light, fast boats, though was the RayCraft.

I don't know for sure, but I believe Mr. Ray bought his hulls from the same place my boss did because they had the same shape as the hulls in the box. I can't remember and don't know where to find out, but they were

made someplace up in Canada. He knew what he was doing, though, and a RayCraft was a beautifully built boat. The transom, foredeck, and all the trim was very good mahogany. Despite that, the old man only sold one or two. Everybody and his brother was turning out the tackiest looking fiberglass runabouts back then and OMC and Mercury had seen the wave of the future and were turning out engines big enough to make anything haul ass.

Some of those early fiberglass boats were so astonishingly ugly that it took a second glance to make sure you actually saw what you thought you did. The motors were just as silly looking, too. But it didn't make any difference how light and pretty and efficient your boat was, nobody gave it a second glance if it was rolling around in the wake, and that truth persists to this day. I ought to have had sense enough to have some sense myself and gone into some other business, because those RayCrafts were a certain indicator if there ever was one.

There were about four of them around here, though. One of my uncles had one. It was a mighty good boat, too, smooth riding and very dry. The only trouble with it was that it was hard to pay attention to where you were going from looking at all that varnished mahogany. I don't know what became of my uncle's RayCraft, but the next boat he had was a fiberglass Thunderbird (with the "cathedral hull") and it wasn't hard to pay attention to where you were going in that thing. I do know what happened to a few other RayCrafts though. They were varnished all inside and people around here did not understand that you couldn't just let such a boat sit out in the hot sun all the time, so soon Mr. Ray's original, very good varnish job went to hell and the boat got to where it didn't look all that cute anymore so it turned into a derelict. Leaves banked up along the transom and that rotted out.

One time, about 1969, a young man brought a RayCraft to me to get some advice about how to fix the transom. He was an idealist and thought he could fix the old, badly checked mahogany foredeck and varnish it back as good as new, but he didn't know what to do about the transom and eight or ten inches of rotten plywood back by the stern.

He thought he could shorten the boat and build a new transom and I guess he could have. I told him that it would be a world of trouble but he had seen a brand new RayCraft and wanted to do it anyway. I wish I could say that he was successful but, though he did a little messing around with fiberglass and varnish and got the boat back to running, it never did turn out very good and soon finished disintegrating.

The brand new RayCraft in 1969? Yep, there were two of them hanging from the ceiling in the old boat place where I used to work. They were hanging there in 1990, too, when the old man died. They were sold to some "discriminating" people right around here. I know where one of them is. I'll see if they'll let me take a picture for you.

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Update & Upgrade

Update

We first introduced Bantam in the June 1, 1999 issue of *MAIB*. By summer 2002 at least two hulls had been built and were running. In the August 15 issue of *MAIB* we presented an update on Tom David's Bantam with a 14 picture photo commentary on the first boat completed with full folding roof geometry. She was propelled by a new 25hp Honda and hit 16 knots wide open before being fully broken in.

Earlier that year in February John Bartlett wrote from Florida that his Bantam, *Pelican*, had been launched on a blustery overcast day and promptly taken on a jaunt. He had not yet assembled the roof and little of her interior, but after about 320 hours of construction time to this stage, he was impatient to give her an early baptism with three eager friends to shove her off. Here are some excerpts from his report:

"Just launched your Bantam last weekend and wanted to let you know how pleased I am. She performs very well, speedy and thrilling even with my 9.9hp Yamaha. I busted north through whitecaps on the Intracoastal with no pounding and hardly any spray. Very stable in boat wakes in the inlet. Carries four big men all day and feels lively and stable. She also slips along easily at idle and corners flat at speed. With four patio chairs, very comfortable and roomy. We all had a great time and were out for hours on three days and used very, very little gas. I am working on cabin roof now."

Good news indeed. Of course she was floating very light without her superstructure and interior detailing, but also because John Bartlett was not concerned with length con-



straints and had, with our agreement, pulled out the main hull transom flush to the stern, gaining a few additional square feet of water plane to float his 100-lb. motor. As designed for a Dutch client, the point had been to allow parking the hull, nose removed and motor down vertical, in a moderate length European garage where every inch saved was vital in order to close the door. Furthermore, building her as designed makes clearing potwarp from the propeller much less acrobatic. The weighing of advantages and disadvantages is always a compromise. Even with generous American garage length, marina cost, or just outboard exposure may make some pick the short version while the longer main hull makes her run a bit better with more bottom to carry her weight.

A year later Bartlett sent an update on his boat. He had spent the summer on another boat up in Canada and finally got back to complete his *Pelican*:

"She's a great, great boat. I deviated from your window details some, lack of confidence in my carpentry skills, but I built the roof light about 80 lbs. of 3/8" ply glassed both sides so I can stand and walk on it. Windows are held in by wing nuts and some piano hinges and superstructure is very rigid. The side forward windows slide aft, captured by the roof overhang, then secured in place by lines attached to cleats. Moldings make it quite watertight and secure while remaining light and airy.

The bow section is light and removes easily. The hull is built to your plans except for the transom extension I discussed with you. I feel she is quite light as I am a good glasser, stripping the resin off with a squeegee, then filling the weave, etc. Light cloth and finish has received many compliments. I did a good bit of radiusing and filleting. This past fall I finished the roof and windows, electrics and interior cabinetry. She now has two comfy berths with a drop in piece to make a wide double. I have a 5' counter to port. The port bunk foot fits under it. Very comfy and utilitarian. Dry, airy, great visibility, have a nice cruiser.

Four knots at 2500rpm with six adults. No wake but won't go much faster now loaded, but it's a nice speed at maybe 20mpg. Anyway she's good in a chop right into whitecaps on the Indian River or on the beam, not rocking feels very secure. I have a push pull stick rigged up to a spinner on the wheel and I can steer from the roof or foredeck, idling along in near silence in 16" along the flats looking straight down over the bow watching the stingrays scatter. I can cruise where kayaks and canoes go, and there are few of those down here, which means I've got thousands of acres of good boating, cruising, and anchoring off to both sides of the Intracoastal Waterway. It's just the ticket for Florida where the channels are very busy and deep anchorages few.

Anyway I'm so happy and sure of her safety and performance I've decided to offer her for weekly charters (www.treasurecoasthouseboatrentals.com).

I hope many more Bantams are built as she is really a great boat that does everything well. Cost me about \$3,000 for ply, plexiglass, epoxy, glass cloth, and electrics, not including the motor. She's painted with exterior latex, white shiny boat paint on roof, and I'm thinking of a luggage rack on the roof, just

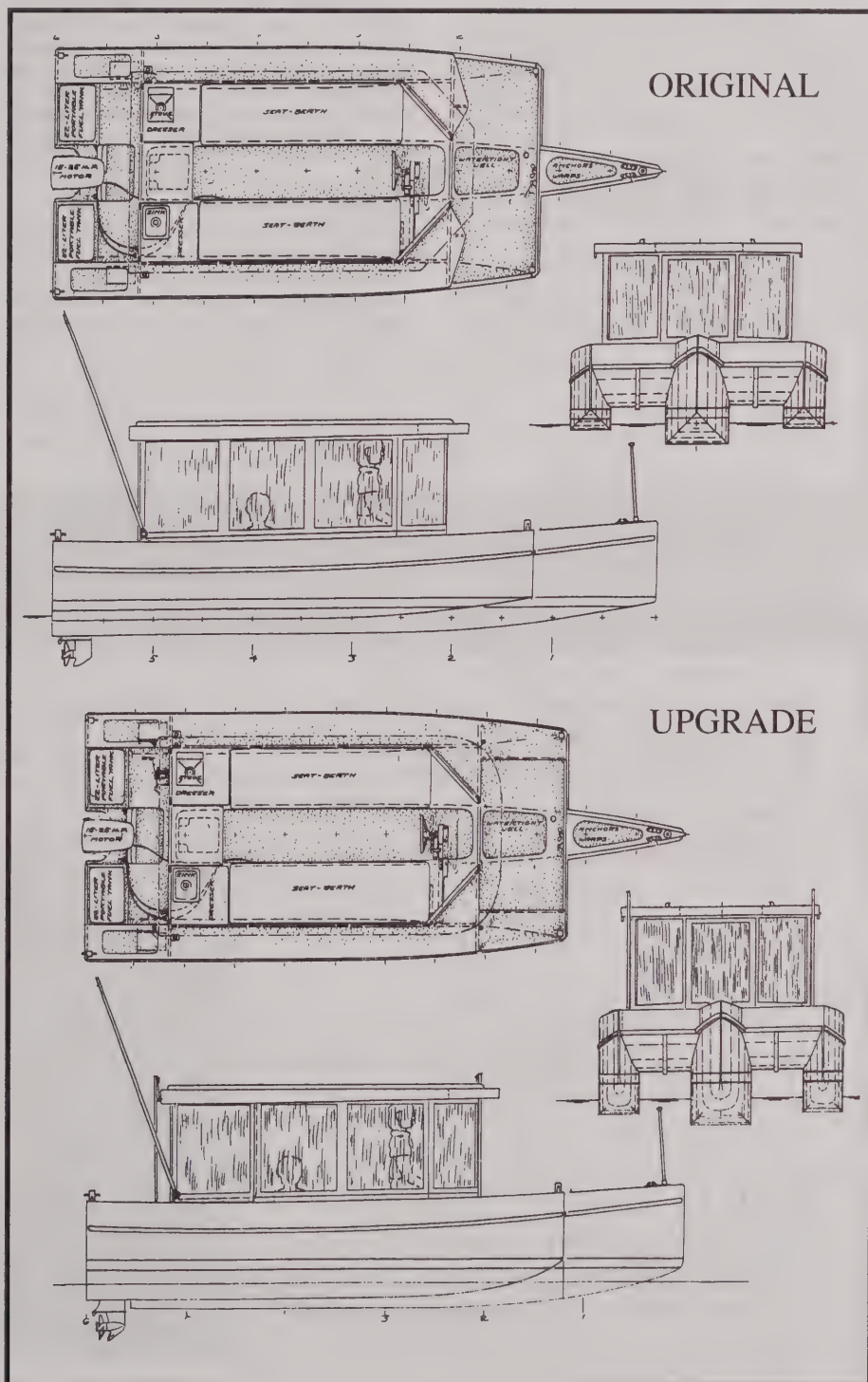
enough room for some underbed storage boxes or could hinge up Volkswagen style for an extra rooftop berth. She's easy to build and I got lots of use from the hull on weekends while I finished roof and windows."

Not much left to add apart from a note or two. It is good to hear the joy and accomplishment pervading this project. We sure like the idea of throwing into her a temporary platform for a few beach chairs to ride around while the house matured in the shop. And to share her with others is a nice combination of subsidizing her cost while spreading the good news.

We'd try a little more pitch on the propeller for a bit more speed at the rpm Bartlett prefers for economy. We are surprised by the

roof's reported strength, as 3/8" alone would not seem good defense against a northern snow load, not in Florida, or 200 lbs. of point load. Finally, a good railing seems called for on the rooftop sleeping, as powerboat wakes at night might make for a realistic nightmare. We would not support routine loading of her roof and thus window structure if you keep her folding ability. On the other hand, with a stout house someone will go for a flying bridge, which we'd also discourage. She is in all ways meant to be light for easy towing behind modest cars and easy running with moderate horsepower.

But there will be the temptation to add to her. Bartlett already thinks of bumping up her efficiency with that 9.9hp unit by adding



tails of perhaps 4' length. If there is no personal advantage to her minimum available length, there will be little to dissuade him. Indeed she would run a bit better yet, but after a prop change first. But she'll turn less well likely and you've got to bear in mind that she is structurally quite dainty, which should limit the ultimate extent of such ideas. Bartlett's craft seems destined to take advantage of an extensive network of protected salt and fresh water ways where grand structural stress might only be an issue if at hull speed she runs into a pop top channel buoy.

Upgrade

Tom David, on the other had, all along has been interested in reasonably serious exploration of the New England coastline, a good part of which is unprotected indeed, apart from longer crossings such as from Nantucket to the mainland. Equipped for cruising, short of a radar set, and with the 25hp for warp speed to cut time of exposure between sheltered grounds, his Bantam did not fare well enough in her original configuration to readily head out. An old truth confirmed yet again, multihulls readily accumulate weight in structure and additions to show mis-estimates quickly and undeniably. Her

problem, our problem, was not enough suspension travel of the bridge between the hulls at her level of displacement. Some serious wallops would periodically happen with impressive noise and impact in the forward tunnels, and water would spit up and against the windshield.

What she needed for usage like Tom David's was more freeboard between the hulls to keep waves from pounding her too early and to allow airflow to rush through the tunnels without periodic constrictions aft which would often make her cough spray out, up and over right in the face. But unfortunately her ergonomics between main hull sole and settee height stood in the way of any radical alteration of plans and boat.

The solution is reasonably affordable in terms of cost and effort, gives her a dramatic increase in positive buoyancy, and makes her three bottoms de facto impenetrable to absorb impact from rocks and large unyielding flotsam at speed. It is only really acceptable as a design concept due to the inherent stability characteristics of Bantam's wide legged trimaran stance, most monohulls would not like it.

We added 6" of foam under the structure of the mainhull and 8" under the floats, enclosed on the sides and bottoms with ply, glass and epoxy, all without touching the structure or the finish of any existing Ban-

tam, apart from minor seam related cosmetics. In fact, the boot top could cover that seam or you could keep the original line between bottom paint and topsides finish to have more than enough bottom paint showing if she lives on a mooring a good part of the year, a particular concern of Tom David's.

The upgraded plans show bread-and-butter contouring in plywood of all three bow sections to allow quieter entry running or at rest. The sandwich is hollow, of course, and it could be assembled of lots of leftover pieces as all would be shaped with grinder and sander from round to square aft, covered in glass for final protection. You would have to turn her over, which was part of the assembly sequence to begin with.

Apart from the work itself, additional nuisance arises from the need to empty the hulls of any loose and non-invertible items such as house batteries. Bartlett's *Pelican* seems to not need this upgrade at all, while David's Bantam would be seriously improved to allow the coastal explorations she was built for to begin with. With her platform soles, her bridge freeboard should be about 6.5" - 7" higher in the water for more than double the air in her tunnels and a quieter ride in choppy conditions at speed.

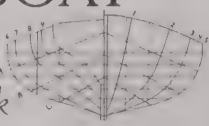
At any rate, the upgrades are, of course, free to all who have already bought plans and are now permanently part of the master plans.

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Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

"The Crack of Dawn"

It's ten past four on a snowy afternoon. The tide is falling close to low, the horizon is nonexistent. Behind the headlands of Sandy Point Reservation at the southern tip of Plum Island the world is a muted gray blanket, confusing depth perception and blurring focus. The same wet wool engulfs the broader Atlantic beyond the island and creeps into the foreground to snag its indistinct edges on the exposed sandbars, making them floating islands in the gloom. Every moment increases the intensity of the grizzle. I am certainly grateful not to be making my living on the waters of New England. You would need the reckoning capabilities of the ancient

Polynesians to find your way home safely tonight.

In stark contrast was the startling dawn at 6:30 over Cape Ann. A few lean clouds loitered at the lower altitudes in the early winter sky. To the southeast came a thin magenta crack in the overcast of the approaching storm front. I watched this line grow like skillfully applied theatrical makeup, outlining the world's eastern limits. I have enjoyed many dawns here on the coast. There have been remarkable ones for which I've dragged a grumbling spouse or child from bed to witness the miracle.

Of all past dawns where that old expression, "Red sky in morning, sailors take warning," has come to mind, none could touch this morning's display for surgical precision and rapid execution. Widening to no more than a finger's width above the horizon, the sun rose through the wash of color to be enveloped by the leaden clouds. The reflection of shallow rays from the ocean beyond (perhaps Boston Harbor) then shot out a colorful feathered boa still remarkably true in value.

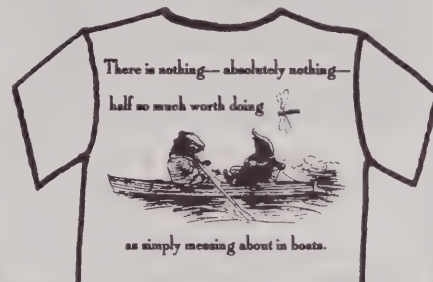
The sometimes painter within me clamoured to be released and capture this, either with the camera (tucked away in a closet) or from a palette of clean watercolors (buried deeper in the studio space down cellar). I knew neither could have ensnared the glory of this moment. There is no technique available to the amateur to put this on film. And Windsor Newton, for all their history, hasn't compounded the pigments that could do justice to the color. The image burnt onto my retina is captured and can be replayed.

The beauty of living on the coast is, in part, the collection of all these experiences. People who live around the water, be it for a stolen hour or two "messaging about," or fortunate enough to be in intimate contact daily, have their horizons widened and are seduced

by nature's whims and moods. When the troubles of the world seem to weigh too heavily on you, take a minute and cast back through your happiest memories of coastal experiences.

Never much of a journal keeper, I've begun to treasure the experiences I've taken time to write down. It's been a rather undisciplined affair 'til now as work and young family interfered. The "doing" was more important than the telling or sharing. With the world becoming more demanding, more complex, and far more unnerving to deal with, we all can benefit from savoring the waterfront experiences available to us.

This morning I fully appreciated the expression; "The Crack of Dawn."



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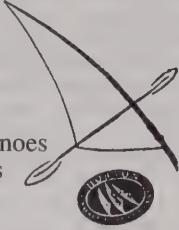


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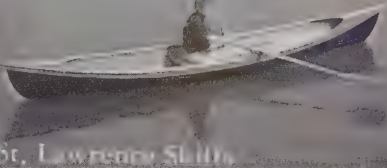
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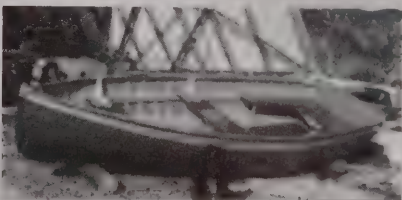
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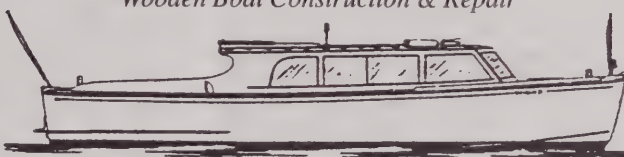
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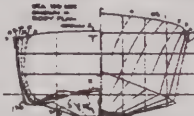
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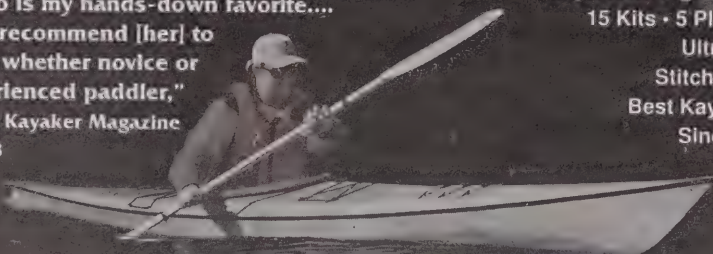
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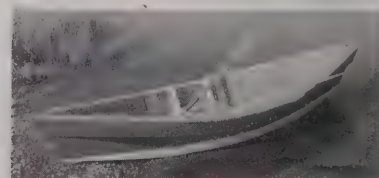
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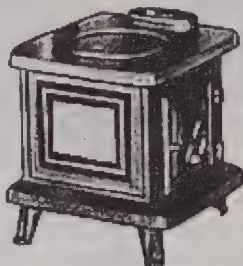
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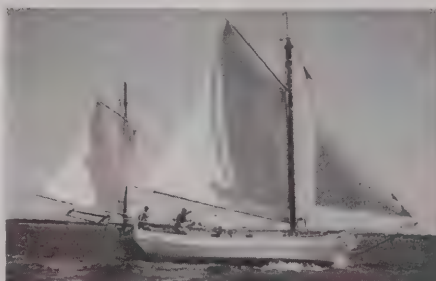
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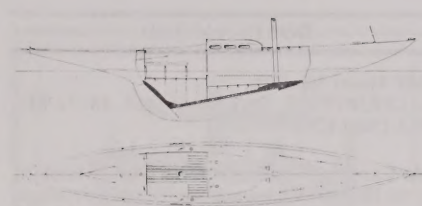
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Compac 16, '80, exc cond, 5 sails, orig main & jib, new main & jib plus genoa. Galv tilt trlr, tires & wheels new 3 yrs ago. '00 Mercury 4.5 2-stroke. \$2,500.
LAWRENCE BECK, Pittsburgh, PA 15237, (412) 364-6823, <beck1213@city-net.com> (24)

Rowing Shells, Fernald's Marine now dealer for Alden rowing shells. Over 57 years selling rowing, sailing craft, canoes, kayaks & skiffs at River Parker.
FERNALD'S MARINE, 291 High Rd. (Rte 1A), Newbury, MA 01951, (978) 465-0312.(TFP)

9' Conny Type Yacht Tender, dark green FG hull, red bottom. Flotation, bronze hrdwre, wood seats & trim, lots of room. Like new S & T fitted oars & locks. Well used but nds some cosmetics. Rides nice on registered EZ Loader trlr. Package \$950.
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GEAR WANTED

Small Drum Winch, no handle okay. CHRISTIAN DAHL, Woodbury, MN, (651) 714-4311. (23)

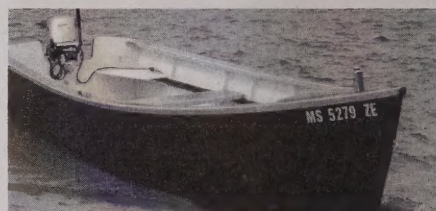
Kermath Sea Twin, gas engine and/or parts. S. K. HOPKINS, P.O. Box 235, Wicomico Church, VA 22579, (804) 580-8723, <Dab@crosslink.net> (23)

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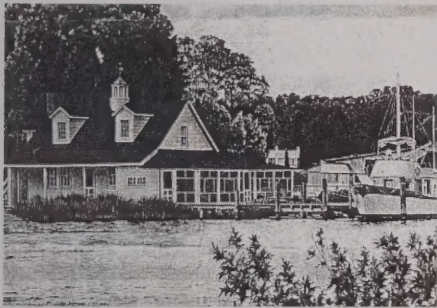
Nutmeg (aka \$200 Sailboat), Bolger design, 15'6" x 4'6". Plans w/compl directions. \$20. DAVE CARNELL, 322 Pages Creek Dr., Wilmington, NC 28411, <davecarnell@att.net> (TFP)

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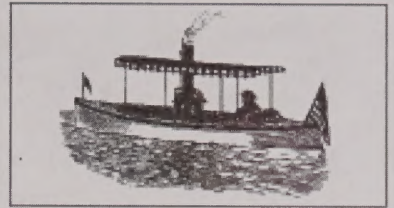
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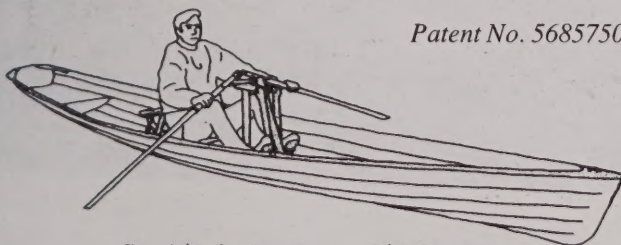
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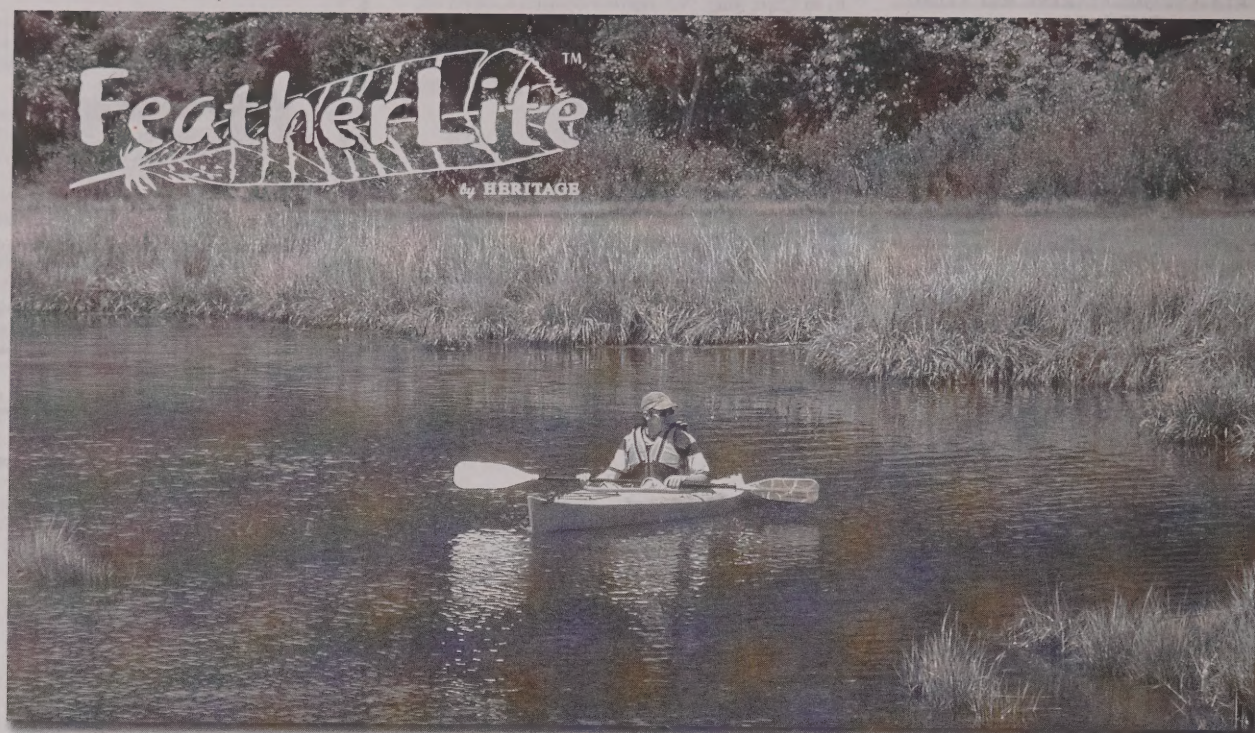
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