

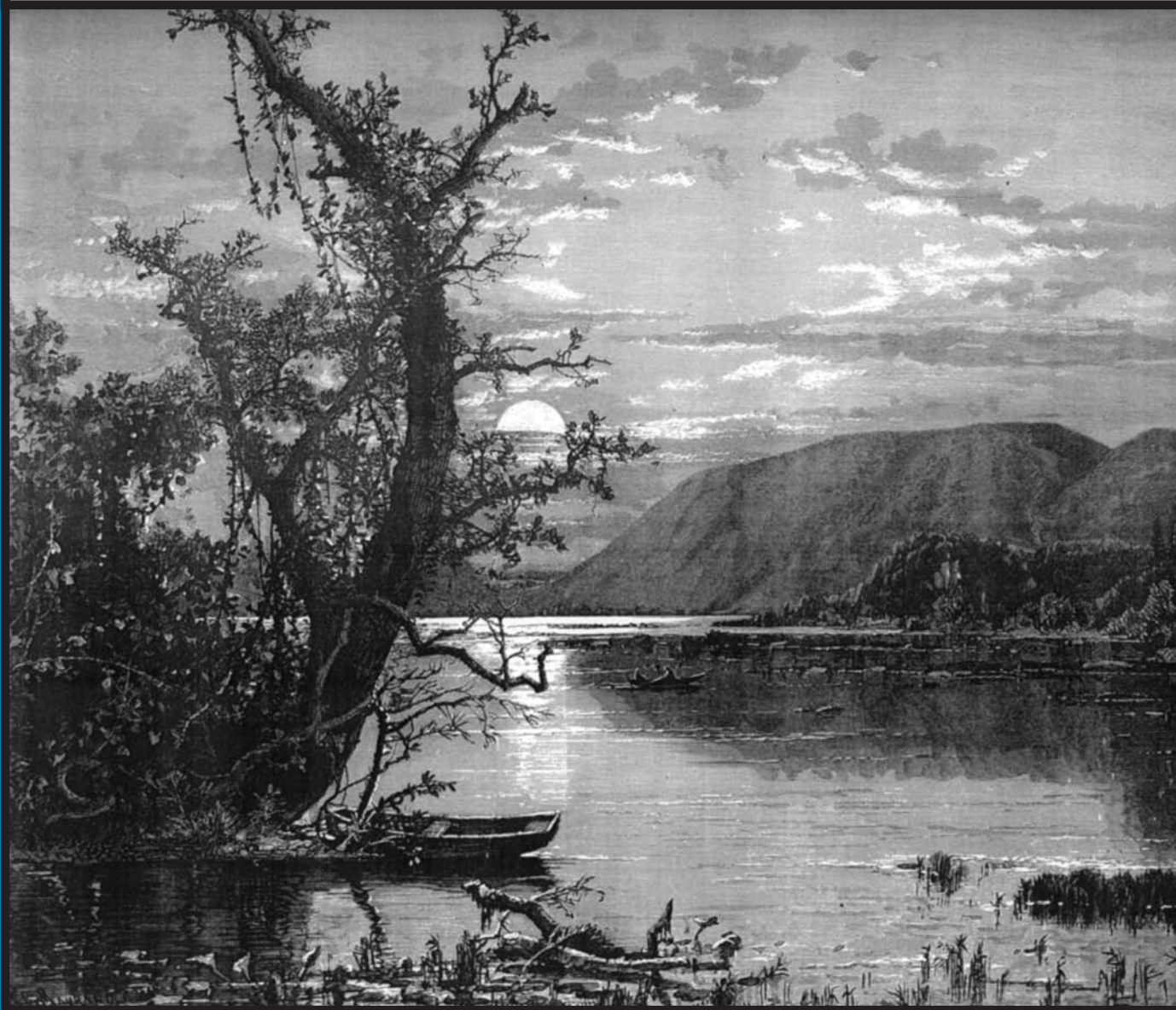


messing about in **BOATS**

Special Features This Issue
"Two Catboat Races" - "Comfortable Fall Cruise"
"Outlaws of Laguna Madre" - "Beemer Sideboat"

Volume 23 - Number 16

January 1, 2006



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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



I thought I'd start off the new year with some comments that came to mind in response to a note on a non-renewal that just came in. While nearly all of those who do not renew (about 800 a year, 20% of the readership) simply do not return the renewal form, a few do, usually with a notation sort of apologizing for abandoning ship, as it were. Occasionally someone will take the opportunity to vent dissatisfaction with something I am or am not doing. The last such instance was all about how there just didn't seem to be any articles that were found worth reading in the magazine and what it did have was sometimes offensive.

This latest critique grabbed me because I was asked, "Why, as editor, do you feel compelled to print every fatuous prolixity submitted to your magazine?" This sent me to the dictionary to find out what a fatuous prolixity was. "Fatuous" was defined as "complacently or inanely foolish." "Prolixity" is "the quality or state of being prolix." "Prolix," in turn, means "unduly prolonged or drawn out" or "given to verbosity and diffuseness in writing..."

Now that I knew what it was I was guilty of, the accompanying critique, which stated, "I can't stand the writing, especially Robb White," came into focus. Ha, that ol' debbil Robb. I had no idea that what he wrote was "fatuous prolixity." I greatly enjoy his stuff and, judging from letters and notes on renewals, so do many of you. Those not enthralled sometimes remark that they no longer read him. An easy solution.

Our now ex-subscriber concluded with, "When I retire I will volunteer to help you with editing. Until then I will just keep trying to teach college freshmen to write." A teacher! A writing teacher! Somehow I became an editor and writer without being taught how to be either (my education is in electrical engineering), never learning the proper form of writing and editing as laid out for all of the writer wannabees by writing teachers from college textbooks. Now help is at hand.

One thing I have learned from my 46 years of editing and publishing is that I could do it just as I wanted to without hewing to any establishment notions about how these are done. Had what I done been really bad stuff, unacceptable to readers, I'd long ago have been out of this business. Because I have only had to please myself, no other boss

in sight at all since I was 30 years old, I was free to do it, as Frank Sinatra once said, "my way."

Can you imagine a writing teacher getting ahold of our content before you got to enjoy it? All that variety of content and manner of expression hewed into solid blocks of dull, edited text, homogenized writing, plodding along under the guidance of some style book or other.

A major hurdle, it appears, to most who contemplate writing something is that they have to "write," like it was some sort of special skill. To my mind the best writing is that which reads as if the author were talking to the reader. Instead of striving to "compose" sentences larded with the requisite amount of modifiers to the nouns and verbs, all in the officially approved sequence, grammatically, chronologically, whatever, which convey the message, just write it like you'd say it. Since we all express ourselves uniquely, this makes for interesting reading.

It is not entirely laziness that keeps me from heavy red pencilling of the stories that you share with us. I like the way you tell your stories. I like the way I tell my stories and want you to share that same pleasure in seeing what you have to say in print the way you said it. Nobody here is going to gut your effort in the interests of fitting it to established rules of writing. I'd rather err (if that is the case) towards fatuous prolixity if it is enjoyable, than towards the Reader's Digest approach that guts all the life out of a story.

Obviously I'd never be hired today to do magazine editing, nor find a market for my own writing. Square peg in a field full of round holes. I wasn't successful selling any of my writing to the national motorcycle magazines back in the '60s until I had established myself through my own magazines. Then they wanted some of my writing. In the late '70s I sold some writing to the early *Small Boat Journal* as the then editor, Dave Getchell, was a kindred spirit and he left my writing alone. When *SBJ* was sold and turned away from where I was at, I had no choice but to start my own small boat magazine in order to get my writing published. Since I would then be my own editor, no problem.

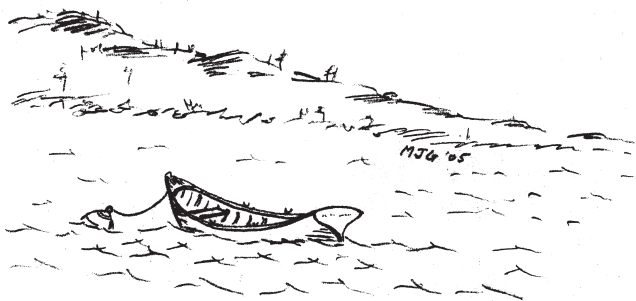
Still no problem almost 25 years later. And for how many more years? No end in sight that I can see. And without any editorial assistance!

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On the Cover...

"Moonlight on the Susquehanna," woodcut after a drawing by J.D. Woodward from *The Aldine*, Vol. VI, No. 7, July 1873. "Mr. Woodward takes us with him along the Shenandoah," the article says, "and with the privilege that art enables us to exercise we are just where we choose to be." Contributed by John B. Yellott, Jr.



From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman

When you find yourself an ash or spruce pole about 12' long, you're in business. You can buy a length of closet pole or cut yourself a sapling and peel the bark. Dress one end with a rasp and pound on a metal ferrule. Voila, a punting pole. "Now what?" you ask. "I don't own a punt." A canoe is better. You do have a canoe? Good. If it hasn't a keel, you can punt in the shallow water about the marshes and scare the birds. But if you happen to have an old, flat bottomed, aluminum canoe that has a long sharp keel, better still. You can punt across the ice, it'll track quite well.

Now give a good shove with your pole. If you find yourself supine on the ice and your boat is 20 yards off, you're doing it wrong. Flex your knees more. That's right. If the ice is clear of snow, you zip quite quickly. With your weight distributed by the canoe, you need scarcely any ice to support yourself. If you break through or come to open water, well, you are in a boat. Try not to tumble out. The water gets rather chilly this time of year. If you do fall out and manage to drown yourself, don't come crying to me with your complaints.

After an afternoon scooting over the frozen salt marsh, drifting downstream on ice floes is quite relaxing. Go back out to the river. Take aim at a heavy slab of drifting ice and paddle as hard as you can, if you're by yourself your bow will be just high enough to get you up and onto it. Not that I advise going out by yourself, it's far more pleasant to freeze to death with a friend.

Now you're ensconced on your own little floating island. If it's large enough, you can venture out and explore. If not, relax, drape yourself over the thwarts, lean back, and contemplate Time and the River. An ice field on a brisk winter eve is truly a thing of beauty. Lord knows that we Northerners need to get our money's worth out of winter. Remember to lash a spare paddle between the thwarts and carry a dry-sack with plenty of extra clothing. If you don't drown the first time, you may want a change of socks. By nightfall, perhaps, you'll have cooled off.

Not cold enough yet? Then treat yourself to an evening's paddle by moonlight. There's still a little open water out there in the channel. When it gets below zero Fahrenheit, the ice tends to form on your blade with every stroke. Think of the advantage, a heavier paddle develops your shoulder muscles. Come spring you'll be in better shape than everyone else. This open water seems just a trifle crunchy.

You should have brought a Coleman lantern to keep yourself from freezing. It could also have served as a steaming light to prevent your being run down by this oil tanker that's plunging downriver right at you. Her great steel prow comes crashing through the ice, and her skipper is not expecting canoeists this January evening. Move that little boat, Buddy! You frantically shove apart ice floes with your paddle. The tanker rumbles past you into the night. Maybe now you've had enough. Hopefully, that big pot of soup is simmering on the back of the wood range and a loaf of hot bread is just coming from the oven.

That's right, Lad, keep dreaming. The last 30 yards to the island are all huge shards of ice broken up by the tide, lots of them on edge. Stumbling over them, dragging your canoe, you wonder if those are your feet that are moving so slowly. You used to have toes down there. Thank goodness it's only 100 yards to the cabin. Time to sit on the wood range and wrap yourself around a hot mug of supper. It would be fun to feel your fingers again. Just hang your wool gloves on the warming oven, they'll impart a quite redolent odor throughout the cabin. And she doesn't want to feel how cold your hands have gotten since you've been out playing, thank you very much. She's been tucked in with a good book since you departed.

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One of my fondest memories has come to haunt me. In the early 1960s Dad and I would take "cool off rides." Lacking a boat, trips out in the car were our way to beat the heat of sticky summer nights. A favorite destination was the boat ramp on the Parker River and the long ride along the Merrimack River from Haverhill to Amesbury or reverse. Often we'd drive straight up Route 95 to Newburyport, windows rolled down to capture the most breeze.

By late August the ride up the highway would be punctuated by dad's exclamations of, "Oh, look at the purple loosestrife!" There in the soggy pasture along the roadside would be a few straggly plants displaying their vivid purple blooms... the conversation would then disintegrate into singing a round of "it was a one-eyed, three-toed, flying purple-people-eater." I still can hear his voice as I travel that stretch of highway. Good pasture management and a dense stocking of beef cattle have removed that original patch of loosestrife, but areas not grazed or mowed have become a vast mat of purple from boundary fence to roadside.

I wish we could write a song that would raise public awareness of this vegetative scourge. "It is a multi-staked, highly invasive, whorled leafed, purple-meadow-eater," just doesn't have the same catchy jingle quality of the original song. More the pity as people don't seem to acknowledge the danger of buying it or allowing it in their gardens.

While I was working in a local garden center I would cross the noxious stuff off our buying list and wrote letters and made phone calls to our buying office to avoid spreading the plant. There are no "sterile cultivars," all forms of lythrum can and do crossbreed. Please avoid it and, if you find it on your property, eradicate it while it is small. Preferred treatments are Rodeo for wetland treatment and Roundup for upland areas. Treat it during the midsummer before seeds set and again late in the season as it is preparing to go dormant.

Purple loosestrife was introduced in the 1800s along with our friendly phragmites (pampas grass) that have been discussed in an earlier essay. With their tall, showy blossoms they excelled as ornamental plants that needed little care. Since the 1st century lythrams (named from the Greek root for blood) have been grown by herbalists for their astringent/styptic qualities in the treatment of dysentery and bleeding wounds, including ulcers.

Today the only good use for the plant is that it offers red-winged blackbirds a nesting site which the long billed marsh wren avoids. The wren is the major factor in nesting mortality among the blackbirds. The wren seems to be fearful of the dense growth, possibly the sticky nectar and pollen weigh down its wings.

Readily adaptable, loosestrife is an erect perennial herb that sprouts from a bunch of heart-shaped leaves in any location the seeds have fallen. The more moisture, the more rapid the growth and spread of the plant, taking over wetlands, whether natural or disturbed by land developers.

As it expands it replaces native species which are needed to sustain native wildlife. Forming impenetrable stands, the plant will eventually reduce habitat for both plant and animal species in the area invaded. Every year ponds are lost to use by migrating birds due to habitat reduction.



Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

Lost in the Loosestrife

Reaching heights of typically 4'-10' tall, each plant can produce as many as 50 flowering stems from one root-base. The number of minuscule seed a single plant can produce is upward of two to three million. This is a very efficient siege engine, one that can reproduce itself by seed or root stock as sinewy roots run out from the parent plant to colonize the next bit of open ground. Calling this an alien or invasive species brings to mind all the grade B movies of "It Came from..." and "War of the Worlds," with good reason. Since the few pretty sprouts seen 45 years ago, I have witnessed acres of pristine marshland become choked by this weed. We need to be aware of the danger and support the County Conservation efforts to control and eradicate the plant, starting with our own gardens.

In 1997, the USDA approved three insect controls for the eradication of the plant. The root mining weevil has had success in Thunder Bay and two leaf eating insects are showing promise as well. These bugs have a lot of lunch to chew through before the problem is contained or eradicated from our wetlands. Individuals can help by making others aware of the problem and pulling up or chemically killing the plants on their own properties. Organize a loosestrife (or phragmites) party, get a knowledgeable horticulturist or county sponsored leader for a weekend of cleanup along your roadways and town-owned wetlands. Do this only with permission and proper techniques. Severing a root piece and having it float away to reestablish elsewhere is making the problem worse, not better. Disposal of the stems and seed pods is critical, black bag baking to kill the stuff by high temperature may be the only sure bet. Many agricultural seed stocks are highly contaminated, white clover seed has been tested as contaminated in many areas, the seed size similarities make separation difficult. You could be spreading loosestrife on your new lawn next spring.

Already several old waterways across America, including my own Essex County, Massachusetts, are choked by loosestrife and reed-beds, making them all but impassable. Imagine trying to pilot your boat through this snarl and how much it would limit your ability to Mess About. Contact your DPW or State Department of Environmental Protection now and learn what you can do to win the war on invasive plants. Don't get lost in the loosestrife!



Book Reviews

Close to the Wind

By Pete Goss
266 pages

Carroll and Graf Publisher, Inc. 1998

Reviewed by Sam Chapin

This is the story of the disastrous obstructions and solutions on the way to a singlehanded race around the world, 1996 Vendee Globe Race. Why should I be interested in an around the world race? This book was handed to me by a new friend and I took it, out of what I thought was politeness.

Intellectually I think these are dumb races. One person can't sail these boats under good control. If they are looking for the ultimate challenge, then why all the autopilots and electronic gear? My own experience with singlehanded racing was 15 to 20-mile races in Key West with boats from J24 size to Westsail 43. I thought that was stupid then, too, but actually found that it required better planning of maneuvers and was exiting in its own way. I remember those races in particular above many others.

Pete Goss uses the first 165 pages to tell us about growing up (a picture of him as a youngster sailing an Optimist pram in Thailand), being a member of the Royal Marines, getting obsessed with the singlehanded race around the world and the life along the way. The pace of complications and impossibilities to be solved draws you along in the story.

I had thought that perhaps it was written by a professional writer but could find no other author listed. Perhaps the work he developed as a motivational speaker helped Goss put together this pattern. The motivational and team work concepts were things that he developed as he was meeting with corporation executives to seek sponsorship (and money for his boat, race, and expenses).

That first section includes the Carlsberg two-handed transat in a poorly prepared boat, the Cstar or Carlsberg singlehanded (across the Atlantic) 1988, the 1992 British Steel Challenge produced by Chay Blyth. This last was a ten vessel race around the world the wrong way and crewed by people who paid for the experience. Goss worked as a training captain for these paying crews and then as a race captain in the race.

The races themselves are described from the aspect of stress and danger without much technical descriptions of the sailing. He made note of the participants in the British Steel Challenge, that these people came more with a sense of ultimate challenge than from a love of sailing and many with no sailing experience.

Because I had not been following this around the world sailing I got on the internet and tried to put together a list of big ocean adventures leading to the present:

1895 Joshua Slocum sailed *Spray* around the world alone.

1960 OSTAR with Colonel "Blondie" Hasler in his Folkboat with Chinese Lug Rig (he didn't win) solo from England to U.S.

1967 Francis Chichester sailed solo around the world with one stop in Sidney, Australia.

1968 Globe Challenge, Around the World Alone. Knox-Johnson the only finisher.

1973 First Whitbread Around the World Race. Multiple sailors and stops.

1982 BOC Challenge, Around the World Alone with three stops.

Vendee Globe Around the world alone with no stops.

1989-1990: 13 racers, 7 finished.

1992-1993: 14 racers, 7 finished.

1996-1997: 16 racers, 6 finished, Pete Goss 5th.

2000-2001: 24 racers, 15 finished, Ellen MacArthur 2nd.

Then comparing the boats taking part in these adventures, you find Slocum's *Spray*, a shallow draft modified fishing boat with a curious ability to hold its course off the wind, the modified Folkboat of Hasler's, Knox-Johnson's modest 30'some ketch. Then the boats began to be fully designed for the races around the world.

Goss's boat for the Vendee was a 50-footer with most of the other boats 60'. His was especially designed for the race and the Southern Ocean going east. He had a ballast bulb on a lateral swinging keel which now seems to be replacing water ballast. For combating leeway he had twin bilge dagger boards because when the ballast bulb is deployed laterally it is ineffective on leeway. Then he had the broad wide stem to promote surfing and the angled twin rudders and low streamlined pilot house.

The current boats used in the Vendee are the IMOCA 60 or International Monohull Open Class Association 60-footers. The notable features are cleared decks with low streamlined pilot house, not much cockpit, wide relatively flat stern, twin rudders, mid-ship mast, shrouds carried wide to outriggers, no back stay, boom articulating with deck just behind the mast but not on it, and the swinging ballast bulb. These are designed to be sailed solo with multiple electronics, powerful autopilots with backups, and a generator with plenty of fuel to keep it all going.

The Current Volvo Ocean Race 2005-2006 is a multihull (10) around the world race with multiple stops. A late entry in September is sponsored by Disney with a boat named *Black Pearl* to advertise *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

The pictures of the boat show a black boat with black sails outlining a huge pirate's head. The boat is a Volvo 70 which is a new class with more openings for innovations such as carbon fiber hull, deck, mast, boom, swing ballast keel, daggerboard, nonmetallic fiber stays, etc. Paul Cayard will be the skipper of the *Black Pearl* and he has recruited many experienced sailors to sail with him, so in spite of the late start they hope to be contenders.

Why should we be interested in around the world races? The unusual boats? The unusual tactics? The unusual challenge? So many other challenges in the world...

The Gougeon Brothers on Boat Construction 5th Edition

(A Rant Disguised as a Review)

By Robb White

The technical staff of Gougeon Brothers ("West System," that's the trademark) sent me a complementary copy of the 5th edition of their venerable book of how to build a boat using epoxy. At that, I am going to stop this review and make a statement of dad-blamed fact. There has been a world of opinion expressed by inexperienced people about how epoxy behaves around wood. I am not going to name any names, but some of the people who denigrate its use as a wood sealer have enough credentials to cause ignorant people to pay attention to what they say. Though they have the credentials, from reading what they say it is obvious that a lot of them don't have enough actual epoxy experience to know what they are talking about. I am not trying to put anybody down but that's what it takes. Opinion is opinion and proof is proof.

I suggest the following experiment: Seal a little piece of plywood with any other sealer (Firzite™ used to be the state of the art), paint it with paint according to the manufacturer's instructions, and leave it lying around in the birdbath for three years with one side in the water and the other in the hot sun. Coat an identical piece of plywood with solventless epoxy according to the manufacturer's instructions and paint it with the same paint and leave it lying around in the same bird bath with the other piece. That's what I did in 1971 when W.E.S.T. System™ epoxy became available. It works, y'all. Solventless epoxy is the best sealer for wood there ever was and that's why Gougeon Bros. is still in business. If Lyman had discovered it back when they switched to plywood planking they would still be in business, too.

I am kind of biased and that is another fact that you need to bear in mind while reading this review. I am a loyal kind of person. I buy my groceries at Bobby Hendrix's grocery store. I went to school with Bobby. His wife was the best pitcher on the girl's softball team that Jane was shortstop on. He was a pain in the ass as a little boy and his personality has not improved all that much but he knows produce and meat and has sense enough to keep good suppliers amongst the local people. The okra ain't gritty and the squash hasn't been walked on and the beef didn't have to be dragged out of the truck because it came in dead. I didn't ever get a chance to get to know Sam Walton.

I have had a connection with the staff of Gougeon Bros. starting way back at the time of the bird bath experiment. They are good people to do business with. The company is employee owned now. Though Meade, Joel, and Jan have sort of retired, I bet they aren't too far away. Jan is probably building some kind of modern marvel next door and Meade will not quit fooling around with those ice-boats. I don't know what Joel is up to but it is certainly something. I know a good many of the people who run the show and they have all been there for a long, long time and

know a lot about epoxy and have been kind enough to help me with my abstractions through the years. You know the Gougeon Bros. don't just pump epoxy into little cans to sell, they have built a world of boats and wind turbine blades, and stuff.

I am not putting down any other epoxy company and have tried various brands just to see if I was missing out on anything and they were all good. I especially like the ultra slow mix of MAS™ epoxy and I tried System Three™ and liked it fine, too. A man (Paul Oman, PPI™) sent me a sample of an epoxy that will work underwater! Do you think I let that claim go without going on a fact finding mission? Hell, no. If West System™ were to go out of business, I would still be able to build boats the way I have gradually found is best for me. I am trying not to be belligerent. Y'all self-appointed, inexperienced experts do it your way and I'll do it mine and we'll compare end results anytime you want to.

The Meade Gougeon book is not only the epoxy boatbuilder's book, it is complete. You don't actually need any other book to build a boat. Meade is a good writer and covers the whole shooting match. His explanation of lofting from the offsets is so clear I wish I had had it when I labored through old, ponderous, pedantic Howard I. Chapelle back in 1960. Admittedly, he plugs his own products all through the book but you know it is hard to beat the real thing. If I was an amateur just starting out and wanted to learn all I could, this would be the first book I would buy. Of course I would buy Chapelle and Steward, too. After I got to be a book-learned expert, I would jump up and build me a bunch of boats before I started issuing opinions, though.

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Activities & Events...

27th Annual Ship Model Show

The USS Constitution Museum, in conjunction with the USS Constitution Model Shipwright Guild, will present the 27th Annual Ship Model Show February 7 through March 11 at the Museum in the Charlestown (Massachusetts) Navy Yard. This is a juried show where models will compete for awards in Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master categories. Models may also be submitted for exhibition only. All models are eligible for the Most Popular Model Award, voted for by visitors to the Museum, and for the Curatorial Committee Cup, awarded by the Museum's Curatorial Committee.

While deadline for entry registration was December 16, interested persons are invited to contact the Museum for further details about visiting the show.

Sarah Watkins, Curator, USS Constitution Museum, (617) 426-1812, ext. 126

Age of Sail, Age of Steam

March 11-12 are the dates for an exhibition of model ships, boats, and scale engines presented by Florida Gulf Coast Maritime Museum's Model Ship & Boat Guild. Over 17,000sf of space has been reserved at the Manatee Conference Center in Sarasota, Florida, for the two-day event. Model builders of all sorts and maritime museums from all over the country are supposed to be making a showing with the ship and boat models covering a full array of merchant, military, and pleasure craft. Model steam, gas, and diesel propulsion units are also to be exhibited.

For more information, or to get yourself included in the display with models from your own collection, please contact Hal Pelta at (941) 722-9960, <hhpelta@ero1s.com> or Roger Allen at (941) 708-4935, <Roger.Allen@Manateeclerk.com>

Information of Interest...

Red Tide Rampant

I read with interest Robb White's article on Red Tide in your November 15th issue. We here on the south shore of Long Island have been living with Red Tide for decades now, the result of the common attitude that our teeny weeny bays have an endless capacity to absorb the stinking effluence of two or three million people of the most piggish stripe and not become cesspits in the process. There is an growing awareness of the problem amongst a small minority of the area residents but it is, of course, too late. The only thing that will save the bay is the termination of industrialized civilization, which is not something we can count on for a while yet. Solace may be taken from the fact that it will eventually happen, as the petrol is running out fast, and we are making our damned surest to use it up just as quick as we can.

This year we had an ironic turn-around. For most of the spring it poured. Then, some time early in July, it went into a protracted drought, not a single drop of rain for the remainder of July and all of August and

September (this was literally true in Patchogue, on the North Shore there were a handful of thundershowers to punctuate the drought). So what happened, apparently, is that the early and persistent spring rains did their usual job of flushing tons of detritus and pollutants into the estuaries, but the sudden drought prevented said same from making its way out into the bays. So while the bays were in reasonably good shape for most of the summer, by mid July every pond, lake, and headwater was covered with a thick matt of green biological efflorescence.

It was pitiful to drive by Robinson Pond near me and see duck butts sticking up out of the ooze as the poor birds tried to pull up what was left of the bottom growth. Which I would guess wasn't much as there was zero sunlight getting through. Some of the headwaters of the larger estuaries went completely hypoxic and began wafting sulfurous fumes into the toady communities of frankenmansions that have sprouted up around them, sending more than a few of the residents into mild forms of respiratory distress, even hospitalizing a couple of them. Whether or not these same people were aware that by building where they did they became significant vectors to the problem is not something I could judge.

It's November now as I write this, and when I take the Yole out for a row I can now look overboard and see bottom down to about 3' or 4', maybe more if it's a dead calm. This will last until June or so. Then the murk returns. A lot of people who grew up with the Red Tide think the Great South Bay is just naturally scuzzy. I have a hard time explaining to them that it's not really supposed to be that way.

Ever wonder about the amount of carcinogens the two or three trillion cigarette butts chucked out of car windows every year send percolating down into our water supply? The Littoral Society did one brief study examining the mathematical likelihoods, the conclusion being that it was a subject well deserving of more study. I have lost the article, of course. And I wonder how my Phillip Morris stock is doing?

Brian Salzano Patchogue, NY,
mailto:b@tinybrain.org

Safety Brought to Mind

Recently there has been some discussion about life preservers in *MAIB*. This came to mind on a trip we took our Robb White-designed cedar strip "Sportboat" and our small camper up to Dale Hollow Lake on the Kentucky/Tennessee border. This is a very beautiful 61-mile long Army Corps of Engineers lake. When I saw this sign at the boat ramp in the Army Corps of Engineers campground I thought I would take a photo of it and share it with the readers.

Henry Champagny, Greenback, TN



Conover Canoeing Trips

I was happy to see your reference to the Conovers in the November 15 issue. I first met Alexandra Conover when she worked for my neighbor, Mickey Fahey, in Chesuncook Village 30 years ago. Over the years Alexandra and Garrett have brought many parties to the Chesuncook Lake House which was owned by my good friends, Burt and Maggie MacBurnie. Burt passed away several years ago and Maggie has sold the Lake House. She still works in the woods and spends winters in Greenville.

There is no better trip than the West Branch of the Penobscot from Roll Dam to Suncook Dam. I believe that the Conovers stop in Lobster Lake as well. They do this trip once a year, usually in high summer. This trip is really special. There are not many outfits that do things the old way. The food is first rate and the pace is comfortable. The camps are done as they should be, tight and comfortable.

I have always found that the true joy of canoe camping is the amenities that you can lug with you. The Lake House is not as it once was but everything else is unchanged. If you are ever able to make this trip let me know and we'll have a meal at my camp in Chesuncook Village. I have a state-of-the-art bean hole which I'll fire up if I know you're coming. If Maggie MacBurnie is not off working we'll have her there as well. She has a great many stories of the north woods.

Bill Haggerty, Chesuncook Canoes, Ivoryton, CT

Kennebunkport Conservation Trust and Maine Island Trail Association Announce Partnership

The Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) has joined with the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust (KCT) to manage visitor use and promote Leave No Trace ethics on the Cape Porpoise Islands in the Bay of Maine, beautiful islands that have quite a bit of use from local residents and visitors. The joint effort by MITA and KCT will be to ensure that increased use does not degrade the islands. The islands have a lot of interesting history and people should be able to visit them, but it's also important that visitors leave the islands in the same or better shape than they found them.

MITA has worked closely with the state and other land conservation organizations to create management plans and to educate island users on 43 state islands as part of a ten-year management plan and agreement with the State of Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. MITA also administers a program to educate the public about Leave No Trace principles.

Boaters are welcome to visit KCT islands for day use such as fishing, swimming, picnicking, and walking the beaches. Day use islands include Stage, Goat (which is the home of the light house) Redin's, Green, Milk, Savin Bush, and Bass. Camping is allowed on Vaughn, Trott's, and Cape islands with a permit, which is available from the police station in Kennebunkport.

One of the first efforts is likely to be new signage and an increased effort to get visitors to carry off all trash. There is also a plan to sell "wag bags," a system for safely disposing of human waste. That has been an ongoing problem on the islands.

The Maine Island Trail Association was founded in 1987 to promote access to

islands, education of visitors about low impact travel, and island stewardship such as island clean ups. It currently has over 150 islands and mainland sites ranging from Kennebunkport to Machias under its stewardship.

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust is a community organization dedicated to preserving the natural beauty of Kennebunkport which has so far protected over 50 properties through direct purchase, donations, and conservation easements.

CruisingResources.com Improves Online Searching for Sailors

The most comprehensive search site for cruising sailors, Cruising Resources, now enables users to select not only the topic but the type of information they need with a single click. The new Beyond-Search concept developed by Cruising Resources allows visitors to select articles, web sites, vendor information, and other items three ways; by Topic (e.g., Roller Furling, Hot Water Systems, Clothing), by Source (e.g., magazine articles, non-commercial web sites, vendors), and by Type (above). Visitors can also use keyword search.

Cruising Resources has grown beyond 10,000 searchable entries on 270 cruising topics, so the ability to narrow a search can save sailors lots of time finding information they need. Launched at the 2004 Annapolis Boat Show, CR has exploded to become one of the most used boating sites on the Internet according to Alexa rankings. In popularity the site has already moved past the websites of many established cruising-related organizations, thanks to its comprehensive entries and ease of pinpointing information.

CR offers Topic-Specific Sponsored Links, greatly improving the cost-effectiveness of online ads. Product and service vendors can pay a small fee to be placed at the top of their particular Topic, far above their competitors. A maker of masthead tricolors, for example, can place a link exactly where sailors will see it as they choose to investigate Navigation Lights. No ad dollars are wasted on visitors interested in Refrigeration or Hard Dinghies or Seasickness.

In another innovation, CR allows visitors to copy any listings onto a My Resources page to maintain a personalized collection of gear and information they are interested in. Forthcoming innovations will help sailors analyze and compare cruising boat designs and evaluate them against their needs.

David Stookey, Cruising Resources LLC, (401) 841-5111, <david@cruisingresources.com> www.cruisingresources.com

The Gronicle Has Passed Into History

Neal Small isn't familiar with gronicles according to his letter in the November 15th issue. They are, in fact, quite rare today. At one time they were widely used in lateen rigged Mediterranean craft. In that rig the mast is moveable, the sail is very large, and it is laced to a massive yard. The gronicle provided enough purchase to handle it with few men. Some Northern European vessels adopted it but it sometimes failed in very cold conditions.

During the early years of the Clipper era (1849-1869) some vessels were fitted with gronicles. Various factors mitigated against them. First, the need for the increased purchase provided by the gronicle was lessened since the crews were quite large and had

plenty of muscle. This made no purchase necessary. Secondly, parsimonious purchasing agents were reluctant to purchase a purchase.

Finally, the terrible cold encountered below the tip of South America caused frequent failures and reports of sailors freezing their gronicles off rounding the Horn became commonplace. Their use had been entirely discontinued by 1858. The gronicle has passed into obscurity.

Captain Gnat

Tracking Down Florida Bay Charters

In the November 1 issue Bill Vines mentions an article by Preston Larus, and then Bill finds "Shoal Draft Mecca" in *Small Boat Journal*. I had read that article and had tried to track down Florida Bay Charters. My guess now is that it was in the spring of 1988 when I was looking all over Key Largo, but they had disappeared. All I found was a Black Skimmer hull upon some 55gal drums, full of leaves and water, behind a dilapidated motel.

Some enterprising person could develop a nice business catering to all of us dreaming of that shallow water Mecca.

Quentin Wilson, La Madera, NM

Information Wanted..

Thames Barge Sprit Rig for Small Craft?

I was quite interested to read the article in the November 15 issue comparing the sprit rig with the standing lug rig. Having tried both rigs on the same boat, it was my experience that sailing performance is much the same with either rig. The issue seems to center around what works best for your purposes when setting or lowering sail. One of the commentators in that article mentioned emulating the standing sprit rig of the Thames Barges in some manner that would suit a much smaller boat. I find this a very intriguing alternative. Could it be a practical option in a boat around 25' in length?

I imagine it as a way of avoiding the thrashing about of either yard or sprit when dropping or raising the mainsail. Using brail lines is a good way to quickly contain the sail, but it does leave the peak of the sail aloft where, in breezy conditions, it may be active windage aloft. In any case, if anyone has tried out an option like this in a small boat I would be most interested to learn of their experience and advice. May this discussion continue on in future issues of this fine publication.

Ed Porter, Box 458, Lunenburg, NS B0J 2C0, Canada

This Magazine...

Painless Dentist

I like my dentist, Dr. B in Eastport, Maine. He enjoys boating and is not so timid as to stay off the St. Croix River (Maine/New Brunswick) when everyone else has. It was a glum day as I headed off the mountain on the 45th parallel into the easternmost city in the U.S. for my first crown. What lay ahead? Pain in the jaw? Pain in the wallet? Boredom in the waiting room?

My spirits were buoyed as I reached for the current issue of *Cheerleader*, only to discover that fine publication covered an even finer publication, this one. I dropped

Cheerleader like a hot potato. Alas, my time with my favorite fantasy magazine, *MAIB*, was cut short when the hygienist called my name and gave me that "you are next" look of hers. All business.

Thankfully the images called up from the few short minutes with *MAIB* were enough to sustain me through the painless procedure. And the new crown performs admirably, thanks to Dr. B.

Regarding "Sabal Palms" vs. "Sabal Pines" (*MAIB*, October 15 "Opinions," page 5), everyone but a Yankee editor knows "Swamp Cabbage" is the much sought after delicacy known as "Heart of Palm," not pine. I apologize for any confusion I may have caused. Bon appetit, y'all.

Patrick Mehr, Charlotte, ME

Page Bottom Annotations

Do you ever put the magazine's name at the bottom of each page with the issue date? I did not realize they weren't there until I copied an article.

John Wilson, Charlotte, MI

Editor Comments: Nope, never have, just more clutter to deal with putting each issue together.

MAIB Has Been My Guide

I'd like to take a moment and thank you for the wonderful magazine. How you manage to get two issues out each and every month is beyond me. If I were forced to give up all my magazine subscriptions, *Messing About in Boats* would be the absolute last one to go.

It has become my guide into an area of boating that I know very little about. I grew up in a boating household but all my experience has been in deep water, sailing San Francisco Bay and the ocean outside the Golden Gate. Sailing led to fishing which led my parents through a series of small commercial salmon boats. My brother and I spent several summers working the boats with them.

A few weeks ago I sold my 26' sloop that was berthed in the bay due to the cost of ownership combined with a lack of use. However, just ten minutes down the road is a nice reservoir with a 10mph speed limit and no PWCs. With your magazine as a guide I intend to begin exploring the shallow waters of the lake and, perhaps, the Sacramento Delta. I am looking forward to enjoying the simplicity of small boats and to discovering new areas unreachable by boats that draft 6'.

Michael Matthews, Livermore, CA

Low Tech Approach is Refreshing

Your magazine is a continuing pleasure and certainly the most unique publication I receive. I find it amusing when an occasional reader tells you how you ought to change it for the better. I hope you just keep doing what you do for a long, long time.

Apart from the wonderfully varied content, the low-tech approach is very refreshing in this age of mega-media. This probably is a reflection of my age.

Phil Joseph, Onekamo, MI

Three Cheers for Ed

Three cheers for Ed Cass for bringing us "Running a Blockade in the War of 1812." Is there more to come? I, for one, certainly hope so.

John Mullin, Dallas, TX



At play on the bay, a Great South Bay cat finishes ahead of a 14' Arey's Pond cat.

This was the 13th Annual Arey's Pond Cat Gathering and, despite a mid-race period of dead calm, it was another great success overall. Eighty-eight boats had registered for the race, the greatest number of boats ever entered. The three classes took off for their respective starts right on schedule as the signal cannon sounded from the committee boat. In the first class, Alan McClennen in his Dunbar Monomoy was at the line at the cannon blast, followed closely by Nat Hammatt sailing a Bay Bird. The next cannon sent the larger catboats, mostly Marshall 18s and Arey's 16s, off a very tight line that also included three wooden Crosby Cats and a Great South Bay Cat, followed by the third start of the 14'-and-under class of cats.

A variety of colorful sails, including Egyptian Dacron and tanbark, created a beautiful sight as they headed into the fog as

Arey's Pond Cat Gathering 2005

By Tony Davis

it filled in from the east. As viewed from the committee boat, the cats disappeared into the fog and were soon out of sight. I worried that I may have just sent 80 boats and their crews into a potentially dangerous situation. Luckily, the wind held long enough to spread the fleet at the narrows and the fog was patchy. No one completely lost visibility. But as the fleet rounded the first mark, the wind died away completely and the tide had now turned east pushing the boats towards Chatham and away from the second mark and the finish line.

From the committee boat we radioed and contacted chase boats and participants to ask if they were having fun or whether it would be best to call the race due to no wind. Reports came back that boats were moving, albeit slowly. Some sailors were swimming and some were singing to pass the time. Eventually the wind did pick up and 77 boats finished setting a record for the longest elapsed time for the race to date. One cat took four hours to cover the three-mile course. All the food was devoured at the awards ceremony before the crew of this cat made it to shore. For the after-race gathering and awards, Catherine Macort had prepared a wonderful feast for over 100 people.

A thank you to the cat gathering participants who raised \$1,000 for the Friends of Pleasant Bay and \$736 for the Friends of Arey's Pond.

Race organizer and A.P.B.Y. catboat designer/builder Tony Davis was happy to present his daughter Brooke with third place finisher award in the A.P.B.Y. 14 Class.



13th Annual Arey's Pond Cat Gathering Winners

88 Signed Up - 61 Finished

Traditional Boats: Alan McClennen, Jr.	1:32:35
Catboats Over 20': Woody Metzger	2:47:29
Crosby Cats: Eliza McClennen	2:46:58
Marshall 18: F. Warren McFarlan	1:43:50
A.P.B.Y. 16' Open Lynx: Skip Hall	2:42:14
A.P.B.Y. 16' Cabin Lynx: Neubert & Reilly	2:42:48
Marshall 15: Bill Welch	2:06:10
A.P.B.Y. 14' Bradley Gale & Matt Evans	2:47:28
Classic Cats/Handy Cats: Jim Nathanson	2:43:24
Beetle Cats: Nathan Garrett	2:45:37



Three brisk starts but only one long becalmed finish.



The Great Whitehall Bay Labor Day Catboat Race

This is a short story, mostly told in pictures, since one picture is worth a thousand words. Twelve entrants, a few chase boats, and 37 participants took part in a beautiful day of racing on Whitehall Bay, north of Annapolis, Maryland. The fleet began to gather the night before, recognized each other as like-minded folk, headed for the same event, and finished the day with a splendid pool party.



Morning light...



Sanderling (cat ketch) and H18, Bill.



The start...



They're off...



Turning the mark...



And back again...

Bill Hoover (Commodore) and the trophies,



The Gang, labor Day 2005.



Maine Island Trail Association Cruising Advisory Committee Meets

MITA hosted a meeting of interested persons in November to review prospects for attracting the cruising community into MITA's fold in view of their interest in the Maine coast and islands.

Karen Stimpson, MITA Executive Director, described some of the challenges facing MITA:

Expansion of the three prongs of MITA's mission to provide recreational access to the islands, voluntary stewardship to care for the islands, and public education in Leave No Trace principles.

This year MITA is expanding the Trail by 15 to 20 additional islands and mainland sites and partnering with other organizations such as Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Chewonki Foundation, and Portland Trails, as well as many local land trusts toward purchase of four significant Trail islands.

To fund expansion, MITA has initiated a boat donation program and a corporate partners program.

Tom Franklin, Director of Marketing & Membership, described MITA resources for dealing with its challenges:

Thirty-five hundred members, ten staff, blue chip partner organizations, and an 18-year history of successful stewardship of Maine islands.

Shared values that will sustain a long-term and mutually beneficial partnership between cruisers and MITA. The increasing cost and scarcity of access to shore frontage, the value of volunteering to care for what one cares about, and shared love for and knowledge of Maine's islands will enable cruisers to become informed, committed, and inspired participants in MITA programs and activities.

The unique affinity of MITA and Maine's economic interests. MITA represents one model of how Maine can accommodate increasing numbers of tourists and retirees without spoiling Maine's natural resources, indeed, by enlisting them to support those resources as volunteers and at the same time supporting the many Maine businesses that, to some extent, benefit from increased tourism.

Dave Mention, Trail Director, facilitated a discussion of concerns and issues:

Moorings: No consensus was reached but pros and cons were discussed for MITA-sponsored day moorings, overnight moorings, moorings in difficult or small remote harbors, and the identification and location of moorings in the guidebook, but an equal number of the group felt MITA should not set any moorings.

Cruise Planning: MITA could offer cruise planning to yacht clubs, it could publicize existing resources of value to cruisers such as power squadron and Coast Guard training programs (the group did not recommend that MITA sponsor workshops that are already offered by others), and it could offer programs to cruisers on how to avoid running down kayakers. The group also confirmed that MITA primarily is known as a kayaking

organization and should work with kayakers to help them avoid conflict or collision with cruisers. It also recommended that MITA work with the windjammer fleet, camp and kayak organizations to reduce island impact and that it educate cruisers regarding control of pets on islands and encourage cruisers to carry trash bags ashore and undertake voluntary cleanups of islands visited.

Tony Jessen, MITA Board Chair, facilitated a discussion of outreach and education:

Recommendations included seeking speaking opportunities before yacht clubs (particularly during the winter months), using yacht club publications to publicize MITA, and identifying and working with informal as well as formal yacht clubs. MITA should make more information available to cruisers about islands of relevance to them, it could offer cruise planning assistance in exchange for yacht club assistance in marketing MITA, and it could offer a different version of the guidebook for cruisers.

Also, an abbreviated or "teaser" version could be produced and distributed to the yacht clubs in the spring when they begin to become active. This could include information regarding who MITA is and be separately produced and geographically tuned to appeal to different parts of the coast.

Identifying a chief contact person for each club was also mentioned. Participants at this meeting would be a good source for volunteers.

Discussion took place regarding relationships between cruisers and lobsterman and whether MITA might serve a kind of mediator role.

An annual cruiser event was mentioned and panned as possibly too expensive time-wise for MITA to manage.

It was suggested that all clubs be mailed a "starter kit" consisting of basic information resources regarding MITA for the club to post and have on hand.

Finally, it was suggested that cruisers be recruited as part of the Trail stewardship group to help look after their favorite island.

Karen Stimpson, Executive Director, led a discussion on publications and website:

Communication with yacht clubs and other cruising organizations could be facilitated by establishing a formal liaison representative.

MITA could regularly provide short notices for yacht club bulletin boards.

The guidebook or other MITA material could be distributed at yacht club meetings.

A category of yacht club membership could be established.

A listing of cruisers' favorite anchorages could be compiled and distributed.

MITA could work with yacht clubs in creating Maine cruise itineraries.

The guidebook could be better tailored for cruisers (wake hazards for kayakers, unique island information such as vegetation, wildlife, history, geology) and marketed at boat shows.

An annual cruising community event would be useful but perhaps expensive.

New guidebook content could be obtained from other publications such as *Maine Boats & Harbors*, *Offshore*, and *Working Waterfront*.

A discussion of marketing and funding was led by Tom Franklin, Director of Marketing & Membership:

MITA has no distinctive "brand" or identity that distinguishes it from the many organizations that conserve and steward

Maine coastal resources.

Affiliation with yacht clubs would be best achieved through a liaison representative, initially working with the Cruising Committee and expanding from there.

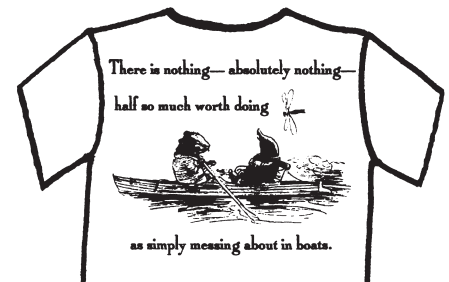
It will be difficult or impossible to obtain yacht club membership lists for MITA mailings so the focus should be on using yacht club mailings with MITA content.

Access to MITA islands would be very attractive to many cruisers.

MITA could market to yacht and sailing clubs outside the U.S. and to charter companies in Maine.

The group briefly discussed the merits of "flipping" the current MITA membership model into a stewardship model in which membership and guidebook would be an ancillary benefit for those who were interested.

In adjourning the meeting, Tom Franklin expressed the hope that those attending would leave with a strong personal commitment to helping MITA in the future and that MITA would be able to offer cruisers such significant value that it would develop a very strong and enduring base of support among the cruising community.



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Fall. That would be the answer. The question was how to get a sailing vacation that didn't involve long stretches of either rain or calm. In previous years Sarah and I had tried cruises in our sharpie ketch *Sanderling* earlier in the year and been rewarded with incandescent Chesapeake humidity. While it was easier for both of us to take vacation before the college we work at geared up for fall semester, the weather options we dealt with then were a selection of humidity, heat, calm, and thunderstorms.

This year we had another focus, the 23rd Chesapeake Small Craft Festival in St. Michael's. It would take place during fall semester, but not at the peak times of student use for the services we offered. We could take a Friday and a Monday off and we'd be able to get to the Festival in time to see a fair amount of the action.

Thursday, and the breeze was a muscular southerly, wrapping into a front that stretched across ten states. We battened the house down before we went to work and kept a "weather eye" outside for the anticipated thunderstorms. Nothing much appeared. When we applied to Intellicast for a look into the future, the forecast was for light winds filling in the high behind the front. We'd been debating whether to use the four days sailing rather than wandering along docks, but with this forecast, wandering along docks was exactly the best use we could have of our time.

Friday morning, and there was still a usable northwest breeze. We packed provisions and supplies and were off the dock by 11:00am. The north wind was still powerful enough to help and, as soon as we could bear off from our course out of Deep Creek, we set sail out of the Magothy River. With a prospect of a glorious run down the face of Kent Island, we headed south. Before we even got to Sandy Point, however, the gentle breeze softened. Pretty soon progress under sail had changed from an efficient, environmentally friendly way to travel to a hobby for those who didn't need to get anywhere. One thing that didn't change was the wonderful clarity of the air. Looking north we could see the trees on Swan Point ten miles away, "hull down" over the curvature of the earth.

We "pulled the plug" on the sails and asked Little Mo to step in. Unlike other years our 12hp one-cylinder Yanmar started easily and clattered steadily under the deck as we headed down the Bay. The wind had failed us but the tide had not. The cluster of shipping at anchor was tide rode, pointing north against the ebb tide. We were progressing at a fairly steady 5.5kts. Because it was Friday the hellacious motorboat chop we have come to expect off Annapolis was still a day away,

Rich Neck.

The Really Nice, Comfortable, Pleasant Fall Cruise

By Mark Fisher
Mf70@hotmail.com

instead we had glassy swells in all directions and few travelers. One significant traveler was a rather yacht rigged Chesapeake buy boat that passed us at a knot or so above our speed.

The miles and hours reeled off as we neared Bloody Point. An occasional line of ripples had formed in the smooth swells but never anything that would push the boat. We saw a few fish jumps, one looked odd. I mentioned to Sarah that it looked like there was a ray in the Bay still, but nothing else happened. Suddenly a volleyball-sized head and matching green back slid out of the water 60' away. For a long second both Sarah and I looked into the sea turtle's eye and then it slid back under the surface. Because of Little Mo's pervasive clatter, the sea turtle's charming "phchooo-tthfft" for air could not be heard. We looked hard for another visit but never spotted him (or her) again.

As Bloody Point light approached, our favorable tide was faltering. The anchored shipping had all aligned facing south and our speed over the bottom dropped to 5kts. There was some encouragement ahead though, a J32 was reaching across from South River, demonstrating that there was at least a little air. We kept the banger going while we were stemming the tide with the knowledge that we were only a half-mile from being able to make the turn around Bloody Point, the southern end of Kent Island, and take advantage of both the reaching wind and a favoring tide.

Since any two sailboats in sight of one another are racing, as soon as we could clear the Bloody Point shoal we quickly unrolled both main and mizzen, then unleashed our "big gun," the blooper. This wonderful sail was a legacy from the previous owner of *Sanderling*, it is the bottom corner of a huge spinnaker. Together with an 8' jib boom I glued up, it works wonderfully as an off-the-wind sail. In fact, the J32 looked like they were nailed to the bottom as we sailed past (sweet thought). If the contest had been hard on the wind, or in choppy water, the result would have been just as decisive in the opposite direction, but the victory was sweet nonetheless.

As we headed up Eastern Bay, the J32 packed it in and motored on ahead. For us, the blooper was just able to hold a rhumb line for the top of Eastern Bay at Rich Neck. We continued on up the Bay at an encouraging

3kts, helped by the current and the smooth water.

Off in the distance, just under Kent Island, another traditional looking ketch was motoring up the Bay. We speculated that she, too, was headed for the Small Craft Festival. The afternoon stretched on and we had a decision to make, in order to get to the Festival to see everything we would have to emulate that other ketch and turn Little Mo back on. But we didn't want to give up the quiet!

An alternative was in our mind. A few weeks before we'd been on this same stretch of water. We'd anchored for the night in the bight behind Rich Neck and been rewarded with the first view of the Milky Way we'd seen in Maryland that season. Because of the relatively shallow charted depths and open nature of the anchorage, it is rarely used by the squadrons of weekend cruisers on the Chesapeake, but it is well protected from settled northwest breezes. In addition, that very "unprotected" nature of the anchorage ensures that the bottom is clean sand, meaning a solid anchorage and a clean anchor when weighing it in the morning.

If we waited until Saturday to get to St. Michael's we would get there by noon or so. We would miss some of the Festival, but we weren't presenting anything anyway and there would be plenty of time to see what it offered in the second half of the day.

The gentle breeze continued through the afternoon with just enough shifts to keep us wondering if we would make it all the way up on one tack. A complication was that our refurbished Lowrance depth sounder had gone "toes up" the previous week. As we rounded Rich Neck, we were just edging behind the state "clam line" buoys. These are a collection of 500 marker buoys set out by the Maryland DNR to keep hydraulic clam dredges out of shallow water or grass areas. As it happens, they also function as a sort of "picket fence," positioned on the 10' depth line around all navigable waters in the state. We thus knew we were about to run out of water.

My second line of depth information was engaged, I started watching the lanyard on the bilge board more closely. The board sticks down about 7' and is an infallible marker of shallow water, if you're watching. At the last minute we got a lift by the wind and cleared the point without touching. We jibed over and headed up into the planned anchorage. Behind us, a steady stream of goldplaters motored for the Miles River, leaving us to find our rest in solitude.

We didn't have a depth sounder but we did have the board, as well as a lead line. In addition I'd placed waypoints on the anchorage as well as on a clear path into it, and we followed the dotted line on the GPS to the planned spot where we anchored in 6' of



water. The autumn sun was setting and the beach along Rich Neck was stretched out in front of us. It was too late to go ashore but we watched a collection of small white herons milling on the beach under the nose of a big blue heron for ten minutes.

The first star came out, a clear Vega directly overhead joining the brilliant Venus in the east. We soon had the full spread of the heavens above us, seamed together with the ragged path of the Milky Way. The four stars of Pegasus were prominent and I again followed the stars of the tail out to Andromeda. For the first time ever I spotted the Andromeda galaxy. With binoculars I could even see the orientation of the disk. With the blinking lights of the transcontinental jets and the steady progress of the satellites overhead, we went to bed in the cockpit, the better to see the canopy of stars.

That night, however, the secure anchorage showed another side. I was pulled from my burrow under the covers by the anchor drag alarm of my GPS beside my ear. From I don't know where, a steady easterly had built up. We were now hanging 180' from where we were at sunset. What was more, the 6' of water had melted away to 4' at the rudder. A little reflection, added to inspection of the GPS track we'd built up while at anchor, showed that we had not actually dragged anchor. If the Viking anchor had lost a little ground when the wind shifted, it had quickly re-set. I reset the anchor alarm in turn, admired the rising Pleiades for a while, and slipped back asleep.

Saturday dawned just as clear as Friday. The breeze was now from the southeast, right out of the Miles River. We motored off the hook as we were pretty well embayed by the wind, and we were soon close hauled in the light southerly. After an hour this breeze, too, vanished and we ended up joining the procession into the Miles.

St. Michael's harbor was surprisingly open. There was plenty of room behind the first rank of power yachts for a boat with 3' of draft to swing, and we anchored within easy rowing range of the action. And action there was. Small vessels perched along the dock, slipped among the wharves, and criss-crossed the harbor. We went ashore, got credentials, and spent the rest of the day inspecting the offerings, including a gam with the editor of *MAIB*.

Our dinghy, *Feather*, was, of course at home in this mix. We told our share for "how we done it" tales, as we heard others. My favorite was the owner of Bolger's Queen Mab #1. She had gone to another yacht designer with her request for a boat she could put in her small Honda, and he had replied, "I don't do toys!" This resonated as we looked out over the harbor, filled with nothing but toys.

The scene of the action.



We ran across Roland, the man who had bought our previous boat, *Ayesha*, and traded stories for a while. He was showing off what he'd built, perhaps the brightest paint job, if also the ugliest boat at the show (I think he'd agree).

After dinner we came back in and enjoyed a talk by a fellow who had rowed from New York to Florida in shifts, over a period of years that included time off to have a heart attack. We then went out to sample Andre's skygazing workshop and ended up with a thrown-together musical group of penny whistles, a fiddle, a hammer dulcimer, and yours truly on a very amateur concertina. The night was a big change from Rich Neck. Boats swung on all sides of us and parties across the harbor kept the night busy. We slept below.

We stayed around Sunday for the final race, a composite "row, sail, and anything you got" race of three legs. We figured that Roland's boat would have enough carrying capacity to hold the three of us and we came in a fairly creditable third. The final "yard sale" was fairly light on goodies so we bid everyone "goodbye" and slipped out of St. Michael's around noon.

The light northwest breeze we'd had for the race was still there and we were soon beating across the top of Eastern Bay, heading for Kent Narrows. In the gentle breeze our blade jib helped us carry around 3kts until we had to switch to hydrocarbon power for the Kent Narrows channel. We caught the bridge at the last moment and exited out onto the Chester River. The breeze here was steadier and we were soon reaching up toward Hail Point.

Again using the GPS as the primary guide, we felt our way into Hail Creek. We crossed the channel of the creek about a quarter mile upstream from my last plotted anchorage, then turned at right angles and ran a steady string of lead line soundings across the estuary. We used that data to find the center of the channel, and anchored in 4-1/2' of water.

The rest of the creek beckoned and *Feather* was soon unshipped and bobbing beside the mother ship. Using the dinghy we then rowed up the channel to explore the Hail Creek marsh. Since this creek is totally without aids to navigation, we had it all to ourselves. We had not needed the dinghy for most of the exploration, the depth was over 4' almost all the way to the head.

In colonial times Hail Creek was the hailing port for shipping headed up to Chestertown. Now it bisects the south end of Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge and all traces of commerce were gone, our only neighbors were a pair of bald eagles chattering in the trees and an occasional blue heron inspecting the shallows. *Sanderling* was a cheering sight as we rounded the bend back to the anchorage.

The night was another quiet, clear, early autumn night. We decided to sleep in the shelter of the cabin so we did not get the star field display of Friday night. As it got darker, the eagle's chattering calmed down and the only sound was a distant boat out on the Chester. The wind came up again in the night but we swung solid and secure on the hook. When I got up around 3:00am to check our swing, Orion was leaping high above the eastern horizon with blue-white Sirius at his heels.

By Monday morning the wind had shifted to a gentle nor'easter. After a sumptuous breakfast of bacon and apple pancakes we headed out, using Little Mo for the first part as we threaded our way out the GPS-marked channel.

On the Chester we were able to set the bloop and we carried it out the final east/west reach of the river. As we neared Love Point, the wind finally gave out again and we settled down to a long motor leg, assisted by the autopilot.

Coming back into the Magothy we busied ourselves with final "ship's chores," setting things up so *Sanderling* would be ready the next time we needed her.

It was a calm trip. There were no emergencies or out of the ordinary events. While there was a decision and a choice to make at each point of the trip, there never was the kind of gut-wrenching activity that had been so frequent on a certain earlier trip. This was the perfect trip to leave us ready to finish out the semester at the college and we were ready to turn around and do it again.

All sail set.





Game Warden Ernie Lerma in state skiff and Technician Harvey Van Matre on scooter waiting for dark in an "oil cut" off the Laguna Madre next to the Kenedy Ranch, scene of heavy poaching activity for deer as well as gill netting for fish. Patrols would sometimes last two or three days.



14' "Scooter" shown on the Lower Laguna Madre at a fish camp dock ca. 1978. Note bamboo push poles lashed to deck. 115hp Mercury later replaced the 65hp shown. Sidearm is under slicker suit, which could be a problem in an emergency.

Technician Harvey Van Matre with about 1,800' of monofilament gill net ca. 1978, photo taken in Port Mansfield in back of Harvey's house where he maintained a boat shed for the state.



Outlaws of the Laguna Madre

By Ron Bennett, Texas Game Warden (ret.)

It was flat calm on the Laguna Madre that night, stars so sharp and clear that it seemed you could reach out and touch them, no moon, black water, the sounds of ducks feeding, plopping, flopping, squawking, flapping of wings, thrumming of drumfish, and a chorus of coyotes yipping and howling on the ranch shoreline to the east of us. We had poled our state boat, a "scooter," which was a flat, sled-like 14' hull with a center console powered by a 115hp Mercury outboard motor. We weren't running the Merc right then, however, we were poling the scooter on the flats with 10' long bamboo poles for stealth, sneaking up on an "outlaw" gill netter.

My use of the word "outlaw" is not in the true criminal justice sense, but in the colorful sense. They were men who were not "outlawed" by the court, they just crossed the line using illegal means and methods for catching fish on occasion when opportunity presented itself and profits were high, which was often.

Our target that night was a lone commercial fisherman, running his 1,200' gill net set in the lower Laguna Madre near Port Mansfield, Texas. A gill net was illegal means and methods in saltwater for the taking of anything, it didn't matter. Their target species were redfish, speckled trout, and drum, primarily good market fish, this was in the '70s.

The fisherman was using a homebuilt 15-1/2' flat-bottom skiff powered by a 40hp Evinrude, the outboard motor of choice in those days, at least in our area. A tough motor, it withstood the rigors of commercial fishing with little maintenance. The boats were kept tied to the fish house docks when not in use, an environment that was hard on everything, especially transom mounted outboards and plywood constructed skiffs. The constant banging against the fish house docks caused by wakes of passing boats or the wind took its toll on equipment.

Their skiffs were heavy load carriers for their size. The fishermen would build center thwartship fishboxes in their skiffs that could hold approximately 500lbs of fish. The weight of the fisherman needed to be considered, plus the outboard, fuel, and gill nets, or whatever gear was to be used in their pursuit of fish that day or night. A "set" of 2,400' of gill net was not unusual in those days either, and the lead line could weigh quite a bit. There were no cork lines since the webbing was monofilament which floats, but more on that another time on how we caught on to that method, a story in itself.

Texas game wardens are state peace officers capable of enforcing any or all of Texas' laws, but our main mission was enforcing game and fish laws including general hunting laws, migratory game bird laws, protected and endangered species, pollution regs, commercial fishing, shrimping, sport fishing, boating safety, the list seemed endless and the job thankless. The sportsman, or "dude fisherman" (commercial fisherman's term, one who fishes for fun and pleasure), would get mad at us for writing him up for various infractions, the commercial fisher-

man would also, then the shrimper, the pleasure boater, it seemed like everyone wanted a piece of us for doing our job. Ah well, it just came with the territory, we have to have a thick skin and a sense of humor or we won't survive without having a heart attack, ulcers, or both.

We would pole a little, then drift, listening. We were in about 2-1/2' of water way out on the flats. We heard the thump and slapping of fish being dropped in the fish box, tails flapping against the sides of the box, sometimes the scrape of a lead line over the gunnels of the skiff, perfect. Not a light was showing, not one, everyone working in the dark, but one's eyes got used to it and with bright stars out it was really no problem, even seeing the stingarees in the gill net was not a problem, however, getting them out could be since they would become so twisted up in the webbing with that ugly barb ready to give you grief if you weren't careful what you were grabbing.

Going by sound only we determined that we were probably within 50 yards of our netter. We carefully and silently tied our bamboo poles to the deck cleats and I primed the Merc. Looking at Harvey, who had gotten out the Q-Beam spotlight and was gripping the handrail, he nodded at me, I thought a prayer, Please Lord, let there be no violence or hitting of obstructions and let this Mercury start on the first spark! This is serious business, sneaking up on folks violating laws while they're making a living at the same time, nothing is to be taken lightly, that can come after the excitement is over.

We had a pretty good group of commercial fishermen in Port Mansfield but you never knew how a man might take it when you got into his "living" whether he came by it legally or illegally, always an unknown factor. Of all our commercial fishermen in Port Mansfield, I never had reason to suspect any of them being armed nor, apart from the occasional barroom brawl that the Sheriff's Department would have us break up, were they particularly violent. But they all carried a "fish club" in their skiffs for stingarees and other vermin and that was a caution to be sure. They were hard working, hard playing men and they worked at fishing legally, too, but many times the temptation was just too great. I've known those men to bring in \$700 to \$1,000 a night by gill netting when the fish were running good, and this was in the '70s. That would last a few days until we really got into their nets and nabbed a few of them to put a dampener on their activities.

We would check fish house landings daily and when we started seeing those figures rise dramatically, we knew they were back at it gill netting. It required lots of sneaking around, observing, listening for the slap of flat-bottom skiffs and the whine of outboard motors running dark until they shut down, launching boats off of ranch shorelines in the dark, wild chases and long nights, nothing came easy or simple. Getting bearings by compass, using markers as reference points as well as certain combinations of lights in Port Mansfield required lots of practice, perseverance, and old-fashioned footwork gathering information.

I turned the key and the Mercury roared to life, our adrenalin shot up as fast as the rpms did. I firewalled the throttle and she fairly jumped up on top and was almost immediately on a plane. 115hp on a 14' boat has lots of push to her, heavy bronze prop

would just plow its way through the mud until by sheer force it pushed the boat up on a plane, sometimes we had to spin it out when trying to get up out on the flats, but operating in the dark we wanted to keep her pointed towards our target so that we wouldn't become disoriented. Harvey turned on his spotlight and we had him like a deer in headlights but commercial fishermen stay mentally ready, too, especially one that is fishing with illegal gear.

We saw him throw his gill net clear of the skiff, jump to the stern, and pull on the rope and the Evinrude came to life. Dammit, first pull, too! But the chase was on, he spun the skiff out to get on top and was off like a gunshot, he ducked as he ran through the mainline of a trotline which was strung above the water in saltwater here. His bow caught the line as he no doubt knew it would and the line stretched and then snapped like a bullwhip that even we could hear with the 115hp screaming, hooks and staging must have been singing around his ears. I know that our spotlight had ruined his night vision just like it was doing to us, but he took out in the dark regardless, heedless of any obstructions, obstacles, sunken dredge pipes, nothing was going to deter his getaway if he could help it.

We had jumped him close though and there was no escaping the 115 that night, plus he had a couple of old hands on his tail, not rookies, we were just as heedless during the chase as he was. We were gaining fast and he finally shut her down seeing that we were coming up on his transom, we came sliding alongside him and grabbed his gunnel. He was friendly, if a little breathless, so were we. "How you guys doing? Ron? Harvey? Just thought I'd do a little trot-lining tonight, nice night, right before a norther, the fish are sure moving tonight," he said.

"Well yeah, Benny (not his real name), but you forgot your net," I said.

"Aw, hey, Ron, I don't have no net," he looked down. "Hey, you guys want some coffee?" I thanked him and told him that we had some, thank you, and we'd hash all the legalities out later. I asked him to show me some running lights that worked and he tapped his bow light and it blinked on, then he stabbed a corroded stern light in its socket and it worked, too! Hard to write a man up when he's got equipment that works, after all, we were running dark, too. I pulled the switch and by golly, our lights worked, too, sometimes everything turns out okay.

There's one thing people can understand, being fair when you are enforcing the law and using good common sense while doing so. Write the flagrant stuff up but use your head on the ticky things, keeping anything working in this environment is a major task for anyone, something is always going on the fritz.

"Okay, Benny, we're going to pick up the net, sell the fish for the state that's still in the net, and we'll be talking to you about that after this is all done, you'll probably be facing charges, at least one, I would imagine."

Benny just looked at us and nodded, polite but not admitting to anything, smart move. Benny started his Evinrude and headed into port and he still had a decent load of fish to sell. In those early days we hadn't established court precedence on determining what constituted gill-netted fish as opposed to trotline caught fish (a legal method then). Also, the law did not address being in pos-

session of netted fish, just taking them by gill net. Sure, there were visible marks around the gill plates of fish that came out of gill nets, especially on speckled trout, but I have seen with my own eyes fish with gill marks that were caught off trotlines, indicating that they had escaped a gill net only to end up on a trotline, so you had to see the fisherman taking the fish from the net, an almost impossible thing to do.

Well, Benny lost his net, which that night was a 1,500' set, and the remaining fish in the net. He forgot to throw a PFD in the skiff before he went out and we wrote him on that. He understood that if he had hit an obstruction and was thrown from the boat, it would be an important piece of equipment but the thing is that you need to be wearing one before it can be of any help. I wasn't the man's daddy so I didn't preach to him. The upshot is that Benny may have had another set out there so he probably didn't do badly at all. If he didn't consider profit and loss (loss to game warden, for example), then he wasn't much of a businessman. The net would be burned by court order later, the fish sold on the open market, and the funds deposited in the state game and fish fund which targeted our operations as well as other conservation programs.

Harvey and I got back to where we had jumped Benny, could tell by the stirred up bottom and broken trotline nearby, found his net and started picking redfish, speckled trout, black drum, stingarees, sheepshead, and croaker from his net, throwing the stingarees back, of course, and piling his net on deck. Afterwards we sat down and broke out the thermos and shared a well-earned cup of coffee. The stars were beautiful, the marker lights on the Intercostal Canal blinking in the distance, the ducks started settling down after that brief flurry of activity of outboards screaming and the slap of flat bottoms on the light chop and were busy feeding once again. Harvey looked at me, "Wonder how the poor folks are doin', we're doin' just fine." It was getting colder and that coffee sure tasted good.

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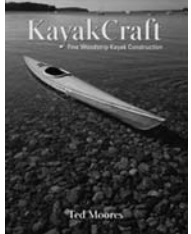
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Fourth Day

Wednesday, June 15: Wonder of wonders, the day warmed up, courtesy of the sun's return. But with it came black flies and mosquitoes which emerged with a cruel vengeance. On river left ahead we noticed signs nailed to a tree, "Falls Ahead/Chute Avant," and more to the point, "Indian Falls Portage Trail." The fun and games aspect of the expedition was over and the real work was about to begin. An overgrown, up-and-down portage trail complete with blowdowns and slippery, muddy sections required a 10 to 15-minute hike along a stretch of rapids to Indian Falls itself. Below the falls four anglers fished the pool, with one carrying a cache of beer cans in his creel.

In the humid air our party alternatively poled, paddled, lined, and portaged this whole section. Looming ahead was Indian Falls, an across-the-river ledge drop with a few missing teeth. The canoes headed for the bluewater gap and plunged into the whitewater below. I stepped aside and let Larry do the honors. Once reassembled below the falls, with all the canoes intact, we broke for lunch, in turn becoming tasty morsels for the swarms of insects. Many resorted to bug nets for relief. "There used to be bug nets with a hole for the mouth," someone commented. "Through the hole you could eat food or smoke a cigarette." The sultry heat made us feel listless and we couldn't wait to get out of there. "I almost wanted to jump into the river," Larry later told me, "to cool off and get rid of the bugs."

During the afternoon the skies darkened and the weather deteriorated. We were approaching "The Narrows" (in French, les Étroits) without fully knowing what to expect. As we came around a bend I glimpsed a mind-numbing scene, the Nepisiguit's great heart beat more vigorously. After thousands of years of erosion the river had ground down inch by inch through the rock plateau, leaving 100' high quartz-laced cliffs on each side. From our canoe vantage point we could see only the far distant horizon, the plane from which the charging water dropped out of sight. What we could not see, we could hear, was a constant roar of wild water racing through this pinched chute. We immediately eddied on river right for a most careful scout. I sensed it was probably the end of our canoeing day, we seemed to have encountered a River of No Return.

Mike announced his game plan. "We'll avoid river right with its tremendous whitewater. If need be, we'll set up camp here or

Canoeing New Brunswick's Nepisiguit River

Part 2

The Trip That Wouldn't Give an Inch

By Richard E. Winslow III

For Mike Patterson, Shauna Stuber, and Larry Totten, great river-running leaders and best friends, who led me down the Nepisiguit

ferry across to river left to check out the situation there." Mike made a quick reconnaissance downstream on foot and rejected the site as too hummocky, too stony, and too overrun with mosquitoes.

With our bows pointed upriver and some hard paddling we ferried across the rushing current which pulled our canoes considerably downstream. We landed on a slick brow of ground, mostly mud and puddles, coursing down the hillside were lots of rivulets, pushing dead sticks ahead of them.

We stumbled upon an overgrown portage path leading steeply up the hillside. The climb was trying, pushing through the jungle-like thicket over fallen logs and branches while springy wet saplings swatted our faces. Portaging canoes through such tight quarters would be grueling. When we reached something resembling level ground, I noticed several ill-defined trails through the brush and trees leading in the general direction of the cliff's edge. Following one at random I found a lookout point and peered down on the canyon. In the gorge below was a torrent of dark blue water laced with ribbon-like whitewater, one braid after the other.

I clambered back up to the main portage trail and soon came to a small clearing where a partly collapsed brick chimney rose skyward, the sole remnant of a long-abandoned or burned cabin. An earlier party evidently had gathered a few of the loose bricks to fashion a fire ring. As I stood there I puzzled over who might have lived in this incredibly isolated place, what their purpose might have been, and why they left.

The path then descended steeply, at the bottom, in sight of the river, a roaring brook cascaded down, cutting the trail. A slippery log wedged in the channel provided just

enough of a footing to allow for a flying leap to the opposite bank. The whole hike took about 15 minutes. Afterward I joined the others on a grassy slope down at the river's edge. Mike was gesticulating in the direction of the river. As a late arrival I caught only half of his game plan. "We'll run the river hard left through the canyon, set up the kitchen here, and camp up the hill at the chimney site."

I turned back along the same trail and joined up with John on the way to the canoes. "I'm not going to make this run," he said, "I'm tired." As a psychiatrist, he knew the limits of human exertion. I sensed I had met up with the right person in whom to confide. "I'm tired, too," I said. "My motor skills and judgment are way down."

Mike assembled the party at the upstream canoe landing site. "I've followed all the trails down to the edge of the cliff and each time carefully analyzed the river below. I know we can run it successfully. Just take it one small piece at a time, like an exercise in my spring poling clinic. All we have to do is navigate through the rock garden at the beginning and then weave around the two monstrous boulders below. None of this is above our abilities, it just looks mean from the top of the wall. When you get down there, it is quite reasonable, Class II at most."

None of us were eager to undertake a treacherous, time-consuming portage that would have added hours to our passage. Faced with that alternative I was swayed by Mike's positive attitude. "We will rise to the challenge as well as beat the clock." "If you are nervous," Larry said, "we will meet you on the other side." I reflected that a solo hike could be more dangerous if I slipped or fell, so I decided to take my chances with the river, with Larry as my able sternman.

In the lead canoe, Mike and Shauna would establish the route, the rest of us would watch and then follow one by one at a safe distance. They plunged down and instantly were out of sight.

Now it was our turn. Larry and I knelt on the hull floor for stability. As we waited I felt half exhilaration, half fear. The backpaddling was over, we let go. We were committed. The next moment we hit a standing wave with a tremendous splash that spilled a fan of cold water over the bow deck. Within a second I saw the monster boulders, realizing that a miscalculation could result in a glancing or direct hit. Such a collision could dump our canoe and send us for a swim.

Larry steered the canoe to take the first boulder, a brown-yellowish thing, close on

Grim Reaper ready to strike. Pass under or swing wide before the doomed tree crashes into the water.

"Look, Ma! Both hands!" Poling or paddling on the whitewater section leading to Indian Falls demands utmost skill.





The old adage, "When in doubt, use common sense," is especially apt when portaging around Indian Falls.



"Plenty of food for us, too!" Indian Falls lunch stop provides a feast for swarms of hungry blackflies and mosquitoes.

the left. Once through this tight chute we bent hard right to avoid the second. Then we shot through with precision. It all happened so fast.

From a rock platform below the bluff, Mike and the others were cheering us on with wild war whoops. We eddied out in foaming water. Now that the run was over my fear was gone, replaced by a sheepish grin that said I knew all along that I could handle it. "This canyon is absolutely gorgeous," Mike exclaimed, "and the pun is intended." The universal feeling was that we had saved much time, a minute-and-a-half run compared with an hour-and-a-half (or more) portage.

After that we wasted no time. Our top priority was finding a home for the night. We all thought the up-the-hill "chimney site" would be too cramped and would require far too much work and time to establish it. I knew from previous expeditions and from published accounts that canoeists generally establish a campsite at day's end above rapids or, if they feel up to it, they run, line, or portage to locate a camp at the bottom. I muttered aloud my thoughts about what we should do.

Responding to this general sentiment Mike pushed ahead for two minutes toward a grass island, a gambler's chance. Most of

these islands are unfit for human habitation, full of rocks, covered with bushes and tall grass, and home for millions of mosquitoes, black flies, and no-see-ums. After landing on the upriver side Mike disappeared into the tall grass for a few minutes. Then he emerged, signaling us on. I knew instantly it would be our home. Our party, as directed, landed on the river-right side at mid-island.

Here it was, hallelujah, almost a miracle, our Welcome Home campsite. More than just a makeshift affair, the site featured a landing place, a fireplace, recently charred billets of logs (some unburned), and enough level, sufficiently spaced tent sites for our party. Either a previous group had tramped down the grass for sites or else spring rivulets, now dried up, had flooded this area and killed the vegetation. The campsite was not marked on Mike's map. Despite highs and lows (literally and figuratively) that occur on canoeing trips, every now and then you win one, and we won this one big. Over a spaghetti supper we all agreed that this day was easily one of the most memorable in our canoeing careers.

Fifth Day

Thursday, June 16: We badly needed, and got as it were, a "rest day" on the river, no major rapids, portages, or heavy rains. At

our high-bank campsite that evening a grizzled but ramrod-straight fisherman wandered over from his camper to join us. We welcomed him, eager to exchange news. For 20 years, he had been coming here to fish. "Quite often," someone said to him, "we see 'River Closed' signs prominently displayed on trees near various pools along the river. Why is that?"

"Those salmon pools have been leased out to Americans," he replied, "and the New Brunswick provincial government is glad to collect the revenue for the privilege. That has been the case with many other rivers, the Restigouche, the Renous, and the Tobique. In recent years a number of fishing lodges have been built on the Tobique." En route to the Nepisiguit, our party had passed the Tobique.

I was dismayed that fishing privileges on these rivers had been sold, making it a pastime reserved for the wealthy. Such a policy has been in effect for years on the nearby world-famous Miramichi River. To be sure, the infuriated salmon, sold to the highest bidder, hate whoever might hook them, Americans, Canadians, licensed sportsmen, or illegal poachers. It makes no difference to them as they fight to spit out the hook and swim away free. They live here, we humans are just visitors.

(To Be Continued)

A derelict aluminum canoe blights the riverbank.



IHOP's monopoly is surely in jeopardy as master pancake chef Larry prepares breakfast.



The morning was clear and we rowed a while but being tired and having the wind against us, we hitched the boat to the limb of an oak which overhung the water some thirty feet. Ben threw out his line hoping for luck. In a short time he had a bite and pulled a large mud fish to the edge of the boat. When the line gave way close to the hook, he put on another hook and tried again, soon bringing in what we call a roach, which they call perch, about a pound's weight and a mud fish of about six pounds. We fished sometime after but caught nothing, then we moved and tried again.

It has clouded up, at about four we have a thunder storm which keeps us bailing pretty lively, during which time I caught a bull-head, which they call catfish, of about two pounds. The storm was over before dark and we started a fire and put up for the night. We always kept pieces of dry fat pine on board to start fires with.

Next morning, Friday the eighth, we rowed and sailed to the point on the east side at the entrance of little Lake George, which point is composed of scarcely anything but snail shells, driven up there I think from the lake by the southern storm, and on which there stood a house. The owners were away and there remained nothing but a couple of Negroes, from which we learned that we had passed Welacka a half mile back. We had noticed a few shanties a little way back but did not suppose it was Welacka.

I went back by land and found it composed of five little shanties and a small house in which lived the Postmaster and had nine inhabitants. The store is a mile and a half back in the woods, a far from interesting place I can assure you. I tried to buy some potatoes of the Postmaster but he had none, by what I saw and heard I think Ben and I could eat in a day all the provisions in the place.

I returned to the boat and we rowed across to the mouth of the Oclawaha, but the current was so strong that we gave up all hopes of getting up the river. At the mouth it is about eighty feet wide, the water is very clear and we see the bottom plain at a depth of eight feet. One would not imagine to look at it, that it was navigable for steamboats nearly two hundred miles. This river is very crooked.

We rowed back to the other side and I took my gun and game bag and started for the store about two miles, the way was along a cart path through the pines, the worn parts of which were sandy the other parts as well as most of the land was covered with small bushes among which at places the white sand shone up like salt. I passed three habitations, at last I arrived at the store.

There was about four acres of land enclosed by a fence, in the center of which stood three buildings, one of them being built of logs and used for the store, the others as dwellings, there were quite a number of young orange trees among which two men were plowing with single teams, the owner was a humped back and had taken the land under the homestead law.

I bought a peck of potatoes and some meal and started back. The load was pretty heavy and it was murky and hot, also bad walking. When I got back Ben said, he did not know but I had been knocked over, on account of my long absence. We stayed at this place all night.

Next morning we rowed down to the wharf. All the people of the place, were

Trip to Florida And Back

From Providence, Rhode Island

Part 4

going a fishing, some to the mouth of the Oclawaha, others to Bear Creek a quarter of a mile beyond. They were all a yellow looking set except the Negro.

We took a last look at Lake George, rowed down stream, landing about three miles below Welacka. The sun came out for a few hours this afternoon. A couple of crackers came along in a boat on their way to Lake Dunn, one entrance of which is close by. The main outlet joins the St. John about eight miles above Palatka. They stopped and we had a talk from which I learned something in regard to the country. There are no muskrats or woodchucks here. I do not think that a woodchuck could keep a hole open. There is otter to be found here, but the fur is coarse and hides are worth about two dollars. Eight bushels of corn to the acre is a good yield.

Before night we rowed down and anchored aside of an island, of about four acres in extent covered with woods about half a mile below. We were waked up in the middle of the night by a grating noise and I got up and went out and found the wind blowing from the northeast. We had dragged anchor and were against the branches of a tree that had fallen into the river. I took the oars, rowed her to a tree on shore, and then turned in. It was very dark out.

Next morning we rowed down to a house about half a mile distant. I went ashore after water. The well was about fifteen feet deep, and boarded sides. I saw an old man and his son at the house, and inquired if there were any fish to be caught? Oh yes, was the answer, we caught one in fifteen minutes this morning, and are frying it for breakfast, but we thought it fifteen hours, for there close to the wharf were the remains of a fire that had been burning all night.

There are plenty of cactus here which is very hard to kill out. The wind blew so strong against us that we went back to the camp, the fire was still burning. We stayed all day. The weather is still uncomfortable, the land around here is just above the water but we are sheltered from the wind. There is no game except small birds, owls, hawks and carrion birds. We got some *Palmeta* leaves and make good seats, got our books, and spend the Sabbath as profitable as possible. We set our fish lines but caught nothing.

Monday morning it was cloudy and windy and we did not move from camp. During the day I shot at an owl but only wounded him. In the evening while sitting by the fire we heard the steady beat of oars in their locks, which sometimes we have heard at a distance of two miles. In a short time a boat came in sight rowed by one man and steered by another. They stopped and inquired the day of the week, they had been up to Lake George fishing and hunting for more than a week and were now going home on account of poor success owing to the bad weather.

They belonged in Georgia but settled here shortly after the war. We bought about three pecks of yams potatoes, as they called

them, for forty cents. They told us there were wild turkeys around the swamps, also deer but that is hard work to get them. They told us that by turning in and going a mile and a half at the first creek on the right hand side we could get all the bittersweet oranges we wanted. They did not leave us till close to eight, they having then to row seven miles before getting home.

Next morning the sun shone brightly and we rowed easily along with the tide, and it was very pleasant. The birds were singing gayly. We saw a flock of parrots of about a dozen but could not get a shot at them. The maples are in blossom, and other trees are just leafing out. I shot a beautiful drake on the fly, the body was perfectly white, parts of the wings were black. About noon we turned into the creek, as we were passing through the bonnets side of the entrance, I struck a gar fish on the back with my oar, driving him well into the mud. Then I hitched a hook into him and pulled him in.

The creek was very crooked, pursuing one direction not more than two hundred yards. It was a continuation of esses. We started several small flocks of grey ducks, they were very bashful, as is all the game. In the course of two hours we emerged into a body of water, from which there led three other outlets, but we had got enough of the creek business and stopped to fish. Ben caught two catfish, one of about three pounds, the other about nine. My gar fish was about two and a half pounds, I had to shell it instead of scale it, and the shell held its shape as when alive.

We noticed a low roaring which at first we thought was a steamer going up the river, but we soon understood the truth, for it grew louder and louder and there were lots of buzzards sailing to and fro in the direction from which the noise appeared to come, we put up our lines took the oars and made for a shelter. It soon roared fearfully through the trees. It lasted about a quarter of an hour, with the wind came clouds, and continued to. We camped for the night.

In the morning, we took the passage to the west and soon entered into the main river. We continued rowing several hours. On the way the young Negro we spoke of going up overtook us in his boat. He had been a possum hunting the night before and had caught two. Their way of dressing is simple, they dip them into water and thoroughly wet them, then they are rolled in hot ashes and scraped. He said they were worth fifty cents in Palatka.

We landed at the island from which I had shot at the ducks on the way up in hope that I might see them again. I went slowly and carefully through the reeds and peeped over the other side. There was a small flock coming toward me. I waited till they came in range and fired killing two and wounding one, which we got with the use of more powder. We rowed down to where there were two boatloads of Negroes fishing and tried our luck and did as well as usual. They spend all the day on the water and a doleful looking set they are. The sun now came out and we ran ashore, took everything out of the boat, washed her out and placed them back. Then we rowed a mile and stopped for the night.

Thursday the weather still cloudy, we rowed a little and I went ashore after water at a plantation. I saw some nice oranges and as usual inquired the price. The drop oranges, as they call those that fall to the ground, were

a cent apiece and I bought sixteen. They were so ripe that they would not keep but a few days. They were delightful eating.

We passed a couple of houses owned by northerners. At one of the wharfs was a screw wheel steamer about thirty feet long with a cabin on the back part. She was painted white, her name was *A.E. Bromley*. We rowed a little farther and put up for the night.

Next morning while rowing Ben shot a turkey buzzard, and it had a strange aroma. We stopped at the shod fishery and had a pleasant chat, most of them were at work mending their nets. We left and rowed to a place on the west shore about a mile and half from Palatka and got supper. About ten it had cleared off and still continued so. After supper the wind being favorable, we sailed across, landing a little after sunset. Before going to bed we went up to the Post Office but it was shut up.

Saturday morning last night was very cold very close to a frost. Ben went to the store after which we rowed past the place and ran ashore, to wait for evening mail.

This morning the sun rose clear for the first time to us, and it is warm and pleasant. It is one of the days we longed for. We spent the time reading, writing, singing, and sleeping. The wind is from the north and we do not expect steady good weather till it changes. Boarders are out rowing and as they pass each offers his opinion as to what we do with the strange looking boat: some thought it a shooting box, others that we were moss gatherers, some thought we sold oysters. And a great many others, too numerous to be mentioned. At evening, we rowed up to the place and went up to see a Saturday night in Palatka. The mail did not arrive until late so we had to wait until next morning.

Sunday the seventeenth went to the post office but there was nothing for us. It appears as if we could not get a letter from home, but I sent as often as possible. We left the place, rowed down across the river and landed at the ground we had left two weeks before. At about noon, after dinner, I went after ducks but came back empty. It has been cloudy all day, the wind from the northeast.

Next morning I went after ducks and killed two. When I came back breakfast was ready. After which Ben went out and returned with two partridge, wood peckers, two grey squirrels, and one quail. The wood peckers measured little more than two feet from tip to tip. Their bodies are black and, yellow under the wings. On the back of the head is a red spot.

As the day was clear and warm I went in bathing on the sandy beach. In the afternoon I went out again, shot at and missed a duck, picked some oranges and a bunch of flowers and returned. The flowers were of three colors, yellow, white and blue, their fragrance was beautiful. The evening was clear and with a full moon, it was delightful. A few mosquitoes busied themselves about us but do little injury.

Out next morning after ducks. I shot at and missed one. After breakfast Ben went out and killed a grey, in the afternoon he went out again and got about two dozen bitter-sweet oranges, while he was away, I shot at a duck that came sailing by and missed, also a

flock of quails that I got a glimpse of running through the bushes, and missed. It has been cloudy all day, wind from the northeast.

Wednesday morning out as usual, I shot a duck this time. After breakfast Ben went out, I went the other way along the shore and shot a small grey duck and wounded another, Ben came back empty handed. In the afternoon as we were sitting by the fire, I cast my eyes toward the water and saw a duck sailing along not thirty yards distant. I grabbed my gun, which stood behind me, and fired, killing her. The water was rough and I let her drift ashore at some distance from us. I took my gun and went after her, and got another one before I came back. It is still cloudy and the wind is blowing strong.

Next morning it was still cloudy, Ben went out but came back disgusted. We made a decoy duck, though not a very graceful one, coloring it with charcoal and tallow. In the afternoon it cleared off and I took a stroll through the fine oaks. We expected to leave the next day.

(To Be Continued)



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International Scene

Hurricane Katrina was a big event. Eighty-six vessels were heading for or through the Port of New Orleans when the hurricane struck but only one, the anchored bulker *Chios Beauty*, got into trouble, ending up against the levee across from downtown New Orleans. Overall, the Gulf Coast maritime sector seemed to have suffered relatively little damage and most ports and waterways were reopened to some extent within ten days.

The U.S. Navy quickly sent several amphibious warfare ships because of their built-in helicopter basing, command-and-control, and housing capabilities. The Navy also sent both of its hospital ships, the Norfolk-based *Comfort* and the San Diego-based *Mercy*. Several foreign navies also responded, among them the Dutch who sent the frigate *Hr Ms Van Amstel* up from Aruba and Canada sailed three warships from Halifax, but they faced two problems, how to find emergency supplies when federal Canadian emergency officials didn't answer weekend phone calls (the Navy used its credit cards to buy these supplies locally) and then how to get through or around Hurricane Ophelia, which was positioned right in the course southward. And the President declared that the provisions of the Jones Act, which bans non-U.S. ships from carrying passengers or cargo within U.S. waters, were temporarily suspended to allow foreign ships to distribute oil and gasoline to where it was needed.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency immediately chartered the cruise ships *Ecstasy*, *Holiday*, *Sensation*, and *Scotia Prince* and asked for proposals for chartering other cruise ships as temporary housing for 25,000 people, and Greece pledged two cruise ships. However, most of the New Orleans refugees in the Houston Astrodome didn't want to move the few miles to the luxuries of the *Ecstasy* and *Sensation* already at Galveston. Instead, in displays of American self-reliance, they managed to find alternative housing elsewhere.

Katrina had, and will have, enormous economic impact nationwide. Although its ports came off relatively unscathed, the New Orleans / Gulf Coast region is home to six of the top 15 tonnage ports in the nation, handling more than 500 million tons of cargo per year (this is more than the combined total of all waterborne shipments for the states of California, Florida, New York, and Alaska) with the Port of South Louisiana the largest tonnage port in the country and fourth in the entire world. It alone handles nearly 200 million tons of cargo per year and 15% of all U.S. exports. And the ten grain elevators on the lower Mississippi River handle 62% of all U.S. grain exports.

Much of all this cargo is moved to and from the region by river and coastal barges. One tugboat hauling 15 standard river barges (this is not a big tow on the Lower Mississippi River) occupies about a quarter mile of river channel. To haul the same amount of cargo on land would require two 100-car unit trains on two miles of track or 870 trucks stretching over 34 miles of highway and far more fuel. Yet short-sighted politicians and the public generally ignore (or are ignorant of) the importance of waterborne transportation!

Hard Knocks and Thin Places

During the month some commercial ships had miseries, excitements, and visits

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

from Captain Murphy:

A paint-locker fire on the car carrier *Grande Spagna* was extinguished by the crew and it proceeded on to Antwerp.

At Vanersborg, Sweden, the pilot on the small freighter *Tanja* asked for a bridge to be raised and got a go-ahead. Halfway through the bridge was suddenly lowered, bending the foremast and breaking lanterns.

The historic British steamboat *Balmoral* began taking on water in the Swansea Docks after it hit an underwater object. No passengers were aboard.

A small Indonesian tanker had an explosion in the engine room while unloading gasoline, injuring the master.

The coal-laden *Zhuoyang III* capsized in Force 9 conditions on Bo Hai Bay and all 15 crew were rescued 15 hours later.

On the Yangtze River a cargo ship hit a dock and caused a boat anchoring at the dock to capsize. Only five of ten on the boat were rescued.

An engine room explosion on the small Chinese container carrier *Kaiyue* seriously injured three.

The *Michelle* and the *Kiefarenwald* collided off the Dutch coast. The *Michelle* sank and its crew of seven reached the other ship via a lifeboat.

The ro-ro *Ufak-1* caught fire 78 miles off Trabazon in Turkey and the 53 persons on board were removed since there are no firefighters or firefighting equipment in the eastern end of the Black Sea. The vessel eventually sank.

In Bangladesh the product tanker *Ever Green* collided head-on with the cargo vessel *Lisa* and the *Ever Green* "instantly" sank with one man missing.

A container in the hold of the *PAC Makassar* exploded so the ship returned to Singapore for cargo inspection.

The cargo vessel *Aalfjord* collided with the small fishing vessel *Tojako* in West Norway and the larger ship sank.

The luxury Chinese "yacht" (a river cruise ship?) *Galaxy No. 2* ran onto rocks in thick fog on the Yangtze River and all 163 passengers, including 85 foreigners, were rescued.

Also rescued unharmed, but in far-off Sardinia, were Prince and Princess Michael of Kent after the f30 million, 246' yacht *Phoebe* ran onto rocks. Three others were seriously injured.

The price of trying to achieve a better life often comes high. An Ecuadorian boat carrying 103 people left Manta for the States without permission and sank. Only nine were rescued by the Columbian Navy.

A speedboat able to carry ten was carrying 34 people when it left Cuba for a dash to the U.S. Thirty minutes later the boat capsized and only three were rescued.

A Danish tanker took 39 Somali refugees from a small boat off the coast of South Yemen. They had spent several days at sea where one person died while another gave birth to a child.

And the master of the Maltese-flagged cargo ship *Imbat* was arrested in Canada after eight crewmen fled the ship and claimed refugee status.

Grey Fleets

The nuclear attack submarine *USS Philadelphia* (SSN-690) was steaming quietly along in the Persian Gulf when the 625' Turkish freighter *Yaso Aysen* "attacked" it from the rear, climbing atop the submarine and staying entangled for over an hour. Damage to both vessels was severe but not disabling and several investigations were immediately triggered, not the least being into why the freighter was able to sneak up on a U.S. Navy warship without being noticed.

The U.S. Navy may transfer the somewhat elderly Landing Ship, Dock *USS Trenton* (LPD-14) to India.

The U.S. Navy will transfer eight Lockheed Orion P-3C long-range maritime-surveillance aircraft to Pakistan and that country may buy four F-22-P frigates from China along with some helicopters.

Elsewhere, President Putin sacked the commander of the Russian Navy, giving no specific reasons but the sinking of the submarine *Kursk* and the recent close call with a trapped mini-sub no doubt played roles.

The U.S. Navy relaxed its 20-year ban against joint military exercises with New Zealand, a ban triggered by that country's anti-nuclear policies. New Zealand may now join with a number of other Pacific nations in exercise Deep Sabre off Singapore.

The U.S. Navy's new Chief of Operations wants a "1,000 ship" navy but not all of this mighty fleet would be his. He was talking about expanding international naval cooperation among all freedom-loving nations.

The Royal Navy took no chances and closed off a five-mile stretch of beaches and even diverted flights in and out of a local airport while a team exploded what was probably a World War II bomb. (In Ireland at about the same date, several objects believed to be World War I star shells washed up on beaches and were later detonated.)

And the U.K.'s Defense Secretary revealed that he wants eight of the new Type 45 destroyers if the prices offered by BAE Systems and VT Group are right. The destroyers probably will cost about f650 million (about \$1.2 billion) each, somewhat cheaper than what the planned 12 U.S. Navy DD(X) destroyers will cost (up to \$4.7 billion each).

The U.S. Navy recently awarded a contract for ten 40' MPF utility boats. The high-speed landing craft (25kts with load, 30kts without load) will replace some of the famed but much slower LCM-8 "Mike Boats" that are essentially unchanged since World War II.

The Israeli Navy nearly lost one of its Nahshul vessels when it took on water in Eilat harbor, and another boat towed the flooded one to shore after the crew of seven had been rescued. The Nashuls were built in South Africa and are small security patrol boats.

White Fleets

The cruise ship *Norwegian Dream* arrived at Seattle about seven hours late after two of its four engines failed.

The *Hanseatic* ran aground near Spitzbergen and its 161 passengers were flown to Bodo, Norway.

The *Pacific Sky* ran onto a reef in New Caledonia. Two tugs pulled it free and it and 1163 passengers then continued their Pacific cruise.

The *Costa Classica* had a smallish fire that started in the mooring line storage area and the cruise was cancelled.

While passengers were still disembarking from the *Monarch of the Seas* at Los Angeles, three crew members were killed by methane gas from a sewer pipe being replaced. Ten others, including two of the ship's doctors, were harmed.

And the U.K. Maritime and Coastguard Agency said it received an alert from the Italian Coast Guard that the cruise ship *Lyubor Orlova*, struggling with Force 9 (strong gale) winds off Cape Wrath in the Northern Isles, might be in danger. It turned out that a nervous (and perhaps seasick?) passenger called her sister in Rome who then called the Italian Coast Guard.

An industry study claimed that the cruise sector pumped more than \$30 billion into the U.S. economy in 2004, up 18% from the year before.

And the world's largest cruise ship, the *Freedom of the Seas*, is now afloat and being fitted out for service starting next May. She will be joined by two sisters in 2007 and 2008. All will be a bit larger than the present tideholder, the *Queen Mary 2*.

They That Go Back and Forth

British Columbia Ferry Services, Inc. needs ferries so badly after a summer of breakdowns and other problems that it bought the 26-car ferry *John Atlantic Burr*, which has been operating on Lake Powell in southern Utah since 1985. The little vessel will be sliced lengthwise, then trucked to Canada and welded back together and fitted out with toilets and cabins. It may also be widened to carry an extra nine cars. And B.C. Ferry's new payroll software somehow cheated several hundred workers of an estimated half million dollars although the new system had been tested for months. Emergency checks were quickly cut.

An improvised explosive device on the Philippine ferry *Ramona* killed several people.

A Nigerian ferry sank in floodwaters on the River Lamurde and about 60 died. The ferry had been pressed into service after a bridge fell into the flood the week before, killing at least ten.

The 1,000-passenger ferry *Sonia* was routinely moving between Trinidad and Tobago when a male passenger was reported as having fallen overboard. A head check showed three of the 148 passengers were missing.

In Brazil, about 30 died when a ferry sank near the provincial capital of Sao Luiz.

In Brisbane, fog may have contributed to a collision between a high-speed ferry and a shell being rowed by nine students of St. Margaret's Anglican Girls in spite of flashing lights on the shell and the caps of each girl. The shell was chopped in half and two girls received minor injuries.

An Irish ferry company banned Northern Ireland foot passengers if they're supporters of the Rangers football team because they sang sectarian songs on a trip back from Glasgow after a game there. The decision was supported by the Rangers Supporters Association and politicians.

Each year the Zambesi floods for months and 24,000 Angolan refugees living in a remote corner of Zambia cannot get across the river to receive assistance. In 2003 a new ferry was bought with proceeds from a

concert by tenor Fernando Pavarotti and friends. Now supplies are being brought across the river on the ferry.

Legal Matters

The Dutch owners of the *Project Europa* must pay \$70,000 for polluting Canadian waters with about 40 litres of oil off Cape Race, Newfoundland. Engineers were working on the ship's oil-water separator at the time.

A Swedish tanker owner was fined \$57,000 in the U.K. for a spill due to negligence during transfer of fuel on the *Bro Traveller*.

And Brazil wasted no time in slapping \$4.3 million fines on a shipyard and a shipping company days after a Bahamian-flagged ship spilled 3,725 gallons into Guanbara Bay that fouled the beaches of Niteroi, just across the bay from Rio de Janeiro.

Nature

Designating a critical habitat (35 sites totaling 17,299 acres in California, Oregon, and Washington) for the western snowy plover will have a conservation cost between \$272.8 to \$645.3 million and an economic cost from \$514.9 million to \$1323.7 million over the next twenty years, or so estimated the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

China will build an \$86.5 million barge to carry a small Russian nuclear power plant for use in the White Sea. The Russian branch of Greenpeace immediately attacked the idea, saying the plant would be an ideal terrorist target, but do not be surprised if other, similar Russian-built, barge carried power stations appear elsewhere in the world. By the way, the U.S. Army operated a 10 megawatt nuclear power station called Sturgis in the hull of a Liberty Ship moored in the Panama Canal Zone in the late '60s to middle '70s.

Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

Thirty-four nations have agreed to cooperate in making the Malacca Strait safe from pirates and will explore ways to share the load. Indonesia said there is no link between maritime terrorists and piracy in the Strait.

Japanese ship owners were more than unhappy when that country's main non-life insurance companies decided to slap a premium on vessels using the Malacca Strait.

Pirates attacked a tugboat towing a barge full of scrap metal in Indonesian waters. The master dropped the barge and managed to escape to Singapore with his crew of eight. It was the second such piracy incident involving a tugboat in those waters in less than a week.

For the first time a Canadian warship patrolled Canadian Arctic waters to control illegal fishing and assert sovereignty in the Far North. Canadian officials stated that the voyage by the frigate *HMCS Fredericton* was not associated with a dispute over tiny, barren Hans Island, which both Denmark and Canada claim.

Odd Bits

Cargo volume was sharply up at Pacific Northwest ports and at Oakland but port congestion was rated as "low" at Los Angeles/Long Beach, Oakland, New York/New Jersey, Hampton Roads, Charleston, and Savannah while Seattle and Tacoma got a "medium" rating and no ports got a "high"

rating. Additional longshoremen, railroads adding intermodal equipment, and opening ports to night-time and weekend operation have helped but ports have yet to feel the full impact of expected import increases and 8,000TEU container carriers.

U.S. marine transportation fatalities last year dropped to 757, mostly the 676 deaths from recreational boating. For comparison, rail fatalities were 802 and highway transportation deaths remained just under 43,000.

Just to give an idea of the technical problems faced by the offshore oil drilling people, how do you get cement to set properly in a drill hole 35,000' deep where the pressure is 35,000psi and the temperature is above 600°F?

Helicopters are increasingly used to ferry harbor pilots out to ships and a chopper crashed into Richards Bay, closing that South African port, after one rotor blade brushed the ship while picking up its harbor pilot. He was still being winched up when the helicopter nose-dived into the sea. The winchman was killed but the other two survived, one with severe injuries.

Why outsource when you can do at home? Two Americans plan to buy a second-hand cruise ship, anchor it in international waters off California, and hire 600 Indian software engineers for about \$1,800 a month per, no health plan or pension. They would work in shifts around the clock and be classified as "seafarers" for the legal advantages. Each worker would have access to shore leave in Mexico, paid flights to visit his family in India every four months, and the usual amenities and attractions (shuffleboard, anyone?) of a cruise ship. Reportedly vast numbers of Ph.D.s, many American, are applying for jobs. Clients of the company would reach the ship via water taxis.

Headshakers

The master of the Emergency Towing Vessel *Anglian Sovereign*, a "dry" ocean-going tug chartered by Her Majesty's government to prevent oil spills, ran the ocean-going tugboat into rocks off the island of Oxa in the Shetland Islands at 15 knots in strong winds, and 200 tonnes of diesel oil spilled out. The master freed the ship and brought her into port, listing 15 degrees and with her forefoot badly smashed and gashed. (A diver later swam up into one of the oil tanks.) The master failed a breathalyzer test and was arrested for drunkenness.

The city supervisors of San Francisco voted not to accept the famed World War II battleship *USS Iowa* as a war memorial, citing local opposition to the Iraq war and the military's position on gays. The warship will probably end up about a hundred miles away at Stockton, an inland port city mostly noted for its yearly asparagus festival.

In Holland, a 15-metre (49') replica of a Viking ship was constructed from 15 million ice cream sticks and plans are afoot to sail it across the Atlantic next year.



I was sitting in my favorite reading room the other day, perusing my copy of the *Vintage BMW* (as in motorcycle) *Bulletin*. While glancing through the new members section, a familiar sounding name came into view, one Bob Hicks, from Wenham Massachusetts. Could this be THE Bob Hicks, I wondered? I suspect it may be, so perhaps the Editor has also pondered and longed to combine messing about in boats with motorcycles. Herewith is a picture of my Beemer sideboat rig which, with a little Yankee ingenuity, does just that.

Speaking of Yankee ingenuity, how come I never hear of Dixie ingenuity? I suspect it has something to do with sailing. We Yankees use a multitude of sailing rigs while, for some reason that I fail to fathom, southern folks are hung up on just one rig, the yawl. I've noticed they often misspell it in their writings. What's even more mysterious, even the non-boaters down there, that's all they talk about, too. Here's what I overheard on talk radio, "Why any fool can see that yawl is a product of intelligent design."

I didn't hear the rest of it, but sure, the yawl has its merits but I can't help but notice that it sort of looks like the designer just thought it would look, so cute, to have the little baby mast follow the mama mast wherever she goes. Most of the other stuff they say about yawls I just can't comprehend. I'd sail down there but I'm sure they'd catch me for having the wrong rig.

On the pages of this very fair and balanced magazine I did read about an exception though. Defying conventional southern wisdom and perhaps risking blasphemy, a certain Wes White was experimenting with (gasp) a non-yawl rigged boat, a proa.

That reminds me, the investigative reporter (conflict of interest?) of that article, who appears to be of southern evolution, was wondering how fast iceboats go. There was a boat on Lake Champlain two years ago that did 10 times windspeed as measured by a guy with an anemometer (5kts) in one hand and a radar gun (50kts) in the other. That's an exception, though. It was done in what they call a bubble boat, which more closely resembles a glider than what is commonly thought of as an iceboat.

For a picture of that boat, but not that day, look here: www.iceboat.org/images/03-04/isa/Burlington-3-2004-004.jpg. Make sure you click the image as you'll want to closely examine the rig unless, of course, you're from the south because it isn't a yawl. As you slowly, carefully, minutely, examine, study, and ponder the rig you may begin to realize why men seem more interested in rigging than the fairer sex. You'll have difficulty understanding this without looking at the picture.

No doubt, after much study and contemplation of the placement of the telltales, you might wonder how the pilot observes them. Seems like he might run into something as the rig bumps and wiggles along, trying to determine their meaning. I was there that day

My Beemer Sideboat and Other Interesting Diversions

By Doc Shuter



but, as luck would have it, some idiot forgot to bring the tiller to my 100-year-old gaff rig stern steerer (aka a Hudson River boat), *Floater*. No amount of Yankee ingenuity by this idiot could adapt the roof rack into a tiller.

Just as well, as 5kts was the brief peak wind speed of the day and *Floater*, with her current rig and sails, needs more wind than that, might do three times wind speed under ideal conditions which, except for the wind speed, they had that day. Most iceboats in between *Floater* and *Insanity* (yes, if you examine that bubble boat long enough you might notice the name, curiously the Admiral can see the name instantly, then gives me that look) will do more like four to six times wind speed. Maximum speeds are close to 100, although there was an iceboat back in the 1800s that supposedly did, I believe, 143mph. Even though it was supposedly well recorded and documented, people today don't believe it to have been possible.

I have heard of a catamaran that did three times wind speed. You know, I've never seen a yawl rigged iceboat. Hmmm, so that's why there's no iceboats down south!

Going back to Wes White's proa, I notice that he chose a crab claw rig. So, to answer my own question from above (...Dixie ingenuity?), I would deduce when southerners aren't talking about yawls they're just thinking about food and so have little time for other thoughts. Yes, with a little Yankee ingenuity and deduction we will find the answers to life's persistent questions. Oh, oh! I just looked at the picture of Wes' proa again and that's not a crab claw rig at all. Oh well, I'll just follow the lead of the current administration. When the facts don't fit their beliefs just ignore 'em, deny 'em, and/or twist 'em.

Now that we have figured out why the current president is the way he is, we can discuss the rigging of my sideboat. It's usually a 1967 BMW R60/2 with a 1972 Velorex sidecar. Now when you put a sidecar, or in this case a sideboat, on a motorcycle it's no longer a motorcycle. Doesn't handle at all like one, but that's not to say it isn't as much

fun as one, just different. Motorcycles are like monohulls, it's all about the heeling, which on a motorcycle is a lot of fun, and on a boat, well some people like it and others don't. Down south I've even overheard them talking to their dogs about this, "yaw! heel!"

Put a sidecar/sideboat on a motorcycle and it's more like a proa, much more level, yet at least as much fun. For the sidecar/sideboat, right turns (in the U.S. anyway) are where it's at. Similar to a catamaran/proa/iceboat, your fastest speed (catamaran/proa/iceboat) around a right hand turn (sidecar/sideboat), is with the windward hull/runner/sidecar/boat wheel just off the water/ice/road. Quite simple isn't it? Some guys add ballast to their sidecars to keep them down. I, however, like the sandbaggers of yore, prefer moveable ballast by leaning right into the sidecar, whether or not the Admiral is in there shouting and gesticulating her orders.

Hey if you think I'm nuts, we met a German guy and his wife who thought it was really cool (you just can't argue with those Germans) to ride out on the middle of winter Lake Champlain with their sidecar rig and camp, the same winter that idiot forgot his tiller. He broke his ankle trying to get the rig out of a stress crack they got stuck in though. Too bad he didn't have a vintage WWII BMW with a driven sidecar wheel.

Sorry, no plans yet for a side iceboat. I can remove the sidecar body and install the cradle in about a half-hour. Two straps and some spring lines attach boat to strap. The boat is a Phoenix Vagabond, a sort of poor man's Verlen Kruger Sea Wind touring canoe. We usually motivate it with double paddles, though. The picture shows her nearly ready for launching. It works really well, the sideboat is more aerodynamic, not to mention hydrodynamic, than the sidecar body. Crosswinds are no problem. Parking the rig at 17' long, though, is like parking a minivan with no reverse.

Try as I might, the Admiral threatens mutiny, the brig, and reduced rations whenever I suggest she ride in the sideboat. So we pack our camping gear in the sideboat and the Admiral rides the pillion seat where she can more easily give orders to the Captain.

One of our most memorable trips was to Lake Otsego, New York. We were camping on the north side of the lake (a long, narrow lake). We putted into town (as in Cooperstown) along the eastern shore of the lake on a beautiful autumn morn, leaves just turning colors, had breakfast in town, then launched and paddled north through the mist along the western shore. Then, whoa, we entered the twilight zone, as in winding the clock backwards 250 years. Here was a native Iroquois on the beach in front of his bark long house. He was complete with moc-casins, body paint, feather through nose, etc. On one side there's a dugout and on the other he's boiling up a little bear fat and pine tar to patch that dugout.

I can hear 'em on talk radio now, "why yawl couldn't possibly be intelligent design." Well, you all, this is a true story!! Up over the hill, out of sight, was the Fenimore Art Museum which, besides having regular art also has, I believe, the largest collection of Native American art in New York. The "native" was an employee doing a live exhibit for most of the year, which really wasn't 250 years ago after all. This rig is capable, under ideal conditions, of infinity times wind speed, and it's not a yawl, or a crabclaw rig.

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"American Proas" Response

By Wes White

First, I would like to tell Craig O'Donnell, who wrote "More About American Proas" in the November 1 issue, that I have been an admirer of his website (the cheap pages) for some time now. It is a real nice blend of eclectic subject matter and valuable, hard-to-find information.

Having said that, I am afraid that I have to take issue with some of what he wrote recently in that November 1 article. I won't deal much with the juniper controversy except to say that it is possible for the same tree (Atlantic white cedar, in this case) to have many different common names. Down here in Georgia we call it juniper.

As far as my proa being too light is concerned, I have never intentionally added weight to any boat I built or owned. To the best of my knowledge, neither has my father. Reading the caption that accompanies the picture in "The Flying Proa of Dog Island" in the September 1 issue will clarify that the 200lb cousin was not necessary in those conditions. The only time the boat was uncontrollable was on the first day when the NOAA was reporting 20-22 knot sustained winds. I don't know the exact weight of my boat, but I would guess something between 200-250lbs all standing. It has about 200sf of sail. The damn thing was overpowered and did what most any good boat will do under those circumstances, it rounded up.

One of the beautiful things about traditional proa sails is that they are lifting rigs. The vast majority of that lift is transmitted through the backstay to the stern of my boat. When it gets lifted, the bow is driven down, pushing the center of lateral resistance forward. The cousin (who, truth be told is probably only about 185lbs and stands 6'3") was helpful in countering that. Once the wind dropped to about 15 knots, the boat was easily singlehanded. What I really needed on that first day was a sail that I could reef, or a separate, heavy weather rig. I think I have a solution for that figured out, but let me try it first before I talk about it too much.

I'm not familiar with the Hasty Proa, but on mine one doesn't have to stay in one place all the time. We found it to be a fun, comfortable, and easy to control boat. One can walk from one end of the platform to the other without hurrying and the wake will make a gentle S-curve. It never seems to do anything suddenly or unexpectedly. I guess the length helps in that. I would have to say that my old Cape Dory 25 requires a more stationary helmsman.

My proa was intentionally designed in the hope that I could steer it by shifting the crew weight and playing with the sheet. I was after simplicity and am real pleased with the results. The boat can be controlled that way on any course from a broad reach on up. To me, that is an advantage. I can alter the direction of the boat without any complicated appendages or added drag. If you think about it, controlling a boat with a rudder is kind of like steering a tractor with independent rear wheel brakes. You can get very dramatic results, but it costs you a lot of energy. I do agree about slats being superior to a trampoline for the platform. I have had a little experience on Hobie Cats and I never even con-

sidered putting anything but slats on my proa.

As far as water ballast tanks and pumps or buckets are concerned, I built the boat to be as simple as possible, and if I had to resort to stuff like that I would, quite frankly, consider the whole experiment to be a failure.

The statement in Craig's article that worries me most is: "Wes would probably be too modest to say he invented the rig on his boat." I did feel awkward when I read the line in my father's article that obviously inspired that. I can see how it might sound as if I were laying claim to Euell Gibbons' and Gary Dierking's work. I don't think that was intentional on his part.

A few years ago I wrote an article for *Messing About* describing the construction model of my proa (July 15, 2002) in which I outlined my thoughts about the rig and gave full credit to both men. I am very concerned should anyone get the impression that I am trying to steal another man's ideas. In his defense, my father knew about both that article and the fact that I had come up with the idea of tipping the rig years ago, long before I knew anything about Euell Gibbons or the internet (where I found both men's ideas).

I remember disagreeing with him about including that fact in my article. He thought that I should mention it, I chose not to. Perhaps it was modesty. I just figured that Mr. Gibbon's claim pre-dated mine by decades. My father thought that we (Euell and I) were both smart as hell to have come up with the idea independently. I do have to say that I value my father's stories about my boat because of the obvious pride he feels, and I can't bring myself to criticize them.

There is a nice article called "Canoe Sailing in Kiribati" that can be linked to from the *Messing About* website that gives a first-hand account of the women of that island taking an active role in canoe handling. If I

remember correctly, they were stationed on the akas and platform and charged with keeping the ama just skimming the water. That may not be steering, but it beats the hell out of hanging around in the main hull and bailing. That story was also published in one of the issues, but I can't find it in my tall, random stack.

We have an old book that is a compilation of plans from the *Rudder* magazine that includes one of Commodore Munroe's proas. My original ideas for the tipping rig came from playing with a model based on that boat that I made as a kid. I had a lot of trouble because of the stationary, vertical mast. Gary Dierking and Haddon & Hornell (*Canoes of Oceania*, Bishop Museum Press) showed me the light on that one.

Writing can be funny in that it is sometimes very hard to identify sarcasm. If I over-reacted to Craig's statements, I apologize. If he is ever going to be in this area, I hope that he will let me know. I would really like to have him sail on my boat and give me his opinion.





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It might be better to explain myself first thing so as not to tarnish my image. A boat built out of good wood, epoxy, and fiberglass the way we build them is the best way to build a small boat. There is no question about it and that statement is not an opinion... it's a proven fact. Take "Old New" for an example. It is actually, as far as the elements are concerned, a fiberglass boat. So is the Rescue Minor and so is every boat we have built since about 1973. If these people (including me) would quit varnishing them and use the same kind of paint folks use to protect regular fiberglass (Awlgrip™, Imron™) when the gel coat begins to chalk off, the boats would be able to be neglected with impunity like it was made out of solid fiberglass.

The only difference between a wood boat that has been properly fiberglassed with epoxy and a real fiberglass boat is the strength/weight ratio. Real wood, properly sawn and seasoned, and of the proper species (tulip poplar, *Liriodendron tulipifera*, almost as light as cedar and as strong as hard maple... 80,000psi) is the strongest for its weight of anything you can build a boat from.

The much touted Kevlar is so strong that a strap of it only 1/8" thick can hold a load of lumber on a flatbed semi truck. Kevlar is what they make bulletproof vests out of. I have used Kevlar on boats in attempts to make parts of them bulletproof but it is so difficult to cut and glue that I have just about given it up. Even when saturated with either epoxy or polyester resin, Kevlar is so limp that you couldn't build a boat out of it. The much touted Kevlar boats are mostly fiberglass or very expensive carbon fiber and that brings us to the point of this whole first paragraph.

To stiffen fiberglass enough so that a boat is usable takes so much fiberglass and something else that the boat turns out heavy for its size... much heavier than a wood boat. Manufacturers have consistently cheated to get around that drawback by putting some kind of stiffener in with the fiberglass. Boston Whaler uses polyurethane foam. Some people use little balsa wood blocks glued end grain to the outer layer of glass. Most skiffboat manufacturers use plywood which is very heavy for its strength. Even a foam-cored small Boston Whaler is a heavy boat.

It is possible to build a wood-fiberglass boat the same size and strength that weighs less than half. The best way to build a skiff is to use good wood and fiberglass, but if you can't do that because of some glitch in your priorities, a regular fiberglass boat ain't half bad. Because of some glitch in my priorities I ran fiberglass boats for a long time and have watched other similarly glitched people get good service from them, too. I'll run out a few so you can see:

The first fiberglass boat I had anything to do with was a "Winner" 15' skiff that my father bought back in 1953. It replaced a Lyman 16'. My father was always one to jump on any new bandwagon... first person to buy a Wankel powered car and the first to shave with an electric razor. The engine on the Lyman was an early Evinrude 15 and was very new, so when he got this Winner he swapped the engine. Though the motor was fine with the Lyman, it would not get this fiberglass boat up on a flat plane so he had to buy a 35. Guess what? No, fooled you again. The 35 would plane the boat but it was slow

Pretty Good Fiberglass Boats

By Robb White

and boggish feeling. We still had the Lyman and naturally, while he was gone off on some expedition, I rassed the heavy motor from one transom to the other and had me a regular hot rod for a little while.

That Winner might have been the very first production fiberglass boat made and I guess the builders were scared it might come to pieces on them because the word "overbuilt" might have been coined to fit it. We had to drill holes to bolt the 35 through the transom and it was 1-1/2" thick... solid fiberglass. I never drilled a hole in the bottom of it but I guess it was close to 1/2". Just the gelcoat on the foredeck was a full 1/8" thick. I don't know what the damn thing weighed but it could have been concrete as far as I was concerned.

The next fiberglass boat I had any experience with was called an "MFG," which was an acronym of the Molded Fiberglass Boat Company. I worked for the OMC dealer screwing windshields and steering wheels on them when I was a teenager. The early MFG boats were pretty much like that Winner in the overbuilt department. They were lapstrake looking and those convolutions of the fake laps stiffened the sides and bottom a little so they were a little bit thinner and they had a piece of plywood to stiffen the transom but they were still heavy boats... looked a little like the Lyman that would blow their doors off with half the power.

I think the gas-hog V4 OMC and the piled-higher-and-deeper gas-hog "Mark-something-or-other" Mercury engines were escalated up to compensate for the slowness of fiberglass boats. I also think that's when people began to think you had to go 30mph in a planing boat since that's about when one of those lead bellied tubs finally began to get up on top of the water. Aluminum boats would have been better except for that aluminum shape and the fact that aluminum fatigues when it bends over and over again in the same place which happens with any aluminum planing boat that is light enough to be practical... and how that aluminum oxide (like they glue on sandpaper) blows back in your eyes.

So back to my original topic. Finally manufacturers discovered that it didn't hurt for fiberglass to flex. One of my favorite fiberglass boats was a Larsen made up around Minnesota. It was a narrow 14' skiff that had wood runners built into the bottom to stiffen it up a little. The fiberglass was so thin that you could push a dent into the top-sides with your finger and, when it ran, the places in the bottom between the runners rippled like a baby's belly when you do the old raspberry on the belly hole trick.

Larsen (later Brunswick) knew what they were doing alright and our old boat did the shimmy shake for many miles, including a bunch of trips to the Bahamas as the dinghy behind our surplus motor whaleboat (talk about an overbuilt fiberglass boat! Coral heads heisted up their skirts and scurried out of its way). The old Larsen is still going strong after some 30 years and it runs almost every day. I gave it to a permanent resident of Dog Island and he has worn out and rusted up a whole series of 9.9s with it.

Another pretty good fiberglass boat I had was a reject from this man who, though he claims he didn't do it, used a 13' Boston Whaler for a plug. I always liked the notion of Boston Whalers since they looked a little like the old Reynolds aluminum boat we had when I was a boy. It was actually a very seaworthy boat if you didn't mind hard pounding, and so was this Boston Whaler pirated job. The man was in the fiberglass semi truck hood and fender business and his whole outfit consisted of an open shed, a chopper gun, and a pallet of four drums of polyester resin. He kept the molds scattered all around the yard and washed them off and sprayed the mold release on them and turned out these R model Mack hoods and fenders (also pirated) to order.

He kept the Boston Whaler mold out in the yard, too, and the aphids that lived in the pecan trees in his yard dripped doo doo in it all summer. One time when he got an order and sprayed a hull he hadn't got the aphid crap out of the mold good enough and the gel coat had a freckled look to it, so he sold me that hull at a bargain and sprayed another one for his customer. I fitted this thing out like I wanted it and added some stiffening to the bottom and transom and a block of styrofoam up in the bow with a sheet of 1/4" plywood on it to get a little cast net traction and commenced using it for a boat.

I ran the first model Evinrude 25 that had the 50-to-1 mix on there and it was alright for a boat... pounded so bad that the beating of that plywood on top of the styrofoam foredeck blew those little white turds back on me but I took it to the Keys a bunch of times. One time when I was in the money (?) I even bought a real 13-1/2' Boston Whaler. I had one of those tiller steered two-cylinder 40s on there and it was a hotrod.

Why didn't I have a center console and a steering wheel? I think a steering wheel in any boat that is not so big that it needs hydraulic assistance with the rudder is as useless as tits on a swab handle. I would rather just have the swab handle. Of course, I use a PVC pipe extension on my swab handle to let me get forward a little bit My mother refused to ride in that hotrod... said it pounded so bad she was afraid it would give her a hernia of the heart. She thought a 15 would have been just right and if the little tub hadn't been so heavy she would have been right but it really didn't need no durn 40.

Which those old two-cylinder 40 OMC motors were the favorite crab and oyster skiff motor down here for many years and that brings up another old fiberglass boat that served a long and useful life. My next door neighbor over on the island was an old retired Air Force man and a tightwad of legend. He had some kind of old '50s style fiberglass runabout with tailfins and all. I don't know what it was but it was actually the ugliest boat I ever saw... reverse sheer and too much of it... I think Bayliner copied the lines. It had one of those molded plastic windshields that had so much distortion you couldn't tell where anything was that you looked at through it, and looking at the man coming across the bay with the binoculars you couldn't tell if it was one, two, or three people sitting in the front seat. And... it had twin old et-up-by-salt OMC 40s on the transom and... the ugly little boat wasn't but about 14' long.

Even if they had packed those tail fins full of some kind of primitive foam, it was a

real death trap but that man was as proud of it as if it had been a Pierce Arrow automobile. He especially loved those ancient twin 40s even though, because he was too cheap to maintain a battery (let alone two batteries), he had to climb over the back of the seat to crank them and almost always had to make at least two trips because one of them would cut off before he could scramble over the seat back to his steering wheel (!) and jam both throttles wide open and show us with our old Larsen and the 9.9 what twin 40s would do.

What they would do would be spit and backfire through the carburetors and one of them would cut off again and the boat would slew around sideways and almost sink the old man. It would have been a mystery why he loved the boat so much except every time he saw me he explained that he had bought it at a sheriff's sale for \$20... trailer and all. I didn't believe him, of course, but he stuck by the story. I wouldn't have given 20 cents for the damned thing but it ran for over 30 years.

Then there is old Charlie's boat over on the island. Charlie was a lot like the old Air Force general (probably only a colonel but he acted like a general) except that he is retired from something else. His old fiberglass boat was about 15' long and a very derelict looking little thing with aluminum house letter numerals on the transom like it had been in a boat livery or something. Charlie had better sense than the old general and kept a fairly new outboard motor on his boat, though.

There is this little outfit in Carrabelle which sells and services OMC and now Yamaha outboards and keeps a lot of boats in dry storage on racks in a big metal building and has been doing that since the early '60s. The proprietor and sole employee of this emporium will take real good care of your boat or motor... if you bought it from him. I don't know where Charlie bought the boat but he did, at least, buy his engines from this man so they were always rinsed off and always ran good (the general took his boat home after every trip and never rinsed anything, not even his own person).

Charlie was very friendly and stayed on the island almost as much as we did and we always waved at him. It was sort of hard to do because the distinguishing feature of Charlie's boat was that it had a house exactly like a little car with a windshield and side windows and all. It was even round topped about like one of those Sears Willys made cars that had a faux trunk and you could barely see Charlie sitting in there on his way back and forth to and from the ice machine

on the hill. All you could see was his arm and hand waving out the window as he zoomed by on his way back with the goods.

Waving at Charlie was a regular ritual for us for 20 years but then about ten years ago, Charlie just quit coming to the island. It was so unusual that we thought he must have died but then one day we were moseying down the bay in the Rescue Minor and we saw Charlie coming across from the mainland. We waved ecstatically but Charlie didn't wave back. We were puzzled but we were glad to see him. I figured he must have shoulder problems and we waved at him all summer long.

One day we saw him anchoring outside his house and I idled up alongside him to tell him how glad we were to see him back again but it wasn't Charlie at all. It was this little ugly bastard with what looked like a red golf ball on the end of his nose and he turned that nose up vertically in the air and cut us dead-er'n hell like we were trash and he was royalty. I guess Charlie sold his house and boat as a package deal. Jane and I now call that guy "Faux Charlie" and hope he breaks down crossing the bay from being snooty to the guy in Carrabelle.

Another good old boat belonged to another Charlie on the island. It was (is) a Grady White which I think is the best made of the deep vee style boats. Like I have said all along, though, those kinds of boats are only efficient when running some 30mph the resulting ditch (and wake) is expensive. Charlie II's boat is only about 19' long and takes every bit of that 150hp it has on the stern to make it do its thing which is not nearly enough to keep a 23' plywood crab boat from outrunning it with 70hp. The name of the boat is *Salt Cod II* and it has been a fixture down here for 20 years and, though it is in the water about one week per month all summer long, it is still running the same engine. That's a testament to the guy in Carrabelle who sold it to Charlie II and stores it and rinses that engine and keeps it fixed as only an expert OMC man can do.

Old Charlie II himself was a pretty good boat man and so are his children and now grandchildren. I've only heard the plaintive cry, "The boat's not working!" one time and that was just because she had the wrong key in the hole. Old *Salt Cod II* is showing her age, though. Despite more or less indoor storage, the gel coat is getting hazy and the engine is looking pretty rough. It is going to cost Charlie's heirs a bunch of money to replace it...

You know, Mr. Grady has been in the boatbuilding business ever since back in the wood boat days and has never deviated from trying to build the best thing he can and, as such, his boats are kind of pricey amongst the common trash you usually see.

Charlie's heirs will have to stay with old Grady when the time comes or they'll be mighty disappointed with an inferior product when it starts to soaking up water and the transom goes limp and the plywood turns to mush under the deck. They ain't stupid, though. The man in Carrabelle still sells Grady White (no relation) boats after 30 years. *Salt Cod III* has a certain ring to it, don't you think?

Another good fiberglass boat is one of those "Panga" boats like they use in Mexico and other Third World countries for inshore commercial fishing and charter operations. They are long and narrow (like all good commercial outboard boats) and will run cheap. They'll also plane a big load with low horsepower and that's what they do down in Mexico. I have it on good authority that the bare hulls are made in Japan and shipped nested in shipping containers all over the world. When they get to their destinations local people fit them out to suit the needs of the populace.

Some of them come to the U.S. where they are duded up fit to kill with an interior liner and steering wheel and all so as to suit the tastes of a more frivolous set of consumers. They also put way too much horsepower on them and spoil the whole intent of the design... that makes them run wet for one thing. If I didn't have exactly what I need right now I would see if I couldn't find me a 23' (they come in several sizes) naked hull to fit out to suit my needs.

One of the deluxe jobs that I see regularly has a 250hp Honda on the stern. For that money the man could have bought one of those 35hp Yanmar diesel outboards and had a real thing. You know, I read somewhere that a 250hp four-stroke outboard burns between 25 and 30 gallons an hour.

We just had this Katrina and that Rita stimulate the gas prices pretty good. You know, it is funny how that works. I think they say, "Oops, here comes a hurricane... better raise the price of gas and home heating oil and diesel fuel... hell, natural gas is too low, too. Let's double the whole shebang and get it while the getting is good."

So one might wonder, am I going to buy a big shiny fiberglass panga to haul my grandchildren in? Shoot, man, are you crazy?

The old Larsen and one of many 9.9 OMC engines it wore out.



Working on the high speed jet.



Eric Schade of Shearwater Boats has developed a new system for building glued lapstrake boats that promises to make it more practical for most of us. Since 1996 Eric, the owner of Shearwater Boats, has designed and sold a line of stitch-and-glue kayaks and pioneered the design and construction of hybrid (stitch-and-glue hull and strip built deck) kayaks. His success as a designer has been such that the latest Chesapeake Light Craft Kayaks were designed by him.

Less well-known is the fact that Eric has developed a whole line of multi-chine lapstrake rowing and sail boats. These are not pie in the sky. At our shop, the Wooden Boat Workshop of Norwalk, www.woodenboat-workshop.com (see sidebar), we have so far overseen the construction of five of Eric's version of a Melonseed. This is a 14' center-board sailboat based on an 1890s New Jersey duck hunting boat. As such it has a low, sleek profile, a huge cockpit, and a barn door rudder. The lapstrake hull exterior emphasizes the lines and gives it a real classic look.

Thus far the boats have all been sprit rigged, which seems ideal, no standing rigging, short spars (10' long), and the sail is

Glued Lapstrake Construction the Modern Way

By Dave Jackson

furled simply by wrapping it around the mast. And it doesn't appear that anything is sacrificed in the way of performance. Several of us at the shop have sailed the melonseeds and they were a lot of fun. Not in the hang-on-the-trapeze tradition, but an excellent boat for a couple or small family.

Another popular boat (three so far) has been the one Eric calls simply the 15-Footer. Designed as a modern planing hull, it can be rigged in a variety of ways, as a catboat or sloop, marconi, gaff or sliding gunter main. Additional designs are a Whitehall sail and/or pulling boat, a Norwalk catboat (half as wide as it is long), prams, and a number of non-lapstrake boats.

What makes all these boats noteworthy is that in each instance the boat has been an individual's first foray into boatbuilding.

(I should explain that that is what our shop does, we furnish an individual the space, tools, and as much coaching as they need to build their own boat.) What has made this possible is a certain amount of state-of-the-art technology coupled with some middle-aged technology.

All of these boats are designed on a computer and the design is sent on a disk to be cut out by a computer-controlled router. Thus each and every plank, hull frame, deck beam, or other piece is cut to finished dimensions. Even the holes for the stitching wires are pre-drilled. To ensure that every part is located properly, most parts are "keyed" to one another so it is distinctly hard to put things in the wrong place or upside down (hard, but not impossible, but that's another story).

What this means is that the building process need not begin with building a strongback or building form. Instead, loops of copper wire are used to "stitch" together the planks (as many as four to seven planks a side) and an internal stem, transom, and frames. Tightening these stitches literally pulls the hull into final shape. At most it may be desirable to use winding sticks to ensure

The Answer To Building It In The Living Room

By Dave Jackson

For those of us who like to build boats and other sizable toys, one of life's burning questions is where to build the next one. The Wooden Boat Workshop in Norwalk, where I have been hanging out since I retired, represents one answer.

To a greater extent than many people recognize, the development of wood/epoxy/fiberglass construction techniques, coupled with computer-generated plywood planks and frames and stitch-and-glue assembly has made it so virtually anyone can successfully build a really nice boat should they wish to do so. This certainly has been the experience at the Workshop, where the great majority of people who come there have never built anything significant before, let alone a boat. As one of the proprietors of the shop remarked to me once, in four years they have never had anyone who couldn't complete a boat or kayak (and weren't pleased with it when they did), assuming they continued to come to the shop and work.

The idea behind the shop is simple. You approach the shop with a dream or a requirement, a kayak, a rowing boat, a sailboat, or motorboat. Sometimes it's because no one seems to make exactly what you want, or you want to customize it, or you simply don't like the look of available plastic or fiberglass craft. Or maybe you just want to create something with your hands that will be uniquely yours, or have a boat or canoe you wish to restore. We'll discuss with you what you wish to accomplish and look at whatever plans or sketches you may have brought with you. Then together we can review what is available in the way of kits or plans that might meet your needs. We have current catalogs for most of the larger kit boat producers and designers and are anxious to learn of other good designs.

If nothing is exactly right, or you like a design but would like it to be longer, narrower, higher, or whatever, then we will put

you in touch with Eric Schade of Shearwater Boats (Eric@shearwater-boats.com) who lives very near us. Particularly if he can use one of his existing designs as a point of departure, Eric is exceedingly obliging about working with people to produce just what they want.

Once you have settled on a design, (and upon payment of a deposit), we order the kit you want or, in the case of a custom boat or a restoration, we purchase the building plans or materials, whatever is necessary in order to proceed.

Given our national proclivity for instant gratification and the severe demands on most people's time, we strongly recommend to most people that their first boat be a pre-fabricated kit of some sort; i.e., that they not plan to start with a complicated, scratch-built design. Not only is it likely to take much less time to complete, but the level of skills and workmanship that is required is more manageable and the likelihood of completion is significantly greater.

With respect to time commitment, in the case of designs that we are familiar with, we can usually give people a pretty good idea how long it should take to complete their project. By way of example, it usually takes about 60 to 100 hours to complete most stitch-and-glue kayaks, canoes, or rowboats, ranging up to 200 to 300 hours or more for the more complicated, larger, pre-fabricated sailboat kits. Basically this means you would have to work one weekend day most weekends during the late fall through the early spring (or over two to six months) by the time the last coat of paint or varnish has dried.

When deciding to work at the Workshop, an individual must be prepared to work an average of 8-10 hours a week; i.e., two evenings or one weekend day, or the economics don't make much sense. While in the case of a kit the shop is famil-

iar with you may be quoted a flat price for the use of the shop, that price is predicated on your showing up regularly to work (absent weddings, funerals, vacations, and family obligations). If you don't then, after a while you will be asked to pay rent on the space your project occupies (which is a real drag for everyone). And don't worry, in case something unexpected occurs in your life, the shop has ways of putting things on hold.

Ultimately the most important thing the shop has to offer the neophyte builder is peace of mind. There is always someone on hand to counsel with you as to what the next step on your project should be and to tell (or show) you how to accomplish it. Furthermore, hands-on help is always available to the extent you want or need it and at no additional cost, although the shop's policy is not to build your boat for you, but to show you how to do a good job of it yourself, where that is at all feasible.

Having said that, we recognize that people come to us with very different levels of skill and experience, and we take that into account in the amount we do for them. While we want them to learn to use tools and build skills, nobody is encouraged to use any power tool they are not comfortable using, and we are prepared to do ourselves any critical steps they may not feel comfortable undertaking or that might seriously impact their project.

Turning to the shop, in addition to plenty of space (heated, air-conditioned, and well-lit), we have a Delta Uni-saw, a band saw, and a thickness planer, a good assortment of hand-held electric tools (almost all by Fess Tool), and hand tools for general use, although you are free to bring your own tools should you wish to do so.

For more information, look in on the workshop's website at www.woodenboat-workshop.com, or call Peter Hess at (203) 831-0426.

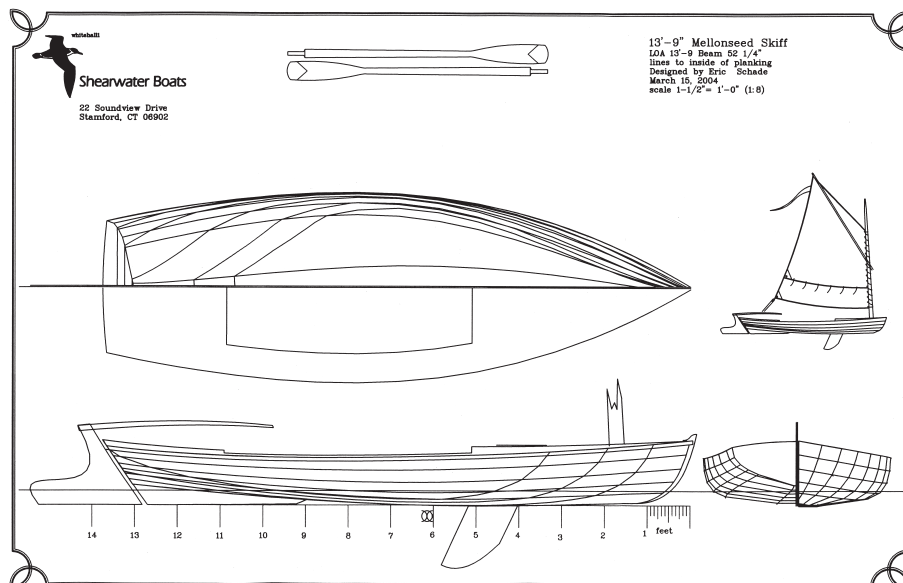
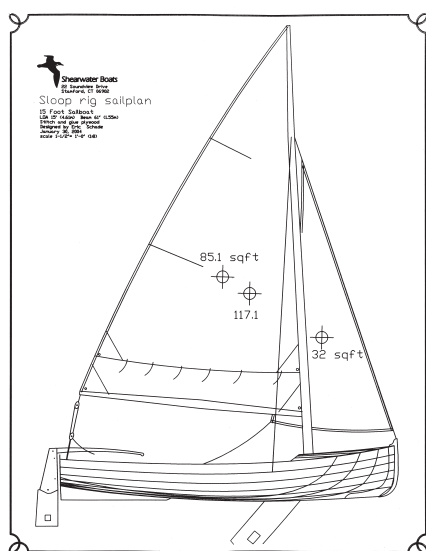
Once this is checked, epoxy is injected into all the seams in the hull, joining all the parts together. When the glue has cured these joints are strengthened with fillets of filled, thickened epoxy. At this point, after only two or three days, the hull is essentially complete and it is time to proceed with decks, rails, cockpit coamings, hatches, and other features.

Okay, so what are the disadvantages? Well, purists will point out, for instance, that frames are not beveled, gaps are instead

If you have not seen or heard of one of Eric's lapstrake kits, it is not surprising. All his craft of this type have so far been built in our shop. There are two reasons for this. First and foremost, the designs are complicated enough that they should not be sent out to a neophyte builder without a fairly comprehensive building manual, and Eric has not had a chance to do one yet, let alone one for every different design of his.

In the short run, at least, it would seem that these kits, whatever their merits, aren't ready for the big time. The obvious immediate outlet (other than our shop) would appear to be professional builders or skilled amateurs who could construct the missing parts and be expected to solve any problems with perhaps the help of a phone call or two.

For the professional, the savings in time would translate directly into increased profit, coupled with the ability to charge less. For the amateur, how about more immediate gratification, along with more time to spend on those special touches?



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The first issue in my stack of back issues (11/1/04) has a photo of a nice dinghy under tow and a letter from Richard Smith, wondering about the big bow wave under his new boat. He asks for suggestions on towing efficiency. I've dragged both hard boats and inflatables for thousands of miles and might be able to shed some light on that.



We should start by noting that towing "efficiently" is not the same thing as towing "well." Towing "well" usually refers to boats that track nicely and keep their bow up under way. But towing "efficiently" refers to how much power it takes to pull the thing along.

It's easy these days to measure towing efficiency with a handheld GPS. My 10' plywood dink slows me down by 0.2kt when I tow it at 1800rpm. If I tow my 10' Avon inflatable at the same motor output, I'm slowed by 0.5kt. That 0.3kt difference is sig-

Dinghy Towing

By Steve Axon

nificant when your cruising speed is only 5kts and you're facing long passages. Though the Avon tows "well," it is much less "efficient" than the hard boat.

Richard makes the right basic assumption, that the longer mother ship will generally want to pull its tender along faster than the dink's hull speed, so the dink will be trying to plane, and an "efficient" boat to tow will be a shape that planes easily. In a typical, beamy, short dinghy this usually means flat sections aft and a light overall weight. Both features are desirable anyway, since a dink is frequently lifted on board or hauled up the beach.

So we would expect Richard's new boat with round bottom (and probably greater weight) to be harder to pull onto a plane than his old prams. Hence the bigger bow wave. I doubt there's much Richard can do to greatly improve his towing efficiency short of changing boats. But here are a couple of ideas that can help any dinghy tow better.

Richard might look at the position of his towing eye. It should be down near the waterline so that the bow is lifted as she tows. A higher eye pulls the bow down into the water, slowing progress and even causing the boat to root and swerve off. In the photo Richard's eye is halfway up his bow, which is too high.

The tow line length can be adjusted so the dink is sliding down on a stern wave rather than trying to climb up one. You can feel the change in tension on the line as you adjust this underway. The proper distance back will change with speed, but is around 10' at 5 knots if you want to catch that first wave.

Some knowledgeable folks swear by long painters so that the towed boat is several waves back (we're talking tow lines of up to 80'). I've tried this but my dinghy wanders around in an alarming fashion when towed that far back. In a following sea I fear it may actually run off a steep wave and flip. So I've concluded the long tow line advocates are primarily power boat operators whose speed is great enough to minimize the effect of following waves.

For those of us towing at slower speeds, following waves demand some other type of control system. What I suggest is towing with two painters and running one from each stern quarter. Keeping the lines short (around 12') means there's less to tangle and that tight geometry keeps the dink from running off to port and starboard. It tracks right behind beautifully.

More importantly, the two lines add an extra level of security. Eventually any painter will chafe through and it's a real drag to look

over your transom (for the first time in how many hours) and notice your dinghy ain't there. With two lines rigged you'll just get a reminder to replace that worn one.

I also insist on using a floating tow line so there's less opportunity to tangle the thing in your prop. Otherwise Murphy's Law dictates a foul, usually in an awkward spot, and often with a big audience. A 78-year-old single hander we know lost his finger to a fouled tow line last year. He was backing down to set the hook and reached back to lift his towing line to prevent a foul. At that busy moment the line wrapped on the prop and looped over his pinkie. He says the thing just pinched right off before the diesel stalled out. Bud suffered through a long, squally night alone, then made the blustery 45-mile crossing to Nassau the next day, all the while fiddling with a tourniquet. He handled all this with amazing aplomb, but also decided he was perhaps taking his "single handing" too literally.

Polypropylene is the only floating line I'm familiar with and it is generally lousy stuff. The cheap, slick 1/4" braid commonly found won't cleat well or stay tied. They're now selling lengths of a fancier 3/8" polypro at hardware stores, stuff with brightly colored covers that looks like climbing rope. It is better than the slick braid, but still cheaply made, and you can't see core damage due to the cover.

By far the best polypropylene line I've found is a 5/8" multi-braid that's sold to the horsey set. I think horses won't chew polypro, must taste worse than nylon? This stuff has no sheath, but has a lovely hand so it both cleats and holds knots well. The large diameter may seem like overkill for towing a dink, but it's nice to have that extra material in a chafing situation. And I think the thick line floats better, too. It comes in bright colors and the spool is labeled "Derby." I've found it at hardware stores and even in the big orange Depot in horse country.

Having said all this about towing, I have to conclude by pointing out that I don't head offshore, or into any possible rough water situation, without putting the dink on deck. Towing in steep following seas is just asking for trouble. When things blow up you have your hands full reefing and holding on and have little thought to spare for a towed dinghy. We run into sailors each winter who have lost their dinghies to unforecast squalls.

With a small foredeck and limited budget, the happy choice for me has been a nesting 10' dinghy. She rows, motors, and sails beautifully (using an old wind surfer rig). The 45lb halves are easier to lift and handle on deck than the whole boat. They float independently so it is easy to put the halves together while sitting on my stern swim platform. It turns out you can make a nester out of most dink designs with a little thought, and a few modifications.



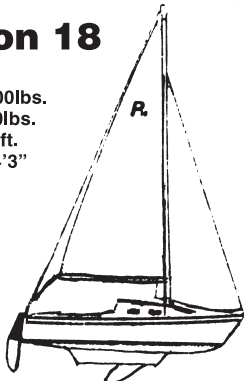
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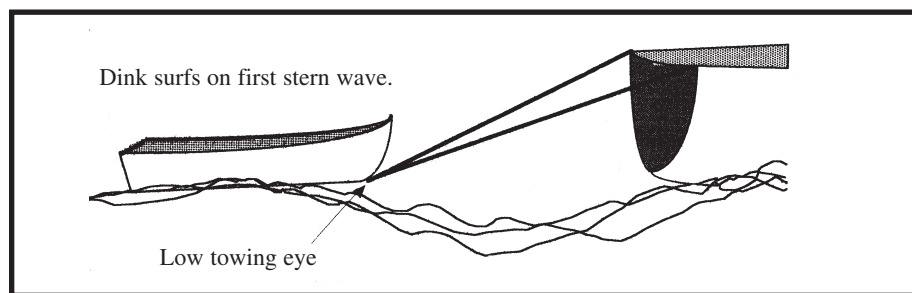
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The 13'6" Jabiru kit canoe is assembled by snapping together preformed plywood panels in a sort of jigsaw puzzle joint. It goes together quickly and well, more like building model airplanes than boatbuilding. In fact, before I knew it, before I'd even thought if I really wanted a canoe, I had one.

The problem was that, for reasons of habit and inexperience, I couldn't seem to get the hang of paddling a canoe. I tried to do it with other (similarly inexperienced) people but the whole exercise was frustrating and unpleasant, a little like learning to ice skate. It would have been wise to have gotten some good advice on canoeing or kayaking, be more patient, learn to do the J-stroke. I began to think of my canoe rather as I think about catamarans, or recreational vehicles, fine, but not for me.

My aversion to paddling, I thought, might be simple prejudice or the inability to take on yet another way of messing about in boats. In any event, the hapless Jabiru stayed under the house for two years. Then one day it occurred to me that since I've always enjoyed rowing, perhaps I could convert the canoe to a rowboat.

Oar Extensions: I built a quick mock-up to see if the idea was feasible. The first thing I had to do was to get the oarlocks about 4' apart. I mounted some old oarlock sockets to the ends of a 4' long 2"x4" that I clamped across the gunwales about a foot abaft the rear seat. I would borrow the 6' oars from the little tender, they were too short but would do for trials. If all went well I'd build a couple of seven footers.

We launched in a couple of hours. Getting aboard included getting my legs under the temporary rowing thwart which proved to be rather exciting. I hadn't reckoned with the extensions keeping the boat a foot away from the dock or the canoe's instability as compared to my tender. Once I was in and settled my wife checked the trim. With just me and my 200lbs as close to the center thwart as I could get, the boat was down by the stern but not by much. I figured the dog up forward or a sleeping bag and lunch box would help even things up.

The improvised mock-up rowed well, even with the short oars, good headway between strokes. She tracked surely, maintaining good headway between strokes. I made slight adjustments in the clamping of the 2"x4" to take the oarlocks a little further from the seat but other relationships seemed satisfactory, not perfect but reasonably agreeable. I wedged a piece of plywood between the bottom of the seat and the deck, making a comfortable backrest.

The hybrid was a solution to an as yet undetermined problem, the result of a hunch

Extension plate and bracket.



Converting a Canoe To a Rowboat and Launching It Singlehanded

By Richard Alan Smith



Mock-up in the water.

rather than any clear plan or need. I had a boat that could serve as a canoe or rowboat, maybe even a kayak, and a project that would cost little and promise some enjoyable days in the shop.

The final version of the oarlock extensions is a pair of 1/2" shaped plywood plates bolted through the short side decks, moldings and all. The oarlock socket ends are held up by angled 1/8"x1" wide aluminum support brackets bolted through the end of the plywood plates and through the hull with aluminum backing pieces on the inside, simple and strong. The extensions can be unbolted in minutes to return the rowing boat to canoe or kayak mode.

A Wheeled Skeg: Somewhere in the middle of all this it occurred to me that it would be good to be able to launch the boat singlehanded. I remembered seeing a small boat skeg that contained a wheel to assist in moving the boat about and set about building one.

A photograph of the angle between the stem head and ground when the boat was lifted from the pickup allowed me to estimate the size and shape of the skeg and the wheel diameter. I didn't want to add any more weight and drag than necessary to the stern since she was a little heavy there anyway. The boat was directionally stable under oars without any skeg at all. I thought a 3/4" skeg might be a bit light for rolling along a ramp. I planed a bit from a piece of 5/4" Douglas fir

Skeg and wheel.



for the skeg and found a piece of 3/4" oak for the wheel. I soaked the oak for several days in linseed oil and used some scrap sheet brass for the cheek blocks. I put in a brass ferrule bearing for the brass bolt that acted as an axle. The skeg assembly was then epoxied to the 1/4" plywood bottom.

The boat, which would be used, I thought, for bird watching as well as for aimless pleasure rowing about the cove would be named *Grebe*. This gave me a fine opportunity to add a bit of refinement. I found a nice piece of cedar to use as the backrest and carefully sawed and shaped a Western Grebe into it. The weight was reduced marginally, I suppose, but I liked the look and feel of the thing, all rounded and varnished with the promise of sunnier days.

Sea Trials: I pushed the boat out of the shop, wheelbarrow fashion, to the small pickup truck, lifted her up onto the tailgate, rolled her back on a fender, and secured her before attaching a red flag to the considerable overhang. At the marina I eased the boat from the truck and rolled her down to the dock as my wife took some photographs, feeling an independence similar to my own.

Boarding was a bit less risky without the cross bar but the tipsiness at a dockside launch would take some getting used to. Once in, I rowed about the harbor getting the feel of the boat. I could see that longer oars would be useful and thought about lifting the sockets a bit. She still carried her way well between strokes but I felt the added resistance of the skeg and wheel and noted a slight but definite reduction in maneuverability.

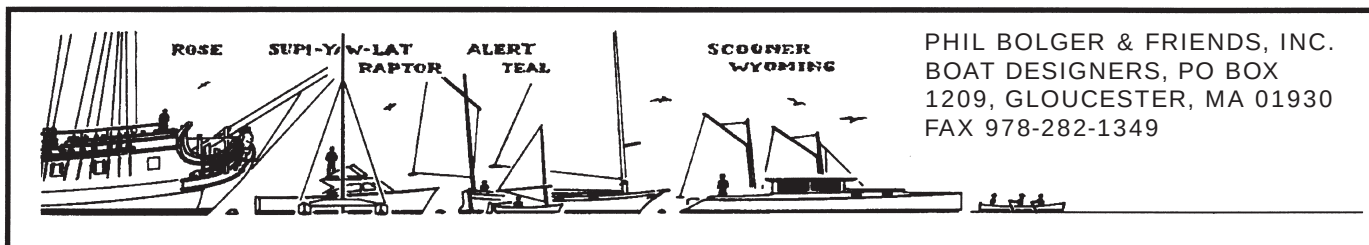
After prowling the cove for a while I rowed back to the slip and pulled her up on the dock. I wheelbarrowed through the gate, up the ramp (the high tide obligingly produced a gentle slope), and across the parking lot to the truck where I lifted the stern up to the lowered tailgate and rolled her forward on the fender/roller. The operation was getting easier with each launch and retrieval. The wheeled skeg certainly takes the stress out of manhandling a 51lb boat on shore.

I look forward to making improvements, raising the sockets a bit might help. I'll also think about cutting down the length of the skeg a little to get less lateral resistance and I'll find a better material for the wheel, the oak suffered some abrasion from the expanded metal of the marina ramp. A rubber, plastic, or metal wheel could work better, maybe one with a slightly larger diameter.

As for the boarding difficulty, I might even build a pair of Gary Jackson's folding extension brackets, that or lose a few pounds. Only time will tell if messing about with *Grebe* on the water will match the pleasure I found in messing about in the shop last week.

Setting the oars.





The article on Dovekie by Gary Forehand in the November 15th issue suggested some thoughts about this 30-odd-year-old design. It was made for my own use and inspired by the philosophy behind L. Francis Herreshoff's Rozinante design. There was, and is, no use in imitating Rozinante. It is one of the all-time masterpieces of art. Either you build it exactly as designed, or you change something and it does not look quite as good. Two caveats: the Red Head rig that is now on offer looks just as good as Herreshoff's rig to my eye, and stands better.

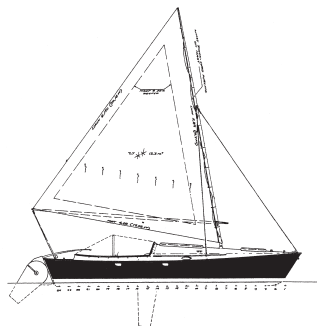
But the rig of the completed LFH design was not the original one of *The Compleat Cruiser*. As first conceived, Rozinante had the short-gaff rig of the Meadow Larks and looked better to me. LFH made the change to the conventional jib-headed rig at a client's behest and it is one of several examples of his afterthoughts and yieldings to requests being less wonderful than his first flashes of inspiration. Somebody should build it as he first envisaged it, the hardware he designed for Meadow Lark would work on it with little or no modification.

Back to Dovekie. Though hypnotically beautiful and a thoroughbred performer, Rozinante is too deep, heavy, and expensive and cannot be rowed well enough to make good the underlying philosophy of simplicity by eliminating mechanical power. I described a cruise in a boat with similar character, not quite as striking to look at and probably an all around better performer, last winter in *MAIB* Vol. 22, No. 19, and dwelt on what we could not do and where we could not go in a boat like that. In Dovekie I wanted a boat that I could row up creeks even

Bolger on Design

Dovekie Retrospect

Design #292



with a foul stream, run on beaches, and haul on a trailer with minimum effort, but which could still be camped in without hardship. Incidentally, from the first time I saw the Rozinante I've been uncomfortable with the potential of that ton and a half of lead bolted to a half-decked, lofty-rigged boat.

The perfectly flat bottom with neither deadrise nor rocker gave the shallowest hull draft on any given displacement and produced the most comfortable surface to lay a mattress on. I had just learned that a bottom like that would perform well if the edges were rounded off on quite a small radius. I had wood construction in mind, but my friend of many years then and since, Peter

Duff, offered to build her of Airexcored fiberglass in his Edey & Duff yard as the prototype for a possible class.

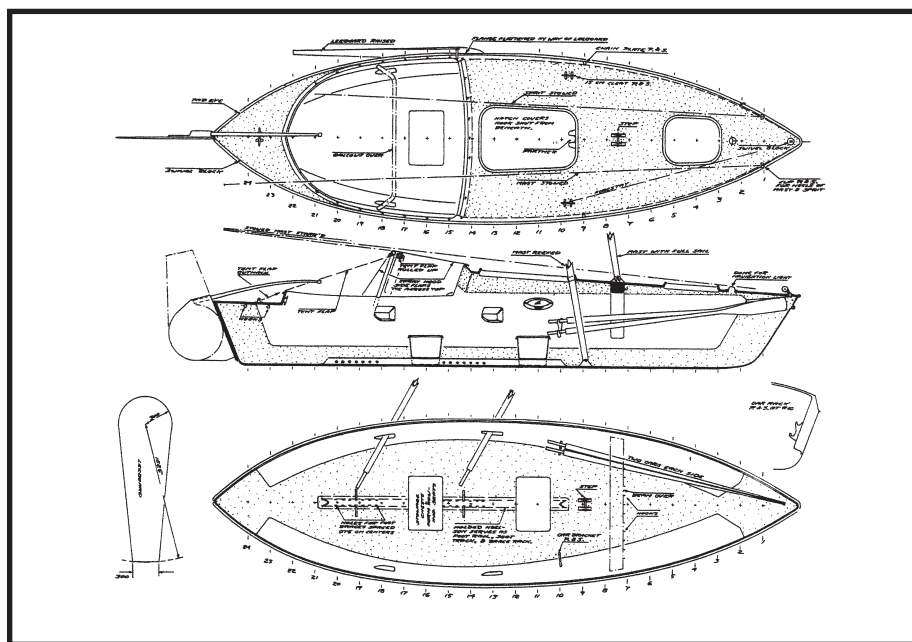
The resulting boat proved to be delightful to sail, fast, spirited, and handy. I took delivery in Mattapoisett after trials and headed for Gloucester. I got through the Cape Cod Canal with no problems, possibly because a Concordia Yawl was between me and the control tower as I passed it. I had intended to spend the night in the bight behind the Gurnet in Plymouth Bay, but when I emerged into Cape Cod Bay I did not like the looks of the weather. Northeast squalls and a thickening sky decided me to row back into Sandwich, lower the mast, and tent the boat in. A "three-day easterly" set in with hard wind, driving rain, and thermometer in the 40s. I spent three days lying around, reading, and generally relaxing. Once or twice a day I got into oilskins and went out for a meal or just a walk. The tenting was overall tight and in the small space body heat kept it comfortable enough given sensible dressing.

Sunrise on the third morning showed a northwest wind and sky blown clear and I got underway. It was blowing quite fresh but I could just lay the course for Gloucester and ease her through the puffs. Dovekie really showed her paces. In two hours flat I had the Gurnet abeam, which I make 13 nautical miles. Allow what you like for my bearings not being very good, that is travelling on a close reach in a boat under 20' waterline.

The wind gradually eased off to light. I got her to steer herself for an hour or so at a time, a pleasant surprise in a cat-rigged boat with her kind of underbody and handy for a rest in the shade after the strenuous beginning. Sailing a direct course for Gloucester put me far offshore. As the lights of Boston began to show up against the sunset sky the wind began to fill in again, backing more westerly and steadying. I had a fine sail to Gloucester, dropping anchor about midnight.

The rest of the time I owned her she was used almost entirely for day sailing, finding her a delight to handle, blow high, blow low. She could be noisy and bumpy in certain types of waves but she never got me wet. I used to row a couple of miles on windless evenings, sometimes into a nearby marina where the invisible oarsman caused first puzzlement and then amusement. Once, on a windy day, my brother and I tried her with four oars. The effect, with four 10' oars, was powerful and she seemed to go very fast, but I found the long oars at the maximum beam of the boat inconvenient at times (20' beam, after all!) and concluded that less oar power would have been a worthwhile trade-off.

I tried capsizing her. It was not very easy to do, but possible. I had no trouble, in smooth, calm water, getting the mast down and righting her, but it was a long job to bail her out. I have heard of two accidental capsizees in production Dovekies, both due to drastic overdriving and in rough water. I



think both needed help to recover; it could have been serious in cold water.

On this showing Peter went ahead with a production run which eventually ran to 165 boats. The production boats had one set of oars eliminated, which made sense considering how little the two-pair option had been used. The single deep high-aspect-ratio lee-board was replaced by a shorter, broader board on each side, a big improvement in one way as the length of the deep board swung it so far aft as it came up that she carried an unacceptable lee helm; that is, she could not be sailed to windward in shallow water. But performance suffered.

Peter and I took a production boat to the Mystic Small Craft Meet and I noticed the difference immediately, though if I hadn't experienced the single-board prototype I would have said she went very well. (Incidentally, one night of the meet featured a spectacular thunderstorm. We had to turn out of our dry beds on Dovekie to help limit the damage to other boats at the floats in the squall and downpour.)

Some years later a flotilla of production Dovekies was sailing up the west coast of Vinalhaven on one of Peter's guided tours (he organized one or more a year to show owners and prospects how to exploit the capabilities of Dovekies). My single-lee-board prototype, on about her third owner, came sailing out of Fox Island Thoroughfare, sailed across their sterns, sharpened up, and passed them to leeward, tacked across their bows, and bore away home. Not very tactful! I have to suspect that some experimentation

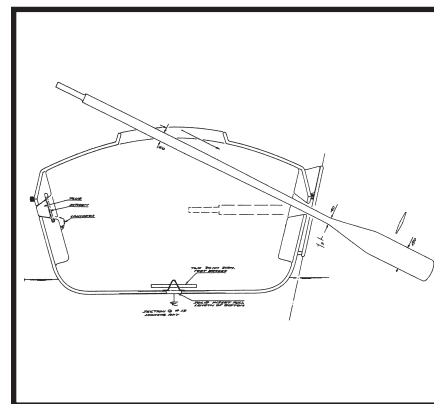
with the foil section of the twin boards, or perhaps making them broader still would have been in order, though it may well be that there is really no substitute for a certain amount of depth for the highest performance on the wind.

Publicity about Dovekie produced requests for a version suitable for home building, not needing the elaborate molds of the production boats. Finally somebody commissioned something of the kind and I tried to oblige. The owner-builder was reasonably pleased with the outcome but I was not and never made any effort to push that design, #344 in the archive. Eventually I realized that what was needed was a fresh approach to the same wish list rather than an attempt to adapt a molded fiberglass project to one-off amateur building.

The result of that reasoning was Birdwatcher, of which regular readers will have seen a lot. Birdwatcher has sailing qualities comparable to the prototype Dovekie. She's a hundred pounds heavier and needs an inch more water to float. Her oar arrangement is less powerful, though much handier in use, and she is not quite as easily propelled. She is eminently buildable in a home shop and, if well finished, at least equally good-looking to my eye. She has more sheltered space and has a good view from shelter, lack of which was an irritation in Dovekie. And without increasing the draft she is self-righting from past 90 degrees, a major breakthrough which sooner or later will have to become the standard. No more capsizings in beachable boats.

I suggested to the current management of Edey & Duff (Peter was retired by that time) that they adapt the Dovekie tooling to a Birdwatcher raised deck and also that the larger Dovekie type, the Shearwater, could have hugely better ergonomics with such a top. But they were phasing out both classes, having concluded that more conservative types were easier to sell.

The original Birdwatcher design caught on very slowly, lacking Peter's intense and imaginative promotion and handicapped by my obstinate insistence on an unpopular degree of austerity (meaning no motors, take it or leave it!). But it looks as if the Birdwatcher II with, at last, a quite neat motor installation and more amenities all through, is going to multiply on its merits and promote the revolution.



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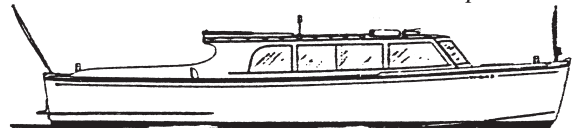


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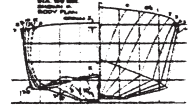
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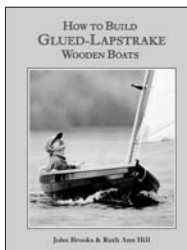
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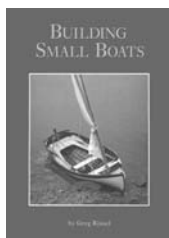
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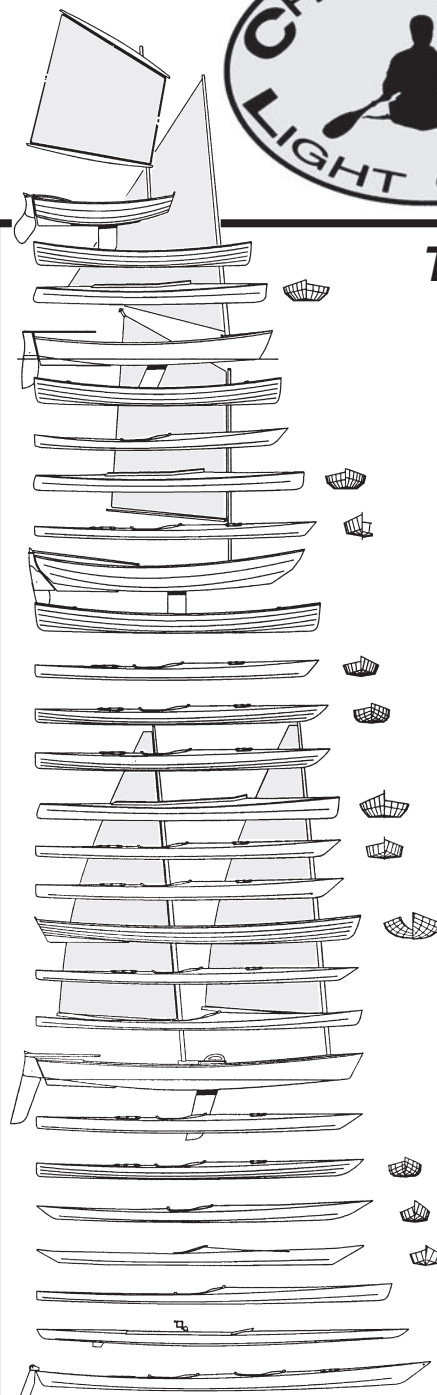
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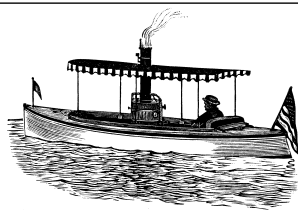
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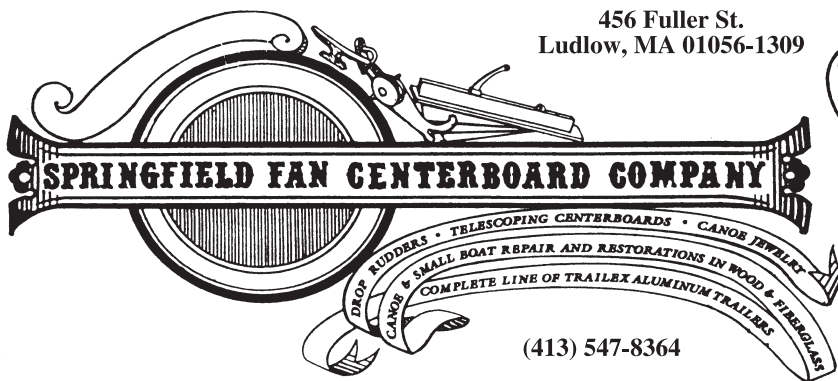
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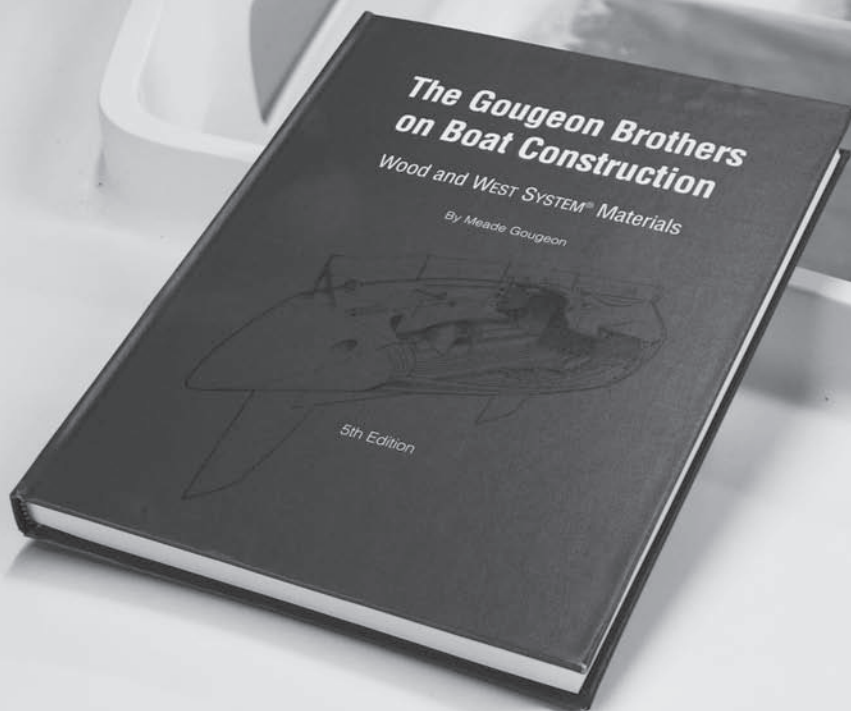
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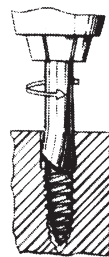


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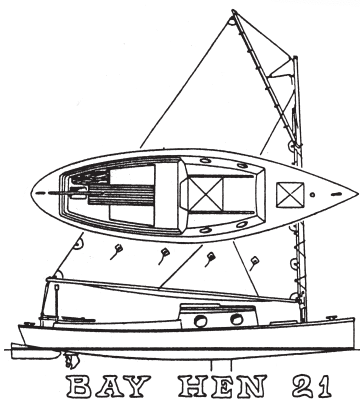
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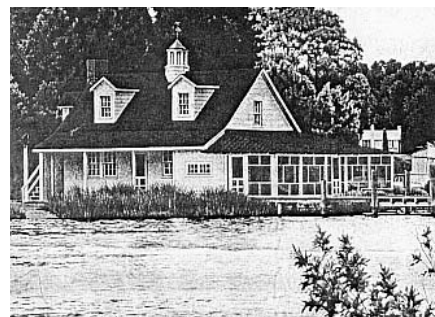
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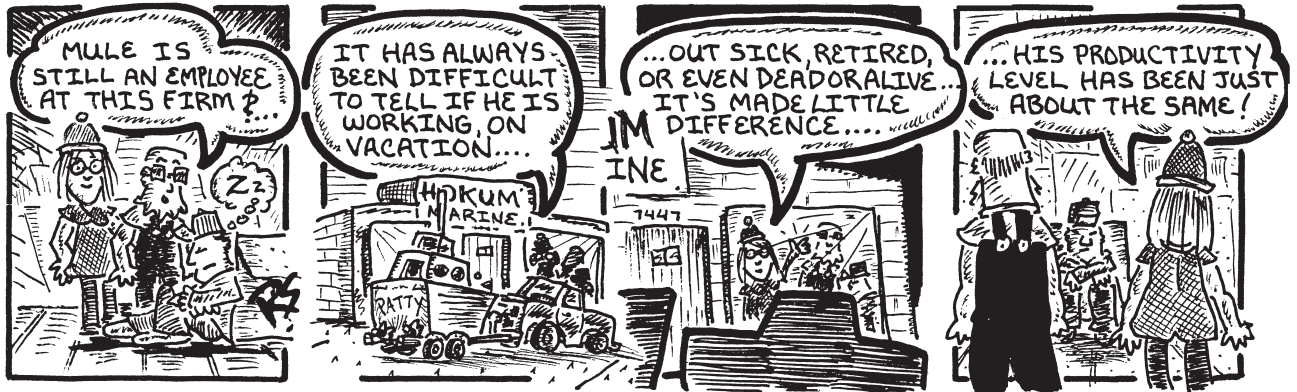
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